

THE NORTH WEST REBELLION.

BY REV. JAMES SIEVERIGHT.

Prince Albert, Carlton, and Duck Lake are now familiar as household words. Little did I imagine on leaving that flourishing town on the Saskatchewan, that some of the names attached to a parting address given by the citizens, irrespective of creed, would in a short space of time be the names of men who fell in defence of the old flag, treacherously shot by a band of rebels. Armed rebellion must be crushed by force. The causes that led to the uprising are far deeper than cannon and rifles can reach. A wise and conciliatory management of the Indian Department would have prevented the whole trouble. Had the Controller of Indian Affairs been of the stamp of Govs. Laird or Morris, the volunteers might have been peacefully pursuing their wonted vocations, and the country spared a large expenditure of life and treasure. The Red-men of the North-West have substantial grievances. Deprived of their hunting grounds and the buffalo—their main means of subsistence—by the advent of the whites, they are often reduced to the verge of starvation by the scarcity of game. Over the graves of Indians buried while I was in Prince Albert might truly be inscribed "Died of starvation or diseases caused by want of food." The muskrat is the main reliance in winter. When it is scarce famine stares the red man in the face. Indians are shiftless, disinclined to hard, steady work; still, men inured to the chase, and nothing else, have a right to be fed by those who took from them lands, their means of subsistence; a right to at least as much food as would keep body and soul together. "What will become of us," said an Indian chief, "when the buffalo die, they are our best friends?" An old Indian can die of starvation, but neither can nor will work—his muscles have never been trained to steady, irksome toil. As the experience of our neighbours across the line shews, it is far cheaper, not to say more humane, to feed the Indian than fight him. The original owners of the soil are slowly dying out through that fell scourge, consumption. It is a reflection far more comfortable to all that they do not die inch by inch through scarcity of food. I know one Indian chief almost heart-broken over the decrease in number in his band. The Indians attribute the excessive mortality to the change of food. Nothing will more speedily draw down divine vengeance on any land than the oppression of the weak and down-trodden. The main hope is industrial schools to train and educate the young. The Indian problem can never be rightly solved by mere speculators like Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney, and some of the officials of the Indian Department. No one can conjecture to what extent rebellion may spread among famine-stricken men. Old hereditary feuds between different bands, superstitious dreams and notions often fatal to the continuous prosecution of war, the want of provisions to feed the hungry horses, are all elements of weakness in any Indian uprising. The half-breeds, too, have wrongs to be redressed. It may or may not have been a blunder to give exceptional land grants to Manitoba half-breeds. Equity demands that the same treatment be given to the half-breeds of the North-West. The French half-breeds are hunters not farmers. Freighting and ven air life suit their wild roving natures better than tilling the soil. That the French priests have some connection with the rebellion is evident from the unreasonable demand for the benefit of that powerful religious corporation. It is not likely that the vast majority of the Scotch and English half-breeds—who are more numerous than the French—will enlist under the banner of Riel to attack the white settlers without grievances. Probably no new country has a better class of settlers than the Prince Albert District, thrifty industrious, moral,—probably no class of settlers has been more unfairly treated by any government. Withholding patents from settlers, some of whom have been in possession for fourteen years, and long since fulfilled all settlement conditions; the refusal of schools and municipal law, the raking all the proceeds from the sale of odd sections to build the Canadian Pacific Railway, which confers no benefit on Saskatchewan Territory; the making no provision for repairing or bridging even the main trails, the refusal to survey into lots the timber lands on the north bank of the Saskatchewan, and sell wood lots to the actual settlers—wronges that could and would be righted by any government that cared for the best interests of the

North West. In spite of all injustice, the Prince Albert settlers have always been loyal. The churches have still a great work to do—the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, the determined foe of injustice and oppression, the reception of the glad tidings alone, can bring peace and contentment to the hearts of men and introduce the universal reign of the Prince of Peace.

CHURCH AND MANSE BUILDING, MUSKOKA.

MR. EDITOR, "I. K." carefully avoids dealing with the point at issue. Instance after instance was given of wrecked or unfinished churches. Instead of adducing a particle of evidence to impugn the substantial correctness of the essential facts, "I. K." cruises off to Magnetawan and Rosseau, localities not mentioned. That the picture is not overdrawn is evident from the fact that new instances can easily be added. At Utterson, years ago, logs were taken out for a church and allowed to rot by the wayside. Italian labourers on the railway, camped in the ecclesiastical building called Bethel, carried off the stove and otherwise defaced it. As a neighbouring farmer remarked, "It is a matter of little consequence, the building was unfit for winter use." My aim in the statements made was not to discourage, but to awaken to new interest. The courage that looks difficulties squarely in the face is more likely to grapple successfully with them than the complacent spirit that blandly says "All is well, rest and be thankful." There is no Presbyterian manse north of Bracebridge. New churches must be built outside and must be obtained in some shape. It is far better for all concerned that help be got from a Church and Manse Erection Fund than depend on the missionary's energy, personal friends or lecturing. It is a bootless assertion good men are needed for mission fields. The question is, how are competent men most to be obtained? The market is not overstocked with this commodity. There is a large amount of truth in Beecher's saying, "Offer \$100, and you will get a \$100 minister." A house to live in, churches in which God can be worshipped winter and summer, will not deter but rather induce capable men to engage with vigour in the mission work of the Church, and by giving facilities for the formation, gradually lighten, if not extinguish the need of outside aid. "I. K." knows little of the practical difficulties of church and manse building, at least in some parts of Muskoka. Not a stick of dry lumber can be had. Seats, modern in style, bought in at a third of the cost for which they can be made are surely a good bargain, especially if earned by the missionary's lectures. I dislike personal references. It will be time enough for "I. K." to chronicle my departure from the Muskoka Mission Field when I leave it.

Huntsville, March 16, 1885. JAMES SIEVERIGHT.

LAY MODERATORS.

MR. EDITOR, In an editorial paragraph in your last issue in relation to proceedings in the English Presbyterian Church, you say, "It is utterly absurd to say that" certain elders whom you name, "are not as well qualified to fill a Moderator's chair as a young minister who may have barely squeezed through college a few months before it became his turn to preside over a Presbytery." Such a case seldom or ever occurs as that of a young minister a few months from college being appointed to preside over a Presbytery. But, so far as argument goes in favour of an elder presiding, I presume that any other minister may be selected.

In relation to your argument and remarks on the subject, permit me to make the following observations:

(1) They would be of much more force if what you apparently assume were proved, namely, that ministers and elders fill one and the same office. This, I fear, it will be difficult for you, or any one else, to establish from either reason or Scripture. There is only one passage in all the New Testament on which the presbyter-theory of the office of elders is founded—1 Tim. v. 17. But when properly interpreted it affords no support to this theory that makes two classes of elders with different functions fill one and the same office, a thing never met with in civil society, and which is an absurdity.

(2) Were the duties of a Moderator of Presbytery, Synod or Assembly, merely to preside, keep order, take the votes and announce the decisions thereof, your remarks would be fair and of some weight. But these are far from including all the duties of a Moderator.

In his official capacity, he is often called upon to exercise the functions which are peculiar to the office of the Gospel ministry. It is his duty oftentimes to preach and conduct ordinations to this office, laying on hands upon the persons so ordained. But it has been ever held hitherto, that one in an inferior office should not ordain or take part in ordaining persons, to a higher office. "We deny," says Dr. Millar, in his work on the Eldership, "the right of an inferior officer to lay on hands in the ordination of a superior, and uniformly act accordingly." To most Presbyterians it would seem strange for deacons to ordain elders, and equally, if not more, strange and unscriptural would it appear for elders to ordain men to the office of the ministry.

A Moderator is, often, called upon to represent the Court, and, in the case of a Moderator of the General Assembly, to represent the whole Church in circumstances and take part in proceedings where a layman would find himself in rather an awkward position. Besides, a Moderator, especially of Synod and Assembly, ought to be in his official capacity, very helpful to his brethren and to congregations by aiding them as he may have opportunity on Communion seasons and on occasions of church openings in a way in which no elder could. It is something with most right-minded persons as to proper respect for persons in office and superiors, to have a Moderator of the Assembly, or even Synod, present and take part in the services on such occasions. Too little is made of Moderators now a days in these respects. These are only a few of the many duties devolving on a Moderator, which none but one in the office of the ministry could well discharge.

It is evident that the office of elder, its nature and functions, in its historical meaning, and as generally understood in the various branches of the Presbyterian Church, needs to be more fully considered. From its nature and functions and the nature and duties of the office of Moderator of our Church courts it appears to me that it is "utterly absurd to say" that any elder can discharge all the duties of a Moderator as well as any minister.

March 5, 1885.

A. WILSON.

JAVA AND PONAPE.

The following statements, which will be of interest to students of physical science and ethnography, are taken from a letter from Mr. Doane, just received, but dated at Ponape, October 21, 1884:

The famous volcanic eruption on the island of Krakatoa, just west of Java, a year since, startled the civilized portion of the world with the "blue" and "red" and other "strange sunsets and sunrisings" it caused. Just now, a year after date, Ponape is gathering up some of the products of that eruption; large beds of pumice-stone in places are covering the sea with its gray hue, as if an immense blanket were spread out. Months since I saw an account of one of the harbours near that eruption filled with this material ten feet deep, and almost as compact as an ice-floe. The winds, and especially the currents, have taken some of that disgorged mass and floated it to our Ponape reefs. A remarkable fact about this is the continuity of an easterly or an north-easterly set of the ocean's current near the line. No doubt masses of the ejected pumice will float along on the same current to the shores of South America, more than half way belting the earth. Our natives call it "sea-fruit," for they have no idea where or how it was generated, but suppose the sea is the mother.

To some of the sandy coral islands lying in the track, it will be a very god-send. The material is gathered, crushed, and put on beds of taro as a fertilizer. Mere sand-beaches, or banks, furnish but little to fertilize vegetation.

But Krakatoa, or Krakatao, has other interests to Ponape. The word is of two syllables—the first the specific name—and *tao* or *tau*, meaning strait, hence the term means *Kraka of the strait*. But *tao* or *tau* is pure Ponapian, and here also means a strait, a passage of water. Java, then, and Ponape are blood-related. Indeed, centuries and centuries since, at least as far back as when Solomon was king, Java had another kind of an eruption, sending off here so many of her vocables. But recently I counted more than fifty of these, some of them names of places on this island. These vocables, of course, took passage with the Malay tongue. And now Java is sending fields of pumice-stone. Some day those who are on the east of her must send back or set afloat to her truths from God's Word.—*Missionary Herald*.