

## MISSION WORK IN SUPERIOR.

BY REV. E. C. MURRAY, CONVENOR OF H. M. COM.

For the Review.

Permit me to say a word with regard to mission work in Superior Presbytery. Commencing at the Eastern boundary we have a railway mission, extending over two hundred and fifty miles of the C.P.R., with head quarters at Schreiber. For several years an ordained missionary occupied this important field but since the resignation of Rev. R. Sturgeon we have been unable to secure, an ordained minister to occupy the field. During the past two years attention has been turned to this part of Ontario because of its rich gold deposits. Already several mines near the line of railway are under development, the country is full of prospectors, and a "boom" is expected next year. The work on a railway mission is different from, city or ordinary country work. The missionary does not always see the results of his work, but then "we walk by faith and not by sight." We are very anxious to see an ordained man in charge of this mission next year. The congregation at Schreiber has provided a study in the church for the missionary, and the expenses of a missionary are lighter here than in most places. The work is hard, but inspiring. Railway men are intelligent, practical, active and frank, even to being outspoken. Their life is full of risk and adventure. Surrounded by temptation they need sympathy and help. Who among our many students in the graduating classes, or among our young ministers who have graduated, will volunteer to take hold of this important field next spring, now rendered specially attractive to a real live missionary, in view of the mining interests rapidly developing? A knowledge of mineralogy as well as theology would be of decided advantage to a man taking charge of this field.

West Fort William, associated with Slate River and Murillo, is steadily progressing. The church at the West Fort was repaired last Autumn and a neat church was erected at Slate River. Mr. Angus Graham of Montreal College rendered excellent service in this field last summer, and Mr. F. A. Robinson is doing good work this winter.

Leaving Murillo, we come to the Ignace Mission which extends to Rat Portage, a short distance of three hundred miles. This mission about holds its own. In general it is similar to the Schreiber field, though not so strong. At Barclay, a point forty or fifty miles from Rat Portage, the Ontario Government have started an experimental farm. It is claimed that there is quite an extent of excellent agricultural land at this point. Already a number of farmers have taken up land and we are hopeful that the development here will add strength in a year or two to this weak and scattered field. Rainy River is an agricultural district. Our mission here extends along the greater part of the river on the Canadian side. Mr. R. C. McDiarmid occupied this mission for a year and a half, during which time he rendered the church good service. The mission consists of five stations, along the river. It is occupied this winter by Mr. Alex. McTaggart of Knox College.

At the head of Rainy River we come to the little town of Fort Francis. Here for some years our church has been endeavoring to sow the good seed. We have a neat little church, and under the ministry of Mr. M. P. Floyd for two and a half years, our cause witnessed considerable advance. Mr. Floyd left the field last autumn to complete his studies in Knox College, and Mr. D. Oliver of Manitoba College succeeded him, and is also doing excellent work. East of Fort Francis lies Rainy Lake and the Seine River country, rapidly becoming famous on account of its rich gold mines. A large number of settlers went into this district last year in quest of gold. A still larger number will follow next year, and it is felt that a mission will require to be opened at Mine Centre. Mr. Floyd made occasional visits to the mining camps and Mr. Oliver is enthusiastically continuing this part of the work. Let me quote from letters received from Mr. Oliver since he took charge of the mission at Fort Francis—Under date Sept. 23rd he writes: "I arrived at Fort Francis on Thursday evening 17th inst., and conducted service on Sunday. On Monday I came up here to Mine Centre and truly this is a wonderful place. There are about 200 men engaged in the camps. I have visited all the camps but one, and hope to call on it to-morrow. The men are rough but good natured. I have enjoyed going in and out among them. I ate at all the camps, and held service in each. To-morrow I will have a service at the hotel when

I expect a good attendance as the men seem interested. I think it is a great pity our church has not a regular mission here. Oh, this is just the place for work and where it is much needed." Under date Nov. 11th he writes again and I clip the following from his letter. "The great hindrance to church work at Fort Francis is "Drink." The town can only support two groceries and yet it supports three hotels and one wholesale whiskey store. I go down to Crozier school-house every Sunday morning." (Crozier school-house is seven miles below Fort Francis, and forms a separate station). "A great many new families have come in lately to take up land. They have plenty of provisions but little money. I believe that in years to come that will be one of the strongest Presbyterian centres on the river. The land is good and when cleared gives a splendid crop and now as the mines are developing the farmers will have a market for their produce. I have again visited Mine Centre, and on this occasion conducted two services, one in Mine Centre and the other in the hotel in Bell City. The collections paid my expenses, but when the boat stops my expenses will be doubled, and the collections may not cover them. But I cannot give up the work. I enjoy it far more than in any other place I ever preached. If you only felt the warm "shake-hands" that these rough men can give. After the meeting many of them remain to speak about their wives and children. Every time I go to Mine Centre it makes me glad I ever studied for the ministry. I had rather ten times go and work among those miners than the grandest city congregation in Canada."

The spirit that pervades Mr. Oliver's letters is inspiring, and I feel that the readers of the Review many of whom are liberally supporting our missions should know something of the men who are engaged in our work. Such men deserve support. The work in which they are engaged is a grand work. The church will not let men or fields suffer for lack of means.

The Manse, Port Arthur.

## THE CURE OF SOULS.\*

BY REV. LOUIS H. JORDAN, D.D.

Ian Maclaren has published so many books of late, that some have begun dubiously to shake their heads. "The pace is too rapid," they have said. Or, moved by an entirely different spirit, whose sinister quality in only partially concealed, they have persistently asked:—"Who is this new Rabbi, who, at home in every field, presumes to teach his seniors?"

Dr. Watson has emphatically something to say in his "Cure of Souls," and he has uttered it with characteristic force and grace. He who omits to read his book will surely be the loser. Notwithstanding the succession of able men who have already filled the Lyman Beecher Lectureship, Dr. Watson has shown his usual insight in the contribution which he has made to the exposition of a theme so familiar. He has not been surpassed by any of his predecessors, and by very few of them has he been equalled, in the sane, shrewd, eminently-wise way in which he counsels the young men to whom he specially addresses himself. Some have averred that the method of the lecturer is too mechanical, and they complain that he has cut up his recommendations into an innumerable number of "points"; but, in the estimate of his not-uncritical audience at Yale, this feature of his addresses added greatly to their value. If the Lectures are the very reverse of scholastic, their merit lies in their rare practical helpfulness, with which is coupled the charm of an engaging simplicity, a transparent modesty, and a playful, bright and felicitous diction.

Dr. Watson is one of those happy spirits, to company with whom is to be made partaker of his happiness: this explains why it is that all who come to know Ian Maclaren become at once his admirers. His "Mind of the Master," brilliant as it admittedly is, has caused some searchings of heart; but his conception of The Servant of the Master will add considerably to a reputation from which nothing will be deducted. The lofty office of the Preacher, in this latest volume of the Yale Lectures, is worthily magnified. If the Pastor, or the student in Homiletics, fail to procure this book, he will ignore the worth of some of the wisest

\*"Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching, Yale University, 1896. By John Watson, D.D. Pp. 301. Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co. Price \$1.25.