

MISSION WORK IN ALASKA.

The Bishop of Alaska, Right Rev. Dr. Rowe, was well known personally to many people in Toronto while a student at Trinity University, and afterwards when a missionary in Algoma before the days there of steamboats and railways. Since then, as will be remembered, he was stationed for many years at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, and has since been appointed by the American Church Bishop of Alaska. The following letter, written by him from Juneau, Alaska, to a personal friend, will, therefore, be of general interest:—

I have only just returned from my long trip through the interior of Alaska. I have been away a little more than six months, during which time I had no news from the outside world. I made in that time by land, river, lake and sea, 5,025 miles. The journey was one of varying interest flavoured with much hard work, danger, etc. The vast territory is very thinly inhabited, and its great loneliness was oppressive. At Forty Mile I had a nice visit with the "mounted police," commanded by Capt. Constantine, and stationed there. The Canadian government is deserving of all praise in providing for law and order away off in this wilderness, by this efficient force. They get great praise from all the miners, American as well as Canadian, for their just and fair conduct, and their good character, and deserve all they get. Here I met another Canadian who splendidly represents Canadian ability and energy, Mr. Ogilvie, D. L. S., who has, it far as Canada is concerned, settled the "boundary question."

Good paying placer gold is to be found in all parts, and the miners are doing fairly well. I think that the prospects are good for considerable development. I had before coming out that they had made rich finds at Krondite, Old "Fort Reliance," which is in Canadian territory.

The Yukon is a marvelous river. It is navigable for 3,000 miles, at least river steamers only run as yet 2,000 miles. It is wide, swift and most picturesque. What will take you two weeks to go up, in parts you can go down almost in two minutes. I visited many Indians, held services, established two new missions and returned by Bering Sea in the United States revenue cutter Bear. She took over to Siberia, Dr. Windt, correspondent of The London Pall Mall Gazette, a famous Siberian traveler. I was with him a good deal, and found him a clever, splendid Englishman. I too, visited Siberia and stood on the Asiatic continent.

Our home is to be at Etka, a most beautiful place. I have only been at home four days in seven months. I had to come on here, and am with the Rev. Mr. Beer as I write. He sends kindest regards. He is doing well. Give my best regards to all my Sault Canadian friends.—P. T. Rowe"

INFANT CLASS TEACHING
IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

The following interesting paper was lately read at Morden by Mrs. E. G. Goldie Scot:

So much has been written and said on the duties of Sunday School Teachers—their responsibilities—and the self-denial required in giving up some part of their time to this work, that it is surely our own fault if we fail to grasp what is involved in the expression, "Taking a class in Sunday School." To those who teach from love (and it is a truth that some are born with a special aptitude for the work) the duties will be pleasures, the responsibilities bravely and prayerfully met, and the reward out of all proportion to the sacrifice made. For those who teach from a sense of duty, there is great comfort in the words of an old Church of England clergyman in the last century, "Altho' I am no way fit for the work, yet God caused me to do it, and on Him I depend for strength to do it, and for success to crown it. I utterly despair of doing anything as of myself and therefore the more I have to do the more I shall be forced to live by faith on him. In this view I hope to get a great income by my living."

The work of Sunday School teaching is especially a free-will offering, and no one who undertakes it from a pure motive but will, in time, come to love it and to recognize in it an especial 'call.'

Apart from the necessity of purity of motive, and a high ideal, the two qualities that seem to me most essential to successful teaching are earnestness and sympathy, and these are especially needed in dealing with very young children.

As the Sunday School is the nursery of the Church, so the infant class is the foundation of the Sunday School, and as such to be laid with the greatest care; and to be entrusted to skillful hands.

The idea that "anyone can teach little children" does not chime now with thoughtful minds. An infant class is a greater tax on the energy, the patience and the unselfishness of a teacher than any other class in the school.

It is with the special desire to help those who are interested in the "little ones," that I venture to offer you a few thoughts on this subject, trusting that you will take them in the spirit in which this Teachers' Association is formed, and overlook their deficiencies.

Last spring I heard a woman lecturer from Chicago speak on "Infant Class Teaching." She was a specialist on the subject and had been chosen to represent it at the World's Fair. Some of my fellow teachers will perhaps remember and have been struck by the same idea as I was—namely, that her method of teaching depended largely on having a number of what I may term devices, to attract and fix the attention of young children. She also dwelt strongly on the absolute necessity of a separate room for the infant class, so that they could move about, sing and be otherwise diverted without disturbing older pupils.

The question we teachers have to meet is how to deal with existing circumstances and to make the best of our accommodation. In most cases a corner of a room or more often of the Church or in a Sunday School is held.

Are we then to give you an idea of making our teaching successful? Let us find out how even these cramped conditions can be of themselves turned to advantage.

A child is brought to Church and told to "sit still and not to disturb the congregation." Its training in reverence for God, and respect for others will have begun in that corner of the school where it has learned that it must not disturb the other classes, and the feeling of union with the main body is also a training for its future development.

Many of the modern aids to teaching, blackboard drawings, emblematical figures, charts and pictures, are useful and desirable, but I think that the first element of success lies not in these adjuncts, but in your own magnetic power of drawing together and interesting your class in the simplest way. The tendency of the age seems to be to run to extremes in the matter of illustrating and explaining a lesson. If you give nothing to a child's imagination you deprive it of one of the most glorious privileges of childhood. Say you present to its notice twelve little figures dressed to represent the twelve Apostles. They look "funny" because the child is naturally unable to grasp the idea that the Eastern garb is intended to convey; or to realize that these men who "followed Jesus" were not unlike the dolls it has seen and eagerly coveted in the streets; and so you convey a far less spiritual lesson to the child than if you told it in simple language a part of these men, and left it to picture them in its own mind. The atmosphere of nursery, which, to a child more especially, surrounds all sacred things should not be too lightly explained away.

The graphic language of the Bible; the word painting, as it may well be called, of our beautiful children's hymns, often convey a deeper impression than that left by realistic illustration of clumsy "object lessons."

Did you ever as a child look at a picture of our Saviour without feeling that it fell short of your conception of what "Jesus was like?" Do you think that the most revolting picture of Satan in any illustrious Bible conveys a more definite or useful lesson than that you learned in the words.—

"There's a wicked spirit
Watching round you still,
And he tries to tempt you
To all harm and ill"

Depend on it the spiritual Satan is