

Missionary Intelligence.

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CAPE BRETON.—A MISSIONARY RECORD.

We gladly open our pages to the following paper which we have been requested to publish. It is written by the Rev. Charles Inglis, one of the oldest of the North American Missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The occasion on which it was written, was Mr. Inglis' retirement from active labour at Sydney, Cape Breton, at the close of the year 1852.

An account of the island of Cape Breton may be found in the second volume of Judge Haliburton's "Nova Scotia," or in the "Monthly Record" of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, vol. 1, p. 79.

In the parish register at Sydney, the earliest record I find of this Mission is an entry in April, A. D. 1785, signed by B. Lovell, Curate.

The Rev. Hanna Corin's earliest entry is in June, 1786. This gentleman came with several Loyalists from New England, continued nineteen years in charge of the Mission, and was removed by the first bishop, Dr. C. Inglis, in July, 1805. At that time, and several years subsequently, the whole island formed one parish, and it does not appear that any part was visited but Main-a-Dieu, and Louisbourg. After an interval of eleven months, the Rev. W. Twining took charge of the parish in 1800, and remained eight years. The Rev. Robert Ferryman paid two visits to the Island in 1815 and 1816, and in November of the latter year the Rev. Hibbert Binney* was appointed, and remained till November, 1823.

In June, 1824, when I was stationed at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, the Mission being vacant, I suggested to the Ecclesiastical Commissary the propriety of visiting the island, and offered my services, provided my own church and parish could be attended to. The offer being accepted, I embarked on board a coasting vessel, and after a passage of six days was well received at Sydney. No steps had been taken to supply the vacancy, owing perhaps to the uncertainty as to Mr. Binney's return. After spending a fortnight among the settlements on the Atlantic coast, and ascertaining the wishes of the congregations, I proceeded to the interior, assembling the people, ministering to the sick, and baptizing the children, together with the performance of such other ecclesiastical duties as were required. My time being limited, I was unable to proceed further into the interior, or to visit the settlements on the Gulf shore; I therefore crossed the Grand Lake, a distance of twelve or fifteen leagues, in a canoe, and after spending a Sunday with the people at Anchat, embarked on my return to Nova Scotia. The particulars of this visit appeared in the Report of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for 1825. My intercourse with the people was for the most part satisfactory, and the passing visit gave them reason to believe that their destitute state was not disregarded by their ecclesiastical superior. The result was a desire to have a resident pastor at Sydney; and two memorials were drawn up and forwarded, one specifying a particular person, whom the memorialists were desirous to have; the other leaving the selection in the hands of the Bishop. With his Lordship's concurrence I returned to Cape Breton in November, leaving my family in Dartmouth for the winter, and, having received the consent of the Society, established myself at Sydney in July, 1825. As soon as the necessary arrangements could be made, I commenced a tour of the island, which occupied four weeks. Baddeck was the first station in my journey, about forty-two miles from the capital. Here I found a few Churchmen, who appeared to rejoice in the opportunity of engaging in our services.

It was at this time that an interesting service took place during the passage. Several children were brought in a boat by their parents to be baptized; and lashing the boats together in the mid-channel, and lowering the sails, the holy ordinance was administered as we steamed on the waters of the lake. Another interesting administration of this ordinance occurred on the road-side, where baptism was administered to several children under the shade of some noble elm. It may be hoped that the holy rite so anxiously sought by the parents was not in after life lost sight of by the recipients.

From Baddeck my route lay through the valley of the Middle River, at that time very thinly peopled. I was travelling along a mere bridle-path, at times

scarcely visible, trusting to the natural instinct of my horse, given by Divine Providence for the service of man: a proof—if proof were wanting—that I was not alone, and that not only God was there, but that His guiding and protecting arm was there also. The day was lovely, the sun shining in his brightness; the insect tribes were on the wing, all nature seemed to rejoice in the blessing of existence. A lapse of twenty-five years has not sufficed to blot the scene from my memory.

Margaret was the next settlement in my route. After assembling the people, and joining in the customary service, I had the gratification of being kindly received by an English family. Having now crossed the island, the different settlements on the Gulf shore came in their order, viz. the harbour of Margaret, Broad Cove, Malou, Port Hood, Plaster Cove, and Ship Harbour in the Strait of Canseau. In each of these places, especially at Port Hood, there were Churchmen to be found, but too few and far between to form a congregation. At this time I was the only clergyman in the island, which comprised the single parish of St. George, and at the distance of at least eighty miles from my parish church.

My route now lay through the Strait of Canseau to Arichat, in the Isle de Madame, a place already noticed in this report. Here, although a great majority of the population were Romanists, natives or descended from French Canadians, I found a small but faithful band of Churchmen from the Norman Isle of Jersey. They were without a church, and had seldom been visited above once a year by a clergyman. Their spirit, however, was good, and taking advantage of this, in two or three years a church was erected, and I had the happiness of procuring them the services of a clergyman, who was recommended by Dr. M. Russell, the late Bishop of Glasgow. Mr. Shaw arrived in 1828, and parochial boundaries were soon after obtained, co-extensive with the Isle de Madame.

Important as this assistance was to me, the island of Cape Breton was still an overwhelming care; and though, as a Missionary, I was over ready to visit the distant settlements, yet I felt the parochial charge of the whole island too great, and after some delay succeeded in obtaining a parish of limited and reasonable extent, into which I was inducted by the governor's mandate, and substituted by Bishop Inglis. From Arichat to Sydney, a distance of seventy or eighty miles, the ground is occupied by persons of the Romish communion.

I have thus given a brief sketch of my first journey round the island, from which subsequent journeys do not greatly differ; except that in the winter season, when travelling on the ice was good, I have crossed the Bras d'Or lake with the mercury at 19° below zero. At one time I could enumerate more than twenty different, and for the most part distant, stations which shared my attention, and I believe I may assert, that for seven years I never saw a brother clergyman.

In the year 1840 Mr. W. Y. Porter was ordained, and employed as Visiting Missionary, and I confined myself to places from seven to thirty-six miles distant from Sydney, chiefly on the Atlantic Board, viz. Sydney Mines, Main-a-Dieu, Loran, Louisbourg, Gabarus, Upper and Lower Mirée, Catalogne, Cow Bay, Glace Bay, and Bridgeport. These places (with the exception of Bridgeport, which as a mining station has been abandoned, and the Sydney Mines, now formed into a separate district) are attended to by the Visiting Missionary. By order of the Bishop, the principal mining establishment has been placed under the charge of the Rev. Robert Arnold. Until the year 1841, I was in the habit of giving a monthly service to that congregation, being occasionally relieved by the Rev. W. Y. Porter, when the appointment of Mr. Elder as Assistant Missionary took place. His death occurring in 1848, that duty again devolved on me; and with the aid of the Visiting Missionary, Mr. Porter, that congregation was kept together, and a neat little chapel built through the exertions of Richard Brown, Esq., the agent of the General Mining Association.

I may now perhaps be permitted to draw a comparative statement between the Mission as it was in 1824, when I took charge of it, and as it is now. It must be borne in mind that, during sixteen years, I was single-handed, and my visits to twenty different and widely distant places could not often be repeated. The seed of the Gospel so thinly scattered could not be expected to produce permanent, or even much fruit, fruit, however, it did produce, which has shown itself as well in the different episcopal visitations which have

been held, as in the increased number of places of worship, Sunday-schools, and communicants. In 1825 the first Bishop, Dr. Charles Inglis, and a Confirmation, of which I have not been able to find any record. In the year 1827, the third of my incumbency, the third Bishop, Dr. John Inglis, administered the ordinance in the parish church to above ninety persons. His Lordship paid a second visit in 1833, and administered the rite in four different stations. In 1842 he again visited the island, and in addition to the Confirmations at Sydney, the Mines, the North-west Arm, Catalogne, Main-a-Dieu, and Louisbourg, he consecrated Trinity Chapel at the Mines, St. John's at the North-west Arm, together with their burial-grounds. This was the last service he performed in person. In the year 1850 Bishop Feltl performed the duty on behalf of the Bishop of Nova Scotia, and confirmed at seven different stations.

At the time of my arrival in Cape Breton there was but one church, which had been built at Sydney by the former government. The building at the North-west Arm was unfinished, and a mere shell; there are now six churches, and a chapel school-house, in which service is occasionally performed by the Visiting Missionary. At the above period there were no Sunday-schools within the Mission; there are now eight in connexion with the Church, viz. one at Sydney, two at the North-west Arm, at the Mines, Cow Bay, Glace Bay, Cox Heath, and Main-a-Dieu, one each, in which there are at least 180 children receiving instruction. The communicants, though much fewer than they should be, have increased fourfold within the above period, and are more uniform in their attendance than formerly. A small lending library has been formed, and collections for the Diocesan Church Society have been uniformly made and gradually increased. The amount raised for Church purposes during the year 1852, has been £105. In addition to this, a very neat school-house has been built on the church ground, within a stone's cast of the church, which has obviated the necessity of assembling the scholars in the vestry, or in the body of the church, a practice which has ever appeared to detract from the reverence due to the house of God, and calculated to leave an unfavourable impression on the children.

It will not, I hope, appear that I have assumed too much to myself in this report. It seemed scarcely possible to avoid a certain degree of egotism; but I must ever acknowledge the service and assistance of Mr. Elder at the Mines, and Mr. Porter; the latter especially was ever ready to undertake any duty at my suggestion, and with him, since his ordination, I have wrought with perfect unanimity. I have now completed my forty-second year in connexion with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; and though on a retrospect I lament many deficiencies, I have cause to be thankful to a kind Providence, which has been my guide, and has preserved me from some apparent and some hidden dangers. I have travelled by day and by night, in heat and cold. At one time a bundle of hay on a cottage floor has been my bed, at another a fallen tree on the road-side; in either case I have risen refreshed and happy, in the reflection that I was, however imperfectly, proclaiming the Gospel of peace and love to persons deprived of the regular administration of the ordinances of our holy religion. That I have too often failed in effecting the object of my mission I must sorrowfully own, and though I had done all, should acknowledge myself an unprofitable servant. My object has been to sow the seed; the cultivation and subsequent gathering of the harvest will be for those who succeed me.

It may be asked why the Church of England has made no further progress in the island of Cape Breton, notwithstanding the support it has received. From the surrender in A. D. 1758 to A. D. 1786, I could discover that any steps were taken to propagate the Gospel in the island according to the principles of the reformed Church. The French who remained were all attached to the religion of their forefathers, and their priests retained the pastoral charge over them. From A. L. 1786 to 1828 the Society gave support to one clergyman; a second was added in that year to the pastoral charge of the Isle de Madame; in 1840, a third, as Visiting Missionary, and in 1842 a fourth, as assistant missionary at the Mines. During the eighteen years previous to this last appointment, several vessels had annually arrived with emigrants from the Western Isles of Scotland, North and South Uist, Barra, &c., none of whom were of the English communion, but entirely composed of Romanists and Presbyterians, while accession to the Church depended solely on the natural increase of the population; for though the Presbyterians were in general steady and willing to

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