

## Editorial and Contributed

### Heavy Tidings.

A SORE CALAMITY has befallen the Church in the sudden and tragic death of a minister deservedly esteemed and beloved, the Rev. William Hall, M.A., Principal of the French Institute, Montreal. The shock makes it impossible for us to write, and we can only append this brief extract from a hurried note from the President of the Montreal Conference:

"About seven o'clock this morning (May 7th) he rose from bed, took a gun, placed it under his chin, and fired it, killing himself instantly. You saw how he was when you were here a few days since. He did not seem to get any worse. He was not suspected by his own family to have any suicidal tendency, and yet when it was reported that he had taken his own life, those who knew of his depression of mind were not surprised."

This is no time to multiply words. Let us humble ourselves before God while we agonize in prayer for our afflicted Zion and for those upon whom the blow has most heavily fallen.

### Meeting of the Missionary Executive.

A FULLY attended meeting of the Executive Committee of the General Board of Missions was held in the Board Room, Wesley Buildings, on the 25th and 26th ult., Rev. Dr. Carman in the chair. The greater portion of the time was occupied with Japan affairs. Voluminous correspondence was read, which occupied five or six hours. At a former committee meeting it had been decided that it was not expedient, under existing circumstances, for Rev. Mr. Cassidy to return to Japan. Mr. Cassidy had appealed against this decision, and an opportunity was now given him to state his objections to the committee. He was heard at considerable length on Thursday evening, and again on Friday morning. He complained, among other things, that the former action of the committee was regarded by many as a reflection upon his ministerial character and standing. After hearing all his statements, and a full conversation in the committee on the subject, the following resolution was adopted:

"That it having been represented to this Executive that its former action respecting Rev. F. A. Cassidy has been interpreted as a reflection upon his ministerial or administrative character:

"Therefore, be it resolved that while this Executive has not thought it expedient that Mr. Cassidy should return to the Japan work at present, yet we desire to assure him that our action in this matter is in no sense an implied reflection upon either his administration or his character."

There next followed a lengthy consideration of the request of certain missionaries of the Board in Japan to be recalled. After a careful and minute examination of the correspondence, and especially of a joint letter of the missionaries recently received, the committee conversed freely about the whole situation. It

was evident that there had been much misapprehension among the missionaries owing to imperfect, and in some cases misleading, reports which have appeared in the press. It was finally resolved that a committee consisting of Rev. Drs. Carman, Sutherland, Potts, Griffin and Mr. Maclaren, Q.C., should prepare a statement in reply to the letter of the Japan missionaries, and to submit the same to an adjourned meeting of the Executive Committee, which will probably be held within the next fortnight. Some members of the committee have privately expressed the opinion that this particular matter is now in a fair way for adjustment.

### Norway House Mission.

THIS month we give a photogravure of Norway House church and mission-house. One of the oldest Indian missions of the Methodist Church outside of Ontario, it is located on Playgreen Lake, a few miles from the north end of Lake Winnipeg, four hundred miles north of the city of Winnipeg. In the year 1819 some Norwegians established themselves at that point, and it soon became one of the chief trading-posts of the Hudson's Bay Co. The Rev. Dr. Maclean, in his "Life of the Rev. James Evans," writes:

"Fifty years ago Western Canada was peopled by Indians and half-breeds and a few white settlers. The population was sparse, indeed, for the country owned by the Hudson's Bay Co. was several hundreds of miles in extent, and the weary traveller in some parts of this vast territory might travel two and three hundred miles without seeing a kindred soul. Indeed, settlers' homes were rare. The trappers and traders congregated in small groups, and built a 'fort' of logs for protection against the roving bands of Indians. A country larger than Great Britain, France, Spain, Germany and Italy combined was inhabited by Indians, half-breeds and traders, and not a soul cared to turn his eyes toward this land to make a home, and spend his days therein. The city of Winnipeg stands midway between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans—the eastern and western boundaries of the Dominion—and away westward for more than a thousand miles, and northward for nearly the same distance, the hunters roamed the plains and forests to procure furs for the company's posts, and thither went the thousands of Blackfeet, Bloods, Piegiens, Crees, Sauteaux, Kootanies, Sarcees, Chippeawayans, and many other Indian tribes."

In 1840 the Rev. Jas. Evans, accompanied by his wife and daughter and two young Ojibeway Indians, Henry B. Steinhauer and Peter Jacobs, started on their long, lonely journey into this vast wilderness of the great North Land. From Fort William they travelled entirely by canoe, and the time consumed in making the trip was from the 12th of May until the first week in August. For their household effects, it seemed the longest way around was the shortest road home, as they had to be sent to England and from thence forwarded by the Hudson's Bay Co. to Norway House, arriving between three and four months after they had been shipped from Montreal. Here, over fifty years ago, Mr. Evans toiled, taking long and perilous journeys in his tin canoe, which the Indians christened, because of its flashing brightness, "The Island of Light." Here he invented those wonderful syllabic characters by