

MOOSONEE.

MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND.—Another year has our Heavenly Father preserved me in health and strength, and enabled me to labour for Him continuously in this inclement and isolated land; and now it is with deep pleasure and thankfulness I set about giving you an account of what I and my faithful band of assistants were able to do during the year which has come to a close.

Outwardly the year was a very chequered one; storms of unprecedented force and duration almost entirely deprived us of summer, while a serious and fatal epidemic of influenza visited every post on the bay, carrying off many victims everywhere, while at Albany it threatened to be as destructive as the whooping cough had been the previous season; our ship was again late in coming, and was not able to return to England, finding the Hudson Straits entirely closed by ice, and was consequently obliged to return to the vicinity of Moore to winter; then winter set in much earlier than usual, entirely preventing us from making a fall fishery, an object of such great importance to us in providing a portion of our winter food; the weather has been extremely severe, and such large quantities of snow have fallen, that I shall not be surprised should a destructive flood take place in spring. Nearly the whole of my vast diocese was again visited last year, and everywhere the gospel was received with great readiness; we have now no active opposition; indeed, there are very few persons in the diocese, except those in the far north, who have not been baptized, by far the greater part into our own beloved Church. For those on the north-western part of the bay a man admirably adapted for the work has been appointed, in the person of the Rev. J. Lofthouse, who, long with God's blessing, to gather into Christ's fold the Eskimo of that region, as the Rev. E. J. Peck has done with those in the eastern side of the bay. Many difficulties have arisen in our way as to the location of Mr. Lofthouse, but I hope they are now nearly surmounted, and before long Churchill will form the basis of extensive missionary operations extending eventually as far north as any human beings exist. For this mission, the most arduous perhaps in Moosonee, liberal provision must be made, so that the dear brother, to whom its management will be entrusted, may feel that he has the fullest sympathy of those whose substitute he is in the evangelization of the heathen. For the present winter, Mr. Lofthouse is residing at York Factory, in the place of Mr. Winter, who is now in England on account of his wife's health; but I expect them both back in the summer, when Mr. Lofthouse will betake himself to his more northern home and devote himself to his labour among the Eskimo and Chipewyans. The Ven. Archdeacon Vincent visited Martin's Falls and Osnaburgh during last summer, conducting at each place a very successful mission; his son, a divinity student under my charge, undertook his first missionary journey, and went to English R. where his ministrations proved very acceptable to the Ojibbeway Indians who resort to that port for the purposes of trade. The Rev. E. J. Peck visited Fort George and Gt. Whale R. in the early part of the summer, and then started from Little Whale R. for the distant station of Ungawa, at the entrance of Hudson's Straits, to see the Indians and Eskimo of that quarter; he was then embarked on board the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company's steamer for Quebec when he was to proceed to England, where I trust he now is, but I have heard nothing of him since he left L. W. R. I hope all has gone well with him, and that by and bye he will again appear among his people, by whom he is greatly beloved.

The Rev. H. Nevitt remained at Moore all the summer, conducting services and school, and attending to the numerous wants of our large summer population; this kept him very fully employed while I was absent on various missionary journeys.

As soon as the river broke up, I set off for Long Portage House, a station one hundred and twenty miles distant, on the way to Canada. The Indians there are Ojibbeways, and as yet have not made much progress in the religious life, but they received my message with attention, and I dare say will yet become emancipated from the superstitions which now oppress them.

Returning from Long Portage House, I remained for a short time at Moose, making all necessary arrangements, and then went in my mission boat to Rupert's House, which I formerly visited yearly, and where I have long wished to see a missionary permanently settled, and for which I had too fondly hoped to see one arrive from England last autumn. Sad troubles have come upon my much loved people during the last few years, numbers of them having died of starvation from the failure of deer, which was formerly very numerous in their hunting grounds; it greatly pained my heart, when asking for one and another, to receive for answer, "He was starved to death two years ago," "She died of starvation three years ago;" I trust the worst is over now, and that such stories of

misery and death as I was constrained to listen to, will never fall on my ears again. My mission was very successful; for I was enabled not only to minister to all the Rupert's House Indians and residents, but likewise to the Indians of the far interior, who came in different trading brigades from Mistassinee, Waswanepi, Machiakun and Nitchekeuh; these are all Christians, many of them are communicants, and the greater part of them read and write the syllabary characters very well. Rupert's House is a great centre of trade, hence the vital necessity of the establishment of a strong mission there. I commenced a house for a clergyman while there, but the greater part of the materials will come over from England, and, should a clergyman come by our ship, which is almost a certainty, he will bring those materials with him; I need not say that all this will be costly; the clergyman's stipend too, is as yet but partially provided for; I am therefore constrained to look to you and my other Christian friends for that assistance which will enable me to carry out my plans without pecuniary anxiety. At Rupert's House, I had eighteen baptisms, married seventeen couples, confirmed fifty-seven persons, and administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to sixty.

Returning to Moose, I intended to remain there the remainder of the summer, as there was so much to be done here which I alone could do; but there soon came a cry of distress from Albany, with the urgent request that I would go there, for the people were dying rapidly. I went at once, and found matters very bad; Archdeacon Vincent was himself suffering, but both he and the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company's representative, were indefatigable in their endeavours to mitigate the sorrows of those by whom they were surrounded. My presence inspired hope; all felt that what could be done for them would be done; they were not to be left alone; a change for the better took place almost at once, and before I left all the sick were on the road to recovery. I visited Albany again just before Christmas, and found all well; I was then engaged almost daily in examining and revising Archdeacon Vincent's translation of the Pilgrim's Progress into the Cree language, it is his first work of translation, and on it he is bestowing much patience and skill; the book, which will be published by the Religious Tract Society, is one calculated to be extremely useful among all the Cree tribes in the Diocese of Moosonee.

Our Moose Indians left us for their distant hunting grounds in October, and from the more distant ones I have not heard; they must be doing fairly well, or some of them would have been in before this. We seldom have any cases of starvation among the Moose Indians, most of them being tolerably well off, and able to take off with them a good supply of flour, when they go off in autumn. We are all doing what we can; there is not one among us but what does his best; in the last year we had much to discourage us in the sufferings of our people, we look to our English brethren, who, under God, have placed us where we are, to keep our hands and hearts uplifted by their sympathy and prayers, that we weary not in our labour, but go on rejoicing in the Lord, and the power of His might.

Believe me, My dear Christian friend,
Yours most faithfully,

Jan. 26th, 1885.

Jno. MOOSONEE.

Contributions will be received by either of my two commissioners: the Rev. Canon Scott Robertson, Threlkley, Kent, or the Rev. J. Burnside, Hertingfordbury, Herts, by the Rev. A. Clarke, The Grange, Elvington, York, or H. G. Malaher, Esq., 20 Compton Terrace, Islington, and in Canada by the Rev. H. Pollard, Ottawa, or they may be paid to the account of the Moosonee Church Fund, at Messrs. Lloyds, Barnetts & Bosanquets Bank, 60 and 62 Lombard St., London.

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BIBLE LESSON.

"The Cave of Machpelah."—Genesis xxiii.

In the life of Abraham, the "Friend of God" we find him called to bear trials and sorrows. The greatest trial of his faith was that recorded in our last lesson, but stood firm even in this tremendous test. To-day we see how true it is what the wise man said, "One event happeneth to all;" and "Our days

on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."

(1). *Abraham's Sorrows.* Our lesson opens with the death of Sarah, and we see Abraham in the character of a mourner. Although Sarah was old when Isaac was born, she lived to see him grow to man's estate, to be thirty-seven years of age; but "the years of the life of Sarah" came to an end, and she died; and "Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." It is natural for us to grieve when we lose a relative or friend, but Abraham does not grieve as one who has no hope; no, he was able to lay the body of Sarah in the tomb "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life;" but he was still a "stranger and a sojourner" in the promised land, and he must at once think of a proper burial place.

(2). *Abraham's Purchase,* verse 8. He "stood up." Persons sat on the ground in token of grief, compare Job ii. 18; 2 Sam. xii. 19, 20. He was living at this time close to Hebron, and the Hittites were the possessors of it. Abraham addresses the citizens "at the gate of the city," the usual place where business was transacted, and asks for a possession, verse 4. They address Abraham as a "Mighty Prince," equivalent to our "Your Excellency," and offer him the choice of all their sepulchres. These were generally in caves with separate niches or shelves cut out of the rock. Abraham declines to receive a gift from them, but begs them to request Ephron to sell him the cave of Machpelah, situated in a field belonging to Ephron, stating that he desires to pay full weight of money therefore, verse 9. Ephron offers to make a present to Abraham not only of the cave but of the field, verse 11; this, however, Abraham declines, and insists upon paying for it. It was worth much more to him than to Ephron; the latter names a high price, verse 15; four hundred shekels of silver by weight, equal probably to about two hundred and fifty dollars, but as money was worth so much more then than now, the amount would be about equal to fifteen hundred dollars; to Abraham, however, it was priceless, as the earnest of an everlasting inheritance, he therefore closes the transaction at once, weighs him out the full sum of money, and thus, verse 17, the field with all the trees, and the desired cave were "made sure" unto Abraham, and then he lays the body of Sarah to rest. We may note that Abraham himself, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Leah were also buried there; its site is known even now after a lapse of upwards of three thousand years. A mosque is erected on the spot, and the cave is strictly guarded by the Turks. The Prince of Wales and Dean Stanley being among the few who have of late years been allowed to enter it.

(3). *Abraham's Hope.* His knowledge of immortality, and hope of a resurrection were, of course, not so clear as the knowledge and hope we have, now that our Lord Jesus Christ has "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," but St. Paul tells us in Hebrews xi. that he did all by faith. He knew that in the ages to come, God's promise about the land of Canaan would be fulfilled, and so he was able to have a blessed hope that she was gone to be with God. Let us thank God that in Jesus Christ and His Gospel we have what takes away the fear of death; we know that death is conquered and that all those who sleep in Jesus are in joy and felicity in the Paradise of God, and when we come to die may we be cheered with the blessed hope of a glorious resurrection.

For Christ our Lord was buried once,
He died and rose again,
He conquered death, He left the grave,
And so will Christian men.

Correspondence.

All Letters containing personal allusions will appear under the signature of the writer.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

OUR NORTH-WEST MISSIONS.

SIR,—In your issue of June 11th, I find an article on "Our North-West Missions," which seems to me to call for comment. With the general aim of the article I heartily concur. Now, if never before, has come the time when "the missions of the North-West must no longer be left to drag on a beggarly existence, but must receive a generous stimulus, and be sustained by large, and systematic, and continuous gifts." It is, as you most justly say, "a scandal that a Christian community should keep within its circle, hordes of uncivilized, unchristianized pagans." I have myself felt this, and said it, again and again, in my public appeals. In Christ Church, Guelph, on Sunday, March 29th, when the excitement over the North-West was at its highest pitch, I expressed the opinion, that whatever might be said as to the administration of the North-West by the Government, the