

The law against potlatching is not enforced. The Indians regard this as a sign of weakness. The law has been fully explained to them, the penalties for its violation have been made known, yet the officers whose duty it is to maintain the dignity of the "Queen's law," seem half-hearted about it. This is a misfortune, for the potlatch is a curse to the people, and a great barrier to their advance in civilization and Christianity.

Letter from REV. J. W. WINSLOW, dated NICOLA LAKE, B.C., January 29th, 1890.

IT is now one year and five months since I entered the work on this field. I cannot help mourning the littleness of the apparent good accomplished, and the not very encouraging prospect ahead; however, I have cause to thank God that my labor has not been "in vain in the Lord." I have known the hearts of Christians and sinners melted to tears by the power of the Gospel at two or three of the appointments. Two souls have been converted to God, and we hope to receive them into full connexion in a few weeks. They are a young husband and wife from Ontario. May God sustain and guide them, that they may be faithful witnesses for Christ in a place where such are very much needed. One aged backslider arose in fellowship-meeting, and, in accents broken with weeping, declared his determination to meet his family in heaven. Two or three others have been in a state of conviction for some time; but the enemy is strong and popular, and the work very slow, and you will not be surprised at this when the following facts are considered. The character of the people is well hinted at when we say that the generality of them are here, to a great extent, because they have set gold and popular freedom from moral and religious restraints far above more noble "goods" that are to be found in the homes left behind in the places from whence they have come. Therefore, to a large degree, "God is not in all their thoughts."

Including all that can possibly be reached in this valley (*i.e.*, whites), I think one hundred and ninety-one is the population. Nearly four-fifths of this number are by birth or membership adherents of other denominations and the congregations, for whatever denomination, range between five and thirty. Of course, Sabbath-breaking, drinking and card-playing are common, and dancing has the support and countenance of the members of other churches. Several of our members, though they will not dance themselves because of discipline, yet virtually uphold dancing. Then our membership is so small, that after account is taken of the number of young people whose characters are yet forming and looking for example, and of those heads of families whose religious principles are elastic, there are so few scattered through a valley sixty miles long, that revival meetings seem out of the question, and we are shut up to the regular services and a couple of prayer-meetings, with difficulty kept up, besides private working with individuals.

About two months ago, four young people connected with one of our families here, who had been converted at Owen Sound, Ontario, came among us,

and it is pleasant to see their faithfulness so far amidst so great temptations.

I trust the Church may continue to send a laborer to this field; one who is faithful in reproof and opposition against sin, and lives an earnest life consistent with his profession; for though such work is against the tide, yet I believe it is the Lord's work, and that He will yet visit this people and do a great work among them.

For some years back the valley has been decreasing in population and in prosperity, and the past summer, with its grasshopper scourge, and this winter, with its steady severity, are very hard on the people; hence finances are a pretty hard question. However, the parsonage has been furnished and improved to the value of about \$140, about half of this amount being received from some liberal Christians of Ontario. My salary will be a little short at the best; the missionary and other contributions, I trust, a little in advance of last year.

MANITOBA CONFERENCE.

Letter from REV. W. P. McHAFFIE, dated FISHER RIVER, Dec. 15th, 1889.

ACCORDING to instructions received from Bro. Rutledge, I visited our people at Beren's River on December 8th. Held service, and administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There is, I am pleased to state, a marked improvement in the general condition of affairs in that quarter since my last visit in March.

Since the arrival of Bro. West to take charge of the school, Bro. Butler has devoted himself with a will to the work of the Church. The work has prospered. The people have now all they want, *viz.*, a missionary and a teacher, and are contented. Our service was well attended, a goodly number partaking of the sacrament, and many gratifying evidences were shown of a deep spiritual work among the people.

Beren's River is, under our present arrangement of of the work on Lake Winnipeg, an important field; and, as is usually the case, in proportion to its importance so is its labor. About seventy miles north on the lake is Poplar River, where we have five families who have embraced the Gospel, and twenty-five families of Pagans. A government school is kept open among them during the year. But what is required is a mission school, with a teacher who will do mission work on Sunday. In my opinion, if we intend to make "disciples" of those Indians, it can only be done by placing a missionary on the reserve. The scattering visits which they are receiving now, on account of the distance and difficulty in travelling, will never do it.

Grand Rapids, one hundred miles up the Beren's River, comprises between twenty-five and thirty families, of which only thirteen persons are connected with the Church. This band Bro. Butler visits when circumstances will allow, which is not often. In summer the trip is made in canoes, and fifty-two times in one hundred miles the canoes have to be taken out of the river and carried over portages. When the missionary takes an active part in those proceedings, as he generally has to do, he is scarcely in the frame of