

see their "tipi" pitched many miles distant. This nomadic life is contrary to the wishes of the Chief Herchmer, who says, "Dacotah duza duza beuika istima ota. Sicedo. Satomna coocoos tatanka sunkaka waopi muzaska cooa Dacota tipi bedikta wanitcado," or, as our proverb expresses it, "A rolling stone gathers no moss."

Like the majority of mission fields in Manitoba, Oak Lake was formerly deprived of services of any kind during the winter months. When the student returns to resume his studies the people are left without any one to break to them the bread of life. Too often there is mingled with their farewells the complaint "With you goes all hope of hearing the sound of the Gospel for six months at least." This, no doubt, will soon be improved; as it has already in many cases. Among others Oak Lake has been blessed in this particular. When your missionary departed his place was supplied at once by a Catechist, Mr. Patterson, who, during the past months, has done excellent work on the field. Some idea may be formed of his hardships if you can imagine what it is to ride on horseback about twenty miles to meet an appointment when the thermometer is from forty to fifty degrees below zero.

Owing to the financial depression consequent on the boom of 1882, the failure of the crops of 1883, and the low prices of the past year, the fields in the North-West involved the Society in considerable expense; and this in spite of the liberality of the people. They subscribed handsomely as they were sure of a good crop; but the prices fell and much that was subscribed has never reached the treasurer. The consequence is that about \$500 debt was laid on the Society through the fields worked by its missionaries in that Province. Oak Lake field, however, notwithstanding the depression referred to, was self-sustaining. Among the many instances of kindness shown to your missionary, special mention should be made of the generosity of Messrs. Lang and Sutherland, who, in addition to liberal subscriptions to the funds of the Society, boarded your missionary free of charge.

In closing, a few considerations are offered to show why, in the consideration of many, Protestant missions should be sustained in the North-West in preference to any other part of the world:

1. The rapid increase of population in that part. This has never been equalled in the settlement of any other part of our Dominion.
2. The Churches that first gather the people under their pastoral care will permanently retain them and their families. The denominational spirit is not so marked as formerly. The spirit of union that is abroad leads people generally to feel less particular as to their denominational connections.
3. The claims of this country as a mission field will be of comparatively short duration; and in a few years with the united effort of old and new provinces, the work of evangelizing the heathen may then be carried on much more effectually.

If this work be not attended to at once, those who have gone out from our Christian homes and sanctuary privileges will soon relapse into carelessness and spiritual deadness, worse indeed than that of heathendom itself. It is gratifying to note that in response to the appeals of Rev. Mr. Robertson and others, the Church in the older provinces as well as one branch of the Church in Scotland, have contributed liberally towards the carrying on of this great work.

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