

North-western missions, and Rev. Prof. Bryce who had been appointed to go to Rock Lake district on mission business. We so join their diary, giving a picture of North-western missionary life.

Wednesday, 25th August, five o'clock. Equipage. Our horse Frank, a splendid fellow, ready for anything; a buckboard; contents: a tent, poles, a pail, a strong rope, an axe, 100 pounds of oats (district so new none to be got for the 100 miles beyond), tea, sugar, a few provisions, water-proofs; P. had a small valise, ten pounds, only baggage to Prince Albert; B. had left all—including sermons—but about two pounds at Emerson. Start for west made; six miles gone; expected to meet McRae, a missionary, but he had left two hours before, despairing of our coming, and gone home some seven miles north of trail. The trail spoken of is the road we are to follow. It is better known as the commission trail and runs along the United States boundary to Rocky Mountains; seven o'clock; heavy pouring rain; bad prospect for tomorrow; get to Steven's stopping place; horse put up; ready for supper; kitchen leaking piteously; no fire in front rooms; chilly; people turn out to be Methodists; uneventful evening; hold worship; sleep under rafters; dry enough, but rain pouring all night; fortunately roof keeps all out; P. dispirited.

Thursday, 26th, seven o'clock. Rain still continues; Frank fed; missionary had better attend to his own horse on these long journeys; did so; if rain continues day will be lost and P. cannot catch the Prince Albert stage, which he expects to meet by crossing the country and reaching a point where stage passes once in three weeks, on Thursday, 2nd September; important to catch it; eleven a.m.; clears up; all ready to start; a mile from Stevens' cross, Missouri trail; an old trader's road from the Missouri to the Assiniboine; also pass a small knoll about thirty feet high called "Calf Mountain;" heard of old lady who had, a few days before, on seeing the so-called mountain, exclaimed very naturally, "My sakes, we had four of them on our farm in Ontayrio and never said nothing about it." Pass some luckless immigrants who had got their heavy load stuck in a coulée (a wet ravine) the night before; sunshine had put them in better spirits again; pass through township 2-8; largely held by speculators, the curse of the North-West; thirteen miles from Stevens', reach Pembina River; what a magnificent view; the valley lying 200 feet below us; can see for miles up the river and the same distance down; a few houses in the valley look like beehives; down we go; a slow and careful process for Frank; P., after asking for the commodity for the past two days in vain, finds a Nova Scotian in this valley; Ontario is the overshadowing element everywhere in the North-West now; Nova Scotia is next best. Eleven o'clock; reach the little stream in the valley; an enterprising Lanark man has erected a bridge at his own expense and charges twenty-five cents for single horses. In our simplicity we asked if ministers were charged. We were sorry then we had asked, but to be even with the toll-man, we asked him what Church he belonged to? He replied to the Presbyterian. We told him we were Presbyterian ministers, and no doubt thoughts of being sessioned came before him. His bridge, however, saved us swimming our horse over the river. A number of settlers came to this point once a month to a service by our missionary, Mr. McRae. Not a settler's house west of the Pembina was found sixteen months ago. Half-past twelve p.m. halted for dinner, five miles from the Pembina; met mail carrier; sent message on post cards to our wives; house of sods where we had dinner; store in it too, fed Frank well and sat down to listen to young woman from near Belleville, who seemed to feel somewhat chagrined at our seeing her humble dwelling, referred to former greatness, had been brought up in a boarding school, her husband, however, formerly a merchant in poor health, had regained his health, and owned a splendid waving field of wheat and oats; wouldn't go back to Ontario. Seven p.m.; had uneventful afternoon; asked several settlers how they liked the country; all preferred it to Ontario; haven't seen a fence to-day; P. asked why grain is growing unprotected everywhere; reason, the herd law prevails in South Dufferin and Louise counties; seems to work well; immense saving to the country in not having to keep up fences; new countries are easy to try these experiments on; reached Crystal City; we were afraid we should miss it; it consists of four houses and a little log Methodist Church, half-finished; were reminded of seeing

three young Englishmen in the train between Emerson and Winnipeg, spring up when they heard the conductor announce in a stertorian voice *Dominion City*, and of their coming back from the car door quite crestfallen before the other passengers at being so excited over a hamlet of six houses; found the blacksmith to be a Presbyterian, but on account of the promoter of the place being a Methodist, the few families in the neighbourhood chiefly of that ilk; found afterwards a strong Presbyterian population had segregated in a district five or six miles to the north of the trail; did not at first find right stopping place to which we had been directed; enterprising boy—imitating example of importunate hotel runners in Toronto, and many another station—assured us all the houses were "stopping places," his own mother's log domicile, no doubt, included; nothing remarkable at Crystal City except that P. and B. occupied an attic room in company with seven other travellers variously distributed between three beds and another on the floor; but, with Sancho, we blamed the inventor of sleep, and soon forgot all about it. All the people, however, were of the best class of agricultural population, no border ruffians or anything of that kind, all had reverently taken part in the worship conducted before we retired.

Friday, 27th, six a.m. Showery looking, but we have fifty miles before us to-day and must be off betimes. Crystal City is bid farewell, and again we are reminded of another city story. We had been travelling towards a regular surveyed place named Alexandria. Meeting a young man, B. asked how far Alexandria was distant? He replied, a couple of miles. B. asked how many houses there were in that city. Were they more than one? "Yes," deliberately replied he, "there is another" (pointing) "at the other end." This other proved to be nearly half-mile apart from the first. But away for Turtle Mountain! To-day's journey is over an unsettled tract; knolls and pond-holes—as the settlers epigrammatically describe it—but the road is dry and good. Met two Irishmen; one who informed B. that he had heard him lecture on Manitoba in Montreal, and he was now testing the accuracy of his statements; pleasant thus to be brought to book. Passed Clearwater, a beautiful brook, on which a colony, largely Presbyterian, had shewn their characteristic shrewdness by settling. Good Scotch names here; service once in three weeks is held here by our Missionary, Farquharson. Reminded by the name of the stream of an old lady's reply to the charge that Presbyterianism is a rather cold, uninviting faith. "Yes," said she, "but it's clear." Twelve o'clock; made our first twenty miles to-day at Badger Creek; high banks; beautiful scenery; should think pretty light land; surprised to see coming from the solitary house on the trail in the valley an old Irishman, a good staunch Presbyterian; he is delighted to see us. B. had received a letter from his minister in Ireland highly commending him, and the old man, who had been lost sight of, shewed his delight by covering us with a good many more titles, theological and professional, than Knox and Montreal, with their new powers, will confer for some time; but Frank attended to, the old man and his two sons did their best to entertain us in their half-finished house. There are some eight settlers in the neighbourhood; but the air of freedom and happiness was most pleasing, albeit under the disadvantage of the wife and daughters being yet in Winnipeg. And, as we sat after our wilderness meal, partaken of with what is known as the "prairie appetite," the old man told his circumstances. "There was I in Ireland," said he, "with my large family, five strong sons and four daughters, on a farm of forty-four acres for which we paid £66 per annum. Oh the anxiety to get the money, pound by pound, scraped together. The last three years I was falling behind £50 a year, though I had paid the same landlord over £1,000 of rent; but I gave the children a good education. We decided to come to Manitoba. I have 320 acres of my own, so has each of these two sons—nearly a thousand acres between us, and it's ours. There is no landlord, nor agent. I am not a Fenian, nor a Home Ruler, but I don't like the rent system. One of my sons is learning the trade of a saddler in Winnipeg. You know, sir," turning to B., "one of my daughters is teaching a school; another has another situation. One daughter passed the Cambridge examinations for the School of Preceptors and is teaching in England; but by-and-by we'll all be together here; and we hope to have a Presbyterian church,

and with God's blessing there can be no happier family anywhere." Soon the sons were away with their oxen for a load of hay, for the sun was shining beautifully. We started on, happy ourselves from the cheery and hopeful picture presented to us with true Hibernian unction, but must leave our further travels for another time. NORTHWEST.

THE IMMUTABLE ONE.

BY REV. JAMES BALLANTYNE, COBOURG.

"I am the Lord, I change not."—Mal. iii. 6.

Of Israel's covenant God I sing,
Of Him who changeth never;
The mountains lose their crowns of snow,
And rivers in new channels flow;
But Jah's the same for ever.

High pyramids and marble fanes
With time will pass away,
Great cities crumble into dust,
Wide empires with oblivion crust;
But Jah remains for aye.

The vast creation like a bell
Of foam upon the tide,
Or like the anvil's spark in night,
Will vanish from our mortal sight;
But Jah doth still abide.

His Power is still the same to-day
As when, at first, He bound
In swaddling bands the ocean's force,
And bowled the planet on its course
Through ether's void profound.

And still His Wisdom is the same
As when He planned the spheres;
Sun, moon, and star, through space that wheel,
The glory of His name reveal
With rolling days and years.

His Justice, too, is still the same
As when, with arm of might,
The rebel angel and his crew
From heaven's battlements He threw
Down to hell's endless night.

And still His Truth the same abides
As when, in Eden's prime,
He promised that the woman's seed
Would crush the serpent and its breed,
And bless in every clime.

And still His Love's the same as when,
Before the mountains rose,
In councils of eternity,
Prospective of dark Calvary,
In Christ His folk He chose.

As all His attributes have been,
So shall they ever be;
Lo! In the New Jerusalem
His Love will brighten gold and gem,
His Truth shall be for basis sure,
His Power will keep the wall secure,
His Wisdom will appear in light,
And Justice in the robes of white—
Yea, His perfections all, in fine,
There, like the coloured bow will shine
In harmony of blessedness,
And in the beauty of holiness,
To all eternity.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER: OPINIONS OF TWO LEADING PROTESTANT CHURCHES.

MR. EDITOR, It may be interesting to compare the decision of the Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church with that of the Presbyterian General Assembly that met recently at Montreal. The former is in the following terms. "Whereas at the last session of the Parliament of Canada, a Bill was introduced by Mr. Gainard, legalizing the marriage of a deceased wife's sister, which was passed in that House by a large majority; and, whereas the Senate of Canada negatived the action of the Commons with the alleged motive of obtaining the judgment of ecclesiastical Bodies, and of the communities generally; therefore, this Conference deems it expedient to affirm the principle that there is not in its judgment any reason founded on holy Scripture or natural laws prohibiting such matrimonial alliances; and further, the Conference authorize the President and Secretary to prepare a petition to Parliament embodying the views here expressed, as containing, in our opinion, the sentiment of a large proportion of the people under our religious care." This resolution was carried unanimously.

The Presbyterian Assembly simply adopted an overture from the Presbytery of Toronto, at the same time appointing a Committee to watch legislation on the subject, and take measures to avert such legisla-