

MISSIONARY TOUR TO PARRY SOUND AND MUSKOKA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE RECORD :

DEAR SIR,—As the Muskoka District is a special field of missionary labor, it may be interesting to the readers of the RECORD to learn some particulars from an eye-witness. Having been requested by the Presbytery, some time ago, to visit this region, I left Collingwood on the 3rd Sept., by the steamer Wau-buno. The route to Parry Sound is noted for its beautiful and varied scenery. Along the north shore it is one vast archipelago. The number of islands in that part of the Georgian Bay is variously estimated at from thirty-five to fifty thousand, and one gentleman is said to have set foot on twenty-seven thousand. Parry Sound is a small village situate on an inlet of the Bay, and has a very safe and commodious harbor. It has a population of nearly 200, representing denominationally, the Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians. There is a neat little church here belonging to the Wesleyans, and also a commodious school-house, in which service is held by other denominations. Here I received a hearty welcome from Dr. Stephen and our missionary, Mr. Caswell. The Presbyterian element in this place is not strong, claiming only about twelve families; but they seem earnest, united, and ready to sustain the cause to the utmost of their ability. By invitation of Mr. Beattie, M.P., I preached in the church on Sabbath morning. The audience numbered about seventy, and they were, apparently, deeply interested. The Rev. M. Gemley, of U. C. B. Society, with whom I had some pleasant intercourse, who was with us in the morning, preached in the evening.

In the afternoon I visited a station 8 miles distant, on the Parry Sound road. The country in this direction is very wild and rugged, interspersed with numerous very fine lakes, and although the soil seems good, it is on the whole rather rocky. The service was held in a private house, with an attendance of about 30. There are eight Presbyterian families, and a Sabbath school has been organised, and is now being conducted in a private house, by Mr. Matheson, a member of our Church. Could some means be employed to furnish them with a library, it would add greatly to the interest of the work. We returned to Parry Sound in the evening.

On Monday I set out for Lake Rosseau. After a drive of seventeen miles, I crossed Turtle Lake in a birch canoe, a most beautiful sheet of water, about three miles long and two wide, surrounded by the grand old woods. The sun shone in all his splendor, and the forests above, vividly reflected in the clear water, rendered the scene really enchanting.

On the other side I met Mr. Ross, a successful pioneer, and a warm friend of Presbyterianism, who, with his stalwart sons, has made quite an opening in the forest, and is, this year, reaping a rich return in a very abundant harvest.

Here I was hospitably entertained, and the neighbours being all met by appointment, I preached to about 30. There are seven or eight families in this settlement devoted to the interests of our Church.

Re-crossing the Lake, and driving five miles further, I reached Rosseau. Here I preached at 8 p.m. to a small company in a private house. This promises to be an important station, there being in the neighbourhood fifteen or sixteen Presbyterian families. At this place, 22 miles from Parry Sound, there are four stores, and several tradesmen of different crafts, and the foundation of a town is fairly laid; and what is more wonderful, they have a daily mail.