

Cape Breton. After the disruption, however, every minister of the Kirk body united with the Free Church except one. Since that time the Free Church ministered to the Spiritual wants of the people until the union of 1860 was effected, forming the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces. The Presbyterian church of Nova Scotia had but one solitary congregation on the Island, viz.: Mabou, whose history we will now endeavor to trace. Though its history as a settled congregation dates back 65 years it is not now a self-sustaining charge. Adverse influences surround it, and it does not comprise a large number of families. Its growth has not been rapid.

The village of Mabou is pleasantly situated at the mouth of the river of the same name. Its appellation is of Indian origin, and the population is largely Roman Catholic. The Protestants comprised a few scattering families of Presbyterians who at an early date received the services of a minister. Three years after Dr. McGregor's visit to Cape Breton the

#### REV. WILLIAM MILLER

was settled at Mabou and Port Hood. Mr. Miller was a native of Ayrshire, Scotland, where he received his early education. He studied theology under the late Dr. Lawson, of Selkirk. Being moved by the urgent pleas sent to Scotland by the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia for more laborers he resolved to come out to this country. In the autumn of 1821 he was ordained at the West River, Pictou, and at once entered upon his work as the first minister settled over the Mabou congregation. His labors were exceedingly arduous and his trials numerous. The comparatively smooth roads of to-day were then unknown. Rivers were not bridged, carriages could not be used. The traveller must wend his way through the trackless forests. With a great deal of self-denial he entered upon and continued his work for forty long years. To the Master alone is now known the ceaseless toil, the heavy burdens, and great discouragements he endured in His service. Little is known of this father of the church. He labored so long in an isolated sphere, was of so humble and unassuming a nature, and so seldom permitted to attend church courts, that few knew or heard anything of him. He also lived in a time when there was no augmentation scheme to assist weak

congregations. No large reductions or generous offers were then made to clergymen when purchasing books. Hence, all through life he struggled with poverty, had a scant library, and never wrote a sermon. His one book was the Bible, and the experience of the Psalmist was his experience, "Oh, how love I thy law it is my meditation all the day."

Mr. Miller's last illness was of short duration. On Sabbath the 7th November, 1861 he set out from home to travel a distance of five miles to preach to his people the unsearchable riches of Christ. It was a most unfavorable day to travel, and friends urged him to remain at home. Their persuasions and entreaties however were of no avail. For 75 long years he had proved faithful, and his desire was to continue faithful to the end. It may be, he said, the last and only opportunity I shall ever enjoy on earth of proclaiming the old, old story. Go he did. A pelting rain storm would not keep him back. On that Sabbath he preached his last sermon and uttered the solemn appeal to his hearers, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear." After the sermon was over, though the storm had increased in fury he returned home. He at once took to his bed and never rose from it. On Tuesday the 16th November, 1861 he passed away to his rest and reward. Though living some distance from Mabou, and surrounded by Roman Catholic neighbors, yet during his whole illness they showed him every mark of kindness, and sympathy. Few memorials have been gathered of this pioneer of the church, yet he left the impress of his work on the extensive sphere which he occupied. The existence of thriving Protestant settlements in the midst of dense Romanism is owing partly to his arduous and earnest labors.

For some years prior to his death Mr. Miller demitted the charge of the congregation. He always continued however to preach as opportunity was afforded him or when no supply was granted by the Pictou Presbytery. In due time another laborer was settled over the field.

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#### THE REV. JAMES MC LEAN.

immediately after his licensure on the 1st Tuesday of January, 1854, was sent to supply the congregation. After his arrival in Cape Breton he spent two Sabbaths in