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THE WESTERN MISSIONARY

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AN ARM OF HOME MISSIONS.

Reader! Have you ever seen a prairie? In summer the long, waving grass suggests the constant motion of the sea; in winter the white mantle of snow gleaming in the sunshine is almost too dazzling for the eye. Mile after mile—mile after mile—and not a tree meets the view. If ever you realize the meaning of the word *alone*, it is in the vast expanse of an uninhabited prairie. Whether facing the wintry blasts of December or the sudden thunderstorm of July, your thought is that you are shelterless. The settler's plough it is true is changing all this, and the golden wheat fields supply the wherewith for rapid progress. In the meantime the settler is poor. He has risked all on his great westward journey. He awaits the return of his venture. So the humble church building must be provided for him, or at least help be given him to erect it. Then as to the missionary. As he goes forth to follow the settlers he is not allowed to homestead. The Home Mission Committee will only permit him to be a spiritual sower. The missionary is often like his early prototypes, "without purse" and almost without scrip. He is like his greater example without "a place to lay his head." So the church says he must have a church building for his work, and a roof to shelter him. He has as good a right "to lead about a sister—a wife," as any one else. So he must have a house. Hence the reasonableness of the church and Manse Fund. It has done a noble work for the church in the west in the last decade. We were rejoiced to record lately a donation of £300 from an unknown giver in Scotland. Perhaps there are many more such donations to follow from the fatherland. Work for this fund has been going on lately in our own Synod. Victoria, B. C. subscribed \$3,000, Hon. John Robson, Premier, heading the list with \$1,000. Well done! New Westminster followed with \$2,300, with more promised. Calgary subscribed \$1165, Regina \$500, and Prospect \$340 with more to follow. Dr. Robertson, on whom the chief burden of the canvass falls, speaks appreciatively of the interest and liberality of our people, especially in British Columbia.

"The branch that Thou prunest, though feeble and dried,
May languish, but never decays." John XV., 2-5.

...TED CHURCH

A GREAT GRIST FROM COLUMBIA.

The law closing drinking places in British Columbia from 11 o'clock Saturday night till 1 o'clock Monday morning came into force with the new year, and there is a disposition to observe its provisions. Test cases were brought before the courts to ascertain the scope of the statute, and although criticising adversely the drafting and phraseology of the Act, the judges ruled in favor of the evident intention of the Legislature. Only those who have spent a sabbath after pay day in mining districts in British Columbia can appreciate the boon such a law will confer.

VANCOUVER ISLAND.

Rev. W. Staples Smith left Victoria in November with lumber for a church at Alberni, and already a good beginning is being made in giving visibility to Presbyterianism. Saw and paper mills are in course of erection and these with farming and mining will make Alberni a place of some importance.

Rev. Alex. Young has done good work at Wellington and Northfield. A manse has been erected at Wellington, to be followed by a church in spring, while a church has already been erected at Northfield. The people are most hearty. Wellington will form a congregation by itself in the near future, and Northfield can then be attached to a mission in East Nanaimo.

The congregation of Nanaimo is taking steps to build a \$25,000 church next season. Since Rev. D. A. MacRae arrived there has been a marked growth.

The people of West Victoria have built a neat and commodious church and the prospects of the congregations are brightening.

Rev. Dr. J. K. Smith, who last summer was supplying Dr. Fraser's Church in London, is now ministering to Pandora Street Church, Victoria, with much acceptance.

St. Andrews, Victoria, is now a strong congregation and there is some talk of getting a city missionary.

THE LOWER FRASER.

Mr. J. W. McMillan was appointed to Mt. Pleasant (a suburb of Vancouver) in December, and already over 60 families are connected with the mission. The sabbath attendance crowds the Temperance Hall, which has a seating capacity of 150, and steps have been taken to build a church without delay. As the collections already amount to upwards of \$20 per sabbath, it is likely that the mission will soon be self sustaining.

The First Presbyterian Congregation of Vancouver will build a new church in spring, and Zion Church is moving in the same direction.

The Westminster Mission, which was started only a year ago, has so developed that one of the stations has called Mr. Mills with a salary of \$1,200, and a free manse. Sapperton, the other station,

has agreed to pay \$600 per annum for the support of its pastor. Each of these stations build a church last year at a cost of \$5,000. Mr. Mills' charge will build a manse in the spring.

Rev. W. R. Ross has been appointed to Sapperton, and Rev. Mr. Muir placed in the charge of Chilliwack. Chilliwack was lately placed on the lists of Augmented Congregations and wishes to call a pastor. The congregations will soon be self sustaining.

Cloverdale built a church and manse last summer and faithful work is being done by Mr. McElmon.

Rosedale is advancing under Mr. Mackay. A church is in course of erection at Island.

INLAND COLUMBIA.

The British Columbia government has generously granted a site for a church at Nelson and the building is going up. Mr. Rogers is pushing his work vigorously. Capt. McMorris writes that there is room in Kootenay Lake district for three more missionaries and asks that they may be appointed in spring.

Quite a commodious church has been built at Vernon, and the prospects there are good. The railway built through the Okanagan valley will change the whole aspect of our work.

The Earl of Aberdeen is planting a colony of Scotchmen on the estate recently purchased by him near Vernon.

Kamloops, under Rev. A. Lee, has done well in the past year, though the town is not growing much.

MOOSEJAW NEWS.

Rev. W. L. Clay's congregation held its annual meeting on Feb. 1st. An addition of 22 members to the communion roll was reported, with three disjunctions and one death. The receipts were for the year \$1,872.29 and expenditure \$1,819.70, a part of which was for the new manse. For the schemes of the church \$121 was raised; and hopeful reports were given in by Sabbath School, Ladies Aid Society, and Y. P. S. C. E. Well done Moosejaw!

A CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SUGGESTION.

An ardent endeavorer, Mr. Wm. Laird of Winnipeg, writes to us about the need for laborers to meet the great lack in winter in our mission stations. We are glad that so much interest is being shown in this subject. Mr. Laird says: "The students should be instructed to familiarize themselves with the methods of work of this Society and the secret of its power." We approve of this. In places "where there is necessary material" these societies could be organized, and when the student is gone there might be left a means of keeping up service in the long and lonely winter. By all means let us utilize the fervor and self-sacrifice of youth to the fullest. It does seem strange that elders and pious people should not have sufficient resource to keep up a service without a minister. Let us enlist the young blood and the next generation will be different.

PRENTISSIANA.

How beautiful and at the same time sensible are many of the words of Elizabeth Payson Prentiss:

"I believe that God arranges our various burdens and fits them to our backs, and that He sets off a loss against a gain, so that while some seem more favored than others, the mere aspect deceives."

"I can't help loving what is Christlike in people, whether I like their natural character or not."

"I am not skilled in argument, but my heart sides with God in everything, and my conception of His character is such a beautiful one that I feel he cannot err."

"It does not follow that a season of severe conflict is a sign of estrangement from God."

One morning she came to the breakfast table with her face all lighted up. "I've got a name for my book," she exclaimed, "it came to me while I was lying awake last night. You know Wordsworth's *Stepping Westward*? I am going to call it *Stepping Heavenward*—don't you like it?"

"I have been in print ever since I was sixteen years old, and admiration is an old story: I care very little for it: but I do crave and value sympathy with those who love Christ."

"I am not sure that it is best for us, once safe and secure on the Rock of Ages, to ask ourselves too closely what this and that experience may signify."

APPEAL TO STUDENTS.

We notice that Dr. Bryce in one of the Church papers says:—"From Muskoka to the Pacific Ocean we need for next winter's work fifty laborers. Probably Manitoba College will supply nearly one half of that number. Surely twenty five more from our eastern colleges will be willing to except engagement for a year, beginning next April, to take after that the Summer Session, and if they choose, then return to their own colleges without losing any time. Do I appeal in vain to our brave young men? What a magnificent showing for God and truth there will be if fifty of the flower of our theological students throw all their zeal into our western mission work next winter."

OURSELVES.

Twelve hundred copies of the WESTERN MISSIONARY are every month distributed free. They go to ministers and leaders in our church, and to scores of persons in England, Scotland, Ireland, United States, and even India and China. We have abundant evidence of good results to our mission work in our seventeen month's existence. Our Business Manager will gladly receive any sums towards meeting this free distribution.

MISSIONS TO THE INDIANS.

NEWS FROM THE CROWSTAND.

Miss Florence McLean writing from the Crowstand on the 3rd Feb. mentions incidentally the following interesting items:—Our school is full at present and all well with the exception of one poor little fellow who is very low. We think that with great care he might possibly recover.

The weather has been so fine lately that the children are able to be out a great deal.

I was very much amused the other day: looking from the door I saw a group of the smaller ones in a corner seemingly much excited. On going over to see what it was I found them all in a circle and in the centre was what they called a Christmas tree. It was a tree with all the old rags and tin pans and pieces of all sorts of trash and one rag doll, which Santa Claus kindly gave me when I arrived on the scene.

Miss May Armstrong writing on the same day adds the following news:—We have forty-seven Indian children in the school now. My room is filled completely. Mattie has four seats vacant, but they need not be long so because there are a good number of little ones out on the reserves who can be got in. The children are quite bright and in good condition for learning quickly. They are in pretty good health, are comfortably seated and are interested in their work. Their eagerness should be a great satisfaction to me.

THEY THANK GOD AND GO FORWARD.

Mr George Wellbourne writes from the Stoney Plain on the 11th of Jan.:—After our two and a half months' experience we feel encouraged, if for no other reason, because we have formed an attachment for the pupils which makes our work among them considerably easier.

It is always a source of satisfaction to us that our relations with the older Indians is of so cordial a nature. The one whom I mentioned as causing so much unpleasantness at first is now all that could be desired.

An additional interest has been lent to our Sunday meetings by Lazarus consenting to interpret for me, so that now we are able to talk to them about the passage which we read.

We are also much pleased on our own account as well as on that of the Indians, that the Rev. D. G. McQueen has been able to so arrange his work as to be with us one Sunday each month.

The pupils are all in good health, and are learning English faster than we are learning Cree, although we neglect no opportunity to do so.

CHEERING WORDS.

Mr. J. Ansdell Macrae, Inspector of Protestant Indian Schools, has done not a little since his appointment to increase the efficiency of the schools under his care, and the committee and teachers take pleasure in acknowledging their indebtedness to him for many acts of kindly courtesy and for the consideration with which he discharges the often delicate duties of his office. Mr. Macrae's communications are not all of the tenor of the extracts given below, which is from a personal letter to the editor, but we have not received—indeed we have not asked—to publish the others: "Your teachers are out of competition for the bonuses given to *day school* teachers, and therefore cannot know how they stand in the line of educationalists. But the fact is, you have taken the lead in getting high class teachers and the result is showing very plainly. Miss Cameron has done more good in one year at Riding Mt. than other teachers had done in the same school in ten years. Morrison at Round Lake is most competent. The Misses Armstrong are capital in the school room, and Skene is a good teacher. I congratulate you on your selections for the school room, and shall mention Miss Cameron to the Dept. as the best day school teacher in the Northwest Superintendency."

VANCOUVER ISLAND.

The Rev. J. A. McDonald, of Alberni, B. C., writes on Jan. 25th I have my sister Minnie and my friend Alex. McKee with me now. Both will help in the work indirectly by giving me all my time for study of the language and dealing with the Indians. We are waiting patiently to hear if anything has been done or will be done about starting a school for the Indians and asking for the Government grant. We have two boys with us at present and could get others: many of the children have gone with their parents to the Sound for sealing and will return next month. My sister thinks of opening a day school next month to see how the children will attend. We went down to the Opi-ches-habt village in fifteen minutes yesterday. It was like a day in spring, so mild and bright. We had twelve in attendance at the Sunday School and they have their lesson well learned both in English and Indian. The pronunciation is more difficult than Gaelic but I am getting my tongue around it and my ear accustomed to the sound. We received five quarters of S. S. lesson picture rolls from St. Andrew's Church, Victoria, as well as Christmas cards from friends in the east and illustrated S. S. papers, cards &c. from the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Scouler, of New Westminster, all of which are very useful, especially the lesson rolls.

The Birtle school has an attendance of thirty—as many as it can accommodate.

AN INDIAN BUILDING COMMITTEE.

When a resident missionary was first established at the Crowstand, a building was erected to serve as church and school house. It was a very modest affair, built of poplar logs, plastered with mud, roofed with thatch and lit by three small windows. In this house of God the gospel was preached for nearly ten years and here Messrs. Cuthbert McKay, D. H. McVicar and John Black gave faithful service as teachers. When the first industrial school building was erected in 1889 the old house seemed to recognize that its glory had departed and it looked more dilapidated than ever, and finally in the spring of 1890 it disappeared altogether in a prairie fire. The new school room afforded a meeting place so much more comfortable than anything the old building had been able to offer that the need for the erection of a new church was not acutely felt for some time. The matter was frequently talked of however and now action has been taken, and the Rev. G. A. Laird is leading on his people to arise and build. Following is the account of a meeting held on the 2nd of February:—

At the time appointed the Chief Joseph Côté and headmen Wa-pe-cake-cake (White Hawk) and Charles Kesic with Wm. Favel as interpreter met to confer with the missionary.

The meeting was opened with prayer. The missionary stated the object for which it was called, namely, to talk about the desirability of building a house for the worship of God. He mentioned also the motive which the people should have, not personal gain but a desire to advance the cause of God, and the spirit that should animate all in proceeding with this work and then called on those present to express their views.

The Chief spoke somewhat as follows:—"My mind at first was not to go on with the church at present, but I think differently now. I did not try to persuade the headmen to think as I did, I allowed them to decide for themselves. I told them the missionary was talking about a church, but I did not encourage them to think as I did. I have altered my mind and I want everybody to be satisfied in his own mind. I never neglect those who have a right to be consulted in such a matter as this. I am now ready to go on."

Wa-pe-cake-cake said "I was very glad when I heard the minister speak about a church, and to hear my chief talk about the church as he has now done. I have been in favor of a church for a long time. I hope everything will go on in the right way."

Charles Kesic agreed with his chief, thought just as he did, and wanted to know how things were to go on.

The missionary explained that as the Indians were poor he expected to pay them for the work performed in the building.

The site was then agreed on, the chief and headmen promising to give four acres of ground to the church to be used as church site and burying ground.

The size of the church agreed upon was 25ft.x30, to be built of spruce logs hewn to 7 inches, with six windows, a belfry a porch over the door and a brick flue. It was agreed that it should be neatly finished within and without. After discussing the letting of a contract for the logs and several other minor matters the meeting closed.

Mr. Laird adds that the church will be large enough to accommodate all the people of the reserve: it is to cost about \$250 of which it is expected \$100 will be raised within the bounds of the mission.

MR. LAIRD'S RESIGNATION.

Since the above was in type a letter dated February 6th has been received from the Rev. G. A. Laird in which he resigns his post as missionary to the Indians at the Crowstand. For some time Mr. and Mrs. Laird have felt that the education of their growing family of boys demanded either that they should be sent away from home to complete their education away from the heathen influences of an Indian community, or that, giving up this work, the whole family should find some new sphere of service. Other considerations have led to the adoption of the latter alternative and Mr. Laird, after speaking of what he has tried to accomplish, goes on to say: "I willingly acknowledge that my administration of the school has come very far short of what I could desire, and as intimated to the Committee some time ago my wish was to be relieved. I therefore place my resignation in your hands to take effect at the end of the present quarter. In addition to family considerations already referred to in former letters, I take this step on the ground that the health of both Mrs. Laird and myself is somewhat impaired. After a brief period of rest and change I hope to be able to undertake mission work in any place which God in his providence may open." Mr. Laird has been a faithful and laborious missionary, and a great change has come over the Crowstand reserve since he went there. Not only have there been signs of progress among the adult Indians, such as that indicated in the paragraph above, but the school which on his arrival was but a small day-school has grown to be the largest industrial school under the control of the Church.

READY RESPONSES.

In response to the suggestion last month that it would be appropriate to acknowledge the services of John Passage, the self-supporting Indian missionary on Lake Manitoba, the editor has been enabled to send him a gift of \$25. The need of a bell at the Stoney Plain was mentioned the month before and as a result, three (!) bells have been offered. Many thanks to our friends.