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THE WESTERN MISSIONARY

Published under the auspices of the Synod, in the interests of Presbyterian Home and Indian Missions.

Vol. I.

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER, 1890.

No. 1.

A HOME MISSION RALLY.

At its meeting on Sept. 23rd in Knox Church, Winnipeg, the Synodical Home Mission Committee agreed as follows:—

That the Synodical Home Mission Committee expresses its opinion that, while certain districts of country may have suffered from hail or drought during the season, yet the abundant harvest vouchsafed by a kind Providence to almost all parts of the North-west ought to lead mission stations and augmented congregations generally to so increase the amounts raised for the support of ordinances that the claims of the ensuing half year may be lessened, and that the grants needed for the year beginning first of April next may be reduced;

That self-sustaining congregations should, during the present year, put forth a greater effort than ever to raise liberal sums as contributions to the Home Mission Fund;

That Presbyteries should organize means of stirring up all the congregations and mission stations by holding missionary meetings or by a general exchange of pulpits for this purpose;

That Presbyteries be urged to encourage the formation of home mission societies, or general missionary societies, giving large prominence to home mission work, in the congregations and mission stations; and

That in accordance with the instructions of Synod a monthly missionary leaflet be undertaken.

"THE WESTERN MISSIONARY."

This leaflet aims simply at spreading news of our missions. Being authorized by the Synod it will only admit to its columns what may be for edification. Lively and useful incidents of missionary life in the wide district from Lake Superior to the Pacific Ocean will always be welcomed by its editors; short and pithy accounts of mission work from the meetings of Presbyteries will be gladly received; pictures of the religious life—in our territory so varied and remarkable—will have a place; but much is expected from members of Synod and others sending in accounts of their personal experiences, both of a trying and joyful kind, for publication. While hardly hoping entirely "to exorcise the evil genius of dullness," the editors expect the leaflet to contain the latest mission news, and to be issued promptly at the time promised.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Good news comes to us of the mission work being done in our Pacific Province. The last five years has seen marvellous progress both in consolidation and advance on the Pacific slope. The Mother Church of Scotland has for years been willing that the brood she had nurtured should find a resting place within the Canadian Church. St. Andrew's Church, Victoria, and in this past year Nanaimo, along with a number of mission stations, are now vigorous congregations of our body, while Vancouver City, with its marvellous growth, has already two of our Presbyterian congregations—and another soon, we trust, to be with us. Thus there is added strength on the mainland to our old "pillar of the truth," New Westminster, and the rising congregations along Fraser River. But much land yet remains to be possessed. Scattered families of white people have pushed their way up the sheltered valleys, and while largely secularized, have in their better moments longings for the sound of the "church-going bell." Superintendent Robertson is now expected to explore the recesses of Columbia, and has just returned from a tour of observation. Let us assist the Columbians, and encourage them to lengthen their cords and strengthen their stakes. Thousands of heathen Indians and hordes of neglected Chinese appeal to us by their ignorance and superstition. Can there be a nobler motto than "Columbia for Christ?"

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE.

In the midst of the Mennonite Reserve, south of Winnipeg, stands the little town of Gretna. As the traveller over the Great Northern Railway enters Manitoba from the south, facing him stands the beautiful Presbyterian church—the only church in the place. The congregation in Gretna is made up of ten different sects, who worship together under the shadow of the Presbyterian vine. There are Jews, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, German Baptists, Free Baptists, Methodist Episcopalians, Mennonites, Canada Methodists, and Presbyterians—almost as promiscuous as the Pentecostal gathering. To Mr. A. C. Manson belongs the honor of inducing this mixed community last year to raise upwards of \$1100 to pay for their church, besides their share of the missionary's salary.

A PLUCKY MISSIONARY.

A student of Manitoba College came to the convener of the Winnipeg Presbytery and offered to undertake the Beausejour mission, where not a service had been held, at his own risk. Four stations have been opened, the missionary reports thirty-seven Presbyterian families in the district, and some twenty-four members. The Presbyterian church alone supplies services here, and will continue them regularly this winter.

OUR SALTCOATS CROFTERS.

At the terminus of the Manitoba & Northwestern Railway are settled forty or fifty families of Crofters, who last year came from the Hebridean islands of Lewis, Harris, and Uist. They were sent out by the Imperial Emigration Society, and are assisted by from £120 to £160 per family. Last year they broke up land and tried a small crop, but from drought it failed; this year they have an average of nearly ten acres a family of wheat and have harvested a good return. On the road to their destination a Gaelic speaking missionary was sent by us to join their train, and on the first Sabbath after arrival, under the open Northwestern sky, they heard the Gospel preached in their own tongue. Their present missionary, Mr. McMillan, is a devoted Nova Scotian Highlander, of whom they are very fond. Two months ago two school districts, "Eden," and "Tupper," were laid out, and in the former, Colin McLeay, a Lewis man, and first-class teacher, has begun work, while in the latter Mr. McMillan will undertake teaching in the spring. This has been done through our agency, though the Northwest Council pays three-fourths of the salary, and gives \$100 to each school to assist in building. These Crofters are now contented, and would not return to the "land of the Gael."

FIRST ICELANDIC PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER.

On the twenty-eighth of September the Presbytery of Winnipeg met in the "Martin Luther Icelandic Church," in Winnipeg, to ordain Jonas Johannsen, an Icelandic student of our College. The building, which contains about 400 people, was crowded to excess with spectators, chiefly Icelanders. Rev. Dr. Duval, of Knox Church, presided and made a most impressive address to the young minister. Rev. C. D. McDonald, the new pastor of Kildonan, gave a thoughtful sermon on the benefits of Christian education, and Rev. Dr. Bryce addressed the people, complimenting them on their progress in English, and urging them to rally round their minister both in spiritual and temporal things. The meeting marks an era in Icelandic evangelization.

BREVITIES.

A new church at Oaklands, near Portage la Prairie, will be opened on the 19th inst., and another at Prospect on the 26th.

Fourteen families, with eighteen signatures, have subscribed \$655 for a new church at Marquette.

Down at Port Caldwell, Lake Superior, a little church for the fishermen is going up.

Medicine Hat congregation has bought a beautiful new manse for its estimable new pastor.

GOLDEN GRAINS.

The bread cast upon the waters twenty years ago when the Home Mission Committee began work in Manitoba, has returned in less than the many days.

How gladly we see the band of earnest students from Manitoba College, who went forth in the springtime with doubt and hesitancy, coming again in the autumn and bringing their sheaves with them. Some with ten, some with twenty, and one nearly thirty precious souls added to the Lord!

Manitoba wheat fields have suffered because the laborers have been so scarce and costly, and precious grain has thus been lost. How we appreciate Luke x. 2, as the Lord speaks of the heavenly harvest!

The West this year rejoices in the finest of the wheat; surely we shall with grateful hearts pay our vows unto the Lord NOW.

READ MALACHI III. 10, AND CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

1. *Home Missions.*—This means largely carrying the Gospel to our settlers. The eastern church sends to us \$25,000 for this purpose. Shall we not largely help this fund?

2. *Manitoba College.*—This is a great Educational and Home Mission agency. During the late holidays, a band of forty young men from the College were engaged in preaching in the scattered settlements. Manitoba College is the hope of our Church for the Northwest.

3. *Augmentation of Small Stipends.*—To raise the salaries of ministers in weak charges is praiseworthy. In the last eight years this fund has probably done more to advance the Church by supplying struggling charges with ministers than any other agency.

4. *Foreign Missions.*—This not only includes Missions to China and India, but to our Northwest Indians. The fact that we receive from this fund \$20,000 this year for our Indians should make it a most popular object.

PERSONAL.

The genial Earl and Countess of Aberdeen stopped over Sabbath (Oct. 5th) in Winnipeg, and will return from Vancouver, accompanied by Professor Henry Drummond about the 21st.

The minister of Edmonton, D. G. McQueen, B. A., lately went east, and returned with a helpmeet to the banks of the Saskatchewan. We wish them happiness.

Rev. A. Macfarlane, one of our most faithful missionaries, has been appointed to Plympton and Millbrook for the winter.

Mr. Arthur Bowinan, M. A., of Manitoba College, is to be licensed and ordained by the Brandon Presbytery and put in charge of Douglas congregation.

OUR INDIAN MISSIONS.

MISSIONS TO THE INDIANS.

MISTAWASIS.

The Rev. John McKay, of the Mistawasis Mission, has taken advantage of the opening of the railway to Prince Albert to pay a visit to Winnipeg with his daughter, Miss C. B. McKay. Since Mr. McKay's written reports of his work are usually very brief, confined indeed mainly to categorical answers to the questions annually asked, advantage has been taken of the opportunity to secure, by a personal interview, a fuller account of the Mission under his charge than has recently been given. It is twenty-four years since Mr. McKay entered on the work of our Prince Albert Mission, as interpreter for the Rev. James Nisbet, but it is only twelve years ago since, principally through the influence the Rev. Dr. Black, of Kildonan, he was ordained to the ministry. He was thus among the first of the little band of native preachers who gave themselves to the work of evangelizing their countrymen, and whose bead-roll contains the name of George Flett, Solomon Tunkansuiciye, Cuthbert McKay and Donald H. McVicar. When the attractions of the Prince Albert Mission became known white men crowded in, and the Indians retired to a reserve on the Snake Plains, 75 miles distant. Mr. McKay followed them, and has been their missionary ever since. The modest building which served as a church at first, became in course of time too small, and two years ago a larger and more comfortable church was erected, which Mr. McKay and occasional visitors tell us, is well filled at morning and afternoon services on the Sabbath Day, and which numbers on its communion roll fifty-six members, all of whom spent their early years—many of them till adult age—in heathenism. Abundant evidence as this is of success, it represents but a part of the missionary's work. Indians from the far north, on their way to Prince Albert, often spend a few days at the halting place in the wilderness, which the reserve offers, and not a few of them hear for the first time the Word of Life from Mr. McKay's lips.

The day school has been under the patient and sympathetic care of Miss McKay ever since the Mission was established, nine years ago. For the last quarter it has had an average attendance of twenty, which, considering the scattered location and nomadic habits of the Indians, may be regarded as very good, and especially when it is remembered that this is for the quarter ending with September, the quarter, that is, when the Saskatchewan woods and prairies abound in all kinds of berries, and when going to school is quite intolerable even to a boy who has not the Indian's love of thicket and river bank. *La Grippe* was epidemic on the reserve last winter, and interfered seriously with the work of the school, but Miss McKay, not to be beaten when the price to be paid for victory was merely her own ease, took no holiday this summer, and

even now while she, after an absence of nine years, is visiting relatives in Winnipeg, the school is carried on by a volunteer, in the person of her younger brother Thomas. A number of the more advanced children have been removed to take advantage of the better facilities offered by the Government Industrial School in Battleford. The highest class now in the school reads in the Third Book, and great pains are taken by Miss McKay, who is of course a fluent mistress of the Cree tongue, to make sure that they understand what they read, and that the danger of Indian schools—parrot-like recitation—is avoided. Attention is given to industrial training; most of the girls knit well, and some of them bake good bread. An evil complained of by Miss McKay, and indeed by many other teachers, is that the children leave school so young. She tells of one girl who was married at the age of sixteen, and who continued for about a year to attend the school. She now writes her husband's letters for him, and is able to render an account in a business like way.

Altogether it is evident that Christianity and civilization are going hand in hand in this little community, and that such a missionary and such a mission teacher, especially when they have the backing of a Christian chief, like Mistawasis, must wield a potent influence in the way of uplifting the people.

PRINCE ALBERT.

When Miss Baker went to Prince Albert eleven years ago, she went to take charge of the Presbyterian Mission School, which had been established for the benefit of the Cree Indians. The school was already at that time in a state of transition, and has since developed into the principal public school of a flourishing town. Under greatly altered circumstances Miss Baker still remained true to her ideal work and, when an opportunity offered this summer, she opened a little school among a band of Sioux, on the north side of the river opposite the town. Major Perry, of the Mounted Police, was so kind as to lend a large tent in which to hold the school, and to send a team daily to drive her to the crossing of the river. The townspeople subscribed some \$300 towards the establishment of a school. Everything was favorable except the Indians themselves. They did not want a school. They are United States Indians and have no reserve, but hover round town; indeed the adults among them are fugitives from justice, who crossed to Canada immediately after the Minnesota massacre in 1862. But Miss Baker has gradually won them over—the head man last of all—and there is a prospect that the school will be permanent.

The Revs. Dr. Warden and Mr. Macdonnell made enquiries when on their recent visit to Prince Albert, and the result is that the Synod's Foreign Mission Committee has undertaken the erection of a school building and the support of a teacher. It is hoped that Miss Baker will remain to guarantee the success of a school which owes its existence to her persevering enthusiasm.

AN INDIAN FOR THE INDIANS.

Up about the northern end of Lake Manitoba are several small reserves of Saulteaux Indians who are nominally under the care of the Roman Catholic Church, but who have never had a resident missionary, and indeed were not even occasionally visited by a Roman Catholic priest, so that they were left in practical heathenism. This condition of things appealed to the heart of John Passage, a Christian Indian, who lives on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg, and he makes regular Sabbath visits to one of these reserves, tramping across country by a bridle path a distance of some 25 miles for the purpose. A gentleman of Winnipeg whose business calls him to pay occasional visits to these out of the way places, attended two of his meetings in the month of August and was very much impressed with what he saw. The little building was completely filled with an audience of about sixty. The demeanor of the congregation was devout, the singing hearty and full of feeling, and the preaching most earnest and impressive. Altogether from what the visitor saw and heard at the meetings and on the reserve, he was convinced that the work is manifestly a work of God and the Indians are in a condition peculiarly open to missionary effort. Passage, who speaks English fairly well, is a poor man, earning a rather precarious living by fishing, and is content to go on as at present doing what he can for his Master, but through the influence of the gentleman above mentioned, who is a Presbyterian, the matter has been brought before the attention of the Synod's Committee on Foreign Missions with the suggestion that the Presbyterian Church adopt the mission and assume the support of Passage as a missionary. But Passage is not a Presbyterian and indeed is apparently in the happy condition of knowing very little of the denominational differences that divide Christendom, so it has been thought better not to take official action, but to allow some of the members after correspondence to secure an independent fund from such as are willing to help, to enable this self-denying and devoted servant of God to carry on his good work free from the distractions due to too narrow an income.

John Thunder, a former pupil of the Bird Tail day school has begun to farm. His first crop of wheat amounts to 270 bushels.

Articles made by the children in the Okanase day school were exhibited at the Strathclair Fall Show, and won prizes amounting to three dollars.

When Miss Walker, of the Portage la Prairie school, was in Ontario during the summer, the little girls of her school wrote to her and kept her informed of their doings.

A kind friend of Miss Walker's has offered to bear the expense of plastering a room which needs it in the Portage la Prairie school.

The contract for putting a new floor in the Okanase school has been let to an Indian, and the gentleman who writes about it assures the Committee in Winnipeg that the work will be well done. The Indian is an elder in the Presbyterian Church.

Mr. E. F. Ferry, who has taught in the Round Lake school for the past year, has resigned with a view to attending college, and his place has been taken by Mr. A. Morrison, who comes highly recommended from Durham and Owen Sound, in Ontario.

The clothing sent by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society has already arrived at its destination on some of the reserves, and is much appreciated. The missionaries say that as the peculiar needs of the Indians are becoming known, the supply of clothing improves in suitability every year.

The extension of our work goes on apace. The new buildings this year embrace :

The Government Industrial School at Regina—brick, now complete—to accommodate 200 children.

The Industrial School at Muscowpetung's—stone, to be ready by Nov. 1st—to take the place of former school, which had grown too small—to accommodate 40 children.

Extension of the Crowstand Mission—stone, to be ready in November—to increase the accommodation from 40 to 70. The nominal capacity of the present building is 40, but 50 have been crowded into it.

Day school at Prince Albert—log building—newly organized—to accommodate about 20.

School room at Portage la Prairie—frame—to accommodate 24 and relieve the strain on the present over-crowded building.

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