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THE WESTERN MISSIONARY

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

Vol. II.

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER, 1891.

No. 13.

HOME MISSION WANTS.

A few days ago there met in Knox Church, Winnipeg, eight men, representatives of the Home Mission work from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains. Why day after day did they consult so seriously? Because the work under their care comprises hundreds of preaching stations, from which come pouring in splendid returns of mission work done by students during the summer, of new stations opened, of large gatherings at the services, of increase of membership, of souls saved; and now there is the prospect of the sheep in the wilderness being unsheltered for the winter. No wonder the conveners consulted anxiously! Probably fifty preaching stations may be supplied from Manitoba College; but it was estimated that besides this, 25 ordained men and 25 catechists will be needed to cover the 150 preaching places entirely unsupplied. After every call, after every invitation for men, at the time of the meeting of the Synodical Committee not more than 20 effective laborers were in view to meet this demand for 50, and we are not speaking of Algoma or British Columbia. Our very success is our difficulty. Places all over the west, where no service has been held before, say the Presbyterian Church is the one most likely to give us supply, and supply reasonably good. Brethren throughout the church! You are supporting us liberally with money, will you not do something, by summer session or otherwise, to provide us efficient laborers, and enough of them?

OUR SYNOD.

Before the next time of issue of the MISSIONARY our Synod in Brandon will have met (Nov. 11th). This meeting marks a new departure, it being an autumn meeting. It is to be hoped it will be a success. It meets on Wednesday and extends over Sabbath. It will be a great occasion for brotherly intercourse, and we, with our scattered fields of labor, need more of this. The reports covering only half a year will not be very full—one of our wits calls them "scratch" reports; but we have had a peep at the programme prepared by the committee, and there is promise of plenty of eloquence. Speakers have been appointed to bring up Systematic Beneficence, Home Missions, Indian Missions, Sabbath Observance, Temperance, College matters, Historical Society, and much else. Brandon is already at work billeting the members. It looks as if it would be the best Synod ever held in the West.

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MANITOBA HIGHLANDS.

The hardworking clerk of Minnedosa Presbytery, Rev. S. C. Murray, of Neepawa, writes to us of mission visits paid by him :

" Few places in the province have advanced more rapidly than the district east of Riding Mountain, north of Neepawa. Rosedale, formerly a part of Neepawa field, was this year found again too large for one missionary. To the help of Mr. Richmond, the earnest laborer at this place, came this summer Mr. Hamilton, a young man of missionary spirit just arrived from Scotland." " On October 27th," says Mr. Murray, " I visited Mr. Hamilton's wide field, and at one point dispensed the communion. The people are fond of Mr. Hamilton, and desire him to remain with them. Settlers are pressing into this region, and it will be largely Presbyterian. On the evening of the 27th I met Mr. Richmond at Orange Ridge, where services were first held one year ago. Eight persons presented certificates, and six professed faith. We had here a delightful communion service, and this will soon be a strong congregation." " Last week," says Mr. Murray, " I visited Yorkton field, where Mr. John A. Urquhart labored efficiently last summer. I held at Orkney, the chief station, on Saturday, a preparatory service and few people more appreciate a minister's visit than these Orcadians. On Sabbath morning I preached at Armstrong's Lake, where I baptized an adult and dispensed the communion. Driving sixteen miles, I reached Orkney. The congregation was the largest ever seen in Orkney, one family having come thirty miles from Devil's Lake to be present. Four children were baptized, six persons were received by certificate, four professed faith, and three elders were elected by ballot. We had a grand service, and the communion was most impressive. From Orkney we hurried over the eight miles to Yorkton, and here the communion was again dispensed. We had at the close a conference as to the affairs of the congregation; and at half-past eleven at night I found myself alone in my room at the hotel eating the last slice of the bread prepared for the communion service. I was awakened by the sound of 'Train time' at half-past four Monday morning, and hastily arose and departed. Yorkton is an important field. A church is much needed at Orkney. In this region we must have an ordained missionary this winter."

DAKOTA EMIGRANTS.

Trains of settlers' effects have lately been passing through Winnipeg chiefly to Yorkton belonging to the people who have tired of the dry climate and fierce storms of Southern Dakota, and are seeking homes in our Canadian west. Legends in large letters are on these trains such as "Farewell land of cyclones," "Ten years of failure," &c. We are sorry for the misfortunes of these people, but we trust they will now be satisfied. Some of them are Presbyterians. We shall do our best to see that they are supplied with the means of grace.

LAKE WINNIPEG FISHERIES.

Mr. J. S. Hamilton, a student of Manitoba College, thus writes of this mission:

The work is very varied. All forms of belief are met, and nearly every vice exists. Sceptics and indifferent are numerous, though a larger number, including some Christian Indians, appreciate the efforts made for them. The most important station in my field was Grand Rapids. On the opposite side of the Saskatchewan, from the fishery station, is a large Indian reserve. I remained four weeks at Grand Rapids, holding service on the Sabbath morning on the reserve, and in the afternoon at the fishery. The average attendance was 60. From this station I sailed about 75 miles to a camp on Reindeer Island. Here there were 40 men, but as the camp was removed to Horse Island, in two weeks I also left this island. Last year the most important point was Little Saskatchewan, but it was not so this year. I visited for four weeks Horse Island, where upwards of 40 men were employés. In all the stations nearly everyone turned out, whatever their denomination. The congregations are generally assembled in the cook house or on the fish barge. The men are dressed in their every-day fishing dress, but are attentive and respectful. The singing at some of the services was very good. I held in my short stay seventeen services, besides having many conversations on Christian things. The literature sent by Knox Church, Winnipeg, Christian Endeavor Society was very useful. I would recommend that in future the missionary should be sent into the field early in June. My stay was a most pleasant one.

HARROWING OLD GROUND.

In the French settlements along the Red River south of Winnipeg there are scattered groups of Protestants. Three of these—Union Point, and Glenlea on the west side of the river, and Niverville on the east, have been worked together this summer by Mr. J. B. Ferguson, a zealous student of Manitoba College. Union Point has a comfortable church, has this summer enclosed it with a handsome fence, and proposes to paint and improve it. The attendance at service is good, and a successful Sabbath school is maintained. Glenlea and Niverville congregations worship in their frame schoolhouses, which are crowded with worshippers. There is a whisper that a new church in each place is being planned. Fourteen have been received this summer by profession and certificate into fellowship.

AUGUSTINE CHURCH, WINNIPEG.

This enterprising little congregation lately extended a call to Rev. C. W. Gordon, B.A., of Banff. We regret, so far as Winnipeg is concerned, that he has refused the call. Banff is to be congratulated on keeping its minister. We trust Augustine Church will speedily get a suitable pastor, and that our south wall in Winnipeg will soon be manned.

From the words of the devoted Mackay, of Uganda, we quote the following:

"Still clearly shines the morning star, the sign of the gospel of peace. The burning of a few straws will make a smoke, and for the time the stars are rendered invisible in the sky. The flame dies out at length, and there again *Manet immota stella*. Nothing yet has ever withstood the Gospel long."

"Mechanical work is probably as legitimate an aid to missions as medical; nor do I see why one should not be as helpful to missionary work as the other, except for the difficulty of getting out of the rut our ideas run in."

"It is indeed dark days for Uganda just now; but we know that just as surely as the sun will rise to-morrow, so surely will brighter days dawn on this unhappy country."

"It is not enough that we nibble at stray corners of the concrete mass of heathendom and Satan's kingdom."

"The right never did succeed but slowly and by reverses."

"The continental idea of 'every citizen a soldier' is the true watchword for the Church and Missions."

"The cantilever principle of Missions: For every man added to the staff abroad, let there be secured among our friends at home a guarantee of sufficient amount to support him,"

"It is not to win numbers to the Church, but to win men to the Saviour."

LAKE OF THE WOODS.

The exit of the Lake of the Woods into Winnipeg river is marked by a considerable fall. A rocky barrier upwards of two miles long and a few hundred feet across gives room for numberless mills. Gordon Brown a few years ago called this the "Minneapolis of the Northwest." Rat Portage, Norman, and Keewatin are three towns built respectively at the east end, middle and west end of this great water power. Rat Portage is now called the "Saratoga of Manitoba." It has a self-sustaining church under Rev. R. Nairn as pastor. Norman has for the summer supported a Manitoba College student, Mr. J. L. Small, and has done well. Keewatin has a beautiful church, which has been occupied during the summer by Mr. A. C. Manson, of Manitoba College. Much religious interest has been awakened. Three elders have been elected and ordained. Our Home Mission Editor was down lately and administered the communion, 35 persons were received into fellowship, four of whom were Icelanders, fruit of our Icelandic work in Winnipeg. Ninety communicants took part and the service was most impressive. How strange that this region which was so shortly since a rocky waste, only disturbed by the cry of the wild fowl, and later still by the profanity of the railway navy, should now have its echoes resounding with the songs of devout worshippers! "The wilderness and the solitary place shall break forth and blossom as the rose."

MISSIONS TO THE INDIANS.

A GROWING MISSION.

The work at the Portage la Prairie Indian Mission is growing both in volume and in interest. The attendance at the school now numbers eighteen, of whom twelve are boarders, the rest day pupils, who go home to the tepees in the outskirts of town after the school day is over. The industrial work in the school is of a very real character. A few days ago, when a member of the committee visited the school, he found that the two biggest girls in the school (aged about 16 or 17) had been excused from class work in the afternoon because they had done the school washing in the morning, a washing of the size of which there was abundant evidence on the clothes-lines in the yard. The building begins to be too small for the increasing attendance, and it has been decided to increase the accommodation by the erection of an extension which on the ground floor will provide kitchen and bath-room, and upstairs a loft to serve as a store-room. Hitherto the same room has had to serve the whole institution as kitchen, dining-room and often as study. The matron shows with evident satisfaction a cistern which had just been put in, and the cost of which has been defrayed by the King's Daughters of Motherwell, Ontario.

The religious services of the mission continue to be attended with deep interest, and a brave, if now and then unequal, struggle is carried on in behalf of the Indians to rescue them from their heathenish superstitions, and, most difficult of all, from the remorseless creatures who for money, or even more unworthy objects, break the law and supply the Indians with liquor. But that the Indians are growing both in Christian perseverance and in manly independence is shown not merely by the religious services which they take a share in conducting, but by the fact that they are trying to buy at the market value a block of 300 acres of land adjoining the Portage. These men are Sioux originally from Minnesota, who have no treaty rights in Canada, and now finding themselves fenced off from nearly all the land about the town, in the vicinity of which they have lived for nearly thirty years, they wish to buy a place they can call their own. There are instances where individual Indians have saved money and bought land, but this is believed to be the first instance, in the North-West at least, where a whole band has shown the public spirit and provident self-interest implied in such a proposal. The committee has been asked to help the Indians to secure possession of the land, and is using its endeavors in that direction.

The transfer of Mr. D. H. McVicar to Mistawasis leaves Mr. and Mrs. Skene alone to prosecute their trying work among the Indians of the File Hills reserves.

A REVOLUTION AMONG THE INDIANS.

Reports of a very encouraging character come from Mistawasis. The church is crowded at the Sabbath services; sewing classes and Sabbath school are much appreciated. Twenty-six of the Indians combined some days ago and provided the missionary with what will almost amount to his winter's supply of wood, hay, potatoes, and other necessaries. (What a revolution is this for Indians, who naturally look upon a missionary not as one to whom they give but as one from whom they get, supplies!) The communion is to come early in November, and already several of the Indians have asked to be received at the Lord's table. The repairs which it has been found necessary to make in the manse are being executed under Thomas McKay, son of the late missionary, and Indian carpenters. A plasterer will be brought from Prince Albert to complete the work. Miss Christie McKay, who has with much self-denial performed the work of schoolmistress ever since the school was established on the reserve, has given up the position, and is about to be married. Her place as school teacher will be taken by Mr. D. H. McVicar, B.A., who will also act as interpreter for the Rev. Mr. Nichol. Mrs. McKay, the widow of the former missionary, has built a house on a farm adjoining the reserve, and to this she and her family have removed. It is natural that Mrs. McKay should be unwilling to quit the scene of her own and her husband's labors, and we will count their continued presence as a most helpful influence in support of the young missionary and his wife.

A STUDENT'S "SHORT-CUT" TO MISSION WORK.

Mr. W. J. Wright has been appointed farm manager and instructor in trades at the Crowstand school. He has already gone west to enter upon his work. Mr. Wright is a student of Manitoba College preparing for the ministry, who at the call of the committee has shown his willingness to fill a necessitous place in our Indian work—for genuine mission work it is, although the name of the post savors of other things—to train these wild children of the plains under Christian influences to industry, order and obedience, to develop in them self-denial, and a desire to be useful in the world. Mr. Wright is a practical carpenter and blacksmith, and to accept this position, ungrudgingly leaves the place he has had during the summer, in which he made wages considerably larger than what he will now receive. This will be a valuable addition to the staff of the Crowstand school and will both give a more decidedly industrial cast to the training of the boys and will set the Rev. G. A. Laird, the missionary, more free for evangelistic work among the Indians of his own and neighboring reserves.

AN OLD WARRIOR NOW AT PEACE.

While the editor was in Portage la Prairie some three weeks ago the little Christian community of Sioux Indians lost one of its oldest members by death. Was-kwa-o had been a Christian for many years. He was fond of telling of the enjoyable visits he used to pay in the old days to the manse at High Bluff, when the Rev. Hugh McKellar was minister there. A long illness has of late years worn away the old man's frame, and brought him again and again to the very threshold of the other world. His weird unearthly appearance gave a peculiar solemnity to his exhortations, and especially to his rebukes to those in the camp when drinking or scandalous conduct of any kind was going on. So enraged did the subjects of these rebukes often become that he was many a time driven from the tepees, and only a few weeks before his death he was found by the lady missionaries lying beside the little church huddled in a heap and scarcely able to move. Frequent supplies of nourishing food from the mission house, and many little attentions such as he could appreciate, helped to cheer his declining days. When the writer was taken to see him he could not eat; he could not speak except in half articulated monosyllables, but with such emphasis as he could muster, he bore witness to his faith: Miss Walker and Miss Fraser sang in Sioux a few verses of two or three hymns such as he loved to hear, a brief prayer was offered, and we bade him good-bye. A few hours afterwards the news came that all Was-kwa-o's troubles were over.

FATHER HUGONNARD—THE ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONARY SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

The Rev. Hugh McKay writes, under date Sept. 24th, on the subject of which mention was made last month:

One of the boys, J. M. King, was taken by us from the pagan wigwam and attended our school for more than two years. The priest frequently during that time tried to influence the parents, visiting them and trying in every way possible to persuade them to send the boy to the Qu'Appelle school. Last winter the parents visited some friends at Qu'Appelle, and the boy went with them. The priest met them again, and after much persuasion the woman agreed to let the boy stay until spring on condition that she get \$8.00. The boy stayed at the Qu'Appelle school, was baptized, and returned to our reserve in the middle of April. In August Father Hugonnard and the officer of the law appear and take the boy away, contrary to the wishes of the parents, saying, the woman agreed to leave the boy two years, and the woman saying she only agreed to leave the boy till spring.

The other boy, Harry, son of Ka-se-wa-se-mat, or rather son of his wife and her first husband, attended the Qu'Appelle school and was baptized there. The father and mother made application to the Department to have the boy transferred to Round Lake. Permission was granted. He was entered upon our list of scholars, and we received government grant for him for nearly two years. He is taken from the parents very much against their wish, and placed in another school. We were not consulted in the matter either by our agent or by the commissioner.

These are a few facts. What can we do? These Indians come again and again to ask us to assist them to get the boys back. They will be satisfied only when the boys are taken back and placed in the school at Round Lake.

AN INDIAN REFORMATORY.

All agree that the education of the Indian should be compulsory. In states having compulsory education, Truant schools have been found necessary aids in the enforcement of the law. Besides these, most, if not all, the states maintain Reform schools to prevent youthful offenders from becoming professional criminals.

Why should there not be an Indian Reform school, which would combine the best physical, industrial, mental and moral instruction with strict prison discipline, a school to which it would be recognized a disgrace to be sent?

Such a school could not fail to be a great aid to the discipline of every other school not only as an asylum for refractory boys, but as wholesome warning to those inclined to insubordination.

Too much credit cannot be given to Commissioner Morgan for his efforts to bring the Indian school up to a system, and make the education of Indian youth compulsory. Now if an Indian Reform school can be established, it will be a very important auxiliary to the system.—*J. A. Chadburne, in Word Carrier.*

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Will ministers to whom this leaflet is sent confer a favor by passing it on, after they have read it, to the Secretary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, or of any other organization in the congregation devoted to mission work? With a view to sending specimen copies, the editors will be pleased to receive the names of persons likely to be interested in the work the Presbyterian Church is trying to overtake in the West.