

5
(Missions to the Heathen.

No. VI.)

O'Meara, Frederick Augustus
REPORT

OF A

MISSION

TO THE

OTTAHWAHS AND OJIBWAS,
ON LAKE HURON.

BY

THE REV. F. O'MEARA.

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May.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

The Rev. F. O'Meara was appointed by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in 1839, as a Missionary to the Indians at Sault St. Marie. He was subsequently transferred by the Bishop of Toronto to the Government Indian Mission at Manatoulin Island.

The following Report was drawn up, and sent home by Mr. O'Meara, at the request of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

79, Pall Mall,
June, 18, 1845.

MAHNETOOAHNENG, LAKE HURON.

REPORT.

To the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

December 26, 1844.

It had long been found, by painful experience, that in attempts made to civilize and christianize the aborigines of this province, the neighbourhood of whites to settlements formed with that view, constituted a serious obstacle to the success of such efforts, and moreover that little could be done toward that purpose while they continued scattered in small villages here and there on the shores of the lakes which stud the province. Under this conviction Captain Anderson, a gentleman who has grown old in the Indian cause, and in whose mind their civilization has ever been inseparably connected with their reception of the Gospel, as taught

by the ministrations of our apostolic Church ; laid before Sir J. Colborn, in 1835, a plan for collecting all the Indians in the province on one of the numerous islands that stud the north shore of Lake Huron, and named this as the largest and best adapted of the group for making the experiment proposed. This plan having met with the approbation of that friend to the North American-Indian race, Captain Anderson, accompanied by the Rev. Adam Elliot, made a progress along the whole northern shore of Lake Huron, in the month of June that year, for the purpose of laying the proposed plan of a general Indian settlement on this island before the various chiefs. With this intention, they started from Penetangweshene, situated near the extremity of the Georgian Bay, and continued their voyage, touching at every point or island where there were Indians to be found, till they arrived at the Sault de St. Marie (Pahwahteng) where they landed, on the 27th of that month. Their exertions were attended with signal success, not less than 400 of the Indians to whom they communicated the proposed plan highly approving of it, and promising to avail themselves of the temporal and spiritual advantages it offered.

With these prospects of success, the above mentioned gentlemen, with Mr. Orr, as schoolmaster, arrived here, to take up their abode permanently, on the 28th of May, 1836 ; and having cleared a few feet of land, in the midst of the thick forest that then occupied the place of the present establishment,

planted the standard of the Gospel and of civilization at the door of the wigwam which, for some time, formed their only shelter from the inclemency of the weather. In a short time, they had every appearance of their most sanguine expectations of usefulness being fully realized ; but all their hopes were destroyed, when, in August of the same year, Sir F. B. Head, who had in the meantime succeeded Sir J. Colborne in the government of the province, came to the island to preside at the annual distribution of presents, and ordered these first Missionaries of the Church, settled among the Indians of Lake Huron, to leave the work in which they had so ardently, and with so fair a prospect of success engaged. The Mission buildings, which had been carried on under the superintendence of Captain Anderson, were left uncompleted ; the school which had been gathered together, with much pains, broken up ; and the self-denying labours of the Missionary rendered, to all human appearance, abortive ; and what was worst of all, an impression was left on the minds of the Indians, naturally suspicious, that both the Superintendent and the Missionary had grossly deceived them.

But the enterprise, though thus abandoned, was not suffered to depart from the minds of those who had begun to carry it into effect ; in June, 1837, Captain Anderson having solicited and obtained permission to complete the buildings that he had, the previous year, commenced, arrived here with workmen ; but, to use his own words, “without Mis-

sionary or schoolmaster ;” however, on Sir George Arthur assuming the government of the province, the above-mentioned gentleman laid his plan of a settlement of Indians on this island before his Excellency, who immediately took it up with an ardour very gratifying to every well-wisher of religion, in general, and of the conversion of the aboriginal inhabitants, in particular; and as the then Archdeacon of Toronto, now Lord Bishop of the Diocese, gave the plan his decided approval and powerful aid, a Missionary staff was soon made up, consisting of Captain Anderson himself as Civil-superintendent; the Rev. C. C. Brough, (now Rector of St. John’s, London, Canada West,) as Missionary; Paul Darling, Esq., Surgeon; and Mr. Benjamin Bayly, (now master of the grammar school, London,) Schoolmaster. All of these, with their families, set out from Cold Water, at the eastern extremity of the Georgian Bay, on the 9th of October, and after the most stormy and uncomfortable passage on record among the traditions of voyage on this lake, arrived, on the 30th of the same month, within sight of the Establishment; but owing to a heavy fall of snow, the only object they could discern from their boat, in the direction in which they were steering, was a lurid flame that shot up to the heavens, and served to guide them toward the desired haven. What was their consternation on approaching nearer to discover, that their beacou-light was no other than the flame of the Mission-house, one of the two only houses to which they trusted for shelter from the

inclemency of a northern winter ! However, nowise daunted or damped by this untoward event, nor by the scarcity of provision to which they were obliged to submit, (the vessel on which they had relied for their furniture and supplies having been twice baffled in attempting to reach them, and finally obliged to winter at Penetangweshene,) they set to work at that object which had drawn them from the comforts of civilized life, to this isolated, and then desert, spot.

But the confidence of the Indians had been lost by the sudden breaking up of the establishment, and their minds, naturally suspicious, had been worked on by the zealous emissaries of Rome, with the view of making them regard in no friendly light every attempt for their good, made by the English Government or the English Church. Under these disheartening circumstances, the self-denying zeal of the Missionary was manifested in a way calculated to dissipate the false impression which had been made by the untoward circumstances above related, and he neither spared himself nor regarded the comforts of the domestic circle in comparison with the fulfilment of the ministry committed to him. In the depth of a northern winter he sallied forth on the ice, now in the teeth of a biting north-west wind, and then up to the ankles in melting or melted snow, for the purpose of visiting the Indians all round the northern shore of the lake; and showing them, by the privations he was willing to endure in their cause, that he sought not theirs, but them. It is impossible

for any one who has not undertaken those Missionary journeys to have an adequate idea of what has to be endured in them. It is not the intensity of the cold, or the snow drifts carried in one's face by the northerly winds, which might be almost compared in this respect with the sandy blasts of the Arabian desert, that forms the worst part of them ; it is when these are passed, and the Missionary is about to seat himself on the ground by the wigwam fire, that the worst part of the expedition has to be encountered. The filth and vermin by which he sees and feels himself surrounded are quite sufficient to make him long for the morrow's journey, even though it be but a repetition of the biting winds and blinding drifts which he has already experienced. Still happy would he be, and soon would he forget even these inconveniences if, in most cases, he were received as a welcome guest, and his message listened to with any degree of attention: but the averted eye, the head covered up in the filthy blanket that forms almost their only covering by day and night, and laid down to sleep, are too often the returns met with for the labour endured, and the glad tidings conveyed, by the Christian Missionary. Besides that, the squalid wretchedness, and starvation, that usually surround him, are sufficient to make his heart bleed for the poor creatures, though, in very few cases, can he administer any thing like relief to the famishing little ones of the family. This is a very inadequate description of what had to be endured by that servant of God who preceded me in this Mission;

but they did not prevent him from persevering in his labour of love, and the consequence was, that he was enabled in many cases partially, at least, to remove the suspicions of those in whose cause he so faithfully laboured. With all his exertions, however, not nearly a tithe of those who, at the time of the first settlement at this place, gave in their adhesion to the plan, consented to receive his instructions.

But yet, by the joint endeavours of the Missionary and those who laboured with him in the same good cause, a small number were induced to settle here, and receive the Christian religion, and they have been gradually, but not largely, increasing up to the present time.

In August, 1841, the Mission was deprived of the valuable services of the Rev. C. C. Brough, as the health of his lady, and the education of a large family, compelled him to seek a sphere of labour in a more genial climate and a more civilized place. The present incumbent was, by the direction of the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, removed from the Sault de St. Marie, where he had laboured among the Indians, under the patronage of the venerable Society, a station which was considered to be not so well adapted to the gathering of the Indians into one community, as this establishment, and was appointed to fill the post which had been so faithfully occupied by his predecessor. In November of the same year, Mr. Bayly, the schoolmaster, followed Mr. Brough to London; and his situation was filled up in the following Spring, by Mr. John Burkitt, who, at

present, holds it. I am sorry, however, to be obliged to close this short sketch of the history of the Mission, by informing you that the last mail, before the close of navigation, brought an official intimation that the government, who have up to this time supported the Mission entirely, would dispense with the services of a schoolmaster after the 31st day of this present month, and would thenceforth consider the Missionary Clergyman responsible for the onerous duties of that situation. How little the due discharge of these will be consistent with that of those peculiar to his sacred calling, will appear from the details to be given further on in this report ; and he therefore fears, that, in case he is not relieved from this additional burden by the sympathy of British and Canadian Churchmen, he will be conscientiously obliged to surrender a charge, in which he feels the deepest and most engrossing interest, but which, under the operation of the late regulation, will become too heavy for any one man. But such is his confidence under God, in the increasing Missionary spirit abroad in Britain, and in this province, that the possibility of his having to leave the flock among whom he now labours, never once occurs to him, for he feels assured that the work which he has in hand is the work of God, who can turn and dispose the hearts of his people, on both sides of the Atlantic, as seemeth best to his godly wisdom, for the promotion of his gospel, and the building up of the Church in this wilderness.

The island on which the Missionary establishment

for civilizing and christianizing the Indians is placed, is the largest of three which stretch along the north shore of Lake Huron, at about fifteen miles distance from the main land. It is about ninety miles in length, and, in its broadest part, about thirty in breadth, but, in some places, it is not more than two miles from water to water; its narrowest part is just at the establishment, where there are but two miles across to the bottom of a deep bay, which comes in from the south. The bay of Mahnetooahneng (Manatoulin), laid down in Taylor's map as Heywood Sound, looks northward, and is barred, as it were, with lofty and well wooded islands, which stretch from point to point across the entrance of it, serving to break the force of the sea from the north; behind these rise the Mountains of La Cloche, at the distance of twenty miles from the establishment, the whole *coup d'œil* being, what an admirer of scenery, on a large scale, would call grand. The particular spot was selected in consequence of the shelter it affords to all kinds of vessels, from the Indian fisherman's bark canoe, to the largest ship that traverses these lakes, and on account of the excellent land in its immediate neighbourhood. Though, if one were to take an impression of the whole from what is seen on landing at the Establishment, it would be set down to be as barren a spot as could well be imagined; on going a few rods from the shore, a fine, rich vegetable soil presents itself, which is capable of producing almost any of the varied fruits of the husbandman's toil. This is a great point in inducing

the wandering hunters of Lake Huron to settle down to a farmer's life, for, were the soil more stubborn and unproductive, they would soon be disheartened, and give the attempt up in despair. Another advantage which led to the selection of this as a proper place for gathering the Aborigines into one community was, that there are in the interior of the island, several lakes, some of them of considerable size, which, in certain seasons of the year, abound with excellent fish, and all at a short distance from the shore of the great lake, and from the Establishment. Having said thus much with regard to the advantages of the position for the purpose for which it was selected, I am bound to state some drawbacks, which are sometimes complained of to me by my flock. The first of these is the want of a market for the fruits of their industry, which advantage they enjoyed while they resided on the main land, where they could have recourse to white settlements for the sale of what they might manufacture, when not engaged in out-door work. This inconvenience, it will be seen, arises necessarily out of the plan itself on which the settlement was formed, namely, separation of them from the white population of the province. Secondly, the almost total absence of animals of chase from the island. Thirdly, there is no merchant resident on the island, or within accessible distance. This is, indeed, a serious difficulty to our people, as they have no certain way of procuring clothing, &c. even though they be in possession of the means of purchasing what they need.

Another great drawback to the place, is the want of a flour-mill, which prevents their profiting materially by the capabilities of the soil, for growing wheat by trial: the nearest mill of the kind being at Pene-tangweshene, a distance of above one hundred and fifty miles from this place.

The people for whose benefit this Mission has been set on foot, are parts of two different tribes of the same nation (the Algonquin.) The names of these tribes are the *Ottahwaks*, who come from that part of this lake which is near Michahlahmackinack, and from Lake Michigan. And the *Ojibwas* or *Chippewaks*, (the latter word being the English corruption of the former,) who inhabit the shores of Lakes Superior and Huron. The affinity of these two tribes is clearly seen by the similarity of their dialects, which are not more different from each other than those of some parts of England are from that heard in the metropolis. Both, in general, understand books in the Ojibwa dialect, and conversation is easily conducted between individuals of the different tribes. And though, in many cases, the modes of expression and even the words differ, yet the structure of both tongues is essentially the same, as, also, are the rules for the inflection of words. The Ottahwah, having been brought up on those rich lands now forming part of the State of Michigan, is consequently a better farmer, and more at home in all the labour connected with that occupation, than the Ojibwa, who, having been brought up on the rocky barren shores of Lakes Superior and Huron,

is more in his element, while traversing the trackless snows of his native forest, and passing whole days in the pursuit of fur-bearing animals. Thus it is much easier to induce the Ottahwah to settle in one place, and to cultivate the ground for a subsistence, than the Ojibwa, who, having been accustomed to a wandering life from his infancy, finds it impossible for him to continue the whole year in one place.

In their heathen state, the *superstitions of both tribes* are essentially the same, consisting in little more than a worship of terror paid to evil spirits, whom they think able to inflict terrible misfortunes on them, if neglected. There are different forms of this worship—the Metawawen, which, as far as I can gather from accounts given by my people, very much resembles the witches' incantations of which we read in old English story—the Cheesuhkeewen which is somewhat akin to the oracles of pagan antiquity,—and the Sahsahguhwejegawen or sacrifice, which consists in an offering made to the object of their worship of what they most highly esteem, sometimes articles of clothing, and, when it can be had, a living animal. This offering, according to my Indian authorities, is generally followed by a feast, during which the articles, after having been some time laid on an elevated platform, are taken down and distributed among the visitors. These, with certain superstitious observances used in the cure of diseases, seem to be all in the way of religious ceremony that they make use of in their heathen state. But, in connexion with their superstitions,

I must not omit to mention one, which seems to exert a greater influence on them than any other ; when their young people reach the age of eleven or twelve, they are directed, by their parents, to blacken their faces, and fast, until they obtain from their guardian spirit, some dream or vision. Their frame being reduced to a very weak state by abstinence, their minds are easily wrought on, and they invariably imagine that they have the desired dream or vision; and, according to what they think they see then, so is their destiny ; and from that time, they make to themselves representations of what they have seen, and keep them by them ; and on these pieces of wood they place their trust for deliverance from sickness and death. I have not yet met with an Indian who had not gone through this ordeal in youth. The ideal divinity that figures most in their heathen traditions, is one named Nane Boozhoa, who, they say, claims relationship with man, and also with all the brute creation. To him they ascribe all the blessings they enjoy, such as the simples which they collect for medicines, &c. This divinity they describe as transmigrating, sometimes assuming the body of one animal, sometimes of another, and always leaving the body he assumes as soon as its blood is shed, and seeking another for himself.

The supreme Creator of all things they place in the part of the heavens where the sun is at noon, and others, inferior, occupy the other quarters of the sky. Their idea of an after state of happiness is, as far as I have been able to gather, (for they are not

very communicative on this point,) that it lies to the west, where all good Indians go after they die, and which, they say, is quite a different place from the white-man's heaven. In connexion with this last subject, I would mention a tradition which is abroad among the Indians, which, I am told by those who have embraced Christianity, is a great hindrance to others joining the Church. They say, that, a long time ago, when the French Missionaries first came among the Indians, many received their religion, and, among the rest, an old man, who some time after sickened, and to all appearance died, but after some time revived again. As soon as he recovered his health, he was observed to return to his heathen ways, and to give up going to church altogether. Being asked the reason of this conduct, he related what he saw during his trance: "I went," said he, "immediately on breathing my last, to the white-man's heaven, where the Missionaries had taught me to look for rest, but the gates were shut against me. I knocked, and there came to the gate one, such as the black-coat used to describe the heavenly inhabitants to be, and asked me what did I want there. I immediately shewed him what I had round my neck (the rosary with a crucifix attached), but he did not open the gate for me. On my asking the reason of my not being admitted at once, on shewing the badge of my Christianity, he told me that this was not the red-man's rest; it was only for the white-man. He, however, directed me to go to the far west, where, he said, the red-man must stay. I then

set out (continued the narrator), and journeyed along many suns, till at last I came to where the sun sets, and saw those of my own colour enjoying themselves with continual feasting and rest, and my heart was glad that I had at last found the place where I was to dwell; but one of the chiefs came to me, and asked me the same question as I was asked at the white-man's place. I told them I was a red-man, just arrived in the world of spirits, and hoped to find rest and pleasure among my own relations. 'Oh! no,' said the chief to me, 'I cannot admit you here: you gave up the Indian ways long before you left yonder world; you served the white-man's God: go, therefore, to where the white-man's God is chief.' And I was thus left in a very miserable condition ever, till I awoke from my trance. Therefore, I will no more serve the white-man's God, whose place is not for us; I will do as my fathers did, and go to them when I depart hence." This circumstance, say my informants, produced a great defection among the Christians at that time, and still continues, to many, an obstacle to their receiving the truth.

All their treatment of the sick is mixed up with magical practices; as, they say, they received the knowledge of simples from the benevolent spirit mentioned above, and, therefore, he must be invoked to assist with a view to their successful application. Like all tribes whose religion consists principally of magic, they are extensively acquainted with the most virulent poisons to be found in the vegetable creation, and are often but too successful in the murder-

ous use of them. I myself knew a white man, since dead, who, while residing in the Indian country as a fur-trader, was suddenly deprived of his sight by smoking a pipe into which a minute portion of vegetable poison had been introduced by an Indian whom he had offended, and he continued completely blind till his death. But it is with that utter recklessness of futurity, which forms a prominent trait in the Indian character, that the Missionary has chiefly to contend. Even while, with all the earnestness the subject is calculated to produce, he speaks of that which made a Felix tremble on his throne, all his hopes of having made a favourable impression are often destroyed by his being answered with some unseasonable demand for pork, flour, tobacco, Indian corn, or something else equally connected with their present wants. The following anecdote will serve to illustrate this point: While I was residing at the Sault de St. Marie, I was visited by an Indian from the interior, perhaps thirty days' journey from that place. I gave him and his people some provisions, to supply their present necessities, and invited them to come the next day (Sunday), as I wished to give them their dinner, and, after that, to tell them about the white-man's God. He said they should all come; but, at the time appointed, he alone made his appearance, with his face painted in a most frightful manner. I asked him where were his young men. He said that he had not been able to keep them sufficiently sober to come; but, as he himself had promised to come to me, he had not drunk any spirits. After

he had had his dinner, I began to talk to him of the necessity of embracing the Christian religion, told him of the fall of our first parents, and the redemption of the world by the Son of the Great Spirit, and other subjects which the occasion called forth. I was quite pleased and encouraged, during my discourse, by the seeming anxiety with which he laid the bowl of the pipe that he was smoking on the ground, and the thoughtfulness which the increasing slowness of the wreathing puffs from it appeared to indicate. At last I told him that I had done ; and the streaked-faced warrior of the wood stood up with a remarkable majesty, and having, according to Indian etiquette, shaken hands with every body in the room, and handed his pipe round for each to take a puff out of it, he commenced his oration, thanking me for what I had told him of the white man's religion,—it was all very good, and he would think over it by his wigwam-fire during the winter ; but what he had been chiefly thinking of, was, that I had been very kind in feeding him, and his people, the day before, and that he, therefore, wished to ask me to supply him, and six or seven canoes full of his people, with provisions for a fortnight of their journey homewards.

I have already mentioned that the Indians are exceedingly suspicious ; but this, probably, arises from the treatment they have too often experienced from white people, with whom they have had to do. And the same may be said of another trait that strongly marks their character, namely,—a want of

sufficient sense of benefits received from white men; for they are apt to think that all white men are as selfish in the objects of their intercourse with them, as are the traders, and it is with difficulty we can induce them to believe that we seek not theirs, but them.

Such are the people with almost all of whom the Missionary at this place is necessarily brought into contact for ten or fifteen days together, at the time of their assembling from all parts of the north shore of this lake, and the adjacent parts of Lake Superior, to receive the clothing and provisions which are dealt out to them by the generosity of the British Government. Till last summer these presents were issued to those resident on the American territory, as well as to those who came from places within the British lines. But a regulation was issued from head-quarters, by which the United States Indians had notice that, in three years from the date of the order, the presents would thenceforth be confined to those who come from *bonâ fide* British land; and, in the summer of the present year, this was for the first time put in force.

In former years the number, annually assembled to receive presents, varied from three to nearly six thousand; but this last summer, 1,878 was the total number of those to whom presents were issued, and from this number may be very nearly calculated the gross population of the north shore of this lake, and the adjacent parts of Lake Superior. Allowing for those who, from sickness or other causes, did not

come to the distribution, the whole does not probably exceed two thousand two hundred,—a sad falling off from what we are told by old people, who have known this lake for many years back, of the populous and flourishing villages which, sixty years ago, were to be found on many of its points and islands ; and were there any annals of preceding generations of this unhappy race in existence, no doubt the comparison of the population, at the time when white men first made their appearance among them with that of the present day, would tell a fearful tale of the ravages that the vices of nominal Christians have made amongst them. And shall the few that remain be suffered to dwindle to annihilation, without a vigorous effort, on the part of British Churchmen, to save from eternal destruction the remnant that is still permitted to exist ? To exist, as though a merciful God were, for a little longer, holding forth to the sons and daughters of England's favoured Church an opportunity of, in some measure, atoning for the countless and aggravated wrongs which these people have suffered from those degenerate ones, who came forth from the same fostering bosom of the Church, only to scatter the destructive poison of sin through the wilderness in which they sought a livelihood !

No—I cannot but hope, with a hope bordering on certainty, that, no sooner is it known, through the medium of the Venerable Society, that within the same space in which Rome has her two, and Dissent its three or four emissaries,—the former also

making preparations to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes,—the scriptural and apostolic Church of England has but one Missionary ; and his hands about to be much tied up by the Government regulation, to which allusion has been already made,—assistance will be furnished to place us at least on a par, in this respect, with the teachers of error among this people. It is true that, in the account that has been given of them whose cause is pleaded in these pages, there is little or nothing to excite the enthusiasm, which has not unaptly been termed the romance of Missions ; and, it is equally true, that, whoever will embark in the cause of the Gospel among them, must expect to be driven back from every other ground of support to the one motive of a constraining love of Christ, and of souls ; yet I most firmly believe that that principle will bring forth fruit in the hearts of English Christians, which will, perhaps, stay the destruction of the North American Aborigines, or, if not, save at least a remnant to be to the glory of the Redeemer. That such assistance will not be unattended with a gratifying, though not, perhaps, a very splendid result, what remains to be said of the mission at this place will, I humbly trust, fully show.

Of the number already stated as being the probable amount of the aboriginal population of these parts, about 380 are members of our Church, of whom about 120 are resident in small bands, scattered here and there along the shore, from St.

Joseph's Island, which lies at the mouth of the river St. Marie, to Bahehwahnah Bay, in Lake Superior ; about 180 belong to the village at this place, and the rest are here and there among the Indian villages, or encampments, along the Lake Shore. Perhaps 750 are Roman Catholics, of whom 508 are resident at a settlement, within about seven miles of Mahnetooahneng, and the rest scattered over the Lake Shore. With regard to those resident at the village, under the superintendence of two priests of that church, one of whom is of the order of Jesuits ; it is to be observed that they are not the fruits of any recent success of the emissaries of Rome, but are almost all emigrants from a Roman Catholic Mission in the United States, a considerable number of whom were baptized in very early life ; whereas, every individual of those included in the number of members of our Church, except, of course, the few infants that have been baptized since the parents embraced Christianity, is the fruit of recent, and very inadequate, Missionary exertion put forth by our Church, and every such individual has been rescued from the darkness of heathenism, or the errors of Rome. The remainder, except a very trifling number of Methodists, still continue heathens, and, therefore, open to any attempts for their conversion which God may put it into the hearts of his servants to make.

The system that has hitherto been pursued in the instruction of the natives, collected into a Christian community at this place, is essentially that set down

in the canons and rubrics of the United Church of England and Ireland, which the writer has found admirably suited to the wants of a people emerging from barbarism and heathenism, and seeking instruction in the things which, as Christians, it becomes them to believe and to practice. For instance, when a preacher from one of the ranks of dissent commences operations among them, he is obliged to commit the important duty of public prayer to the half-instructed Indian, or half-breed, whom he has engaged as interpreter, by which means, serious errors in faith are likely to be introduced under the sanction of the Missionary, but without his knowledge; or, to say the least, the blessings which the untutored savage is taught most ardently and frequently to pray for, will most probably be those connected with what he shall eat, drink, and put on.

But the Church Missionary has a scriptural and spiritual form already at hand, the fruit of the piety and wisdom of devoted martyrs, and holy confessors of the Church, which, with a little exertion, he will soon be able to read in the native tongue, so as to be understood by his flock. And thus he has the advantage of knowing the sentiments that are uttered to be those of sound and scriptural prayer for blessings, the bestowal of which, on his people, will put them in possession of that which is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come.

The following circumstance will show the advan-

tage of a scriptural form of prayer, in instructing a semi-barbarous people:—On one occasion, while I was resident at the Sault de St. Marie, I arrived late on Saturday night at an encampment of Church-Indians, with the design of spending the Lord's-day with them. Having conversed on religious subjects with the family, and concluded by reading a portion of scripture and prayer, I rolled myself in the blanket which forms, on such occasions, my only bed, and with my head on a bag of Indian corn, laid me down on the ground by the wigwam-fire to sleep. As I was much fatigued by my journey of about twenty miles over the wintry snows, it was daylight before I awoke the next morning; and the first accents that saluted my ears were those of prayer. The father of the family had assembled all the inmates of his wigwam, and was, on their behalf and his own, sending up to the throne of the heavenly grace words of confession, petition, and intercession: the thoughts, and most of the words, being no other than those he had heard in the form of sound words, in which his minister, though at that time only a beginner in the knowledge of the native language, was able to conduct the public worship of God.

Having said thus much, it is scarcely necessary to add, that all public worship at this Mission is conducted according to the forms prescribed by the Prayer-book; and the Missionary regrets that he is not able to place a copy of that first of all human compositions in the hands of every individual of his

flock, to be not only their form of public, but their manual of social worship. For, though he has for some time had the various services, in manuscript, in the Ojibwa tongue for his own use in the desk, the Canadian Church has not been able to incur the expense of having it printed. But he trusts that this obstacle to his labours in the cause of the Gospel will soon be removed, as he has been instructed by his respected diocesan to memorialize the Venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, with a view to obtain such assistance as shall bring about the completion of this good work.

In order to give your Venerable Society, and those under whose notice this Report may fall, an idea of the usual routine of pastoral work at this Mission, I will lay before them an account of the labours of one week. Sunday commences with a Sunday School, in which the Missionary and his wife are the sole teachers, the schoolmaster not being able to render any assistance, owing to his not having acquired the language. This continues from nine o'clock, A.M., till eleven, by which time the Indians begin to assemble for morning worship, which is concluded, by a sermon in the native language, at about one, P.M. At half-past two, the whites, resident on the establishment, assemble for English service, which occupies till four, at which time the Indian congregation again assembles, when there is evening service, and an exposition of scripture by the Missionary in the native language.

On Monday morning, there is another service,

and a scripture exposition, and the same Wednesdays and Fridays; besides that, the holidays of the Church are kept, by having service, and an exposition of the particular passage of Scripture, set apart for consideration on each such occasion. This last mentioned ordinance of the Church has been found of eminent service in fixing on the minds of the native Christians the passages of Scripture, and with them the characters thus brought before them. Separate services are also usually had for the benefit of the whites on Saints'-days, and other holidays; three evenings in the week are devoted to the instruction of the native young men of the place, in Scripture, history, geography, &c.; and some of them, who have not yet learned to read, and are too much occupied during the day to attend the schoolmaster, receive, on these occasions, lessons from the Missionary. Besides these opportunities of instruction, the people are usually visited in their own houses, two or three hours daily being usually devoted to that branch of pastoral work.

The rubric, that requires communicants to notify to the curate their intention during the week, previous to the administration of the Holy Communion, is acted on, and thus an opportunity, equally delightful and profitable to minister and people, is afforded of examining into the advance in spiritual knowledge of the latter, and pointing out any inconsistencies of demeanour which may have occurred during the past month; and, on the whole, obtaining a more intimate acquaintance with the degree of

spiritual growth, which has, in that period, been made by each communicant. The establishment of monthly communion commenced after the visit of the Lord Bishop of Toronto to this Mission, in 1842, which was felt by all to be a time of refreshing from on high, and will long be remembered with gratitude by the sons and daughters of the forest, in whose temporal and eternal interests his lordship showed so much concern.

Besides the above-mentioned opportunities of scriptural instruction, afforded in obedience to the rubric of the Church, the natives are encouraged to come to the Missionary to inquire on any subject which may need further elucidation to their minds, and a time is set apart each day (except Saturday) at which he is at home to receive such inquirers. So generally do the more serious avail themselves of the permission, that this forms an important item in the labours of the Missionary,—indeed, preaching would be of little avail, unless it were accompanied by conversational explanation and enforcement.

One or two facts will serve to show the advantage of a constant Scriptural instruction to such a people as those of whom I treat. But, before I mention the particular circumstances which appear to me to be illustrative of that point, I would beg to record the general fact which would seem to bear the same way, that, notwithstanding the untiring efforts of the zealous emissaries of Rome, within the sphere included in this Mission, and their admirable system of having two Missionaries connected with the

neighbouring settlement, one stationary and the other travelling, not one of those who have since the commencement of the Mission been received into connexion with our Church, has, to my knowledge, either while a catechumen, or after baptism, been moved from his steadfastness, although no inconsiderable number of our congregation are converts from Romanism.

An old Indian woman, one of my communicants, on one occasion went over to the Roman Catholic settlement to visit some of her relations who live there, and, in the course of the day, she called on the priest, who began to extol his persuasion as the only one by which salvation could possibly be had. To enforce his arguments he produced some part of his vestments made of silk and richly embroidered with beads, &c., and displaying it before the eyes of her and her son, who was with her, said, "See, this is my ushwewen (weapon) against the devil, when he comes to attack me." The old woman made no reply to his controversial harangue, but soon left the settlement on her way home; as they walked along, she said to her son, "My son, did you hear what that Blackcoat said about the fine garment that he showed us; he said it was his ushwewen, but it is only made of silk. Our Blackcoat, (clergyman,) tells us of very different and much stronger ushwewen, even the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

During my absence, last summer, at the triennial visitation, an aged woman, also one of my commu-

nicants, fell sick of a disease attended with great pain, and which, in a few days, proved fatal. When she was known to be in a dangerous state she was visited by both the priests, accompanied by her Roman Catholic relatives, who joined in using the most earnest entreaties to her to die in the bosom of the true Church, as they styled it; but not all their persuasions could draw a word from this stedfast Christian, which, even they, could construe into an indication of her wavering in her Protestantism; and she frequently professed to those around her her desire to die leaning on the Gospel truths in which she had been instructed since she came to reside at this place.

But not only does Scriptural instruction furnish this people with a powerful defence from the errors of Romanism, it also supplies an effectual antidote to the fanaticism which is abroad in the present day, and has reached even unto them.

I was visited, some time ago, by Shengwokose, (little pine,) a Protestant chief from the Sault de St. Marie; in conversation he told me that he had been very much annoyed during the past winter by the efforts of Baptists and Methodists at that place, (they reside on the United States territory, but extend their operations to our side of the river,) to draw him and his people from their adherence to the Church of England. Among the extraordinary doctrines that had been advocated by the chief of the Baptist Missionaries, was, that the world would surely come to an end early in the ensuing spring.

But I will give the chief's own words. "The old man came to me just as we were preparing our sugar-boiling lodges, and, having looked very attentively at our work, he said to me, I do not tell you not to make sugar this spring, but this I tell you, that all you make will be of no use to you, for on a certain day in the next month the world will be burned up with fire, and all mankind be called to judgment. I made no remark in answer to what the old man said, but I pondered it well in my mind, and, in thinking of it, I wondered very much at what I had lately heard, for it appeared directly contrary to what I had heard from my own minister's reading the word of the Great Spirit, that no man knows of that day, not even the Son but the Father. However, I came to the conclusion, that, even supposing that what the old man said should turn out to be true, the word of the Great Spirit always says, that there is no harm in being found at one's lawful occupations. So, having finished the preparations for sugar-making, I and one of my young men set off on a hunting expedition some days before the time mentioned by the old man. The day appointed happened to be Sunday, so we did not do anything in our hunting, but rested all day by a fire that we made in the woods; the day continued throughout serene and beautiful, and not the slightest indication of change was to be seen over the heavens. At last the night came, and we laid ourselves down in the snow with our blankets around us, but, for a long time, I eyed the heavens above me to see if any

change would take place, but the same cloudless sky that was all day, continued at night, and I watched the stars till at last I fell asleep, and in the morning, when I awoke, the sun was already some length in the sky. I awoke my son, and said to him, Come, let us set off, it was all falsehood that the old man told us."

Those heathens, who profess a desire to be instructed in the truths of the Christian faith, with a view to baptism, are first enrolled as catechumens. When they have become acquainted with the leading truths of the Gospel, and have shown, by orderly conduct and regular attendance on the means of grace, that they are sincere in the desire professed by them, they are received into the Church by baptism, three persons being selected from the communicants to be witnesses to the vows made by the person baptized. That those who are thus selected to be godfathers and godmothers are capable of understanding the duties devolving on them, the following instance will show.

Two years ago I received into the Church by baptism two adult Indians, and, as usual, had three of the communicants as witnesses; to these I addressed the admonition to the witnesses contained in the service for adult baptism. Sometime after this, the female who had been godmother at this baptism, told me, at the end of morning service, that she wished to speak to me; on my inquiring what she wished to say, she asked me, did I not remember what I had said to her and the others who stood

beside such an one at his baptism. I answered in the affirmative. She then told me that she knew of the person for whom she stood having been guilty of a breach of his baptismal vows; and she wished to ask my advice as to whether it was not her duty to go to him and remind him of his vows, and tell him of the sin of what he had been doing. I, of course, highly approved of the proposed step, and the woman consequently waited on the individual, and her christian admonitions were not only well received, but attended with a very beneficial result.

I shall only add one instance more, to show, that the scriptural truths, in which the Indians are instructed at this Mission, exert an influence over those who receive them, which, even in the near prospect of death, gives joy and peace that passeth understanding. The woman of whom the foregoing fact is related, was, the winter before last, attacked with a malady which brought her to the very gates of death. So near did she at one time think her end to be, that she sent for all her children, and other relations, in order that she might take leave of them. I asked her some questions calculated to draw out her feelings at that trying hour. "Are you afraid to die?"—"No, not in the least degree." "Were you always so fearless of death?"—"Oh, no; I was once very much afraid to die." "What makes you different now?"—"I have at this place found the way of life, and therefore I am not afraid." "Is the good character you have constantly maintained the reason of your hope for eternal happiness?"—

“ Oh, no, that is not the reason.” “ If God were to deal with you according to your doings what would become of you hereafter?”—“ I should be cast in hell?” “ What then will deliver you from destruction?”—“ The Blood of the Son of God.” She recovered from this attack, and is still alive, adorning the doctrine of God, her Saviour, in all things.

Having thus stated the grounds for belief that the great Head of the Church has not withheld his sanction to the Missionary labour already performed under the auspices of our Church, as well as for confident hope that a corresponding success would attend further and more extended exertions in the same cause, I shall conclude by briefly stating the wants which are most felt as hindrances to the progress of this good work.

The first and chief thing needed is *clerical aid*. I would only add that our opponents, both Romish and Dissenting, proceed on the scriptural rule of having two or more labouring together, and perhaps no where is the want of such an arrangement more felt than at this Mission. Shut out during the winter months from all possibility of seeing and conferring with his clerical brethren, and during summer having to encounter a dangerous voyage of five or six days before he can arrive at the nearest station where a clerical brother is located, the Missionary is utterly precluded from the aid which brotherly advice and sympathy would afford.

The next want is that of a *suitable building to be devoted to sacred purposes*, there being, at present, nothing better than a log school-room, of very inadequate size, and, of course, utterly destitute of the decencies, not to say adornments, which befit the place where prayer is wont to be made. The want of room is felt at all times, but more especially at the period of the annual assemblage of Indians to the issue of presents at this place, when not one-half of those who would otherwise attend on the means of grace can be accommodated.

Of the *want of books*, which is the only other that I would mention at present, I have spoken above.

Praying that the Great Head of the Church may abundantly bless the labours of your benevolent Society for the spread of His Gospel in the world,

I am, &c.

FREDERICK A. O'MEARA.

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