



Very faithfully yours,  
J Ryerson.

Maclean & Co Lith. Toronto

HUDSON'S BAY;  
OR,  
A 'MISSIONARY TOUR

IN  
THE TERRITORY OF THE HON. HUDSON'S BAY .  
COMPANY,

BY THE REV. JOHN RYERSON,  
CO-DELEGATE, AND DEPUTATION TO THE WESLEYAN MIS-  
SIONS IN HUDSON'S BAY:

WITH BRIEF  
INTRODUCTORY MISSIONARY MEMORIALS,  
And Illustrations.

-----  
"THE DESERT SHALL REJOICE AND BLOSSOM."  
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## INTRODUCTORY

### MISSIONARY MEMORIALS.

We need not go to nature for "great and marvellous" phenomena, as if in that direction only they could be found. Modern Christianity has placed before the world objects more marvellous than any which nature presents; not by wealth and a sinister agency, nor by political policy, nor by the crosier, the sword, or the papal cross, certainly not by the miracles of imposture, but by a power too ethereal for sense, and too holy to have its source in man's depraved and sanguinary selfishness. Our prefatory pages are much too limited for amplification; but we mean by the marvellous, the distinguished and numerous CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY INSTITUTIONS which God has created,—phenomena this having a different aspect from nature's, and a profounder meaning,—more beautiful than the most finished symmetry of art, more sublime than the loftiest achievement of human energy, more important than the secular acts of the studio, the forum, the lyceum, the senate, or the throne; phenomena linking itself on the one hand with the will of God and redeeming love, and on the other with the hapless condition, salvation, and eternal destiny of Adam's race. And not in vain; for these Institutions—British, American, Continental, and Colonial, have made millions believers in Christianity, and millions more are on their way to the Cross. "It was," as Bishop Heber observes, "no superfluous revelation to confirm which so many miracles were wrought,



so many prophecies delivered, so pure and precious blood poured forth on the rocks of Calvary."

These monuments have been reared at great cost. What an expenditure, even to millions of pounds,—what thought, consultation, anxiety,—what self-reproaches for supineness, and purposes for full and uninterrupted consecration,—what assemblies, what advocacy, what appeals, what prayer,—what acts of dedication, what tearing away from kindred and country—embarkations—voyaging—trembling receptions among pagans—fears—labours—sufferings—temptations—perils—afflictions—bereavements! The price of conquest is life. Henry Martyn dies prematurely at Tocat, in Persia; John Williams is murdered in Polynesia; Threlfall by assassination falls in an African desert; Richard Williams is fished on the beach of Terre-del-Fuego.

These Institutions have given existence to a new and precious literature. We concede to no other publications the interest and usefulness which such as are Missionary possess. A Missionary library is one of the golden things which Missionary Associations have provided; and it is not meagre; and we are not ashamed of it either on plebian, or philosophic, or royal shelves. The author of "Hudson's Bay," to his praise, now contributes a Missionary volume for posterity.

These Institutions confer benefits which reach and raise the most dark, and degraded, and despised of the human species of every clime, by Him who is for "salvation unto the end of the earth." It is not admitted that man can receive any good which Christian Missions do not bestow. Let Tonga witness.

The benefits are personal, domestic, national; and to Christians there is brought back a reward and stimulus. The planting of Christian villages in barbarous regions, while it is an act of daring, confronting, as they do, remaining barbarism, is to beautify the earth; for we cannot conceive of an earthly scene more lovely, more needed, than a Missionary establishment in some valley, or on some summit or shore where the "father of lies" has from time immemorial had dominion. Here is the true picturesque for the man of taste and poetry. These labours of love are augmenting the renown of the Saviour, and giving majesty to the inimitable language of Missionary Associations, and pre-eminence to Protestantism. "Blessed be the Lord God!"

The basis of these Institutions,—be they Episcopal, Presbyterial, Congregational, Baptist, or Wesleyan, is Revelation, the unspeakable merits of Christ, and the seven-fold energies of the Holy Ghost,—all indispensable.

Concomitant with these immutable essentials there is needed an agency rich in spiritual attainments, sound sense, various gifts, physical ability, and indomitable will,—and for some positions, increasing yearly—learning, breeding, erudite application, and most patient research, and faultless judgment,—and in all, self-sacrifice, endurance, heroism, integrity, faith, in conjunction with mental independence, and official submission,—every motive sustained and sanctified by the conviction, that the call to, and the duties of, "this ministry" are imperative. A Native Agency has already settled the question of its utility by its efficiency. Of fidelity, one of the most popular

Missionaries of the Church of England exclaimed,—  
“Earth and hell shall never keep me back from my work.”

Female excellence is more and more demanded in the spheres where modern Missionaries move; and all Churches have their Hannahs and Marys. Names already enshrined in Missionary biography, and others unknown to the public, but not to God, have often exhibited a supernatural intrepidity; and cheered under sorrows when there was only the wife to soothe. We thank you, Christian heroines of the wilderness! Of Mrs. Judson it is said, she was the first female that ever left America as a Missionary. But the Mothers of Israel are the most munificent benefactors to Missionary Societies, and to mankind; and there is now hardly a vessel that goes far but takes gifted sons or daughters to the heathen. Of the mother of Swartz it is recorded—and let the record be imperishable—“When dying, she called her husband and her pastor to her bedside, and made known to them that she had devoted her son to God, and adjured them to train him up to His service alone.”

The means employed have been ample and select, but certain: the Scriptures, the pulpit, Christian fellowship, prayer; the press, translations, tracts, and other publications; day and Sabbath-schools, industrial schools, and higher institutions. With some tribes there have been long and depressing watchings for results, and years have fled before a Kaiarnac has stepped up to the table at which the Missionary read the story of the Mount of Olives; but many have at length, like that Greenlander, approached saying in loud and affecting voice, “How was that?

tell me once more, for I would fain be saved too." With other tribes the first impression has been so unexpectedly sudden and extensive that the servants of the Lord have been embarrassed by the jubilant shouts of converts.

It is delightful that the honours of the immense Missionary work are not exclusively obtained by any one Church. The catalogue of diverse translations of the Scriptures, printed by the colossal British and Foreign Bible Society, proclaims this grateful fact, that many minds, and many Churches have contributed to open the Inspired Volume to all nations.

Kingdoms, States, Provinces, Territories, and Islands have conspired to invest with magnificence the Protestant Missionary undertaking: but none will say we are invidious when we distinguish the radiant Royal Isle across the Atlantic, which James Montgomery said was a "little paradise," and "worth the price it cost."

"I love Thee,—when I hear thy voice  
Bid a despairing *world* rejoice,  
And loud from shore to shore proclaim,  
In *every* tongue, MESSIAH'S name!"

However much of joy and profit attends such a survey of the general Missionary work, we must proceed to specify a well-known Institution—the WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY of Great Britain, whose operations are closely connected with the publication of this volume.

For the reasons of its success we are not to go to philosophy, to morality, to sentimentalism, but to the bottom of the Wesleyan movement; and one word will supply every reason—Love. Wesley believed and avowed, in the face of the fair but fatal

dogmatism of Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, the universality of man's corruption and condemnation, and insisted that Divine Love pitied the whole depraved race, and devised a universal Remedy ; that the same love made justification by faith, and sanctification from all sin here, and now blessings accessible to all. This was his adamantine standing-place, and his doctrine, and its felt power made him emphatic, whether at Oxford, in the "house," or in the amphitheatre at Gwennap. This has been the standing-place of his successors, and it has been their concern to inherit his faith, his ardour, his emphasis. First, the love of God ; secondly, Christian love inspired by it. Here is the "magic" key to the entire "mystery" of Wesleyan success and enterprise.

We submit this as the sole test for critics and censors, though a Sydney Smith, or a Southey be among them. As to its Doctrines, whether alluring or alarming, they would not have been promulgated had they been any other than the pronouncements of Divine Love : and when the Wesleyan Missionary has gone forth with them, what but love could follow the tones of love ? As to its Spirit, the love of Christ has first been in the heart, and everything else has followed. This has produced sanctity,—pietism, expansiveness, yearnings, promptings ; this has given clearness to the vision when men far from God had to be sought ; swiftmess to the feet when they had to be pursued ; tears over their woes when found ; extacy when reclaimed. This has made Wesleyan Missionaries pioneers to the Churches. As to its means, they are expressly divine, and prudential ; and when we say prudential, we intend to be under-

stood as saying divine in principle. How simple the system of preaching the Word, of reading it, of prayer to God, of the communion of saints! Where these are, the "Bread-fruit-tree" towers in perennial verdure and beauty, and satisfies not its dependants, as naturally it does in Southern climes, with only four delicate and wholesome crops a year, but all the year; and while that national tree is food, clothing, and habitation to the listless people, this still better production of Divine beneficence, which flourishes in the North as in the South, is every thing to man. As to its Discipline, the world knows it is promotive of order, liberty, manliness, piety, safety, happiness, and usefulness. Its jurisprudence is paternal: indeed Wesley made it that providentially; and the British Conference, "through honour and dishonour," wisely saves from demolition its palladium of Connectionalism, and benignantly maintains its patriarchal character. There are, then, the doctrines of love, the spirit of love, the means of love, the government of love; and everywhere the dauntless aggressions of love, for the rescue of man, and for the glory of Christ.

From the establishment of Wesleyan Methodism in England these have been its fundamentals; and when its Missionary Society had to be organized, others were not required. These essentials were plastic enough for compression within the bounds of Britain; they were expansive enough for the globe. The presiding Spirit was there as at every former advance of the Methodists, and nothing was necessary but to give the vitality of their faith and system a new direction. As in the case of language the grammar comes after terms and phrases, so in this case, Method-

ism was always Missionary; sent its first foreign Missionaries out in 1769; but did not form its Missionary Society until 1816: and before its formation the Wesleyans had more than one hundred Missionaries in different parts of the world, and many District Missionary Societies in England. This is not the order of worldly men. The Methodists did the work largely first, and then God moulded it.

Dr. Coke had wept burning tears for India before the Conference, and was about to depart with seven men of his own spirit. The Rev. George Morley had recommended the formation of a Society for Leeds, and the Rev Jabez Bunting had brought his great mind to bear on the novel subject, and in October, 1813, a public meeting was held in Methodist Leeds, though the fearful doubted, and sceptics laughed at this innovation. Thomas Thompson, Esq., won the first honours of chairmanship under such circumstances; "and the interest created was deep and extensive." That celebrated Missionary advocate, Richard Watson, preached one of the sermons from the lofty invocation, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live;" and it was then that he uttered the conviction of the Wesleyan body: "The valley is still full of dead. It is only in a few places on its verge that the prophets of the Lord are seen. . . . On the rest of the valley the gloom of despair settles, and sin and death hold undisturbed dominion." This was the commencement of Missionary Meetings among the Methodists; and they have ministered to the delight of tens of thousands—millions since; have emancipated many minds from their littleness: furnished an amazing impulse.

to the Gospel chariot; and given to the religion, generosity, and efforts of the Wesleyan community an unprecedented eminence and glory.

It has been difficult to say whether the Heathen have been more benefitted by the disinterested services of British Methodists, than British Methodism has been ennobled by Christianized Heathenism. Happy reciprocity—ample repayment!

The re-invigoration of the Body has often been the effect of this reciprocity, and in conjunction with the stated means and usages the graces and gifts of many members have been discovered, and called into requisition for the service of the Church in remote countries. While the christianity of the Wesleys is known for its life and activity, it will be so; and the admirable Wesleyan Theological Institution shall continue to send forth to every land Christian and Wesleyan labourers able to say, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

We want space to ensure deserved conspicuousness to the names of Missionaries which the Wesleyan Society can claim. What form of credulity and atheism has abashed them? What iniquity, what scene of blood and of cannibalism deterred them? What strong hold of pantheism, of polytheism, of polygamy, of incantation, imposture, and devilism have they not assailed? But they have given sanctity to the vile—made attractive the abhorrent—convinced and calmed the ferocious! We shall not go to Clarendon or Macaulay for the moral sublime while we have Wesleyan annals. Hamilton, of Leeds, was right when



he said, "Here is a form of character,—original, unparalleled."

We must remark briefly, that whether opposition to this Society has been stealthy or open,—whether it has come from a Korah, a Shemai, or a Philistine, it has been repelled. It has lengthened the list of the world's worthies. It has found authorship for many priceless Missionary publications. It has made practicable a Lay Agency, and taught the incredulous, that however much the ordained ministry is in the order of God, he calls and owns other faithful coadjutors. Many Churches have been provoked to imitation.

This volume is too pleasing an evidence of the diffusiveness of Wesleyan Missions for us to forget to remark, that this Society is possessed of inherent powers of propogation; and its recent ecclesiastical proceedings in the Colonies, have reminded us forcibly of the journeys of the Apostle of the Gentiles. The inspiring watchword is—"To the regions beyond!" A missionary body is a true propogation society. Wesleyan Methodism in the British Colonies of America, Africa, and Asia is a transcript of Home Methodism in doctrines, means, and discipline; but forbearance on this prolific, happy topic is, for want of space, our duty. What transformations take place! What consummations are the new Colonial Conferences! The members many of them are far away; but they are of the legitimate progeny, the same love in their hearts, and the same Scriptures their heritage. Hereditary Wesleyanism! First a sermon from some Missionary, and a few are converted and united in class, and the few are a society, and

the society becomes a circuit, and the circuit a district, and the district districts, and the districts a Conference. There is an imperial tree whose rich and beneficent branches stretch, and bend, and strike,—and stretching farther still, bend, and strike again, and in its welcome recesses whole families take shelter, and pluck its fruit. What shall we call thee, thou British Parent Wesleyan Missionary Society?—A sacred Gospel Banyan!

This Society had, in 1854, 367 Central Stations in different parts of the world—not cramped positions, but many of them embracing much country, or tens of thousands of human beings, on perhaps, fifteen or twenty islands, with a paid agent on each, superintended by European or other Ministers; 3116 Chapels, or other places of worship; 507 Missionaries; 706 other salaried Agents; 8779 gratuitous laborers; 115,000 persons in the Church; and nearly 90,000 in schools—Sabbath, day, and superior. Its spacious and classic Mission House in London shows what the opulence of a Missionary community can do; and its Missionary Museum is enriched with objects that enchant the Missionary heart more than the ancient or modern splendors of the British Museum. Of the executive of the Society what can be said when such are the results, but that the General Committee, and Secretaries, and Treasurers have been, and are men of sanctified motive, comprehensive observation, inflexible fidelity, and commanding abilities? Comparison is not made for sectarian purposes, but thankfully, that the care and power of God may be known; yet here is a Missionary status—geographical, numerical, financial, educational, and spiritual not

reached by any other Society of a voluntary Church. And still keeping the primitive calling of Methodism in view, the "spread of scriptural holiness," there is sung in many tongues with anticipation and confidence, as when the joys of its primeval converts rewarded expectation, and the Holy Spirit encouraged the Society's Managers to progress—

"Thy people saved below,  
From every sinful stain,  
Shall multiply and grow,  
If thy command ordain;  
And one into a thousand rise,  
And spread thy praise through earth and skies!"

Much space would be necessary for the astonishing history of the METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, in the United States, originated by the Rev. John Wesley, A. M. With America upon his heart, he apostolically asked at the Conference of 1769,—who will go? and Boardman and Pilmoor rose, and each with Lutheran simplicity replied, "I will go." They came, they laboured, they conquered; and since their day, with Asburys, McKendries, and Heddings for Bishops, what pioneering, toils, sacrifices, vigilance, perils, valour, hardihood, revivals, enlargement, victories! The candour of General Conference documents has acknowledged the aid of British Methodism, which had no distant country at first from which to draw talent, members, and tried rule and usage; but from Britain subsidies like these have year after year with emigration been generously granted by Providence.

Despite persecution and obloquy, from the Lakes to the Gulph of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific—and farther still—the Methodism of the States has spread—not devastation, like the prairie fire—but the doctrines of "Christ crucified," and

"the beauties of holiness." The Membership of all its sections there, we believe, is about fifteen hundred thousand; its Hearers five or six millions; its Ministers eight thousand; its Schools, Academies, Colleges, and Universities numerous; its Book establishments massive and very popular; its Churches and other properties more accumulated than those of any other Church; and its vast Missionary field is glorious for benevolence and triumph. Here is displayed by the faithfulness of the Omnipotent, and in brilliant circumstances, a sublime answer to Deborah's sublime prayer: "Let them that love Him be as the sun, when he goeth forth in his might."

Thirty years ago the MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA was founded. In the memorable year of 1791 the New York Conference of the Methodist Church sent the first Methodist Missionary to Upper Canada, and very soon other ministers, —and these, with able ministers from the British Conference, laboured and fainted not, though ruggedness, hardships, dangers, sufferings met them in their progress, and ecclesiastical dislike misrepresented, and political zealots calumniated them. The Canada Conference has now within its jurisdiction more than 200 Circuits and Missions; more than 270 Evangelists; about 30,000 members; its funds liberally supported; its College, Industrial Institutions, and Schools very successful; its Book Room, and periodicals widely patronised; and its noble Missionary Society had, with an increase of £1800, an income last year of £7,500.

The Wesleyans of Canada have always felt that their resolution to supply the new settlers with the

Gospel, involved duty, piety, patriotism, and loyalty; the civil, educational, and commercial progress, and religious happiness, and greatness of Canada; and they are fully aware of the indissoluble connexion there is between their prolonged services, and the past and present marked prosperity of the country,—a prosperity resulting as well, in various degrees, from the services of other Protestant Churches. No work done by the Wesleyans has been more joyous, and sooner rewarded effort, than that among the Aborigines of the wilds. Providence has made it apparent that to the Wesleyans, chiefly, has been committed Indian elevation. As the early, judicious, and unwearied friend of the Red Tribes, we rejoice to mention with gratefulness the venerable Wm. Case, yet living to publish the Lamb of God; and we anticipate that, when dying, the words of the departing Missionary, Elliot, at the age of ninety, will be his: "Let no dark cloud rest on the work of the Indians: let it live when I am dead."

At a time when the Wesleyans of Canada were steadily discharging their prescribed duties as witnesses for their Lord, and rejoicing in their successfulness, and in their connexional harmony, and increasing facilities, and were resolved on greater things, and a wider outlet for their benevolent feelings was a desideratum, the Parent Missionary Society of England, in the most honorable manner, generously arranged that its Missions in Eastern Canada, and in Hudson's Bay Territory, should be incorporated with the Wesleyan Methodism of Western Canada; and the English Conference of 1854 consummated the union of the West, the East, and the North

with paternal cordiality. That both Conferences readily and affectionately agreed on the preliminaries; that the respected ministerial and lay brethren in the East acted with unanimity; that the Eastern department is very valuable; that Hudson's Bay is a very important acquisition, is very gratifying to us to acknowledge; but judging from the last Address of the Canadian to the English Conference, and the facts of the case, it is evident, as the Address states, that "the happy and important consummation in which we exult is mainly to be attributed" to the Rev. Enoch Wood, now for eight years the valued President of the Canada Conference, and for four years the General Superintendent of Wesleyan Missions in Canada and Hudson's Bay.

About the period when the negotiations were began, there was a conviction on the mind of the Rev. John Ryerson, the Wesleyan Co-Delegate, that he had a duty to perform for the Wesleyan Missions and pagan tribes of the Hudson's Bay Territory, and such was its vivid and abiding character, that he willingly, and in the fear of God, offered himself for a tour of Missionary exploration, regardless of the obstacles and dangers which presented themselves. We thought then, as we do now, that the hand was held out which guided Wesley in his wondrous way. The Missionary Board of Management selected him as its Deputation to the Wesleyan Missions in that Territory, and the Conference approved of the selection, reluctantly consenting to be deprived of his counsels for a protracted period. Last June, after a deeply interesting valedictory service had been held, he commenced his journey, accompanied by devoted

brethren, the Rev. Messrs Thomas Hurlburt, Robert Brooking, and Allen Salt, an ordained Native Missionary, and their families. As they left Canada with many prayers and warm regards,—so they were cheered on their tedious way with marks of respect, and received at their appointed posts of labour with much courtesy and hospitality by the official gentlemen at the forts of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company.

The Deputation relates in his letters, now published, his progress through the Territory, and its interesting condition, making it supererogatory for us to do it. He returned after an almost fatal voyage by way of England, where he was greeted by the Parent Missionary Committee as a brother beloved, and a faithful messenger of the Wesleyan Church in Canada. Not until winter had commenced did he reach home, and in excellent health and spirits; and there he had the inexpressible joy of making this record at the beginning of his fifteenth Letter: "I had travelled nearly ten thousand miles; was exposed to all kinds of weather; endured all kinds of fatigue; was exposed to all kinds of danger, yet without receiving any personal injury, or being one day detained during the whole tour by sickness." At the first meeting of Missionary Board, held at the Conference Office in Toronto, after his return, while the preserving care of Almighty God was devoutly acknowledged, the meeting with a sincere welcome, unanimously presented to the esteemed Deputation "its very cordial thanks for his able and successful management of the important Mission which, in the spirit of self-denial, he so cheerfully undertook."

This elegant and useful Volume is among the first-fruits of his important Mission, and is published very opportunely. It is written with perspicuity, ability, and force ; the topics are very numerous, well selected, and the statements original and authentic ; its descriptions of novel scenery natural and correct ; the subjects of soil, productions, agriculture, extent of country, and of the establishments, travel, trade, government of the Hudson's Bay Company, well and instructively brought out. The arrangements of Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Territory, conducted much to Mr. Ryerson's comfort, and facilities for observation. There is much for the tourist, the merchant, and the christian. The chief value of the author's work is derived from the intelligence it communicates of the number, habits, and wants of the population of the distant and unique region ; the state of mind, body, morals, and religion there it presents ; the readiness of the people to receive religious and secular instruction ; the immensity of the mental and moral field for cultivation ; the condition of the Wesleyan and other Missions ; and the numerous, inviting openings for the Gospel. For these reasons and for reasons of economy, this reliable volume will be a valuable directory for the Managers of the Wesleyan Missionary Society and others for many years.

As the first volume published at the Book Room by the Wesleyan Missionary Society of Canada ; and so beautiful in its typography and illustrations, it must gratify the Managers,—and further, that the author is an influential official member of the Canada Conference. Still more, this volume exceedingly gratifies



us as it is a production of Wesleyan unity in Canada and Hudson's Bay ; and as such it is commended to the Ministry and Laity of the Wesleyan family in Canada, and to the patrons of Christian Missions in British North America, the United States, and Great Britain.

Co-operation for Christ is the duty of all who glorify Christ. The Wesleyan Missionary Society is one in object, spirit, purpose with the illustrious Protestant Missionary Societies of the age ; and with that prince of writers, Dr. Harris, we say, "Nothing shall be too great for them to attempt ; and every conflict shall be a victory." The present demand of the waking world is for sanctified men, talent, aggressiveness, heroic zeal, faith, intercession, and systematic benevolence. What shall the result of Christian Missions be a century hence ? What when millennium wonders and delights come ? What when the many souls saved shall have been gathered from the east and west, and sat down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven ? There is effort needed : there is a day of remuneration promised. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

J. SCOTT.

C. W., May 1st, 1855.

## LETTER I.

FORT WILLIAM.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

Owing to the detention, by fog, of the river mail boat, we did not leave Kingston until eight o'clock on Friday evening, June 9th, and consequently did not reach Hamilton before a quarter to three the next day—Saturday. This was thirty-five minutes before the time for the cars leaving; plenty of time to have got our baggage on board, and to have gone with that train. But for the want of knowing *which way* to proceed, and the total neglect of the managers of the railroad, to send any one to *their own wharf* (to which the steamer went in order that the passengers might reach the cars in time,) to direct the passengers, we failed in getting our trunks in the baggage-car before the train was off. I have travelled a good deal, but so ill and shamefully-managed an affair, I never before witnessed. The cars kept running backwards and forwards, not stopping three minutes in any one place, the porters and carters running and driving first one way then another, hallooing, one one thing, and another, another thing, until the independent gentlemen, as it would seem, having sufficiently sported themselves with our confusion and perplexity, started off. Mrs. Ryerson had got into the car, and was taken

on, while I and the luggage were left behind. This caused me a detention of nine hours at Hamilton, and the night train meeting no train from Brantford at Paris, I was there detained five hours more, so that I did not reach Brantford until Sabbath morning at 9 o'clock. All this detention, causing, as it did, an additional expense of between four and five dollars, was anything but pleasant. I have heard a good deal about the completeness of the "Great Western Railroad," and the punctual regularity and correctness with which its matters were managed; but everything I saw in going from Hamilton to Windsor made a very different impression on my mind. I saw baggage most shamefully handled. At the Paris station trunks were thrown out of the baggage-car on the platform, a distance of several feet, with such violence as to endanger the trunks being crushed to pieces; in one of my trunks articles of considerable value were destroyed. The man, while dashing the baggage out of the car in this manner, was at the same time swearing most profanely because some one did not come to help him; but whether it was to help him to swear, or destroy the luggage, I did not ascertain. The night cars arrived at Hamilton an hour behind their time, and the Monday express train was equally late; and being behind our time the train had to wait at Chatham some fifty minutes for the Western train; so that we did not arrive at Windsor until nine o'clock, instead of fifteen minutes of seven. In

Detroit I stopped at the "National Hotel," a large and well-kept house.

At ten o'clock on Tuesday morning, on board the American Steamer \_\_\_\_\_, I started for Sault Ste. Marie. This was one of the most splendid vessels I ever saw, and the tables, attendance, &c. were in complete agreement with the beauty and elegance of the ship. There were between two and three hundred cabin passengers on board. In the middle of Lake St. Clair, where the channel for large vessels is not more than four or five rods wide, there had grounded a large propeller, which totally choked up the channel; not being able to proceed, we came to anchor: there were collected about this unfortunate propeller ten or twelve steamers and sailing-vessels. Some of these vessels were assisting in towing the propeller off; others, like ourselves, were detained, not being able to pass, all the navigable waters in this part of the lake, for large vessels, being *monopolized* by this monster water-craft. However, after a detention of five hours, the propeller was got off, and we were enabled to proceed on our voyage, which we did with great speed, as the weather was remarkably fine, and our ship was a very fast sailer. In the middle of Lake Huron, we came up with an old steamboat, without an engine, from Cleveland, loaded with coal; this huge concern we took in tow, and had the honour of leading her all the way to the Sault; but the pleasure that such a leading position might have caused, was very much lessened by this

piece of gallantry, very much retarding our progress. These Americans know well how to kill "two birds with one stone;" for while towing the coal ship along, the men were employed in supplying the steamer with coal for the voyage to the Sault and back again to Detroit. I never saw a finer article of the kind than this Ohio coal; it is singular to me that more of it is not used in Canada. We arrived at the Sault on Wednesday the 15th, at 7 A. M. Shortly after, Mr. Brooking came over from the Canada side, and conducted me across the river to a very comfortable Hotel, kept by a Mr. Pien, where I met the whole party in good health and spirits, and ready to embark in the Company's schooner, lying at the upper end of the rapids. The village on the American side of the river is pleasantly situated; and is a beautiful little town. It is a military port and naval depot, and has a strong post, in which there are stationed fifty or sixty soldiers. The Sault Canal, which is intended to connect the waters of the Lake Superior, and its tributary rivers, with the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean, is now being made. When finished, it will be a work of great magnificence and inconceivable utility, connecting, as it will, these immense Western waters, and opening the trade of these vast regions with the Atlantic, and the cities of the old world. The canal is intended to be sufficiently large for vessels of the largest size to pass through; it will be a mile and three hundred feet long, 120 feet wide on the top, and of a depth to allow of vessels draw-

ing twelve feet of water to pass through. The lockage is only about twenty-two feet ; the fall of the river being only a few inches over twenty feet. The Company engaged with the American Government to build the canal for six hundred thousand acres of land, and it is said that by the transaction thy will make immense riches. John Hargrave, Esquire, is the gentleman in charge of the Hudson's Bay stores and affairs at the Sault.— From this gentleman we received very kind attention. Mr. H. did everything he could to provide our company with necessaries, and conveniences to make our voyage and journey comfortable and pleasant. I shall always entertain a pleasurable and grateful recollection of the noble hospitality of Mr. H. and his excellent lady, with whom our party had the pleasure of taking dinner before embarking on board of the schooner. We went on board at four p. m., but did not sail until next morning at day-break. The "Isabella" is a fine vessel of eighty-six tons burthen. She is exceedingly strong and well made, built after the old English style of ships. The Captain, a plain, sensible man, well acquainted with his business—treated us with great kindness and respect, and did everything he could to promote the comfort of our company. Fourteen miles from Sault Ste. Marie, just before we enter Lake Superior, we pass an Indian Mission, belonging to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. This Mission was commenced between two and three years ago, a number of

Indians have been converted, and joined to the Church, a school has been established, and the Mission at the present is in a very prosperous state. There is a Church, parsonage, and a number of Indian houses in the village. The Missionary Society has built a substantial wharf for the accommodation of vessels sailing on the lake, and the Lake Superior steamers stop here and take in wood, which is supplied by the Indians, and proves to them quite a source of revenue.

Our captain told me that quite a number of Indians from Moose Factory, at the South end of Hudson's Bay, had left their old residence and were settling in the neighbourhood of this mission, that they might enjoy, as in time past, the instruction of Methodist Missionaries, and receive the ordinances as administered by Wesleyan Clergymen.

Fifteen miles north-west of the Methodist Mission Station, is a Baptist Mission among the Indians. The Missionary is a Mr. Campbell, who was educated for, and ordained a Minister in the Episcopal Church in Canada. Mr. C. was appointed by the Bishop of Toronto to be Missionary to the Indians and half-breeds on the Canada side of the Sault, the Protestant part of which consists of about 150 souls. But Mr. C. became acquainted with the Baptist Minister residing on the *American* side of the river, and by this Baptist man, was converted to the doctrine of Anti-pedobaptism, and joined the Baptist Church. Mr. C. is now a zealous Missionary

under the direction of the Baptist Missionary Society in the United States.

All day on Thursday we were sailing before a pleasant breeze at the rate of five or six knots an hour, but about eight in the evening the wind died away ; so that we made very little progress during the night. Friday morning it was almost a perfect calm ; not a breath of air to be felt, although there was so much of a swell as to produce a little rolling of the vessel—sufficient to cause illness with some of our party, especially Mrs. Salt, who was something more than comfortably *sea-sick*.

This morning we caught a very fine salmontrout : it weighed twelve or fourteen pounds, and upon which we made an excellent breakfast ; made the more pleasant because of the novelty of taking it on the deck of our *petit vaisseau*. We are now quite near the shore of this iron-bound lake, as it is usually designated, and certainly it is very properly named. A more sterile, dreary-looking region I never saw ; one barren waste of rocks, rising one above the other, some of the peaks to very great height, and covered with very little vegetation. All along the shore of the lake there are bold prominences and high cliffs, for each of which our captain had a name. On one of these mountain-heights, the Indian tradition says, that Nanabashoo had his residence, whose wonderful doings in days of yore, we have frequently heard, Peter Jones and others relate.

At half past one o'clock, P. M., we arrived at



Michipicoton, one of the North-west Company's stations, situated at the mouth of the river of the same name, and distant from Sault Ste. Marie 120 miles. A large cove at the mouth of this river makes an excellent harbour ; the water in the cove is from two to six fathoms deep, and of a surface sufficiently large to give commodious anchorage to two hundred vessels of every size. The entrance to the harbour is very easy, and the anchorage ground of the best quality. On one side of the cove there is a kind of indenture of flat and arable land of several acres ; and it is said that the Roman Catholics intend building a village here, and establishing an Indian Mission. Our vessel being deeply laden, could not go up to the Station establishment, which lies some distance up the river ; we therefore came to an anchor in the lower part of the harbour, some three miles distant from the Station.

At four o'clock, two boats came to take our company and some portion of the cargo to the Depot on shore, where we arrived safely about six o'clock, and were very kindly received by Mr. McKenzie, the gentleman in charge of the Station. By this gentleman we were treated with much attention and kindness during our stay at Michipicoton. At eleven o'clock on Sabbath, I preached to a small company, consisting of our party, the officers in charge of the station, the captain of our schooner, his wife, and several other persons belonging to the establishment. In the afternoon Mr. Salt preached to the Indians,

the congregation numbering about twenty. These simple children of the forest listened with great attention to the word, and seemed to be affected by it. In the evening, I married a Frenchman to an Indian woman, both of whom conducted themselves with serious propriety ; much more so than many persons whom I have married elsewhere.

Monday, at nine o'clock, we left the Michipicoton Station, and returned to our vessel, but were not able to set sail and resume our voyage until near twelve o'clock. Our schooner got out of the cove without difficulty ; but there being scarcely any wind, we made but slow progress during most of the day. We sailed along near the shore, on the land or rocks adjacent to which hardly a green thing is to be seen. I was told that a few years ago most of every living thing of a vegetable kind, all over the country was destroyed by fire, since which it has presented little to the view except one interminable waste of sterile and barren rocks.

We had on board four men, miners from Cornwall, England, on their way to Michipicoton Island, to be employed as laborers in a copper mine belonging to a company in Montreal. This Island lies north-west from Michipicoton Station about thirty miles. In order to land these men, we "*hove-to*," and not being able to discover the landing-place because of the thick fog, we were compelled to stay there until morning. During the time the wind died

away, and by the force of the current, we came nigh being drifted on shore : but fortunately when near the shore, we found *soundings* ; and so we then "cast forth the anchor, and wished for the day." But when the day came, no wind came ; however after waiting with some anxiety for several hours, a light breeze sprung up, which enabled our skilful captain to extricate us from our rather uncomfortable situation.

On this island there are two mines, one of silver and one of copper ; I did not learn whether or not they both belonged to the same Company. Both of these mines are now being successfully worked. One of the miners informed me that the silver mine produced last year seven or eight barrels of very rich ore, which was sent to England to be smelted. About eleven o'clock in the day the wind began to rise, and continued to rise until it blew nearly a gale, accompanied with rain, which made it much more disagreeable, as it drove all our company, and the captain's wife, who was on board, into the cabin—a room not more than twelve feet square. You may judge what kind of grotesque appearance we made ; sixteen of us, with some dozen trunks and carpet-bags, the women and children sick, Mr. H. lying on his back groaning, and with others, looking terrible things, and all in the space too small for a *petite chambre*. I enquired next morning of Mr. Salt, how he had got on the night before. He said he was not sick, but he saw some things that liked to have made him sick. I told him I heard things

I thought equally calculated to produce *maladie*. Fortunately for myself I was not sick, although a poor sailor, and much subject to sea-sickness. Brother Brooking was also quite well, but Mrs. B. and the little girl suffered greatly.

Tuesday the 20th, the wind was very light all day, and part of the time what little wind there was, was against us, so we made very little progress during the day. In the course of the day we passed the head of "Isle Royal" a long island belonging to the United States. This Island is sixty miles long, and averages from six to eight miles in breadth. There are a number of rich copper mines on it that are now being worked by American Companies. Indeed this whole country seems to be rich in minerals, and abounds with rich ores of silver, copper, and very likely gold also. At Sault Ste. Marie, I saw a piece of pure virgin copper, weighing 3,200 pounds, taken out of the Copper Harbour Mine—a mine belonging to an American Company, and situated three hundred miles north west of the Sault, on the South side of the Lake. There are two hundred miners constantly employed at this mine. The "Eagle Mines" are ten miles distant from the Copper, and are as extensive as the Copper, and there are also employed working them 200 men. At both of these mines immense quantities of copper are procured in its pure state without the least admixture of alloy; and I was told by persons well qualified to judge, that minerals and metals would be found as

rich and in as great abundance on the British as on the American side of these immense waters, if sought for, and worked with equal skill and diligence.

Thursday evening at half-past eight o'clock we came to anchor in "Thunder Bay," three miles distant from Fort William ; but it being too late to land, we remained on board until next morning.

Friday morning a boat was sent to take us and our luggage on shore, where we arrived about half-past seven o'clock, and were very respectfully received by Mr. Boucher, the gentleman in charge of the Station. The canoes which are to take us to Norway House have not yet arrived, and are not expected before the 30th inst., or the 1st of July, so that it is probable we shall be detained here a week or ten days.

The "Isabella" returns to Sault Ste. Marie immediately, so I have not time to write any more, or correct, much less to re-write what I put down on paper during my six days' voyage on board of our little ship "Isabella." We were just a week from Sault Ste. Marie to Fort William. By Sir George Simpson, whom I expect to meet between this and the Winnepeg Lake, I will send you some additional notices.

I am, as ever, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Yours most respectfully,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood,

President of the Conf., &c. &c. &c.

## LETTER II.

FORT WILLIAM, July 3rd, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

I closed my last letter by mentioning that we had just arrived at this place, and were kindly received by Mr. Boucher, the Superintendent of the Station. Fort William is an old business depot, established, in the first place, and occupied many years by the "North West Company ;" but when that Company was merged in the Hudson's Bay Company, this station with all the other stations and property belonging to the former, were transferred to the latter corporation. There was formerly a fort here, as its name signifies. The enclosure was four square, and made of high strong pickets. At each corner of the enclosure there was some sort of a *tower*. All that now remains of these fortifications and buildings, is an almost dilapidated block-house, and a large fire-proof store-house, built of stone, with a tin roof and iron window shutters. The walls of this singular looking and most substantial building, are three and a half feet thick ; indeed such is the massiveness of the walls and compactness of the entire structure, that it is said nothing ever freezes in it during the coldest winters, notwithstanding the intensity of the frosts in this northern latitude.

The scenery around Fort William is rather pretty.

In the immediate vicinity, the land consisting of an alluvial soil, is entirely flat, covered with small hemlock trees and willow bushes; but in the distance rise stupendous and rugged mountains, and in the opposite direction, or to the left as you face the river, the noble expanse of the Lake Superior, with hundreds of rocky and mineral islands on its mighty bosom, and thousands of abrupt and towering hills on its shores, stretch out to the horizon. The Station, which is situated at the mouth of the Hamenistaquoia River, has a large farm connected with it, on which they raise barley, peas, potatoes, and garden vegetables of every kind. They also keep horses, horned cattle, sheep, and hogs. They usually have from fifteen to twenty-five cows. In their dairy, they make not only what cheese and butter the Fort William Station requires, but, more or less supply other stations with these articles. There is also an observatory here,—or as the Captain of the *Isabella* called it, “a look-out place,”—from which you have an extensive view of the surrounding scenery and Lake Superior. There are a large number of *canotes de maitre*, or very large canoes, always kept at this Station; indeed they are made here for the use of the Company's agents and other travellers. The canoes are kept in a large house built for this purpose. It requires four men to carry one of these large canoes, whereas two men are sufficient to carry the lighter canoes of the north.

They are paddled or rowed by ten, twelve or sixteen men. There are now building two very fine canoes of this large class, for the purpose of conveying Sir George Simpson and his party to the Sault Ste. Marie, on their return from Norway House and the Red River.

Sabbath, the 25th, we had divine service in the dining-room, which was attended by Mr. Boucher and a number of the persons belonging to the establishment. In the afternoon, Mr. Salt went over the river and held a meeting with a number of pagan Indians. There were encamped on that side of the river eight or ten families to whom Mr. S. gave a word of exhortation, and sung and prayed with them. Mr. S. says they seemed desirous to receive instruction, and listened with attention to his address. Mr. S. agreed to visit them again next Sabbath, should we remain so long in the place, and the Indians expressed a strong desire that he should do so, and promised to let others know, and get together of their people as many as they could at the time.

I baptized the infant daughter of Mr. McKenzie, the "chief trader" of Michipicoton station, his lady and children not having yet gone down, he having been but lately removed to that place. Mrs. McKenzie requested me to *re-baptize* another of her children, who had been baptised by a Roman Catholic priest—no other minister being accessible. But this I was compelled to decline doing, not believing



re-baptism lawful, although the baptism had been performed by a person not duly authorized, or even by a false teacher of religion.

Monday morning, the 25th, in company with Messrs. Brooking and Salt, in a bark canoe, I went on a hunting and fishing excursion to the mouth of the 'River DuCurre' a place seven miles distant from Fort William. In the morning when we started, the wind was favourable, but we had hardly got out of the river on the lake, when the wind shifted round and came strongly against us, so that although we used our paddles and oars with all the *skill* and application we were capable of, yet we did not reach the place of our destination until after one o'clock which was two hours and a-half from the time we started. This was my first experiment in the business of hunting and fishing; and but for my fish-line breaking, and my gun missing fire, when the one should have showed itself a true conservative and the other a real progressionist, I should have caught a fish and killed a partridge—but to my great disappointment, just as I brought a large speckled trout to the top of the water, my fish-line broke and away went the trout, line, hook, and all: and after displaying some skill in hunting, as I think, I came near a partridge, which was pointed out to me by Mr. Brooking, who, by-the-bye, made as great a fuss about it as an Indian would have made in meeting with a drove of buffaloes. Well, I presented Mr.

Salt's rifle in due order at the bird, which was not more than two rods from me, but the gun missed fire, and snapped the second time, when the bird walked off—not deigning to fly—with as much indifference as though I and my gun too were unworthy of its notice.

The River Du Curren is about as large as the River Humber, near Toronto. Some twenty rods from the mouth there is a fall in the water of about twenty feet. The fall is not perpendicular, but nearly so, presenting to the eye a large surface of white foam, which, at a distance, has the appearance of a bank of snow. At these falls, water-power to any amount could be obtained. The land for a large distance round is very rich, and no doubt could be most profitably cultivated. At 6½ p. m., we left our fishing-ground to return home, where we arrived safely at 8 o'clock. This was my first and probably will be my last fishing and hunting-day.

Wednesday, the 28th, I availed myself of the kind offer of J. Willson, Esq., Custom-House officer, at Sault Ste. Marie, who was on an exploring tour along the North Shore of Lake Superior, in company with Messrs. H., B. and S., to a seat in his boat, to visit the Roman Catholic Mission Establishment. This is beautifully located on the bank of the river, about a mile and a half above Fort-William depot. I called on the Rev. Mr. Shuny, the superintending priest of the Station, who received and

treated us with courteous respect. I had an half-hour's conversation with Mr. Shuny, and learned from him that it had been between three and four years since the commencement of the mission ; that he himself, assisted by one or two men, part of the time, had built the church and parsonage ; that there are now between twenty-five and thirty dwelling-houses in the village, occupied by the Indians, and that Indian families were constantly coming to the station for the purpose of building and settling in the village. The church is comfortable, and, for the place, is a fine building. It is built of logs and neatly clap-boarded, it is about 30 by 40 feet in size, (with the addition of a large vestry at the back end,) and will accommodate from 200 to 300 persons. The parsonage is a neat house, 30 by 36 feet on the ground, and one story high. It is built of logs, clap-boarded, and painted white. The building of these two substantial structures, with a number of out-houses, &c., was accomplished principally by Mr. S.'s own hands, and during the same time he performed his ordinary work as priest, besides assisting in the day school, visiting it twice every day, catechising and instructing the children. Mr. S. has only been eight or nine years among the Indians, yet speaks their language fluently, and preaches in it with great ease. His bed-room is also his workshop, study, and sitting-room. In one corner of the room is the bed, consisting of a pillow and two buffalo skins ; in another corner of the room

are wide shelves, holding his carpenter and joiner tools, and in another corner is his desk, writing-apparatus, and a few books ; in another part of the room a box, stool, and two chairs. I remarked to our brethren, that such laborious and self-denying zeal was worthy of a better cause than the spreading of Popery, and that it was humiliating to ourselves, contrasted with the exertion and success of some of our own missionaries, who seemed to measure out their work, both with regard to kind and extent, with as much care and exactness as a Jew would measure silk velvet. I recollect one missionary, if not more than one, who objected to teaching a day-school on the ground that it was not quite canonical, and was beneath the dignity of the ministerial office ; that he was called to be a minister and not a school-teacher. One thing is certain, that the Roman Catholic missionaries throughout these extensive regions, in zeal, in labour, self-denial, and in success in *their work*, are much, very much before us, and unless we bestir ourselves with very much more united, earnest, and *persevering* exertion than what we yet have, this whole country will be over-spread and hedged in with the briars, thorns, and hedges of popery.

July the 1st. This is the ninth day since we came to this place, and the canoes that are to convey us to the Norway House have not yet arrived. Of course we are now looking for them with some degree of anxiety. Since I came here I have been

as comfortable as circumstances would admit. To be sure my bed was not very fine or downy, but it was the best that, for the time being, I could procure. It consisted of three boards and three or four Indian blankets, with my over coat for a pillow. But two nights since, the thing on which my bed rested, called a bedstead, gave way, and down went one end of my three boards, and their incumbent, on the floor. Well, next morning I reported in due form the disaster to the Superintendent of the Station, and forthwith the carpenter was sent for to examine the state of affairs, and make the necessary repairs. When the carpenter came, who proved to be a farmer also—an old intelligent Scotchman from Glasgow, by the name of McIntyre—he inquired where *my bed was* ; and being informed that all the furniture of my dormitory was before him, he shook his head, and expressed surprise that the establishment could afford nothing better. Well, having repaired my *bedstead*, the old farmer went home, but shortly after returned with his good old lady, bringing with him a fine buffalo-robe and a large nice pillow for my bed ; and then, in the evening, the servant man, John, a Highland Scotchman, brought to my room his own little feather-bed, which he *would have* me take and use during the remainder of my stay at Fort William. So, after this, I luxuriated on a comfortable feather-bed until I left for the North ; and then these honest and noble-hearted people insisted that I should take the pillow with me, which I did, and at the same time not forgetting

to remunerate them for their disinterested and Christian kindness—simple, but noble generosity, which I take great pleasure in recording, and shall always have pleasure in recollecting.

Sabbath, 2nd July. This is the 2nd Sabbath and the warmest day we have had since coming to Fort William. At 11 o'clock we again had divine service. Mr. Hurlburt preached and led the religious exercises. In addition to the company present last Sabbath, this day we had Mr. Willson from Sault Ste. Marie, who was present and took part with us in our devotions. In the afternoon, Mr. Salt, accompanied by Mr. Hurlburt, again visited and held a meeting with the band of pagan Indians on the other side of the river. All the Indians in the encampment attended the meeting, and, besides, there were present two or three Roman Catholics and other Indians, who had been called to the meeting by the party belonging to the camps. The brethren say that the Indians listened with great attention to their address, and manifested a still stronger desire than the last Sabbath, to be taught the "*new way*."

This evening at 8 o'clock the canoes arrived, and well pleased we were to see them. As the voyagers will require rest, we cannot leave Fort William before Wednesday morning; in the mean time, we shall be very busily employed in making preparatory arrangements for our long voyage. By Mr. Black, a passenger in the canoes from Red River, I received a letter from Sir George Simpson, in which his Excel-

lency says, that with the canoes, and at the *stations*, every possible arrangements had been made to provide for our safety and comfort during the voyage. His Excellency also says that he expects to meet us somewhere this side of Lac la Pluie. By Sir George, should we meet him, I will endeavour to send you a few lines; otherwise it is not likely that you will hear from me again until after my arrival in England.

I send this letter by Mr. Black, who is on his way to Scotland, and who will leave this to-morrow morning. With the exception of a few days little indisposition, I have been quite well since leaving home.

I am, as ever, Rev. and Dear Sir,  
Yours very respectfully,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. ENOCH WOOD,  
President of the Conference,  
&c., &c., &c.

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### LETTER III.

FORT ALEXANDER, July 20th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

Monday and Tuesday, the 3rd and 4th inst., were busy days with us. The voyageurs were engaged in washing, drying, and in making various preparations for a long voyage; the people belonging to the station were busy in preparing *three new* canoes, and in arranging our provisions, equipage, &c., &c.

The canoes provided for us were entirely new ; we saw them launched, or put into the water for the first time. They are indeed very fine water crafts. The *birch bark* canoe in which I go is thirty-three feet long, five feet two inches wide in the middle, from whence it tapers to both ends ; it is two feet three inches deep, and will carry twenty hundred weight, with six or eight voyageurs. Our luggage, &c., will weigh fourteen or fifteen hundred ; then there are Mr. and Mrs. Brooking, child, and myself, passengers, and six voyageurs. The other canoes are nearly as heavily laden as ours.

We commenced getting our things to the landing, and loading our canoes, immediately after breakfast, on the morning of the fifth inst., but were not ready to start before 12½ o'clock. Our "shoving off" and getting under way was an exciting time. Three such large canoes, carrying so large a company, all abreast, and propelled with eighteen paddles, striking the water with as much uniform exactness as the step of the best drilled soldiers, the voyageurs striking up the Canadian boat song, were scenes more exciting to me, by a great deal, than anything I ever experienced in embarking on a sea-voyage. We paddled on until three o'clock, and then stopped for dinner, which detained us an hour. After taking our repast, "all seated on the ground," we resumed our voyage, which we continued to prosecute with great energy until 7 o'clock, when we stopped for the night on a pleasant spot of ground, twenty-six miles distant from the place of embarking at 12½



o'clock. This was our first night of "camping out," and to me it seemed novel enough. We had three tents, one occupied by Mr. Hurlburt and family, one by Mr. Salt and family, and one by Mr. Brook-  
ing and family, and myself. Our tent was very large, and therefore accommodated Mr. B. and family, and myself, without inconvenience. The servant man, Francis, whom Sir George had kindly provided for me, and who was of great service to us the whole voyage to Norway House, had the tea made, and all matters connected properly arranged in the space of a half hour, and we sat down to our table on the ground, with appetites well prepared to do justice to the good things that a watchful Providence had provided for us in the wilderness. The mosquitoes were exceedingly troublesome; and although during the first night of our encamping we were not troubled with the *black* fly, yet, for several days subsequently, this little winged insect was to us a source of no little annoyance.

On Thursday morning, at 3½ o'clock, we were called by the guidé, Jock, and were in our canoes, under weigh, by fifteen minutes past four. We had now to encounter numerous and very strong rapids, so that we did not reach the mountain portage, only distant twelve miles from where we slept the night before, until 2½ o'clock. The Kaminirtaquoiah River I found to be a much larger stream than I had supposed from its appearance at the mouth. In depth and width it is equal to the Grand River between Brantford and Dunnville. The banks were

age in height from eight to twenty feet ; the soil is alluvial and very rich. In it grow trees of large size and rich and most beautiful foliage. The vegetation all along its banks is remarkably thrifty and luxuriant in its appearance. The land is well timbered : there are found, in great abundance, the fir tree, birch, the tamarack, the poplar, the elm, and the spruce. There is also the white pine—but not in great plenty. I saw wild hops and peas in great abundance, and some bushes and other flowering shrubs in full bloom, in many places covering the banks down to the very margin of the river, adorning them with beauty and filling the air with fragrance. Indeed the land on this river, up to the mountain portage, and, I am told, for a long way back, is unsurpassed, in richness and beauty, by any lands in British America ; and now that the Sault Ste. Marie canal is being made, which will open a water communication from the Lake Superior to the Atlantic Ocean, I hope these fertile lands will soon be settled, and that there will be seen, at no very remote period, in this now almost interminable wilderness, flourishing agriculture, villages, and towns. In company with Mr. Salt, I went to see the waterfall in this river, called the "Mountain Fall," which I was told was in this vicinity. We had great difficulty in finding it at first, but, guided by its thundering roar, through such a thicket of brush, thorns, and briers, as I never before thought of, we reached the spot from whence it was visible. Certainly a grander waterfall I never saw. The whole river

plunged in one broad white sheet, through a space not more than fifty feet wide, and over a precipice higher, by many feet, than the Niagara Falls. The concave sheet comes together about three-fourths of the way to the bottom, from whence the spray springs high into the air, bedewing and whitening the precipitous and wild-looking crags with which the fall is compassed, and clothing with drapery of foam the gloomy pines that hang about the clefts and fissures of the rocks ; indeed the falls and the whole surrounding scenery, for sublimity, wildness, and novel grandeur, exceed anything of the kind I ever saw. Thursday evening was clear and pleasant ; but in the night the sky quickly became overcast with clouds, and it commenced raining, and continued to rain until morning, so that in the morning the bushes and grass were thoroughly saturated with water ; and our way, for some distance, being principally over portages, one succeeding another in quick succession, and one of them being more than a half mile long, we were induced to remain until the middle of the day, to give the bushes and grass time to dry. At 1½ we left our place of encampment, and in the distance of five miles passed three portages—one of which was long and difficult ; at the end of it our guide determined to stop and camp for the night. It was early, but a difficult road of rapids and waterfalls was before us ; and, besides, it looked very much like rain ; and indeed we had hardly got our tents pitched when the storm was upon us in almost irresistible fury. But fiercely as



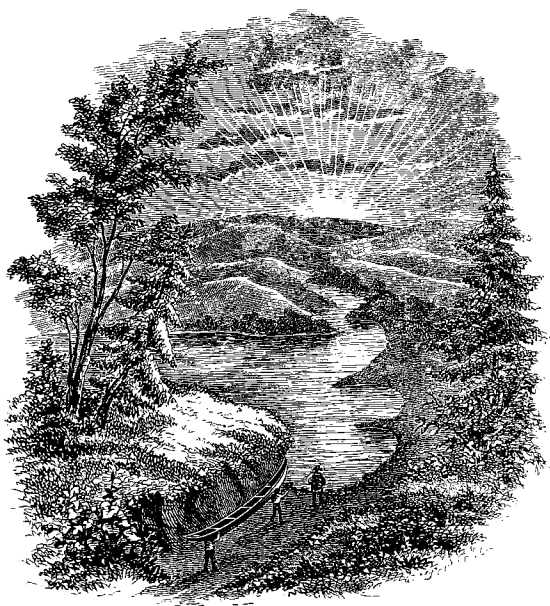


PULLING A CANOE UP THE RAPIDS.

the storm commenced, it continued greatly to increase, the loud rattling thunder, the vivid and forked lightning, the torrents of rain coming down as though poured out of buckets, the wavering and rocking of the trees, and the howling of the forest, all constituted such a scene of majestic and *terrific* grandeur as I do not wish again to witness. The water came down in such torrents as to flood the ground: one part of the *floor* of our tent served as a channel for a creek. But after two hours continuance, the storm subsided, and we were enabled so to adjust matters to the exigency of the times as to get part of a night's comfortable repose, notwithstanding the *tornado* through which we had passed.

Saturday morning we started at four o'clock. During the day we passed a large number of strong and some dangerous rapids. Several times the canoe, in spite of the most strenuous exertion of the men, was driven back; such was the violence of the currents. Several times the men had to get out of the canoe and attach to it a long rope, while they at the other end would wend their way along the shore, sometimes up to their middle in water, sometimes crawling, creeping amidst the briars and thorns, and clinging to the rocks and bushes on the bank of the river. On one occasion such was the violence of the currents, that though four strong men were holding the rope, it was wrenched out of their hands in an instant, and we were hurried down the rapid with

violent speed, at the mercy of the foaming waves and irresistible torrent, until fortunately, in safety, we reached an eddy below. After a good while spent in fixing and arranging, we were enabled to resume the perilous effort to ascend this torrent-rapid, which, happily for us, proved successful, and we found ourselves, by the mercy of Providence, at the upper end of this cataract; but not without having received great damage to our canoe. The canoe was badly broken in several places, but by continual bailing she kept afloat until we got to a suitable landing, when the men took her out of the water and repaired her. These perilous accidents occasioned us a detention of more than three hours. Towards the close of the day we entered a little lake called Lac Du Chien or Dog Lake, at the far end of which we came to a portage of the same name, and said by our voyageurs to be three miles long, although to me it seemed to be a good deal less than this distance. We made the portage the same evening, and put up for the night at the far side. It was after dark before all our things were over, our tents pitched and we prepared to commence preparations for supper, which was not over and we reclining on our terra firma bed until eleven o'clock. This portage is called Chien, or Dog Portage: it is the same name as the little lake you pass in coming to it; and the beautiful sheet of water, about fifty or sixty miles in circumference, you cross immediately on leaving it, is known by the same name also. The Chien



PORTAGE DU CHIEN.





Portage is the first *long* portage I made: I endured the fatigue of it, although I carried several parcels, with little inconvenience.

On the morning of the 9th, we crossed the Chien Du Lac, a distance of fifteen miles, and at the other side we entered a beautiful river of the same name. Near the mouth of the river we passed a point of land or rocks, on which there still stands the remains of an old breast-work fortification, said to have been built many years ago by the Indians. I was told that one time a body of the Sault Indians concealed themselves behind this breast work when ten canoes of their enemies were passing, upon whom they fired, and with one single exception, killed and destroyed every one in the ten canoes. The Indian who escaped saved himself by jumping into the water, and swimming to an island between two and three miles distant.

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#### LETTER IV.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

We were three hours crossing the Lac du Chien or Dog Lake; on the other side we entered a beautiful river of the same name, up which we paddled for two hours, when we stopped to take dinner.

The land is beautiful, rich and well timbered on both sides of this river for the distance of more than twenty-five miles from its mouth. A most de-

lightful settlement could be formed here, and, if the Hudson's-Bay Company would encourage it, no doubt would be formed in a very short time. Along the banks of the river Du Chien I noticed the first Norway pine that I had seen since coming into the territory : it was generally of the middling size, very straight and free from knots. *At 3½ o'clock on the 10th*, our guide called us : by four o'clock we were in our canoes and paddling on our way. We had not gone far when we entered a succession of small lakes, dotted all over with little islands covered with grass and willow bushes. This day at five o'clock p. m., we reached the Savan or Prairie Portage, the height of land between Fort-William and York Depots. It is between three and four miles long, and a continuous cedar-swamp from one end to the other, and is therefore very properly named the *savan* or *swamp* portage. This portage is the dividing ridge between the lakes Superior and Winnipeg, and lies 840 feet above them, and 1,683 feet above the sea. In going from Lake Superior to these *high* lands of swamps, which separate the waters flowing into Hudson's Bay from those flowing into Lake Superior, you ascend 830 feet ; and from thence to Lake Winnipeg you descend 853 feet ; and from Lake Winnipeg to York Depot, at Hudson's Bay, you descend 830 feet more ; making the whole descent from the Savan-portage to York-depot, 1,683 feet. We passed on the portage a short distance, and finding a *dry spot*, we pitched our tents, and arranged to make this little spot our lodging-place for the night. Most of our luggage was taken over

the portage this evening, but the canoes were not taken over until next morning. During the night I suffered much from the cold: it was the coldest night I ever experienced in this season of the year; the ice formed half an inch thick. Very early in the morning of the 11th, we struck our tents, and, after an hour and a half hard working and wading, not so much fatigued as I expected to be, I found myself at the far end of the portage, on the shore of a small lake, the waters of which, the Indians say, empty themselves through the Albany River, into the south end of Hudson's Bay. On Wednesday morning, the 12th instant, at four o'clock, we started down the Savan River, which, in this part, runs at the rate of two miles an hour. We were now fairly embarked on the waters that flow into Hudson's Bay, and the pleasure of finding myself once more sailing *down* stream, was truly delicious; rendered much the more so, by the toil and danger of the uphill work we had had for the past six days. We had proceeded on our voyage this morning about six miles, when we met Sir George Simpson, and Mr. Hopkins, his private secretary, who were on their return from the Norway House and Red River.—His Excellency had two canoes, each manned with eight men. These canoes were of the same size with our own, but fitted up in a more elegant, or at least a more fantastic style. I had the pleasure of being informed by Sir George, that instructions had been given to the Company's officers at all the stations we should pass, to provide for us every necessary,

and to convey us on our way with the least possible delay ; that a house had been provided for Mr. Salt and his family, at Lac La Pluie, and that the Honourable Hudson's-Bay Company had granted £50 per annum to each of our missions in the territory. His Excellency saluted me very cordially, and with his usual frankness and kindness expressed his hearty wishes for the health and safety of the missionary families, and the success of our missionary work. After parting with Sir George, we proceeded on our way three or four miles, and then stopped for breakfast. After breakfast we had not gone but a mile or two, when we were suddenly stopped by a *jam* in the river, that stopped up the channel, and closed the passage, so that we were compelled to make a full portage. This was very annoying, having so lately been quite "*used up*" by this portage business. But it was no use to murmur ; the trees and driftwood heeded not our complaints ; so at work we went, and despite of the perplexing *jam*, we made the portage, and in an hour and a half, we were in our canoes, voyaging on again. This afternoon Mr. Brooking had the good fortune to shoot a fine duck, upon which, in the evening, we made an excellent supper.

The river Savan empties into the Lac Du Mille, or the Lake of 'Thousands, so called because of the innumerable islands which are in it. I should judge that this lake is sixty or seventy miles in circumference ; we were five hours in crossing it. At 7½ o'clock, we reached the other side of the lake, and

camped on a rocky point just at the mouth of the river Du Mille. The water in this lake and river looks much clearer and is very much better tasted than any of the waters through which we have passed since leaving Fort William ; but the country for many miles is extremely rocky and barren, totally unfit for any agricultural purposes.

Thursday morning the 13th, I rose at 3 o'clock, and the old guide not yet moving I called out at the top of my voice, *lève, lève, lève* ; this soon brought the old fellow from his bed of *down* and he repeated my call for the men to rise. By 3½ we were fairly "under way," and the weather being cool and the water smooth we made rapid progress for three hours, when we came to a short but very precipitous and high portage, which in crossing and getting breakfast, took us more than two hours.—The scenery all along this chain of lakes, is most attractive and delightful. We are now alongside of Mr. Salt's canoe, and the men of both canoes are singing one of their Canadian boat-songs, which over the calm waters, and amidst the surrounding islands, sounds enchantingly delightful. At five o'clock we arrived at the French Portage, the fourth that we had made during the day. The canoes and our luggage were carried over, our tents were pitched, and we were partaking with a good relish, of our evening's repast, before nine o'clock. At the point where this portage is usually made, it is more than two miles long, but the water this year in the streams

and lakes being remarkably high, our guide succeeded in descending the rapids a much greater distance than is usually safe to attempt, so that the portage where we made it was not more than a quarter of a mile in length. My friends thought that I should not be able to endure the fatigue of walking over the portages ; but thus far I have done so without experiencing much inconvenience, and over almost every portage that we have yet made, I have carried a carpet-bag, sometimes two, besides my blankets, pillow, &c. Our whole way to-day has been through a series of little lakes, narrow and rapid rivers and streams. The land continues to present little else than sterility and barrenness, a continual succession of hill and dale, of rocks and swamps ; yet the vegetation looks thrifty and the foliage exceedingly rich and luxuriant. The timber principally consists of birch, spruce, tamarack, large quantities of Norway pine and a few scattering white pine. To-day I saw in many places wild gooseberries, currants, strawberries, and flowers of great beauty in great abundance, some as beautiful water lilies as ever I saw anywhere, quite equal in loveliness to any I have seen in England raised in hot houses at great expense. Friday, the 14th, rose at 3 o'clock and as the old guide and all the rest of the voyageurs and passengers too, were fast asleep. I called the guide, who soon had the men and all concerned "fixing" to start. At a quarter to four we were on our journey. This morning until 10 o'clock we

were wending our way down a creek, a more crooked and intricate one than which was never navigated by anything in the shape of a water craft ; it was one unceasing succession of crooks, windings, and turnings, and so short the turns and so narrow the passage in hundreds of places, that it seemed impossible that the canoes could float or pass through them. The men dozens of times had to jump out of the canoes and quite carry them. It had rained the night before, so that the trees and bushes were thoroughly saturated with water ; and from the boughs hanging over our course and through which we had to force our way, we got more than comfortably wet. At 10 o'clock reached the Lac du Mort, a small lake into which this horrible stream of water empties itself: here we stopped for breakfast ; after which we resumed our journey and made sixteen miles of the voyage over the " Lake of Death," when at 2 o'clock we put ashore on a rocky island, for dinner: a few miles from our dining place we came to the Portage du Mort, a quarter of a mile long, at the other side of which, crossing a little lake, half a mile in breadth, we came to another portage of the length of the Portage du Mort ; we made this Portage, and at the far end pitched our tents and put up for the night. The 15th: this morning we did not rise until fifteen minutes to 4 o'clock, so that it was half-past four by the time we started. We are now on Sturgeon Lake, a sheet of water fifteen or twenty miles long and averaging from two



to three miles in breath. We stopped and took breakfast on a large rock in the middle of the lake. Mr. Hurlburt showed me with what wonderful facility the bark is taken off the birch tree. It is cut round at each end, and parted up and down by the point of a knife, when it quite turns from the tree of itself, as though contrary to nature it had been compelled to circle the tree but as soon as loosed from its bonds, by its own native elasticity, it is expanded and leaves its confinement. During the fore part of the day we passed five rapids and made two portages. The scenery of a rapid is an exciting thing : upon nearing the head of a strong rapid the men make every possible effort to urge the canoe forward faster than the water so that it may steer the better; the bowsmen and the steersman stand erect, guiding the frail bark through the smoother places in the current, which hisses and foams around you as if eager to devour you. Now we rush with rapid speed towards a rock against which the water dashes with fearful fury, and to a person unaccustomed to such scenes, you appear to be on the point of destruction, but one vigorous stroke of the paddle from the bowsmen and the steersman, sends the light craft at a sharp angle from the impending danger, and away you plunge again over the surging waters, sometimes floating for a minute in a small eddy, and hovering as though to choose your path, and then, again plunging swiftly forward through the windings of the stream, till having passed the whole in

safety, you float in the smooth water below, It was raining hard when at two o'clock we stopped for dinner, but our cook, Francis, and the other men of the canoe soon had our tents pitched, into which Mr. and Mrs. B. entered while I went under the canoe, and sat down or rather laid down, on the ground, to write. Though the rain continued to fall heavily yet immediately after dinner we again took to our paddles, at which we industriously toiled till half after six, when we put ashore on a narrow point of land that projects into the lake, where we pitched our tents and it still continuing to rain, we made the best preparation we could for safety and rest during the night. It being Saturday evening it became my duty to shave ; a duty that I had not had the trouble of performing since the Saturday evening previous. I had to shave and attend to the other matters of the toilet in the open air ; in this spacious apartment I was shaving, dressing, and taking a *shower bath* pretty much at the same time ; but though I had so many irons in the fire, none of them seemed to burn until I went to put away my tools, when I found it rather a perplexing business to dress, dry my razor, &c., in the midst of a rain-storm. To-day we did not start until very late: the heavy rain of the previous day and night, and the consequent fatigue and exposure of the men, rendered a little rest and an opportunity of drying clothes, &c., necessary. Six miles from our night's lodging-place, at the commencement of the River Mechagu, we came to a portage made round a splen-

did fall in the water, of between thirty and forty feet. The fall is not quite perpendicular, but is precipitated down the banks with great force, presenting a sheet of foaming whiteness and surpassing beauty. The stream is perhaps ten rods wide, divided in the middle by a little island of rocks, upon which, in apparent thriftiness, there is growing a clump of Norway pine and fir trees. Were these falls in the neighborhood of the civilized world, they would deservedly excite more attention than nine-tenths of the curiosities of this kind, now so famed in Europe and America. A short distance from the fall-portage, we came to a series of rapids, extending more than a mile. I had passed a great number of rapids before, but had seen nothing to be compared with these; I will not attempt to describe them, or to portray the scene of our little fleet of bark canoes, conveying passengers and voyagers, to the number of thirty-three persons, dashing into the foaming water, whose confused and tumultuous billows, which by the violence of the current, are thrown up to four times the height of the canoe, in the midst of which, you would not suppose that the frail bark would live an instant; but the tiny thing flies on at lightning speed; and before you have time to fear, you find yourself safe in the tranquil and unruffled waters below, retaining no marks of your precipitate passage, but the little wetting you may have got from the spray thrown up by the dashing of the waves, and the jumping, running,

skipping of the nutshell crafts in the midst, over, and through them.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,  
Very faithfully yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood.

Savan Portage, July 10th, 1854.

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LETTER V.

PORTAGE OF THE FALLS, July 21st, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

From the Mile rapids, the distance of two or three miles, we entered the small lake Namacan, which is about nine miles across. The wind was blowing freshly and directly against us, but the voyageurs worked at their paddles bravely, and we made good progress. At 7 o'clock, we stopped for the night on a little island of rocks, where we found not enough of earth to hold our tent pins, and we had to fasten the sides of the tent with poles and stones. To-day, we passed several Indian camps, and there came out to us from them several canoes. One was paddled by two little girls. They were in a state of perfect nudity, with the exception of a rag about the lower parts of their bodies. They were fine looking children, apparently sisters, of ten and twelve years of age. A man in another canoe was also naked, with the exception

of a piece of blanket about his waist; he was in stature six feet high, and was of a build every way in proportion, and had a manly, generous, open countenance: he, with several other Indians, saluted us in a manner most friendly, followed us to the next portage, and assisted us in making it. I like the appearance and bearing of these Indians much, and have no doubt that were religious teachers sent to them, they would receive the Gospel and become Christians. On the morning of the 17th, I was up, and called the men before 3 o'clock, and we were in our canoe, pursuing our journey by half after three; eight miles of paddling brought us to a short portage, which we made, and then after a half mile of water carriage we reached the portage Neafs, at the far end of which we entered a river of the same name; on this river we paddled seven miles, when we arrived at the east end of Lac-La-Pluie, where we stopped, and on the surface of a smooth rock took our breakfast. Along, for forty or fifty miles past I have noticed several kinds of wood, that I had not seen before since leaving Sault Ste. Marie, such as iron-wood, maple, both soft and hard, and a few white oak trees of very small growth. Lac-La-Pluie, or the Rainy Lake, is a beautiful sheet of water, it is forty-eight miles long, and averages about ten miles in breadth. The wind was fair, so we sailed delightfully before the pleasant breeze until near noon, when the wind dying away, we again took to our paddles. Notwithstanding that the after part of the day was excessively hot

and sultry, the men worked exceedingly hard, being resolved, if possible, to reach Lac-La-Pluie that night. During the day we made two portages, and travelled fifty-five miles. We arrived at Lac-La-Pluie before 8 o'clock : Mr. Johnson, the gentleman in charge of Fort Frances, was not at home, but we were received with great kindness by the chief clerk, whose name I do not now recollect, who did everything he could to make us comfortable during our stay, and to supply us with such things as we needed when we departed. Fort Frances, so called in honour of the late lady of Sir George Simpson, is rather an old building, situated at the bottom of a small bay or curve in the river, near the foot, and fronting a magnificent water-fall, whose soft and melodious sound forms a ceaseless music to the inhabitants. The site of the Fort is admirably chosen, and the scenery in all directions unsurpassed in richness and beauty.

July the 18th.—Lac-La-Pluie, you will recollect, is the place where Mr. Salt is to be stationed, so this morning we had the discomfort of parting with him. As a good man, and Christian minister, I very much esteem Mr. Salt. He daily grew in my affections and confidence during the month of our journeying together. On his way to Montreal, Sir George Simpson had given directions to have a house, &c., prepared for Mr. Salt and his family, on their arrival, which was done accordingly, and we found things in readiness ; and I believe every thing

that can be, will be done to make our excellent missionary and his excellent companion as comfortable as circumstances will admit. Before leaving the Fort, I had an interview through Mr. Salt, as interpreter, with six or seven of the Indians. One of them was an old conjuror, representing himself as commissioned to speak on behalf of the other Indians : he said that they had heard of our coming, that they had held a council respecting the object of our mission, and had determined *not* to receive the gospel and become Christians, but were resolved to stick to the religion and customs of their fathers. I, of course, endeavoured to convince him that such a determination was very wicked, and that if persisted in, would destroy him and his people. The clerk afterwards informed us, that the statements of this old conjuror could not be relied on, that he knew there were many of the Lac-La-Pluie Indians who were desirous to secure Christian instruction, and to have a school for their children. I cannot speak very confidently of Mr. Salt's prospects, but as yet I have seen nor heard nothing that is particularly discouraging, but on the contrary, I believe that the Head of the church is directing this movement, and that the Gospel will yet prove the power of God unto the salvation of many of the poor benighted and degraded Lac-La-Pluie Indians. Messrs. Hurlburt and Brooking did not go on to-day but proposed to remain until next morning, in order to give their ladies an opportunity to do something in the culinary business, and time for

putting things in order. I was much affected, and found it difficult to suppress my feelings on parting with Mr. and Mrs. Salt. May our heavenly Father graciously protect them, and underneath and around them, place his everlasting arm. We left at 10 o'clock; it was raining at the time, and the gentlemen in charge and our company thought that I should not start in the rain, but having done what I had to do at Lac La Pluie in making arrangements for Mr. Salt, and having no time to lose, I determined to be off without further delay, notwithstanding the unpropitiousness of the weather. Our canoe now being lightly loaded, and having six able voyageurs, and the swift current of the Lac-La-Pluie River in our favour, we made rapid progress, and by seven and a half P. M., had shortened the distance which I had to travel from Fort Frances to Fort Alexander, forty miles. The Lac-La-Pluie River is a magnificent stream of water: it is decidedly the most beautiful river of any I have seen since coming into the territory. It has a rapid current, and is about a quarter of a mile wide; its noble banks are covered with the richest foliage of every hue: the trees along them are large and more varied than any I have yet seen: ash, poplar, cedar, red and white pines, oak and birch, and an abundance of flowers of gaudy and variegated colours everywhere beautify the scene. Large quantities of as rich and fine land as is to be found in America also lies along on both banks of this splendid river. The climate is also very fine, and as thriving a set-



tlement of agriculturists and trades-people could be formed here as are found in Canada. On our way to-day I shot a duck, and just before we put ashore for the night, there appeared on the beach a black bear ; he stood looking at us until we came within forty yards of him : as I presented the gun he turned to scamper off ; I fired, but there being nothing but shot in the gun it is likely I did not hit him ; although the report of the gun, or something else, very materially quickened Bruin's speed. While seated on the ground in my little tent, the fish gambolling and jumping in the water of the river that is flowing hard by, and the voyageurs soundly sleeping and lustily snoring around the door of my tent, I write these lines in reference to the doings and scenes of the day, and as it is now 12 o'clock, and we have to start to-morrow morning at 3 o'clock, I must lay down to rest or sleep the remaining three hours of the night, if I can.

Wednesday morning at 2½ o'clock, Jock, the guide, called us, and before 3 o'clock we were all on board, and our ship was under way. At 12 o'clock we reached the mouth of the Lac-La-Pluie River, which empties itself into Lac-Du-Bois, or Lake of the Woods, as it is now frequently called. The Lake of the Woods is a splendid sheet of water sixty-eight miles in length, and from fifteen to twenty-five miles in breadth ; dotted all over with hundreds of beautiful islands, many of which are covered with a heavy and luxuriant foliage. At 2

o'clock we put ashore on a rocky island for dinner. The men seemed tired or lazy, and for the past few hours we made but comparatively slow progress, and I was glad when the canoe was turned to the shore, hoping that some refreshment would renew their strength, or reanimate their industry.

We did not get away from our dining place until fifteen minutes to 4 o'clock ; soon after we started the wind began to rise, and continued to rise until it blew nearly a gale ; we were driven quite out of our right course ; the canoe shipped a good deal of water, and we were ultimately compelled to take shelter behind a rocky point that projected a long way into the lake. It was with much difficulty that we made the shore, but having succeeded in doing so, we found a suitable place for pitching our tent, and for our abode during the night. Gladly did I find this resting place, rude and wild though it was. How sweet is a place of repose and safety after a season of exposure, trial and anxiety.

July 20th—The wind blew very hard during the night and continued to blow until 6½ o'clock in the morning when it began to abate, and by 8 o'clock it had entirely subsided. We breakfasted before starting, but the day being calm and clear and our voyageurs working incessantly, we found at night that we had voyaged a long distance. It is impossible to describe the beauty, and with any degree of accuracy, to state the number of islands in this lake.

It is not surprising that as Mr. Ballantyne with his voyageurs "floated out upon the glorious expanse of Lac-Du-Bois," he should have been excited with feelings that occasioned the following eloquent remarks :—"There is nothing, I think, better calculated to awaken the more solemn feelings of our nature, [unless, indeed, it be the thrilling tones of sacred music] than these noble lakes, studded with innumerable islets, suddenly bursting on the traveller's view as he emerges from the sombre forest rivers of the American wilderness. The clear unruffled water, stretching out to the horizon—here intersecting the heavy and luxuriant foliage of an hundred wooded isles, or reflecting the wood-clad mountains on its margin, clothed in all the variegated hues of autumn; and there glittering with dazzling brilliancy in the bright rays of the evening sun, or rippling among the reeds and rushes of some shallow bay, where hundreds of wild fowl chatter as they feed with varied cry, rendering more apparent, rather than disturbing, the solemn stillness of the scene: all tend to raise the soul from nature up to nature's God, and remind one of the beautiful passage of Scripture, 'O Lord, how marvellous are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.'" This afternoon, an Indian in a canoe with his wife and three children came alongside; he was a fine looking person, of athletic size and well built, and his wife, in appearance and person, quite superior to most of her sex

among the natives of this country. The Indian saluted me very cordially, and inquired if I were the minister who was to come up with Peter Jacobs, and said he knew Peter Jacobs. We gave him in exchange for some berries, some flour and pemican—and then proceeded on our way, receiving from him, on parting, warm expressions of good will and a hearty shake of the hand. At 7½ o'clock coming to a suitable place we landed, raised our ship on a dry dock to repair her, built our house, cooked, and ate our supper. I then sat down on the ground, and wrote my journal for the day, and then rendering thanks to the Supreme Being for His unnumbered mercies, and commending myself and the voyageurs to His still continued care, I laid me down on my *bed* to take my needed repose.

On Friday morning, the 21st, I rose at 2½ o'clock, called the men and at ten minutes after 3 o'clock, we were on our way. There was not a breath of wind stirring, the heavens were as clear and as calm as nature's laws could make them; the birds were singing sweetly, all things seen and heard were calculated to inspire one with delightful and devotional feelings as we speeded on our voyage over the undisturbed and silvery looking element on which we sailed. At half-past six, the wind rose a little and it being fair we hoisted sail, and continued sailing before a most delightful breeze until half-past twelve o'clock, when we arrived at the Rat portage, the first we have had since leaving Lac La Pluie, a

distance of near two hundred miles. This portage is at the far end of Lac du Bois ; we made it, and then crossing a small lake a quarter of a mile wide we came to Rat Portage Station, a small fort belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, presided over by a half-breed who could not speak a word of English. I had no sooner got into the house and sat down to write, when not less than a "dozen" of monstrously black and half-naked Indians rushed into the room begging for tobacco. I had none to give them, having forgotten to bring some with me from Lac La Pluie ; they continued talking all the while I was writing, greatly to my annoyance and perplexity. O ! to what a depth of degradation human nature can be brought, but the Gospel preached to the poor can reach even these, low as they are in the scale of humanity,—raise them to be Zion's sons, and make them heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. There is a splendid fall in the water at the Rat portage. The waters from Lac La Pluie, Lac du Bois, and their tributary streams are all here gathered into a narrow channel not more than six rods wide, and hurled over a precipice between thirty and forty feet high with most terrific and crashing violence. I stood looking at the jumping, leaping, and foaming waters and listening to their thundering roar, until dizzied with the noise and grandeur of the scene I could not but exclaim "how terrible is God in his doings, how wonderful His works, to the children of men." The water

below the falls widens out into small lakes and ponds, connected together by short and narrow rivers, the most of them very rapid, some of them precipitately so. There is a considerable quantity of good land in the neighbourhood of the Rat Station; the potatoes and other vegetable I saw growing there looked very fine. We left the Fort at half-past three ; four or five miles below we passed an Indian village of camps ; four women in a canoe came to us, and offered for sale part of a sturgeon, which the men took and gave in exchange some biscuit; the sturgeon, however, we very little needed, as the man in charge of the fort, on our leaving, had kindly furnished us with the largest and finest half of a large sturgeon, and two fine ducks. We continued our voyage over the lakes and down the rivers until half-past seven o'clock, when finding a suitable place for landing and pitching our tents we put to shore for the night. We were all well tired and glad of a resting place, having been voyaging sixteen hours during the day.

I am Rev. and Dear Sir,

As ever, yours most respectfully,

J. RYERSON.

Rev. Enoch Wood, &c., &c.

## LETTER VI.

FORT ALEXANDER, July 24th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:—

On the 22nd we started at five minutes past 3 o'clock a. m., and before breakfast made two portages and run five rapids. These rapids were all short, but two of them were terrifically precipitous. In the midst of each of these rapids we made a leap of five or six feet over nearly a perpendicular fall in the river, into the angry and foaming billows below, that seemed spitefully resolved to swallow us up; indeed it would seem, in looking at the falls and the ragings of the water below them, that there could be no possibility of escaping destruction; that the canoe must inevitably pitch under water and dash to pieces; but our fears proved to be groundless; we dashed over the falls and through the waters, receiving no harm but a sprinkling from the spray, and a little wetting from the crest of an impudent wave that now and then obtruded itself into our boat. We breakfasted at the end of the second portage, and at 10 o'clock were travelling on again against a strong head wind that seemed intent on obstinately disputing with us every inch of the way; we consequently got on slowly, though we worked hard. At 2 o'clock we put ashore for dinner, and no great distance from our dining place, we passed a small village of Indians, where the Episcopal Church has a mission,

called White Dog Mission. I had a letter to the Rev. W. McDonald, the minister in charge; but being in great haste to get on, and meeting with a boat belonging to the mission, I did not stop to deliver it, but gave it to one of the men in the boat. The mission village, if a village it can be called, is beautifully situated on a rising spot of ground facing a small bay that opens into the river. A small tract of land in the immediate neighborhood seems to be good, and would, doubtless, admit of productive cultivation. I noticed potatoes, oats, &c., growing finely. I learned from one of the men in the boat, that it was now three years since the mission was commenced; that as yet they have no church, but have religious service twice every Sabbath in a place fitted up for that purpose; they also have a day and sabbath school, and a considerable number of Indians are camped in the vicinity most of the time. I counted in the village only five houses, and six or seven Indian camps.

This was the most tedious day of travelling we have had, since leaving Lac La Pluie. A head and high wind all the day. After dinner we made a portage, and passed a rapid—the most difficult and dangerous of all the many perilous rapids we have passed since I commenced the voyage. So deep and precipitous was the *pitch*, in the middle of the rapid, and so violent the force of the water that it seemed impossible for the bowsman to keep the canoe from driving against a rock that projected into the water at the lower end of the fall; indeed, by the utmost



exertion the canoe was saved from striking the rock, but by a hair's breadth ; but great effort and skilful management, by the blessing of a merciful Providence, brought us safely through. At the lower end of the fall, the steersman missing a stroke of his paddle, the canoe was whirled round like a top, and for a few moments we seemed to be at the mercy of the violently agitated waves.

The 23rd was one of the finest days I ever saw ; clear, calm, and not very hot,—a day the perfect contrast of the one preceding. Twenty minutes before three o'clock, I called the men, and we were in our canoe, paddling along through the silvery and unruffled waters, just as the day began to dawn. How gloriously splendid does the opening day and rising sun appear in these regions of isles, hill and dale, rock and water ! As the sun arose, how enchanting to behold the blazing waters, the gilded hills, the crimsoned heavens, all radiant and refulgent with sparkling brightness and splendour.—Before dinner we made five portages and passed as many rapids ; the falls of water in the rapids were from twelve to twenty feet ; some of the portages were short, and the sheets of water between were also very narrow : indeed in several instances, before the thundering of one cataract died away from the ear it was saluted with the hollow roarings of another. At one of the portages I saw two ant hills, four or five feet high, and not less than sixteen or eighteen feet in circumference ;—at first I was at a loss to know what they were ; they looked like immense

heaps of brewers' grains. In looking at them it occurred to me what a lesson of industry and perseverance men might learn from the works of this tiny insect—"Go to the ant, and for one poor grain, see how she toils and strives." At all of the portages to day I carried my carpet bags, blankets &c.: one of the portages was a quarter of a mile long, and as the heat was most intense, when we got to the end of it, I was wet with perspiration and quite exhausted. Close at hand however there was a mammoth rock, affording a complete shelter from the scorching rays of the sun; under the shadow of this rock I sat down with great delight—I thought of the gracious promises. "A man shall be a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." At five minutes to three o'clock we stopped for dinner, which detained us fifty minutes, this was a very short time compared to the usual time of detention for meals, which is seldom less than an hour or an hour and a half. These voyageurs will fuss and talk about boiling a piece of pork, or a bunch of pemmican, and eating it, as long as it would take any body else to prepare and partake of a sumptuous repast of half a dozen courses. My cook, Francis, this evening asked me if I were not sick, he thought I must be so as I "eat so little." I told him I never had eaten so much in the same time in my life: he thought it "very strange."—Directly after dinner we came to the sixth portage that we passed to-day, where there is another magnificent fall in the river, or the chain of lakes. We then

proceeded through and over one continual succession of lakes and rapids for twelve or fifteen miles, and finished the series by passing a rapid, the very appearance of which was sufficient to make a person not armed with the strongest nerves shudder. We passed it however in safety, and a short distance below it put ashore and pitched our tents for the night. The weather during most of the night was extremely inclement: it thundered, lightened and rained most terrifically, and the wind blew a very gale. I never heard such peals of thunder; I never saw such lurid flashes of lightning; for two hours and a half clap succeeded clap, and flash succeeded flash, until the whole heavens seemed to resound with terrific roarings and blaze with vivid light: the rain also fell in torrents; at times it came down as though it was poured out of buckets: for a time I thought the tent would inevitably come down and be carried away by the tempest, and that I might be prepared for such a catastrophe, I got up and dressed myself; but after a while the storm abated, my frail habitation was undemolished, and I remained sheltered beneath its canopy in safety. I did not however again retire to rest, but improved the short time that elapsed until the minute of departing should arrive, in writing. At  $2\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock I called the men, and by five minutes before three o'clock we were voyaging on the water. Before breakfast, which we stopped to take at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock, we made seven portages and run five rapids. We stopped for breakfast at the head of the Lac De Bonnelle, or Lake of Sails.

This lake is twenty-five miles long, and averages from one to three miles in breadth. Between breakfast and dinner we made three portages, the last of which called "Cap de Bonet" Portage, was a quarter of a mile long. We passed several camps of Indians: four of the men in two canoes came to us and assisted us in making a portage: we gave them some tobacco, with which they seemed well pleased. I am of the opinion that this would be a good locality to establish a mission and build a mission village; there is about here a great deal of excellent land, the climate is healthy, and it is in the midst of numerous bands of Indians, who are teachable and friendly disposed. In the afternoon we made seven more portages, and would have made the eighth, and reached Fort Alexander the same evening, but for the heavy rain that commenced falling in good earnest about 5½ o'clock, and poured down in torrents during the greater part of the night. It had been thundering, and threatening rain the most of the day, but still we had only a few showers until after five o'clock. A harder rain I seldom ever witnessed and what made it the worse for us, it commenced just as we came to a portage, and in the midst of it we were compelled to make two portages. We consequently, by this exposure, together with many of our things got thoroughly wet. The rain came down in torrents, and the wind blew most tempestuously; but we were obliged in the midst of this warring of the elements, and the ground completely soaked with water to pitch my

tent. I made my supper on bread for we could cook nothing for the want of a fire, which it was impossible to kindle. I lay down in my wet clothes, being quite overcome with fatigue. I slept several hours quite soundly, and in the morning felt no particular inconvenience from the exposures and fatigue of the previous day.— During the day we made seventeen portages, varying in length from six rods to three quarters of a mile, over these portages I carried my two carpet-bags, blankets, pillow &c. Tuesday the 25th, the morning was cold and gloomy, the ground perfectly saturated with water, and our clothes any thing but in a comfortable plight. We started at a quarter to four o'clock, and after having made one portage and paddled our canoe for twelve miles against an obstinately strong and head wind. At nine o'clock, we arrived at Fort Alexander, well pleased and thankful that another stage of our long and wearysome journey was accomplished. Fort Alexander belongs to the Lac La Pluie District, and although Mr. Ballantine, in his book, says that it is not "famous for its appearance," yet in my judgment it is not surpassed, if equalled in beauty and pleasantness by any station belonging to the Company, between St. Marie and Red River. It is situated on an elbow of land made by a bend in the river Winnipeg, three miles from the river's mouth. The bank of the river where the Fort stands is about twenty feet high. The scenery for many miles around is strikingly beautiful. The climate for Hudson's Bay Territory is remarkably

fine, and salubrious, the land amazingly rich and productive. The water in the lakes, Lac La Pluie, Lac Du Bois, Winnipeg &c., is not deep and because of their wide surface and great shallowness, during the summer season, they become exceedingly warm, this has a wonderful effect on the temperature of the atmosphere in the adjacent neighbourhoods, and no doubt makes the great difference in the climate (or at least is one of the principle causes of it) in these parts to, the climate in the neighbourhood of Lake Superior. The water in Lake Superior is of so great a depth that it never becomes warm, it is always as cold as ice water, hence the air is always cold, and the surrounding country barren and sterile; but it is quite different in these parts, the land is not only very rich, susceptible of the highest cultivation, but vegetation is rapid, luxuriant, and comes to maturity. They grow spring wheat here to perfection, and in few places do vegetables of most every kind thrive better,—there is now in full view, which with delight I look upon through the window while I write, a fine field of wheat.—These things fully satisfy me of the correctness of the opinion I have already expressed, that this is one of the most eligible places for establishing a mission and building a Mission Village to be found in the southern department of the Company's Territory. In addition to what I have already said, I would remark that Fort Alexander is in the centre of a country over which there are scattered a great many Indians, who resort to the Fort every year in

great numbers, besides a number of families who are continually about the place.

All day we were wind-bound at the Fort. In the evening the two canoes with Messrs. Hurlburt and Brooking arrived, I was glad to see them, but still felt disappointed that by adverse winds I should be so long detained as to allow them to overtake me. They had rivers and little lakes to navigate ; but we the open waters of a long lake, and the most tempestuous and dangerous sheets of water in the North West Territory.

Wednesday the 26th. At two o'clock, a. m., just as I was dressing myself, I heard old Jock's voice, calling out, "*up, up, up.*" I was glad to hear him, for although the night before I had charged him, that if the weather permitted, he must be ready for starting by two o'clock in the morning, yet I was apprehensive that he might not get up and be prepared for leaving, at so early an hour. At half-past two, we were rapidly moving down the beautiful River Winnipeg. It may be said that Fort Alexander is located three miles from the mouth of the river; but the river empties into a bay ; so that you do not see Lake Winnipeg fully until about twelve miles from the Fort ; but after travelling twelve miles we rounded a point, and Lake Winnipeg, calm and clear as crystal, glittering in the beams of the morning sun, stretched out before us to the distant and scarcely perceptible horizon. Every pleasure has its alloy : the delightful calm on which we felicitated ourselves, was soon ruffled by a breeze, which

speedily increased to such a degree as to oblige us to put ashore ; but before we could do so, the wind was blowing furiously, and it was with great difficulty we made the shore without being swallowed up in the waves. On nearing the shore, the men jumped out of the canoe, up to their waists in water ; two of them held the canoe, while the others carried the luggage to the beach ; and then the voyageurs took up the *ship* itself, and carrying it on their shoulders, placed it safe on terra firma. Here we pitched our tents, and remained wind bound until seven o'clock in the evening, when the wind having moderated, we left our encampment, and travelled until eight, and then again went ashore, and put up for the night. Next morning, the wind blew too hard to admit of our starting before nine o'clock ; but about this time it moderated and blew fair ; so on starting we hoisted sail : the wind increased so that we proceeded on our voyage at a rapid pace, at fifteen minutes to three o'clock, we reached the mouth of Red River, and glad enough was I to see it. Just after entering the river, we put ashore for dinner, close by where there were five or six camps of Pagan Indians. Some dozen or fifteen of these Indians pressed round us, and continued to watch our every motion until we left : we gave them some tobacco and flour, with which they seemed well pleased. At fifteen minutes to four, we commenced the ascent of the river, and at eight o'clock, arrived at the Indian *Mission* settlement, situated twelve miles from its



mouth. Here the Church Missionary Society has an excellent mission. I was received by the Rev. Mr. Cowley, the Missionary, and entertained during the night, with great kindness and attention. This Indian settlement is situated on both sides of the river, and is about five miles in length. The community comprises four or five hundred souls.— There is a fine stone church, 40 by 75 feet on the ground, with a gallery; a parsonage and school-house. There is a day and also a sabbath-school: the average attendance of children at the day-school is fifty; at the sabbath is seventy-five. There is a fine farm connected with the Mission, on which they grow excellent wheat, peas, barley, potatoes, &c. &c

At 7½ on Friday morning the 28th, we started from the Mission, and arrived at the *Stone Fort*, or Lower Fort Garry, at ten o'clock. This splendid establishment, is one of the H. B. Company's Depôts on the Red River, and stands on the west side of the river, twenty-two miles from its mouth.

Some description of *this* fort, and of Upper Fort-Garry; also of the Red-River Settlement, the settlers, churches, &c., I propose to give you in my next letter. In the mean time,

I remain as ever,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Very affectionately yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood, }  
&c., &c., &c. }

## LETTER VII.

LOWER FORT GARRY,  
Red-River Settlement,  
Aug. 1st, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :—

By Mr. Ballandyne, the chief factor, and Mr. Lane, one of his assistants, I was received, on my arrival at the Stone Fort, with great kindness, and was treated by these gentlemen and all the officers belonging to the Company's service, with marked attention and hospitality, during my stay in the settlement. ——— Ballandyne, Esq., has charge of both stations,—the Upper and Lower Forts,—or as they are usually called, "Fort Garry and the Stone Fort." The Chief Factor resides at the Upper Fort, but as I have stated, Mr. B. was at the Stone Fort on my arrival there: he was just returning home, and kindly offered me a seat in his gig, which I gladly accepted, being very desirous of visiting and seeing as much of this singular colony as possible. As I have said, the Hudson's-Bay Company's servants occupy two forts or stations in the settlement, one situated on the left bank of Assiniboine, immediately above its junction with Red River, and fifty miles from its mouth; and the other on the left bank of the united stream, half way down to Lake Winnipeg. The former consists of wooden buildings, the latter of stone, each being surrounded chiefly by a stone wall, from ten to twelve feet high.

The Lower Fort contains between four and five acres of land ; the Upper Fort, much the most important, of the two, is not however, above half of the extent of the upper forts. The number of men and officers in both establishments, does not permanently exceed thirty. Within the limits of the Upper Fort, there resides, Major Coldwill, Governor of Assineboine, and Captain Hill, one of his suite, and an officer of the enrolled pensioners ; also at present, W. Johnson, Esq., Recorder of Rupert's Land, who occupies apartments in the house of the Chief Factor. On my way to Fort Garry I called on the Rev. Mr. Mason, who was for several years Wesleyan Missionary at Ross-ville and Norway House, but has recently left the Methodist and joined the Episcopal Church, in which, a few days since, by the Bishop of the Diocese, he was ordained priest, and appointed to York Place, for which station he sets out in a few days. On the 29th, immediately after breakfast, in company with W. Johnson, Esq., and Mr. Lockart, I went over the river to visit the Roman Cathedral and the Monastery connected with it. There were three Priests in the Palace, by whom we were received with affability and apparent respect, and by whom we were conducted through the Church and Monastery, and shown every thing we desired to see. The church is a fine stone edifice, with two spires, built after the style of Roman-Catholic churches, and is sufficiently large to accommodate eight hundred or a thousand persons. The building of the convent is a large building, two stories high. I was

told that there are now twelve or fourteen nuns in the institution : there is also a school connected with it, at which there are in attendance between forty and fifty young women and girls. The lady-superior, a person evidently of very respectable accomplishments, received and treated us with great civility and attention. We were also introduced to several other ladies of the establishment, whose deportment towards us was most respectful and proper. The teacher of music, with great skill and beauty, played for our entertainment several pieces on the piano. After spending two hours visiting the convent, looking at the grounds, church, &c., we returned to the Fort, gratified, at least not displeased, with what we had seen. On my return to the Fort I found Mr. Ballandyne ready with his horse and carriage to take me to call on Bishop Anderson and several other gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His lordship the Bishop received me kindly, and treated me with suitable attention and respect : he cordially invited me to dine with him, and expressed a warm desire for the success of our Missionary work in Rupert's Land. After leaving the Bishop's residence, we called on Adam Tom, Esq., who for fifteen years has discharged the duties of recorder, or chief-justice, of the Territory. Mr. Tom is a gentleman of learning and superior ability in the legal profession. He has now resigned his office, and with his family will return to England by the Company's ship next month ; so I shall have the pleasure and profit of his company as fellow-passenger : I also called on

Governor Coldwill, from whom and his very accomplished lady, I received every mark of considerate respect ; and I left their residence gratified by the interview with them with which I was honoured.— In the afternoon in company with Mr. Ballandyne I went down to the Presbyterian Church to hear a lecture from Adam Tom, Esq., “on the state and progress of the Red River Settlement,”—a subject on which, from his long residence in the settlement, and his opportunities of observation, Mr. Tom was well qualified to treat, and he did so with great elegance, beauty and ability ; with the lecture I was delighted and instructed. At the close of the lecture I was introduced to the Rev. Mr. Hunter, Archdeacon of the Northern District of the Territory, and Missionary at Cumberland Station, situated on the Saskatchewan River, between two and three hundred miles from its mouth. I was also introduced to the Rev. Mr. Black, Clergyman of the Presbyterian Church in the settlement. Mr. Black pressed me to preach for him the following sabbath, which I engaged to do at three o'clock, p. m., declining to take the pulpit in the morning, as I intended to visit the cathedral church at eleven o'clock, to hear Bishop Anderson. At seven o'clock, in company with my kind and attentive host, Mr. Ballandyne, I returned to the Fort, not a little fatigued with the unceasing engagements of the day. On Sabbath morning, the 30th, I heard Bishop Anderson preach a very good sermon, although it was more than forty minutes too long, he occupying an

hour and twenty minutes in delivering it. His lordship is certainly not a very great preacher, but he is a good man, and, I should think, very well qualified, especially by the general blamelessness of his character, to promote the interests of virtue and education in the bounds of his diocese. The cathedral-church is a very poor, dilapidated building, which has to be propped up all round the outside, with skids and braces, to keep the walls, which are of stone, from falling down. The congregation is not large ; still there are several respectable families belonging to it. In the afternoon at three o'clock, I preached in the Presbyterian Church, which is distant from the Upper Fort six miles. The congregation was large and very attentive. The church is built of stone, and has sittings for four or five hundred people. Mr. Black told me that the cost of its erection exceeded a thousand pounds sterling.—This surprised me, for in Canada such a church could be built for a less sum than five hundred.—Mr. Black is a minister of excellent ability; is universally esteemed and well spoken of : he is very useful, labouring indefatigably and successfully in promoting the spiritual interests of his Church, and the religious and social welfare of the people generally. His congregation is the largest of any in the settlement, with the exception of the Episcopal congregation that worships in what is called the "Rapids Church," ministered to by the Rev. Mr. Cockrin.—After service in the Presbyterian Church, Mr. Lock-

art took me to the Lower Fort, where I stayed two days.

In conversation with you on several occasions, I have expressed the conviction, that in view of more extensive and effective missionary operations in the Territory, we should have a Mission in the Red-River Settlement : and on this subject I believe your judgment accorded with my own. I therefore directed my most earnest attention to this matter during my stay in the neighbourhood, the result of which I will communicate to you when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you ; in the mean time, allow me to give a more particular account of the colony, than is contained in the above few hastily-written notes. Some of the following facts are matters of history. Of some I was personally cognizant : *all* of them I have on the most unquestionable authority.

Under conditions of colonization, the late Earl of Selkirk, in 1811, purchased from the Hudson's-Bay Company, as chartered proprietor of Rupert's Land, a very large tract of country, stretching about ten degrees of longitude on the American frontier, which was then understood to run along the heights of land between the feeders of Hudson's Bay and those of the Gulf of Mexico ; and penetrating northward, so as to comprise the entire basons of Red River, and its principal tributary, the Assineboine. Soon afterwards, His Lordship, under a quit rent, secured by a written treaty, bought up the aboriginal title to the soil, on a depth of two miles from either

bank of each river. Subsequently, however, to His Lordship's death, the Hudson's-Bay Company, by an arrangement with his representatives, resumed its grant, undertaking at the same time, the payment in all time to come, of the quit-rent already referred to. Lord Selkirk's single colony, in this extensive region, was established in 1814, near the confluence of the Red River and the Assineboine, about fifty miles or so, from the entrance of the united streams into Lake Winnipeg. From the one river, the whole of Lord Selkirk's territory was called the "District of Assineboine"; while from the other the colony came to be called the Red-River Settlement, though lately distinguished by the Americans, and perhaps with better taste, as the "Selkirk Colony." His Lordship's earliest colonists were Scotch Highlanders, and some few years afterwards, they were followed by a band of Swiss; and in 1823, another accession was made to the settlement, by a large number of French Canadians. Almost immediately after the commencement of the settlement, it was exposed to the hostility of the North-West Company, whose partizans and adherents twice expelled the handful of settlers; Governor Semple lost his life on the occasion of the second expulsion.

The number of inhabitants, taking the last census as a basis, must be between six and seven thousand: they are divided pretty equally between Roman Catholics and Protestants, the former principally French, and the latter generally English. The original elements of the population have in a great



measure disappeared. The Swiss have left the settlement to a man ; and many of the Scotch Highlanders; and have migrated to the Upper Waters of the Mississippi. The great bulk, therefore, of the existing population, has been derived from the fur trade, being the retired servants, themselves generally Orkney-men or Canadians, with their Indian or half-breed wives, and their children by such wives. In these two principal sections of the population, the pure Europeans are necessarily very few, and in proportion are becoming fewer and fewer every day. The only other section that might require a separate notice, is the remnant of Lord Selkirk's Scotch Highlanders, who, with very rare exceptions indeed, have intermarried entirely with each other. In addition, by the bye, may be reckoned a small body of Enrolled Pensioners, who, several years ago, were induced to come to the Settlement in prospect of gain, but being mostly disappointed, many have migrated, and others are preparing to do so.

With regard to agriculture, nominally every settler is an agriculturist, but really half of that number is almost exclusively buffalo-hunters. Independently of the Company's purchases, and that at fixed prices, these two classes afford a ready market to each other, every hunter requiring agricultural produce, and every agriculturist requiring what are called "plain provisions"—pemmican, fat and dried meat. Besides these two grand distinctions of occupation, there are very few settlers indeed, more

particularly of the agricultural class, who have not, more or less, some other means of gaining a subsistence, such as carpenter's work, or blacksmith's work, or lumbering, or trading. With regard to this last-mentioned source of income, every settler is permitted to import everything but spirits, enjoying in this, the advantage secured to the company itself, and that without the delays and difficulties of a custom-house : he is also permitted to buy and sell, with the exception of furs, all the productions of the country. As the natural result of this system, any individual of industry and economy, who has ever been able to scrape together such a trifle as ten pounds, for a first venture from England, is in a fair way of becoming a man of wealth and consequence; and thus there is gradually springing up a middle class of substantial people, though the circumstances of the country do too often prevent the father's social rank from descending to the children.

The agricultural productions are such as might be expected. With a soil of black mould, and a summer of blended heat and moisture—though drought occasionally occurs,—the settlement yields good crops of wheat, barley, oats, pease and potatoes. Turnips have also been tried with success, but they are not likely to be zealously or extensively cultivated, so long as the same spacious prairies, which afford pasture in the open season, furnish abundance of hay for the winter. Over these boundless pastures there roam thousands of sheep, and black cattle and horses. The horses are seldom

used, though gradually more than formerly, for agricultural purposes, being chiefly reserved for hunting and pleasure. The oxen and cows form the true wealth of the great body of the settlers, the supplies affording beef in the winter, and helping to establish, at little expense or inconvenience, young couples when marrying and settling in the world.—The sheep are valuable chiefly on account of their wool, which is wrought up by the more industrious families into what is called "country cloth."

Regarding the religious matters of the colony, I would observe that the Roman Catholics and the Protestants are very nearly equal to each other in point of numbers. The former almost universally speak French, and the latter almost universally speak English. They are separated, too, by locality as well as by language, very few of the Roman Catholics being found among the Protestants, and still fewer Protestants among the Roman Catholics.—Hence the two denominations live, so far as religion is concerned, in perfect harmony, without collision, and without proselytism. The Protestants are again subdivided into Episcopalians, and Presbyterians in connexion with the Free Church of Scotland—the latter consisting chiefly of the remnant already mentioned, of Lord Selkirk's original colonists. The Roman Catholics are under the Superintendence of a bishop and several priests. They have two places of worship : one of them, the stone cathedral already mentioned, is a really creditable edifice, in point of size, and form, and solidity.—

Their ecclesiastical establishment is maintained partly by tithes—not the tenth sheaf of England, but the twenty-sixth bushel of Lower Canada—partly by fees and dues of various kinds, and partly by a grant of money from the Hudson's-Bay Company, but chiefly by the aid of the Propaganda College, amounting last year, according to the official statements, to 12,000 francs, or £480 sterling.

The Episcopalians have in all seven places of worship : three of the number, however, are merely of a provisional and temporary character. They enjoy the ministrations of a bishop, who takes his title from Rupert's Land, and six clergymen, all supported from sources wholly independent of their congregations. His lordship's revenue is derived in nearly equal parts, from the fur trade, and the late Chief-Factor Leiton's bequest of £10,000 sterling, amounting in all to nine hundred or a thousand pounds a year. It is said that the Bishop expends not only his clerical stipends, but also much of his private fortune, mainly on spiritual objects, within the diocese. Two of his lordship's six resident clergymen are connected with the Church Missionary Society, one with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and one with the Colonial Church and School Society ; while the remaining two are respectively Chaplain to the Hudson's-Bay Company, and Master of the Bishop's Classical School.

The Presbyterians possess two places of worship, the same minister ministering in both. They find

both parsonage and stipend for their pastor, without any extraneous assistance, though the present incumbent, as a matter of special consideration for himself, does receive from the Hudson's-Bay Company, a spontaneous gift of fifty pounds sterling a year.

*Education.*—The Roman Catholics have two seminaries of education, under the management of ladies connected, it is said, with the Grey Nunnery of Montreal. The larger of the two is, beyond doubt, the most spacious dwelling in the whole settlement, and has extensive accommodations for female boarders. The Bishop of Rupert's Land also conducts a boarding-school,—or rather two boarding-schools, in neighbouring houses, one for boys and the other for girls. These establishments had been originally set on foot under the immediate auspices of the fur-trade, by the late Rev. Mr. Jones, but were transferred in 1838, to his assistant, the late Rev. Mr. Macallum ; and as that gentleman was not there at the time of the Bishop's arrival on the Red River in 1849, his lordship undertook the superintendency of the schools, which seem to have been rather singularly thrown in his way. In addition to Bishop Anderson's two schools, for the support of which the fur-trade grants a hundred pounds sterling a year, a boarding-school for commercial purposes has recently been opened by Mr. Donald Gunn, a leading member of the second congregation of Presbyterians.

Of *common* schools there are in all in the settle-

ment, but eight,—five of them maintained wholly or partly by the Church Missionary Society, two of them depending more or less on the Bishop's individual bounty, and only one, namely that attached to the principal congregation of Presbyterians, being supported entirely by the fees of the pupils. In illustration of this subject, it may be remarked, that the Governor and Council of Assineboine, two or three years ago, granted £130 sterling, of public money, in aid of common schools, and also that the same municipal body had, a few years before, appropriated fifty pounds sterling, to promote the object of the Red River Public Library, an institution now numbering nearly two thousand volumes, with a very small proportion of works of fiction.

*Government.*—The Hudson's-Bay Company, under the charter of Charles the Second, dated May, 1670, exercises over Rupert's Land the rights of subordinate sovereignty, subject only in fealty and homage to the Crown and Parliament of England. The machinery by which the Hudson's-Bay Company governs the settlement, consists of its Governor as an executive officer, and of its Governor and Council as a Legislative body. This Legislature enacts laws or rules with respect to roads, bridges, police, gaols, courts, &c. ; such rules being required by the charter, to be not repugnant to the laws of England. For these purposes it draws funds from a duty of four per cent., on the invoice value of all imports, with the exception of certain articles of

necessity and instruments of cultivation, such as stoves, books, prints, philosophical apparatus, church bells, and every thing, in general, tending to promote agriculture and the manufactures. The Council as at present composed, contains about twelve members, one-third being clergymen—two Roman Catholics and two Episcopahans ; of the laymen a majority are half-breeds, while of the minority only one is not intimately connected with native blood.

*Courts of Justice.*—By the Hudson's-Bay Company's charter, the administration of justice is committed to the Governor and Council. For local convenience, however, inferior courts have been invented, with a civil jurisdiction over the settlement, strictly so called, up to £5 sterling, deciding by a majority of votes. Beyond this, the civil jurisdiction for the District of Assiniboine,—and virtually also, the criminal jurisdiction for the whole country, — are vested in the courts of the Governor and Council, with the help of a jury. Though the Governor nominally presides, yet the real president of the tribunal is the Recorder, or Chief-Justice, of Rupert's Land.

I have written more lengthily respecting, and have detained you, Rev. and Dear Sir, in the Red-River Settlement, much longer than I at first intended, feeling the subject to be of some interest and importance, and being very desirous of putting you in possession of all the facts I learnt of this interesting

colony, is my apology for having drawn so largely upon your valuable time.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, as ever,

Yours most respectfully,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood, }  
&c., &c., &c. }

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LETTER VIII.

Norway House, August 10th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

At 4½ on the evening of the 1st inst., we left Lower Fort Garry, and by nine o'clock made the mouth of the river, a distance from the Fort of twenty-two English miles. The measures of distances used in the Territory are English, not American or Canadian. The banks of the Red River continue to diminish in height as you descend the stream from the Upper Fort, until you come within seven or eight miles of the mouth, you find no banks at all ; indeed, the whole river below the neighbourhood of the Indian settlements is a very swampy, sedgy, flat looking affair, covered with bull-rushes, and swarming with flies, mosquitoes and water fowl. On Wednesday the 2nd, by four o'clock we were on our way over the smooth waters of the Lake Winnipeg. Lake Winnipeg is much larger than either Lake Erie or Ontario, though the water



is very shallow, it is three hundred miles long and about sixty miles wide, and eight hundred and fifty-three feet above the level of the sea. There appears to be but little land that would admit of cultivation, though I was told there were localities in the neighbourhood of the lake where are found large tracts of land of most excellent quality. Along the eastern shore the granite and trap rocks are every where exposed, the latter being the most extensive, and no where do these masses rise to the altitude of hills. On the north and west shores the bird's eye limestone is the prevailing rock, and forms low cliffs in a country otherwise every where flat. By 8½ we had made a distance of about fifteen miles, we put ashore for breakfast on the point that was but just visible to the eye when we started. We had fine sailing until near night, the wind was fair and as strong as the canoe would bare, and we did not sail during the day a less distance than sixty-five or seventy miles. Towards evening the wind very much increased : we reefed sail : soon it came to blow a very tempest and we took down the sail, and it was only by the greatest exertions that we succeeded in reaching the shore. Lake Winnipeg is very much subject to winds and storms, which many times rise so suddenly as to give the mariner no warning of their approach, until like a giant in his strength, they are upon him. Imagination cannot paint much less can language describe the sublimity and grandeur of a thunder storm, as seen in the forest on

the shore of the lake when the wild waters are raging ; the lurid glare of the vivid lightning seems brighter, and the claps and roarings of the thunder seem lower and deeper than any where else. O! I never shall forget the terrific grandeur of that dreadful thunder storm, the sheets of flame for minutes at a time, played round the frail tent as if eager to devour it, while the rolling thunder shook the very ground on which it rested ; the foaming billows in their snowy whiteness were lashed into fury and the torrents of rain came down as if poured out of vessels. It was with the greatest difficulty, requiring the utmost exertion to prevent the tempest from sweeping the tent away. At eleven o'clock, however, the storm abated and the latter part of the night was calm and pleasant.

On Thursday morning by four o'clock we were on the water paddling away towards Norway House, but the wind was against us and with the sun continued to rise until  $9\frac{1}{2}$  ; we were compelled to put ashore and seek protection from the raging of the waters on terra firma. The men soon pitched my tent and I sat down in my *petit maison* to pen these notes, all the time being annoyed and teased almost to madness by the pestiferous mosquitoes. The wind having abated at five o'clock we put to sea again and continued our voyage until nine o'clock, when we stopped for the night on the point of a rocky prairie that runs out into the lake a long way. Friday the 4th by three o'clock, a. m., I was up and dressed and called the men, I had to call several

times at the top of my voice before I could arouse them ; poor fellows they seemed unusually indisposed to rise and go to work. It was very late the night before when they laid down, and then the mosquitoes would not let them sleep, these horrible pests of human beings drove the poor voyageurs from under their canoe, and they were compelled to flee to the lake shore and lay down on the naked rock to obtain a little relief from the persecutions of their blood-thirsty enemies. We started at 3½ and were soon relieved from the fatigue of the paddle by a favourable light breeze, which continued to waft us pleasantly and speedily forward until five in the afternoon ; but then, as according to the old adage, "it never rains but it pours," so our breeze was soon converted into a gale ; in an hour we were compelled to run our canoe into shoal water, to save her from being swamped in the deep water, and each man getting out waded with the baggage to a place of shelter where the canoe also was secured ; but we had scarcely got our tent pitched and the things put in order, when the tempest was upon us ; and a tempest which in severity and duration exceeded the one the night but one before—it was a perfect tornado ; O ! the loud claps and hollow rolling of the thunder, the vivid flashes and streaming light of the lightning, the descending torrents of the water floods—all, all, not only surpasses the power of description but exceeds the fancy of the liveliest imagination. We were wind bound all day yesterday, the wind was

very high and directly against us. At four o'clock, p. m., we attempted to make an evening voyage and if possible to reach Berren's Station, where we intended to spend the Sabbath ; but we had not proceeded more than a mile when the violence of the wind compelled us to seek refuge from the waves in a little cove behind a point of rock that seemed to extend its sheltering flank into the sea as for the purpose of sheltering our frail bark from the raging of the waters.

Nothing is more trying to one's constancy than to be wind bound on the shore of these lakes. "On the wide ocean raging," you are more resigned, for you expect it from the imperious element, but to be stopped for an indefinite time in the midst of flies and mosquitoes, in the sight of birds and animals, and within a few miles of the place of destination ; and all this when you have no time to lose, is a species of annoyance which is apt to overcome one's *philosophy*. At 5½, six large boats passed near the shore where we were lying, conveying Mr. Swanson the Chief Factor of the Lac La Pluie district and the winter supplies of merchandise and provisions for that department of the Hudson Bay Company's most extensive and lucrative business. The sight was a very imposing one, six very large boats abreast under full sail and going at the rate of eight knots an hour. Sabbath the sixth the wind being fair, at three o'clock I called the voyageurs and in two hours we were at Berren's Fort, a station of the fur trade,

situated near the mouth of the Berren River. We were very kindly received by Mr. Cummens, the gentleman in charge of the Station, who did all he could to make me comfortable during my stay in the place. Mr. Cummens requested me to have religious service with them, and with this request I gladly complied. The service was attended by the family and the servants at the Fort, in all about fifteen or twenty persons. During the day I went out to look at the premises, &c. The neighbourhood is very rocky, but still there are spots of rich land dispersed among the ledges of rocks which produce any kind of grain or vegetables grown in the country. The wheat, barley, potatoes and the garden vegetables on the premises look remarkably well. No where in the territory have I seen the fruit of the ground look better. There is a river called Pigeon River, that puts into the narrow bay on the opposite side from the Fort, along the banks of which, I was told by Mr. Cummens, there is a great deal of excellent land, a sufficient quantity to form a large settlement. This in my opinion would be a good position for a Mission Station. Besides occasional visitors, there are fifty or sixty Indian families belonging to the place, and there is no Mission of any church on this side of the Winnipeg Lake, between Fort Alexander and Norway House. Mr. Cummens expressed a strong desire that our society would send a missionary to the neighbourhood, and said he would do any thing he could to promote the object; he also remarked

that promises had been made at different times by both the Church and Wesleyan Societies to occupy the ground, but as yet nothing had been done, however extensive and inviting the field unquestionably was ; that the Indians in this region were favourably disposed towards the Christian religion, and were anxious that a Missionary should be sent to them, and a school established among them for the education of their children. In the afternoon I went over to the opposite side of the bay to visit some Indian families who were camped there. There were five camps, which were occupied by twice or three times that number of families. My interpreter was not a very good one, and the interview with the Indians was not so satisfactory as I had been led to anticipate, from the conversation I had had with Mr. Cummens. But still the two Indians who acted as the spokesmen for the rest, were, as I afterwards learned, *medicine* men or conjurers, who derive a profit from their craft, and are therefore opposed to whatever may endanger it. Mr. Cummens said we must attach no importance to any thing they said, that they were great liars every one of them, and not the least reliance could be placed on any of their declarations. In the evening I again held services in Mr. Cummens' dining room ; several Indians were present who had come over from the camps I had visited in the afternoon.

Monday morning at four o'clock, we started from the Fort, although the wind was high, and the ap-

pearance of the weather every way unfavourable; we however kept our course for twelve or fifteen miles, when the increased inclemency of the weather forced us to the shore for safety; the clouds grew heavier and sent forth at intervals hollow-sounding gusts of wind, the sure harbingers of a strong gale; soon the lake resembled one rolling sheet of white foam, which contrasted strangely with the calm placidness of its surface the preceding day. By reason of the great tempest that was upon us we were detained in our place of refuge until after three o'clock, when the wind having died away, we were again, enabled to resume our "march over the ocean wave." At 4½ the weather became perfectly calm. The face of the water was as smooth as a mirror, and the voyageurs being fresh and full of energy, we made excellent progress. At the time of halting in the evening, we were on a part of the coast where no resting place can be found. The night was remarkably clear and pleasant. The orb that rules the night was shining in full splendour, and not a breath of wind ruffled the silvery surface of wide Winnipeg; so, quite contrary to their usual practice, the voyageurs concurred in the council of Jock, the guide, to go on, and we continued our journey until one of the clock next morning, when having come to a miserable place, but the best we could find, we landed and pitched our tent; but the gloominess of the place, and the wetness of the sand and grass prevented me sleeping a wink. I kept my candle burning until morning light appeared, which by the bye was

not very long, as day light appears in this latitude, at this season of the year, before three o'clock.

Tuesday morning the 8th, notwithstanding the lateness of our working and going to rest the night before, at 4½ A.M., with our paddles we were propelling our little ship over the smooth and placid waters towards Norway House, at the rate of five miles an hour. An hour and a half after starting we were favoured with a fair wind, and until four o'clock in the afternoon we diligently improved the delightful breeze which had so agreeably relieved the voyageurs from the toil of the paddle. Indeed old Jock always looked pleased when we had favorable wind, and would be continually laughing or singing. I asked him one day what he found to talk and laugh so much about? and he said *every thing*. Well then Jock thought he would turn interrogatist, and he enquired, what God made mosquitoes for? I can assure you it was a question more easily asked than answered. I could think of nothing else to say at the time, only that it was likely the Supreme Being permitted them to exist as instruments for the punishment of *wicked voyageurs*.

How short-lived frequently are our prosperities. The wind that had been so fair and pleasant during the day, at 4½ began to blow hard, and in half an hour we were in the midst of a tremendous gale. We however succeeded in making the shore without sustaining much damage, other than getting pretty well wet with spray. We had time, after landing,



to get the canoe secured and our tents pitched before the rain commenced, which was accompanied with one of those dreadful tornadoes, and terrific thunders and lightnings, so common in the neighbourhood of Lake Winnipeg at this season of the year.

In my next letter I will trouble you with some account of Norway House and Rossville Mission. In the mean time,

I remain as ever,

Yours with much esteem,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood, &c.

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LETTER IX.

NORWAY HOUSE, Aug. 16th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:—

I remarked in my last letter, that on Tuesday evening of the 8th inst., we were driven ashore by a gale when distant from the strait or river, through which we pass out of Lake Winnipeg into Playgreen Lake, about fifteen or twenty miles. We had time, after landing, to pitch the tent and arrange the canoe matters before it commenced raining; but the wind blew most furiously, the thunder rolled with terrific grandeur, clap succeeding clap with increasing violence, while the vivid lightning stretched across and blazed around the frowning and angry heavens with a vividness and beauty too, but for the terror of the scene,—too wonderful and sublime

to be described but never to be forgotten. I took every precaution and made every preparation in my power to meet and withstand the tempest. We drove the tent-pins down to their utmost depth. I brought my casket, canteen, travelling-basket, &c., into the tent, and placed them round on the bottom of the canvass. I then went down to the lake shore and got some dozen of large stones, each as heavy as I could carry, and placed them also around on the bottom of the tent ; but with all these preparations, it required my constant personal exertion to prevent the thundering and lightning tornado from sweeping boxes, stones, tent, and all away. This hurricane lasted several hours ; but, about twelve at night, the gale having exhausted itself, the tempest began to subside, and by morning the weather had sufficiently moderated to allow of our resuming our voyage. At 8½ o'clock we reached the strait, entering which, and turning round a point to the right, in a few moments we found ourselves at the commencement of Play-green Lake, where, on a nice sandy beach, we put ashore for breakfast. At the time we landed on the east side of the narrow strait, there were fifteen or twenty large batteaux that landed on the west side for the same purpose. This brigade of boats were from Saskatchewan and Rocky Mountain countries ; they had been down to York Depot with furs, &c., and were returning freighted with provisions and goods for the western trade.— In the place where they landed this morning they

lay wind-bound for twelve days, so that they had to send back to Norway House for an additional supply of provisions previous to their leaving. This shows how fortunate we were in having made the whole voyage from Red River to Norway House in a little more than eight days, but we worked hard, not losing a moment, day or night, in which we could sail. We arrived at Norway House at 3½ p. m. This old and important establishment is situated at the mouth of a small sluggish stream, known by the name of Lach River, and about twenty-four miles from the Winnipeg Lake. William Barnston, Esq., the gentleman in charge of the fort, met me at the wharf, and kindly welcomed me to Norway House. Here I also again met with my old travelling companions, Mr. and Mrs. Brooking. I need not say that I was glad to see them.

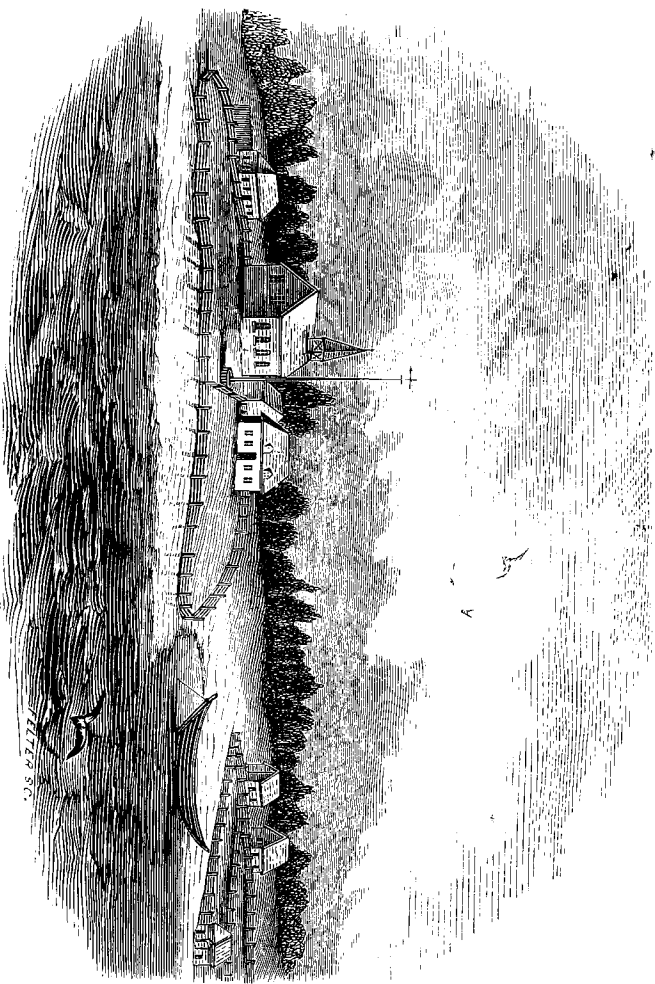
Norway House is one of the oldest and one of the most important establishments belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. The houses of the establishment are ranged in the form of a square, all of them painted white or whitewashed. They are one story high, with the exception of a large house, building and nearly finished, and which is to be the residence of the chief factor and his family. The ground on which the fort stands is rocky, but there is a large and beautiful garden belonging to it which would be a credit to the best domicile in Canada. In this splendid garden were growing, in prime order, almost every useful vegetable, among which were

seen, in great abundance, potatoes, onions, squashes, beets, parsnips, celery, vegetable marrow, cucumbers, &c., &c.; and then the flosculous part of the garden was truly and exquisitely fine; the flowers are in great variety, and in beauty and richness of colours are not surpassed anywhere. Mr. Barnston has great taste for flowers, and cultivates them with great skill. He showed me several kinds which he had procured from Mr. Lunn's garden, at Montreal. Mr. Barnston also excels in the knowledge of botany. Some of the most valuable specimens of natural history in the British Museum are of his procuring. A large rugged mass of rocks rises up between the forts and Play-green Lake, on the top of which stands a flag staff as a beacon to guide the traveller, for Norway House, so hid in a cove that it cannot be seen from the lake till the boat almost touches the wharf. On the left side of the building of the fort, extends a flat grassy park or green, upon which, during the summer months, voyageurs pitch their tents and Indians build their camps. There were lying on the front of this flat, near the water's edge, more than twenty large boats. A number of boats are always kept here for the purpose of replacing any boats that may get injured in voyaging between the distant parts and York Depot. Behind the fort rises another hill of rocks, beyond which stretches the thick forest, its outlines broken here and there by cuttings for firewood, or small clearings for farming.

Mr. Barnston had kindly arranged for my staying

at the fort, during my stay at Norway House; I consequently took up my lodging there, visiting Rossville Mission, which is distant from the fort two miles, as often as convenient, or occasion required. Rossville, the Indian Mission, is situated on an island in Play-green Lake; so that the Mission cannot be approached from Norway House but by water. The local situation of the place is remarkably pleasant and the land very rich and productive. The garden looks beautiful; it is large and full of the most useful vegetables, all of which are in fine order, and growing most luxuriantly. There is also a field of potatoes that looks remarkably well, so that Mr. Hurlburt, instead of finding himself in a waste howling wilderness, living on pemmican or buffalo tallow, and surrounded with savages and eaten up by mosquitoes, finds himself in a most comfortable and well-furnished parsonage, surrounded with not only the necessities, but even the luxuries of life, and with a Christian Society, far advanced in knowledge and practical piety; indeed there is no Indian Mission in Canada, which, for pleasantness of situation, and means of domestic comfort, will compare with Rossville Mission.

On Friday, the 11th, in company with Messrs. Baruston, Hurlburt, and Brooking, I visited the Indian School at the Mission, to witness the annual examination of the scholars, and the distribution of prizes, &c., which they are accustomed to give on those occasions to the most meritorious of the chil-



WESLEYAN MISSION PREMISES, ROSSVILLE.



dren. The value of the goods distributed on this occasion was £10 ; the most of this sum was given by the gentlemen at the fort ; Mr. Barnston subscribing £2, and Mrs. McKinzey £1. There were sixty-five children present, from five to fifteen years of age ; about twenty were writing, and reading in the New Testament, several were ciphering, two or three were pretty well advanced in the knowledge of arithmetic ; they sung very well—music is one branch of science taught in the school. Saturday evening I again went to Rossville, and remained there until Monday. Sabbath morning, at six o'clock, Mr. Hurlburt preached in Indian ; at eleven o'clock, I preached ; Mr. Brooking read the morning service of the Episcopal Church. I baptized eight children, and then administered the Sacrament to between eighty and a hundred communicants, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Barnston, and Mrs. McKinzey, from the fort, partaking with us. At three o'clock, P. M., I again preached and baptized a child, and, in the evening, at the close of the prayer-meeting, I baptized an Indian woman, who had come all the way from Oxford House, a distance of more than 250 miles, to secure Christian baptism. During the administration of the ordinance, and especially when I was proposing to her the questions contained in our form of baptism for adults, she seemed greatly excited and agitated ; the perspiration poured off her like rain ; but she answered in the affirmative all the questions with firmness, and apparently great devo-



tion. The church is a neat wooden building, one story high, well seated, and about 35 by 45 feet on the ground ; it will accommodate two hundred and fifty persons, and is usually well filled at the public services, especially the 11 o'clock service, with a congregation of exemplary and devout worshippers, who, in personal appearance, &c., are in advance of any Indian congregation I ever saw in Canada. In the afternoon, accompanied by Mr. Steinhaur, I went through the village, and called on every family in it ; the most of the houses were clean ; the families in them appeared to be comfortable ; but the agriculture of the place is far, very far behind what it ought to be. I was told that the village has been going back, in this respect, ever since the late Mr. Evan's time, who indeed was the founder of the Mission, and who, for a number of years, in many ways, was eminently useful among the Indians in the territory. It is to be hoped that the present Missionary will be successful in his endeavours to effect a great reformation among the Indians of his charge, with regard to the cultivation of the land and the improvement of their domestic premises. There are about forty houses belonging to the settlement ; several of them, however, are some distance from the village. The parsonage is a neat building, and sufficiently large to accommodate any ordinary family ; it now needs some repairs ; especially a new roof is indispensable. The school-house is an excellent building, and of commodious size ; a

part of it has been partitioned off, and the room occupied for a printing office : this part will now be occupied by Miss Adams and the children of the female school.

The boats from McKenzie's River, which were to take us to Oxford and York, did not arrive until Wednesday, the 16th, so I had the pleasure of spending two more days with my excellent and kind friends of the Fort; and I have great pleasure in here recording the feelings of grateful respect which I entertain for Mr. and Mrs. Barnston and their estimable family, by whom I was treated with so much attention, and from whom I received several kind and most welcome presents. Long may that lovely family live in the enjoyment of every domestic blessing ! long may they live to adorn the domestic circle of which they are now so bright ornaments !

Very early, on Wednesday morning, the boats arrived, and we immediately commenced packing and making arrangements for our departure ; but the changing of boats, getting supplies of provisions for the men, &c., prevented us getting away from the fort until 5½ o'clock in the evening. At five, P.M., we went on board of our new craft—indeed all things were quite new—new voyageurs, new watercrafts, totally different from those in which we had previously voyaged. The boats used in the territory are coarse, awkward-looking affairs as you ever saw. Each boat will carry two or three tons weight, and costs from £20 to £25, and is usually manned by eight, ten, or twelve voyageurs. I was

placed in Bruce's, the guide-boat No. 1 ; Mr. and Mrs. Frooking and their family in the next boat, and Mr. Steinhaur and the school teacher for Oxford Mission in the third boat. We travelled some eight or ten miles, and at sun-set stopped for the night. Bruce had my tent immediately pitched, cedar boughs gathered and laid down for my bed ; tea was directly prepared, of which I partook with a good appetite, and then sat me down to write these notes.

On Thursday morning, at 3½ o'clock, the men were called from their slumbers by the guide ; but before I heard Bruce's clear voice crying, "lève, lève, lève," I was up and dressed, having arisen before three o'clock ; indeed I slept very little during the night, and was glad when the time came for me to leave my uncomfortable couch. We travelled twelve miles, and at 8½ o'clock stopped for breakfast. During the day we run a rapid. This was the first rapid I had seen run by a boat, and it seemed to me more difficult and dangerous than running the rapid in the canoe. The principal fall in this rapid was several feet, and when the boat passed over it, the jar was as though she had struck upon a rock.— After passing over a series of little lakes, amidst innumerable little islands of rocks, we entered the river Sion, a narrow, sluggish, crooked stream, hardly wide enough to admit the boats passing, the oars of which were continually getting entangled in grass and willows that grew on either side of the narrow space of open water. I have seen no coun-

try, since leaving Canada, that seems so dreary and utterly worthless as the desolate and barren regions through which we have passed to-day. We found no place to stop for dinner, and we liked not to have found a place for lodgment during the night. Our poor weary voyageurs worked away until dark, hoping to reach some spot where a sufficient quantity of dry earth could be found upon which we might pitch our tents; but they looked in vain, and we had at last to take up our quarters in a willow swamp, where, almost every step you took, you sunk into the mud and water.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, as ever,

Most truly yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. E. Wood, &c.

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LETTER X.

Oxford Place, Jackson Bay Mission,  
August 20th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:—

After having attempted to repose for a few hours on a bed of decayed vegetables, which were no sooner trampled upon than they became quite wet, I rose from my watery couch, and before 3½ on Friday morning the 18th, I was all ready for marching. I may here say that, throughout my long tour thus far, in no instance have I detained the

voyageurs, in a majority of cases, I have called the men ; in no instance have they waited one moment for me. All this day we were voyaging against the stream of Black River, very properly named from the blackness of the water, and in many places so narrow that the men could not use their oars, and were compelled to take to their poles. At 11 we made a half portage occasioned by a dam that had been thrown across the river for the purpose of raising the water above it to a sufficient depth for navigation. A half portage is, when the lading is carried over and the boat is not, there being a sufficient depth of water for the boat when disburthened of her load. Here the luggage was all carried over and the boat through a kind of race. At 2½ we arrived at the portage "*haute de terre*," or Height of Land portage, so named because of its being a ridge of land that divides the waters flowing into the Hudson's Bay, through the Jack and Hill rivers. The portage was not a very long one, but it was the first full portage I had seen made with the boats. The freight is always carried over first, and each crew carry the lading of their own boats only ; but it requires all the crews of the brigade—that is thirty men—to carry or take over one boat ; the boats are run over on slides, rollers or poles. The freight bateau in the territory are large, and apparently awkward and unwieldy things ; they are long, broad, and shallow, capable of carrying fifty hundred weight, and nine or ten men, besides three or four passengers with provisions for themselves

and for the crew. The boats are built of light material, and it is said are very light for their size, and that they do not draw more than three feet of water when loaded, perhaps less. This morning—Saturday the 19th, before 4 o'clock, we were marching over 'the ocean wave to the Robinson portage, where we arrived at 7½ o'clock. The Robinson portage is a mile long, and the road across it is a smooth highway, two rods in width. Immediately on landing, the passengers went over to the far end of the portage, where we breakfasted. We were not troubled with mosquitoes, but the sand flies were exceedingly annoying. To convey a brigade of boats over a portage, especially a long one, is a tedious, tardy piece of work, as I have said, it requires all the men of the brigade to each boat and consequently only one boat can be taken over at a time. Twenty of the men are harnessed two and two, drawing with straps across their breasts, the others are on either side of the boat, lifting, shoving, &c., as the occasion may require. It was 2½ o'clock before all the boats were got over, so we dined before leaving the portage. After starting we rowed on without stopping until 8 o'clock, when we landed on a rocky point, and pitched our tents for the night; within fifteen minutes after leaving the boats, our tents were pitched, and a half dozen fires were blazing, which appeared all the more brilliant and pleasing, because of the darkness and stillness of the surrounding regions.

Since leaving the Robinson portage we were navi-

gating a narrow stream of water between hills and mountains of rocks, some of which were of immense altitude, and came so close together from opposite sides of the river, as hardly to admit of the boats passing between them. The sterile barrenness of this part of the country exceeds description; it seems incapable of affording existence to any thing having animal life; indeed it is perplexingly unknowable for what purpose such a waste, howling wilderness of rocks, swamps and bogs could have been created.

Sabbath morning, the 20th, I was up and had done all the business of the toilet before 3 o'clock, and by 3½ o'clock Captain, or Commodore Bruce had his fleet under way. At 5 o'clock we came to the Big Hill rapids, the most dangerous and difficult of passing of any I ever saw. The loading was all taken out of the boats and carried round the rapids, and then each boat was run down the rapids by Bruce, the guide, who stands in the bow, the steersman and four men at the oars. I was desirous of remaining in the boat while it run the rapid, and obtained the reluctant permission of Bruce to do so. The scene was novel and grand, and withal, rather terrifying; in a moment of time we were hurled through and over the water for the distance of nearly a quarter of a mile. I enjoyed the thing exceedingly, and was well pleased that I had ventured on making the practical experiment of running one of the most fearful and dangerous rapids in the territory.— After I had run the rapid, Mr. Brooking thought he must do so too, and he came down in the third

BIG HILL RAPIDS.





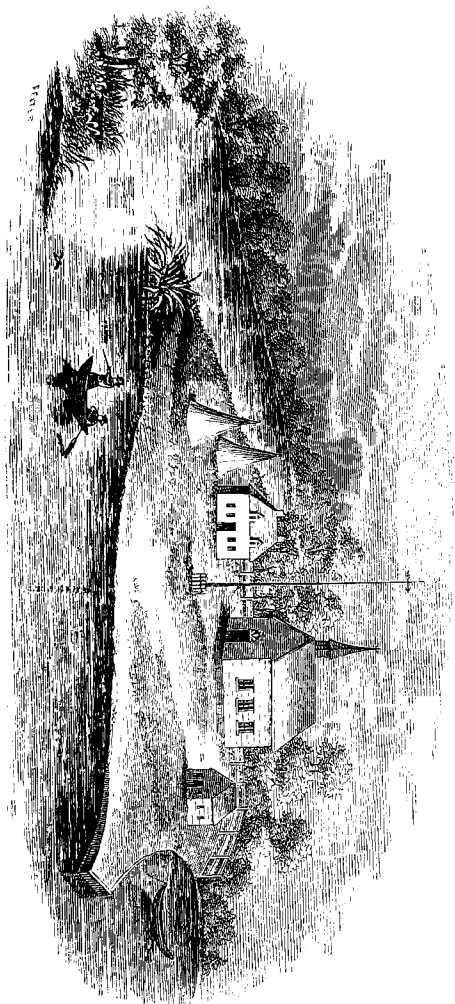


boat safely, and because of the feat, my friend's countenance glowed with unusual lightness, and he seemed taller and straighter than ever. Soon after leaving Big Hill Portage and rapids, we entered a little lake called "Lac De Vent"—or Lake of Wind—so named because of the extreme tempestuousness of it. The boatmen say they never cross this lake without having to encounter high winds, and most times tempests. It blew nearly a gale when we passed, but the wind being favourable we sailed at such a rate as I had never done before; we went at the rate of twelve miles an hour; the boats flew over, and rushed through the water like things of life. This was the Sabbath, yet voyageurs, in their *long voyages*, are required to travel on the Sabbath as well as on the week days, but after breakfast, before starting, Bruce, the guide, called all his Roman Catholic men, who constituted almost all the crews, together, and they united in the prayers of the Roman church, in which they apparently engaged with sincerity and earnestness. Monday the 21st, at 4 o'clock, when we left our encampment the day was wet and gloomy, but as the sun arose the mist cleared away, and towards noon the weather became fine and pleasant. At 11 o'clock we arrived at the Oxford House, or Jackson Bay Mission; the brigade, by the direction of Mr. Barnston, having gone eight or ten miles out of their way, in order to land us there.

We found only one Indian family at the Mission; all the other Indians and their families being absent,

hunting or fishing ; but we sent off two Indian boys in a canoe to an Island not far distant, where many of the Indians were encamped, and by 7½ o'clock, p. m., seven canoes, with as many families belonging to the Mission, arrived. There is a parsonage house and a church at this Mission, both unfinished ; so far as they have gone, the expense of their erection has been met by the Hudson's Bay Company, but it will require £70 or £100 to complete them : when finished, they will be very suitable buildings for the object for which they were erected.

There are only a few houses here ; the most of the Indian families, when at the Mission, still lodging in camps. This was also the case with several families at Rossville Mission. Mr. Brooking intends to do all he can to induce all the Indian families to build them houses to dwell in ; and there is no doubt, should he be spared, in a short time the number of dwelling houses, and the amount of cultivated land will be greatly increased. The Mission is delightfully situated at the head of what is called, at least by the Wesleyans, Jackson's Bay. This Bay and Mission were so named, I was told, after the Rev. Thomas Jackson, who was president of the English Conference the year the Mission was commenced. The Mission premises are on a peninsula which is formed by the lake, or Jackson's Bay on one side and the river Wire on the other ; the river runs down near the lake, and then makes a turn from it, forming a semicircle before emptying itself into the bay. There are about fourteen or fifteen acres of



WESLEYAN MISSION PREMISES, JACKSON'S BAY.



land on the peninsula, all of which is Mission property. The land is of a most excellent quality, producing abundantly most kinds of useful vegetables. There are now growing more than an acre of excellent potatoes, several patches of turnips, and in the garden, beets, parsnips, carrots, onions, &c., in great abundance. At dinner we had a feast of fine potatoes and turnips, and when leaving, we took with us enough to last us all the way to York. Much fatigued, at 1 o'clock, a. m., I retired to rest, and at 6 o'clock the following morning we were all busily engaged in preparing for my departure. There is a large boat here worth £20, belong to the mission ; it was *presented* to the Society last year by Mr. Barnston, of Norway House, another evidence of the goodness of Mr. Barnston's character, and the sincere and firm friendship he feels toward the cause of Christian missions. Mr. Steinhaur being absent from the mission for two or three months, the boat was entirely neglected, and was half full of mud and water, so it was no trifling job to prepare it for use. We had every thing prepared for our departure, when we saw a boat approaching the wharf ; this proved to be one of the four boats belonging to L'Esperance's brigade ; it was L'Esperance's own boat that had been directed by Mr. Barnston to come round by the mission and take me down to York. Mr. Brooking, in order to secure stores, &c., concluded to accompany me to York, and Mrs. Brooking accompanied us as far as Oxford House, distant twenty miles from the mis-

sion. We left the mission at 9½ o'clock, and arrived at Oxford House at 2½ o'clock. Oxford lake is one of the most beautiful sheets of water in the territory; it is thirty-five miles long, and averages from eight to twelve miles in width; it is covered over with beautiful islands, and abounds with fish of the richest quality, and finest flavour. Oxford House is situated at the north east end of the lake on the brow of a grassy hill that gradually rises from the margin of the water to a considerable height. The fort establishment consists of a small number of wooden houses, one story high, built in the form of a square, and surrounded with high stockades, pointed at the tops. Rather a high flag staff towers above the buildings, upon which a flag is always raised on the occasion of the arrival of boats at the fort.

We were kindly received and courteously treated during the three hours we remained at the fort, by Mr. Wilson, the gentleman in charge. The premises of this establishment cover several acres of land, in a state of excellent cultivation, and upon which there are now growing in fine order, barley, peas, potatoes, &c. At 5 o'clock, p. m., we left the fort; I was in L'Esperance's boat, Mr. Brooking and Steinhaur in two other boats. We travelled for twelve or fifteen miles, and at 7 o'clock went on shore, and pitched our tents for the night. At the approach of *tea time* we found ourselves rather in a "fix," there not being a cook belonging to L'Esperance's brigade; but as necessity knows no law, Mr. Brooking undertook the business of *chief* cook, calling to his assistance

Mr. Steinhaur and two of the voyageurs. In three quarters of an hour it was announced that tea was ready, and, when we came round the board, there was spread out before us, on a clean white cloth, that rested on the floor of the tent, for a table, fried fish, roast ducks, boiled ham, boiled potatoes, bread and butter, and sweet cakes; and the tea made so strong and sweet that even *I* could drink but little of it; and just as we were commencing tea, one of the voyageurs brought two large fat rabbits, neatly dressed, and proposed to cook them for us also. Whether or not the chief cook would have proposed the rabbits for our *tea dessert*, I can not say, as I did not wait to know his intentions, but at once urged the necessity of being excused having any part in the work of demolishing two fat rabbits, in addition to all the fine and fat things before us.

Wednesday the 23rd. Last night we camped at the upper end of a series of rapids, which, this morning, as soon as we started, we commenced running. There are ten or twelve rapids in this series, some of which are most difficult and dangerous. One of the rapids is almost always passed by making a portage, but in consequence of the very high water this season the guide ventured to run the rapid.—L'Esperance says that, although he had passed this rapid forty times, he had never attempted to run it but once before. In running this rapid the boats struck several times, and, from one of them, a piece of wood was torn from the keel, two or three inches



thick and six feet long. At 6 o'clock, a. m., we came to the Fall portage ; a short, but a most difficult one ; the height and ruggedness of the rocks over which the boat and loading have to be carried, render the work of making the portage very slow and laborious. The scenery all along this Hill river is novel and fantastic, exceedingly so. The stream is turbulent and unfriendly in the extreme, but in romantic variety, and in some sort of beauty, nothing can exceed the scenery which surrounds it. High rocks beetling over the rapids like towers, or rent into the most diversified forms, gay with various coloured mosses, or shaded by over-hanging hills—now a tranquil pool lying like a sheet of silver—now the dash and foam of a cataract—these are parts only, of its picturesque and striking pictures.

I am as ever,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Very affectionately yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood,  
&c., &c., &c.

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LETTER XI.

YORK, HUDSON'S BAY,

Aug. 31st, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :—

On leaving the Fall portage we entered Kneeh Lake, a sheet of water fifty-six miles long, and about ten miles wide. The wind being fair and high, we

sailed across this lake with great speed, reaching the lower, or north east, end of it at 5½ o'clock. Passing out of Knee Lake, we entered Jack River, rapidly down which we went for ten or twelve miles, through a series of as many rapids, when we came to Jack portage, where we stopped all night. We travelled to-day about seventy miles, run ten or twelve rapids, and made one very difficult portage. This night the aurora was most brilliant, and continued in rapid motion until after midnight. The farther north you go the more brilliant are the northern lights and the more rapid is their motion. The portage where we stopped last night is at the mouth of Jack River, where it empties into a small lake ten miles across, named Swamp Lake. On Thursday morning, at the lower end of this lake, on a small rocky island, we stopped for breakfast. Leaving Swamp Lake, we entered Hill River, which is little else than a continued series of fearful rapids and difficult portages. All day we were running rapids, and making portages. The boats ground on rocks frequently, and several times our boat struck so hard that it would seem to break her to pieces. All the boats were more or less injured. One boat stranded on the rocks, and had several of her knees broken, and a hole broken through the plank, ten inches wide, and three feet long; the loading had to be taken out of her, which was done with difficulty, and she taken to the shore, hauled up, and repaired. At 7 o'clock, p. m., we stopped to camp, still in the midst of rapids or waterfalls. I would name the

most of these waterfalls, for merely to call these *cataracts* rapids, conveys a very imperfect and even erroneous idea of them. In many places the water pitches down quite perpendicularly, several feet ; and the boats, in passing over these precipices, do not run, but leap. We are now come to that part of Hill River where the banks are of clay, and very high. A high clay bank of a river, or lake, is so novel a thing, in this part of the country, and so greatly contrasts with the no banks at all, or the marshy low sedgy banks, or the barren—broken, up and down, every shape, rocky ones, every where seen, on the lakes and rivers, that a high smooth bank of clay is most reviving and refreshing to the eye. We are now in full view of a mountain of considerable height, although the altitude of it I should think, is not quite so great as certain mountains in the McKenzie River country, about which I heard a Scotchman, from that part of the territory, telling the voyageurs, while last night seated round the fire, at the door of my tent. This Scotchman, who was returning to Scotland, after having served out his time, said there were mountains in the part of the territory where he had been, so high that they reached above the stars, that he himself had carried boats and packages over them—that in the winter the weather was so cold, it froze your breath as soon as it passed the lips, and that you could hear it hiss as the frost took hold of it on its coming out of the mouth !!

Friday the 25th. To-day, after passing two

rapids, and making two portages, we entered Steel River, about forty miles above where it puts into the River Hayes. The Steel River is a wide, deep, rapid stream of water ; the current in it runs about two miles an hour ; but there are no strong rapids and no portages ; indeed there are no more portages to make between this and York. We made more than thirty from Norway House to this place, and run rapids almost without number. The banks of the river are clay, and high ; in some places, very high ; fifty, eighty, and perhaps a hundred feet high ; in many places they are smooth and white, not a little resembling in appearance the chalky cliffs of Dover. We reached the mouth of Steel River, where it empties into Hayes River—sixty miles from York depot. At 7 o'clock we entered Hayes River. The Hayes River is a beautiful stream ; it averages a quarter of a mile in width, and its current runs at the rate of three knots an hour. On entering the river the boats were all fastened together, side by side, and then with one man to steer them, they were left to drift with the current, during the night. We then addressed ourselves to the business of preparing for bed, which, when done, we lay down to rest, or sleep, or pass away the still and silent hours of the night, as best we could. When day-light fully appeared on the following morning, we found ourselves within thirty miles of York, we having drifted thirty miles during the night. Within a few miles of York we put ashore for breakfast, which was prepared and disposed of very expeditiously, all

feeling much anxiety to see York, and with some of us to see the end of our inland voyaging. We arrived at York depot at 10½, and were kindly received by William McTavish, Esq., a chief factor, and the gentleman in charge of the station. Mr. McTavish conducted Messrs. Brooking, Steinhaur, and myself, to our quarters, and showed us the apartments we were to occupy during our stay at York. We were greatly surprised, and not a little troubled, in learning that the ship had not yet arrived; although it was then the 26th, and the usual time of the vessel reaching York is the 10th, or at the latest, the 15th of the month. To me it was a circumstance calculated, at least, to try my faith. I could not think of remaining during the winter at York; and to return into the interior to any place where I might advisedly remain during the winter season, would involve a journey of several hundred miles, and five or six weeks to perform it in, and this, too, in the inclement season of a Hudson's Bay autumn. But still, with feelings of resignation and submission, I was enabled to commend myself and the whole matter to the direction of the gracious Being, who does all things well. At 3½, p.m., on their way to England, the Rev. — Archdeacon Hunter and lady, Adam Tom, Esq., lady and family, the Rev. Mr. Mason, and Mr. Ross, arrived, so we were not likely to be lonely during our stay at York. The Fort at York, as all the factories or depots are called, is a large square, of about ten acres, inclosed within high stockades, and built on

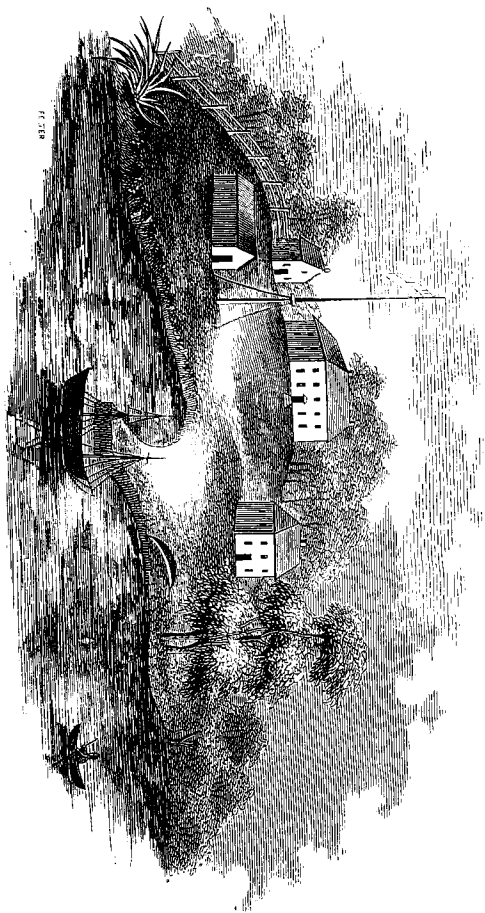


PLATE 108

YORK FACTORY.



the banks of Hayes River, about five miles from its mouth, where it empties itself into Hudson's Bay. The houses are of wood, and certainly can make no pretensions to architectural beauty, but still their regularity, and clean white appearance, have a very pleasing effect on the eye. The principal building is the general store, where the goods to the amount of two years outfit for the whole northern department are stored. This general store is the centre building, and is built with an open space, or court, in the centre of it, after the manner of French hotels. On each side of the centre building is a long low white painted house, with window frames and edgings painted. In one of these, visitors and company residents are lodged in the summer season; the other is the mess room or dining hall. Four large stores stand at right angles to these houses, and forming thus three sides of the front square. Behind the front building stands a row of small and low buildings, painted yellow, for the labourers and tradesmen; and on the right hand is the dwelling-house of the chief factor, and adjoining it is the clerk's house, called "bachelors' hall;" and in front of the chief factor's house, Mr. McTavish is now building a parsonage for the chaplain. On the left hand is the provision store and the Indian trading shop. A few other buildings, the oil store, the lumber-house; among which is seen a tall singularly-looking building, the observatory, called the look-out place, from which the inhabitants have an extensive view of their wild domains; and just near it stands the



ice house. The ice-house is filled every spring with ice, which does not melt during the summer, although the weather for two months is intensely hot. In the ice-house a store of fresh meat is laid up sufficient to supply the people in the fort to the commencement of winter ; also, fish are there kept fresh for any length of time. As I have said, the ice in the ice-house never melts, so neither does the lower stratum of soil in the surrounding country, the uppersoil only melting to the depth of two or two and a half feet ; the sub soil is perpetually frozen. The country around the fort is one immense swamp, as level as a floor, thickly covered with willow bushes and dotted, here and there, with bunches of pine trees. The only large timber in the vicinity grows on the banks of Hayes river, several miles above the fort, and consists chiefly of spruce fir. The spruce fir is the principal article used for fire-wood, and is brought on rafts, or in boats, from several miles up the river. Nelson River is a broad, rapid, beautiful stream, which discharges itself into the Hudson's Bay, near the mouth of Hayes River ; between the rivers is a belt of low swamp, known by the name of the " point of Marsh."

Sabbath the 27th. There was Divine service held in the dining room at 10½ o'clock. Archdeacon Hunter, from Cumberland Mission read the service, and Mr. Brooking preached. The congregation was large, consisting of the officers and servants belonging to the fort, voyageurs, a few Indians, and several persons, who, like myself, had come to

York to take passage in the ship for England. In the afternoon, at 3 o'clock, Mr. Hunter read the service and preached in Cree. Mr. Hunter is a good Cree scholar; he has translated the prayer book and the Gospel of St. John into Cree, and the translations have been printed by the Church Missionary Society. Mr. Hunter has also made a good commencement in forming a grammar for the Cree language; he has written out the verb in all its moods, tenses and persons, and is now on his way to England to get it published, with portions of the Scriptures, which he has translated, and which have not yet been printed. Monday the 28th.—This morning, at 9½ o'clock, the announcement was made by the skipper, from the top of the observatory, that the ship was in sight. The tidings produced great excitement, and great joy, in which feeling, I can assure you, I participated. I went into my room, and on my knees gave thanks to the glorious Ruler of events, who holds the winds in his fist, and the waters in the hollow of his hand, for thus giving this timely relief from painful anxiety. The packet boat and the skipper, with his fine little vessel, were immediately sent off to the ship, but she being distant twenty miles, and the wind high, they did not reach her until near night. At 12 o'clock at night the packet boat returned, bringing the mail and a few packages. At 1 o'clock, on Tuesday morning, the schooner returned from the ship, with a full cargo, when immediately all hands, who could find room to work, were employed in unload-

ing and conveying the goods to the store-houses. It is surprising with what activity and order the men in the company's employ work. The schooner is one hundred tons burthen, and she was fully loaded, but the whole cargo was discharged, and in the store-houses before seven o'clock in the morning. On Wednesday, Captain Heard, with the cabin passengers, came on shore, among whom was a Mr. George, a catechist of the Church of England, who is on his way to Red River, where he expects to receive ordination from Bishop Anderson for the missionary work some where in the Territory. Mr. George's station is not yet determined, but he says, although a young man, he has come out with the intention of not returning, having consecrated his life to the missionary work, in the Hudson's Bay Territory; and he had not been at York a day before he commenced learning the Cree language. I am sure, my dear sir, you will unite with me in saying, that this is as it *should* be.

On Thursday, the 30th, at 1 o'clock, a. m., Dr. Rae arrived on his return from his exploring expedition in the Arctic regions. You are aware that Dr. Rae, a year ago, was sent out by the Hudson's Bay Company, to complete the survey of the west shore of Boothia. Dr. Rae appears to me just the man for such an expedition. He is very muscular and active, full of animal spirits, and has a fine intellectual countenance; he is considered by those who know him well, to be one of the best snow-shoe walkers in the territory, and is also a most excellent

marksman. Dr. Rae failed in completing the survey of the west shore of Boothia, but he has obtained a knowledge of the probable fate of Sir John Franklin's party, which cannot fail of being deeply interesting to thousands in Europe and America. As Dr. Rae will himself publish an account of the matter, it will not be necessary for me here to mention what I have heard stated in conversations which I have had the pleasure of holding with him on the subject. Dr. Rae is taking home with him a number of articles purchased from the Esquimaux, said to have been obtained where the bodies of the persons who had died of starvation were found, among which are forks, spoons, plates, &c. Dr. Rae spent the last winter at Repulse Bay—lat. 66-32—dwelling in a house of ice which he and his party built.

Sabbath, September 3rd, as on the previous Lord's day, we had Divine service in the dining-hall; Mr. Mason read the prayers and I preached: the congregation was not so large as the Sabbath before—some of the voyageurs having left during the week for the interior. In the afternoon, Mr. McTavish set the men of the fort unloading the schooner, which in the morning had come in from the ship with a full cargo; but the Christian Indians who were at the fort refused to work, although strongly urged to do so, "it being the *Sabbath day*." This was a pleasing evidence that Christianity has not only taken strong hold of their hearts, but that they are also obtaining enlightened views of the moral obligations of the Gospel.

On Friday, the 8th, the schooner came in from the ship with the last load of goods, and brought directions from Captain Heard to the officers to commence sending out the furs, &c., for the homeward cargo, so we were encouraged to indulge the pleasing anticipation of, in a few days, being on the "wide ocean raging," with our faces towards the land of our fathers and of our home. During the day Mr. McTavish conducted me through the principal buildings of the establishment, showing me all the matters and things that it would likely be interesting for a stranger to see ; and at the same time he presented me with two pairs of unusually large horns—one of the red deer or elk, the other moose. A gentleman who spent a number of years in the North-west Territory, gives in substance the following description of the elk and moose. "The elk," he says, "is about the size of a horse, and their bodies are shaped like those of the jumping-deer,—i. e., the deer that are found in the northern parts of the United States and Canada. Their tails are remarkably short, being not more than three inches long. Their hair, which is three inches in length, is of a light grey colour, and is as coarse as that of the horse. The horns of these animals grow to a very large size ; their extreme points are four or five feet apart, and they branch out before and behind like those of the common deer. Their bodies are well proportioned, and their appearance and movements are noble and majestic ; indeed on the whole, they may be considered the most majes-

tic animals that roam through the forests of North America. They shed their horns in the month of February or March ; and by August the new ones are nearly at their full growth. Notwithstanding the size and strength of these animals and the means of defence with which they are furnished—they are as timorous as a hare. Their skins are very useful, and will dress as well as that of a buck. They feed on grass and buds, and the twigs of trees. Their flesh is tender—of a very fine flavour.”

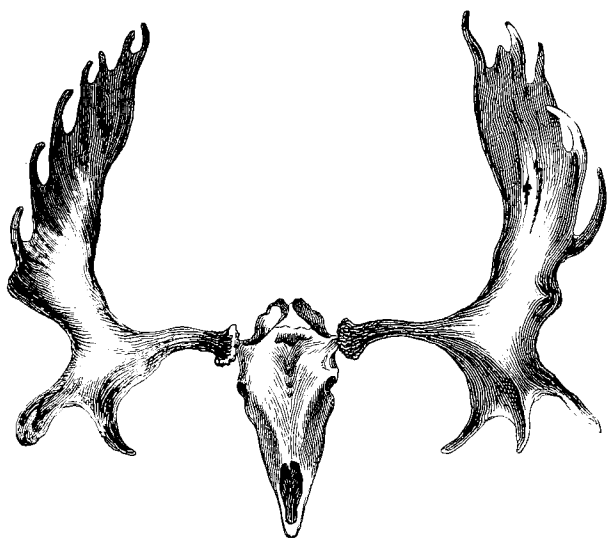
The moose is, in size, next to the buffalo, among the animals of the north west. The body, in shape, is something like that of an ox—raw boned, with high haunches ; but its neck and head resemble those of the horse. The ears are large, like those of an ass. The horns are flat and branch out only behind, and are shed every year. The feet resemble those of the deer, excepting as they are much longer and broader ; and when the animal puts them on the ground the hoofs separate, two or three inches. The head is about two feet long. The upper is much longer than the under lip of this animal ; and the nostrils are so wide that a man might thrust his hand into them to a considerable distance. The colour of the moose is a light grey, mixed with a deep red, and the hair is so elastic that its shape can not be altered by beating. The flesh of this animal is exceedingly good food, it being easy of digestion, and very nourishing, as well as very palatable. The nose, and upper lip which is large and loose from the gums, are esteemed a great

delicacy ; it is of a consistence between marrow and gristle, and when properly dressed, is certainly a rich and luxurious dish. The hide of the moose makes excellent leather, as it is thick and strong, and when dressed, it is remarkably soft and pliable. The pace of the moose is a walk or trot, and it is exceeded in swiftness by very few of its fellow tenants of the forest. It will with ease trot over a fallen tree five feet in diameter. This animal is commonly found in low ground, where it feeds on moss and the buds of trees. The moose generally remains alone, although sometimes five or six of them are found together. Their senses of hearing and smelling are amazingly acute, and therefore the least noise, made by a hunter, such as the rustling of dry leaves, or the breaking of a small branch, will be heard by this animal at a great distance, and will instantly alarm its fears. When put to flight, the moose does not, like the deer and most animals, run a short distance and then stop until it perceives some new appearance of danger ; but very frequently he will not make the least halt until he has run ten or fifteen miles. No other animal that runs in the woods is so difficult to approach. The elk and moose horns, presented to me by my kind friend Mr. McTavish, I intend, through you, my dear sir, to present to the Missionary Board in Toronto ; and perhaps they may be seen, and may be objects of interest when you and I shall have passed away, and shall be known on earth no more.

On Sabbath the 10th, at half-past ten o'clock,



HORNS OF THE ELK



HORNS OF THE MOOSE





Mr. Hunter read prayers, and preached an excellent sermon, by which I was instructed and spiritually benefitted. Mr. Mason by the sacrament of Baptism, received into the Christian Church, seven adults, Indians, besides several children. It was pleasing to see these once heathen, and children of the forest, giving themselves to the Saviour, and "witnessing a good confession before many witnesses."

On Sabbath the 17th at half-past ten o'clock I preached, Mr. Mason reading the service. At half-past three, P. M., Mr. Mason preached in Cree to between twenty and thirty Indians.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Most affectionately yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood,  
&c. &c. &c.

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## LETTER XII.

York, Hudson's Bay, 10th Sept., 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Before concluding the letters which I have taken the liberty to address to you respecting the matters and things as I saw them in Rupert's Land, during my tour,—I beg to make a few remarks respecting the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company, and I will state what I have to say, in as few words as I can. It was in the year 1669 that the Hudson's Bay Company, under the direction of

Prince Rupert was formed in London for the purpose of prosecuting the fur trade in the regions surrounding the Hudson's Bay.

The charter which was obtained from Charles the II. gave to them and their successors, under the style and title of the Governor and Company of Adventurers trading in Hudson's Bay, the exclusive right of trading in all the country watered by rivers flowing into the Hudson's Bay.

The charter also authorized them to build and fit out men of war, build fortifications, establish forts, and to do anything necessary to protect themselves, and to prevent any other company from carrying on trade with the Indians in their territories. The charter at the same time required them to do all in their power to promote discovery, and the religious and moral interests of the natives. Armed with such ample powers the Company forthwith established a fort or trading place near the head of James' Bay, now called Moose Factory; very soon afterwards a number of other forts were built in different parts of the territory; so that before long, the Company being wealthy, extended their trade and spread over regions, far beyond their originally chartered limits. The Hudson's Bay Company, however, found a strong and active rival in the North-West Company, which had been engaged in the fur trade in many parts of the country before them.

Between the officers and servants of the two Companies there was a continual strife, and very frequently most serious feuds occurred, even to the

shedding of blood and taking life. But in the year 1821 the Companies united and were merged in one, under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, since which time the united Company's business has been much more prosperous, and the government and management of their affairs much more wise and religious.

The extent of territory over which the Hudson's Bay Company carry on their trade, and throughout which Depots and Forts are established, is very great. As the crow flies the distance between Fort Van Couver, on the Oregon, and Fort Confidence, on Bear Lake, exceeds 1350 geographical miles, and the space between the Company's posts on the Labrador coast, or their station at Sault Ste. Marie, and Fort Simpson on the Pacific, measures more than 2500 miles; the territory is supposed to be somewhat more than 4,000,000 of square miles, or about one third greater than the whole extent of Europe. Throughout this vast extent of territory, a regular communication is kept up between the Governor and the numerous scattered Posts, and supplies are forwarded to all the districts annually with a regularity and exactness truly wonderful.

The country is divided into four large departments, called the Northern, Southern, Montreal, and Columbia Departments. The Northern Department includes all the Company's establishments in the far north and frozen regions. The Southern department includes those stations to the south of York, the forts at the head of James Bay and along

the shores of Lake Superior. The Montreal Department includes the country in the neighbourhood of Montreal, up the Ottawa River and along the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Esquimaux Bay, and the Columbia Department comprehends an immense extent of country to the West of the Rocky Mountains, including the Oregon Territory, in which the Hudson's Bay Company still continues to trade. These departments are again divided into smaller portions called Districts, each of which is under the direction of a superintending officer; and these again are subdivided into numerous minor establishments, forts, posts, and outposts. These forts or posts have a complement of men, varying from four to forty each, with an officer who has charge. There is connected with each district a depot to which all the supplies for the district are forwarded, and to which all the furs, &c., from the forts are sent to be forwarded to England. York Fort is a depot of the Northern Department.—Moose Factory is the depot of the Southern Department. Lachine is the depot of the Montreal Department; and Fort Van Couver is the depot of the Columbia Department.

There are belonging to the Northern Department, thirty-five Forts or Stations; to the southern twenty-five,—to the Montreal, thirty-four,—and to the Columbia Department twenty-one, making in the whole Territory one hundred and sixteen depots, and trading stations, in each of which, as I have stated, there is a superintending officer and from

four to forty men, mechanics, labourers, servants, &c. Besides, the Company employ multitudes of men as voyageurs, manning and working the boats and canoes, in every part of the Territory. There are now at the York Depot not less than forty boats that have brought down loads of furs from the interior, and as soon as they can be loaded will return freighted with the winter supply of goods for the various inland stations. Besides these now waiting for their loading, I have met since I left Red River, between forty and fifty more boats which had been down, and were returning with their loads.— Each of these boats will carry from four to five tons, and is manned with from seven to twelve men. There are eighty or ninety boats with their crews of some seven or eight hundred voyageurs; and this is but a mere fraction of the water craft and hands to man it, which the Company has employed. It is supposed by gentlemen connected with the Company that they have not less than forty thousand pounds invested in shipping and boats alone.

The Company is governed by a Governor and Committee, residents in London, elected by the stock-holders, who meet once a year for the transaction of general business, and to discuss and receive reports, &c. The Committee in London appoints a resident Superintendent or Governor who presides at the Councils of Chief Factors and Chief Traders, by whom the business in America is conducted, and the instructions of the Home Commit-

tee carried into effect. The officers of the company in the Territory consist of, first, as we have just stated, a Governor; the present Governor is Sir George Simpson, who resides at Lachine, near Montreal, but makes an annual visit to the Territory. Next the Chief Factor, or share holder; this is the highest rank under the Governor, to which any one in the service can rise: his salary at present is about £500 a year. The next officer in the descending line is that of Chief Trader, or half share-holder; next come the Clerks, then Apprentice Clerks, then the Post Master, usually a promoted labourer, who for good behaviour or faithful service has been partly put upon a footing with the gentlemen of the service. Then there is the interpreter, who for the most part is a more than ordinary intelligent labourer of pretty long standing in the service, who, having obtained some knowledge of the Indian tongue, is found to be very useful in trading with the natives. Every officer knows his place and his work: the laws regulating their duties are clearly defined, and well understood, and are enforced with a strictness and rigour truly military and naval. Hence the harmonious working of the whole extensive and complicated machinery, and the wonderful financial results of its operations. For instance, there were eight boats in the two brigades, with which I came to York, from Norway House; these boats were loaded with furs from the Mackenzie River; in each of these boats they were forty-two packs of furs, each of which, I was told,

was of the average value of £75—so that there were brought to this depot by eight boats only, furs that in the English Market will bring more than twenty-five thousand pounds. We may infer from this what the annual aggregate product of the Company's trade must be through these immense territories. There was sold at the Company's premises in London in the year 1848, 21,348 beaver skins, 54 lbs of coat beaver and pieces ; 6,588 otter, 1102 fishers, 900 silver foxes ; 19,449 cross, white, red, &c. ; 31,115 lynxes ; 11,292 wolf ; 908 wolvereen ; 150,785 martin ; 38,103 mink ; 195 sea otter, 150 fur seal ; 2997 bear ; 18,553 musk rats ; 1651 swan ; 632 cat ; 2,889 deer ; 2090 raccoon, and sundry smaller lots. The sales in London alone amount to more than £200,000 per annum, and this forms but a small part of the yearly returns from the Company's Territories, large quantities being exported to the continent, to the United States, and to Canada ; and occasionally furs are exported by the Company to China.

With regard to the bearing of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the religious matters of the territory, I cannot speak very confidently, not having been long enough in the country, nor had an opportunity to form a perfect judgement. That many of their officers are gentlemen of elevated and noble minds, and are decidedly favorable to the christianizing of the natives, there can be no doubt. I never received more kind and respectful treatment from



any class of men than I have from the Company's Officers in every place I visited throughout my entire tour. The following note extracted from a letter I received from the Rev. Mr. Brooking, will show his opinion on this subject :—

“To the Rev. J. Ryerson :

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,—You requested me to impart to you my views with regard to the bearing of the Hudson's Bay Company on the interests of Christian Missions among the aboriginal tribes of this country. I can only say that so far as my observation goes, I think it to be decidedly friendly. I have spoken with most of the gentlemen in charge of the stations through which we have passed, on the subject, and in only one instance did I find anything like hostility or even indifference. In most cases the prevailing feeling was in favour of christianizing the natives. This was especially the case with J. Hargrave, Esq., at the Sault St. Marie, and George Barnston, Esq., at Norway House ; and W. Mac-tavish, Esq., at the York Depot. I was assured by the latter gentlemen in a conversation I had with him, that he was fully of opinion that the interests of Missions, and of the Hon. Company were identical, and in promoting the cause of Missions, he was also promoting the interests of the Company.—“The fact that the sale of spirituous liquors is prohibited as far as possible, can only be properly estimated by those who have had the oversight of Indians when they had access to it.” The Hon.

Hudson's Bay Company appropriate annually considerable sums for the diffusion of religion in the territory. Bishop Anderson at Red River receives £300. The Rev. Mr. Chapman, Chaplain at Fort Garry, £150, and the Bishop's School receives from the Company £100 per annum. The Rev. Mr. Cowley, Missionary among the Indians at Red River has allotted to him £50 ; the Missionary at Moose Factory has £50 ; the Rev. Mr. Mason, of York, has also £50. To the Methodist Missions, there is given to Lac La Pluie, £50 ; Norway House, £50 ; Oxford Place, £50 ; Edmonton, £20. Besides these, there are considerable sums given to the Roman Catholic Missionaries, the exact amount of which I do not know. The Rev. Mr. Black, Presbyterian Minister at Red River, also receives annually the sum of £50. All these grants make the sum of £820 sterling given for the support of Protestant Missions by the Company, besides the £100 per annum given to Bishop Anderson's School. To be sure these are small sums when viewed in connection with the trade of the Company, the net gains of which is supposed to be not less than *fifty thousand pounds a-year*, after paying the officers and every expense ; yet small as they confessedly are, they still indicate a favourable disposition on the part of the Company towards the interests of the Christian Religion in the territory. One thing I can say with satisfaction, that I shall always entertain a pleasing and grateful recollection of the kind and honourable

treatment that I every where in the territory received from the Company's officers, and the facilities which they cheerfully afforded in promoting the objects of my mission."

I am as ever,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Yours, most affectionately,

J. RYERSON.

THE REV. E. WOOD,  
&c., &c., &c.

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LETTER XIII.

YORK, HUDSON'S BAY,  
September 12th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

In surveying the widely-extended, and still extending trade of the Hudson's Bay Company, we perceive evidence of an industry, and energy, and perseverance, exceedingly creditable to the members of it, as men of enterprise and business. They have explored the Western wilds, and planted numerous establishments over an immense tract of country—a tract of country thousands of miles in extent. They have made the wandering savages of the wilderness extensively tributary to the comforts and enjoyments of civilized society in almost every part of the civilized world, and in thousands of instances have displayed amazing fortitude and courage in exposing themselves to, and cheerfully enduring hardships

and dangers. The souls of the Indians are of infinitely more value than their furs ; and to raise the multitudes of this people in the scale of moral and intellectual existence, to surround them with the comforts of civilized life, to rescue them from the gloom of superstition, to mould their hearts to Christian purity and kindness, and to cheer their dying hours with a well grounded hope of eternal glory and blessedness, constitute an amount of good, one would suppose, sufficient to call forth very strenuous and untiring exertions for their relief. Should not Christian benevolence emulate the activity and perseverance which have so long been displayed in commercial enterprises and the pursuits of worldly gain ? We hope the day is not distant when no country will be unexplored by the heralds of salvation, and that the wandering tribes and benighted sons of our own almost interminable forests will not be overlooked by Christian men.

I have no fellowship with the opinion, and I am glad to know you have none, that is strongly entertained by some, that the Indian race is doomed to destruction. In proportion to the efforts which have been made, no missions to the heathen have been crowned with greater success, than those to the aborigines of America. The Indian tribes of America have peculiar and strong claims on the millions of American Christians who live in freedom, and have grown rich upon their soil ; and to me it seems that no part of the extensive field to be cul-

tivated on the American continent is more white unto the harvest, or presents more open doors for usefulness, in proportion to the number of souls, than the territory of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company. The Protestant Missions in the country are few and far between, notwithstanding nineteen-twentieths of the natives are willing, thousands of them anxious, to have missionaries sent to them, that they may be brought to the Christian religion. There are in this vast Territory but eighteen Protestant ministers. Thirteen of these belong to the Episcopal Church, four are Wesleyan, and one Presbyterian. Six of the Episcopal clergy are confined to the Red River Settlement.

The following places are inviting fields for Missionary labour, and by some Society these important posts should at once be occupied ; Michipicoton, Fort William, Lacloche, Grand Lac, Rupert's House, Albany, Kinogomousse, Churchill, Trout Lake House, Nelson River House, Berins River, Swan River, Rocky Mountain House, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Alexander, Rat Portage, and Edmonton, where there should be sent at least two or three Missionaries. The Wesleyan Missionary Society has a native teacher labouring in the neighbourhood of Edmonton, near the Rocky Mountains, with gratifying success ; but one individual, although ever so well qualified for the missionary work, could do comparatively little in a population of many thousands, the most of whom are anxious to receive religious instruction.

Day and Sabbath Schools are indispensable adjuncts to the Missions among the Indians: well qualified teachers are therefore almost as necessary in carrying on missionary work as the Missionaries themselves. The schools are in the English language, but the teacher must understand the Indian also, and hence the great necessity of the Society more earnestly directing its attention to the educating and training of suitable persons to be employed as teachers in the schools. I believe that a school on some such plan as the Industrial Schools at Muncey town and Alderville. should, and might, be successfully established in some central place in the Territory. A school for the instruction of children, both male and female, in the arts of life, and the rudiments of science, as well as in the principles of the Christian religion, forms the *basis* of the most efficient missionary exertions among the Indians; and if such a school was established at a convenient place in the country, it would be as the day spring from on high to a region now, in a great degree, over-spread by an intellectual and moral midnight. As the Hudson's Bay Company, from motives of interest, as well as from more noble considerations, would doubtless contribute something to the support of such an institution, should it meet their approbation, the expense of it would be less to the Missionary Society than is commonly incurred in similar establishments. The children and youth already mentioned might be instructed in the arts of civilized life, in

science, and in Christianity ; and when so instructed they would be equally useful as the instruments of spreading civilization, and the religion of the Gospel among the Indian tribes ; such persons being familiarly acquainted with the manners and customs and feelings of their own people, and being able to speak the language correctly and fluently, as well as having Indian blood circulating in their veins, would have ready access to the natives, and would doubtless exert a most powerful influence over them.

The aborigines of America are capable of being exalted in the scale of existence, and of arriving even at eminence in the arts and sciences. The eloquence and native oratory of some of these is proverbial in civilized countries, and has caused them to be enrolled among the sons of genius. Many of them afford abundant proof that they possess acute and comprehensive minds ; and, as a people, their capacities are not inferior to the whites ; and is there a people to be found on the earth, who are not raised above them by superior cultivation and mental improvement, who possess greater elevation of feeling, and who appear more majestic in mind ? Their virtues and their vices too are not those of an ignoble and mean mind. Let their condition be improved by the arts of civilized life, their minds enlightened and enlarged by science, and their hearts softened and renewed by the elevating influences of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, and they will assume if not a high, at least, a respectable rank

among the nations. Could we hear some of their cleverest men unfold to their countrymen the wonderful scheme of man's redemption through the sacrifice of the Redeemer, with a brilliancy and power which have distinguished some of their speeches delivered in behalf of their tribes, and that brilliancy and power rendered more effective by the subduing influences of religion, who would not listen to them with admiration, pleasure and profit? Could a number of the natives of Rupert's Land be brought to concert plans for the extension of the Gospel in the north western wilds with the skill, and to execute them with the fortitude and perseverance, which they display in hunting, and warring with each other, the happiest result might be expected.

I have now performed a duty which I have had much at heart for several years. I have passed through the Territory; visited the most important points in it; made myself acquainted with many localities, and with the character and circumstances of many of the Indian tribes: and the result of all is a stronger impression on my mind, than before, of the greatness and importance of the work which lies before the Church in this land.

Whether the suggestions and observations here made deserve consideration or not, I cheerfully submit to the judgement and piety of those friends of humanity for whom they are intended. Such are now my own views of the importance of the subject here referred to, that I should have felt myself guilty



of most blameable neglect if I had failed to improve this opportunity to hold it up to the attention of the numerous and devoted friends of the Missionary work.

As ever, Rev. and Dear Sir,  
Most respectfully and affectionately yours,  
J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood,  
&c., &c., &c.

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LETTER XIV.

LONDON, Oct., 26th, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

On Monday morning the 18th of September, at 6 o'clock, our luggage, &c., was sent to the ship "Prince of Wales" in the schooner, and at 10 o'clock Mr. and Mrs. Tom and their two sons, Mr. and Mrs. Hunter and child, Miss Bird and myself were conveyed thither in the packet-boat; the Captain accompanied by Drs. Rae and Combs followed soon after in the Captain's gig. In the evening at 10 o'clock Mr. Mason, Dr. Bennet, and Messrs. Watson and Miles came on board to spend the night with us and bid us farewell. So at supper we had a large party, and spent two or three hours very agreeably. Captain Heard, Dr. Rae, Dr. Bennet, Messrs. Mason, Watson and Miles sung some beautiful odes and songs, and it was near 1 o'clock,

A. M. when the party separated. All day Tuesday, the 19th, we were confined in the "Five Fathom Hole," not being able to get out for the want of strong favourable wind, the wind being against us. Wednesday at 8 o'clock, A. M. we sailed. There were passengers in the cabin, Mr. and Mrs. Tom and two sons, Miss Bird, Mr. and Mrs. Hunter and child, Neal Finlinson, Esq., Doctor Rae, Messrs. Ross and Steinhaur. There were also about twenty-five steerage passengers. The crew consists of twenty-four men, besides the captain and first and second mates, twenty-seven in all. The "Prince of Wales" is a fine ship of five hundred and fifty tons measurement, but capable of carrying eight hundred tons. She has now on board more than five hundred tons<sup>?</sup> of fur skins. The trade of the North-west company must be immense. The cargo with which the ship is now freighted is estimated as worth not less than £120,000 *sterling*. The three first days after sailing the breeze was light yet favourable; but on Saturday the 24th the wind turned against us, and during the night we got entangled in the ice, or the ice became so thick around the ship that we were obliged to lay to and "wait for the morning;" but when the morning light came it did not bring with it the discovery of the way of escape from the perils by which we were surrounded. We were between three and four days shut up in the ice, surrounded with fields and mountains of it, extending far beyond the reach of our

vision even when assisted by the spy glass. Fears now began to be entertained by all on board that we should not get out of the ice, at least towards the point of our destination. To be *closed in the Hudson's Straits* in the early part of the season is nothing unusual, and not particularly perilous, for the warm season is before you; but to be enclosed in the ice in *these Straits* just as the winter is setting in, when you are liable to be *frozen up* any hour, is most dangerous. We were in latitude 63—it was snowing and blowing almost continually, with a frost that put the thermometer down to 26 below zero; indeed there was every appearance of the winter setting in; and what added strength to the gloomy prospect was the universal belief that we were to have an early winter. The passengers looked exceedingly cast down. The captain himself appeared anything but comfortable, and said that he never before saw anything on this wise in the Hudson's Straits at this season of the year, though he had navigated these waters for twenty years.

Wednesday, the 28th,—on the South side of the Straits we found a narrow channel of open water, through which we wended our way until we had passed the fields of ice, when by a strong head wind we were driven over to the opposite shore of the Straits; in the afternoon we found ourselves quite close to the shore of what is called Digg's Islands, the most barren and dreary looking region of all the desolate scenes I ever beheld.

Thursday.—We are now fairly in the NARROW Straits, and near "Cape Walsingham" on the south side of the Straits. The hills and mountains of rocks that rise to a great height are covered with snow, and not the sign of vegetable life is visible upon them. Dr. Rae says, there does, however, grow on these sterile hills of everlasting snow, a kind of heath or heather, and a short kind of moss, upon which the rabbits live, that are found here in considerable numbers. We are now coasting along within five or ten miles of the shore, which is very bold, and the water very deep close up to the banks: it is said that the ship could in perfect safety, so far as the depth of water is concerned, go within twenty yards of the shore.

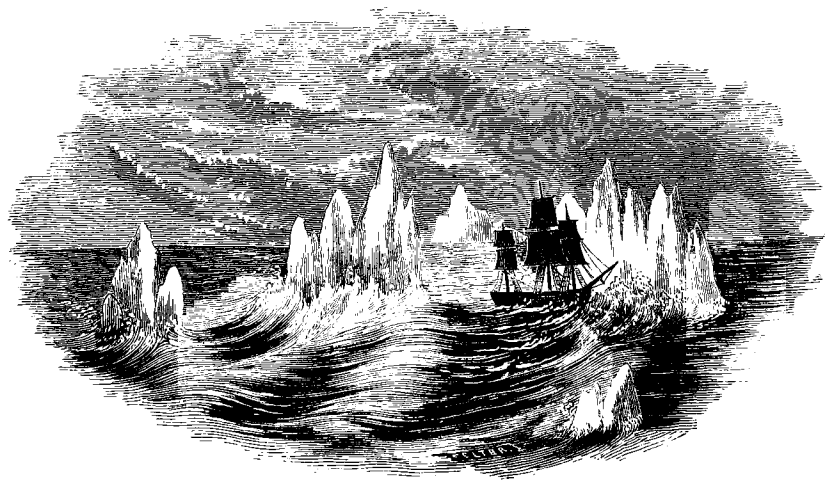
Friday, the 29th.—The weather is extremely cold, and we have no fire in our cabin: I can hardly keep from freezing. Yesterday for the want of wind we made little progress; during the night, however, the wind rose, or there came a little wind: towards morning it increased, so that in an early part of the day we had made eighty miles from where we were the evening before at 6 o'clock. We are now near Charles Island, a barren rock in the midst of the Straits, now and most of the year round covered with snow: passing you see in the distance further south the main land, a prominence of which rising up above the surrounding country and extending further into the sea, is called "Cape Weggs." Beating against a head wind we were carried to the

north side of the Straits, when we passed Cape Look Out, and a little while after, the North Buff, and still a little later in the day, at a short distance from us we passed a large iceberg, supposed to be between fifty and seventy feet above the water, and some half an acre in extent of surface ; it appeared spotlessly white and more like the dripping snow than ice. Just as the sun was setting we passed five more icebergs : the rays of the setting sun falling upon them gave them the appearance, in some parts, of variegated colours; and in other parts of brilliant whiteness, which as seen in the distance were objects of beauty surpassing description.

Saturday the 30th.—Last night we sailed about thirty miles and are now in lat 63, and west long. 71. In the evening at tea during a conversation respecting the Esquimaux Indians, Captain Heard presented me with an Esquimaux spear which he had obtained from some natives on the Labrador coast. This curiosity, with other articles, dear Sir, I will present through you to the Missionary Committee, to be kept in your office, should I be spared to return to my native country. This morning the weather is fine, and the wind fair, although we are making slow progress, the breeze being very light. There is a splendid ice-berg near us, the drapery of which is so white as no fuller could whiten it. At two o'clock, p. m., we passed the "Savage Islands," situated in lat. 63, and long. 70 50. Another ice-berg just by, looms up to the height of ninety or a hundred feet above the water.

Sabbath, the 1st of September. Last night at twelve o'clock, we came within a hairsbreadth of being destroyed by coming in contact with an ice-berg.— There was a thick white fog on the water at the time, and the first the watch saw of the ice-berg was the dashing of the waves against its side. We were then within a few rods of it, and going at the rate of between six and seven knots an hour. The watch sprang from the bow on the deck, and at the top of his voice, cried—"Breakers ahead—down with the helm—hard up!" The ship instantly obeyed the helm, and this saved us; had we been one rod nearer to the ice-berg, when it was discovered; or had there been one half-minute's more delay, in giving the command; or the ship have been one atom more tardy in obeying the helm—we should have gone with our bow directly against the ice-berg, in which case all agree that nothing could have prevented the instant destruction of the vessel, and, as the captain afterwards said, in five minutes not one would have been left to tell the tale of the sad disaster. As it was, when the ship came in contact with the ice-berg, she was turned perhaps one quarter round, and therefore struck with the *cheek* of her bow, and keeling over a little, raked along the side of it, the collision breaking to atoms and carrying away the "cat-head," the spritsail-yard, the bumkin, the captain's boat called the gig, the bulwarks or the frame or cap of them—a piece of timber of strong oak, between eight and nine inches square. The cat-head is a piece of timber of strong

oak, twelve or fourteen inches square, projecting two-and-a-half or three feet out of the quarter-bow; this was broken off as smooth as though it had been sawed off. Indeed the collision made clean work of it, not leaving a thing from stem to stern projecting beyond the hull of the vessel. Pieces of ice broken from the ice-berg, fell on the deck of the ship. I felt anxious to preserve some of them, but this I had no means of doing. The ice-berg was as high as the masts of the vessel, and supposed to be near two acres in surface. The side which the vessel struck was smooth or even, or comparatively so : this was most fortunate ; for had it been otherwise, we should still have been broken to pieces, or at least our masts would have been carried away. The crash as it was, was tremendous. When the bulwarks gave way, the sound was as though the ship was breaking in two ; and then the noises, terror and excitement, attendant on the occurrences of those fearful fifteen minutes, I will not attempt to describe. All the days of my life will I render praise and thanks to the Supreme Being, for the peace and composure of mind he gave me during the trying crisis.—Through this day the captain and all hands have been hard at work, endeavoring in some degree to repair the injury sustained by the ship, through the sad occurrences of last night. The captain supposes the amount of damage done the ship to be more than 60 pounds : he seems a good deal despondent, and says that no such accident had ever before befallen a vessel on which he sailed. The wind is high, and



THE PRINCE OF WALES RUNNING AGAINST AN ICEBERG IN HUDSON'S STRAIT.





directly against us ; we are making, perhaps, no progress, but are beating about to avoid the ice-bergs with which we are surrounded ; for two or three hours we have been near the monster ice-berg we struck last night ; it almost makes one's blood freeze in the veins to look at its bold front of breast-work, seventy-five or a hundred feet above the water ; it appears to be nearly four-square. There are now in sight thirteen ice-bergs : they surround us on every side, like herculean beasts of prey, waiting to swallow us up. I forgot to say in the proper place, that we struck the ice-berg in lat. 62 32, and long. 71 west.

Tuesday, Oct. 3d. For six or seven days we have been contending with a strong wind, that continues to blow most spitefully against us. It is now the fourteenth day since we left the Five Fathom Hole at York, and we have yet more than a hundred miles to make, before reaching the mouth of the Straits ! We are also still surrounded with ice-bergs ; a few moments ago there were eighteen in sight. The wind being high and directly against us, our better way would be to lay-to, but for the ice-bergs ; but that we may keep out of their way, we are obliged to keep the ship constantly sailing.

On the 4th we encountered one of the most terrific gales ever met with in these waters. Our sails were torn to pieces, the jolly-boat broken, and otherwise much injury done to the ship, and besides were driven forty-five miles back towards Hudson's Bay ; but by Friday the 6th, we had regained our lost ground, and had reached the Buttons Islands, at the

mouth of the Straits, passing them at six o'clock in the evening. For five days after we got out of the Straits, we had a fair wind and fine sailing. During the time we made more than a thousand miles of our voyage. We then met with another gale, that lasted for the most part of forty-eight hours, and did the ship much harm. During the rest of our voyage, the wind was mostly favourable. We arrived in London Oct. the 29th, 1854. Allow me to remark in conclusion, that Captain Heard is a most active and skilful commander ; and from no officer with whom I ever sailed did I ever receive so many acts of kindness, and experience so much attention.—The passengers in the gentleman and ladies' cabins, amounting to sixteen in number, were also most kind and agreeable. We lived together like a family of brothers and sisters, all endeavoring to contribute to the welfare and happiness of each other. I expect to sail from Liverpool, for America, about the 25th proximo ; so I hope soon to have the pleasure of visting my native land and home, and of seeing you, my Dear Sir, and my friends in Canada.

As ever, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Most respectfully yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. E. Wood, &c.

## LETTER XV.

KINGSTON, Feb. 8th, 1855.

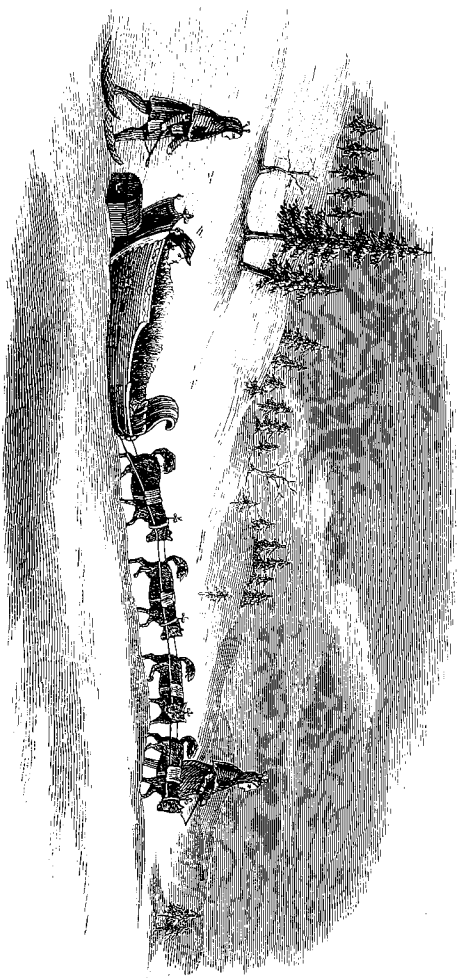
REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

Understanding that it is your intention to publish the Letters respecting my late tour through the Hudson's Bay Territory, (which I have taken the liberty of addressing to you,) in a more substantial form than in the columns of a newspaper, it has occurred to me that some general remarks in reference to several of the matters mentioned in the correspondence might not be out of place in an additional letter or two.

In my last letter I stated that I arrived in England on the 24th of October, after a very tempestuous and perilous voyage of thirty-four days from York Place, in Hudson's Bay. I remained in London about six weeks, and then took passage for Boston, the 9th of December, in the British steamship *America*. We arrived at Boston on the 25th, having made the passage from Liverpool in sixteen days. I was detained in Boston two days ; during which time I heard more profane swearing, and witnessed more drunkenness and disorder in the streets, than I heard or saw during the six weeks I was in London. By the lying and deception of railroad conductors and hotel-keepers, I was detained on the road between Boston and Brantford three days and two nights, so that I did not reach home until Friday evening, the 29th of December. On arriving

at home I found my family and friends well, and I need not tell you that I was glad to meet and embrace them after an absence of seven months; during which time I had travelled nearly ten thousand miles; was exposed to all kinds of weather; endured all kinds of fatigue; was exposed to all kinds of dangers, yet without receiving any personal injury, or being one day detained during the whole tour by sickness. To that gracious Providence which watches over the servants of God with more than parental kindness, numbering the hairs upon their heads, and guiding their every step, I desire to render hearty praise and thanks for the many deliverances wrought out for me, and the secure protection that was continually afforded me.

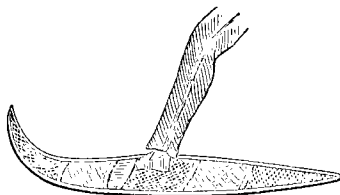
The mode of travelling in the Hudson's Bay Territory is novel, and for the most part dangerous. In the summer it is in boats or canoes; in the winter season it is in sledges drawn by dogs, or on foot, with snow-shoes. I have some where given you an imperfect description of the boats and canoes used in the territory; but as the summers are short, the time for voyaging is comparatively so also, and consequently, during the greater part of the year, all travelling in Rupert's Land is either on foot, with snow-shoes, or in sledges drawn by dogs. The Indian snow-shoe is formed of two pieces of light wood, fastened together at both ends, and spread out near the middle, thus making a kind of long oval, the interior of which is filled up by a sort of net work, made of deer-skin threads; they are from three to



DOG CARIOLE TRAVELLING.



five feet long, and from fourteen to eighteen inches



wide. On these shoes an Indian, or any good traveller, for instance such as Dr. Rae, will travel thirty, forty, and they sometimes, when hard pressed, even accomplish fifty miles a day, or within the twenty-four hours. The Hudson's Bay sleigh, or cariole, is made of a very thin board, usually not more than half an inch thick, and twenty or twenty-four inches wide, and ten feet long, turned up at the front end two and a-half feet. On this thin and smooth platform is built a box of very light wooden frame-work, covered with the skin of animals, leaving a sufficient space behind for the traveller's cassette, or trunk. These sleighs are drawn by four, six, or eight dogs, and attended or driven by two Indians—one of them going before the dogs to guide them, the other following the sledge to steady it, and keep it from upsetting. With such a team, travellers journey thirty, forty, and fifty miles a day; and they have been known to make over sixty miles in a day.

The British territory north of Sault de Ste. Marie, and extending from the Labrador coast, in the east,



to New Caledonia, and the shore of the Pacific Ocean, west ; in the bounds of which is Rupert's Land, or the Hudson's Bay Territory proper, is one-third larger than all Europe. In many parts of this immense country there is a great deal of excellent land, very suitable for agricultural purposes ; this is especially the case in many localities south of lat. 55, where almost every kind of summer grain and useful vegetables can be grown with the greatest facility, and in great abundance. There is not to be found in British America, finer, richer, and a more productive soil, than there is in Selkirk Settlement, on the Assiniboine and Red Rivers ; and in the bounds of Rupert's Land there are millions of acres equally rich and fertile, and equally suited, from climate and locality, for farming and agricultural purposes. There is no want, therefore, of suitable localities in the Territory for Missions, where the Indians could be congregated together and settled in villages or on farms, and where the sciences, as also the arts, or agriculture and mechanism could be scientifically and practically taught them.

The lowest estimate I heard made of the number of Indians in the Territory, was two hundred thousand souls ; and some persons supposed there might be, and probably were, not less than three, four, or even five hundred thousand. What an inviting field, "whitening unto the harvest," does this region open up to the philanthropist, and the Christian Church ! and the more so because of the friendliness and sobriety of the numerous Indian tribes, their great

favourableness towards Christianity, their entire willingness, and even earnest desire to be taught its doctrines, and to have schools established among them for the education of their children and the rising generation.

The following are the principal, or at least the most numerous and noted tribes in the country :—Seauteaux or Chippewas, Crees, Stone Indians, Sioux, Black Feet, Chipewyans, Crows, Slave-Indians, and Flatheads. The Seauteaux, or Chippewas, inhabit the country from Sault de Ste. Maria north, up the shores of Lake Superior ; from thence to the south end of Hudson's Bay, thence north and west through the Lac la Pluie Districts, down as far north as the Berin River, which empties itself into the Winnipeg Lake, one hundred and fifty miles south of Norway House. With the exception of Roman Catholic Missionaries, there are only four Missionaries in all this immense territory—one Wesleyan, and three belonging to the Church Missionary Society. The Stone Indians, Black Feet, Slave-Indians, Sioux, Crows, Flatheads, and a numerous tribe called *Carriers*, inhabit the vast plains and forests on the east and west of the Rocky Mountains, and live principally by the produce of the chase. Their country swarms with buffalo, and great varieties of deer, bears, &c., which they hunt, shoot, snare, and kill in a great variety of ways. It is said that many of those tribes are well supplied with excellent horses, with which they hunt the buffalo, and that although they use the gun a good

deal, yet they prefer the bow and arrow, which they use with surprising skill and expertness.

The Carriers, who call themselves "Ta Cullies," which it is said signifies "The people that go upon the waters," all reside west of the Rocky Mountains; their language is very similar to that of the Chipewyans; they are very friendly with the white people, and well disposed to the white man's religion.

The Cree Indians inhabit the country on the Hudson's Bay, north and south of Hayes River, some two or three hundred miles each way, and thence westerly, to Norway House, and thence up the Saskatchewan River, a thousand miles to Edmonton Place, near the Rocky Mountains. Of the Cree Indians I learnt the most, and with them had the most intercourse, and, therefore, with respect to them, may be allowed to say the more at length. The personal appearance of the men of this nation is prepossessing and inviting; they have active looking figures, fine intelligent countenances; and their ever active eyes are black, clear, and quick. Their average height is about five feet six inches; their persons are generally not very muscular, but they are wiry, well built, and are capable of enduring great fatigue. Dr. Rae's best men were Cree Indians, and one of the most vigorous and active of his party was a Wesleyan, from the Rossville Mission. Perhaps the Indian women of this tribe, on the whole, are not so good looking as the men; many of them have a down-cast look, and are rather awk-

ward in their gait ; this may arise from the hardships they endure, and the unkind treatment of their husbands ; for the Cree Indian in his pagan state, like all other aborigines of America, makes a complete slave of his wife, and all the females dependent upon him, or subject to him. But still I saw many Cree women who were not a whit inferior in their personal appearance to their husbands, and in intellect and propriety of conduct were vastly their superiors. This was especially observable among the Christian Crees. Christianity raises woman to her proper position in the social circle, and they, devoting themselves to the cultivation of the mind, and the pursuits of religion, with more earnestness and diligence than the men, have made proportionably greater improvements. Mr. Ballantyne says, "There is no music in the soul of a Cree." This may be, and probably is true, of the soul of a *pagan* Cree, but it is not true of the soul of a *christian* Cree, or any other christian Indian. Paganism has no music in it any where, or with any people ; it is a monotonous system of unkindness, gloom and sorrow, from the beginning to the end ; but Christianity, the constraining love of Christ—the sweet music of the Saviour's name—puts music into the soul of the heathen, even of the pagan Cree, and brings out the music also in fervent aspirations after Christ, and in melodious songs of praise to the honour of his name. I wonder at the statement, "that there is no music in the soul of a Cree," by the amiable and clever author of "Every Day Life in the Wilds

of North America"—seeing that Mr. B. had visited the Wesleyan Mission among the Crees at Ross-ville, near Norway House, and had there the opportunity of witnessing the power of the Gospel on the souls of the Crees, and of listening to the harmonious notes of sacred music, which well-tuned voices poured forth in sounds seraphic, in honour of the Saviour who had redeemed them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. I had also the opportunity of witnessing their devotions ; of looking on their glad and lighted up countenances, and of listening to the sweet melodious music with which they thanked and praised their great Creator : and then, especially, it seemed to me strange that any one could venture the assertion "that there is no music in the soul of a Cree" When I was at York depot, there were encamped outside of the fort some dozen families of Cree Indians ; three or four of the camps were inhabited by christians, a number of whom were excellent singers. I seldom passed the camps of these christian Indians without hearing them singing ; this was especially the case on the Sabbath days. I was many times delighted and refreshed with the sound of old and familiar tunes, which reminded me of by-gone days, and of a home and a land that were then afar off. And then the melodiousness and correctness of their singing, I have seldom heard equalled, and still more seldom excelled. "No music in the soul of a Cree ;" why, when converted, his soul is full of music, and he has a voice well

adapted to give delightful expression to that music, and the heart-stirring and cheering emotions which christianity, and christianity alone, inspires.

One day, unattended by an interpreter, I went into one of the christian Indian camps, the inmates of which could speak no English, or French ; I consequently could hold no conversation with them ; but the Indian took down a parcel, and after removing six or eight covers of skin, &c., he shewed me the Gospel of St. John, the Hymn Book, the General Rules of the Methodist Society, the Morning and Sacramental services of the Church, all in Cree, and by a glowing and expressive countenance strongly indicated the great happiness he experienced in "reading those prayers and singing those songs which tend to the knowledge and love of God," and by which he worshipped and praised the world's Creator and Redeemer.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, as ever,

Most truly yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood, &c.

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#### LETTER XVI.

Kingston, Feb. 12, 1855.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:—

The Crees, in their *pagan* state are the most kind-hearted and pacific of all the Indian tribes.— They live together in great harmony, seldom differing or quarrelling among themselves. "The cele-

brated war dance is now no longer in existence among them. They have wisely denounced both war and its accompaniments long ago." They bury their dead ; and usually, over the grave erect a tomb of bark material, in the form of the roof of a house. They do not now bury with their dead firearms, knives, kettles, &c., as they once did, owing, it is supposed, to their intercourse with the white people, and the consequent knowledge they have obtained of civilization.

The Supreme Being, among the Pagan Cree Indians is called "Manitow ;" but it can scarcely be said that he is worshipped by them, or that anything really is worshipped by them. The very few ideas they have of the attributes of the Great Spirit are exceedingly imperfect, erroneous and absurd. "Indeed no religious rites exist among them, unless the unmeaning, and senseless mummery of the medicine tent can be looked upon as such." But it must not be forgotten that of late years Wesleyan Missionaries, and Missionaries of the Church of England, have exerted themselves to spread the Christian religion among the Indians of Rupert's Land, and that their success has been principally among the Crees. Among this people the Wesleyans have three Missions,—one at Jackson's Bay, near Oxford House, one at Rossville, near Norway House, and one at Edmonton Place, near the Rocky Mountains. The Church of England also have missions at Cumberland Place, Carlton House, Fort Pitt, and other places, the names of which I do not

now recollect. The missionaries in these Missions have done, and are still doing much good. They are diffusing among the people the Gospel of the Grace of God. They are teaching the sciences, and by precept and example, are instructing the natives in the arts and customs of civilized life. The Cumberland Mission, belonging to the Church Missionary Society, presided over by the Rev. Mr. Hunter, Archdeacon of the Northern Department of the Territory, is one of the most interesting and successful missions in Rupert's Land. The Indians in this mission are perhaps in advance of any others, in the knowledge of the arts and sciences, and I am told many of them are most exemplary and devoted christians. This is probably owing to the piety, and the devoted zeal, of the able and accomplished minister whom Providence has placed among them.

There are, doubtless, many converts to Christianity in the Cumberland Mission who give other and more tangible evidence of the *reality* of their conversion than did one of Mr. Hunter's parishioners; an anecdote of whom the Archdeacon related to me. Mr. H. said that, one day, one of his people came to him, and, with great gravity and seriousness, said,—“I know that Christianity is true, that it is the great, the best religion, much better, very much better, than the pagan—my old religion.” “Now,” said he, “When I was a pagan, and followed my old ways—the religion of my fathers—I could eat eight rabbits for my dinner, and then was not satis-



fied, but since I have become a Christian, and follow the new way, six rabbits at a time is plenty for me ; I don't want any more !" This, certainly, to say the least of it, was a *new* evidence of the truth and goodness of christianity ; but still, laughable as is the anecdote, there is moral truth and sound philosophy in it. With the Indian, in his wild state, it is always a "feast or a famine ;" having no forethought, never providing for to-morrow, or laying up anything for the time of need, they are continually being exposed to want, and very frequently are compelled to fast for days, yea, weeks at a time. They then, perchance, get plenty of game, or animals, and, under the pressure of biting hunger, will eat such quantities of food, as one might suppose it impossible for the human stomach to contain. But the christian Indians are far more provident : they think of the future ; they take thought for to-morrow, and in time of plenty make some provision for the time of scarcity, and consequently live more regularly, and are not exposed to the extreme wants so frequently experienced by their pagan countrymen.

It has been said, that many of the Indians of Rupert's Land are *cannibals*. I do not believe that this assertion is true ; if we are to understand by this expression, the eating of human flesh for the *love* of it ; or the eating of the flesh of enemies taken in battle, &c., by way of martial triumph. In this sense of the word, which, it seems to me, is the only proper import of the expression, the Indians of

British America are not cannibals. But if by *cannibalism* is meant the eating of human flesh to appease the cravings of hunger, when starving—then some of the American Indians have been, and others may still be cannibals. But it must not be forgotten, according to this interpretation of the term, there is not a nation in Europe that may not be charged with the crime of cannibalism, and if Dr. Rae's understanding of the matter be true, Sir John Franklin's party were guilty of it. But I do not apprehend *this* to be cannibalism, but I understand it to be just what it is—the eating of human flesh when driven to the terrible alternative of doing so, or perishing with hunger. In this sense, some of the pagan Indians are cannibals, but I believe in no other.

Mr. Ballantyne says that the Indians do not resort to cannibalism from *choice*, but *only* when urged by the irrepressible cravings of hunger. Mr. B. relates the following anecdote, and says that he "heard it related by a friend who had spent many years of his life among the North American Indians:"—"It was in the spring of —," says Mr. B., "that my friend Mr. C—— stood in the Indian Hall of one of the far-distant posts, in Athabasca, conversing with a party of Chippewyan Indians, who had just arrived with their furs from their winter hunting grounds. The large fires of wood, sparkling and blazing cheerfully up the large chimney, cast a bright light around the room, and shone upon the dusky coun-

tenances of the Chippewyans, as they sat gravely on the floor, smoking their spwagans in silence. A deed of the most revolting description had been perpetrated by an Indian of the Cree tribe, and they were preparing to relate the story to Mr. C. After a short silence, an old Indian removed his pipe; and, looking round upon the others, as if to ask their consent to his becoming spokesman, related the particulars of the story, the substance of which I now give. Towards the middle of winter, Wesagun, a Cree Indian, removed his encampment to another part of the country, as the game was scarce in the place where he had been residing. His family consisted of a wife, a son of eight or nine years of age, and two or three children, besides several relations, in all ten souls, including himself. In a few days they arrived at their encamping ground, after having suffered a great deal of misery by the way from starvation. They were all much exhausted and worn out, but hoped, having heard of buffaloes in the vicinity, that their sufferings would soon be relieved. Here they remained several days, without finding any game, and were reduced to the necessity of devouring their moccasins and leathern coats, rendered eatable by being scorched over the fire. Soon this wretched resource was also gone, and they were reduced to the greatest extremity, when a herd of buffaloes was descried, far away in the prairie, on the edge of which they were encamped. All were instantly on the *qui vive*. Guns were

loaded, snow shoes were put on, and in ten minutes the males of the hungry party set off after the herd, leaving Wessagun's wife and children with another girl in the tent. It was not long, however, before the famished party began to grow tired ; some of the weakest dropped behind ; while Wessagun, with his son Natappe, gave up the chase, and returned to the encampment. They soon arrived at it, and Wessagun, peeping in between the chinks of the tent, to see what the women were doing, saw his wife engaged in cutting up one of her own children, preparatory to cooking it. In a transport of passion the Indian rushed forward and stabbed her, and also the other woman ; and then, fearing the wrath of the other Indians, he fled to the woods. It may be conceived what were the feelings of the rest of the party when they returned and found their relatives murdered. They were so much exhausted, however, by previous sufferings that they could only sit down to gaze on the mutilated bodies, in despair. During the night Wessagun and Natappe returned stealthily to the tent, and under the cover of the darkness, murdered the whole party, as they lay asleep. Soon after this, the two Indians were met by another party of savages, *in good condition* ; although, from the scarcity of game, the others were starving. The former accounted for this, however, by saying that they had fallen in with a deer not long ago ; but that, before this had happened, all the rest of the family had died of starvation. It

was the party who had met the two Indians wandering in the plains, that now sat around the fire, relating the story to Mr. C. The tale was still telling when the hall door slowly opened, and Wessagun, gaunt and cadaverous, the very impersonation of famine, slunk into the room with Natappe, and seated himself in a corner near the fire. Mr. C. soon obtained from his own lips, confirmation of the horrible deed, which he excused by saying that most of his relations had died before he ate them. In a few days after this the party of Indians took their departure from the house, to proceed to their village in the forest ; and, shortly after, Wessagun and Natappe also left to rejoin their tribe. The news of their deeds, however, had preceded them so they were received very coldly ; and soon after Wessagun pitched his tent, the other Indians removed, with one accord, to another place, as though it were impossible to live happily under the shadow of the same trees. This exasperated Wessagun so much, that he packed up his tent and goods, launched his canoe, and then, before starting, went up to the village, and told them it was true he had killed his relatives, and that he was a conjuror, and had both power and inclination to conjure them to death too. He then strode down to the banks of the river, and embarking, with his son, shot out into the stream. The unhappy man had acted rashly in his wrath. There is nothing more dangerous than threatening to kill a savage, as he will certainly endeavour to kill the person who threatens him, in order to ren-

der the execution of his purpose impossible. Wessagun had no sooner departed, than two men coolly took up their guns, entered a canoe, and followed them. Upon arriving at a secluded spot, one of them raised his gun and fired at Wessagun, who fell over the side of the canoe, and sunk to rise no more. With the rapidity of thought, Natappe seized his father's gun, sprang ashore, and bounded up the bank ; a shot was fired, which went through the fleshy part of his arm, and the next moment he was behind a tree. Here he called out to the Indians, who were reloading their guns, not to kill him, and he would tell them all. After a little consideration, they agreed to spare him ; he embarked with them, and was taken, soon afterwards, to the fort, where he remained many years in the Company's service." Now it is quite evident that Wessagun was induced to kill his relatives from the *abhorrence* of what is called by some persons, cannibalism ; and though, by the bitings of starvation, he himself was subsequently driven to commit the same dreadful deed, yet, because of it, he was treated as an outcast, being shunned and abhorred by all the members even of his own tribe.

Of the food, the dress, the camps, the hunting, &c., of the Indians of Rupert's Land, I have no time to say anything at present ; but will conclude my too long letter, by begging to remind you, my dear Sir, and the Christian public generally, that the extensive field of the Hudson's Bay Territory, is now open before you and the Missionary Society. This

large portion of the Saviour's vineyard, before His servants lies ; in every part of it there are effectual doors open, into which your missionaries may at any time enter and cultivate Emmanuel's land. Indeed this immense Territory is every where whitening unto the harvest, and the Macedonian cry, "come over and help us," with an unmistakable distinctness, is heard from all parts of it.

Will the friends of the Saviour, the friends of humanity, respond to this call ?

" Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high ;  
Shall we, to men benighted,  
The lamp of life deny ?"

No, no, this cannot, this must not be !

I am, as ever,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Most faithfully, and affectionately, yours,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood, President,  
&c. &c. &c.

## APPENDIX.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE SELKIRK COLONY.

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In conversation with an esteemed friend, a few days since, he expressed a regret, that I had not in my letters respecting the Hudson's Bay, given a more particular account of the Assineboine and Red Rivers ; and the locality and extent of the Selkirk Settlement. In order to supply as far as I can, any defect in my notice of the Colony, I have thought it right to make the few following remarks respecting it:—

The Red River rises in the Territory of Minnesota, in the United States, a little west of the Mississippi River and considerably to the south of the sources of the latter ; it runs northward, and eventually discharges its waters through Lake Winnipeg, into Hudson's Bay. It is navigable for boats, for more than one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth.

The Assineboine River takes its rise west of the mouth of the Red River, some hundred and fifty, or two hundred miles north of Swan Lake. It forms a junction with Red River, fifty degrees forty minutes north latitude, and fifty-five miles from the



mouth of the latter, where it empties itself into Lake Winnipeg ; consequently, the united stream is fifty-five miles long. There is no habitable land on either side of Red River, for twelve miles from its mouth. Ascending the river twelve miles, you come to the Indian settlement, where the Church Missionary Society has a Mission. This settlement extends five miles along the river, on both its banks, at the upper end of which and five miles below Lower Fort Garry, commences the Selkirk Colony, or Red River Settlement, extending thirty miles on either side of Red River, to Upper Fort Garry, (which is situated at the point of junction between the Assineboine and Red Rivers) ; from thence twenty-five or thirty miles on either side of both rivers : so that the settlement lies in the form of the letter Y.

The French settlement is on *both* sides of Red River, above its junction with the Assineboine, to the upper end of the settlement, and below the junction only on the *east* side. That portion of the settlement consisting of Europeans and Half-breeds, is situated on the west side of Red River, and from the junction of the two rivers, on both sides of the Assineboine, to the upper end of the western branch of the settlement. All the settlers are professedly farmers, though half of them live a great deal more by hunting, voyaging, or fishing than by farming. There is no *second tier* of farms ; they all front on the river, are deep, narrow, and much like those of the French on the River St. Lawrence.

The settlement is on an extensive plain, or prairie, which extends, somewhat broken and interspersed with timber, north-east towards Lake Winnipeg; to the west, it is a vast, unbroken plain to the Rocky Mountains. Above the settlement on Red River, and below it on Lake Winnipeg, are extensive tracts of timber,—pine, oak, white-wood, poplar and cedar. The river is free from ice about the first of May, and closes about the first or tenth of November. The thermometer in winter sometimes falls as low as 42 degrees below zero, of Fahrenheit; but the general temperature is from 5 to 15 degrees above zero. From three and a half to four feet of snow falls in the winter, but rain is unknown from November to April, during which period a thaw never occurs. The almost miraculous rapidity of Spring compensates for the long winter months. The farmers raise wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, and all kinds of garden vegetables in abundance, also horses, horned cattle, sheep and hogs. The wheat is equal to any in the world, weighing from 65 to 70 pounds to the bushel; barley and oats are also heavy, and the potatoes of the best quality. Indian Corn is raised, but it is not relied on as a sure crop. The land is never manured, for it never needs it. The Hudson's Bay Company pay regularly, only however, for what they wish to consume, except in seasons of scarcity, four shillings and four pence, Canada currency, per bushel for

wheat ; 2s. 6d. for oats and barley, and 1s. 3d. for potatoes

There is no export trade in the colony. They receive their supplies of dry goods, woollen cloths, and liquors, from York Factory, a store of the Hudson's Bay Company, on Hudson's Bay, eight hundred miles from Red River. Some of the traders, perhaps most of them, order their goods from England, but they are always brought to York Depot in the Company's ships. It requires more than two months to make the journey from Red River to York Factory ; and there are thirty-seven portages to be made in that distance. The wheat is ground by wind mills, of which there are eighteen, and two water mills : there are no saw mills, all the deals or boards used being cut by whip saws. In the settlement there are no fulling mills, or manufactories of any kind.

The hunters, who are mostly half-breeds, do little else than hunt buffalo. They make two grand excursions each year—one commencing on the 20th of June, and lasting two months, and the other on the 20th of September, lasting to the 10th of November. Besides providing themselves with buffalo meat—upon which the professed hunters chiefly live, they bring in great quantities of it for sale. They also prepare great quantities of pemican, which is used for food, and buffalo tallow, which is used for light ; indeed, the buffalo fat makes as good candles as beef tallow. The buffalo meat, both fat and lean

is worth 2d. a pound ; and the pemican when well prepared is worth, or will bring 5d. or 6d. a pound.

As pemican is a kind of food with which people in the civilized world are not generally acquainted, a short description of it, may not be unacceptable to some who may chance to read these statements. The flesh of the Buffalo is cut up into large lumps, and these again, are cut into flakes or thin layers, and hung up in the sun to dry. When thoroughly dried, the meat is taken down and pounded between two stones until it is broken into small pieces ; the broken or pulverized meat is then well mixed with the melted fat, and put into a bag, about a foot in diameter, and two or two and a half feet in length—made of the buffalo skin, with the hair on the outside ; the bag is as tightly as possible sewed up, and the pemican allowed to cool. In this state it may be eaten without being cooked ; but most people who use it, and the voyageurs who subsist on it when travelling, mix it with flour and water, and boil it ; in which state it is very palatable, and would be much more so, but for the buffalo hairs which are frequently left in it by the carelessness or filthiness of the hunters, or the persons who prepare it. Pemican is good wholesome food, and will keep fresh for a great length of time ; indeed, for years, if kept dry. The buffalo meat after having been cut into thin pieces and dried in the sun, is often made up into packs, and sent into every part of the country (as is the pemican,) and used as dried meat. The num-

ber of buffaloes in the Hudson's Bay Territory is immense ; and herein is seen the wisdom of a kind Providence.

J. RYERSON.

Kingston, March 13th, 1855.

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CHAPTER II.

LETTER FROM A WESLEYAN MISSIONARY.

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OXFORD HOUSE MISSION, JACKSON'S BAY,  
December 5th, 1854.

REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR,

It is with the greatest pleasure that I embrace the present opportunity of the passing of the packet to the South, of writing to you. I shall ever esteem it a privilege to communicate with you from time to time as opportunities present, and I hope you will not fail to write us occasionally as your numerous engagements will allow. Mrs. Brook-  
ing and myself frequently dwell with gratification on the kindness and respect we received from you during our long and arduous journey to this country. Every day more strongly convinces me that your coming to Hudson's Bay was of the utmost importance to the future well being of these Missions.

I am thankful that we have now got our house very comfortably fixed for the winter, though not quite finished, we hope to have it completed

in the inside by Christmas. The great clay chimney which stood in the centre of the house I removed altogether, and have got a small one erected in the roof for the two stove pipes. By this arrangement we have an excellent passage through the house, and a good cellar where the chimney stood. Out of the large room on the right hand side, we have now a comfortable living-room, a small but convenient bed-room, and a small store closet. On the other side we have a good bed-room, and a small sitting-room, on which I am now at work, and hope to have it finished in about a week. All this I have done, besides making several articles of furniture, with my own hands, and busy enough I have been, I can assure you. It is true I had the services of a young man, a boat-builder, who came out in the ship, that assisted in rough-plaining some of the boards, but he has returned to Oxford House, his services being required there. In addition to this, we have erected a good fish-house; so you see that we have not been idle. I have still a hard winter's work before me, as you must be aware, in getting out wood, and erecting the other necessary buildings for the successful carrying on of this Mission. We have also got our Church in such a state as to answer our purpose during the present winter.

I am glad that I have as yet no cause to alter my opinion in reference to the *situation of the Mission*. We have already upwards of twenty families who

make this their home, and more are coming in the spring on their return from hunting. We cannot of course, expect that *all the Indians will at once give up their wandering habit, and settle down into civilized life* ; this would be contrary to the nature of things. It must be a work of time ; and I am fully convinced that when the large mass of them see the superior advantages of such a course, that no insuperable difficulties will be met with in getting them together. I also think that no better place could be selected, as there is more good land extending along for four or five miles on the shores of this beautiful bay, than can be found in one place, anywhere else in this neighbourhood.

We have already formed a Society by receiving upwards of twenty on trial ; and the blessed Lord is evidently carrying on a gracious work. When the Indians are all at home our usual congregation consists of upwards of a hundred persons, and at times considerably more ; not one who is not prevented by sickness, in the whole settlement, but what attend the means of grace ; and their appearance would do credit to those whose circumstances are more propitious than theirs. Just now our congregation consists of women and children, the men being absent on their winter hunt. They return again at Christmas, and remain a few days, when they go off and remain away until the ice breaks up in the spring.

My opinion in reference to the Honourable Company's treatment of the Indians has undergone no

change. I am quite convinced that, all things considered, it is the best system that could well be devised. The Indians here are far better off than they are in Canada. The Company supplies them with articles of excellent quality, at prices far more reasonable than the same articles can be obtained for in Canada. Those who from old age and infirmities are not able to procure their own living are greatly assisted, and in some cases wholly maintained at the Company's establishments. Then as to intemperance, I have seen no persons, either *white or red* since I came to the country who have shown the least symptom of this detestable vice. I have every reason to believe, therefore, that the Company's treatment of the Indians is highly conducive to their welfare. I, of course, speak in reference to those who are more immediately under the Company's controul. The striking contrast between those and the Lac La Pluie Indians, who have access to the American Fur Traders, will best illustrate this. For they, as you are aware, are a set of ragamuffins, if indeed such a term can be applied to those who, when we passed them, were nearly in a state of nudity.

I must now proceed to mention a few of our wants. I was greatly perplexed for a bell to call our people together at the services, and puzzled my brains to find out a substitute ; we had not even a tin horn, which would have done pretty well. I at length bethought me of the large *pit saw*, which



when hung up and beaten with a stick made a tolerable substitute ; but it cannot be heard very far. A bell, therefore, we must have as soon as possible. We also want a Sacramental Service, if one can be obtained. I believe Mrs. B. has written her friends both in Canada and England for some such things as worsted thread, needles, &c., in order that the females may be instructed in knitting and sewing &c.; and also pieces of prints and calico, and such things as will make the little school girls dresses. Any of these things which our friends in Canada are disposed to contribute, should be sent off to England, so as to arrive there early in May, as the ship leaves London about the first of June.

We also want above all things the prayers of the faithful : ours is an arduous and important undertaking. Our position is an isolated one. We have none here to sympathise with us, and have many difficulties and temptations peculiar to the position we occupy. Urge this upon the attention of our dear people at home, and then I am sure we shall not fail to have an interest in their prayers, and a share in their benevolence. I had almost forgotten to say that your name is likely to be perpetuated in these parts ; Mr. Sinclair, our Schoolmaster and Interpreter, has given to his youngest son, born since his arrival on this Mission, the name of JOHN RYERSON, as a token of respect.

Yours, &c.,

R. BROOKING.

The Rev. John Ryerson, Co-Delegate, &c.,

## CHAPTER III.

## LETTER FROM A CREE LABOURER.

OXFORD HOUSE, Dec. 9th, 1854.

TO THE REV. JOHN RYERSON.

Having been called upon by you to labour with the Missionary at this place, I cannot let this opportunity pass without dropping you a few lines, because I know you are very anxious to hear from the Mission field ; and I believe many of your Christians in Canada will be interested to hear of the rapid progress of Christianity among the people of this place. Since our arrival at this place many of them have been baptized, and embraced the truth of Christianity ; but we still look forward, praying to our heavenly Father that more souls may be added to our numbers. But we are sorry to state, though not utterly cast down, that we still have heathenish ignorance around us to destroy, horrible darkness to dispel, hearts of stone to break, as you beheld on your way down to York Factory. But we are not discouraged ; we are looking forward to see the final triumph of the blessed Gospel in every part of this habitable place.

We thank you with our hearts for your visit to Oxford Mission, and we earnestly pray you to remember us now that you are in Canada among your friends. In memory of you, and your visit to this

place, I have given your honoured name, "John Ryerson," to my infant, who was baptised by the Rev. R. Brooking two weeks ago. Although I have not been able to teach school for want of things I have asked you to send, I have not been idle. I have laboured hard with my hands in helping to make a fish house, and chimney, and other things ; and we have hard winter work before us. And we trust that our Christian fathers will send us books, and all other school articles to begin our school with these poor children, which they mostly need at present, and which are long expected by their Christian parents.

I am happy to state to you that many of these people that were once worshippers of idols, are casting away their idols to the moles and to the bats, and are now sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right minds. It is a blessed thing, my Christian friend, to be the means, under God, of saving them from perdition ! We rejoice that the Lord is working in this place. His work is going on ; idolators giving up their idolatrous worship, and some of them becoming true "Christians indeed, in whom is no guile."

In addition to my letter to you, first, I would write respecting myself ; and secondly, respecting the children of this place. First, I am a native of this place, but when I was young my parents removed to Norway House before any Missionary came to

that place ; but before long Missionary arrived amongst us, who took me and taught me, and used all his effort to make me happy, and to bring me up in the Christian knowledge ; where I was instructed to pray to the true God, and to read the most holy word of God ; and as I was enabled to read the word of God and begin to understand it a little, I found that Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I was chief. I now and then saw more and more of the beauty and excellency of the blessed Gospel, which conveys eternal salvation to all mankind. And as I was enabled, by the grace of God, to see the effects of the Gospel of Christ, I knew how to pray to the Great Spirit to pardon my sins, to make me happy, and to bless my soul. I believed, I prayed more and more, and God in his great mercy heard my prayer. Since I was converted I had an earnest desire that all around me should be made happy, converted to God, and have their eyes opened to behold the wonderful works of God. This is my prayer to God ; for I feel that I can never do too much for him who left the highest throne in glory for the cross of deepest woe, in order to give men a place in the mansions of his love. I feel it is a high privilege to be a co-worker with the blessed God, in rescuing souls from a curse of eternal sinning, and suffering, and raising them to everlasting life, holiness, happiness, and glory ! Oh that this cause would go on ! But we rejoice to know that the cause of God will go on. It has

Omnipotence for its support. Jesus "shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." This is what we greatly needed ; and I believe it is the Lord who put it in the hearts of his servants to think of us, to sympathize with us, to feel for us, and to send us the gospel. We cannot express our gratitude to the God of mercies, who has inclined the hearts of the good people in Canada to send us Missionaries in this dark benighted land, though we are unable to recompense them for their so many favours to us ; but we trust that they shall be "recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

Secondly. As I have afore said to the Christian friends in Canada, respecting our intended school at Oxford Mission, I would like to say a little more to you. Instead of giving you a happy account of our intended school at this place, I inform you of the sad circumstances of it. Since our arrival at this place we did not keep any kind of school that would benefit the children of this place, because we have not a book to teach them out of. If we should teach them, it would be only to teach them to repeat their lessons by heart, which is not the proper means to make them know something. Many times these poor children come in to my house, requesting me to teach them to read, and to sing the sacred hymns. They are very fond of reading the word of God, and singing the sacred music. This is what we want, and we are willing also with all our utmost ability to

impress on their minds those truths "which are able to make them wise unto salvation." In order, therefore, to fulfil their request when they come in to me, I make them read out of my own Testament, as many as are able to read a little, and the rest I make them to sing the hymns in their own tongue. Having reported to you, therefore, the sad state of our intended school, I earnestly beg my Christian friends to send them books, and all other articles that will be useful for our school at this place. I do beg for them spelling and reading books, Testaments, Bibles, copy books, slates, and slate pencils, &c. &c. And I also beg for them some kind of musical instrument, that would amuse our children, or to start out our tunes with, (such as acordeon and tune fork.) And we also beg for them some kind of clothing; for they are very naked. We would be heartily obliged to our Christian friends if they send them some kind of printed calico, thread, thimbles and several articles for girls; and some kind of shirting, or any kind of wearing stuff for boys, that they may be clean when they go to school, but more especially when they go to the house of God on the Sabbath days. Since we know then that you are the leader of this work, we ask you to pray for us, and for these little ones in this place, that they may have the means of learning the truth of God, for I verily believe that the children of this place will readily learn what is far better than to learn merely the use of their bows and arrows. I have often been deeply affected on Sabbath even-

ings while standing in front of my house, and listening to the voice of singing from many a little house or tent, which is the only interruption to the Sabbath's stillness which surrounds us. One cannot but rejoice to see young and old with their Indian printed books in their hands, as they hasten from different directions to the house of prayer at the sound of the "Church-going" beaten saw. We earnestly beg our Christian Fathers in a Christian land, to send us a bell for our use, for we much need one for our chapel.

I have described to you, my Christian friend, the willingness of these children to be taught what is good; and also our willingness to teach them the blessed religion of Jesus Christ. And you will also see by this the willingness of the people to become Christians.

In conclusion, therefore, of these few lines, I shall, at the very last, write to you about the "lame boy," of whom you said, that we shall remember him always for thy sake;\* though it is a very little that I can do for him myself, yet I can gladly mention to you that Mr. and Mrs. Brooking are using their utmost ability to do him good, which was your desire, though not made known to them by human command. The lame boy has been baptized, and

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\* An Indian boy twelve or thirteen years o'd who appeared to be a cripple from swelling on his knees, whom I found in an Indian camp at the Mission, with whom I sympathized, and for whom I prayed.

well clothed, and now goes to the house of God every Sabbath day.

Here, I shall conclude my letter, wishing you to pray for us, that “the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified amongst us, even as it is with you.” Thus prays

Your favoured Friend,

JOHN SINCLAIR,  
(alias)

MA-TO NE KE-SE-KWA WE KE MOW.

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CHAPTER IV.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S PARTY.

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“TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

“REPULSE BAY, July 29, 1854.

“SIR,—I have the honour to mention, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that, during my journey over the ice and snows this spring, with the view of completing the survey of the west shore of Boothia, I met with Esquimaux in Pella Bay, from one of whom I learnt that a party of ‘white men’ (Kabloonans) had perished from want of food some distance to the westward, and not far beyond a large river containing many falls and rapids. Subsequently, further particulars were received and a number of articles purchased, which places the fate of a portion, if not all, the then sur-



vivors of Sir John Franklin's long-lost party beyond a doubt—a fate as terrible as the imagination can conceive.

“The substance of the information obtained at various times and from various sources was as follows :—

“In the spring, four winters past (spring, 1850,) a party of “white men,” amounting to about forty, were seen travelling southward over the ice and dragging a boat with them, by some Esquimaux, who were killing seals near the north shore of King William's Land, which is a large island. None of the party could speak the Esquimaux language intelligibly, but by signs the natives were made to understand that their ship, or ships, had been crushed by ice, and they were now going to where they expected to find deer to shoot. From the appearance of the men, all of whom, except one officer, looked thin, they were then supposed to be getting short of provisions, and they purchased a small seal from the natives. At a later date the same season, but previous to the breaking up of the ice, the bodies of some 30 persons were discovered on the continent, and five on an island near it, about a long day's journey to the N. W. of a large stream, which can be no other than Back's Great Fish River (named by the Esquimaux Ootko-hi-ca-lik), as its description and that of the low shore in the neighbourhood of Point Ogle and Montreal Island agree exactly with that of Sir Geo. Back. Some of the bodies had been buried (probably

those of the first victims of famine) ; some were in a tent or tents ; others were under the boat which had been turned over to form a shelter, and several lay scattered about in different directions. Of those found on the island one was supposed to have been an officer, as he had a telescope strapped over his shoulder and his double-barrelled gun lay underneath him.

“ From the mutilated state of many of the corpses and the contents of the kettles, it is evident that our wretched countrymen had been driven to the last resource—cannibalism—as a means of prolonging existence.

“ There appeared to have been abundant stock of ammunition, as the powder was emptied in a heap on the ground by the natives, out of the kegs or cans containing it, and a quantity of ball and shot was found below high water mark, having probably been left on the ice close to the beach. There must have been a number of watches, compasses, telescopes, guns, (several double-barrelled,) &c., all of which appeared to have been broken up, as I saw pieces of these different articles with the Esquimaux, and, together with some silver spoons and forks, purchased as many as I could get. A list of the most important part of these I enclose, with a rough sketch of the crests and initials on the forks and spoons. The articles themselves shall be handed over to the Secretary of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company on my arrival in London.

"None of the Esquimaux with whom I conversed had seen the 'whites,' nor had they ever been at the place where the bodies were found, but had their information from those who had been there, and who had seen the party when travelling.

"I offer no apology for taking the liberty of addressing you, as I do so from a belief that their Lordships would be desirous of being put in possession at as early a date as possible of any tidings, however meagre and unexpectedly obtained, regarding this painfully interesting subject.

"I may add that by means of our guns and nets, we obtained an ample supply of provisions last autumn, and my small party passed the winter in snow-houses in comparative comfort, the skins of the deer shot affording abundant warm clothing and bedding. My spring journey was a failure in consequence of an accumulation of obstacles, several of which my former experience in Arctic travelling had not taught me to expect.

"I have, &c.,

"JOHN RAE, C. F.,

"Commanding Hudson's Bay Company's  
Arctic Expedition."

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*List of articles purchased from the Esquimaux, said to have been obtained at the place where the bodies of the persons reported to have died of famine were found, viz :—*

"1 silver table fork—crest, an animal's head with wings, extended above ; 3 silver table forks—

crest, a bird with wings extended ; 1 silver table spoon—crest, with initials 'F. R. M. C.' (Captain Crozier, Terror) ; 1 silver table spoon and 1 fork—crest, bird with laurel branch in mouth, motto, '*Spero meliora* ;' 1 silver table spoon, 1 tea spoon, and 1 dessert fork—crest, a fish's head looking upwards, with laurel branches on each side ; 1 silver table fork—initials, 'H. D. S. G.' (Harry D. S. Goodsir, assistant-surgeon, Erebus) ; 1 silver table fork—initials, 'A. M'D.' (Alexander M'Donald, assistant-surgeon, Terror) ; 1 silver table fork—initials, 'G. A. M.' (Gillies A. Macbean, second-master, Terror) ; 1 silver table fork—initials, 'J. T.' ; 1 silver dessert spoon—initials 'J. S. P.' (John S. Peddie, surgeon, Erebus) ; 1 round silver plate, engraved, 'Sir John Franklin, K. C. B.' ; a star or order, with motto, '*Nec aspera terrent*, G.R. III., MDCCCXV.'

"Also a number of other articles with no marks by which they could be recognized, but which will be handed over with those above named to the Secretary of the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company.

"JOHN RAE, C. F.

"Repulse Bay, July, 1854."

## CHAPTER V.

## MISSTATEMENTS CORRECTED.

KINGSTON, March 22nd, 1855.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

A day or two since my attention was directed to an article in the *Christian Guardian*, selected from the "Athenæum," and headed "*Probable Fate of Sir John Franklin*,"—so full of perfectly incorrect statements, that I think it may be proper to disabuse the minds of any who may chance to read it, and thereby be led astray. The writer of this article says that he states the facts from which "an additional gleam of light has been cast over the probable fate of the Franklin Expedition"—on the authority of an *Esquimaux* "who accompanied Dr. Rae's party, and who has been for many years a member of the Wesleyan congregation at Rossville, in Hudson's Bay." Now, no *Esquimaux* ever resided at Rossville, nor do I believe there was ever one within hundreds of miles of that station; the farthest south in the Hudson's Bay Territory, that I heard of the *Esquimaux* Indians having come, was Fort Churchill,—a station eight hundred miles north-east of Rossville. The voyageur from Rossville, who accompanied Dr. Rae's party, is a *Cree* Indian, and knows little or nothing more about the *Esquimaux* than I do :—he is brother-in-law to Mr. Steinhaur, the Indian Missionary who accompanied me on my return from the territory,—and I believe

he has been for a few years a member of the Wesleyan congregation at Rossville. I saw and conversed with him at York Factory, through Mr. Steinhaur as interpreter, but heard nothing from him of Sir John's being found dead, "with his blanket over him, and his gun by his side,"—nor of "Sir John's watch, all in pieces, with his silver spoons, knives, and forks;" nor did he tell me of the Indian's "good sledges, spears, canoes, &c., of oak wood,"—all of which is pure fabrication, and the most of it the sheerest nonsense. Dr. Rae, in his letter and journal published in the Times, (England,) says not a word about Sir John's being "found dead, with his blanket over him, and his gun by his side." All that Dr. Rae says, respecting his learning from certain Esquimaux the fate of Sir John Franklin's party, is, that somewhere not far from Repulse Bay, lat. 66, 32; long., 87 degs., where he wintered, he had met with several of the Esquimaux, by whom he was told that four years before, a party of their people had seen some forty white men travelling towards the south, and drawing a boat after them; that they were much emaciated, and apparently quite exhausted; that not long after thirty corpses were found in one place, and five in another place, supposed to be the bodies of the men before seen. Dr. Rae publishes a list of the articles that he obtained from the Indians, and which they say were found near the bodies of the persons above mentioned; but in this list there is no mention of "Sir John's watch, all in pieces, with his silver

spoons, knives, and forks." I regret that I have not at present Dr. Rae's letter by me, (having sent it to be published) as I would like to give a correct list of the articles obtained. I spent three weeks with Dr. Rae at York Factory, and was fellow passenger with him to England, during which time I had many conversations with him respecting his exploring tour to Repulse Bay, and the coast of Boothia; also, in regard to his interviews with the Esquimaux, and what he had learned from them respecting the fate of Sir J. Franklin and his party. Dr. Rae repeatedly said that he could get *no trace, whatever*, of the fate of Sir John Franklin; that he made particular inquiries, describing Sir John's person as tall, aged, with a grey head, but that the Esquimaux had heard of no man answering this description; they said there was only one officer with the party of white men that had been seen, and he was comparatively a young man. Dr. Rae's conclusion, therefore, was that Sir John had perished long before this party of his crews had reached the point where the Indians met them; he said there was no probability that Sir John could have long held out in the endurance of the fatigues and exposures of such journeying, being advanced in life, (about 70 years old,) and not very hardy, and but a poor traveller. In addition to this, as the crews &c., of Sir John's two ships amounted to more than eighty men, there were more than forty belonging to the expedition, besides the party the Indians saw, of whom as yet nothing has been heard.

There is another curious statement in this selected article ; it says Dr. Rae and his party " were 100 miles beyond the region inhabited by the Esquimaux." Now, Dr. Rae went no farther north than the neighborhood of Pella Bay, where throughout all the region round about there are found Esquimaux.

But the most curious of all is the "god-send" affair of this article ;—it says " the ship was a great god-send to these people, and they now all have good sledges, spears, canoes, &c., of oak wood." Is it not very mysterious that Dr. Rae, with his interpreter at his side, should know nothing of these god-sent "sledges, spears, canoes, &c., of oak wood," among the Esquimaux with whom he had intercourse, and that one of his servants should know all about these articles ? Why one would suppose that charity itself, if nothing else, would have induced this man to let his master know something about these "canoes, &c., of oak wood ;" for certainly nothing could have been more gratifying to Dr. Rae and the friends of Sir John Franklin, than to have procured even a splinter of the "oak-wood" belonging to the ship on board of which the lamented hero had sailed and perished. It is also very wonderful how these Esquimaux of Pella Bay region found Sir John Franklin's ships,—how they got to the dismembered fragments; and after reaching them, how they were able with no tools of their own, and with no knowledge of the tools used in civilized society, to convert the materials of the ships into good



oak wood canoes,—a kind of canoe that no Esquimaux (and perhaps nobody else) ever saw,—and a canoe that would be as great a curiosity at Pella Bay, as would the sight of a man walking on his head through the streets of Toronto. An Esquimaux would know as much about building a canoe of “oak wood” as a shipwright in Liverpool would know about building one of birch bark. The idea of an Esquimaux throwing away his little “tub skin boat” (for the canoes are made of skin and very light) and undertaking to manufacture one of oak wood! How preposterous! Why you might as well talk about the Indians or voyageurs between Lake Superior and Norway House throwing away their bark canoes and undertaking to build others of *iron*. But how did the Esquimaux find the ships, and get to them? The territory occupied by the Esquimaux in those parts, for the purpose of hunting and fishing, does not extend within several hundred miles of the place where it is supposed (by those who have had the best opportunities of being well informed on the subject, and therefore are the best qualified to give an opinion) Sir John’s ships were lost. Dr. Rae supposes that he himself was not within at least five or six hundred miles of the whereabouts of the ships’ fatal disaster, and yet he was certainly at the very northern outskirts of the region where the Esquimaux roam and hunt. The selected article says Dr. Rae was “100 miles beyond the region inhabited by the Esquimaux.” Well then how could those untutored Esquimaux

have found their way, and made the journey over the hills and mountains of perpetual snow and ice ; and over channels of water too,—for they would have to cross wide cracks or openings in the ice ;—all this, in search of ships of which they had never heard ; indeed, it is more than probable that they did not even know of the existence of any such thing as a ship. Surely, if the Esquimaux of Repulse Bay, found and succeeded in getting to Sir John's ships, it must have been a "godsend," for in no other way than by supernatural agency, does it seem to me they could have known the one or accomplished the other. The undoubted truth is, that the Esquimaux never saw anything of the ships, and therefore never got anything from them, with the exception of a few articles, such as Dr. Rae mentions, and which seem to have been found near the bodies of those who had perished.

As so little seems to be known of the Esquimaux in this country, you will allow me before closing this letter to make one or two remarks respecting them.

My knowledge of this singular people is principally derived from Dr. Rae, and Neal Finlinson, Esq. ; the latter having spent forty-one years in the Territory, in the service of the Honorable Hudson's Bay Company, five years of which he was at the Esquimaux station in Ungava Bay. Mr. Finlinson was at York during my stay at that fort ; he was also fellow passenger from York to London, when I

frequently saw him and had with him many highly interesting interviews.

We sometimes speak of the Esquimaux as *Indians*, and I have frequently fallen into the error myself,—however, they are not American Indians, but a race quite distinct from, and in many respects very dissimilar to them. It is believed, and not without the strongest evidence, that the Esquimaux, particularly those from the mouth of Beck's River, eastward, are of the same origin with the native Greenlanders, and I suppose there is no dispute among historians, with regard to the aborigines of Greenland, being of European origin. Grant, in his history of Greenland asserts on the authority of the Moravian Missionaries, that the Esquimaux and the Greenlanders are of the same origin, and that their language, at present, “does not differ as much as the high and low Dutch.” It is remarkable that the Esquimaux are never found far in the interior of the country, but their dwelling places and hunting grounds are all along on the coasts,—never perhaps one league from them, and very seldom more than half that distance. The length of their territory on the northern shore of the western continent, is immense. In coming from Europe you first meet with the Esquimaux on the coast of Labrador,—thence they are to be met with on both sides of Hudson's Strait,—on the western coast of Fox Channel,—then west to Victoria District; still proceeding west you find them all along on the coast of the Polar Sea, to the Esquimaux Lake and

the mouth of Mackenzie River,—thence in the Russian Territory, on the coast of the Icy Ocean, to Behring's Straits ;—thence south along the eastern shore of the Straits to Norton's Sound, and indeed all along the coast as far as Prince William's Sound, a distance of fifteen hundred leagues, or four thousand five hundred miles from the Labrador coast.

The Esquimaux in his pagan state has no fixed abode, but roves from place to place on the coasts, and it is said that those of Labrador sometimes come south as far as Newfoundland. I have said that the Esquimaux are of a different race from the other native Americans, for they not only speak entirely a different language, but while other tribes have no beards, they have them so thick and long that it is sometimes difficult to discern any feature of their faces ; they are likewise the only savages that eat their food in a raw state. They are of a middling stature, generally robust, but lazy, and of a brown colour. Their head is large, and their face round and flat ; they have thick lips, a flat nose, long black hair, large shoulders, and, it is said, uncommonly small feet. In cold weather, (and it is almost always cold where they roam,) they are well clothed, for there is nothing to be seen but part of their faces, and their hands. I am informed that they have a sort of shirt, made of the entrails of fish, with coats made of bear, deer, or bird skins, and that they also wear caps on their heads. They likewise wear breeches made of skins, with the hair inwards, and covered with furs without ; also, two

pairs of boots, one over the other, of the same sort of skins. In the summer, like the voyageurs of Hudson's Bay Territory, they have nothing to cover them in the night ; and in the winter they lodge in tents made of hides, or in caves. Their chief employment is hunting and fishing. As a general thing they are a remarkably mild tribe or nation, particularly those who dwell in the eastern part of the continent. Murder is seldom heard of among them ; a murderer is shunned and detested by all the tribe, and forsaken even by his relations and former friends. The women, in their heathen state, as is the case with all American pagans, perform the most laborious offices ; they pitch the tent, carry or haul burthens, make and mend clothes, and prepare the victuals. When anything is prepared for eating, the wives and daughters are never served until all the males have taken what they think proper. The dress of the women is not very dissimilar to that of the men.

Of the Christian Esquimaux, belonging to the Moravian Mission, on the Labrador coast, I forbear to say anything, as sources of information with regard to them are within the reach of almost every person.

As ever, yours,

Very affectionately,

J. RYERSON.

The Rev. Enoch Wood,  
&c., &c., &c.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PORTAGES, DISTANCES, &amp;c.

*Names of Portages and the Distances between them—Names of Lakes, and their lengths—Names of Rivers and their lengths, &c.—obligingly furnished by G. E. JOHNSON, Esquire, Recorder of Rupert's Land, who accompanied His Excellency, Sir GEORGE SIMPSON, Governor, in the Spring of 1854, from Montreal to Red River.*

## KAMINISTAQUIAH RIVER.

From Fort William

to Parapluie	Portage.....	25	miles.
" Mountain	" .....	7	"
" Ecarte	" .....	1	"
" De l'isle	" .....	4	"
" Recousi	" .....	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
" Contenu	" .....	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
" Martin	" .....	19	"
" Little Dog	" .....	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
" Dog	" .....	$3\frac{1}{2}$	"
" Dog	" .....	15	"

## FROM DOG RIVER

to Barriere	Portage.....	37	"
" Jourdain	" .....	3	"
" Coldwater	" .....	8	"
" Prairie	" (5 miles long.)....	$4\frac{1}{4}$	"
" Milieu	" .....	$\frac{3}{4}$	"

To Savanne	"	(4½ miles long).....	1½	miles.
Small Lakes.....			1	"
Savanne River.....			24	"
Mille Lacs.....			32	"
Portage Pante.....			9	"
Little Discharge Portage.....			11	"
French Portage (2½ miles long).....			5	"
Portage des Mortes.....			18	"
Portage deux Rivieres.....			3	"
Sturgeon Lake (to Riviere Maligne).....			25	"

## RIVIERE MALIGNE.

To First Portage.....			1	"
" Second "			½	"
" Third "			8	"
" Portage De l'île.....			5	"
" Lac la Croix.....			2	"
Across Lac La Croix to River Namacan.....			10	"

## RIVER NAMACAN.

To First Portage.....			2	"
" Second "			5	"
" Third "			8	"
" Fourth "			2	"
" Lake Namacan.....			7	"
Lake Namacan.....			9	"
Portage Neufs and Creek down to Lac La Pluie.....			7	"
Lac La Pluie to River.....			38	"
To Fort Frances.....			2	"
Lac La Pluie to Lake of the Woods.....			83	"

Lake of the Woods to Rat Portage.....68 miles.

WINIPEG RIVER.

Dalles .....	14	"
Grand Decharge.....	20	"
Terre Jaune Portage.....	3	"
Charette " .....	100	yards.
Terre Blanche " .....	1	mile.
Cave " .....	100	yards.
Portage De l'île.....	18	miles.
Chute a Jacquet.....	26	"
Pointe du bois Portage.....	9	"
Pointe aux Chenes " .....	100	yards.
Roches Brulles " .....	1	mile.
Chute des Esclaves" .....	5	"
Barriere " .....	7	"
Grand Rapid.....	8	"
White River.....	8	"
Six portages together in White River..	5	"
Lac de Bonet.....	8	"
Aeron " .....	13	"
Cap de bonnet Portage.....	1	"
Middle " .....	1	"
Grand " .....	5	"
Petites Roches " .....	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
Terre Blanche " .....	4	"
1st Eau que meut.....	3	"
2nd " " .....	100	yards.
3rd " " .....	8	miles.
Fort Alexander.....	7	"



## LAKE WINIPEG.

Pointe de grand marais .....	24 miles.
Red River Beacon.....	25 "
Red River to Lower Fort Garry....	23 "
" " Upper Fort Garry....	24 "
Lake Winnipeg, long .....	300 "
From Lake Winnipeg to York Depot	500 "
Number of Portages from Lake Win- ipeg to York Depot.....	37

FINIS.

