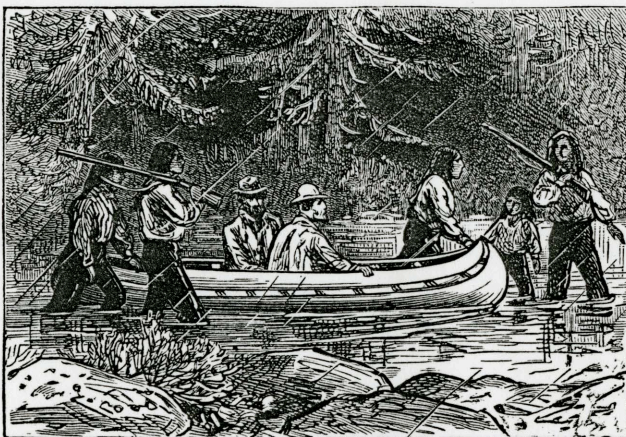


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NOTES ON
NEEPIGON
AND THE
MISSION TO THE RED INDIANS
AT NEGWENANG



COMPILED BY MISS A. C. DAY

Colonial and Continental Church Society
9 SERJEANTS' INN, FLEET STREET, E.C.

1892

Colonial and Continental Church Society.

(INCORPORATED 1887.)

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NOTES ON NEEPIGON.

OH, friend of the red man, who, by your contributions to the funds of the Colonial and Continental Church Society, have, during some years, sent the Rev. Robert Renison as *your representative* to bear the good tidings of great joy to the little band of Ojebway Indians on Lake Neepigon, let me crave your continued prayers and sympathetic help now that deep sorrow has removed their friend and guide. Though Lake Neepigon is only some 60 miles north of Lake Superior, the difficulty of travelling is so great that often many months elapse without any news of the outer world reaching Negwengang. Remember the 30 years during which the red man waited for a "black coat," and rejoice that through the exertions of your beneficent Society many of these "sons of the forest" are now earnest Christian men. Then rally round your Society, and help it to the utmost of your power to send many more such missionaries to the rescue of these bereaved Indians and other lonely waiting souls who are hungering for the knowledge of their Saviour.

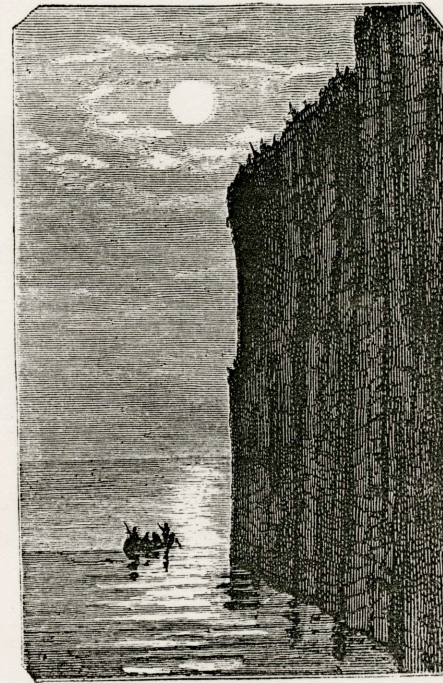
I cannot *now* give details of Mr. Renison's noble work among the Indians, but must refer you to the *Algoma Missionary News* for the past few years. In the issue of June 16, 1892, the Bishop speaks thus sadly under the head of "Clerical Changes":—

"Foremost among these changes stands one which might

well justify the heavy black-edged lines of mourning in which the press usually announces the occurrence of some sore public bereavement. We refer to the fact that this month the diocese loses, though it may not be finally, the services of the Rev. R. Renison, our well-known missionary at Neepigon. The circumstances leading up to the change can easily be conjectured by the readers of our columns. Some months ago, as will be remembered, Mr. Renison sustained a loss which is the sorest and heaviest that can fall on any missionary, in the death of his devoted and excellent wife, and this sad event left his five children without a mother's care. Three of them (boys) had already been attending Port Hope College School. The two girls, Julia and May, have since then left for Toronto, where they are to have the benefit of the sympathies of the Woman's Auxiliary. These changes left Mr. Renison so completely isolated and cut off from all domestic companionship, that he has felt constrained to sever his connection with the Mission at Negwenenang, and accept an appointment for one year as assistant in the Church of the Ascension, Toronto. The loss to this diocese is simply irreparable. Not only is our clerical force diminished by the departure of one who could ill be spared, but our poor Indians lose a friend in whom they will never find a truer or better. But we will not yet bid our brother a final farewell. Who knows but some unforeseen turn in the wheel of Providence may restore him to us again? And so we will live in hope, meanwhile making him over as a loan for a season to our friends in the Ascension, and so liquidating by a single payment the many debts of obligation under which they have laid us, by their frequent and generous benefactions to the Missionary diocese of Algoma."

When, on the occasion of his visit to England during 1888 to attend the Lambeth Conference, the Bishop of Algoma held a small Drawing-room in a Sussex country house, he then

mentioned Mr. Renison's work, and read the poem, 'Wait, he is sure to come.'



ON LAKE NEEPIGON.

He told us that the Indians at Negwenenang on Lake Neepigon are very loyal, and that they would like a flag (Union Jack), partly to show their allegiance to the Great Mother, and also to float on Sunday so as to serve as signal of Divine Service, instead of a bell, which they did not possess.

Before the Bishop left England on August 3, I had been entrusted with a flag for the chief, and also a large doll dressed by some young people of my acquaintance, as a present to

Mr. Renison's children. I had the pleasure of packing these things with some other useful articles, and forwarding the box to the Bishop's address ere he left England.

On his way to Sault St. Marie, he transacted diocesan business in Montreal and Toronto, and held an ordination in Muskoka. Home was reached about August 23. On Saturday, August 25, he wrote :—

"On Monday morning (D.V.) at 7 o'clock, Mrs. Sullivan and I start for Neepigon to visit Mr. Renison and his Indians. She is very busy with her preparations, as it was only this morning I got a telegram saying that the time would suit, and that Mr. Renison and his Indians would meet us on Wednesday next."

After the Bishop's return to Sault St. Marie, he started off for the Manitoulin Visitation, whence he wrote as follows :—

"October 2, 1888.—The flag for the Indian Mission was simply a grand one. We raised it temporarily over the Mission House during our visit, and the Indians, no less than Mr. Renison and family, were lost in admiration of it. The Mission carpenter was to prepare and put up a proper flag-pole. Instructions were given to raise it on special occasions, and only in fine weather, and always to lower it at sunset."

Let me give a glimpse of what travelling in Algoma is like, as described in Mrs. Sullivan's private letter, dated October 4, 1888 :—

"I am again alone, the Bishop having left a week ago for the Manitoulin Island, and he does not return for a fortnight. He has had wet weather since he left, which is very unfortunate, as he has to be in open boats most of the time.

"I promised to give you some account of our last Neepigon trip. I fear I cannot make it as interesting as it should be. The Bishop and I left Sault St. Marie on Monday, August 27, hoping to reach the Mission by Saturday.

"By 7.30 A.M. we were at the beginning of what proved a very long journey.

"By 3 P.M. we arrived at Sudbury, where we had to wait for a day, as no trains leave Montreal on Sunday by the Canadian Pacific Railway.

"At Sudbury we met Dr. Selwyn, of the Geological Survey, with whom the Bishop much enjoyed a long talk. In the morning they both went a few miles on an engine to see some copper mines.

"The Bishop was much pleased with his visit ; he had the



NEAR RED ROCK.

offer of a gun, as it was possible they might meet or see a bear. Owing to a long train and many immigrants going to the North-West, we did not leave till three hours after time, but this loss was made up in the night by rushing along at a high rate of speed. There was a dining car attached to the train. At 11.30 A.M. Wednesday we reached Red Rock, where we bid 'good-bye' to trains, and took to the more primitive way of travelling, *i.e.*, canoes.

"Mr. Renison, our devoted missionary, met us, and was so pleased to see his Bishop again.

"He told us he had not been able to arrange for our leaving that day, but hoped to start the next.

"We remained that night with the Hudson's Bay agent, it being a H. B. post.

"The Bishop had service in the evening, and that night we slept in a bed for the last time for seven nights.

"I will tell you a fact about the Indians you may not know. It is impossible to hurry them, so being with them is a splendid school to learn patience in.

"It was 2.30 P.M. on Thursday before we were really off.

"Mrs. Renison and the five children had been waiting for three weeks for Indians to take them up.

"One is quite dependent on *Indians*, as there are many dangerous currents and places in the rapids no white man knows of, so he cannot go alone.

"Had we been fewer we should have got on much faster than we did, but the more people there are the longer it takes for baggage and the cooking of food.

"The Indians, of course, thoroughly understand packing a canoe, and you would be amazed at what one will hold.

"We had 18 pieces of baggage when we left the Sault, everything that was possible packed into oiled bags, *i.e.*—

Tent bag	2 bags of clothing (for	Our hand-bag
Poles	Indians)	Robe case
Blanket bag	1 bag of clothing	Umbrellas
'Our' bag	Hamper	Camp table
Tinned meats	Lunch basket	2 camp chairs
Water pail	Doll box	and Lantern
	Frying pan	

"You may add to this small list all the Renisons' personal things, and 10 bags of flour, pork, sugar, &c. We started with

three canoes, and paddled up beautiful Lake Helen (the Renisons did not join us till the next day), but we had only been half-an-hour out when down came the rain, and a squall came over the lake; the Indians paddled into some rushes near the shore, got out the tarpaulin (belonging to the floor of the tent) and the poles, and in a minute had a little tent over us. In a short time we were able to start again, and soon turned into the beautiful Neepigon River, with its wooded



CANOE.

banks, many rapids, and dangerous currents. Going up it is very hard in some places to make headway. For some time the Bishop had to put his hands on the rower in front of us and help him with each stroke. The Indian behind paddled and the man in the bows rowed. At 9 P.M. we heard the welcome sound of the rushing rapids, and knew our first camping ground was near. It was getting very dark, and I was so thankful when we got out of the rapid, for we had to cross the foot of it.

"Soon the canoe was unloaded and carried up the bank.

"One cannot pay too much attention to the canoe, for everything depends on it. A sharp stone or root running into it and we should all have been at the bottom. Soon we were up, the tent stretched, tarpaulin down, bag in, table and chairs in their place, and the hamper and lunch basket unpacked; and very glad were we of a cup of hot tea and something to eat, having had nothing since 12 o'clock. We slept well, and next morning began the long portage; it was over two miles. The Indians made three stopping places, the canoe and things being too heavy to take further at a time.

"They will carry the things to No. 1 place, then go with the canoe to No. 2, then back for the other things; when they are all over they begin again with the canoes, and take them to No. 3, &c.

"It took us all day to get everything over to the end of the portage. Every portage empties a rapid, and there there is a very long and grand one.

"We took to the canoes again on Saturday, when we were joined by Mr. Renison and all his party.

"We saw that it was impossible now to reach the Mission by Sunday, and what worried the Bishop was that he had appointments for the next one, but there was nothing for it but patience.

"One thing that wasted the time so was the Indians' cooking. Three times a day was bread made! They won't eat it cold. It is made with flour and water and soda, and put in frying-pans.

"Pork and fish and tea (of course we never saw milk) composed the bill of fare.

"On Saturday we got on well, till at 4 P.M. a tremendous 'blow' came on, and we had to land the canoes immediately, for they are such frail things they can't stand much sea. The place happened to be a most exposed spot—no trees, and quite flat. The wind was so high I really thought in the night that we and the tent would be blown away: they put very big

stones all round the tent side to keep it down. It was a miserable night.

"Next morning (Sunday) the Bishop explained to the Indians how it was necessary for us to travel, although it was Sunday. Of course only necessary things were done; no fishing.

"We always had prayers night and morning round the



THE CAMP FIRE.

camp fire, which is the only enjoyable thing in camping. It is sometimes made double, so that they cook on both sides of it, and is sometimes six or seven feet high, whole trees being put on.

"That day was very hard; we had three portages to make,

and rapids to pass. One place I always dread ; a great white stream coming rushing into the Neepigon at right angles, and we had to go through just where it turns, within four feet of the high rock, and just as we were getting out of this seething, rushing water one oar broke ! I quite thought we should be turned round and sent back into the middle of the torrent, but the Indians managed to keep us out of it. It almost made me sick. I dislike the water at any time, and this kind of thing is a real trial to me.

“The Bishop does not know what fear is, and, I think, does not take enough precautions.

“That night we camped at the end of a pine forest ; it was very beautiful, and when we went to our tents the sky was ablaze with stars, but at one in the morning a great storm came up, and thunder and lightning ; and the rain beat on the tent with such violence that I thought it would make holes in the canvas, but it kept dry, which the others did not. Mr. Renison said they had a pool in the middle of their tent, and many things got wet.

“On Monday we got to Flat Rock Portage, and were kept there by the storm the whole of Tuesday, the Lake Neepigon being in such a wild state that no boat could live in it. By this time we arrived at the state of being very thankful for every *mile* we made, and thought if we got home in three weeks we should be fortunate.

“Wednesday morning at 4.45 we were awakened by Mr. Renison making a peculiar Indian cry, and we knew we had to get up, that the lake was calm. It was bitterly cold and dark.

“We had barely time to dress, as the Indians thought the wind might rise after sun-break.

“After we had been on the water about half an hour the clouds grew very beautiful, and the red light came in the sky. One of the Indians said to me, pointing to it, ‘Misquahbenooqua,’

which is ‘the Rosy Dawn’—my Indian name. I thought to myself, ‘I am glad I do not see it often under the same circumstances.’

“At 9 A.M. we came to our last portage, and were quite ready for breakfast.

“It was a very rough path, many rocks and roots and branches nearly closing over it, and very glad we were to take to the canoes again for the *last time* till our return.



‘MISQUAHBENOOQUA’—‘ROSY DAWN.’

“We arrived at the Mission about 3 P.M., and saw the nice new Mission-house, and soon had a comfortable wash and changed our things, which was a great luxury.

“I have a splendid camping dress, made of a dark blue blanket ; it is warm and light, and nothing will tear it, but you get tired of the same dress morning, noon, and night for seven days.

"As soon as we had something to eat in the Mission-house at Negweneng, the Bishop called for the box you packed, and got the children round him, telling them he had something for them (indeed we were all most interested to see the contents). The cords were all most carefully undone (everything being most valuable at the Mission, even a match), then the canvas was unsewn, screws unscrewed, cover taken off, and there lay the doll, as snugly packed as when she left Sussex. This is saying a *great* deal for the packing. Fancy the 44 times the box had been handled on the journey up the Neepigon! After the wrappings were undone the beautiful doll was put into the arms of the eldest girl. Her delight was so great she could not speak. She just looked and looked at it, not even touching it; and dolly was worthy of the admiration, for she was beautiful, and it will give many an hour of enjoyment to children who have little in their lives to amuse or refine them. They will take dolly's things as patterns for their own, and there is no saying what good she may do.

"As the Bishop has written an account of our visit to the Mission, I will say nothing of it.

"We intended to have left the next morning, in the hope (?) that we could get to Red Rock by Saturday at 5 P.M. to catch the train, and so allow the Bishop to keep his appointments; but Thursday it blew so hard we could not venture. Friday morning saw us once more in the canoes. Now that we had only two canoes and light loads we got on very fast. We camped that night on an island, but it was quite dark when we got there, and 11 P.M. before we shut the tent door (or flap). The fires that night were glorious. It required thoughts of the morrow's hard work to make one say 'Good-night.'

"Friday had been a very hard day; we had head winds, and the rain came down in torrents. I would not hold up my umbrella, as it kept the canoe back, so like the others got

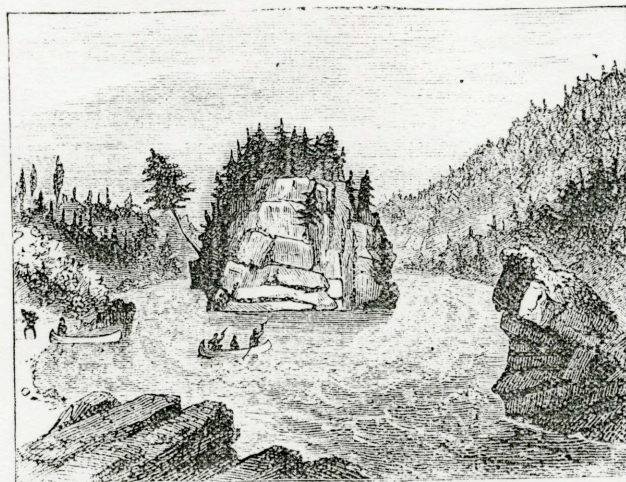
drenched. It is a horrid feeling to have even your hair so wet it makes your head ache with cold.

"Once we were all so wet we had to land and light a fire and dry ourselves. The men were so numbed they could do nothing.

"Crossing the lake it was so rough that the water came in, and I was so glad to step on the land again.

"The next day we had the 'White Sheet' to cross again, but our oars were good ones, and we got through safely.

"Another danger to pass was 'Island Portage'; here, there



SPLIT ROCK PORTAGE.

are two islands—small, in a line—in the middle of the river, and there is a grand fall of I forget how many feet, and this makes three rapids, surging and boiling right across the river.

"We had to steer to one of these islands and make a portage, and then there was only a very little bit of smooth water into which we had to get—a little to the right, or to the left, and we should have been in a rapid!

"We got down safely; and now there was just one other place I dreaded—Split Rock, the most beautiful and grandest of all the rapids.

"Here, too, the passage is very narrow, and our Indian's thoughts were far from his duties at the critical moment, for he nearly let us go down; we were within one yard of it. Mr. Renison was just going to jump in when he managed to turn her head. I told the Bishop my hair would be grey by the time we got home, with all these frights.

"The prospect of keeping appointments had vanished, and Saturday evening saw us in camp again. It became most important we should soon reach somewhere, for our food was just finished. We had to take Indian fare, 'salt pork,' but it really tasted very nice.

"On Sunday at 2 P.M. we arrived again at Red Rock, most thankful for all God's mercy and lovingkindness, which had kept us safe and well through all our journeyings.

"To give you some idea of the labour of portaging, I may say that every piece of baggage was handled forty-four times, from the time we left Red Rock till we reached the Mission.

"This journey Mr. Renison makes four or five times in the year, and thinks nothing of the hardships, which in winter are far greater owing to the intense cold.

"He is a hero, and one of the bravest of Christ's soldiers I know; his wife, too, is so good and unselfish.

"Their boy is doing well at school, which is a great comfort to them.

"It may interest you to know that we were away from home seventeen days, and in that time travelled 1,500 miles, and only slept in a bed four nights. I am not rested yet.

"The Bishop left again that same week, and has not been at home more than three days all September.

"He left this again on the 28th of September, and hopes to return on the 16th of October.

"I am sure by this time you have had more than enough of my news, so will stop at once.

"With kindest regards, &c.,

"F. M. S."

The Bishop had hardly returned home after his trip to Negwenang when he received the following letters from the Indians:—

"*To the BIG BLACK COAT.*

"Dearly Beloved—

"We, the Indians of Negwenang, now make a beginning in order that eighty logs may be prepared for a church which is to be built. This is all our ability; we are very poor. Money none have we.

"But we beseech you to help us pretty much, that ye may give till the church be completed. As for our gift, this is all it is like, eighty logs and nothing more.

"We thank you for your past help, and now we still believe in you, that you will help us, that we be no longer famished when we pray.

"We, the Indians, will do our best. Yes, and we do thank you that you have been merciful to us who are very poor.

(Signed) "FREDERICK A. OSHKAPIDKA.

"SEYMOUR OBESEKUNG.

"PETER PEDIGOOGUM.

"JOSEPH MAGWA, and others."

The following summer another visitation of the Neepigon district was held, and I again quote from one of the Bishop's private letters, dated August 13, 1889:—

"Since I last wrote I have been taking one of my rough trips to out-of-the-way regions up in Lake Neepigon. It occupied 17 days, and was a journey I am glad to have undertaken.

"Up at the Hudson's Bay post, about forty miles beyond the Mission, but still on Lake Neepigon, we came in contact with a band of pagan Indians, and spent two days among them, feeding both body and soul as far as possible. Poor creatures, many of them looked the very embodiment of misery. They were amazed to see the 'big black coat' up so far, and scarcely took their eyes off him, save while eating, and then they showed a concentration of purpose which was marvellous to behold.

"I very much doubt if many of them had ever eaten bread before! I would have given a good deal to have been able to photograph the scene on the island which was the appointed meeting-place. About a hundred, young and old, seated or squatting on the ground, with expectancy in every eye, while Mr. Renison and I stood by a huge pyramid of camp bread baked on the spot, and pieces of pork, distributing to the hungry multitude.

"As we began, I could not help wishing for a momentary return of the miraculous multiplying power of New Testament times, in my fears that the supply might be insufficient, but the pyramid was more solid than my fears, and there was 'bread enough and to spare,' the surplus being distributed as fairly as possible, as also the unused tea, which seemed to be the *summum bonum*, judging by the eagerness with which the women and children crowded round me as I distributed it in handfuls.

"Dear me, how I wished for about twenty tales of good, serviceable clothing to give out. How some of these wretched, half-clothed creatures live out the winter I know not. I must try and see them again next winter if I am spared. They come down to the post every year to receive their little annuity of four dollars each from the Government through the Indian agent, and remain for about three months. Many of them come from a distance of upwards of two hundred miles, bring-

ing their entire worldly substance with them, in the shape of a few rolls of birch bark for their wigwams, a crooked knife, a net, and a camp-kettle! The number that came to meet us was not so large as we had hoped, owing to the fact that a person had gone round industriously and done his best to thwart us.

"One of the stories he told them was that Mr. Renison and I were constables come to arrest some of them!"

In October, 1889, the Mission-house was burnt down, thus rendering it impossible for Mr. Renison and his family to winter at Negwenenang. I must now conclude with some columns from the *Algoma Missionary News* of June 16, 1892. Let us all take "Wait, he is sure to come" to heart, and aid to let Christ's name and work be known.

NEEPIGON.

In connection with Rev. Mr. Renison's resignation of his Indian work at Neepigon, reported elsewhere in our columns, we think it well to find space for his last report to the Bishop. It is as follows:—

"Owing to my dear wife's illness and death, I am sorry to have to report that my work among the Indians of Lake Neepigon has been greatly hindered during the past year. After the disease had developed, it became necessary that we should remove her to Port Arthur, that we might have all the available medical aid and comforts so essential for one in her condition. At the same time, I was glad to be able to keep the work going in Port Arthur during Mr. Machin's absence in England.

"For nine months I have been unable to visit the Indian Mission at Negwenenang, but the poor Indians never failed to come down from time to time during that interval to enquire after their dear friend and benefactress, whom they loved as a mother. They usually came down on Saturdays, and waited

over for the following Wednesday evening service, joining their white brethren in worship. At such times we always arranged to have part of the service in English and part in Indian, to the great interest and delight of all. Three Sundays ago, when reading the morning prayer in St. Mary's, I happened to raise my eyes from the Prayer Book and look through the side window of the church, when I beheld a sight which almost incapacitated me for the remaining part of the service. Three Indians from our Mission had just arrived at my dear wife's grave (which I can always see either from the chancel or the reading desk). They were using their snowshoes for shovels, scraping the snow off the grave, and then brushing it down with their mittens, as a sacred thing, till every particle of snow had been removed. They then knelt down beside the grave and prayed (not for the dead, I am sure), the tears falling fast, especially from old Oshkopekuhda's eyes. (He was the first of the little pagan band who met Bishop Fauquier on Lake Neepigon twelve years ago, and requested that an English Church missionary be sent to teach them the religion of their 'great mother,' the Queen.) After they had prayed they sat down in the snow in solemn meditation.

"They knew that the service had already commenced in the church, and so did not want to disturb us. I had to stop in the middle of the service, and send one of the congregation out to bring the poor shivering creatures inside. I tell you, dear Bishop, that affection like this, so genuine, has more than repaid me for the ten years I have spent in isolation teaching these poor creatures the way of salvation.

"While I write this report six of our Indians from Negwenang are just at hand. They came down (60 miles) to take up some tar-paper for the roofing of a new schoolhouse which has been erected at the Mission during the last two months. They will remain over Sunday, and I am just now going down to the parsonage (where they will take up their quarters) to

practise some Indian hymns for the occasion. Their interest in the Mission seems to have increased rather than diminished during the long break that my dear wife's affliction and death caused in that part of my work.

"At present Mugwa is the schoolmaster and catechist. The services and the day-school have been kept up regularly, and almost without intermission, during my absence, and the Indian agent has been so well pleased with the progress that the children have made in the ordinary English subjects that he thinks Mugwa quite competent to receive the yearly grant of \$200 from the Indian Department as the regularly appointed teacher. This one fact alone gives me great encouragement, for this young Indian was trained and educated for the work in the very Mission in which he has been labouring efficiently as school teacher and catechist during the past year.

"There is a good, substantial church, ceiled and lined with the best lumber, sawn and dressed on the spot. It is also furnished with seats and a good bell. The whole cost was about \$900, all of which had been subscribed by friends in England and Canada. Our good friend Miss P— alone sent us a cheque for £100 sterling for this purpose, so that the Indians here are more favourably situated than many of their white brethren in having a church entirely free from debt.

"Summing up the whole subject, I may say that :

"(1) The Indians have good, substantial log houses, each one containing a cook-stove and a box stove.

"(2) They also possess a good strong ox, with which they plough their garden and haul their winter's fuel.

"(3) Generally they raise potatoes sufficient to keep them through the whole winter.

"(4) They have family prayer every morning and evening in their houses, and always say grace before and after meals.

"(5) During the last ten years no less than 22 of the

little band have died, including, of course, infants. They are buried in a cemetery consecrated by our present Bishop.

"(6) The congregation at present, all told, is about 30, among whom there are 15 communicants. But there are fully 75 more who have been baptized by the Bishop and the missionary whom we cannot persuade to settle on the reserve, and who are wandering about from place to place."



THE BISHOP AND MISSIONARY EN ROUTE FOR LAKE NEEPIGON, 1878.

In connection with the above report, we are sure it will interest our readers if we publish the lines written many years since in commemoration of the strange providence which attended the first establishment of this Indian Mission. It will

be remembered that the late Bishop made his first visit to the Neepigon region in the summer of 1878, accompanied by the Rev. E. F. Wilson. The central point of the whole incident will best be described in Mr. Wilson's words, as reported in our columns at the time. After describing the journey and their meeting with these red men for the first time, he goes on:—

"There were two principal men listening to us, and they several times expressed their approval as the Bishop proceeded.

"One of them replied at length. He said: 'Thirty years or more ago the Indian chiefs were called together at the rapids of Sault St. Marie to meet the great white chief in order to make a treaty with him about surrendering their lands to the Queen. My father was chief at that time; his name was Muhnedooshans. The great white chief's name was "Nobsin" (Sir John Robinson). The great white chief made a treaty with us; we were each to receive six dollars a year, every man, woman, and child, as an annuity. My father often spoke to us about it when he was alive. My eldest brother is now our chief; his name is Cheyadah. We still carry on the precepts of our father. We do not as the other Indians do. The great white chief gave my father a paper which showed the boundaries of the land set apart for our use by the Queen. My eldest brother now has this paper. My father said to us, "Do not travel about all the time as the other Indians do, but settle upon this land and farm like the white people do." We obey the precepts of our father. We have already cleared some land, and every year we plant potatoes. We cannot do much more than this until we have someone to teach us. We have built also three log houses like the white people; they have windows with glass in them, which we got in exchange for furs at the Hudson Bay Company's post, and the doors were made with nails; the roofs are made with strips of bark. Some of us live in them in the winter time. There would not be time for you to see our houses to-day. It is too late, for they are some

miles off. Our land is about four miles in extent ; that is how we gain our living.

“Another thing that the great white chief said to my father was that we should not join the French religion ; he would send us an “English black coat” to teach us, so every year my father was waiting for the English teacher to come ; he waited on year after year, and at length died a pagan. His last words to us were that we should still wait for an English teacher to come, and that when he came we were to receive him well, and ask him to open a school for our children to be taught. He also told us never to sell our land to the white people, but always to keep it, and not to scatter about, but to keep together. Thus to this present day we have kept to the precepts of our father, and we now welcome you as the English teachers that our father told us to look for.’”

The following lines were suggested by the events described above :—

“WAITING.”

Was it a promise that the white chief gave
So many years ago, that he would send
A teacher to point out the way of life,
And tell the dear old Story of the Cross?

Was it a promise? So the red man deemed :
And yet, not yet ! the promise is redeemed.

Through all the changes of those thirty years
That promise echoes sadly, calming first
The bounding pulse of manhood, chastening all
The joys and triumphs of a savage life.

Looking from steadfast eyes, whose sorrow dumb
Mocked the brave words—“Wait ; he is sure to come !”

“Wait ; he is sure to come !” the exulting words
At first brake forth from lips that scorn delay ;
“The white man holds the truth ; he will not fail
To guide his brother to the perfect day.”

And I myself shall see the blessed sight,
And with my people hail the glorious light.

“Wait ; he is sure to come !” no other hands
Shall lead us into light ; no other lips
Shall teach the truth ; and yet—and yet ’tis hard
With outstretched arms to wait and watch so long,
And in despair again, and yet again,
To cry for help, and still to cry in vain.

“Wait ; he is sure to come !” the hopeful words
Fall sadly, wistfully by dying beds,
O’er newborn babes, o’er childhood’s smiles and tears,
O’er every passing scene of grief and change ;
O’er wasted lives that have no home—no goal
But the great hungry craving of the soul.

“Wait ; he is sure to come !” the years pass by,
The head is whitened o’er by winter’s snow ;
The sight grows dim, the active limbs are stiff,
The hand is paralysed, the voice is low ;
And the bright searching glance of former years
Is dimmed by hope deferred and patient tears.

“Wait ; he is sure to come !” but one hath come
Before him ; not the messenger of Life,
But Death ; and closed the eyes that watched so long,
And hushed the voice, and stilled the beating heart,
And folded the tired hands upon the breast—
And the red chief hath entered into rest.

So he, too, died in faith, seeing afar
Scarcely the shadow of the rising day ;
Stretching forth patient hands to grope for God
That no man grasped ; bequeathing to his tribe
The hope which his red warriors, ’midst their grief,
Took up and echoed from their dying chief.

“Wait ; he is sure to come !” How beautiful
Upon the mountains will his footsteps be !
How glad his voice, bearing good tidings on
Through the dark forest, by the inland sea !
“Wait ; he is sure to come” at last, and bring
Glad tidings of our Saviour and our King.

But is he sure to come? Through blinding tears
 I hear a voice that asks, "Where is the soul
 I came on earth to save? thy brother's soul?
 The soul that hungered after righteousness?
 Red man and white, I died from sin to free:
 Could none be found to bring that soul to Me?"

"Am I my brother's keeper?" I would plead,
 But that I dare not; for I know full well
 The glorious Gospel was not given to us
 For selfish hoarding, but in solemn trust,
 That by the white man through the expectant world
 The banner of the Cross might be unfurled.

Ere I turn back to my vain, selfish life,
 Again I hear that loving, pleading voice—
 "Is there not joy in heaven o'er one redeemed?
 And these have waited and have watched so long!
 Work while 'tis called to-day. For work undone
 There will be time to weep when night is come."

Peace, vain regret! I leave the wasted past
 Beneath the Cross. My loving Lord, than I
 More merciful; only let me press on
 To speed the message while it yet is day,
 And tell the red man that the night is past,
 And he they long have looked for comes at last!