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S K E T C H

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MAY 10 1899

MISSIONARY PROCEEDINGS AT CAPE BRETON.

From August 1833, to October 1834.

It must be very gratifying to every Christian to notice the increasing interest manifested by the public respecting the moral and spiritual condition of the multitudes of our countrymen transplanted to the forests of British America, whether from choice, or, as is generally the case, from dire necessity. It is evident that neither schools nor clergymen exist there, when the settler first intrudes on the Indian or the beaver; and that the poverty which forced him to separate himself from all the comforts of civilized life, must, for many dreary, laborious years, forbid his gratifying his longings after suitable education for his offspring, or the "voice of the preacher,"—"the messenger of glad tidings," to revive in the aged, and give birth in the young, to the inquiry, "What must we do to be saved?"

A strong conviction of the duty lying on all to rescue as far as in their power these our kindred in the flesh from the appalling danger of forgetting the God of their fathers, induced, in 1832, an effort, which has, by the blessing of God, resulted in providing the Highland settlers in the island of Cape Breton with two ordained clergymen of the church of Scotland; one, now the pastor of the settlements of Middle River and Bradock, after itinerating for thirteen months throughout the whole island; the other still itinerating, but ready to accept a fixed charge as soon as arrangements are made for his maintenance by some of the older settlements, when the originators of the Mission hope to send a third, and so *annually*, till the ten parishes into which it is proposed to divide the island are supplied with pastors of their *own* beloved kirk, and able to instruct them in the only language they understand—the Gaelic.

The following "Journal of itinerating labours in Cape Breton by the Rev. D. J. Frazer of Pictou, transmitted to the Secretary of the Glasgow Colonial Society, and published in its Report of 1829," will at once exhibit the need of the island, and the cause of its being fixed on as the sphere in which to manifest this sense of duty.

(Drawn up and communicated by the Rev. Mr. Martin of Halifax.)

"In the month of September last, (1828) the Rev. D. J. Frazer, of Pictou, proceeded on a Missionary tour to Cape Breton, accompanied by the Rev. John Maclellan of Prince Edward island. These gentlemen separated at the Straits of Canso, which separate Nova Scotia from Cape Breton; the latter proceeding in such a direction as would enable him to take the northern parts of the island in his route, and the former pursuing his tour to the southward. Mr. Frazer states that he found much difficulty in gaining the object of his mission, on account of the peculiar manner in which Cape Breton is intersected by water, as also by reason of the extreme and almost unprecedented inclemency

of the weather at that season of the year. By perseverance, however, and at the expense of much personal fatigue, he arrived at the beautiful and interesting island of Boulai de Tréé, situated in the Bras d'Or Lake. The south side of this island is almost entirely occupied by Roman Catholics, but the north side presents one unbroken line of families, earnestly desirous of obtaining a minister from our mother church. They are chiefly from the districts of Gairloch, and the islands of Scotland, and almost all exhibit those features of industry, sobriety, and decorum which peculiarly distinguish emigrants from those districts. To them Mr. Frazer preached repeatedly, and was highly delighted, not only with the affectionate warmth which distinguished their reception of himself, but more especially with the zeal they manifested in attending to his public ministry. There are upwards of forty families, extending along a coast somewhat more than thirty miles in length, and on every occasion on which he preached, he represents them as following him by families in their boats. They are not far from the settlement of Bradock, where he also preached, and where these affectionate beings followed him. The population of Bradock is not exclusively Scottish; but they all seemed willing to unite with the island's population in applying to your Society for a clergyman.

"Mr. Frazer remained for ten days in their settlements, and found frequent occasion to exercise his ministerial functions. From thence he proceeded to Sydney, the capital of Cape Breton; there he was also greeted with unequivocal cordiality, and preached twice to a respectable and highly attentive audience. Many persons have been awakened to a sense of a coming judgment in that place. It was here alone that Mr. Frazer encountered any but Roman Catholics or Presbyterians.

"The Baptists have gained a few proselytes, and there is a clergyman of the Church of England settled there; still the general feeling seemed leaning towards the simplicity of our forms, and Mr. Frazer himself has been supplicated to reside amongst them. After a stay which was delightful in every thing but its shortness, Mr. Frazer returned again by the Boulai de Tréé island; and finally bidding adieu to his countrymen in this sequestered spot, who followed him with prayers and tears, he proceeded by water to the head of the N. W. arm of the Bras d'Or Lake, visiting in his progress the coasts and islands of that superb expanse of water. Generally speaking, as far as he could ascertain, the inhabitants are Roman Catholics or Presbyterians; and whilst he found the former tolerably well supplied with priests of their own communion, the latter are, alas! perishing in ignorance, and with few means of instruction. From the Bras d'Or he pursued his journey to River Inhabitants, and onwards to the Straits of Causo, where, after many toils and many pleasures, he once more met with his fellow-labourer Mr. Maclellan. It were, indeed, desirable that Missionary tours could more frequently be undertaken, not merely for the exclusive purpose of preaching the gospel, but also to stir up and guide the people to such measures as would ensure the regular administration of ordinances. This, however, is what the brethren in the colonies cannot hope to accomplish to the extent which is indispensably necessary, because their own flocks would suffer severely thereby, and because, they themselves receiving no pecuniary remuneration, the expenses of their journey fall insupportably heavy on their limited means; and it is hoped that your benevolent Society will consider the propriety of sending out Missionaries with no particular limits assigned to their labours.

It is however necessary to remember, that a knowledge of the Gaelic language is indispensable in Cape Breton, and the greater part of our adjacencies. Mr. Frazer represents Cape Breton as an object worthy of all Christian sympathy, and of your most serious consideration. The present generation still bear the impression of men who once heard the joyful sound of the Word of Life. They are all, perhaps, more or less alive to the destitution of their situation, and many amongst them are mourning in sorrow of soul over the remembrance of privileges once enjoyed, and the anticipation of privations yet to be endured. But if this feeling be not cherished, if these our kinsmen according to the flesh, and members of our own church, are left to experience that sickness of the heart which is caused by hope deferred, it is to be feared that another race will spring up who will feel little of this desire, and that a moral darkness will fall upon these poor people, which it will be far easier to prevent than to remove. There is little doubt that if the vivid and living reality of Cape Breton were placed before the eyes of the Scottish public, it would call forth a burst of benign sympathy which would enable your Society to dispel the gloom which pals the hopes of our countrymen in these wilds."

That the above affecting picture was no exaggerated representation of the desolation of the portion of Cape Breton visited by Mr. Frazer, is fully proved by Mr. Farquharson's more minute investigation; as well as that the description in its utmost force applies to every portion of the island, which he has now completely explored; and from his Journal we shall now proceed to give extracts.

"Middle River, 17th February, 1834.

"I shall in the form of a journal give you a brief view of my labours here since my return on the 11th September, from Newcastle, Miramichi, where, as related in my last letter to you, I was ordained. On the forenoon of the 16th, I preached a Gaelic sermon at the Gut of Causo, and set off for St. George's Channel. Next morning, notice was sent round the end of the channel of my being to preach, and by ten o'clock a houseful of attentive hearers assembled, to whom I preached with pleasure and liberty. In the afternoon, two or three miles farther on, in the house of a respectable farmer, I again preached to about thirty persons. Here I gave intimation that I should preach again on Thursday, ten miles distant, in a neat church, built last summer, on the south-east end of the bay. On Wednesday, baptized some children, (for the first time,) on my way thither. Found a good congregation on Thursday, to whom I preached in Gaelic and English. Friday, a number of people assembled, some having children to baptize, and some to hear the word, whom I exhorted regarding the nature of the ordinance of baptism, the ends for which it was appointed, the responsibility of parents, &c. Round this channel is a large settlement of Presbyterians, all Highlanders with the exception of a few individuals, all attached to our church, and have been looking and waiting, and some, I hope, praying for a minister from the old country and church. About one hundred and seventy families, including Grantames, four or five miles off, would be able to maintain a minister; and though some are poor, being new settlers, I really think if a clergyman came who would conduct himself suitably to his profession, and have their best interests at heart, that they would cheerfully and respectfully maintain him. Two churches, seven miles distant, would be requisite, and at either of these, on a good summer day, each of these families might assemble, the distance from either to the most

remote settler not exceeding twelve miles. Many of the people expressed their anxiety every time I visited them, that I should settle amongst them. On Saturday, I crossed the channel northward for Matagawash, having previously sent notice that I should, God willing, be there on the Sabbath. This Settlement, including the basin of River Denny, contains eighty families who can easily attend the same place of worship. In the middle of the Settlement they have erected a place of worship, now nearly finished. They are Highlanders, connected with our church, and would very willingly join another Settlement to maintain a clergyman. On Sabbath the 22d, had a pretty large meeting in the church, to whom I preached in both languages. Here I observed several individuals from the end of St. George's Channel, a distance of fifteen miles. Monday, crossed the River Denny, a narrow arm of the Bras d'Or Lake, intending to preach to the people on the opposite side, on my way to Hogama. Most of them being from home, I remained till next day, when, (though very rainy,) a houseful attended, who listened with earnestness and attention. Next day, accompanied by about twelve of those who were my hearers the preceding day, we travelled onward to Hogama, where I preached to a small number; amongst whom were four men from Lake Ainslie, who, after sermon, insisted that I should go with them, and give them a sermon on Friday. I had not intended to visit this Settlement on my first course, as they had a minister among them, a young man, Mr. Maclean, from Uist, who came out two or three years ago, not sent by the Colonial Society, with whom the settlers on Lake Ainslie and the Middle River agreed for three years, but who having proved a disgrace to his profession, they dismissed a few months previous to my visit. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Pictou connected with our church, but has been suspended and disavowed by them. On Thursday, having left notice that I should be at Hogama on Sabbath, I accompanied the men, a distance of fourteen miles, preached on Friday in Gaelic and English, and baptized fifteen children. Round this Lake are two Settlements of Presbyterian Highlanders, with a few exceptions, from the western isles, Isla, Muck, &c.; in each of these they have a church well advanced. These, and Cape Mabou, a Settlement not far off, contain one hundred and fifty families. Their need of a faithful pastor is particularly urgent; few of them can read the Word of Life, and they have no means of grace to resort to on the Sabbath. Saturday, I returned to Hogama, and on Sabbath preached to a pretty numerous congregation, a number of whom were from Matagawash, where I preached the preceding Sabbath. This settlement and Washbuck contain one hundred and sixty families, Highlanders, very anxious to get a clergyman of our church. They propose building two churches seven or eight miles distant. On Wednesday, farther down the Bay, I preached to a crowded houseful of very attentive people, chiefly from Lewis. On Thursday, proceeded for Middle River, or, as sometimes named, Wagamathuck. I arrived in the evening, feeling a little dejected, not knowing where to go for the night, being an entire stranger to the place and the people. A kind Providence ordered that the first man who met me was an aged godly man, originally from Lord Reay's country, Kenneth Macleod, whose wife Robina Macdonald, a pious woman, had died some time ago. They were amongst the first who settled on the river, procured two hundred acres of excellent land for each of a respectable family, and two hundred as a glebe for a clergyman of our church. This Father in Israel kindly welcomed me to the settlement, and as kindly con-

ducted me to his house, where I was hospitably entertained till I left the settlement the following week. To the house of one of his sons, within two hundred yards of the church, I returned on the 10th December, to winter quarters, and from thence now write to you." Room will not permit our following Mr. Farquharson in his daily Journies, now becoming more laborious from the advanced season. He left Middle River on the 8th October, visited each settlement on the various arms of the Great and Little Bras d'Or Lake, Boulai de Tr   Island, St. Ann's Harbour, Sydney Harbour, Marguerite, Miray Bay, Gabaras Bay, Grand River, &c. &c. preaching daily, baptizing and visiting, everywhere welcomed cordially, repeatedly pressed to settle amongst them, and followed from one preaching station to another, parents flocking to have their children baptized. "When approaching the place appointed, one might see the mother with the baby on her breast, the father with one on his back, and one in his arms, and perhaps two more running after, all unbaptized; some having travelled eight miles that morning." After much interesting information, Mr. Farquharson says, "From what I have written, you will learn a little of the desolate condition of many a precious soul here. I really believe, from what I have seen and learned, that there is not a place in the whole world professing Christianity, where there are so many families so near to each other, and so utterly destitute as our poor countrymen in this island are. There is labour enough for seven or eight faithful and laborious Ministers of our Church here. I have planned the Settlements out into Parishes as follows:—1st, St. George's Channel, one hundred and seventy families, two churches seven miles distant; 2d, Hogama, one hundred and sixty families, two churches seven or eight miles distant; 3d, Lake Ainslie, and Broad Cove, one hundred and fifty families, two churches about ten miles distant; 4th, Middle River, Big Bradock, and Marguerite, about two hundred families, two churches eleven miles distant, and occasional visits to Marguerite; 5th, Boulai de Tr  , north side of St. Ann's and Little Bradock, upwards of two hundred families, three places of worship at least; 6th, Myra, Catatone, and Gabaras, one hundred and thirty-nine families, three churches eight and fourteen miles distant; 7th, Grand River, and Grand River Lake, one hundred and twenty-five families, two churches about eight miles distant; 8th, Matagawash, eighty families, which, along with River Denny, would make as extensive a parish as any; 9th, Causo and River Inhabitants." (The fishing stations round the northern point, visited and described by Mr. Farquharson in his tour the following year, will make a tenth parish.) "What a blessing would it be were these poor people now supplied with proper Ministers from the mother Church, (as they call her,) before schisms and dissensions take place amongst them, from which they have been protected by their strong attachment to her, and their language not being known to the Methodists, Baptists, &c. who have visited the island. They are all of one mind, and ready to strain every nerve to maintain a pious Minister who had their best interests deeply at heart; but I have heard some of them declare, that rather than continue much longer without divine ordinances, they would join any denomination. I have advised them to build churches, to keep united together, and thus prepare for the reception of a Minister, trusting that a kind Providence would supply their wants in the course of a few years; and I may truly say, they have been not a little encouraged by my coming out. Oftentimes have I heard sentiments of thanks to God for my coming, and of gratitude to those who were the means in his hand of sending me. The chief requisite in a

Minister intended for this Island is piety; the people are mostly illiterate, and require the truths of God's word to be clearly and plainly expounded to them; without this, the population of a whole Settlement will not join him. They have been oftener than once deceived by Preachers who came out, (not sent,) who turned out a disgrace to their profession, and this prevents them from signing bonds or calls till they have seen and heard him. The best method of supplying this urgent need, is to send out Missionaries to itinerate;—if only one came out each summer, he might before the end of the year accept of a fixed charge, and resign his itinerating salary to another. The oldest Settlements would thus be soon supplied, and the too wide field of Missionary labour gradually diminished. Since I commenced writing to you, the Trustees of this Settlement met, and have requested of me to settle amongst them as their minister. The offer they make is the two hundred acres glebe land, and L.150 as salary, one-half in cash, the other in produce, cattle, sheep, butter, grain, &c. To this proposal I am a little inclined to agree, but one obstacle is the destitute state of the other Settlements, were I to confine my attention solely to this, unless another Missionary came out to occupy my place. Another is, that I considered it my duty to acquaint you my present supporters with the case, and require your advice concerning it. I have given my assent on the following conditions, retaining the liberty of withdrawing should I see occasion, and giving them the like power till we hear from you. 1st, Should you not get another to succeed me at the end of my twelve months' service, I should be allowed to continue itinerating till Martinmas, and could you get none next year, I should itinerate through the summer; in that case you paid me six months' salary, and they the other six months; or did you see it proper that I continue another year in my present capacity, *i. e.* till August 1835, they must dispense with me. I intend, God willing, to visit Cape North in summer, where there are a number of families who have not been visited by any ministers since they went there. I am now about to leave this river, and attempt a tour round the Bras d'Or Lake. The winter has been favourable, but some days exceedingly cold, snow two or three feet deep; an early spring is expected. Cape Breton is not so cold as I anticipated,—I have heard of little sickness.

“With regard to the want of Scriptures here, I have scarcely entered a house in which I have not seen one or two copies, if any of the inmates could read. These have been supplied by gentlemen in Sydney; many hundred copies of the sacred book have been given gratis or at small prices. The chief demand here at present, is for Gaelic Psalm Books, the people having had no supply since they came here. If two hundred or two hundred and fifty copies could be sent out next summer, it would be very desirable; also twenty dozen Shorter Catechisms, English, and twenty dozen Gaelic, and the same of the Mother's Catechism for schools; likewise fifty small Gaelic Testaments with Psalms and Paraphrases, and the same in English. In the autumn I shall make a return of what I have sold, to the Bible Society.”

Mr. Farquharson mentions Harris, Lewis, Uist, Lochalsh, Islay, Muck, &c. as the mother country of the Settlers in Cape Breton generally, and describes them to be sober, industrious, kindly neighbours, and some pious persons who keep up the knowledge of the Scriptures and some measure of reverence for the Sabbath, by reading and expounding the Scriptures, catechizing, &c. &c. A Captain Macniel, resident at Myra, does much to promote those observances. “A house has been erected

for their Sunday meetings. A pious man, Alexander Macleod, who has been disabled from working on his farm by the fall of a tree on his leg, reads on the Sabbath and teaches a school through the week, by which he earns scarcely enough to maintain his family; a small salary allowed to this man, who is poor but useful, would be well-expended money, and that for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in this destitute settlement. I left a number of Gaelic Tracts with him, to be given to read to such as could read, and have since sent a few of the small books sent by you, which, along with the tracts, will serve as a small library till kind Providence provides further for them."

In consequence of not receiving the letters written to him by his constituents, Mr. Farquharson was uninformed of his suggestion having been adopted and acted on, till a "report reached me in September, that a missionary from the old country had arrived at the Gut of Causo. I proceeded thitherward, anxious to know who and whence he was, and on my way through Hogama met Mr. Stewart, who informed me that he was appointed my successor, and that I was now at liberty to accept of a settled charge. Dear Madam, I cannot express in words the gratitude and joy I experienced in meeting Mr. Stewart; not that I was anxious to be delivered from my itinerating labours:—no; for I was sorry, after writing to you, that I did not state my willingness to continue, should my health permit, not only this year to itinerate, but till you could find another to succeed me. My gratitude arose from seeing so able a man as Mr. Stewart come across the Atlantic to assist us. I mentioned in my last, that real piety is the *only* qualification requisite in a minister intended for this island, the people being illiterate. I have since been led to think, that piety and abilities are needful 'to walk about the walls of our Zion' in this place, as worthy Dr. Chalmers used beautifully to express it. I was therefore led to pray, that God in his own time would send such, and I hope my prayers have in this respect been answered in Mr. Stewart's coming. I trust that he will be most useful, not only in the situation in which the Lord of the vineyard may be pleased to place him, but in the island in general, and particularly when a presbytery is formed. Continue and persevere in your resolutions respecting this island, dear madam, and may the Lord crown your endeavours with success. Look out for another faithful minister, whom you will send out as soon as possible; for believe it, a spirit of emulation and thirst has been excited amongst the presbyterians, partly by my coming last year, and more than doubly excited by Mr. Stewart's arrival,—the people of each settlement reasoning, some because they are the oldest settlers, some because they are the most populous, and others because they petitioned long ago for a clergyman and have got none yet, that their claim is the strongest to be now provided. As no bond had been drawn up relative to the agreement between the people of Middle River and myself, each party wishing to delay till we should hear from you, not knowing but you might require my continuing to itinerate, Mr. Stewart and myself considered it best that he should go on to Middle River next day, call a meeting of the people, preach to them, intimate the case, and present a bond for signature." (Mr. Stewart relates in a letter the accomplishment of this plan) They parted, and met again at River Inhabitants, when Mr. Stewart was summoned to Pictou to undergo trials for ordination. "I returned by St. George's Channel, where I preached four times, taking my leave with a sorrowful heart of a kind and affectionate people, whom I always found very attentive, and to whom I preached with great pleasure up-

wards of thirty times since my arrival in the island. Since then I have been at Middle River. About the middle of March I recommenced itinerating, having visited Big Braddock," (the settlement joined with Middle River under Mr. Farquharson's pastoral charge.) "Having described the greater portion of this tour in my letter of February, I shall merely specify the places where I preached, and dates." (Here Mr. Farquharson gives a list of ninety-one preachings, between 16th April and 18th September, having preached twenty times during a short tour he made, travelling on ice, between 16th March and 16th April.) "The settlements here mentioned, visited for the first time, are Bridgeport Mines, River Mabo, two or three settlements near Cape North, and Marguerite Harbour. Bridgeport Mines is ten miles from Sydney, where there are upwards of twenty families of Scotch Presbyterians maintaining a good character amongst Irish and Scotch Roman Catholics. Some are Highlanders from Tyree, Mull, &c., others, miners from near Glasgow. There is amongst them a respectable schoolmaster. River Mabo lies between Lake Anslie and the Gut of Causo. A good many of the settlers on this river are Roman Catholics, others Protestants from the States, and in easy circumstances. From twenty to thirty families of Highlanders have lately settled on two branches at the head of this river. A pious man reads to them on the Sabbath. The English people have a Secession minister from Pictou, who preaches alternately here and at Port Hood; he is but poorly supported; he has no Gaelic, which limits his usefulness. The people say they would most willingly join another settlement to maintain a minister of our church. On the 5th of August I left the north shore of St. Anne's with fishermen, proceeding to a fishing station called Niel's Harbour; thirty miles distant I passed Niganish, (a small settlement of less than twenty families from the States,) intending to visit them on my return. I slept at Niel's Harbour, preached next morning to about twenty young men from St. Anne's. These conveyed me in the afternoon five miles on to another fishing station, named White Point, where, with the exception of a few individuals belonging to Cape North, they are all Irish Romanists, as wild a set of people as there is in all the island. In the evening two young men rowed me a distance of nine miles to their father's, Macleod, an old settler from Skye, at Cape Bay, within nine miles of the Cape, and the largest settlement in this northernmost point of the island. On the 8th I preached in English and Gaelic, baptizing the children of the Highlanders. On Sabbath, the 10th, preached again in English and Gaelic, and baptized the children of the English people. There are eight or nine English families settled here above twenty years; all the rest are Highlanders, and, with the exception of one or two families, are new settlers. The Highlanders employ a man to read to them on the Sabbath, with whom I left a number of your tracts and catechisms. Hitherto they have had no schoolmaster, but I am happy to say one arrived on the beach with his luggage as I was leaving the settlement. They were never before visited by any clergyman. The Romish priest visits White Point annually, to hear confession, and receive fish from the poor Irish. I baptized upwards of forty children in this settlement; five or six adults, from fifteen to twenty years of age—in two instances the mother and her child. Some of these were, as might be expected, ignorant; but having learned that they had maintained a respectable character, and that some of them had resisted the solicitations of their parents to receive baptism from the priests, never expecting to see a Protestant

minister, I considered it my duty to baptize them, well aware, that did I deny them the administration of the ordinance, some, at least, would apply to the priest the first opportunity. Learning that another settlement of Highlanders, north-west thirty-eight miles, wished that I should visit them, I proceeded for Marguerite Harbour, on Tuesday the 12th, by boat; reached the Bay of St. Lawrence in the afternoon, a small settlement of Irishmen, with only one Protestant family, with whom we were detained two days by contrary winds. On Friday we arrived at Grandtames, a small settlement of eight families, respectable people from Skye. On Saturday preached in English and Gaelic; also on Sabbath and on Monday in Gaelic. The daughter of a settler from Pic-tou was about to open a school here, but had no school-books. I have since sent her some of those sent by you last year, the box having arrived at Middle River in my absence. I have also packed up some for Cape North. On the 19th left Grandtames, taking my leave of those families, who, with tears, earnestly besought me to visit them next season. Two of them conducted me by boat, fifteen miles, to Chetican, a large French settlement. Spent the night in a Jersey man's house, a respectable merchant, who could talk a little English. Next morning proceeded on foot, fifteen miles, to Marguerite Harbour. On the following day preached in English and Gaelic to about thirty families, chiefly Highlanders, from the Island of Rum. These talk of building a small church, and express their willingness to contribute to the maintenance of a minister who would visit them occasionally. They are surrounded on all sides by Roman Catholics. Distance round the coast from Big Braddock to Marguerite Harbour, one hundred and twenty-two miles." Mr. Farquharson, after mentioning swelling of his limbs, occasioned by wet feet and long and frequent standing to preach, says—"There are many inconveniences attendant on travelling here, which people in Scotland have no idea of, arising both from bad roads and uncomfortable lodgings, though the people did their utmost to accommodate me. It is impossible to take a horse through many settlements here, they are so intersected by water; and if I had had a horse last spring and summer, I could not have kept him alive, hay being scarce, and no grass till the month of June. The people are generally a moral, temperate, and industrious race. A few years ago rum was universally used in the island; when a house was to be erected, trees to fell and burn, the neighbours collected to assist, and would have a frolic before parting—dancing and drinking rum being the entertainment. The practice is, I am happy to say, dying away amongst our people; and, with the exception of one or two settlements, spirituous liquors are little used. The poor Roman Catholics are still much given to it, and consequently they are generally in want, and many of them have to sell their little properties.

"The people are very punctual in their attendance when divine worship is to be performed, and attentive hearers. So far as I could learn, not more than one-fifth of the heads of families can read. Most of those who were advanced in life before the Gaelic Schools were instituted cannot read; but the greater part who come out now under thirty years of age can read. From the failure of the crops last season, I have sold but few of the Edinburgh Society's Bibles, as in many settlements the people had enough to do to provide seed and the necessaries of life. If spared, however, I hope to make a satisfactory return to the Society. I have spoken to the people of Middle River about the possibility of forming a small Bible Society among ourselves, to which they most

cordially agreed, by the funds of which, in the course of time, along with the prices of Bibles sold, we may be enabled to pay our debt, and then give our mite to the Society. I received the box from the London Society, in April, with a parcel of excellent Tracts, a good number of which I have since disseminated. I disposed of several Bibles at Bridge Port Mines, and brought a number to Myra, to be disposed of by Captain Macniel as he sees necessary; the remainder will be required in the neighbourhood of Sydney. Your box of medicines I have found very useful, and return my sincere thanks for them. One may travel one hundred miles here, and not be able to find a medicine. I intend to carry some of your books, tracts, &c. with me for the people of Boulai de Tré, Myra, &c. when I go to meet Mr. Stewart, particularly the Tracts on the Roman Catholic errors, as our people are more connected with Romanists there than hereabout." We have here a concise account of the moral, spiritual, and temporal condition of these poor islanders; and assuredly the picture powerfully enforces Mr. Farquharson's earnest recommendation that we should persevere strenuously in an effort which a gracious Providence has prospered so far.

In pursuance of Mr. Farquharson's suggestion, as to the desirableness and practicability of establishing the parochial system in Cape Breton, anxious inquiry was made after a suitable missionary, and, with the warm approval of many of the clergymen of Edinburgh, the Rev. John Stewart, of St. George's Sessional School, was nominated by the Glasgow Colonial Society. Mr. Stewart sailed in July, carrying with him, at his own expense, a well-educated and pious young man, from whose services as schoolmaster and catechist, he anticipated much aid,—while this demonstration of his missionary spirit, his having maintained the worship of God daily on board ship, attended by Roman Catholic passengers as well as by the crew, the energy with which he entered on the labours of his mission instantly on his arrival, together with Mr. Farquharson's cordial approval of the assistant sent to him, give to his constituents sanguine hopes that their choice was guided by that Wisdom which cannot err.

Mr. Stewart's peculiar fitness for training schoolmasters, and organizing schools on the best system, is, in a new country, a happy coincidence, and should stimulate the friends of the mission to extend their bounty in supplying school books.

Mr. Stewart had been but three weeks in Cape Breton before going to Pictou for ordination. All he saw confirmed entirely the faithfulness of Mr. Farquharson's report, as to the eagerness of the people to hear the word preached, their deep attention, and fervent desire to secure to their settlements the regular ministration of the gospel ordinances. Mr. Stewart had already been invited to accept the pastoral charge of some of the settlements, but wished to see more of the Island before fixing, and was very doubtful of the ability of those he visited to maintain a clergyman, from their poverty. Mr. Stewart wrote from Pictou, on the 6th October, when about to sail on his return to Cape Breton an ordained minister, the Moderator having prescribed to him the duty of inducting Mr. Farquharson into his pastoral charge.

Edinburgh, Jan. 22, 1835.

