

1864

Famine hits Oneida

THE 20215
SPIRIT OF MISSIONS;

EDITED FOR

THE BOARD OF MISSIONS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

BY THE SECRETARIES AND GENERAL AGENTS OF THE TWO COMMITTEES.

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church
the manifold wisdom of God.—ST. PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS.

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1864.

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Lima, etc.—Rev. H. M. Thompson.

Our brother, the zealous missionary at Lima, has been called to a sad bereavement in the loss of his only child. Such trials as bring crushing sorrow into the household are often the lot of the missionary in our Western field; but that Gospel which he preaches to others brings its true solace to him and his. We do not generally publish the particulars of the griefs of our Domestic missionaries before the Church. They are often communicated only for the eye of the Committee, whose sympathy the writers desire, while they shun what might seem a parade of their sorrows. Let those who suffer from sickness and death in the circle of their homes always remember the missionaries of the Church, whose home sorrows often find them already straitened in many things, and ready to faint by the way.

LIMA, IND., April 4th, 1864.

We have been called upon by the wise providence of our heavenly Father to suffer deeply since I last wrote you. Our only child is removed from us—a boy of eleven years of age—a child that was every thing which parents could desire—a child of daily prayer offered to God, that he might be spared to work in the vineyard of the Lord, (for he was dedicated to God and his Church from his birth;) and with joy we watched the development of his mind and the affections of his heart; ever thanking the Lord for having given us such a treasure; and little thinking that he was so soon to be called to a better home and more loving friends than earth could give.

On Friday, the fourth of March, he seemed as well, and even more happy all day, than usual; but after tea he said his throat hurt him, and in a few minutes he became very ill. It proved to be the scarlet fever, and though the physician did all that could be done for him, he breathed his last about half-past two o'clock on Sunday, the sixth of March. Thus were we left alone with sad hearts to mourn our loss. The blow was almost too much for my dear wife, and for many days it was feared she would follow our dear boy; but the good Lord in mercy heard our cry, and in pity spared the mother. Ah!

truly our cup was bitter, and our hearts are left sore and bleeding; and yet, thanks be to God, He hath given us grace to kiss the rod, and say: It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth to Him good.

I have at this time nothing new to report in regard to the station, further than that every thing is pleasant, and during our affliction all were as kind as they could be; we had the sympathy of all, and loving care from each. Oh! that our heavenly Father may return all their kindness double into their own hearts!

July 1st, 1864.

Since I last wrote in April, I have by divine aid been enabled to attend to my duties; the Church has been opened every Lord's day, and the Church service held twice on each day, with good attendance, notwithstanding the many things which here, as in other mission points, are constantly arising to make it otherwise; if the doing so rested with men. There are three other places of worship here besides the Church—Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists—and all of these have new ministers this spring, and are doing all in their power to draw people to their respective places of service; but work together in efforts to keep them from the Episcopal Church. For a few Sundays the desire with some, to see and hear the new-comers, did take that class of persons away from us; but after their curiosity in this respect was satisfied, they returned again to the form of sound words and the doctrines of the Church, which they found not elsewhere. But some inroad has been made upon my Sunday-school. I have no doubt, however, that the good seed of the Church will, in many of these little ones, show itself when at length they have the power of choice.

I have been very desirous to have the Church service at other points; but at no place about here can I get a foothold, not even a place in which to hold them. True, there are some who would like me to come, and they have tried to engage the meeting-house, or the school-house, as the case might be; but these being in the minority, the other party would let Spiritualists, preachers, temperance or political lecturers, any thing or any body, have the use of it, so as to keep out the Church.

Thus your missionary can only pray and watch, waiting for the Lord's good time, when perchance these same individuals will be heard to cry, saying: "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

I have, however, cause for thankfulness, and much to encourage me; for God is blessing his own appointments. The leaven of the Church is working, engaging the attention of some who are seeking after the truth, and striking the roots of Church doctrine more deep in the hearts of her children. I have since my last report baptized eleven children and three adults, and five persons have been confirmed.

WISCONSIN.**Oneida Indian Mission—Rev. E. A. Goodnough.**

THE Rev. Mr. Goodnough, in the brief reports below, gives an encouraging view of the good work which, by the blessing of God, is in progress among the Oneida Indians near Green Bay. The mother Church began the missionary work among these people in the Valley of the Mohawk before the Revolutionary war. Many years after that event it was resumed by the diocese of New-York, under the zealous lead of Bishop Hobart, and after the removal of the tribe to Wisconsin, about thirty years ago, the mission passed into the hands of the General Missionary Society. There is a church and a school, the latter being provided for by the United States Government.

ONEIDA, WIS., January 1st, 1864.

I have to report that this Indian mission still continues, by the blessing of God, to be in a highly prosperous condition.

The Indians manifest a greater and a more wide-spread interest in the religion of Christ Jesus than heretofore. Gradually, but I trust surely, the holy and blessed doctrines of the everlasting Gospel are reaching their minds and hearts.

The celebration of the birthday of the Saviour at the mission has been a most delightful time, calling out the sympathies of the Indians in a remarkable degree. And I hope that the holy services of this joyful season have not been without spiritual effects; for several have already desired to be received on trial and as candidates for confirmation.

The school which I keep is doing great good, not only to the children, but like-

wise to the older people, for the children teach their parents and others who question them about what they have learned at the school. I wish to thank those dear friends of the despised and unfortunate Indians, of Philadelphia, Hartford, and Oswego, who have helped me greatly in my work, and have by their timely gifts of money, clothing, books, and toys, made glad the hearts of the poor Indians and their children, who seldom have cause for rejoicing.

March 24th, 1864.

Amidst some trials of faith and patience, the work of the mission goes steadily and surely forward. The extra Lent services have been well attended, and I trust that true religion is being increased amongst us more and more.

Many of the young Indians have gone into the army to fight for their country, and perhaps soldier life will do them good.

The promise is now fair for the continued usefulness of the mission in the noble work of saving the tribe from both spiritual and temporal destruction.

June 23d, 1864.

I have again to report that this Indian mission continues to be prospered. Lately several of the younger Indians, who heretofore have been addicted to the use of strong drink, and all the long train of sins accompanying it, have become regular attendants at the mission services, and some of them have applied to be admitted to the communion. All such instances tend very much to encourage your missionary to persevere in the work, for they give assurance that no labor has been spent in vain.

At present there is every indication that the tribe will be visited with famine; the frosts have cut off the Indian corn even with the ground; potatoes have also been injured by the same cause; the wheat, oat, and hay crops will amount to nothing on account of the drouth; much of the grass and wheat has already perished for want of rain; there has been no rain for more than two months, and most of the soil is dry as dust six or eight inches below the surface.

Fox Lake, etc.—Rev. L. D. Brainard.

We call special attention to the appeal of the Rev. Mr. Brainard, below. He has labored with a most self-sacrificing spirit to