

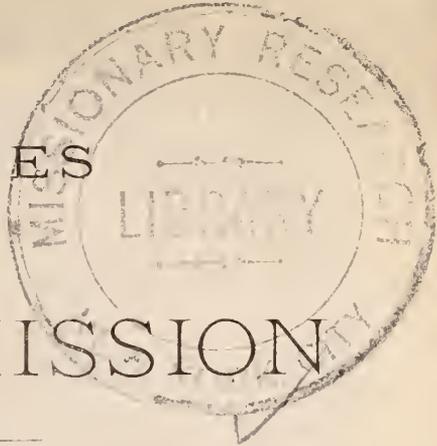
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Tom  
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Indians

# SKETCHES

OF THE

# DAKOTA MISSION



## SKETCH I.

### THE COMMENCEMENT.

The Dakota Mission properly dates its commencement in the spring of 1834. Then the two young men, Samuel W. and Gideon H. Pond, from Washington, Connecticut, filled with a desire to work in the hardest field, and to elevate the most degraded of the human race, worked their way up to Fort Snelling, and, in advance of all others, built a log cabin on the margin of Lake Calhoun. That summer also Dr. T. S. Williamson, from Ohio, made a tour of observation under the direction of the A. B. C. F. M., and went as far as Fort Snelling. He returned to Cincinnati, expecting to remove and commence his work among the Dakotas that autumn; but the winter came on too soon, and he and his helpers did not reach the Minnesota country until the summer of 1835. About the same time also, Rev. J. D. Stevens and family, under the appointment of the same noble Board of Foreign Missions, arrived at the same place. They came from New York State, by the way of the great lakes, and crossed down to Prairie du Chien.

The good Lord had gone before them and prepared an awakening, not in the Dakota nation, but among the U. S. troops stationed at Fort Snelling. By this meeting with the Divine Spirit, when they least expected it, they were encouraged to go forward and work for the evangelization of the heathen in Dakota land.

Almost immediately they became two bands, and commenced operations at Lake

Harriet with the village at Lake Calhoun, and far up the Minnesota river, at the village of Lacquiparle. In the course of two or three years the Messrs. Pond fell into line, and became workers under the direction of the Prudential Committee of the American Board, and finally both became preachers of the gospel to the Dakotas, whose language they had been learning in these years. And they have both lived to see what the Lord has done among the heathen, and to joy in the fact that they were permitted to share so largely in the labors and sufferings of the beginning.

Mr. Stevens, after a few years, transferred his work from the then unpromising Dakota field to the white settlement; and is still living, beyond his three score and ten, and is regarded with veneration, as one of the oldest pioneer ministers of Wisconsin. The first Mrs. Stevens and the first Mrs. S. W. Pond, her sister; the first Mrs. G. H. Pond, and, more recently, her sister, Mrs. Williamson; and also Mr. A. G. Huggins, of those first companies, have heard the voice of the Master saying unto them, "Come up higher." Mrs. Huggins, of that first band who went to Lacquiparle, abides with her children. And Dr. Thomas S. Williamson, whose energy was untiring and whose faith never seemed to falter, is spared to rejoice in what the good Lord has, in these latter days, done for the Dakotas.

On the first day of June, 1837, S. R. Riggs and wife reached Fort Snelling and the station at Lake Harriet, and in

the autumn following proceeded to Lac-quiparle. After nearly a third of a century of work, the one has been taken up and the other left to toil here a while longer.

During these first years there was much preparatory labor to be performed. The language, which existed only in sounds, and was received only in the ear, must be clothed with symbols, and must meet the eye as well. The educating process commenced with making the letters in the ashes with a stick, and then transferring them to the wall, and so progress was made to printed books. When the English notation failed to represent the Dakota sounds, marked characters were introduced.

And, as the great object of all true missionary work is that of bringing the words of life into contact with dead souls, this new and strange tongue must be pressed into the service of the Great King, and the words must be made the bearers of living thoughts which shall awaken the dead spirits. So the missionaries began to write, as well as to speak, in the Dakota language, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." And the answer to this message soon came in a few Indian women, together with Mr. Joseph Renville, the Bois Brule trader at Lac-quiparle, professing their faith in this Only Begotten Son of God.

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## SKETCH II.

### THE HARROWING.

Some poor ploughing had been done, and the seed-basket, filled with precious seeds of the divine word, was slowly uncovered, and the good grain cast abroad by small handfuls. Much of what was sown was like the wayside grain; the word was poorly presented with stammering tongues, and was not understood. Some, however, was harrowed in, and sprang up, giving signs of quick growth.

But the enemy too was there, with eyes wide open. Whereunto would this new doctrine grow? It was not what their fathers had taught them. It was the white man's religion, and not that of the Dakotas. The gods of their ancestors

must not be forsaken. And what did they want of a knowledge of letters? If the book brought them tobacco or potatoes, when they begged of the white man, it was good; but if not, it lied. And what did they want of anything that was not true? No, the schools must be stopped, for the presence of the missionaries had dried up the lakes on the prairie, and made the muskrats scarce. Their *sacred men*—their conjurers, their dreamers and their war-prophets were troubled by our presence, and their young men were no longer successful on the war-path.

So the soldiers were stationed along the way: children stayed away from school, and women, who dared to come to the mission to pray and sing, had their blankets cut up; and the mission cattle were killed and eaten.

This was the *harrowing process*. The seed, which had fallen into the stony ground and sprung up quickly, soon withered away. In the meantime the sower went forth to sow more abundantly. The Master's words were clothed in Dakota garb and sent forth. Some had learned to read in their own language the wonderful works of God.

The laborers, too, were somewhat multiplied. Robert Hopkins and his young wife had come out in 1843, and he had been trying to preach to the Dakotas at Traverse des Sioux for some time before he was taken away, eight years after. Thomas L. Longley had come from the hills of Massachusetts with his strong arms to help commence a new station, only soon after to be drowned in the Minnesota. Miss Julia Kephart had come from Ripley, Ohio, to be a helper at the new station. Miss Jane S. Williamson, too, whose sympathies were easily transferred from the poor colored slave to the ignorant and proud Dakota, had come. Miss Fanny Huggins, afterwards Mrs. Jonas Pettijohn, who, with her husband, labored many years kindly and sympathetically for the Indians, had taken the school at Lac-quiparle. Rev. Moses N. Adams, Rev. John F. Aiton and Rev. Joseph W. Hancock and their wives were added to the working force in 1848. And a little while after, Rev. J. Potter and wife, with Miss

Edwards, were transferred from the Choctaw to the Dakota field.

This considerable addition of laborers greatly encouraged the hearts of those before in the work, and helped to scatter the seeds of divine truth more widely. It was also a testimony, which threw its shadow on into the coming years, of the earnest desire of christians for the evangelization of the red men. Not lost were the prayers and the labors of these toilers.

But the greater the number of seed-sowers, so much the more furious, for the time, seemed the opposition. Not only were the wayside seeds quickly picked up, and the stony-ground seeds withered in the first leaf, but that which fell among the thorns was choked out, and bore no fruit to perfection.

However, a reaction had even then commenced, although at the time scarcely perceived. Some who had gone back on their profession of faith in the new religion were recovered. *Less fire water* was introduced into the Dakota country. The action of the government came more into accord with the work of the missionaries. The civilizing influences of the gospel were coming to be somewhat realized, and much of the opposition gradually died away.

But it was to be "not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord," and the word was finally to take effect on the Dakotas through sufferings. There were too many to go down to the battle. So, one by one, the laborers in the Dakota field fell off; going to, or staying among, the white people, who, after 1851, filled up the new and beautiful country of the Minnesota; and then there remained only T. S. Williamson and S. R. Riggs with their families.

### SKETCH III.

#### THE NEW DEPARTURE.

The treaties made with the Dakotas in the summer of 1851, imported much both to the Indians and white people. For the latter they were the open gate to the whole of Southern and Western Minnesota. As early as 1838, the Dakotas had ceded a small portion of their land lying east of the Mississippi, on which the towns of St.

Paul and St. Anthony and Stillwater were growing up. But now the fertile valley of the Sota-water, and all the broad acres of the South and West, were opened for white men's homes. To the Indian these treaties meant the giving up of their cranberry marshes and their natural deer parks, and the leaving of the graves of their fathers.

When the time of removal came, they were loth to go. They made all kinds of excuses. They had no means of transportation; no horses, no canoes. The white chief, the representative of their Great Father, said to the interpreter, "Tell him he lies." The interpreter says, "He says you lie." The white chief says a second time, "Tell him he lies." "I have told him so." "Tell him again."

So the Dakotas of the Mississippi and the lower Minnesota packed up their teepees, and their household goods, and their household gods, some in canoes, some on ponies, some on dogs, and some on the women, and slowly and sadly took up their line of march up to their reservations.

For several years previous to this time, Dr. Williamson had occupied a station at Little Crow's village, only a few miles below St. Paul. He had preached the first sermon to the few white people there, and aided in introducing the first school mistress into this then future capital of Minnesota. But he had consecrated his life to the Dakotas, and no sooner had they made arrangements to move westward, than he too was on his way up to the Yellow Medicine.

The first winter of the Mission at Pejihootaze (Yellow Medicine), was a fight for life. The house was in an unfinished state. The winter came on very early, and was very severe. The snows were deep and the drifting terrible. The teams that were to bring up supplies were snowed in. The animals perished, the provisions were left for the wolves, and the men only reached home in a maimed and frozen condition. But as God would have it, the fish gathered in shoals in the river near the mission, and the Indians and missionaries lived.

Two years after this, on a windy day in the month of March, the mission houses at Lacquiparle took fire and burned down.

While preparations for rebuilding were being made, Rev. S. B. Treat, Secretary of the Board of Missions, visited the Dakota field. It was then deemed advisable that the small mission force we now had should be drawn closer together. We had been striking blows far apart; hardly within sound of each other. Wires of christian sympathy could not be kept up in such wild distances. "Concentrate" was now the battle cry.

And so the Lacquiparle buildings went up down at Hazelwood, within two miles of Dr. Williamson. Here we gathered the greater part of the families which had really come to sympathize with christianity and civilization.

At Pejihootaze a schoolhouse was already up, which answered the double purpose of school and church assembly. And soon at Hazelwood a small boarding school was established, which was the outgrowth of a smaller one started several years before at Lacquiparle, by Rev. M. N. Adams. This last was cared for by Miss Ruth Pettijohn, and afterwards by H. D. Cunningham and wife; and taught successively by Mrs. Annie B. Ackley, of Granville, Ohio, and Miss Eliza Huggins and Miss Isabella B. Riggs, children of the mission. A neat chapel, too, was soon erected, with but little aid from the treasury of the Board. The Government made its chief agency at the Yellow Medicine, and very soon commenced operations in the line of external civilization.

Those who changed the Indian for the white man's dress, heretofore, were only such as had changed their religion. These were gathered around the mission stations. Many of their wants were now different from those of the Indians generally. They now desired pantaloons and coats. For the recognition and supply of their special needs, it became important that they should form themselves into a separate band. This they did under the name of the Hazelwood Republic, electing their own chief or president. The U. S. Indian Agent readily recognized them as a separate people, and encouraged the formation of a like civilized band at the Lower Sioux Agency. From that time onward, the general influence of the Government was made to bear in favor of cutting off

the hair and putting on pantaloons. Right hard work this was for both parties. But there was power in oxen and wagons, and in brick houses. So the external civilization went on. The white man's axe and the white man's plow and hoc had been introduced, and the red man was learning to use them. But the great and permanent force was in the underlying education; and especially in the vitalizing and renewing powers of christian truth. And so far as this inner thought-life was changed and worked out the exterior civilized habits, so far these habits became permanent forces; otherwise they were only shadows. This was the *New Departure*. Evangelization was working out civilization.

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#### SKETCH IV.

##### SHADOWS.

In the first settlement of this country it was natural and needful to make treaties of peace and of purchase with the Indians. They occupied the continent, and had a traditionary title to the land. The white people were few and claimed no right in the soil, only so far as this command: "Multiply and fill the earth," gave them a right. William Penn's course of treating with the aborigines of Pennsylvania was humane, and just, and wise; and on that was built our government policy of making treaties with Indians.

But by and by Indian treaties came to be quite a source of mischief. The aboriginal land title was recognized, not so much for the advantage of the red man, as for the pecuniary advantage of that class of white men who were dwelling with him; and the remuneration given for country ceded was usually in the line of continuing and confirming Indian character and habits, rather than of lifting them up to the higher plane of educated and independent living.

It should have become apparent long ago that Indians have no power to enforce the terms of a treaty, as against the government of the United States, nor to compel adherence to it from their own people. So Indian treaties became a humbug, and the making of them a solemn farce. The unwritten part of a treaty was quite likely

to be, to the Indians, the more important part, and from it grew difficulty.

As, for instance, this: Before a treaty is signed the Indians stand up and say, "Father, we want to retain permission to hunt on these lands." The commissioners reply: "Yes; it will be a long time before your Great Father will want this land for his white children; in the mean time you can hunt in the country as you have always done." So the treaty is signed. But out of this unwritten part grows trouble.

This was the case with the Leaf Shooters in 1857. Six years before this, they, with others, had signed the treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota, and ceded all their country to the western boundaries of Iowa and Minnesota. In four years the white settlements had pushed forward one hundred and fifty miles west of the Mississippi. A few families had found the beautiful groves and lakes of Okaboja and Okabena, or the Spirit Lake country of northwestern Iowa. In the spring of 1857, this settlement numbered about forty persons. Other settlements were far off, down in Iowa and up in Minnesota. The snow was very deep. The Leaf Shooters had been accustomed to hunt around there and down on the Little Sioux. This spring they found the game scarce and the hunting difficult; and so they undertook to levy black-mail upon the white settlers. A collision came on, and the settlement of Spirit Lake was wiped out. Only four women were taken captive.

At our mission stations we heard the report thereof. But for many long weeks nothing could be done for the rescue of these women. We learned that *Inkpadoota* and his clan had gone westward, and had crossed the Big Sioux, where one of the white captive women was drowned.

Away out in Dakota, in the valley of the James river, two sons of Rebekah negotiated for Mrs. Marble. They took her into their mother's tent, who cared for her kindly; and so, when the planting time came, they brought her home with them to Laequiparle. Reliable Indian men were immediately sent to obtain the other two women; but before they reached *Inkpadoota's* camp, Mrs. Noble had been shot. The only remaining one, Abby Gardner,

they procured from her captors, partly by purchase and partly by diplomaey, and brought her to the Agency at Yellow Medicine.

This appeared to us as a little silver lining on the dark cloud shadow. And only the other day, in a council, when other men had been showing the paper credentials of their greatness, Paul Mazakootemane stood up and said, "This right hand is my paper." It had delivered Miss Gardner in 1857, and many others a few years later. All honor to Paul for the heroism of those years!

Thus, as the Prudential Committee in Boston said: "The indirect value of missions was illustrated in a most unexpected manner; the only two persons who escaped the barbarity of the Spirit Lake murders, having been rescued, at great peril, by men who had learned humanity from our missionaries."

But the cloud shadows hung over us all through that summer. The whole Reservation was in excitement. At one time a son of *Inkpadoota* came to the Yellow Medicine. Immediately Agent Flandreau was informed of the fact, and, by a well laid plan, this Spirit Lake murderer was surrounded and shot; such men as John Otherday and Enos Good Hail being prominent in the affair.

Then a large number of wild Indians came in from the west and increased the trouble. The government sent up troops under Major (afterwards Maj. Gen.) Sherman, to back the demand for the punishment of *Inkpadoota's* clan. But it was not easy to make the other Indians of the Reservation feel that they were under obligations to thrash the rebels. "Why don't our Great Father do it himself?" they said. And indeed that was just what was needed. Both loyalty and disloyalty among the Dakotas then needed the influence of a sharp lesson of punishment. But it came not. By and by the Dakotas consented to go and hunt *Inkpadoota*; but there was no great meaning in their going. So the time for giving the needed lesson was let slip by, and disloyalty was suffered to grow.

Some time after this, there was a great gathering of the Northern Indians at the Yellow Medicine. An evil spirit possessed

the young men. They battered in the door of the government warehouse and commenced appropriating the provisions. They were stopped by turning on them a little howitzer, which was managed by a dozen soldiers. A conflict was imminent, but was avoided. "If there is anything between the lids of the bible, bring it now to bear upon them," the Agent had said. For that time the shadow passed away. But they continued to come and go, until in August, 1862, when the great dark shadow, like an eclipse, came and covered us all.

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### SKETCH V.

#### THE CAPTIVITY.

Suddenly came the outbreak of August, 1862. The cloud shadows did not indicate to us the coming storm. But when it came, as God would have it, the mission families, and the greater part of the white people far up in the country, effected an escape. At the Red Wood, or Lower Sioux Agency, while some escaped to Fort Ridgley, many were killed.

Early on Monday, the 18th day of August, not knowing the state of things at the Red Wood Agency, Mrs. Dr. Wakefield, with her two children, started from the Yellow Medicine in a buggy, Mr. George Gleason driving. When within a few miles of the Red Wood, they were met by two Indians, who shot Mr. Gleason, and took Mrs. Wakefield and her children captives. *They* were probably among the first of the captivity. Then from the settlements across the Minnesota, on Beaver and Sacred Hat streams, and afterwards from near New Ulm and from Glencoe and Hutchinson, they brought in captive white women and children. So that a month afterwards Little Crow wrote, "I have one hundred and fifty-five prisoners."

Some of these were half-breeds, who were with their friends. Some were middle-aged white women, such as Mrs. Earle and Mrs. White and others, who were not subjected to personal abuse by their captors. But quite a number of them were young women who suffered more than death. Beautiful girls were then in demand. One of the white women who

passed through those six weeks of captivity, wrote of the young women of the mission: "The braves boasted that they would have those beautiful girls for their captives." But in this they were disappointed.

At that time Mr. Amos W. Huggins, a child of the mission, was living, as government teacher, at Lacquiparle, almost directly across the stream from where the present town of Lacquiparle is located. Before any news of the outbreak reached them, three Indians visited their house and shot Mr. Huggins as he was about to enter his own dwelling. Their object was simply plunder, for they did not capture Mrs. Huggins and her two children, and Miss Julia La Framboise, but said to them, "Go, go; we won't kill you, but don't take anything with you." So they went out to find a shelter and protection where they could. While stopping at the cabin of a Red River half-breed, a brother of Miss La Framboise came for her, and Mrs. Huggins and her children sought a shelter with the family of Walking Spirit, the chief man of that village. They were cared for as kindly as Dakotas could care for a white woman. In one sense hers was not a captivity, but a kind keeping from harm. Nevertheless, it was a seven weeks of great anxiety and mental suffering. Walking Spirit would gladly have sent her to the white people, but saw no way of doing it safely. And finally, after the battle of Wood Lake, when the Dakotas were fleeing to the Red River of the north, Mrs. Huggins very sadly chose to go with them. But faithful Dakota young men were sent up, who brought her and her children back from Big Stone Lake.

Another case deserving to be mentioned especially is that of Mrs. John B. Renville, the wife of our now excellent pastor of the Ascension Church. She and her husband and child would have made their escape with the mission party. But God overruled and kept them there, as Mr. Renville's presence was a necessary factor in producing the counter-revolution, which resulted in the deliverance of the captives and in breaking up the rebellion.

The camp that was formed, when the civilized and Christian Dakotas left their

houses and pitched tents close together in this time of trouble, Mrs. Renville calls "Friendly Camp." On the third day after the massacres commenced, Dr. Williamson and wife and sister finally left their own home and came to this camp. While there, it was thought, they were in especial danger from men who were seeking to kill them. "Well, if they kill me, my home is in heaven," was the saying of Aunt Jane. But they were protected and sent safely on their way by Paul and Simon.

Let us see how the captives fare. For the sake of safety the white women were obliged to dress as Indians. Provisions, for a while, were very abundant; so that Little Crow could say, "The prisoners fare as our children do." After some weeks, however, the flocks and the herds which the warriors had brought in, were eaten up. The corn and the potatoes of their own planting alone remained. Then the captives began to suffer want; and some, when permitted to leave the tents of their captors, wandered to other houses. One of these was a Mrs. Newman. Early in the month of September, Little Crow removed his camp up the Minnesota to the neighborhood of the Hazlewood mission station. Soon after this, the mission buildings, which had been occupied for a while by some of the Christian natives, were all burned by order of the war council. About this time Mrs. Newman found her way to Simon's house, and, being "a meek and loving disciple of her Lord and Master," as one writes, she was much rejoiced to hear them sing and pray. This was to be her deliverance. When the camps were moved farther up the river, Simon and his son took Mrs. Newman and her three children, in a little one-horse wagon, to Fort Ridgely.

Mrs. De Camp was the wife of one of the employes at the Red Wood Agency. She was taken into the family of a principal man of the Lower Sioux, where they meant to treat her kindly. But she and her three children were unwell and could not eat what Indians cooked and ate. She also suffered much from sympathy with young women, who besought her to help them when they were abused by drunken young men. But after a while

she reached the *teepee* of Mrs. Renville, and was taken to that of Lorenzo Lawrence. Mr. Renville, with Paul and Lorenzo, arranged to have the latter take Mrs. De Camp and children to Fort Ridgely. The difficulty was, how to get them away, as they were all closely watched by the rebel bands. But after lying hid in a swamp all day, they managed to embark at night in a canoe; and thus Lorenzo brought them and his own family, with a French half-breed family, all safely down to the white soldiers' camp.

By this time the lines were drawn between those who meant to continue in rebellion, and such as desired to make peace with the white people. Paul and the other Christian Dakotas of the Upper Agency were the nucleus around which gathered Wabashaw and Taopi and others of the Lower Agency, who, in their hearts, were opposed to the war. When the new camp of friendly Indians was pitched above Red Iron's village, it was first called "Camp Hope." After the battle of Wood Lake, when Little Crow's party were fleeing, it was named "Camp Look-out." And two days after, on the 26th of September, when Gen. Sibley's troops reached there, it was called "Camp Release." For many days fear had possessed the minds of these captives. It was a glad day when hope revived, and gladder still when it became a reality.

It was made our first business to receive those captive women and children—nearly one hundred in number, besides mixed bloods—who had been often threatened with death. And surely never, in the memory of many men there present, had life given them a more joyous day than that.

Up to that time the white women had been dressed in Dakota women's clothing; now whatever articles of a white woman's dress any of them could command were put to use. But they were a bonnetless and bronzed company. Sadness and gladness too were in their faces. In some you could read the feeling of degradation. By many those sad, weary weeks can never be forgotten.

But this was deliverance, this was the *returning of the captivity*. A few only were taken up north by those who fled,

and some of them were rescued by the young men who were sent up after Mrs. Huggins. One photographed scene will never fade out. It was some days after this when a little German girl was brought into camp. Her mother had been a captive, and was still with us. I took the girl by the hand and led her to her mother. She clasped her in her arms, and then, turning to me with an inquiring look, said, "Mr. Riggs, where is the other?"

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## SKETCH VI.

### THE SEPARATION.

When the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up Korah, the wives and little ones went down also. When 400 Sioux men were imprisoned for participation in the Minnesota massacre, 1,500 women and children were left helpless, to be tossed around for four years and led whither they would not, subject to much the same reproach, abuse and bodily want as the prisoners.

Those four years separation were notable years to these wild women and their children.

1. The suddenness was enough to shock even the nerveless Indian. In the middle of August, 1862, these hundreds of women and children were busy harvesting their corn, little dreaming it would only be eaten by cavalry horses or left for squirrels. But women don't know everything, especially Indian women, and I might as well say Indian men. Very certain it is that few of the Sioux were aware of the wonderful panorama in which they were about to exhibit themselves to the whole world, and to make the Sioux name "a hissing and a by-word" on earth. The scenes were piled one on top of another, like cars leaping the track. Little Crow and Little Six, with a handful of mad warriors, gave the first wild leap, rightly divining they would draw the whole train after them, but little thinking where they would land. But the end tarried not. A few days' whirl of glory—the young men flying madly around on stolen steeds, the women and children decked gaily in the apparel of the murdered; a few days' flight and conflict of opinions—the division of the camp,

Little Crow and half his followers running for life to the British Possession, the other half surrendering to the soldiers; and now all wake up, to find the men led away in chains, and the women and children marched away in a different direction. Long weary days of marching bring the families to Fort Snelling, where they are cooped for the winter in a high cattle pen, with a soldier at the gate. Their limbs ache in vain for a free ramble over the hills. Their stomachs, filled only with the vilest scrapings of Minneapolis mills and sour pork, murmur for the corn, potatoes and the wild pickings left behind. Their very bodies shiver over a few coals instead of the great blazing fire, and to the credit of their hearts it may be said, they feel more keenly than all the vacant place in every teepee.

2. The *suspense* was terrible. The ignorant women had not seen much of the world, and didn't know anything about law. They however knew that their husbands and sons had been murdering the whites, and were now in prison therefor, and they themselves dependant for life on the mercy of the whites. The ever-present query was, what will become of us and especially of the men? With inquisitive eyes they were always watching the soldiers and other whites who visited them, for an answer, but the curses and threats they received were little understood, except that they meant no good. With what imploring looks have we been besought to tell them their fate. Strange reports were constantly being whispered around the camp. Now the men were all to be executed, of whom the thirty-eight hung at Mankato was the first instalment, and the women and children scattered and made slaves; now they were all to be taken to a rocky, barren island, somewhere, and left with nothing but fish for a support; and again they were to be taken away down south, where it was so hot they would all die of fever and ague. So winter wore away, and April finds them on a steamboat, floating away, they know not where. As they look on their native hills for the last time, a dark cloud is crushing their hearts. Down they go to St. Louis, thence up the Missouri to Crow Creek, where they are landed and told to make their homes.

But this brings little relief, for what of the men, and can the women and children ever live in this parched land, where neither rain nor dew were seen for many weeks?

3. The *mortality* was fearful. The shock, the anxiety, the confinement, the pitiable diet, were naturally followed by sickness. Many died at Ft. Snelling. The steamboat trip of over one month, under some circumstances, might have been a benefit to their health, but when 1,300 Indians were crowded like slaves on the boiler and hurricane decks of a single boat, and fed on musty hard tack and briny pork, which they had not half a chance to cook, discases were bred which made fearful havoc during the hot months, and the 1,300 souls that were landed at Crow Creek June 1st, 1863, decreased to one thousand. For a time a teepee where no one was sick could scarcely be found, and it was a rare day when there was no funeral. So were the hills soon covered with graves. The very memory of Crow Creek became horrible to the Santees, who still hush their voices at the mention of the name.

4. Accompanying and following these terrible physical calamities were the more memorable visitations of heavenly grace.

It was an unlooked for visitation. The missionaries wrote to the Board that their work for the time was suspended. Some of them were almost ready to look around for other work. Indeed Mr. John P. Williamson made some effort to secure a place as stated-supply in the neighborhood of St. Paul or Minncapolis, but was unsuccessful, and felt such drawings towards the Indian camp that he took the nearest available quarters and spent the winter ministering temporally and spiritually unto this afflicted people.

By gradual steps, but with overwhelming power, came the heavenly visitation. At first Mr. Williamson used to meet the former members in one of their own teepees. Presently there was an evident softening of hearts. Now news came of the awakening among the prisoners at Mankato. The teepee would not contain half the listeners, so for some time, in the middle of winter, the meetings were held in the campus, then in a great dark garret over a warehouse, without other fire than spiritual.

In that low garret, when hundreds were crouched down among the rafters, only the glistening eyes of some of them visible in the dark, we remember how the silence was sometimes such that the fall of a pin might be heard. Many were convicted; confessions and professions were made; idols, treasured for many generations with the highest reverence, were thrown away by the score. They had faith no longer in their idols. They laid hold on Christ as their only hope. On this ground they were baptized, over a hundred adults with their children at Ft. Snelling, and continued additions at Crow Creek.

This heavenly visitation came not without the use of means. The missionary was doubtless one means, for "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" But under other circumstances the missionary's words would have been as empty wind. Calamity showed the Indians the vanity of their worship and prepared them for another. Fear prevented all opposition. A certain hope that it might bring temporal relief opened their ears to the gospel.

When Mr. S. R. Riggs once brought several hundred letters from the prisoners, most of which were on religious topics, and he himself told them of the wonderful work there in progress, it produced a powerful effect. When fifty prisoners were released and joined their friends just before they left Ft. Snelling, it added fuel to the flame; and so it did again when twenty-five were pardoned and met their families at Crow Creek; and the interest culminated when all the living were released and met their friends on their removal to Niobrara.

Meetings, always an important means of grace, were greatly multiplied. Daily meetings were commenced at Ft. Snelling; the steamboat was made a Bethel for daily praise, and at Crow Creek daily prayer meetings were held each summer under booths, which plan was continued the first summer at Niobrara. Women's prayer meetings were commenced at Crow Creek, deaconesses being appointed to have charge of them. The children also had meetings, conducted by themselves. All these means were blessed of the Holy Spirit to the breaking of the herculean

chains of paganism. Some relics of superstition may remain, but after the four years' separation the Santee tribe may be counted a christian people.

### SKETCH VII.

#### THE GOSPEL IN PRISON.

“When He slew them, then they sought unto him.” This experience of Ephraim of old was renewed by the four hundred Dakotas in prison at Mankato in the winter of 1862-3. Little Crow and the other leaders of the rebellion had assured them that their many Gods would be more than a match for the Great God—the God of the white people. And so it appeared to be for a while. Victory every where crowned the tomahawk and scalping-knife.

But the battle of Wood Lake convinced them that, in this, they had been deceived; and that the Great God was more powerful than all their Gods. And so when they came into the hands of the white soldiers, and were condemned and placed in irons, they all expected to be put to death. Some said that, many years before, they had heard God's word and knew it was true, but they had rejected it, and therefore this trouble had come upon them. So their minds were prepared to listen to the gospel.

The Military Commission had done its work, condemning to death more than three hundred men, by far the greater part of them on such grounds and for such reasons as the excited state of feeling, produced by the recent massacres, was alone able to justify. A calmer consideration of the cases declared that the most of them had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

It was in the month of November, 1862, when our camp was made in the neighborhood of Mankato. Soon afterwards, in the village, was erected a low log building, which was made their prison for the winter. And from that place, in the closing days of the year, thirty-eight Dakota men went out to the gallows.

But it was while they were still in the neighborhood of the town that Dr. Williamson and his sister, first visited them. He says, “I remember of feeling a great

desire of seeing and preaching to them, mingled, as I approached them, with a kind of terror, not only from the responsibility of speaking to many whom I had long known, and whose time of probation was now, as it seemed, so nearly closed; but from an apprehension that they would say to me, ‘go home, when we were free you know we would not hear you preach, but when you were in our power we did you no harm, we only went from you; why do you come here to torment us when we are in chains and cannot go away!’ And so it was a great relief to find them listening patiently to all I said.”

The prisoners asked for books. Only two copies of the New Testament and two or three copies of the Dakota Hymn Book were found in prison. Some of each were obtained elsewhere, and afterwards furnished them, but not nearly as many as they needed. Some slates and pencils and writing paper were provided for them. And still later in the winter some other Dakota books were given them. From this time on the prison became a school, and continued to be such all through their imprisonment. They were all exceedingly anxious to learn. And the more their minds were turned towards God and his word, the more interested they became in learning to read and write. In their minds books and the religion we preached went together.

Soon after this first visit of Dr. Williamson, they began to sing and pray publicly, every morning and evening; which they continued to do all the while they were in prison. This they commenced of their own accord. At first the prayers were made only by those who had been church members, and who were accustomed to pray; but others soon came forward and did the same.

Before the executions, Robert Hopkins, who was, at that time, the leader in all that pertained to worship, handed to Dr. Williamson the names of thirty men who had then led in public prayer. And not very long after, sixty more names were added to the list of praying ones. This was regarded by themselves very much in the light of making a profession of religion. Of those who were executed four or five were baptized by Dr. Williamson, and about twenty-five by Father Ravauz.

The writer of this sketch was present at the time of the executions, and on the following Sabbath, Gen. Miller, who was in command, gave orders that the prisoners have leave to go out into the prison yard, to attend divine service. About a foot of new snow had fallen the night before, but, with only a few exceptions, those men, chained two and two, gathered around me to sing and pray and to hear words concerning the life to come. The work of God's Spirit had now commenced among them, and it was continued all winter, "deep and powerful, but very quiet," as one wrote. The result was, that, of the more than three hundred and fifty, in prison after the executions, only a few in the spring were unbaptized. More than two-thirds of them were baptized at one time, Rev. G. H. Pond going up and spending eight days with Dr. Williamson.

Only a few weeks before they were removed from Mankato to Davenport, Iowa, it became my duty to administer to them, for the first time, the Lord's Supper. It was in that dark building, with white soldiers stationed as guards at the door and at several points in the prison, that I gave to those chained men the bread and the wine that signified the Lord's death.

Was it strange that one old man, in partaking of that communion, should pray aloud, "O Lord take off this chain!"

In the spring of 1863, they were taken to Davenport, where, generally, our intercourse was more free and satisfactory than it could be at Mankato. While there they continued to add to their knowledge of bible truth, and, in the great majority of cases, to develop into a higher christian manhood. It was not at all strange that some turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, and turned back to their old heathen customs. The wonder was that such a great majority of them, not only held out true to their new profession, during the years of their imprisonment, but, after their release, came up to be teachers and evangelists among their own people. So that, after making all needed deductions, we can now say, "It was a most glorious work of God's Spirit, for which we shall always praise him." And we will say, "NOT UNTO US, NOT UNTO US, BUT TO THY NAME, O LORD, BE THE GLORY."

## SKETCH VIII.

### BORN INTO THE MISSIONARY KINGDOM.

*By the Son of a Missionary.*

As we wish to introduce our Christian friends into full sympathy with our missionary life and work, it comes to me to open one aspect peculiar to those born on missionary ground, and who have grown up in, and perhaps into, the work. What I have to say is the experience common to all such, but I can tell it better if I make it somewhat autobiographical.

My first serious impression of life was that I was living under a great weight of something; and as I began to discern more clearly I found this weight to be the all-surrounding, overwhelming presence of heathenism, and all the instincts of my birth, and all the culture of a christian home, set me at antagonism to it at every point. The filthy savages, indecently clad, lazily lounging about the stove of our sitting-room, or flattening their dirty noses on the window pane, caused such a disgust for everything Indian that it took the better thought of many years to overcome the repugnance thus aroused. Without doubt our mothers felt it all as keenly as we, their children, but they had a sustaining ambition for souls which we had not yet gained.

This feeling of disgust was often accompanied with and heightened by fear. The very air seemed to breathe dangers. At times violence stalked abroad unchallenged, and dark lowering faces skulked around. Even in times when we felt no personal danger this incubus of savage life all around weighed on our hearts. Thus it was, day and night. Even those hours of twilight, which brood with sweet influences over so many lives, bore to us on the evening air only the weird cadences of the heathen dance, or the chill thrill of the war-whoop.

Yet our childhood was not destitute of joy. Babes prattle beside the dead. So, too, the children of the mission had their plays, like other children. But it was lonesome indeed when the missionary band was divided, to occupy other stations, and the playmates were separated. Once it was my privilege to go one hundred and twenty miles—to the nearest station—to

have a play-spell of a week, and a happy week it was. But, oh! those miles were long and sad ones which carried me back to my own home again, with the melancholy gait of oxen.

Notwithstanding our play-spells, ours was a serious life. The serious earnestness of our parents in the pursuit of their work could not fail to fall, in some degree, on the children. The main purpose of christianizing that people was felt in everything. It was like garrison life in time of war. But this seriousness was not ascetical or morose. Far from it. Those christian missionary homes were full of gladness. With all the disadvantages of such a childhood, was the rich privilege of understanding the meaning of cheerful earnestness in christian life. Speaking of peculiar privileges, I must say that I do not believe any other homes can be as precious as ours. It is true everyone thinks his is the best mother in the world, and she is to him; but I mean more than this; I mean that our missionary homes are in reality better than others. And there is reason for it. By reason of the surrounding heathenism the light and power of christianity is more centered and confined in the home. And then again its power is developed by its antagonism to the darkness and wickedness around it. For either its light must ever shine clearer or grow more dim until it expires.

Next to our own home, we learned to love the home-land in "the States," whence our parents came. A longing desire to visit it possessed us. We thought that there we should find a heaven on earth. This may seem a strange idea, but as you think of us engulfed in heathenism and savage life, it will not seem so strange. It was like living at the bottom of a well, with only one spot of brightness overhead. Of course it would be natural to think that upper world all brightness and beauty. Thus all our glimpses of another life than that of heathenism came from "the States." There all our ideas of christianized society were located. The correspondence of our parents with friends left behind, the pages of the magazines and papers of the monthly mail, and the yearly boxes of supplies, were the tangible

tokens which in our innocent minds awakened visions of the wonderful world of civilization and culture in "the East."

These supplies were in reality, perhaps, very small affairs, but we thought them of fabulous value. Indeed they were everything to us. With the opening of the new year the lists of purchases began to be arranged. Each item was carefully considered, and the wants of each of the family remembered. This was no small task when you had to look a year and a half ahead. What debates as to whether B could get on with one pair of shoes, or must have two; or whether C would need some more gingham aprons, or could make the old ones last through. And then it was so hard to remember mosquito bars and straw hats in January; but if they were forgotten once, the next January found them first on the list. It was fun to make up the lists, but not so exhilarating when, on summing up the probable cost, it was found to be too much, and then the cruel pen ran through many of our newborn hopes. Then the letter went on its way to Boston, or maybe to Cincinnati, and we waited its substantial answer. Sometimes our boxes went around by lazy sloops from Boston to New Orleans; thence the laboring steamboat bore them almost the whole length of the Father of Waters; then the flatboatmen sweated and swore as they poled them up the Minnesota to where our teams met them to carry them for another week over the prairies. Now it was far on into rosy June. After such waiting, no wonder that everything seemed precious—the very hoops of the boxes and the redolent pine that made them; even the wrappers and strings of the packages were carefully laid away. And, thanks to the kind friends who have cared for this work at our several purchasing depots, our wants were generally capitably met; and yet sometimes the packer would arrange it so that the linseed oil would give a new taste to the dried apples, anything but appetizing, or turn the plain white of some long-desired book into a highly "tinted" edition.

When the number of our years got well past the single figures, then we went to "the States" to carry on the education begun at home. Then came the saddest

disappointment of all our lives. We found we were yet a good ways from heaven. For me, the last remnant of this dream was effectually dispelled when I came to teach a sabbath school in a back-country neighborhood, where the people were the driftwood of Kentucky and Egyptian Illinois. Thenceforth the land of the Dakotas seemed more the land of promise to me. From that time the claims of the work in which my parents were engaged grew upon my mind.

Of late years the children of missionaries have everywhere furnished a large portion of the new reinforcements. This is both natural and strange. It is natural that they should desire to stay the hands of their parents, and go to reap what they have sown. On the other hand, they go out in face of all the hardships of the work, made vividly real to them by the experience of their childhood. They are attracted by no romantic sentiment. The romance is for them all worn off long ago. For instance, those of us on this field know the noble red man of the poet to be a myth. We know the real savage, and know him almost too well. Thus those who follow in the work of their missionary fathers do not do it without a struggle—often fearful. On the one hand stands the work, calling them to lonesome separation, and on the other the pleasant companionship of civilized society. But if the word of the Lord has come to them to go to Nineveh, happy are they if they do not go thither by way of Joppa.

I have spoken of the drawbacks to entering the work, but the inducements must also be remembered. They are greater than the drawbacks. We know them also better than strangers can. If we have known more of the discouragements of the work, we also know more of its hopefulness. We know the real savage, but we now know and fully believe in his real humanity and salvability by the power of the cross. Now, too, when the work is entered, the very difficulties which barred the way grow less or disappear. We find the dreaded isolation to be more in appearance than reality. We here are in connection with the best thought and sympathy of the civilized world, whether it be in scholarship, statesmanship or christian

society. And not unfrequently do we have the visits of friends and the honored representatives of the churches. One may be much more alone in Chicago or New York.

The difficulties of the work in earlier years are also changing. We have a different standing before the people among whom we labor. We also have matured and tested our methods of operation, and can be always confident of success. We have also an ever increasing force in the native agency, which adds strength and helpfulness to the campaign. The people we come to conquer are themselves furnishing recruits for this war, so that we, the sons of the mission, stand among them as captains of the host and our fathers are as generals.

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#### SKETCH IX.

##### DAKOTA CHURCHES.

The first christian church organized in Dakota land, especially for the natives, was at Lacquiparle, in 1836, which in the next year numbered seven persons. During the quarter of a century that followed, churches were organized at a number of places—*Kaposia, Oak Grove, Shakopee, Traverse des Sioux, Yellow Medicine, Hazlewood and Red Wood, or Lower Sioux Agency*. The Lacquiparle church counted at one time about fifty members. But after twenty-six years, such changes had taken place in the location of the Indians that only the three last named Dakota churches remained, having an aggregate living membership of about seventy-five.

The outbreak of 1862 destroyed all our organizations and scattered our church members. Some went off to the British Possessions in Manitoba. A portion of these have since returned, but a part remained, and we have heard that they became the nucleus of a missionary church there. A very small number of our church members were imprisoned. But about three-fourths of them were in the camp at Fort Snelling in the winter of 1862-3. And in the spring of 1863, when this camp was broken up, the great majority of those who were professors of religion before the outbreak were transferred to what was, for several years,

known as the Scouts' camp. After this the Dakota churches were, 1st, the one organized in prison; 2d, the one in camp, first at Fort Snelling and afterwards at Fort Thompson; and 3d, that of the Scouts' camp.

In the spring of 1866, the prisoners were released from Davenport and met their families from Fort Thompson at the mouth of the Niobrara, in Nebraska, when the two churches first named were consolidated, according to their wishes, and because of their many wanderings and strange history, it was called the Pilgrim church. This is the church now at the Santee Agency. At the time of consolidation it numbered more than four hundred members. But as the years passed by some were drawn away to the Episcopal church; some went to their friends near Fort Wadsworth, and a still larger number went off with the colony at Flandreau, on the Big Sioux, leaving the Pilgrim church at this writing only about two hundred and twenty-five members.

The Dakota colony on the Big Sioux consists of about sixty families, many of whom have regularly taken homesteads and become citizens. Our mission church there counts something more than one hundred members, and is under the care of a native pastor, which is also the case with the Pilgrim church.

The Scouts' camp church, which settled down on the Lake Traverse Reservation, near Fort Wadsworth, has been divided up into the Ascension church, the Good Will church, the Long Hollow church, the Kettle Lakes church, at Fort Wadsworth, the Buffalo Lake church, and the White Banks church, with an aggregate membership of about three hundred and fifty. These churches are ministered to by native pastors or supplies. The mission church at the Yankton Agency, containing about seventy members, completes the present list of Dakota churches. In all there are nine churches, with an aggregate membership of about seven hundred and seventy-five.

*Okodakecheya*, the Dakota name for church, expresses the idea of a company of SPECIAL FRIENDS. The pastor is a *Wechasta Wakan*, a CONSECRATED OR

MYSTERIOUS MAN. The term *Hoonkayape* is used for elders—the *elder ones* among brethren. *Awanyake*, or *seeing over*, designates the office and work of deacons. Our pastors are members of Presbytery and our churches are Presbyterian. But the peculiar circumstances of our people have required some modifications. The large numbers added after the outbreak, both in the prison and the camp, and their entire want of christian training, required that they should be placed under a special watch and instruction. This we found could be best accomplished by making our *Hoonkayape* class leaders, much after the Methodist pattern. For some purposes the plan has worked well, but there has been a strong tendency to run it into a kind of open confessional. The feeling that only those who had attended the class meeting and told their experience could come to the communion table became more and more pronounced. We found it necessary to oppose this tendency, because it encouraged a reliance upon the class meeting not justified by the word of God.

It ought not to be expected that Indians, coming into the profession of christianity under such circumstances, with so little previous training, and with so many and such serious drawbacks in their personal habits and in their social life, would compare very favorably with the christians of our own land. Temptations to evil are strong and the fortifications around their new struggling life are weak. Accordingly these churches, in their history have presented us with many painful examples of defection. It has been with some a life of sinning and repentance—sinning and repentance. But God, who provides for the wants of the weakest, and makes His grace sufficient for all who truly trust in the dear Christ, has given us very many whose life has been a progress and a victory. Thanks be to Him for the gift of His Holy Spirit, to perfect as well as to convert.

During these late years we have had to face the difficult problem of how to raise these native churches up to supporting their own gospel. They are very poor, certainly. But that would seem to make it the more needful that they at once place themselves in the line of giving,

which is the line of blessing. When first we ordained pastors over the Pilgrim church, we proposed that they contribute towards their support quarterly, at the rate of fifty cents for each male and twenty-five for each female member. They accepted the proposition, but have never fulfilled the promise entirely. The Ascension church promised Mr. J. B. Renville fifty dollars a quarter. They have usually paid that in their own way, but not in money. The Good Will church pledged to Mr. Daniel Renville thirty-five dollars a quarter. This promise they have, by the help of the white people at the agency, generally fulfilled on a money basis. The other churches have done less; but all do something. It is a hard lesson to learn. It is a hard work to do. All we can say is, that we are trying to have them work up towards it.

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### SKETCH X.

#### NATIVE PASTORS.

It was a long, long time before we entertained seriously the idea of native helpers. We had occasionally tried a Dakota man as teacher, sending him off to another village; but, as we then looked at it, we could hardly call our efforts successful. They always wanted large pay for little work. And so we ourselves continued to do the teaching and preaching, still thinking that the time had not yet come for pressing native tact, native talent, and native energy into the work of education and evangelization.

Not until the outbreak and its results came, breaking away the barriers to the spread of the gospel in the Dakota minds, were the barriers in our minds to the employment of native agencies broken. Then, whether we desired it or not, those who had received some amount of education began to impart it to their fellows. Every man builded over against himself, and so the work commenced and prospered.

As men developed religiously, those who had gifts in exhortation and prayer, or in leading the service of song, came to the front, both in the prison and in the camp; and thus we came up to the idea of laying burdens upon those who showed themselves able and willing to bear burdens. We first

selected and set apart *Hoonkayape*, or elders, and charged them with the duty of conducting religious meetings. But soon we came to the conviction that it was high time for us to seek out suitable persons and induct them into the gospel ministry. The work was too great and too difficult for us to attempt longer to carry it forward without native helpers.

When the gospels of Mark and John were being translated from the French, by Mr. Joseph Renville, of Lacquiparle, more than a third of a century ago, there was a little boy who often played in the room where we wrote. He was the youngest of Mr. Renville's eight children. His name was John Baptiste. The old man called him "Koda metawa," *my friend*. This little boy, as he grew up, acquired a pretty good Dakota and English education, and coming to man's estate, he married Miss Mary A. Butler, of Galesburg, Ill. After being employed as a teacher for some time, both by the government and the mission, he was licensed to preach the gospel by the Dakota Presbytery, in the spring of 1865, and ordained as an evangelist in the following autumn. Mr. Renville, as a preacher, is "eloquent and mighty in the scriptures," and is now the pastor of Ascension church.

An incident took place in connection with this our first native licensure, which is significant of the temper of the times. It took place at Mankato. The meeting of the Presbytery had been appointed for that time and place eight months before. But so it was that, on that very day, a party of hostile Dakotas, having come down from the British settlements, had made a "strike" but a few miles out of town. It devolved on Dr. T. S. Williamson, the last Moderator of the Presbytery, to open the present session with a sermon. In that sermon he enforced the necessity laid upon this great christian nation to deal justly with the inferior races—the African and the Indian. That evening one John Campbell, a half-breed Dakota, was brought into town. The Jewett family had been murdered, and there was abundant evidence that Campbell had participated in the murders. The popular excitement was of course very great. The next day Campbell, without a trial, was

taken by a mob and hung on a tree. The unreasonable populace said this Indian raid and massacre had taken place because Dr. Williamson had come to their town; that on a certain previous occasion *he had passed through*, and immediately thereafter, in the neighborhood, white people had been killed by Indians. Dr. Williamson should not stay in the town of Mankato. So they sent a committee of the principal men of the place to demand his immediate departure. This committee came to the Presbyterian church, where the Presbytery was in session, engaged in the examination and licensure of John B. Renville. Some members of the Presbytery were disposed to resent the visit of that committee on such an errand. But Dr. Williamson yielded to the unreasonable demand of the excited people and left.

In the summer of 1866, on the Coteau des Prairies, near Fort Wadsworth, we licensed *Simon Anawangman* and *Peter Big Fire* to preach the gospel to their people in that part of the country. Passing on from thence, that year through herds of buffalo, we came in ten days to the new Dakota settlement at the mouth of the Niobrara, in Nebraska. There we selected and licensed *Artemas Ehnman* and *Titus Mahpiyawakan*.

The next season our first meeting was with this Pilgrim church, then removed down to Bazil creek. There, in a low log building, with earthen floor and dirt roof, at an assembly of the church, we set apart the two native men whom we had licensed the year before to the work of preaching the gospel and administering its ordinances among their own people, and especially to that church. They have obtained a good report as apt to teach, and are earnest, faithful shepherds of Christ's flock at the Santee Agency.

In the summer of 1867 *Robert Hopkins* and *Solomon Toonkansharcheya* were made licentiates. In August of the year following we found an elder of the Pilgrim church, *Louis Mazawakinyanna* by name, holding religious meetings with the enlisted Dakota soldiers at Fort Wadsworth. We organized a church there, and at their request approbated Louis as their preacher.

In the month of August, 1869, our fourth native pastor was ordained. We had just held a camp-meeting, and more than sixty persons had been added to the church organizations on the mountain. A re-arrangement of the churches had taken place. Long Hollow church desired the services of *Solomon* as their pastor. The gathering for his ordination was at Buffalo Lake. It took place in a large, circular summer-house; for it was a raw day outside, and the fire that blazed brightly in the centre was very comfortable. Our friends, Chaplain Crocker and wife and Dr. Comfort, of Fort Wadsworth, were present.

Our next ordinations took place in the spring of 1871, at the Good Will mission church, of *Daniel Renville*, as pastor of that church, and *Louis* pastor of the Kettle Lakes church, at Fort Wadsworth. In the autumn following *Williamson O. Rogers* (Owancha maza) was ordained as an evangelist to preach and administer the sacraments to the church at Flandreau, on the Big Sioux. Since that time *David Tamahpeyahota*, who was five years a soldier at Wadsworth, has been approbated to preach to the Dakota soldiers in place of *Louis*, transferred to the church at Mayasan.

This is our present force of licensed and ordained men in the work of the gospel among the Dakotas. John B. Renville reads and talks English pretty well. Both he and Daniel Renville had the advantages of living for a time at Galesburg, Ill. David has learned some English in the army, but hardly enough to profit thereby. The others know only their mother tongue. Their education has been very limited—confined very much to that portion of the bible which is printed in Dakota. But for Dakota congregations these native pastors are more effective preachers than we are. They are more or less sensible of their lack of education, and of the limitations to which they must necessarily always be subjected. But nevertheless they are thinking, growing men. They make the best of their opportunities. They take advantage of many kinds of illustration, in their teaching, that better trained men would overlook. And they understand native character. By such

instrumentalities it pleases God to carry forward His work among the Dakotas.

### SKETCH XI.

#### THE BIBLE IN DAKOTA LAND.

Among the Dakotas a book was a marvelous thing. It was a *wowape*. Heretofore the *wowape* had consisted of rude paintings or hieroglyphs. The figures of men and horses, of battle axes and scalps, drawn with coal or cut in bark, told the story of a war-party. Rude pictures of pipes and horses feet, with other such hieroglyphs, told a man's history. So when the hieroglyphs of language were first introduced among them, and arbitrary signs made in the ashes with a stick, or drawn with chalk on a board, spelled out words which they had been accustomed to speak and to hear, that also they called *wowape*. And when the words of the Great God were thus written out in their language they would naturally and necessarily be *Wowape Wakan*—the Sacred Writing—the Bible.

With the beginning of our missionary work commenced the translation of the Bible. Many questions regarding the notation of the language were still unsettled, when Dr. Williamson began to obtain from Mr. Joseph Renville, through the French, imperfect translations of portions of the word of God.

Inside of that old trader's fort at Lac-quiparle, more than a third of a century ago, stood Mr. Renville's hewed log houses. His common reception room was more than twenty feet square. In the farther end of this room there was a large open fire-place which held an enormous amount of wood set up on end. And this always made a bright warm fire. On two sides of the room ran long benches, on which Indian visitors sat or reclined. Often, however, they preferred to sit on the floor. A roughly made table and a few chairs made up the furniture of the room. Mr. Renville oftentimes sat tailor-fashion on his chair in the middle of the room, and we sat by the table and wrote. The first verse of the gospel of John was read from the French bible. Mr. Renville repeated it in Dakota, and we wrote it from his lips. When we had finished

writing the verse it was read to Mr. Renville and corrected if necessary. Or if we failed to write the whole verse at the first hearing, it was repeated. In this way, during the first half dozen years, the entire gospels of Mark and John, with fugitive chapters from other parts of the bible, were translated into Dakota. The process, besides giving us some very creditable translations of the Words of Life, was of incalculable advantage to us in helping us to decide upon many terms proper to be used, as well as in learning the language. We cannot thank God enough for giving us such a valuable teacher as Mr. Renville in those first years of the mission.

After serving this apprenticeship, we undertook ourselves to make more exact translations from the original languages. Year by year we were able to report progress. But it was just about thirty years after the first verses were translated from the French when the entire New Testament was printed in Dakota. In the mean time some books of the Old Testament were printed also; and these have increased from time to time, until we have in print the whole of the Pentateuch, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song and Isaiah. Other portions are translated, but not yet printed. The Am. Bible Society has generously assumed the whole expense of electrotyping and printing the Bible for the Dakotas.

Thus it will appear that we have placed and kept the Bible in the fore front of our work. It has been evangelization first, and civilization following along with it. This, it seems to us, is the true order. The civilization and the grand unification of the world is to be accomplished through the faith of Christ. Hence it is written: "For it pleased God that in Him should all fullness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself."

About a year since we received a new edition of the Dakota Scriptures from the Bible House in New York. I took a few copies of nicely bound books in my satchel and went to the Long Hollow church to spend the Sabbath. Solomon, the native pastor of that church, selected a book for himself. It was a beautiful book—moreover, gilt, with clasp. They all admired it

very much, and he wrapped it up carefully and laid it away. We talked of many things, and finally I lay down to sleep. Some time in the night I awoke, and Solomon was still sitting by the fire. Several other men had come in, and the pastor of the Long Hollow church had unrolled the book and was telling them what portions of it were new—the book of Numbers, together with Ecclesiastes, and the Song, and Isaiah, he had never seen before. And said he, “I feel just like a little boy who has got a new bow.”

So the Heavenly Evangel is making its imprint upon the Dakota language; and, what is more and better, it is working marvelous transformations in Dakota hearts.

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### SKETCH XII.

#### THEN AND NOW.

In the first days of July, 1839, a severe battle was fought between the Dakotas and Ojibwas. The Ojibwas had visited Fort Snelling during the last days of June, expecting to receive some payment for land sold. In this they were disappointed. The evening before they started for their homes—a part going up the Mississippi, and a part by the St. Croix—two young men were observed to go to the soldiers' burying-ground, near the fort, and cry. Their father had been killed some years before by the Dakotas and was buried there. The next morning they started for their homes; but these two young men, their people not knowing it, went out and hid themselves that night close by a path which wound around the shores of Lake Harriet. In the early morning following, a Dakota hunter walked along that path, followed by a boy. The man was shot down and the boy escaped to tell the story.

During their stay in the neighborhood of Fort Snelling the Ojibwas had smoked and eaten with the Dakotas. That scalped man now lying by Lake Harriet was an evidence of violated faith. The Dakotas were eager to take advantage of the affront. The cry was for vengeance; and before the sun had set two parties were on the war-path.

The young man who had been killed was the son-in-law of *Cloud-man*, the chief of the Lake Calhoun village. *Scar-*

*let Bird* was the brother-in-law of the chief. So *Scarlet Bird* was the leader of the war party which came to where the city of Minneapolis is now built, and about the setting of the sun crossed over to the east side, and there, seating the warriors in a row on the sand, he distributed the beads and ribbons and other trinkets of the man who had been killed, and with them “*prayed*” the whole party into committing the deeds of the next morning. The morning's sun, as it arose, saw these same men smiting down the Ojibwas, just after they had left camp, in the region of Rum river. *Scarlet Bird* was among the slain on the Dakota side; and a son of his, whom he had goaded into the battle by calling him a woman, was left on the field. Many Ojibwa scalps were taken, and all through that autumn and into the following winter the scalp-dance was danced nightly at every Dakota village on the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers, as far up as Lacquiparle.

That was the condition of things *THEN*. Between *THEN* and *NOW* there is a contrast. *Then* only a small government saw-mill stood where *now* stand mammoth mills, running hundreds of saws. *Then* only a little soldier's dwelling stood where *now* are the palaces of merchant princes. *Then* only the war-whoop of the savage was heard where *now*, in this year of grace 1873, a little more than a third of a century after, is heard the voice of praise and prayer in numerous christian sanctuaries and a thousand christian households. *Then* it was the gathering place of the nude and painted war party; *now* it is the gathering place of the friends of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. *Then* the dusky forms of the Dakotas flitted by in the gloaming, bent on deeds of blood; *now* the same race is here largely represented by pastors of native churches and teachers of the white man's civilization and the religion of Christ. *And the marvelous change that has passed over this country, converting it from the wild abode of savages into the beautiful land of christian habitations, is only surpassed by the still more marvelous change that has been wrought upon those savages themselves.* The greater part of the descendants of the Indians who once

lived here are now in christian families and have been gathered into christian churches, having their native pastors. Some, too, have gone beyond, to the still wild portions of their own people, and are commencing there such a work as we commenced, nearly forty years ago, among their fathers here.

But the work is now commenced among the Teetons of the Missouri under circumstances vastly different from those which surrounded us in its beginning here.

*Then*, with an unwritten language, imperfectly understood and spoken stammeringly by foreigners, the gospel was proclaimed to unwilling listeners. *Now*, with the perfect knowledge of the language learned in the wigwam, a comparatively large company of native men and women are engaged in publishing it. Many ears are still unwilling to listen, and the hearts of the wild Indians are only a very little opened to the good news; but the contrast between the past and present is very great.

I have lately visited, and preached

several times at our new station among the Teeton Sioux, at Fort Sully. Since the autumn of last year, James Redwing and Martha Redwing, his wife, have been the efficient helpers of T. L. Riggs. The religious meetings were not attended by a great many men, but Martha Redwing appears to have acquired a considerable influence over the women and children. Many women having little children come daily to learn to read. And her weekly woman's prayer meeting is attended by more than thirty. Thus little rootlets of the gospel appear to be striking into these dark hearts, to which we shall look for golden harvests. Our books, our schools, our churches, our native pastors and helpers, and other aids to progress, are a guarantee, under God, of success in the still wide-spread field of Dakota heathenism. So we will thank God for the difference between *THEN* and *NOW*, and pray that the divine influences may be granted, so as to secure a more abundant harvest in the future.