

Indian Work.

FIRST NEWS FROM THE UPPER SKEENA.

From Robert H. Cole, Hugwilget, B.C., April 11th, 1900.

THE work in connection with the Hugwilget Home is going on with varying success. There have been many interruptions and difficulties.

A farmer can always find something to do under any circumstances; add to this house-keeping, teaching, and attending to children, building, etc., and you can form some idea as to my work.

Of the \$500 you so kindly sent us, I have used a part for improvements, *i.e.*, in putting an addition (18 x 24) to the old building, and a part for maintenance as the ladies suggested.

The difficulties of building in this country are known only to those who have had it to do. Material is very expensive. Although there is a saw-mill about four miles up the river, it has not been running very satisfactorily. In putting up the addition, I decided to hire as little labor as possible, doing the work myself, with the help of a boy. Six children are the most I have had. If we had accommodation for thirty or forty, we would have no difficulty in getting them.

The Indians of this country get little or no help from the Government,—nothing save a few medicines (for the indigent) and a very few garden seeds.

The site here is all that could be desired. The land is rich, and we can, with a few exceptions, grow all kinds of vegetables, and I have also been very successful with grain. Corn can not be grown on account of the cool nights.

We are perhaps in the best position in the country for work of this kind. Being just at the junction of the Bullsley and Skeena, our location is central. We are one mile from Hazelton (270 Indians), three and a-half miles from old Hugwilget (160 Indians), seven miles from Kishpiax (350 Indians), fifteen miles from Gitseguela (150 Indians)—which is down the river, also Gitwangah and Meinskinisht villages, from thirty to forty miles farther down. The land being of a light clay loam, the drainage is perfect. The Skeena supplies water of excellent quality, excepting about two months in summer—May and June—when it becomes rather muddy.

This farm, by the assessment roll, consists of 303 acres, most of which is covered with hazel brush, small poplar and birch, also some red and black willow. This has grown up probably within the past ten years, since the original timber was burnt; consequently there are any number of charred logs and stumps to be removed in clearing the land.