

P R E F A C E .

"FANCY suggesting that any lake in North America contains an island over one hundred miles long where the ice bridge is in winter the only means of access to the mainland twenty miles off! The atlas shows no such dimensions for any of the *few* islands lying in Lake Huron."

Such was the reply of an old gentleman, who brought an antiquated atlas with him to prove me mistaken, when I mentioned these facts to stir up his sympathies, and get him to contribute clothing and magazines towards the box I was about to pack, and send to the Bishop of Algoma, for the benefit of dwellers on the great Manitoulin.

"Indeed, but I am speaking the truth," I said, "and if you look at a recent official atlas, you will find the area of Manitoulin island such as I describe. You will also find innumerable islands scattered throughout the two hundred miles between Saulte Ste Marie in the West, and Parry Sound in the East." In the Georgian Bay alone, Commander Wakefield noted 27,000.

In Spring and Autumn the islanders are cut off from the mainland for weeks at a time, by reason of shifting ice. In summer they travel by boat or canoe, and the steamers of the Great Northern Company call twice a week at points on the islands, and stations on the opposite mainland across the inside channel.

As an example of a winter journey between mainland and island, I quote the experience of a missionary, then in charge of Algoma Mills.

"Mr. G. re-crossed the frozen channel more than twenty miles