

IN DANGER AMONG THE ESKIMO

secure for our Lord one such jewel from even the remotest tribe."

Leaving Fort McPherson on April 18, 1870, Mr. Bompas started down the river in company with two Eskimo, hauling a small sled with blankets and provisions. On the way he received a message from the Chief of the Eskimo telling him to go back, as the natives "were starving and quarrelling, and one had just been stabbed and killed in a dispute about some tobacco." But this message had no effect upon the missionary; he was busy in his Master's service, and he knew that same Master would take care of His servant, and undaunted, he pressed bravely forward.

For three days they continued to travel without any difficulty, camping at night on the river-bank, and making a small fire of broken boughs. But the glare of the spring sun was very severe, and Mr. Bompas was stricken with snow-blindness. This affliction is one common in the North, and only those who have themselves suffered on the trail can fully realize what it means.

"As the sun rises higher," wrote Mr. Bompas, "and has more power in the months of March and April, to walk long over the snow in the sunlight becomes distressing to the eyes from the dazzling brightness. This is especially the case in traversing a wide lake or in descending a broad river, where there are no near forests of dark pines to relieve the gaze, but an unbroken expanse of snow.

"The effect of this is to produce, after a time, acute inflammation of the eyes. These, in the end, may be so entirely closed as to involve a temporary blindness, accompanied by much smarting pain. . . . The voyager feels very helpless during the acute stage of snow-blindness, and, like Elymas the sorcerer, or St. Paul himself, he 'seeks some one to lead him by the hand.'"

For three days in awful darkness he was led by the hand