

RED RIVER DISTRICT.

From the Rev. O. GERMAN, dated Oxford House, August 8th, 1874.

I have visited the Indians at Island Lake since I wrote you last. The trip occupied a little over fifteen days, including three days visit at Island Lake. The journey was not an unpleasant one, if I except "Mossy Portage," which is about two miles long, and for the most part ankle-deep with water and mire, with an occasional "blind plunge," making one involuntarily institute comparisons between himself and Christian in the "Slough of Despond." But after safely passing that we had some grand, wild scenery, which soon repaid us for all our toil. Manitou Lakahikun (God's Lake) lies nearly south of Oxford House, and is a beautiful expanse of water. The upper part of it (which lay on our route) is everywhere dotted with rocky islands, only partially covered with vegetation—as if these lordly rocks had entered a protest against being invested with such perishable garments. At the southern end of this lake is the famous Manito-Opah, or, Spirit's Crossing. It consists of a narrow channel, or rather two channels, which connect the southern extremity with the main body of the lake. The Indians believe that at certain seasons the Kiche-Manito (Great Spirit) crosses over from one side to the other. The river connecting this lake with Island Lake, is an almost continuous succession of rapids, most of which can be run with the canoe. Island Lake is, as its name implies, a lake full of islands—lands of all shapes and sizes, presenting a most romantic appearance. If it were somewhere else it would be a most desirable place to live. As it is, however, I think it is not destined ever to become one of the world's "busy haunts."

I arrived at the post late on Saturday night, and found that the Indians were anxiously waiting for me. Some

of them who came down with the boat I had already seen at Oxford, and these had probably excited an increased interest in the minds of the rest. They have, however, been long waiting for the Ayuchawikemou. I held three services on each of the three days that I remained with them. They were very attentive, and exceedingly anxious to learn the saving truth of the gospel. I also talked personally with the men. All expressed a desire to become Christians; but those who had more than one wife did not feel like putting away all but one just now. Some of them said they would try to arrange for putting them away during the year, so that by next summer, if I am permitted to visit them, (as I hope to do) they would be ready to begin in real earnest to be good. Those that have only one wife are more hopeful. There are in all, 69 names of hunters on the Hudson Bay Company's books. Of these, 14 are young men; 32 have but one wife each; 20 have two wives each; and three have three wives each. It will be most difficult to establish a mission among them on account of their wandering habits,—and wander it seems they must, in order to get a living. But I think if a good native teacher (a young man would be preferable), in whose heart there was a real love for souls, could be sent among them, to live with them—move when they move, and camp when they camp—great good might be done among them. Having closely examined those who wished to be baptized, I found 42 whom I deemed, under the existing circumstances, fit subjects of that holy rite. 38 children were also baptized; and 14 couples married. Who will come to care for and feed this little flock? O thou Great Shepherd of the sheep, thrust out more into the world's wild wilderness to "feed Thy lambs!"