

in a state of nature; and its President accordingly remarks on this department of investigation:—

“With the Indian tribes and all their ramifications and subdivisions, we shall invite discussion on Ethnology; with the diversified tongues and dialects which these tribes speak, philology and comparative grammar will claim attention; whilst with the vast and varied surface of the continent, and its only partially explored northern boundary, physical geography will naturally prove a subject of absorbing interest to all.”

The Institute of Rupert's Land, thus happily inaugurated, includes among its members and correspondents educated men both of the resident clergy, and the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, stationed at many important points over the vast country ranging from the Pacific to Lake Superior and towards the Arctic Sea. A great and still unexplored field, invites their labours; and there is no department of science which may not be largely benefited by their combined exertions. There is also another class of labourers, to whom science already owes much, and from whose wisely directed co-operation more may be anticipated. “Missionaries,” says a recent Christian reviewer, “ought to be the pioneers and promoters of science, hand in hand with the Gospel, throughout the world. In fact they have been so. And we believe it will be found on close inquiry, that the most efficient labourers in the purely spiritual field, have been on the whole, or on the average of numbers, those who also have done most to shed a brilliant lustre upon the missionary character and name in the fields of natural and scientific inquiries and studies.”

An interesting illustration of what may be looked for from this class of labourers is furnished by a communication from the Rev. W. W. Kirkby, a missionary of the Church of England, transmitted by Mr. Ross to the New Institute of the North West, from which some extracts will be found to embody observations of considerable value.

The river Youcon is the most westerly of the great rivers emptying into the Arctic Ocean. It rises in the Hudson's Bay Territory, but its principal course is through Russian America, where, after receiving the waters of the Porcupine River, it unites with the Colville, and flows nearly due north in longitude 150° W. into the Arctic Ocean. To a portion of the region drained by this great water system, Mr. Kirkby recently directed his attention, and thus details some of the