

Mission Field.

AN INTERESTING LETTER.

The *Church Missionary Gleaner* contains an extremely interesting letter from the Right Rev. Dr. Ridley, Bishop of the North Pacific Mission, of which the following is a part: "It would not be fair for me to tell you the good news I have heard from the lips of our brethren in the North Pacific mission, especially from Archdeacon Collison, and Mr. McCullagh. The story should come from the pens of the chief actors themselves. It will be no small loss to you if they find no leisure to record the work of the Holy Spirit on the Nass river, where the Christians have been powerfully energized in trying successfully to win the heathen for Christ. From time to time written accounts reached me and cheered my seclusion as with spiritual tonics.

"The joy of these tidings, I believe, really improved my health, which you know has been broken for about two years. During the winter I have been an unwilling prisoner, so that the pastoral care of this place has been entirely in Mr. Gurd's hands, and they have been efficient. This enforced seclusion has been ordered for the best. The discipline must have been required or it would not be imposed by the Divine Bishop of souls. No longer do I impatiently chafe as a caged bird, though I am glad to be on the wing, set free to go and come by the same kind hand that shut me in.

"Sympathy is very sweet, and of this I have had innumerable proofs. But my weather-tanned face and hands hardened by the paddle make no further claim. Since April my writing-desk has been rarely opened because of my constant voyaging. My fingers, lately so thin and pliable, now are stiff and scarred and blistered. On the twenty-seventh anniversary of my wedding-day I paddled sixteen hours in steady rain, and during the week's travelling slept two nights in the bottom of the open boat anchored close to shore. As I dozed I was startled by what I at first thought was a steamer's whistle, but it was only the buzz of a bold mosquito exploring my ear, which I smartly boxed to kill the poisonous intruder. He did me a service, however, for being wide awake I became conscious that on my right side my blankets were soaking in the rain water that accumulated in the boat. Wringing them out I tucked them more tightly around me for the night, and next day, on my arrival at Kincolith, Mrs. Collison hung them round her kitchen to dry.

"I can scarcely realize that I am the same man that spent the winter months watched and tended as an invalid. It had the advantages, for though often weary with bodily infirmity I was able to devote an average of six hours daily to linguistic work, which has already proved valuable to my brethren, and will be yet more useful to new missionaries. As long as I was able to follow my out-of-door episcopal work I could make no leisure for the literary de-

partment, so God enforced the leisure, and it has borne as good fruit as the most active winter I have ever spent in this country.

"Another effect of seclusion is in keener sensibilities and perceptions toward nature as showing forth the glory of our God. Long absence enhances the delights of once more wandering among the sweet solitudes of forest, and river, and ocean. How many voices harmonize in the concert of praise! The birds are envied no longer, for I have wings, too, stronger and more than they. The mountain ridges stoop down, not only to faith, but to fancy and imagination, to form the substratum of the Mountain of the Lord's House, with the ensign of Redemption crowning all.

"I must add yet another pleasure I have enjoyed, and that is the meeting amid their work our honored brethren who are God's instruments in winning souls and building up His Church in regions where a sympathetic visitor is welcomed as an angel of God."

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