

The ever-advancing pale-face, with his fire-water and its attendant vices, had rendered the condition of Indian women on the Coast one of extreme degradation. "Wild and woful" the Indian girls sought the protection of the missionary's wife, until the Mission House was filled to overflowing. Finding it absolutely necessary to gather these girls into a home, where they would be under Christian oversight, Mr. Crosby, at his own expense, enlarged the Mission House, that it might be suitable for that purpose. And there, the extension still unfinished and almost unfurnished, always having a household of at least twelve girls wholly dependent upon their benefactor's slender income, with much wisdom and patience Mr. and Mrs. Crosby toiled on until the year 1882, when an appropriation from the Woman's Missionary Society enabled them to engage a matron, and assured the support of eight girls.

A year or so after this reinforcement, in order to reach the many half-breed children who were quite without proper care, the home was given more the character of an orphanage, and soon, from all parts of the Coast, girls—none older than fourteen or fifteen years—and even infants were brought to its shelter. As the work progressed the accommodation was again taxed to its utmost. The removal of Mr. Crosby and his family to a new mission-house met this difficulty; but the inconveniences of the old building were so very trying and so retarded the training and education of the children, that the Board of Management decided to erect a new home.

At that time the Society was contributing the salaries of the matron and a teacher, as well as the support of sixteen girls; but on taking possession of the new building—which, owing to some uncertainty as to the most desirable location, was not completed until the spring of 1892—it became wholly responsible for the maintenance of the institution. This year was also marked by the first annual grant from the Government.

In 1893 there were forty-seven girls in residence, with a matron, a teacher, and an instructress in needle work. No changes other than the ebb and flow usual to any mission home, have since taken place. The past year has been most encouraging.

On a firm foundation of many trials and discouragements and difficulties, incidental only to the Christianizing of the Indians of the British Columbia Coast, a noble work has been done, and is still carried on at the Crosby Girls' Home.

In the midst of surroundings tending to dishearten rather than stimulate, it has striven for the salvation and uplifting of these neglected children of the forest, to make them capable Christian women, "fitted for such a life as they were likely to be called to in after years." Indian girls without homes, sometimes without names, girls who thought an angry God had made them, together with the daughters of Christian natives, have shared the tender care and teaching of its missionaries. In the class-room, in the midst of house-work, in games and pastimes, high over all has been held that "sweetest name." Some have taken it into eternity; others, alas! have rejected it; many live to testify that He reigns in their hearts. The influence of this Home, who can estimate?

In Alaska a boy, under conviction, woke and prayed at midnight. The next morning he told his teacher he was "the sinnerest boy in the school."

The Indians of our Dominion.*

IN order to thoroughly understand the kind of work needed among our Indians, and their social and religious condition, it is well to know something of their history, and especially the story of their relations with white men. Most of the Indians, who are still pagan, in Canada gained their first knowledge of Europeans from the agents of the great Hudson's Bay Company. This company was incorporated in 1670, and first established its trading-posts along the shores of Hudson's Bay. For at least eighty years very little advance was made into the interior. But during the latter half of the last century and the early years of our own a forward movement took place. While the intenser interest of the conquest of Canada by the British, the War of Independence, followed by the rise of the new Republic and the migration into Canada of the United Empire Loyalists, and finally the war of 1812, occupied the attention of England and America, the Company had extended its outposts over a large part of what is now the Dominion. Their relations with the Indians were generally peaceable. The profits from the sale of furs must have been large, and the arms, blankets and other articles which they gave in exchange for them must have materially lessened the hardship of savage life. The system was one of mutual advantage, but was unfortunately of short duration. "After the cession of Canada to Great Britain, in 1763, numbers of fur-traders spread over that country and into the north-western parts of the continent, and began even to encroach on the Hudson's Bay Company territories. These individual speculators finally combined into the North-West Fur Company of Montreal. The fierce competition which at once sprang up between the companies was marked by features which sufficiently demonstrate the advantages of a monopoly in commercial dealings with savages. The Indians were demoralized, both body and soul, by the abundance of ardent spirits with which the rival traders sought to attract them to themselves. The supply of furs threatened soon to be exhausted by the indiscriminate slaughter; the worst passions of both whites and Indians were inflamed to their fiercest, and costly destruction of human life and property was the result." In 1821, the companies, mutually exhausted, united and worked together for a period of seventeen years. Since that time the Hudson's Bay Company has had a virtual monopoly of the fur trade, being able by their wealth and widespread organization to keep down the competition of private traders. Missionary effort has been encouraged, liquor withheld from the Indians, the killing of fur-bearing animals regulated, and generally an attempt made to heal the effects of the previous disorder.

Had the country remained in the hands of the Company, the need for energetic work would not be as great as it unfortunately is. But since 1859 the country has been open to all, and especially since the Dominion Government acquired the country the march of settlement has begun, and affairs have in many respects gone back to the state in which they were during the rivalry of the great fur companies. The Indians have been induced to give up their lands, and as fast as settlement advances toward them they are gathered into Reserves, which are sufficient to support them by cultivation, but not by hunting. The result is at once to pauperize them, for the Indian makes a poor farmer and takes long to learn. The control of the Company over them comes to an end with the inrush of more

*See article January MISSIONARY CAMPAIGNER, "Work Among the Indians, Its Claims and Needs."