

DIOCESE OF MACKENZIE RIVER.

Bishop Reeve, of Mackenzie River, continues to do his hard and extensive missionary work with his usual zeal. The following letter, descriptive of his work, has just reached us, and will be read with great interest by all. We are sure a strong effort will be made to help the bishop in his noble work.

St. David's Mission,

Fort Simpson, June, 1895.

"Being rather short of paper, and there being no stationer's shop within a thousand miles, I had thought of not sending a circular letter this summer; but the account of Mr. Stringer's visit to the Esquimaux is so interesting that it seems a pity to withhold it until next winter, so I will give a summary of it at once. There is also another reason which influences me. He intends visiting Ontario next winter (D.V.). What he has to tell cannot fail to arouse sympathy and interest, so this will prepare for his coming, and I trust many opportunities of telling about his work and its needs will be given him, and that our Lord's stewards will furnish all the help we need for the support of another laborer amongst these attractive but heathen people. Another laborer! We could do with two more, but one we ought to have at once, and Herschel Island seems to be the place which calls most loudly for his presence. This island is now a whaling station. No fewer than fifteen vessels have wintered there this year, so that there is quite a little colony of white people, and the presence of these ships and their crews attracts the Esquimaux from all parts of the Arctic coast, both from the east and west. Mr. Stringer says: "If a mission house could be built there, it would be a good place for a man to be stationed. There would be constant work so long as the ships winter there. At all times of the year there are Eskimos in the neighborhood. There are some there now from almost every mission and trading post, and tribe on the coast of Alaska. And more are coming, being attracted by the presence of the ships." He makes a significant allusion to those families that have "young women among their number," and adds: "Many of those young people, however, are anxious to learn to read and write, and by this means might be influenced for good, and taught more important things." There is also great danger of their being demoralized by "drink," for which some of the poor creatures are acquiring a taste. The presence of so many Esquimaux in the neighborhood, the opportunity of reaching the representatives of so many different tribes, their desire for instruction, their danger from the presence of unscrupulous white men, the restraining influence which the presence of a missionary might have upon the drink and other sinful traffic—everything seems to point to the pressing need of a missionary be-

ing stationed at Herschel Island without delay. The journey to and from the island was not accomplished without considerable difficulty and some danger. Starting from the village at the eastern mouth of the Mackenzie, and accompanied by two Indians in a canvas-covered canoe, he proceeded westward, from island to island and point to point, across the delta, and at two places had to make a traverse of fifteen miles on the open sea. These were passed safely, but shortly afterwards a storm detained them nearly a week in one place, and they ran completely out of provisions. Fortunately, a few miles distant on either side of them were some Esquimaux, who visited them, and were visited almost daily and shared with them their scanty supply of fish. The opportunity was seized for teaching their visitors, who were friendly and anxious to learn, and so the time was not lost. After reaching the island he held school and had prayers with the Esquimaux every day, in a large tent belonging to a chief from Point Harrow. At the sound of an extemporized gong, men, women, and children would flock from the other tents, and sometimes there was quite a respectable gathering. Singing was a difficulty at first. He says: "No one has ever been guilty of accusing me of knowing much about music, or being a very sweet or powerful singer; but I have always found that by means of singing one can generally get those people interested, and so I have struggled through. After a few nights some sailors who were ashore happened in, and remarked how wonderfully well the Huskies (Esquimaux) sang, and were surprised to hear it was only a few days before they had first heard the hymn. Some of those from the west had seen missionaries before, and seemed anxious to learn. I was much encouraged by the interest that some of them took. I wrote out a hymn, and before I left some of them could follow it on the paper. Two or three men especially used to come to me often to ask questions, and they also learned to repeat a short prayer." About a fortnight was spent thus, and then the lateness of the season compelled him to leave. An old whale boat given him by two of the captains enabled him to take a few supplies, and he accompanied some Esquimaux who were travelling eastward. He says: "We spent Sunday with a large party who were on their way to the island. We had a pleasant and profitable day together, and then started on again in company with three Husky boats. Then we fell in with another large party, some of whom I had never met before. They had just returned from a long deer hunt in the mountains. It was inspiring to see how eagerly they listened to every word that was said, and how soon they joined in the hymns and prayers. A few days were spent at this place, and I trust some good was done. One night as I sat by the fire warming myself (it