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HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 123—BISHOP BOMPAS AND THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.

THROUGH the kindness of the Rev. P. L. Spencer, rector of Thorold, diocese of Niagara (who obtained the photograph), we are able to present to our readers a portrait of the Rt. Rev. W. C. Bompas, as he appears at the present time, and also a picture of the

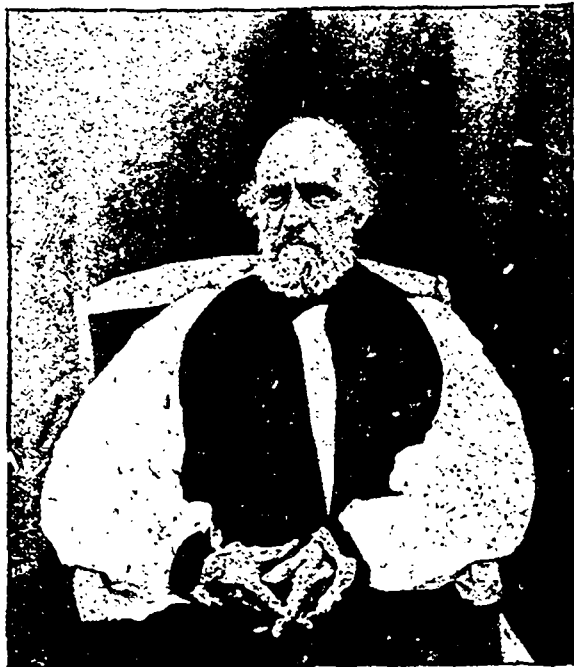
bishop's residence and storeroom. As far back as 1758 two missionary stations were established in the far north of British America, both within or close to the Arctic circle. One was Fort Yukon (in the neighborhood of what is now called Alaska) and the other Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie River. These were posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, and were established for the purpose of trading with the native Indians, who brought them from time to time valuable furs, which they obtained by hunting and trapping, and received in return blankets, ammunition, tobacco,

beads, red flannel, and various other articles pleasing to the simple tastes of the red man. These trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company always formed places of welcome for the Christian missionary. Here the weary man of God always knew that he would obtain rest and shelter, and frequently assistance, in the good work in which he was engaged. Such a welcome the Rev. Mr. Hunter, the Rev. W. W. Kirkby, and afterwards the Rev. R. Macdonald, had received at the distant Fort Yukon, and through it they were enabled to establish a good and substantial missionary work among the Indians of the frozen north.

In the same way work was established at Fort Simpson on the Mackenzie River, eight hundred miles southeast from Fort Yukon.

Thirty-one years ago (in 1865) the present Primate of all Canada, the Most Reverend Robert Machray, Archbishop of Rupert's Land, was consecrated bishop of the whole northwest of British North America, known in a vague sort of way as Kupert's Land. Immediately after his consecration, the Rev. W. C. Bompas, an English deacon of thirty

years of age, presented himself for ordination to the priesthood. He had been six years a deacon; now he sought the priesthood that he might go forth as a missionary to the dreary wilds of North America, and very appropriately was ordained by him who was to be his bishop. He immediately went to his new work under the auspices of the C.M.S. The destination assigned him was the Mackenzie River and the Yukon district. At that time the Rev. Mr. Kirkby was at Fort Simpson, and the Rev. Mr. Macdonald at Fort Yukon, with a dreary waste of eight hundred miles between them.



THE RT. REV. W. C. BOMPAS, D.D.,
Bishop of Selkirk

The journey of Mr. Bompas from London to Fort Simpson is one of the most interesting records of missionary travel to be met with anywhere. The latter portion of it was taken by canoe and on foot, by dog sleighs (as the winter came on) and on snow-shoes. He arrived at Fort Simpson on the morning of Christmas day, 1865, having left England about the first of July. He arrived unexpectedly, to the great delight of Mr. Kirkby, and preached the Christmas sermon from the words, "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy." The church preached in was a handsome structure for such a distant place. It was erected