

LIGHT AT EVENTIDE

hands with them as old friends, she said, 'Bishop has gone.' The woman looked interested, thinking she meant he had gone to visit some of the other missions. Mrs. Bompas tried to explain. 'Bishop dead three days,' she said. Then the truth seemed to dawn on the Indian woman, and she repeated, with rising inflection, 'Bishop dead? Bishop dead? Bishop dead?' at the same time giving vent to such a wail as I scarcely ever heard from a human being. I then realized more than ever how much the loss of our dear Bishop meant to his own people, the Indians."

All men had a profound respect for Bishop Bompas, especially the hardy prospectors. They had endured so much on the lonely trails that they looked upon the Bishop as one of themselves, who had not spent his life in ease and luxury, but struggling with Nature at her sternest. In speaking of the late Bishop, a prospector at Carcross said:

"I feel as if I had lost my best friend. Sometimes some of us were hard up—no funds and no food; but we always felt we could turn to the Bishop for help. We knew that to knock at his door and ask him if there was any odd job we could do meant always, and especially if the Bishop knew we were hard up, that he would find something for us to do—now some wood to get, or, again, some stove-pipe to fix, or a few nails to drive for Mrs. Bompas, or some other work that would give him the opportunity to pay us sufficient to keep body and soul together."

Bishop Stringer, who records this conversation, also mentions that on the Mackenzie River he once met a miner who had been in Dawson in the early days. "When asked if he knew Bishop Bompas, he said he thought he had seen him. When he was described as a pioneer in the land, he suddenly exclaimed: 'Oh yes; that's the man who wrote the book.