



Christmas In— Old Cariboo.

Written expressly for the Recorder by

REV. JOSEPH HALL.

Dear old Cariboo, our lady of the snows, from the bed-rock of whose streams and gulches, and from whose gold-laden gravels probably not less than fifty millions of dollars have been taken. Though the primitive methods of mining, by which this vast sum has been secured, will no longer avail, yet doubtless the precious metal still exists in many places, unexplorable by the poor man, in as large quantities as have been found in the past. This conviction, which has always been held by the prospector who knew Cariboo at its best, has been confirmed by the best skill and experience of the most recent experts. In the strength of this conviction a single company has recently expended no less a sum than \$300,000 in the way of preliminary work with the hope of obtaining gold in quantities sufficient to abundantly repay them for this very large expenditure. May success crown all the labors of our Cariboo citizens in their laudable undertakings.

But the subject assigned me does not relate to the present. And as to Cariboo as I knew it, the mists of a quarter of a century are rendering indistinct many memories which I would have remain vivid. The term of the itinerancy having expired, the inevitable removal took place, and this scene of my earliest labors in British Columbia has never been revisited.

Half a lifetime has elapsed since I found myself looking upon the two-roomed parsonage which had just been vacated by the now long-sainted Rev. Thomas Derrick. It was at a point on the Yale-Cariboo road between Cook's Ferry and Cache Creek that the two stage coaches met halting long enough for the two Methodist preachers, one from each to dismount, greet each other for the first time, interchange a few items of intelligence, the elder bestow upon the younger his fatherly benediction, and resume our places in the stages. A chirp to the horses by the driver and a crack of his whip, and the two coaches going in opposite directions were soon out of sight of each other.

It was the beginning of the sixth year of my ministry, and the first of my full connection with the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist church in Canada. I was unmarried; my partner in house-keeping was Mr. John Mundell, a devout Presbyterian now of Comox, who was teaching school in Barkerville, and had for some time before my reaching Cariboo occupied the parsonage with my predecessor.

I recall with pleasure the little band of faithful souls who held the fort at the little church in Barkerville in the name of the Methodist church, not because they were all Methodists in their form of belief, but because it there represented evangelical Christianity to which they were all ardently attached. Independent,

Presbyterian,

(2) George Ferguson, a primitive Methodist local preacher from Northumbria, England; and for one parliament, a representative of Cariboo District in the Provincial Legislature.

(3) John Lumsley, an Independent from Wales, Cromwellian in his sturdiness, but with a heart tender as a child.

(4) John Mundell, the Presbyterian brother of whom I have already spoken.

(5) John Anderson, a colored brother from Philadelphia, where he had his membership in the M. E. church; a gentle and faithful soul who sleeps in God's acre on the hill near Barkerville, around which spot gathers so much of the pathetic and of the tragic.

(6) and (7) Mr. and Mrs. Price, Baptists from Wales, who were somewhat advanced in life to endure the severities of that semi-Arctic climate. They left Cariboo many years ago, but where they now live, or whether they still survive I do not know.

It was a very blessed privilege, that of communing Sabbath by Sabbath, at least, with these devout few, faithful among the faithless, holy amid the profane, heavenly-minded amongst the



Rev. Thos. Crosby in Chief's Costume.

Presbyterian and Baptist, as well as Methodist. All attended class, and enjoyed together in hallowed fellowship the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. These were they to whom for the first time after my ordination I administered the sacrament. They were seven—the perfect number, and their names I sub-join.

(1) The venerable and venerated Father Gilbert Munro, who during many recent years resided in Chilliwack; indeed, until March of the present year, when full of years and strong in faith, God took him home to the house of the many

worldly, men who like Moses, "endured as seeing him who is invisible," and "had respect unto the recompense of the reward," and like the patriarchs, "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

As to Christmas, I feel some surprise and regret that the incidents of my first Cariboo Christmas have quite passed from my recollection. It is not because Christmas was not made much of in Cariboo. On the contrary, it was observed as a season of peculiar hilarity by the part of the population who wintered there, as a considerable part