

With admirable tact Mr. Duncan suppressed attempts to do violence, and went to England and to Ottawa seeking relief. He obtained promises, but relief never came. Then he resigned his position as president of the village council, and prepared to leave the colony, thinking that by his absence the breach might be healed ; but the Indians, in full assembly, unanimously recalled him to the leadership, promising to stand by him at all hazards. By the advice of his friends in Victoria he consented to return after a short vacation.

But what could the people do ? They could not live in peace with the Bishop, and they had already been informed that the adherents of Mr. Duncan had no claim to the mission grounds, nor to the soil on which their ancestors had lived for a century. Consequently, to abandon the place seemed to be the only alternative ; and finally they resolved to seek a refuge beyond the dominion of ecclesiastical tyranny. Annette Island in Alaska, uninhabited, and only ninety miles distant, seemed to be a favorable location.

Mr. Duncan was deputed by the Indians to go to Washington and obtain, if possible, the permission to settle in that island, and such exemptions from duties as could legally be granted them. He bore with him a remarkable document, a part of which is here copied :

VICTORIA, B. C., Nov. 16, 1886.

To the Lovers of Civil and Religious Liberty in America:

The bearer, Mr. William Duncan, for thirty years a devoted missionary of religion and civilization in North British America * * is on his way to Washington, deputed by the native Christian brethren of Metlakatla to confer with the United States authorities on matters affecting their interests and desires.

Like the Pilgrim fathers of old, this afflicted but prospering and thrifty flock seek a refuge from grievous wrongs, and hope to find it under the American flag.