

FORWARD TO THE FRONT

"As I had especially wished to arrive by Christmas, I could not but acknowledge a remarkable token that our lives are indeed in God's hand. It is hardly needful to say how warm a welcome I received from Mr. Kirkby. When I heard what a trying time he had passed through last fall in consequence of the epidemic sickness among the Indians, I felt very glad to have persevered in my efforts to reach him this winter."

No less enthusiastically did Mr. Kirkby write to the Church Missionary Society on June 3, 1886:

"You will imagine, better than I can tell, what a delight and surprise the unexpected arrival of Mr. Bompas was to us. He reached us in health and safety on Christmas morning, making the day too doubly happy by his presence and glad tidings that he brought. He was a Christmas-box indeed, and one for which we thank God with a full heart. The entire unexpectedness of his coming caused us to see in it more of the loving-kindness of our God. Such a thing as an arrival here in winter is never thought of, nor had it ever before occurred. After the boats leave here in the fall we have no visitors from without the district until now, when the waters are open again. Our dear brother deserves the greatest credit for the way in which he persevered in getting to us, and the accomplishment of his journey speaks much for his energy and determination. A more auspicious day, too, he could not have had for his arrival. He was just in time for morning service, so that we had at once the happiness of partaking of the Holy Communion together. Then followed the Indian service, in which he expressed much delight; and in the evening, like good Samuel Marsden of old, he began his work by preaching from St. Luke xi. 10. He remained with us until Easter, and then went on with the packet-men to Great Bear Lake, where I trust God is doubly blessing him.