



WINNIPEG TWENTY YEARS AGO.

formed Diocese of Selkirk, which was described in the last issue of this magazine. It contains about 20,000 square miles. The Christian Indians are all connected with the C.M.S. Missions, and a most encouraging field of labour offers among the unevangelized tribes.

In Mackenzie River the majority of the Indians are nominally Roman Catholics. The agents of Rome outnumber us three to one, counting workers of both sexes on either side.

Mackenzie River Diocese contains about 600,000 square miles, more than twice as large as the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

The difficulties of the work may be summed up as follows:—

(1) *Language.* Each tribe speaks a different dialect, which must be reduced to writing before books can be printed.

(2) *The immense size of the country* to be traversed, whether in summer by boat, or in winter by dog-sleighs, or on snowshoes, progress is very slow. Lately steamers have been placed on the Mackenzie and Lake Athabasca by the Hudson's Bay Company, which will do something to mitigate this evil.

(3) *Scarcity of Food.* This has already been referred to. It often makes it impossible to go to visit the Indians in the woods, or to stay with them even when they can be reached. For the same reason it is hard for the Indians to stay long at the Hudson's Bay Company's

post, where the missions are. The struggle for daily food soon drives them to the hunting grounds.

(4) *The migratory habits of the people.* As we have said they cannot go in large bands, or live together in any one spot, and in any case must move camp every two or three days. This is one of the most serious difficulties in the way of missionaries. It is impossible to live amongst them, so as to give them regular instruction.

(5) As might be expected there is *much opposition from the Roman Catholic priests and half-breeds.*

(6) Lastly, there is the scarcity of labourers. Here, as elsewhere in the mission field, our stations are undermanned. Too often our substitutes in those distant fields have to labour alone amid privations and hardships, and, for months at a time, isolated from the rest of the world. This ought not to be. Each station should have at least two men, and wherever possible a woman, to do such work as belongs of right to her, in ministering to her own sex. To furnish these is the privilege, as it should be the ambition, of the Canadian Church. Now a word or two as to progress.

Twenty years ago there were only three missionaries and two stations: one at Fort Simpson, the other at Fort Youcon. Athabasca and Mackenzie River formed part of Rupert's Land. Now both have a bishop, clergy, churches and