

Work for God at Home and Abroad.

VISIT TO THE INDIANS OF THE RED RIVER.

DIOCESE OF RUPERT'S LAND.



ON Saturday Mr. — lent us his horse and buggy, to drive down to S. Peter's, an Indian settlement on the Red River bank. It was quite a new experience. The road runs by the side of the river all the way, and the view is very pretty. On either side of the stream are the cottages belonging to the Indians and half-breeds; they are quite close together, so that you seem to be passing through a long village all the way. Each cottage has a plot of ground attached to it, which is more or less in a state of cultivation, and fenced in with a good stout fence.

About four miles down the stream on the opposite side is a fine stone church, and on this side of the stream a stone house, very large and substantial. This is where Archdeacon Cowley used to live, who founded the Indian Mission many years ago. He died last fall, and I believe his family lives there now.

We drove about two miles further on, and arrived at the Treaty Ground. It was Treaty time, and all the Indians had come from far and near to receive their Treaty money and rations from Government. It was a regular Indian fair. Many had come in boats, and there was a perfect fleet of boats, barges, and canoes drawn up on the beach, the canoes made of birch bark. There were hundreds of tents, or tepees, as they are called, pitched on the grounds. Some were encamped under booths made from the branches of trees—a sort of Feast of Tabernacles, one might imagine it. Of course there were a goodly number of refreshment and fancy booths, where everything was tricked out to attract the Indians by their love of colour, and the inevitable circus with the young man outside inviting all to walk up and see the finest show in the world for 25 cents. The Indian tents are more like gipsy tents than anything else. A framework is made of light poles, either round or conical, and a covering of canvas or birch bark stretched over them. Babies, like little bronze cupids, were sleeping in hammocks slung from the trees; ponies and oxen, tethered, or tied to the Red River carts, were

browsing behind the tents. We passed along through all this, when suddenly we came to a large open space of about an acre of ground. There were tents all round, and on the ground, in an immense circle, like children at a school treat, was the largest collection of Indian squaws and children I ever saw—of all ages and complexions: chubby little babies, children, girls and boys, buxom young mothers, and withered old hags, just skin and bone. Their complexions varied from white to the darkest copper. They were all apparently in the very best spirits, talking and laughing away in the most lively manner. The rations were given under the direction of the chief and his counsellors, and were served out by the Commissioners. Each woman had a bag of flour, and in the centre of the ground there was a pile of bacon cut into pieces of uniform size, representing a good many pigs. This was also served out, as well as some tea. I never saw such a well-behaved crowd in my life. There was no whisky allowed on the ground this year, as before there has been a good deal of trouble on that account. They were altogether a most fascinating party, and I could hardly tear myself away from them. The chief is a grand-looking old man, tall and stout and very dark, the result of some prison which he had taken by mistake. He wore a loose canvas coat, and a black felt hat with a gold lace band. He was assisted by his counsellors, intelligent men, dressed, like park-keepers, in dark blue coats and brass buttons, with red collars and pocket-flaps. As we were going away we saw the women busied in getting the evening meal. They had some very good boiled fish and potatoes, and were frying bannocks, made of flour and water, in frying pans over camp fires; the result smelt very good.

We drove home again, and got in about six o'clock, pretty well tired with our sight-seeing.

THE CHURCH EXTENSION ASSOCIATION.

JOTTINGS FROM OUR JOURNAL.

LETTERS of thanks again from a foreign mission which has benefited by the liberality of readers of the BANNER OF FAITH. This is very satisfactory. It shows that many of our