

## THE POLICEMAN'S NEWS

away. They were obliged to travel overland with pack dogs, as although Lake Rouvier empties into Great Bear Lake by the River Dease, this did not furnish a waterway. Passing the place where Stefansson camped in 1910-11 and his sled-making place, through a koppe-like country, on the 28th they crossed Lake Rouvier on the ice and arrived at the tiny cabin which they found in ruins, with nothing to indicate where were the missing priests. Then they sadly retraced their steps and arrived at their winter quarters on October 4th, having travelled over 180 miles.

Nothing could be done in the dead winter months, but almost at once after the Equinox, and on March 20th, the Inspector set out for the mouth of the Coppermine River, taking with him one Constable and the invaluable Ilavnik. They arrived at their destination in 32 days, and two days after met Corporal Bruce 35 miles east of the mouth. Bruce had been detailed in August, 1915, by the Inspector at Herschell Island at the very north of the Yukon Territory, to investigate the disappearance of the priests; coming to Coronation Gulf into which the Coppermine empties, he found early in September that Uluksak, an Eskimo who had been seen by members of the Canadian Arctic Expedition wearing a priest's cassock had a "cache" on a small rocky island in the outer harbour of Bernard Harbour, some 50 or 60 miles north of the mouth of the Coppermine. Accompanied by a naturalist of the Arctic Expedition he searched the cache and found amongst other things, a priest's cassock marked "R. Père Rouvier," a French R. C. Bible lesson-book and a small brass R. C. communion plaque. In October he found in another Eskimo's possession a "Psalterium Breviarium Romani"—in November, Uluksak who was an "Angatkok" or "Shaman" (i.e. priest pretending to and credited with spiritualistic powers) and was considered by the Eskimos to have great command



ESKIMOS VISITING THE R. N. W. M. POLICE TENT AT INNUAIRNERIT

over the spirits, came to the camp of the Arctic Expedition and before he left he had been induced by a member of the Expedition to barter for cartridges the French Bible lesson-book, a Latin Breviary with Father Le Roux' name on the fly-leaf, a crucifix and rosaries which had been the property of the unfortunate priests.

Bruce found various stories concerning the priests: some saying that Uluksak shot them, others that they were spirits which Uluksak shot instead of white men—Uluksak boasted much of his own Shamanistic powers such as living under water for two or three days at a time, bringing dead men to life, turning men and women into wolves and musk-oxen, seeing white men with mouths on their chests and dogs with four tails, etc., etc.; he did not as yet, however, confess to crime but said the articles had been given to him by a white man.

When Inspector LaNauze fell in with Corporal Bruce, May 2, 1916, Bruce had almost made up his mind that the priests might have got safe back to Great Bear

Lake and that the Inspector might have turned back accordingly. He now told his story and the Inspector decided to work westward, visit all the Eskimos en route, and find Uluksak: in a few days they came across a large Eskimo village and Ilavnik and the Inspector letting the people talk, the tragedy was revealed.

Two days after the priests had left for their upward voyage, two men, Uluksak and Sinnisiak, started to follow them, saying that they were going to help the priests: a few nights afterwards they returned carrying the priests' rifles and told the Eskimos that they had killed the priests near the Bloody Falls on the Coppermine.

### SINNISIAK CONFESSES TO CRIME

The Inspector learned that Sinnisiak was believed to be somewhere on Victoria Land (across the Gulf from the mainland) on the ice, and Uluksak east of the Coppermine. After six days' travel Sinnisiak was arrested, stunned with fear of instant death and with a loaded .22 automatic rifle and two large knives hidden under the deerskins at his back. Notwithstanding his threat to "make medicine and the ship will go down and all be drowned," he was taken away.

When they got back to Bernard Harbour, there was a formal charge laid before the Inspector as a Magistrate and the prisoner made a voluntary confession, claiming self defence. He was left with Bruce; and the Inspector with his constable and Ilavnik went after Uluksak. It may seem dangerous to have left but one man in charge of a prisoner amid his tribe of natives: but that is our Canadian way. From the time in 1794 when one constable was sent to arrest a Six Nation Indian in his village, although Joseph Brant was strongly insisting that the Six Nations were an allied nation and not British subjects, through the time when in 1804 a single Toronto constable arrested on



R. N. W. M. POLICE WINTER QUARTERS IN 1915  
It was here that the Reverend Fathers, Le Roux and Rouvier, made their base