

NELSON RIVER.

From the REV. J. SEMMENS, dated Nelson River, December 10th, 1875.

I have not grown forgetful of the fact that occasional reports from out-standing stations are looked for at the Mission Rooms. The long, long time that has elapsed since my last was written has not been the result of careless indifference. There are certain seasons when the transmission of letters or messages from this solitude is an impossibility, and the past four months have constituted a somewhat protracted period of this kind. The Hon. Hudson's Bay Company did not as usual send a canoe southward in September, and the consequence has been an entire cessation of all communication between ourselves and the outer world for the third part of a year. Now, however, for reasons which will soon be mentioned we are preparing for a winter trip to Norway House, and will be our own mail-carrier to the extent of two hundred miles.

It seems a late day now to be informing you that the mission-house at Nelson River was completed on the 20th of August last, and at once taken possession of in the name of the Methodist Missionary Society. It is a high, roomy, well-lighted and substantial building, provided with garret and cellar, plastered with mud and roofed with bark. Though not the most handsome of edifices, it is, all things considered, by no means uncouth. Certainly this river has nothing like it on all its banks. The entire cost is \$340 67, an amount which in a large measure owes its dwarfishness to the personal exertions of the present occupant. We have also erected a small fish-house close by, with dog-yard attached, at no expense to the Society; and are preparing timber for a kitchen on the same terms. So that our successor will find a comfortable home awaiting him when he arrives.

We were greatly surprised and

have been wonderfully inconvenienced by the non-arrival of our supplies last summer. They were ordered in December, 1874, but failed to reach Norway House in time for Nelson River Brigade, which left for this post July 31st, 1875. It seems that it was impossible to obtain shipment from Red River at a sufficiently early date, owing to some confusion in Hudson's Bay Company's traffic Roderick Ross, Esq., kindly forwarded us some flour and salt beef to keep us from starvation in our extremity, and well he did, for our circumstances necessitated speedy relief. Many thanks are due to him for this and hosts of other kindnesses. The small supply thus thoughtfully sent us was, however, insufficient for a winter of eight months duration, and we were compelled to have recourse to a canoe voyage. Other reasons prompted this course as well. We had no cooking utensils, no table or household furniture of any kind whatever, no tools to make what was necessary to comfort. There seemed no other way open to us than to bring a few essentials from our nearest market. To avoid expense and for other reasons, we went in person, and paddled, and portaged, and suffered on the same footing with our companions. In twenty days we were back with nearly 500 lbs of purchases, but the difficulties of the way will never be forgotten. I will not weary you with details. Suffice it to say that though I had seen toil and endured hardships, and been exposed to dangers before, I never knew aught like that. We conquered, however; we accomplished our purpose; we were brought to our desired haven.

Immediately after our return we began the fall fishing. Very limited success crowned our efforts. Fishing has been a failure with every one here this year, and especially with us