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Our Missionaries on the Yukon.

The editorial secretary of the C. C. M. A. received lately via San Francisco two interesting letters from the Upper Yukon district, N. W. T.—one from Bishop Bompas, who has been over thirty years in the far north, the other from Rev. F. F. Flewelling, who left Toronto for this field in the spring of 1896.

Bishop Bompas writes from Buxton Mission, Upper Yukon river. After thanking the C. C. M. A. for the efforts made to obtain funds for Selkirk, he says:—"This district is likely now by present appearances to develop rapidly. The valuable gold mines opened up this winter about fifty miles south of this place have already gathered to them about 1,000 miners, and 5,000 more are expected this summer. Some of the mining claims there are estimated to be worth half a million dollars, and there is a good deal of excitement about them. Such a large influx of people demands more churches and schools. We must trust to a kind Providence to supply men and means.

"The sudden rise of this cold, bare, and neglected region from poverty to wealth is a singular instance of God's wonderful working. He putteth down one and lifteth up another."

"Rev. H. A. Naylor was admitted to priests' orders and the Rev. F. F. Flewelling to deacons' orders on the 28th of March. They are both doing well. I anticipate that it may be expedient to locate them both for next winter at Dawson City, in the neighbourhood of the new mines, the Rev. Mr. Naylor principally for the whites, and Rev. Mr. Flewelling specially for the Indians."

Mr. Flewelling writes later from Dawson City N. W. T., under date of June 17th. He says:—"Klondyke, or Dawson City as it is now called, is a town of three or four thousand inhabitants this spring. * * * * *

"In this country there is scarcely any coin, but business is transacted with this gold dust, and every man carries his 'gold sack,' a bag made of mouse skin, sometimes holding only a few ounces, or again holding two or three hundred ounces. The dust passes at the rate of \$17 to the ounce. The other diggings are nearly deserted, and all the miners are here. The miners, as a class, are a goodnatured, free-and-easy sort of men, but inclined to be ungodly and rough. Many of them only make money to squander at saloons in awful carousals. Liquor

is never scarce, while men often suffer from hunger. Because more money is made on liquor, it is brought in first, food supplies afterwards. This was the reason why some of the boats laden with provisions were caught in the ice last autumn, causing great suffering, while the boats with liquor arrived in the summer.

"At the stores here goods cost from four to ten times as much as outside. Flour, \$12 per 100 lbs. Canned goods, fruit, meat, and vegetables, 75c. per can. Kerosene \$1 per gallon, etc. The missionaries buy their supplies in Victoria and ship them by the Alaska Commercial Co., of San Francisco. Freight costs about 10c. per lb. A missionary coming here should bring at least a year's supply of clothing, etc. In winter it is sometimes 70° below zero, and in summer 110° above. A difference of 70° in 24 hours is not unusual, from 30° above to 40° below, or from 110° above to near freezing point.

"My work is entirely with the Indians in this place. Last autumn the Indians sold their rights to the old village site, being influenced by some white men, and so this spring were obliged to move off. The land question is rather complicated here. The nearest spot of undisputed ground lies about two miles below the old village, and to avoid any future trouble I made application to buy 40 acres there for an Indian village. I am now living in a tent on this new site, and have men at work up the Yukon getting logs for my mission house, while I am busy clearing the ground—healthy, but blistering work. Owing to lack of funds I can at present only put up one building, which will have to be used as a dwelling-house, school, and church: this will cost \$1200 of which the Bishop allows \$500, and a Christian miner has given \$700. The Indians like to come to the services, and join heartily in the singing.

"This is our spring season, and the flowers are in bloom. There are many varieties, and some very familiar ones, but all without scent. The prevailing color is purple. This is the mosquito season, too, and they are maddening. They are everywhere in myriads, and their humming makes even the stouthearted tremble. One has to eat, sleep, write, and do everything else that keeps one still, under mosquito netting. The work is hard and discouraging, but when done for Christ's sake, and in His name, hope brightens, and there is more than a reward even here in the peace and quiet of His presence."