

Gospel. They also go to him for stores, but although their wants are few and simple the supply is not nearly equal to the demand. The Bishop of Mackenzie River Diocese, the Right Rev. W. C. Bompas, who since his consecration in 1874 has worked amongst these Indians, living in their huts and sharing their scanty fare, without a single holiday, thus writes of them :—

In Arctic regions hearts are found
That with the love of Christ abound ;
That joy the whole day long to pore
O'er lesson book of sacred lore ;
That gladly leave the reindeer chase
To meet the messenger of grace ;
And humbly learn in frozen air
To trust a Heavenly Father's care ;
Do not these exiles put to shame
Some who disgrace the Christian name
In lands that centuries ago
The Word of Truth were taught to know ?

In a letter which I had recently from Mrs. Bompas there was enclosed among others a long one from Mrs. Canham, written in August last, a few extracts from which may be interesting, giving some idea of the difficulties under which missionaries labor. She says, "We were a good deal knocked about at first ; for a month we had to put up with a bed in one corner of the public room in the trader's house." This trader and his wife, who could speak only Russian, had six children and "the Indians coming in and out all day," she says, "we never had a moment to ourselves. Then the Alaska Commercial Company gave us one of their outhouses for a year, charging \$75 for it ; such a wretched, tumble-down old place, yet we got through the winter without even a cold, so loving and good is our Heavenly Father in His care of us. Our house consisted of two rooms, one we use as bed-room, store and other purposes, the other, our sitting room, has to do for holding prayers, school, cooking, eating and receiving the Indians in. We are never alone. Mr. Frederickson writes that he thinks of sending us two of his little girls to educate. I cannot refuse to take them or they will be handed over to the priests, but it is no easy matter, circumstanced as we are, to add to our household just now, but I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. We have many blessings and many mercies, and God, even our own God, is ever with us to bless us and cheer us under all our difficulties." . . . "The people were very rude and noisy at first, and there was no reverence at all observed during service. The men came in with their hats, pipes in mouth, and kept up a conversation whenever there was a pause ; women shrieking at their children, and giving them a severe cuff every now and then. I am thankful to say there is a decided change for the better ; they only want to be taught and they will improve." . . . "We have a school of an average from 25 to 30 scholars, but we have been wretchedly off for school material, having only three slates, a few reading and copy books. Mr.

Canham had to chalk the alphabet on a piece of blackened canvas. They are trying to get a house and school house built (a church is quite beyond them), but so great are the difficulties they have them only half completed. Mrs. Canham says she would be glad to get a bell, a small harmonium, a book with simple tunes, etc., but she adds "Do not think I shall expect any of these things for a long time. I know something of the difficulty there is in raising money for any charitable object, no matter how excellent it may be." There are several other interesting items in the letter, but time and space prevent giving more.

We thought until lately that we were alone in working for this mission, but I read a day or two ago that the Woman's Auxiliary at Sherbrooke, Quebec, have undertaken to pay the expense of educating a young Indian to be placed with Mr. and Mrs. Canham, to be called George Sherbrooke.

This is thought the easiest and most effectual way of civilizing and Christianizing the Indians, namely teaching the children while their natures are soft and plastic, as you can make more impression in one minute on soft clay, than you can in an hour on hard brick.

The customs and beliefs of these Indians are very strange. The Esquimaux, who are found chiefly in Alaska and along the Arctic Sea, live in round, mound-like houses, with one door and without windows or ventilation. They consider whale-blubber a great delicacy, and are clad in furs, except when they can get the clothing of civilization, which they are not slow to adopt.

The medicine man is a great institution among the Indians. He has to go through a most sickening ordeal before he is a full-fledged doctor, among other things eat the flesh of several dogs raw and bleeding. If any one dies from an accident it is caused by an evil spirit, and they have numerous charms and orgies to drive these evil spirits away.

But while we are amused and wonder at these strange doings, we must not forget that we owe a debt to the Indian. We must remember that in by-gone days the Indians claimed their birth-right. They roamed free and unrestrained over these vast acres we now call our own without a thought of an intruder.

But the white man came and wrested their hunting grounds and their homes from them, and ever since has been driving them farther and farther back over the prairies and into the dark recesses of the forest.

And what have we done for them in return ? We have taught them to drink whiskey—"fire-water," as they call it. We have taught them other vices too. But we are thankful to say we have taught them some Christianity, and for this we have been richly repaid ; for during the Northwest rebellion of 1885, all the Christian Indians were loyal and "true as steel !"

Have we not then cause for encouragement ? and shall we not awake to greater zeal and earnest-