

THE CANADIAN CHURCH MAGAZINE

• • AND MISSION NEWS • •

Published by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada.

VOL. V.

TORONTO, JULY, 1891.

No. 61.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 61.—REV. W. W. KIRKBY.



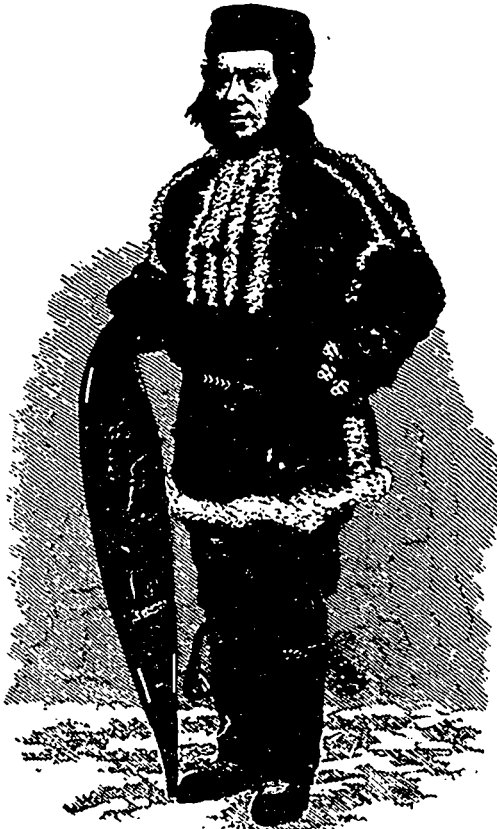
At the annual Diocesan Meeting of the Woman's Auxiliary of Toronto, held in that city on the 21st of May last, the visiting speaker was the Rev. W. W. Kirkby, Rector of Christ Church, Rye, New York, who gave many interesting and some amusing incidents of his early missionary days. As these days were spent in our own North-West, it may be interesting here to give some idea of his work in that "Lone Land." Our information is gathered chiefly from *The Church Missionary Gleaner* for August, 1874.

In November, 1848, the friends of the Church Missionary Society in England were celebrating its jubilee all over the world. In the Village of Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, as in other places, a jubilee meeting was held on the 1st of that month, and then and there a young man of eighteen, named William West Kirkby, received his first impulse towards missionary work. After four years necessary training he was ready for his work, and in June, 1852, was sent out to Rupert's Land as a school-master to superintend the school there, and to establish a training school for native teachers.

For seven years Mr. Kirkby laboured diligently and usefully at St. Andrew's, Red River (Manitoba), first as a school-master and then as a clergyman, being ordained by Bishop Anderson, deacon in December, 1854, and priest a year later. The work there was purely pastoral, the Indian and half-breed settlers all professed Christianity; but even under these favourable circumstances the duties of a missionary are more burdensome than one would imagine,

chiefly because he must do everything himself. Mr. Kirkby, however, was soon to enter upon a very different sphere of labour, and to bid adieu for many years to even the comforts afforded by such a place as Red River—cheerless enough in those days. His post of duty was to be in the far north, which he was to occupy, so far as one man can occupy a territory as large as Europe. His head-quarters were to be at Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie River, (which must not be con-

founded with the other Fort Simpson, near Metlahkatlah, in the northern part of British Columbia). A fair idea of Fort Simpson with its church and other buildings may be got from the accompanying picture, which, of course, represents it as it appears in summer. From its proximity, however, to the Arctic regions, the summer season is very short, lasting for only four months, during which the sun is very hot and shines nearly all the time, rising at two o'clock in the morning and not setting till ten o'clock in the evening. In the winter months the reverse of this is the case. There is a night of twenty hours duration, the sun appearing for four hours only, viz., from ten o'clock a.m. to two o'clock in the afternoon. How dreary must these long hours of no sunshine be!



REV. W. W. KIRKBY IN EARLY DAYS.

Indeed, the whole territory was dreary in those days. When Mr. Kirkby

first arrived from England with his young wife, both of them, indeed, young and inexperienced, he tells us himself that the first thing they did was "to sit down and have a good cry." While on the Hudson's Bay ship that was bringing them out they had friends and companions, but when the ship sailed off and left them strangers indeed in a desolate land, a feeling of utter loneliness for the moment stole over them. However, this was soon mastered, and for seven and