



THE EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE, MACKENZIE RIVER.

OUR PARISHES AND CHURCHES.

No. 91—THE CATHEDRAL OF MACKENZIE RIVER.

THROUGH the kindness of a friend we are able to present our readers with views of Bishop Reeves' cathedral and Episcopal residence. In the group at the "palace" door stands the bishop himself—on the left—taller than the rest; taller it would almost appear than the door itself!

These missionary buildings are situated at Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie River. This Fort Simpson must not be confounded with another of the same name in British Columbia, near Metlakahla. It is situated on the Mackenzie River. It will be found on the map about midway between Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake. It owes its origin as a fort to the Hudson's Bay Co. The forts of this company were for a long time the only spots of civilization in the whole of British Northwest America, and around them, in time, clustered the missionary. Though the missionary has gone to the loneliest spots to be found in the Great Northwest, still it was pleasant for him at times to encounter one of these forts, and meet with men of his own country and training.

It was first visited in 1858 by Rev. Mr. Hunter, who was afterwards made an archdeacon. But Rev. W. W. Kirkby, now Archdeacon Kirkby, and resident in the United States, was the first missionary who took up his residence there. It was he who built the church, school, and mission house. Afterwards Fort Simpson became the headquarters of Bishop Bompas, and from thence he made his long journeys, both before and after his

consecration, to Great Slave Lake, Great Bear Lake, the Youkon River, Peace River, etc.

Here in 1869 came from England the Rev. William Dey Reeve and his wife, a young couple, ready to brave the rigors and deprivations of missionary work in an Arctic climate. After long and faithful work in this inhospitable region, Mr. Reeve was made archdeacon, and subsequently, in 1891, bishop—the heroic Bishop Bompas having resigned to take up the work of the new diocese of Selkirk still farther to the north and west.

We learn from Dr. J. George Hodgins' excellent little Handbook of the Church of England Missions in the Northwest that the clergy of Mackenzie River are:—

The Venerable Archdeacon Macdonald, St. Matthew's Mission, Peel's River; the Rev. John Itssietla, a native deacon, the archdeacon's assistant; Rev. I. O. Stringer, missionary to the Esquimaux along the Arctic coast; Rev. J. Hawksley, Holy Trinity Mission, Fort Horman; Rev. W. Spendlove, Fort Resolution, Great Slave Lake; Rev. T. J. Marsh, Hay River Mission, Great Slave Lake; Rev. Mr. Marriott, St. Philip's Mission, Fort Wrigley.

The stations in the two extremes of the diocese are more than 1,100 miles apart, and the nearest are nearly two hundred miles from each other.

In a letter recently written to the Colonial and Continental Church Society the bishop says of Fort Simpson and Peel's River:—

"Fort Simpson, my headquarters, was the scene of my first labors in the mission field twenty-three years ago. On returning to it, after an absence of thirteen years, many changes are noticeable, and many memories, some sad, some pleasant, are awakened."

"Peel's River is in the land of the Midnight Sun. To see the sun at midnight, you must arrive not later than the end of June. The ride thither down the majestic Mackenzie River would give you great pleasure. Its immense extent, its great width, its long reaches, some of them stretching far beyond the horizon; its high banks, the lofty hills bare and barren, some of them hiding their heads in the clouds; the solitude, the stillness, the dearth of animal life—all this is so different from what it is in England. Arriving at Peel's River and receiving a warm grasp of the hand from the Indians and others, we are cheered to know that, whereas at nearly all the other posts Romanism is predominant, here the reverse is the case. Archdeacon Macdonald has labored long and faithfully amongst them, and has been