

ALASKA,

AND

MISSIONS ON THE NORTH PACIFIC COAST.

BY

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FULLY ILLUSTRATED.

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were too shy to come to me I would go to them. I rented an old log building on the point in their neighborhood and opened school. I have from forty-five to sixty in attendance. I teach them from the blackboard. This school meets in the afternoon. After I had gone a few times they asked me if I would not come Sunday and have church for them. Consequently I hold a little service with them on the Sabbath afternoons. They seem much interested. By and by I hope they may be induced to attend the other church and school.

“ We have had more witchcraft here, and the effect has been very bad on the minds of the young people. Some of my brightest and best scholars have been led away by it. As we have no kind of law, none of the whites felt that they had any right to interfere. It has frequently been said to me, ‘ If you will get a minister here, so that the Indians will see that he is permanent, and one who will make them understand he is determined to break up all such things, it will more than anything else tend to prevent the recurrence of such scenes.’

“ Yours truly, A. R. McFARLAND.”

“ FORT WRANGELL, ALASKA, Sept. 3d, 1878.

“ DEAR BROTHER : Rev. Mr. Young has been very busy since his arrival last month. He has made a very favorable impression both on the whites and the natives. We all like him very much. Last Sabbath he was called upon to attend the funeral of an old woman who died on Saturday. When we went to the house we were shocked to see the dead body

of another woman wrapped in a blanket and lying on the floor. We were still more shocked to find that she had hung herself but a short time before. It was the effect of witchcraft.

“I have not yet moved into the hospital building, as I have nothing to begin with. I am exceedingly anxious to get the ‘Home’ started. There are six young girls whom I ought to take right away, as the miners are coming into town for the winter. I tremble for these poor children lest it should be too late to save them. I have turned the responsibility of the school over to Mr. Young, and feel as if a great load had been taken off my shoulders. He preaches to the whites at three o’clock every Sabbath afternoon. They come out very well, and seem to be greatly interested.

“Sept. 11, 1878.—The steamer has just come in, and how rejoiced I am to hear that the Board of Home Missions has commissioned Miss Dunbar. I wish she was here now to take charge of the fall school. I also received a very kind letter from Dr. Cyrus Dickson, with the renewal of my commission for another year.

“I realize more and more the difficulties I will have to contend with in opening this ‘Home,’ but I also feel the necessity laid upon me of going forward. There are several girls here now who will be lost if I do not take them at once. Of course there are a great many more, but these I feel particularly interested in, because they have been in school and have made considerable progress. Being pretty and smart, they are just the ones the white men will try

to get possession of. I have written many letters and made appeals in many directions, but so far have received little encouragement to go on, and yet I feel that I must do it. Mr. Young has been urging me to get moved and make a beginning. He feels the necessity of it. I will try to move this month into the old hospital building, but of course we will have nothing to begin with in the way of furniture. Still I have faith to believe that it will come in due time.

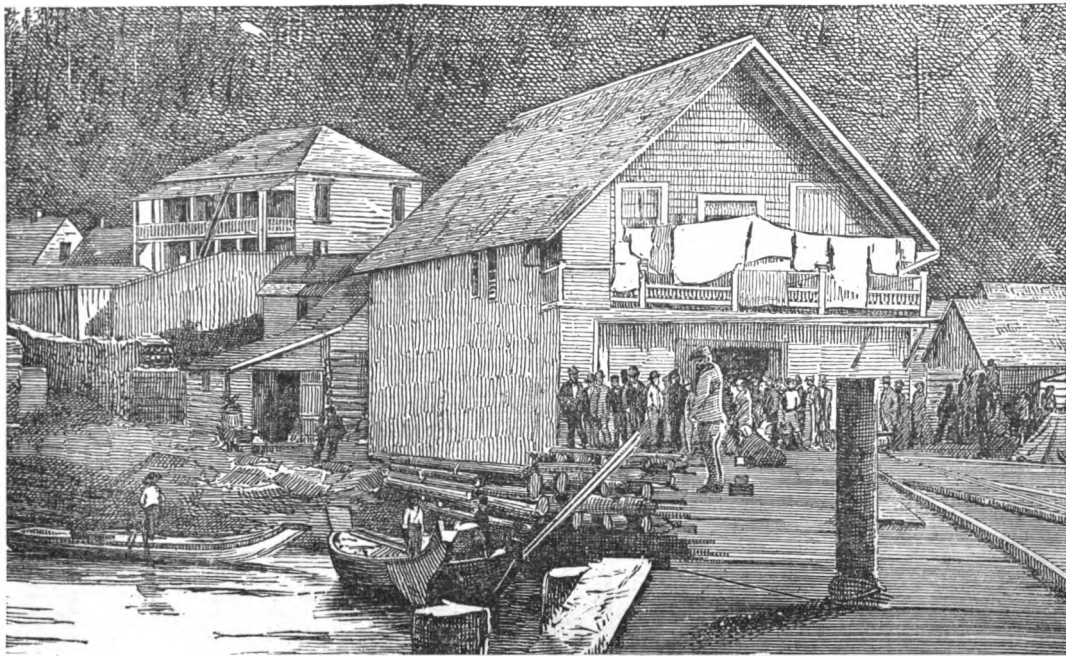
“Mrs. Dickinson has just been in with a woman who is the mother of one of my scholars, a pretty girl of thirteen. She was about to start up the river with the child to make money to buy ‘muck-a-muck’ for the winter. The woman is determined to go herself, but after much persuasion consented to leave the girl with me. So you see the ‘Home’ is started.

“October 17.— . . . My girls are contented and happy. Lest some should think that I acted unwisely in taking them before their support was pledged, permit me to say that I could not do otherwise. I dared not delay even for a week.

“Of course I feel much anxiety about the means to carry on the work. I know it will be a great struggle for a while, but my trust is in the prayer-hearing God, whose work it is. I hope to hear by the next steamer that some societies have assumed the support of these girls.

“Mr. Young is very busy securing what funds he can here toward the erection of a church.

“Mr. J. M. Vanderbilt, to whom we have been indebted for many facilities, has paid the rent for us



THE HOSPITAL—A SQUARE-ROOFED TWO-STORY BUILDING USED FOR THE MCFARLAND INDUSTRIAL HOME FROM SEPTEMBER 1878 TO 1880

on the hospital building for one year, as a contribution from his wife. Truly yours,

“A. R. MCFARLAND.”

In August, 1878, the Rev. S. Hall Young, of Parkersburg, West Virginia, who had been commissioned by the Board of Home Missions the previous spring, reached Fort Wrangell.

Graduating with high honors at Allegheny Theological Seminary, he entered upon his work with great zeal and earnestness, and was very gladly welcomed by Mrs. McFarland. At the very outset of his work Mr. Young was confronted with demonstrations of witchcraft. Consequently he held a convention of the people to put it down. This convention lasted five days. Mrs. McFarland writes :

“FORT WRANGELL, ALASKA, Nov. 9th, 1878.

“DEAR BROTHER : The witchcraft excitement has again broken out and given Mr. Young much trouble. He has shown great wisdom and courage in quelling it without the loss of life. Kootlan, the oldest of the Stickeen chiefs, died this week after a long illness. Although he belonged to the heathen Indians, yet they sent for Mr. Young to attend the funeral. Shustaks lost his wife this week, and is making great preparations to burn the body next Sabbath. Mr. Young and I both visited her during her illness. Her friends firmly believe that she was bewitched.

“The more fully we become acquainted with Mr. Young, the more we are impressed that the Lord has sent us just the right man. He makes a splendid missionary.