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A LUMBER CAMP—BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The Mission Work of the Methodist Church in British Columbia.

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THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE.

BRITISH COLUMBIA, the most westerly Province of the Dominion, has a territory over 750 miles in length, from south to north, with an average width, including islands and water stretches, of nearly 500 miles from east to west. This gives an area of 375,000 square miles. In other words, British Columbia has a territory nearly equal to that of Ontario and Quebec combined. Nearly the whole country is mountainous, and comparatively little is fit for cultivation; but its fisheries and mineral treasures are practically inexhaustible, and its immense forests will be able to supply

the markets of the North-West with building materials for generations to come. Add to this the fact that some one of its ports must yet become the depot of the vast trans-Pacific trade (inasmuch as the distance from Yokokama to Liverpool via the Canadian Pacific Railway is more than 1,000 miles shorter than by way of San Francisco), and it becomes clear that British Columbia will yet play an important part in the history, not only of the Dominion, but of the world.

Compared with the extent of territory, the population is very sparse. According to the census of 1881, it numbered less than 50,000 souls, of whom more than 25,000 were Indians. To these should be added some eight or ten thousand Chinese. With a population so scant and so widely scattered, the progress of mission work

could not be otherwise than slow; but with the opening up of railway communication, and the consequent development of the country's resources, there is every reason to expect a rapid increase of population in the near future.

MISSIONS TO THE WHITE POPULATION.

Over twenty-five years have elapsed since the first band of missionaries, headed by the Rev. Dr. Evans, went to British Columbia. At the very outset they were confronted by difficulties of no ordinary character. The population was sparse and scattered; facilities for travel were few and costly; rates of living were enormously high. But they laboured on, and the result of their labours is seen to-day. Persons converted under their preach-

ing are still to be found all over the Province, and the names of Evans, and Robson, and Browning, and White, and Derrick, and Russ are still held in grateful remembrance by many who were benefited by their ministrations.

Many of those who first emigrated to British Columbia were actuated mainly, if not solely, by a desire to make money, and hence they became regardless of methods if only the end could be secured. The Sabbath was disregarded, and became a day of business or of pleasure; the house of God was shunned; old habits of prayer, and reverence for sacred things, were left east of the Mountains; saloons by the score lent their aid to corrupt the morals of the people. Add to all this the fact that from the first the Methodist missionaries have had to stand