

SPECIAL REPORT

RESPECTING

THE MISSION WORK OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

AT a meeting of the Missionary Committee of Finance, held on the 20th of February, 1885, the General Secretary asked for instructions in regard to visiting certain portions of the mission-field. The Committee, after consideration, directed as follows:—

“That in view of obtaining more direct and definite information regarding our North-West missions, and those in British Columbia, it be an instruction that the Missionary Secretary or a General Superintendent, or both, as they may arrange between themselves, visit those missions in the interests of the Society.”

In accordance with these instructions, and with the concurrence of the General Superintendents, I left Toronto on the 6th of July, and, during an absence of two months, visited all the Indian and most of the white missions on the Pacific Coast. The results of my observations and enquiries are embodied in the present report.

I.—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, though the last census measurement puts it at 341,305, probably excluding the principal water areas and outlying islands. In other words, taking the smaller figure, British Columbia has a territory nearly equal to that of Ontario and Quebec combined. Its southern boundary is the 49th parallel, its western the Pacific Ocean, its northern the 60th parallel, while its eastern boundary follows the irregular line of the Rocky Mountains in a north-westerly direction from the international boundary as far as the 54th parallel, and then due north along the 120th meridian to the 60th parallel. Nearly