

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE NORTH-WEST.

BY REV. DR. COCHRANE.

CANMORE

is next reached, and then Banff Springs, where several of our fellow passengers leave us. Onward we rush to Field, down the Kicking Horse pass and on to the Glacier House, passing on our way the giant mountain peaks that have so often been described, and that appear so sublimely awful and grand when seen for the first time, if, indeed, they do not always appear so to the reflective mind, who contrasts the puny work of man with the handiwork of God: At Canmore we met Rev. Mr. Gordon, where a new church is being erected, and journeyed with him as far as Banff. Mr. Gordon has charge of both these fields, and his time is fully occupied. As is to be expected, during the winter season, Banff has not the number of visitors that crowd to that famous resort in the summer months, but there are so many other points needing supplies that Mr. Gordon has no leisure time.

On our return journey we spent a day at Calgary with the Rev. Mr. Herdman, the popular and efficient pastor of the Church there. Mr. Herdman occupies, perhaps, the most prominent position of all the clergymen in the city, and while devoted to the duties of his own congregation, he takes a deep interest in our mission work. There is, perhaps, no other Presbytery better managed than that of Calgary under his direction. We had the privilege of meeting there with several of our missionaries, and talking over the prospects of their different fields.

Arriving at Vancouver on Thursday, November 6, instead of waiting there for a day, as first intended, we started at once for

VICTORIA

on board *The Islander*, a large, strong, Clyde-built boat, with every modern convenience for the comfort of the passengers. We are now afloat upon the ocean once more, but it is delightfully calm, and the breeze is refreshing to one coming from an inland city. The eighty miles between Vancouver and Victoria is gone over in five hours, and we are again in the capital of British Columbia. One can hardly believe it is November, for "the chilly blasts" that Burns speaks of are wanting. During our stay of five days, with occasional rains, the weather was balmy and pleasant as May in Ontario; even a light overcoat was somewhat oppressive.

Notwithstanding the astounding growth of its rival on the mainland (Vancouver) Victoria is more than holding its own. It now numbers some 25,000. New and handsome buildings are being erected in many of the streets, while the suburbs are dotted over with residences of the highest style of architecture. The new court house, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the new Methodist church and the Roman Catholic cathedral are equal to anything in the eastern cities. Electric street railways now connect the city with Esquimaux, St. James Bay and Beacon Hill, and are a paying institution. The new C.P.R. boats are also expected to call at Victoria next year, and dock accommodation is being provided. The San Francisco and Alaska steamers and the boats plying between Seattle, Tacoma and Washington Territory, via Puget Sound, all make Victoria their headquarters. Add to this the British naval squadron at Esquimaux, and some idea may be had of the importance of the city.

The Sabbath day in Victoria, notwithstanding the sad fact that saloons are in some cases open, and that railway and steamer excursions are frequent, is apparently kept by the mass of the people, and the churches well attended. The Young Men's Christian Association is doing good work among the young men, and is supported in its endeavours by all the evangelical denominations and the leading members of the Legislature. They have, like your own city, a live man for secretary who hails from New England, and has brought with him the tact and push and burning earnestness that characterize the down-east Yankee.

Our Church in Victoria is well represented by St. Andrew's, under the Rev. Mr. McLeod, which is one of the most influential congregations in the city. His ministrations are largely attended, and the growth of the membership beyond all expectation. The First Presbyterian Church, under the Rev. Mr. Fraser, at the other extremity of the city, having outgrown its accommodation, resolved, instead of building an entirely new structure, to enlarge the old building, which has been done at the expense of eight or nine thousand dollars. It is now most commodious, and with its large lecture-room (which is capable of seating some three or four hundred people) admirably adapted for carrying on the different departments of work connected with the church. Mr. Fraser is now one of the pioneers of Presbyterianism in British Columbia, having been settled over his present charge since 1884. In 1882, when the writer of these notes visited British Columbia, this congregation resolved to unite with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Its members were then comparatively few, but now, under the judicious and able ministry of Mr. Fraser, assisted by a noble band of office-bearers and workers, it has acquired strength and vitality beyond anything that could have been expected some years ago.

Mr. Fraser, as Convener of the Presbyterian Home Mission Committee, has done a large amount of work beyond his own congregation. He well deserves recognition at the hands of the Church, and has earned a lengthened furlough, which we hope his people will give him during the present year. The Rev. D. McRae, Clerk of the Presbytery of British Columbia, who has, with another missionary, charge

of the outlying stations near the city, and who has been for many years on the ground, has also done much to help on our cause. During our visit Mr. McRae was laid aside by sickness brought on, to some extent, by exposure and hard work. We are glad to know that he has since recovered, and trust that his services will long be spared to us.

During our stay at Victoria I met with the brethren there, at which meeting we read communications from several of the outlying stations regarding grants and appointments, and decided certain matters that would not admit of delay. The good feeling existing between all the members of the Columbia Presbytery, and their great eagerness to extend our work into the regions beyond, is worthy of remark. In no part of our Church work have we been more successful than on the Pacific coast, and this is due in great part to the fact that at all the important centres we have wise and judicious men. While at Victoria I made a hurried visit to

NANAIMO,

lately under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Miller, but now vacant. The Rev. Mr. Pitblado, of California, was given a call a few months ago, but declined. They offer a salary of two thousand a year and a very comfortable manse. The people are spirited and ready at any time to build a new church if the right man can be secured, although the present building is both neat and commodious. Nanaimo offers one of the most advantageous settlements in our Church for a man of ability. In addition to the duties of his charge, he could do much in districts adjacent to plant churches. The Wellington mines adjacent and other points are clamorous for missionaries, but the action of the committee depends to a great extent upon the selection of the right minister for Nanaimo.

Leaving Victoria at four a.m., Wednesday, November 13, we reached

VANCOUVER

at ten a.m. The day was rainy and foggy, and the bold peaks of the "Lion's Head" Mountain shrouded in mist. But in the Vancouver C.P.R. hotel any man can make himself comfortable as far as material comforts are concerned, no matter how adverse the elements without. The growth of this city is not only remarkable but phenomenal. No city in the British possessions, nay, we may say on the continent of America, has made such wonderful strides as Vancouver. The city was laid out early in 1886, with a population of 600; in 1887, after the fire of June, 1886, which destroyed the place, it had 2,000; in 1888, 6,000; in 1889, 12,000, and now it has reached 15,000 or 18,000. The reasons for this rapid growth in population are not far to seek. It is the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and also of the China and Japan steamship lines. Daily steamers also ply between Vancouver and Victoria, Vancouver and Nanaimo, and bi-weekly to Seattle, Tacoma, Port Townsend and all (U.S.) sound ports. The three new steel ships, *Empress of India*, *Empress of China* and *Empress of Japan*, building for the C.P.R. will bring Ontario and Quebec within reach of China in about sixteen days. The traffic from Australia, China, Japan and India, via the C.P.R., is just in its infancy, and no bounds can be fixed to its future development. The site chosen by the C.P.R. magnates for the future great city is in many respects unrivalled for beauty and climatic advantages. From the shore the ground rises to a height of 200 feet at the highest point, and then falls on an easy slope to English Bay, making perfect drainage easy. Fine water is supplied from high up in the mountain, seven miles northward. Electric tramways are now in operation connecting the extremities of the city, and a company has just been organized to extend the system to New Westminster, a distance of twelve miles, or eight miles less than the route taken by the C.P.R. at present. The buildings are for the most part substantial and ornamental, built of solid stone, or brick and stone. Structures that will compare with Toronto and Montreal for capacity and height are being erected on the principal streets for wholesale purposes. In addition to these are the new opera house built by the C.P.R., the new post office, another monster hotel, banks for that of British Columbia and Montreal, and a fine edifice for the Young Men's Christian Association. The industries of Vancouver for a city of its age are many. There are seven saw mills in operation, besides planing mills, sash and door factories, foundries, iron works, machine shops, soap works, furniture factories, carriage factories and a sugar refinery with a capacity of 200 barrels per day. The streets and avenues are laid out and graded for many miles, so that the people here will not be troubled by the question of annexing the suburbs for many years to come. In a word, every invention and comfort to be found in the large cities of Ontario are to be found in Vancouver. Of course living is high, and it does not do for a man of slender resources to stay long at the leading hotels, but this is true of all rising cities of the North-West and British Columbia. Real estate is still much in demand, although there has never been anything approaching the Winnipeg boom of 1881. Rand Brothers, the real estate brokers, do an immense business, and have agencies in all the important cities here as well as in London, England. The city is also well supplied with newspapers. Three dailies are published, the *Vancouver World*, the *News Advertiser* and the *Telegraph*. The first-named is under the editorial control of Mr. J. C. McLagan, formerly of Guelph, and more recently of the *Victoria Times*, and is a live, newsy sheet giving special prominence to Ontario and Eastern questions. To travellers from the East Mr. McLagan is always "at home" and willing to render them any possible service.

(To be continued.)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S SABBATH SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

MR. EDITOR,—Permit me, through your columns, to remind those Sabbath schools which have not contributed to the expense fund of the above committee, that the financial year closes on April 30, and it is very desirable that all who intend to assist should remit by that date.

The response to the Assembly's recommendation that every school should send us the collection taken up on "children's day" (September 28) has not been so general as we could have wished, or as it doubtless will be in a year or two, so that a small sum, say from one to five dollars, from a number of schools is still required to make up the deficiency for the year (about \$500).

Had we the expenses of Higher Religious Instruction alone to meet our receipts would be ample, but the custodians of the Assembly Fund have notified us that we must conform to the rule enacted in 1889: "That committees having funds be required to defray the expense of printing their respective reports for the General Assembly and for the minutes." This involves also the cost of printing and circulating the necessary schedules, and is a serious addition to our total expenditure.

Did our work permit of indefinite expansion we would press its claims much more urgently, but a relatively small sum will meet all its demands at the present stage. We hope, however, that the committee will be able to extend its operations so as to embrace all that concerns the religious welfare of the youth of our Church. There is no department calling more urgently for the fostering supervision of the Assembly than this. The committee regard the collection of statistics as but a small, though important, part of their work. They are aiming, in the face of much apathy and some opposition, imperfectly no doubt, yet sincerely, perseveringly and as wisely as they can at promoting:—

1. The more complete organization and equipment of our Sabbath schools. To this end they have published "A Handbook of Sabbath School Management and Work," which may be obtained from the publisher, C. Blackett Robinson, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto, at fifteen cents each, or \$1.25 per dozen.
2. More thorough preparation of the Sabbath school lesson and, for older scholars, a broader acquaintance with the Bible, especially the portion embraced in the year's lessons. This is covered by the Biblical and Essay Departments of the examination syllabus of Higher Religious Instruction.
3. More thoughtful study of the Shorter Catechism for which purpose the excellent text-books of the Doctrinal Department are assigned.
4. Some acquaintance with the heroic periods of the Church's history and the scriptural basis of Presbyterianism. This is the object of the course laid down in the Historical Department of the syllabus.
5. Some course of study and examinations which would be a guide and stimulus to earnest teachers in preparing themselves for greater usefulness. No plan is yet formulated, but the matter is under consideration.
6. The union of our Young People's Societies of various kinds in a general guild with Synodical and Presbyterian branches. For this we have admirable models in the Established and Free Churches of Scotland.

The success of our Scheme of Higher Religious Instruction encourages us to go forward. We are chiefly concerned to do our work well, being fully confident that if we do our duty God's work will not be permitted to languish for want of funds. Besides contributions from Sabbath schools we shall be glad to receive donations from individuals specially interested in our Scheme.

Hoping that this appeal will meet with an early and liberal response,
T. F. FOTHERINGHAM.

St. John, N.B.

LETTER FROM TORRE PELLICE, ITALY.

MR. EDITOR,—I have just received a letter from the Rev. Sig. Pons, of the place above named, a few extracts from which may be of interest to the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

He begins by expressing his deep gratitude for the gift of fifty dollars for the Waldensian Church sent him through me by a lady in Canada who is an admirer of that old witness for the truth. Then he says:—

To-day, the 17th of February, is the forty-third anniversary of the emancipation of the Waldenses, granted by King Charles Albert, surnamed the Magnanimous, in 1848. We keep this Waldensian festival from year to year with a joy and a gratitude which time has not lessened. At it we bring together specially the children and the youth. This morning in our beautiful temple of Torre Pellice, not fewer than 450 children were assembled, divided into thirteen groups, representing an equal number of schools. To see this company of children—from six to fifteen years of age—marching along carrying banners, from the central school to the temple, and especially to hear their singing and recitations, made one cry out: "How delighted they are!"

The venerable Prof. Tron, who has always loved children, seemed to have renewed his youth when he saw them walking in procession. Madame and Mlle Beckwith, with the members of my family, were among the 300 adults who there also met together.

Next April, we shall have the great Meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in Florence. We pray God to bless the assembly of so many men of faith and learning in the very centre of the Italian country, and to make their living and speaking evidence of the spiritual union, which reigns among Christian Protestants of every denomination, tend to the advancement throughout the whole of Italy, of His kingdom of peace. The Roman colossus boasts of a unity which is that of the enslavement of consciences. We desire union in the life and liberty which Christ has obtained for us by His blood.

Woodbridge, Ont.

T. F.