

Our Contributors.

NOTES ON A TOUR TO THE PACIFIC.

BY KNOXIAN.

Sharp on time the Pacific Express steamed into North Bay. For the sake of those readers who have never seen Muskoka, that Eden of tourists, I may say that North Bay is a new town—a very new town—on Lake Nipissing, 228 miles north of Toronto. It is the junction point of the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific Railways in this region. I do not say that the Bay is new, nor that it is any farther north than it used to be, but the town itself is decidedly new, having sprung up within the last four or five years. The Canadian Pacific Railway guide book says it has a population of 1,800. The good people who live there would probably say 2,000. The Presbyterians have a neat little church and are taking steps to call a minister. But the locomotive is hissing like fury, and there must be no time spent in discussing ecclesiastical questions.

Time is up, and the long train starts out for a journey of 2,500 miles with as little ceremony and a good deal more suddenness than many trains start from Toronto to Hamilton. Not having many admiring friends in that region, the good-bye business was despatched by shaking hands with a nice young man, a former parishioner, who had kindly come to the station to see me safely off.

The first duty in the Pullman is to get a seat and see who is who. The obliging porter attends promptly to the first part, and in order that the second part may be well done I attend to it myself. Well, who is who? Is there anybody in this car that has the pleasure of my acquaintance? That is a new way to put it, but if a man is starting out on a new journey to see a new country, he ought, perhaps, to put some old phrases in a new and fresh light. A brief survey of the situation convinces me that there is not a passenger in this Pullman that I, to the best of my knowledge, ever met before. There are several young Englishmen, nice young fellows when the national reserve works off. That old gentleman in the next seat is easily recognized as an American. He, as I afterwards learned, is going to Japan, and may be gone nine months. Last year he was in Egypt. Where he may go next year I cannot say, but if he keeps on he will soon find this planet too small for him. Wealthy Americans travel much, and one of their favourite trips now is across the continent to the Pacific by the Canadian Pacific Railway and then to China or Japan by the Canadian Pacific Railway steamers. That splendid-looking young fellow on the other side of the car is an American student who has probably finished his college course. He, too, is going to Japan. The college in which he studied must give the usual amount of attention to athletics, for he has a magnificent physique. Several others are heading for Vancouver, and will take the Canadian Pacific Railway steamer for some part of the Oriental world. That middle-aged gentleman near the end of the car is a miner on the way to his "diggings" somewhere in British Columbia. When he gets off the train at Vancouver he has to travel three or four hundred miles by stage. I hope he may strike something rich, for he is a very agreeable man and talks well on many subjects. Then there is a number of ladies, mostly going to points on the Pacific, some to live there and some to visit friends. Naturally enough one would expect to meet a large number of business men bound for Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, Brandon, Calgary and other important points West, but that was not my experience. A large majority of the passengers seemed to be tourists making the through trip. This is not a business season of the year, but it is the season for summer travel, and this fact may account for the number of through passengers.

But let it not be supposed that all the passengers are in the Pullman. There are four colonist cars crowded with English emigrants on their way to the Pacific coast. Taken as a whole they are a fine-looking body of people, many of them being young, lively and energetic. The younger portion seemed to enjoy the trip immensely. Babies abound. I would not dare to state the probable number in the four cars, but when that train crossed the mountains the population of British Columbia went up suddenly. There were just two thin youngsters—they were not twins—in the Pullman. Modern modes of travel have reduced the hardships of emigration to a minimum. Our fathers and mothers suffered more in one day coming up the St. Lawrence or riding from some lake port in Ontario to their future homes in the woods than these immigrants suffered between Liverpool and Vancouver. Though there was a tinge of sadness on some of the older faces, the great majority were happy and hopeful, and the young folks were distinctly jolly. While some of the ladies in the Pullman seemed to have hard work to put in the time lolling on velvet cushions, taking three sumptuous meals a day and reading fiction not all written by the great masters, these English girls chatted and laughed and had a good time generally. Hurrah for old England.

SUDBURY.

The first place of much importance west of North Bay is Sudbury. Here the "Soo" train strikes the main line; here they find nickel and denounce Hardy. The moment you step upon the platform you discover that this is no ordinary Canadian village station. Foreign-looking men talk loud in a foreign language—perhaps in several languages. No

doubt they are talking about nickel. Whether Mr. Hardy's mining law will help or hinder mining operations is a question that must be finally settled by the event. Any law that interferes with the operations of prospectors, projectors and general speculators is always denounced at first. These minerals belong to the people of Ontario, and no doubt the people wish to make as much money out of them as they can. Whether the Government tried to drive too hard a bargain for the people is a question that time must decide.

ALONG THE LINE.

For a hundred or more miles west of North Bay the scenery is much of the Muskoka type. Here and there patches of arable land may tempt a settler, but it requires an immense imagination to suppose that this region will ever be noted for agricultural pursuits. Lumber, furs and minerals must ever be the chief products of our north shore. Night came down upon our train at a station called Ridout. I went up to roost in my berth between Chappleau and Pardee, went to sleep, as nearly as I can reckon, at Dalton, a station perhaps called after Dalton McCarthy, and came down from my roost next morning at Middleton. What distinguished company we do sometimes get into when we travel.

The scenery around the north-west angle of Lake Superior is simply magnificent. In many places the track is literally blown out of the side of a mountain of rock. On one side of your car the rock rises to an immense height. On the other there is a deep ravine or beautiful lake. Why anybody with a love of nature in his soul should prefer a water route to this scenery I cannot imagine. But we are steaming into Port Arthur and I must stop for the present.

RUSSIAN PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

A DAY OF PRAYER.

The press of both hemispheres teems with harrowing, sorrowful tales of the cruel, inhuman persecution of the Jews in Russia—tales of black injustice, misery and woe!

Earnest men in the United States of America, under the devoted leading of my friend, Mr. W. E. Blackstone, of Oak Park, Illinois, have presented a memorial to President Harrison, numerous signed by editors of the press, ministers of different denominations, officials in high positions, and influential men in the ranks of literature, commerce and the arts, of all the great cities, pleading for a conference of the Christian powers with a view to the restoration of Palestine to the Jews, just as Greece, Servia, Bulgaria, etc., have been restored to their natural owners. It was the outcome of a convention in the city of Chicago, which lasted two days, between Jewish rabbis and Christian divines, itself brought about, I believe, by the distribution of a large quantity of my "Letters to the Jews" and "Lectures on the Jews."

I suggested to Mr. Blackstone and in the religious press of the United States recourse to the Christian's only available resource in trouble—prayer—a day of intercessory prayer; and proposed August 13—the anniversary of the destruction of the temple—when the Jews throughout the world fast and spend the whole day in their synagogues in lamentations, tears and prayers. I have told the two chief rabbis of Jerusalem of this invitation to the Evangelical Churches on both sides of the Atlantic; and I intend shortly asking them to prepare a special prayer for that day in the synagogues, that God may mercifully hear the prayers of the Christian world on behalf of their oppressed brethren.

Let there be general, united prayer to the God of Israel, prayer in private, at family altars and everywhere, for the persecuted Jews of Russia, that He may move the hearts of princes and all in authority to pity and commiseration for those outcasts. Mildmay and Exeter Halls in London should overflow with "God's remembrancers" (Isa. lxii. 6, 7), in supplicatory, believing, earnest prayer; and let the Churches of Christendom proclaim by their sympathy and prayers that religious persecution is abhorrent and wholly opposed to the genius and spirit of true Christianity.

And may He move the hearts of His people and stewards to remember this new mission to the Jews of Jerusalem and the Holy Land with the zeal and liberality of our Episcopal brethren for theirs. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

Jerusalem, Palestine.

A. BEN OLIEL.

THE PAN-CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL.

This Council, which, as the above title implies, is composed of representatives from all parts of the Congregational world, has just opened in the British metropolis. England has sent one hundred delegates; the United States of America another hundred; Canada, Australia and other countries where Congregationalism exists, have contributed a third hundred. With the exception of about twelve the three hundred are in London.

Not a little enthusiasm marks the proceedings. The London Press has devoted considerable space to reports of the Council. Praiseworthy things are being written for the columns of daily and weekly journals upon this first œcumenical gathering of Congregationalists.

A friendly journal, and one of the most influential weekly publications in Britain, in a leading article on the Council has these words:—

"One thing, however, Congregationalists must be prepared

for. In thus challenging the attention of the world they must be prepared for an exposure of their weak points. It is, for instance, to say the least, an evidence of singular limitation, from the point of view of catholicity, that this gathering, representing the whole force of Congregationalism, should be drawn almost exclusively from English-speaking peoples. This is something different from the Vatican Council, where the delegates spoke in Latin because their native tongues were those of every nation under the sun. The almost entire absence of Congregationalism as a form of Church-life outside the Anglo-Saxon pale is, indeed, a phenomenon too remarkable to be passed over. The Protestantism of the continent is mainly Presbyterian. The Parisian is a quick-witted individual, but, though he knows something of the Salvation Army, it would take some time to explain to him the idea of Congregationalism. France, Germany, Austria, Italy and half-a-dozen other nationalities of the modern world, have scarcely been touched by its influence. A purely Anglo-Saxon growth, it has hardly made an effort to establish itself amongst outside races. But that is not all. In the review which is being made to-day of the world-forces of Congregationalism, the fact cannot be lost sight of that even on its own ground, that of the English-speaking peoples, and when working there under the most favourable conditions it has allowed itself nearly everywhere to be out-numbered by much younger communities. In the United States, where it was first in the field, with every form of influence to back it, it is in a minority of millions as compared with the Methodist body, which is two centuries younger; while in Canada, in South Africa, and in Australia, it comes, in point of numbers, very far down on the denominational list. A great opportunity will, in our thinking, be missed if the Council be allowed to separate without a frank discussion of the causes of this comparative slowness of growth."

But though the Congregationalists have been outdistanced by other denominations in some respects, the body is a large and influential one. Canada, to begin with, has over ten thousand members, with nearly one hundred ministers. England and Wales have two thousand seven hundred ministers, and seating accommodation in the churches for over one million and a half of worshippers. The United States of America show a Congregational membership of over four hundred and seventy-five thousand, and an active ministry numbering nearly four thousand five hundred. Scotland and Ireland are not strongly Congregational, yet in the former there is a Congregational Union with one hundred churches and an Evangelical Union with ninety more, and in the latter one Union with twenty-eight churches, with the same number of ministers. Australasia contains nearly two hundred and fifty churches, and the Sandwich Islands a little more than a quarter of that number. In China and India there are scattered congregations. In Sweden and Norway there are about four hundred churches formed on the Congregational model, while the McKee work in France is by some termed Congregational. Mr. McKee, who labours in connection with the Evangelical Mission, being a Congregationalist.

It is quite evident from the proceedings so far that the International Congregational Council now assembled is in session to vaunt of past performances or of present importance. With scrupulous care and marked discretion the Committee of Arrangements, through a well-known representative of the body in England, has sounded forth these sentences: The Council meets at a great moment. It has duties to the Churches in England, in America, in the Colonies, in all the countries of the heathen and the Christian world. The ministry in all these places looks to it for a new baptism, for council and inspiration. The dumb multitudes in all lands cry in their inarticulate way for help; the Churches, enslaved by Conventionism, limited by the necessities of the place and the hour, ask for the larger outlook, the noble enthusiasm, the pious spirit. The men that meet meet with a graver burden than if they had but a dogma to define, or a new formula to invent, or a confession to make. They meet that they may teach us how we may be saved from ourselves, and be filled with the Spirit and purposes and love of God. The Council that creates higher ideals for the Churches will make itself a noble and an everlasting name."

Inasmuch as the Council has just begun its work, I can not be expected in this letter to follow the programme in detail. Particulars for your readers in Canada must be left for after communications. By way of comment upon the programme as it appears, suffice to say its scope is comprehensive and its order luminous and logical. It dispels the idea "that Congregationalism consists in the coddling of a small coterie of detached Christians." It takes in its embrace the individual, individuals in fellowship, the denomination, the nation, the sphere of internationality, the œcumenical idea, as well as the broad missionary spirit that looks to the sending of the Gospel of Christ to the outlying heathen world.

The Council was formally organized yesterday afternoon, Dr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, being first president, Dr. Bevan, of Melbourne, Australia, president, Mr. Northrop, of Minneapolis, United States, Dr. Grant, of Boston, Massachusetts, and Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, of England, were chosen vice-presidents. Dr. Mackennal and Rev. H. A. Halzen, with four assistants, were appointed secretaries.

Among the early exercises after organization was the reception of deputations from other denominations. Vice-president Bevan occupied the chair and gave each deputy a warm handshake. The deputations were as follows: Dr. Donald Fraser and H. M. Matheson from the Presbyterian Church