

Our Contributors.

NOTES BY THE WAY--SOME EXCITING POINTS BETWEEN BANFF AND VANCOUVER.

BY KNOXONIAN.

If a tourist has a little more life than a clam he begins to get deeply interested if not excited soon after he leaves Banff on the west-bound train. The mountains tower up grandly on both sides of the railway and you begin to ransack your vocabulary for suitable adjectives to express your feelings and describe your environment. It is no use. There is no power in the English language to describe your surroundings or tell anybody how these terrific peaks impress you. Dr. Potts came on the train at Banff and as we whirled around the mountain sides, dashed through tunnels, and ran down the fearful gorges, the eloquent Doctor could say little but "glorious," "glorious," "glorious." That hard worked adjective was as good a word to use as any, but in the presence of these awful peaks that seemed to pierce the morning sky with their icy summits even the word glorious seemed weak. At Canmore an observation car had been attached to the train from which the passengers could see the scenery in all directions. The run from Banff to Field, where we stopped for breakfast at the base of Mount Stephen, is a kind of railroad travel that I shall not be foolish enough to attempt to describe. I don't know that I would have tried a description under any circumstances, but two or three attempts that I have recently seen come before my mind every time I take hold of my pen and a voice seems to shout, yes shout, "now don't make an ass of yourself in that way." I won't.

Perhaps the most exciting part of the mountain scenery is the run down the Kicking Horse Canyon. At Palliser, a station a short distance west of Field, the railway and the river run into this terrific gorge together. The mountain sides form two almost perpendicular walls along the sides of which the railway runs, the train shooting from one side of the river to the other as the exigencies of the case may require. Away down below you the river rushes along as quickly I should say as the waters of the Long Sault Rapids on the St. Lawrence. Above the perpendicular walls rise almost out of sight and at times appear to close together over the railway. At Palliser, Brother Potts and I mounted the locomotive so that we could enjoy the full benefit of the run down the gorge. For thirteen miles we had all the excitement we wanted. As we ran out of the gorge we had the benefit of one of the most wonderful sights in this world of wonders. The engineer, as obliging, gentlemanly and intelligent as a young fellow as I ever met, told us to stand on the platform of the locomotive and look right back. Two high mountains seemed to overlap and cross the track while between us and the overlapping mountains was the shoulder of a third which also crossed the track. The scene was grand beyond description and as puzzling as it was grand, for you could not for the life of you see how the train got through. In a moment the mountains vanished. "Look again," said the engineer. We looked again and the same scene reappeared, but reappeared only to vanish. "Look again," he said four times, and four times the overlapping mountains came into view immediately behind the train. "Look now for the last time," said our friend as he stood with his hand on the lever, and sure enough there they were again. The effect was produced I have no doubt by the doubling and twisting of the train across the river.

A little to the west of the Kicking Horse Pass there is a lovely spot. Close by the base of Sir Donald, which rises to the height of a mile and a-half, and near the Great Glacier is the Glacier House in a small restful valley, just the kind of place a tired tourist would like to stay over in for a day. The C. P. R. Company own the hotel and it is said to be well managed. Many tourists remain here, and while they rest themselves get a full view of the surrounding mountain scenery, which is perhaps at its grandest around this little valley. A short distance west of the Glacier House the train comes to the famous Loop, about which many people have read or heard. As I understand it the track forms a letter S about a mile in length. As the train doubles and twists it is not easy to see at the time just how you are going, but whether you understand the situation or not you are thoroughly persuaded that the Loop is a marvellous piece of railway engineering.

Leaving the Loop about four o'clock in the afternoon one striking scene after another meets the bewildered gaze until darkness closes a day of sight-seeing never to be forgotten.

It is a mistake however to suppose that when you have passed through the Rockies and Selkirk the mountain scenery is at an end. The Thompson River Canyons which we passed in the night are said by those who have seen them to almost equal anything on this part of the line. At the risk of being laughed at by specialists in mountain travel, I may say that the run down the Fraser Canyon within a few hours of Vancouver made me think more about my life insurance policies than any other part of the line. For over twenty miles the river runs between perpendicular walls of rock hundreds of feet high. Two hundred feet above the bed of the river the railway is literally blown out of the side of the rock. From the observation car or the window of the Pullman you look right down to the river two hundred feet below and feel—well I don't know how others felt, but as the train rushed along that ledge of rock, whirled around projecting

corners, and dashed through tunnels, I repeatedly felt thankful that the Canada Life is a solvent company and that it always does the square thing on claims. One reason perhaps why this run along the Fraser tries some nerves most is because it comes at the end of three thousand miles when the nerves are more or less unstrung. Possibly too you see the danger more there than in many other places, and then the run is longer. Twenty-three miles seem long in a place of that kind.

Turning to the right, about eleven o'clock, for the first time since we entered the gap west of Calgary, the train runs into a level country, at least a country comparatively level. In a little less than two hours we get our first glance of the water at Port Moody on the Burrard Inlet. A short run along the south shore of the Inlet brings us suddenly up to a large station where the roar and rush of city life, especially the musical voices of a score of hack and transfer men—the first heard since we left Brandon—tell us that we have finished a journey of 3,000 miles. This is Vancouver, about which something next week.

WORLD'S CONFERENCE AT AMSTERDAM.

(Special Correspondence to THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.)

The Conference of representatives from the Young Men's Christian Associations throughout the world arranged for, since the Conference in Stockholm three years ago by the Central International Committee in Geneva, has just been opened in Amsterdam. About five hundred delegates are in attendance, and among them a number from Canada.

This is the twelfth Conference that has been held since the organization of the first Young Men's Christian Association in London forty seven years ago. The first General Conference was held under the presidency of Rev. J. P. Cook, in Paris in 1855. Geneva was the gathering place for the second in 1858 when Max Perrot was president. London, the birthplace of the movement, received the third Conference in 1862, George Williams the founder being elected to preside. In 1865, Elberfeld, in Germany, the home of the Krummachers, the fourth Conference was held, Superintendent Durselin occupying the president's chair. Rev. J. P. Cook presided for the second time at the Conference which met for the second time in Paris in September, 1867. Sixteen years ago Amsterdam was the place chosen for the sixth Conference, J. Van O. Bruyn occupying the presidential chair. J. Von Oertzen in August, 1875, presided at the seventh Conference, in Hamburg, and Charles Fermand at the eighth in Geneva. The ninth was held in London in 1881, presided over by the Earl of Aberdeen, the tenth in Berlin with Count A. Bernstorff as president, and the last one in Stockholm in August, 1888, with Bishop Von Schaele as president.

The Young Men's Christian Association has claims to recognition from the Church of Christ. Its aim is to unite those young men who, regarding the Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His Disciples in their doctrine and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom among young men. It distinctly disavows any intention or desire to enter upon functions proper to the Churches. On the other hand it seeks to be and deserves to be regarded as helpers to the Churches in effort and service directed towards a class of persons not easily reached by ordinary church agencies, and it considers it to be alike a privilege and duty to lead young men into the fellowship of the Churches and under the influence of the Christian Ministry.

The growth and influence of the Young Men's Christian Association during the forty-seven years of its existence are features in Christian activity for which multitudes devoutly thank the Lord. Weaknesses in the individual associations are found as they are found in every human organization, but God has owned the agency, and many thousands to-day bear testimony to blessings to their sons at home, and to their sons who have gone from home by the salutary and spiritual influences that have been cast about young men through this Christian Association. Its power has been felt in all parts of the world. And these who know the power of the Lord through its agency are now in Conference in the chief city of this historical Dutch land.

Holland has over four hundred associations and one hundred and twenty representatives from these associations are taking part in the present Conference. Great Britain and Ireland, with their membership of nearly eighty thousand, have the largest delegation present from any country outside of Holland. Germany has nine hundred associations represented in this Conference by a delegation numbering eighty-six, among whom are Count Van Bernstorff of Berlin, and the Rev. K. Krummacher of Elberfeld, the son of the author of "Elijah the Tishbite." Delegates are here from the islands of the sea, from almost all the European countries, from the regions of Asia, and from the Continent of Africa. The Church of which THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN is an organ is laying plans for the establishment of a mission to the Jews. Its members who may become readers of these lines will be interested with the information that the Young Men's Christian Association has a deep interest in the Saviour's land, and is planning to bring the Saviour's blessings of life and liberty to the young men there. Rev. W. Hind Smith, who was sent abroad by the British Associations to visit and explore, has an interesting declaration to present to the Amsterdam Conference, which the following sentences form a part:—

"I have had the joy (during the past eight months) of forming eleven new associations. In Palestine three, two being at Jerusalem (one for the Arabic-speaking young men, another for the Hebrew converts) the third at Jaffa. At the several meetings held we had the pleasure of meeting representatives who came to hear about our work from Gaza, Ramleh, Lydda and Beyrout. The deputations were each supplied with suitable papers, and left with the resolution to form associations upon their return. (I hear that a German branch has been formed at Jerusalem since my visit there. In Jerusalem we formed a Central Council, which should take the oversight of the work in Palestine, and of which Mr. Ellis, of Bishop Gobat's school, Mount Zion, Jerusalem, is the secretary." "This tour of over 32,000 miles, taken just as I am completing my twenty-seventh year of Young Men's Christian Association secretarial work, has confirmed me in the conviction as to the general progress and value of our God-ordained work (we never had so much cause for thankfulness to God as now); and secondly, as to the results of the past illustrating the text 'My word shall not return unto Me void'—and the sometimes forgotten thought expressed in the line 'no toil for Him shall be in vain.'"

The Committee of arrangements at the Amsterdam Conference deemed it advisable to hold a public meeting to be preparatory to the formal opening of the Conference. If members in attendance and apparent interest are indications of the success of a public meeting this preliminary service last Tuesday evening in the Westerkerk was a great success. A professor in the University here, after hearty exercises of praise in different tongues, delivered an address in the Dutch language. Prayer was offered and was followed by an address in English by the Episcopal clergyman of this city. Another hymn was sung and was followed by a third address in German from Pastor Bahr of the German Reformed Church here. A special song, Haydn's "Creation," and Rev. Mr. Richard, who is over a French Protestant Church in Amsterdam, delivered an address on "Welcome and Union" in the French language.

On the following day, the 12th of August, which had been appointed for the opening of the Conference, the delegates assembled around the banners of their respective countries in the "Maison Stroncken," a large hall in the city situated in the vicinity of Ryks Museum, one of the attractions of Amsterdam, and spent an hour and a-half in concerted prayer for the blessing of the Spirit of the Lord upon the Conference. Prayer ascended from many hearts and through different tongues. At one o'clock in the afternoon in the same place the chairman of Conference, a Christian gentleman from Amsterdam, announced the following lines to be the words of praise with which the Conference should be begun. They are the English translation of the Dutch which he read:—

All ye whose heart in God rejoices,
Ye righteous, spread your Saviour's fame!
The upright ones should raise their voices
In honour of His glorious name.
Let God's house be ringing
With the joyful singing
Of your heart and voice,
Play on harp and cymbal,
Psaltery and timbrel,
Make a cheerful noise.

Let us around proclaim His glory
Our hearts delight with Him abide,
Tell of His love the wondrous story
For in His name we do confide.
O, our heavenly Father,
In whose house all gather
We to Christ belong,
Make our hope increasing
And our love unceasing,
And our faith more strong.

A portion of the 10th of John was read. Prayer in different languages was offered. A presidential address was given by the chairman himself in three languages, and interpreted into other languages, and after another hymn the Conference was formally opened.

Before the close of the first service Mr. Spurgeon was remembered, and on the suggestion of George Williams the founder, under God, of the Young Men's Christian Association, and Mr. Spurgeon's personal friend, a telegram of sympathy in his illness was sent to Mr. Spurgeon. Another message of salvation was prepared on motion of Lord Kinaird and Count Bernstorff and sent to the Queen and Queen Regent of Holland. Then a report from the Central Executive was given to the Conference, and information concerning the progress of the work for the last three years throughout the Young Men's Christian Association world was presented. A delegate from Ceylon then spoke. At 5 p.m., the first session of the Conference was brought to a close.

"Maison Stroncken," Amsterdam, Holland. S.

FRAGMENTARY NOTES.

IRELAND—BELFAST, THE NORTHERN ATHENS—PRESBYTERIANISM—SOME EMINENT PREACHERS.

Presbyterianism is keeping pace with the rapid growth of Belfast. Churches and schools are to be seen in all directions. I noticed a number of new churches in various parts of the city; but was surprised to find that the old leading churches, which were ministered to by such men as Hanna, Cooke, Morgan, and Macnaughton, continue to wear the same quiet sombre appearance they were accustomed to wear when the above-named illustrious men filled the pulpits. The churches would seem to have prospered every way except externally. When people at a distance hear of the work of these churches they are naturally surprised when they see them. A Presbyterian from the country walking hurriedly