

The All-Dominating Work

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada met on June 9th, 1903, in Vancouver city, British Columbia. A special "Assembly train" carried to their destination the large body of commissioners, comprising members from far eastern Sydney, in Nova Scotia, and from all intermediate points from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. The journey from the east was begun on Monday, June 1st, and having passed one thousand miles of the Laurentian country north of the Great Lakes, and another thousand miles of prairie from Winnipeg westward, the "Special" rested on Saturday and Sabbath, 6th and 7th, at Banff—the Strathpeffer of Canada—in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. Thence over the mighty crest of the "Great Divide," through the picturesque Selkirks, and down the startling Fraser Canyon, the train with its three hundred passengers slowly wended its way, reaching Vancouver at 1 p. m., June 9th.

In the evening St. Andrew's church was filled to overflowing for the opening of the General Assembly. The clerks of the Assembly having taken their places on the platform, the retiring moderator, Rev. Dr. Bryce, of Winnipeg, ascended the pulpit and preached the following sermon: "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem; He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel." (Ps. 147: 2.)

Nehemiah, building up the walls of Jerusalem, said: "I am doing a great work, so I cannot come down." (Neh. 6: 3.)

Jerusalem, the joy of the whole earth, appealed powerfully alike to the Royal Psalmist, sinking in penitential sorrow, to the Evangelical prophet in his prophetic forecast, and to the unhappy exiles, including the zealous Nehemiah as they wept by the rivers of Babyion or in the far-off land of Elam.

Jerusalem, the golden, set on fire the saintly Benedictine, Bernard of Clairvaux, the world's great dreamer of Bedford Jail, and the Apocalyptic seer, these all living many centuries apart, as they gazed into the invisible, seeing the new Jerusalem the Holy City!

Yet how great the contrast between the glorious city of the future and the Jerusalem of earth! In the Holy City there shall be no more curse, but Jerusalem, the earthly, from the time of the conquest of Canaan until its overthrow by Titus, suffered seventeen sieges.

The dangers and misfortunes of Jerusalem spoke more strongly to its friends than did even its lofty Mount Zion, beautiful for situation as it was, the type of the Heavenly City.

And the church of God on earth is faithfully represented by Jerusalem in her travail. The gospel of God is remedial. Christ the head of the church,