

In British Columbia.

LETTER THE THIRD.

It is with joy I hear of the coming of Bro. Rose and Bro. Saunders from Nova Scotia to our western province. I hope soon to hear also of others. The eastern and central provinces should go halves in supplying us with men and also with sending us money. It will be slow work at the rate we are going. We lose three students and get two pastors and one student. The country is opening up wonderfully. All experts in mining declare that British Columbia is the richest mining country in the world. I wish that hearts aglow could mine for Christ and devote the substance to the work of evangelization. The wealthy mine owners and officials are not Christians, much less Baptists, so that we have to do our work of trying to lead these thousands to Christ at the labor and expense of the already established provinces.

Since my last to readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR I have had a sight of the Kootenay. Proceeding from the coast to Kamloops I found a dozen Baptists waiting to be organized into a church. The story of this should interest our Maritime brethren. A brother by the name of Chas. Stevens, from Nova Scotia, carried on an insurance business here. His mother is on a visit to him, helping to nurse his sick wife, a beautiful woman and a Christian. She, poor thing, is paralyzed beyond hope of recovery, but bright in the Lord and bearing her sickness with fortitude. This good mother of Chas. Stevens had no rest till she saw a Baptist church organized, and so it came to pass that the few scattered and lately incoming members expressed a wish that something be done, and for which we had long been hoping. Accordingly I arranged to go there for Oct. 9th and hold three services in a Hall and the next night organize a church. We had good meetings, and on the Monday fourteen persons, men and women, met at the house of Bro. Stevens, hard by the jail, organized, elected deacons and officers and praised the Lord together for a good start. The first thing these dear people did was to make a missionary collection of \$8, and also subscribe \$27.50 toward the New Westminster church benefit of their all. They have already secured a lot for a building, expecting Rev. Mr. Vincent from Nova Scotia, if not already there to take charge of the work. Of course other denominations did not think there was room for Baptists, they never do. But they are there and to stay. With a Nova Scotian pastor and half or more of the members from the same Convention I venture you, dear reader, will feel it right proper to help by prayer and money to sustain Bro. Vincent in his work. The Board has made a grant of \$300. The people will raise the rest. Will you kindly take this enterprising city of 2,000 under your wing. It will grow, and there is a good prospect for a great work being done. Mining in the neighborhood is opening up and there is great need of persistent evangelistic effort. The Hall is central, as the building will be when ready. New houses are going up all the time and so I commend this work, pastor and people, to your heart's sympathy.

Thence I went down the beautiful Arrow Lake to Nelson. On the shores of the lake are small towns growing up, some to become prominent, others to cease to be. Making note of probabilities I passed on to the very heart of the Kootenay, viz., Nelson. This is a growing city of over 4,000 people and bids fair to become a great city in the very near future. Large firms are putting up substantial blocks of buildings, banking houses also, and the C. P. R. are making it a distributing point. The Baptist church is a beautiful new building nearly paid for and seating over 300. It is well situated in this extremely pretty city and the members are a spiritually minded people. I held 8 days' meeting with them and was much pleased with all I saw. On the closing night the baptism was used for the first time and I was not a little delighted, not only to have the privilege of moving on the water, but of being the "pioneer baptizer" in the Kootenay, and Nelson has the honor of having the first baptisms. One candidate was a New Brunswicker, so see how near home it is to you, and how you ought to rejoice with Nelson. Besides your own Rev. C. W. Rose has just arrived there to take charge of the work, and they are going to receive him with unbounded joy. To this place we are obliged to give aid to the extent of \$300 and hope they will be self-supporting after next June. Will not some church in your Convention stand by Bro. Rose his first year, and let him feel that though away from home he is not forgotten. While here I visited Kaslo, a town of 2000, and Whilewater, a strong mining camp. I found a few Baptists and a room at each place to be had free for meetings, and such help as the people could give. The details I need not relate, but suffice to say a young man has been appointed to take charge of this field, and possibly thus he may be able to reach, and will hold services, visit, and do the best he can. We expect to form a church soon at Kaslo, for there are a dozen Baptists, and the most of them come from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. It is a delightful fact that there are more Maritime Province Baptists in B. C., than from any other, therefore it is

obligatory for their home churches to aid them if possible.

Again, Bro. Sweet, from Moosejaw, N. W. T., is by this time in Trail, and will do a good work in this resettled community. He also is one of your men. We shall be glad to receive more, such as we have, from your fruitful Provinces. I am proud to tell you that Bro. Stackhouse is beloved and trusted by all the B. C. churches. He is sound in judgment, vigorous in effort and worthy of your confidence.

I am now at Rossland holding a series of services. It is a hard place, and the work here is very difficult. They have a beautiful building, but the baptism has not yet been used. I hope it will be ere I leave. Of this place more in my next, as I need time to find out facts. In the meantime I plead most earnestly for funds to carry on our work. There are some of you, dear readers, who are greatly blessed in your surroundings, and can, if you will, help us in the West to evangelize the people, who are all the time coming from the eastern provinces. The need is very great. Towns are untouched and calls come to us from all quarters. Mr. Wm. Marchant, Victoria, will be glad to acknowledge contributions.

Rossland, Oct. 28th.

D. SPENCER, Supt.

Alberta Letter.

I write of Alberta. Alberta is not Manitoba, though I find that in the Eastern mind the two are more closely associated than the facts warrant. From Winnipeg to Edmonton is just 1,000 miles. Climatic conditions are as different as the distance suggests. Lying next to British Columbia our climate is influenced by our comparative nearness to the Pacific Ocean. Our average temperature is considerably higher than that of Manitoba. In Southern Alberta the warm winds from the west frequently banish the snow in the middle of winter. Cattle on the ranges graze all winter. In the Edmonton district the influence of the "Chinook" wind is not so marked, but nevertheless it tempers the severity of the winter weather. When you read of terrible blizzards in Manitoba do not waste your pity on your friends in Alberta, for blizzards are unknown here. Our average weather from November to March is calm, clear and invigorating, with occasional brief spells of severe cold. Nor is the summer weather in Manitoba any criterion of that in Alberta. For instance, it is reported that wet weather this fall has caused the loss of a large amount of the grain in Manitoba. Our season from seed time to threshing has been all that could be desired, with the exception of a frost in June that did local injury to late grain.

In natural resources also Alberta differs from Manitoba. Southern Alberta is especially adapted to grazing, while the northern part is more suitable for grain growing and mixed farming. We have immense deposits of excellent coal. Gold is washed from the river beds. The government is prospecting for petroleum in the northern part. Only time will tell what varied mineral wealth is buried in the Rockies, whose eastern slopes are in Alberta. It should be mentioned that Alberta possesses the Banff National Park—famous for its scenery and mineral springs.

I am convinced that Alberta, in respect to climate, scenery and natural resources, presents more nearly than any other province or territory a composite picture of all the parts of Canada. One thing only is lacking to complete the picture—a bit of salt water wreathed in fog.

When we turn to consider the Lord's work those who are familiar with the conditions in Manitoba are not far astray in ascribing similar conditions to Alberta. We have the same problems concerning the foreign population. Similar encouragements and discouragements, aspects and prospects. It is the day of small things. We confidently anticipate the large developments.

THE ENGLISH WORK.

The past months have been marked by progress. The churches have advanced nearer to self-support. The force has been enlarged by the addition of a student pastor on the Sturgeon field, who holds regular services at five points, at all of which Baptists are residing. The churches were cheered and blessed by a visit from Evangelist Pugsley, of Toronto, who is now working in Manitoba. He is the first evangelist to do work in the Edmonton district. I have baptized ten since his visit and others will yet follow their Lord in baptism as the result of his work. Pastor McDonald has also baptized some candidates recently.

THE GERMAN WORK

has also been marked by advance. Last winter the force was doubled by the addition of Rev. A. Hager, a Swiss of education, culture, large ministerial gifts and deep consecration. He makes Edmonton his headquarters and works in the country around. The grievous aspect of it is that the funds for the German work have not enlarged in proportion. Consequently Bro. Hager (with a family of five children) must exist on a pittance of about \$400, perhaps supplemented slightly by donations of farm produce. No! it is not that he must exist thus, for in the past year he has refused two calls to the States

offering salaries of \$1,000; but it is that with heroic consecration he has determined to stand by the Germans of Canada. Again, it is not that he must exist thus, for the Baptists of Eastern Canada have the wherewithal to put this German work in Manitoba and the Northwest on at least a decent basis. May the Lord stir the pocket-books.

THE SCANDINAVIANS

in Alberta also afford an opening for Baptist work. The Scandinavian pastor of Winnipeg recently visited the Alberta colonies. There are a few Baptists among them alive and calling for help. Others, members of Baptist churches in other places, have grown cold with the long waiting, while there is a large opening for work among those who are absolutely without religious privileges and almost without denominational leanings. But the Board has no money to send the missionary. Space forbids dwelling on other foreign elements in our population, French, Russian, Galician, etc., with which may be classed a growing Mormon colony in South Alberta. Suffice to say that if these elements are not assimilated by our Christian civilization, Alberta will ere long present to that civilization a front as menacing as that of Quebec. In the recent Plebiscite a practically unanimous English vote for prohibition was almost wiped out by the equally unanimous French, German and other foreign vote for liquor.

Alberta asks for your prayers, your money and a fair share of your young men who are migrating to other parts, young men who will not forsake their religious principles amid the enticements of this Western land. Let those who are allured by the advantages of the States weigh well the opportunities for home making afforded by Western Canada.

Edmonton, Oct. 28th.

C. B. FREEMAN.

Who Ordains the Preacher?

The question touching ordinations is regularly brought before our Convention gatherings, and with little satisfactory discussion on the matter is as regularly "bowed out of court," and we are yet a long way from seeing the many difficulties that have long confronted us properly adjusted. Some of us are still of the opinion that it is a question of more than passing importance; it is radical in our denominational life.

Baptists have ever gloried in their independence. A Baptist church is competent to transact its own business. It chooses its own pastor—he is not sent to them by a parent organization. In tones of pardonable pride we assert that we are called upon to give the answer of—good conscience to God alone—and this is true. But, when a brother is to be ordained to the work of a preacher, forthwith a council is summoned, comprising delegates from neighboring churches, who are asked to interrogate the candidate and to determine as to his fitness to preach the gospel. Why do not the *elders of the church* ordain the brother? Is it not primarily because we, as a denomination, recognize a principle of *interdependence* as binding upon us as well as that of *independence*? A brother set apart to the work of the ministry in the customary way stands in a very different relation to the denomination at large than does a deacon who is ordained in and by the church alone. This is obvious. The council, then, expresses the opinion of the denomination respecting the candidate, or at least this is to be devoutly wished. Is not the council just a sort of jury, an advisory Board for the purpose of commending (or disapproving of) the action of the church? And with this does not the work of the council end? The dominant authority after all rests with the church alone. The church—God's one institution on the earth for the extension of His reign—having thus gained the approbation of the denomination, ordains the minister, and so contributes towards the harmony and honor of the ministry in particular and of the denomination in general. Thus the two—council and local church—being agreed as touching the special equipment of the brother for his chosen work, have the assurance of the Master's approval upon all that they have done—see Matt. 18:19—and accordingly the formal exercises are entered into, including preaching of a sermon, charges to candidate and congregation, laying on of hands, etc.

While as Baptists we are vitally related to each other for grand purposes and common ends, it is not only desirable but imperative that everything possible should be done to strengthen our cause as such. Never has this question of ordinations amongst us seemed so difficult and grave as at the present. It is plainly evident that some greater safeguards than at present should be sought out in order to protect the ranks of the ministry against unworthy and unqualified candidates.

—When a minister leaves a pastorate he should leave it altogether, and give his successor a full chance. To be running back frequently for a visit, or to keep up a sort of half-pastoral relation with favorite members, is not wholesome for the ex-pastor or the church, and it is not fair to the new pastor. Often his sort of thing is done without wrong intent, and thoughtlessly, but it works evil just the same. No minister can be pastor of two churches at once and have things go right.—Watchman.