

TO THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF CANADA, WITH THEIR  
BISHOPS AND DEACONS.

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DEAR BRETHREN,

As was intimated in the last number of the Magazine, an appeal is now made to you, each and all, for a collection in aid of the Lecture Room now in course of erection, or, more probably, completed, by the Rev. W. F. Clarke, in Victoria, Vancouver's Island. This appeal comes through the undersigned, inasmuch as it was he who suggested, from the Chair of the Union, in June last, that "Canada should bui'd the first Congregational Church in British Columbia." The present Chairman, the Rev. Dr. Wilkes, and the Secretary-Treasurer, Rev. E. Ebbs, cordially endorse and recommend the proposal herein contained.

The present condition and claims of the cause presented, cannot be better set forth than in the following extracts from Mr. Clarke's letter:—

"In addition to the other impediments in my way, a serious obstacle to progress has been the lack of a suitable place of worship. We have been compelled to meet in a barn-like upper room, on an out-of-the-way street, very muddy in rainy weather, and with all the associations most inconvenient and repulsive.—This was the best that could be done.

A few days after the publication of the "circular," containing the correspondence between myself and Mr. Macfie, a gentleman from Massachusetts, who has been one of my regular hearers, suggested to me the idea of building a temporary place of worship. He said he was about to leave Victoria, but having done very well here, he was anxious to contribute to some good object before his departure, and if I would undertake the thing, he would give me one hundred dollars toward it. He remarked that we ministers generally made the mistake of trying to do too much *at first*, in the matter of church-building; and thought temporary places of worship should be built while temporary dwellings were the order of the day, and costlier, more permanent, sanctuaries erected when the people began to inhabit mansions. I thought the suggestions had common-sense in them, and backed up by a liberal subscription, they were irresistible. I therefore drew up a subscription list, and my good friend headed it with his \$100.

No sooner was it known that such an undertaking was meditated, than the "*Congregational Church, South*," as Mr. Macfie's interest has been appropriately styled, circulated a subscription list in hot haste, and swept the town before us, canvassing the business portion before I and my friends at all suspected anything of the sort! This, however, did not daunt me, and I plodded along quietly, but determinately, until I obtained *six hundred dollars*, including the original \$100. I have been very fortunate as to a site, through the liberality of the Hudson Bay Company. They had no unsold lots in any suitable situation, but gave me two lots in the best locality yet unsold, allowing me the privilege of selling them, or exchanging them for a more eligible site. I succeeded in exchanging them for *one lot* in a most commanding and desirable position, by paying in addition \$125. The site is solid rock, on a side-hill, near the summit of the highest point in Victoria, and withal very central. The position admitted of putting our temporary building in the rear without marring its appearance, and the lot is large enough for a good permanent church to be built in front of the temporary one.

It is hardly necessary for me formally to announce to you that I am "in medias res" as it respects this important undertaking. The matter required haste, and I have pushed it with all my might. So much so, that in ten or twelve days the building will be ready for occupancy. It is 26 × 40, and will seat 200 persons. There is a small vestry and minister's room in the rear. The cost of the building will be *eleven hundred dollars*, which with the addition of the balance paid for the lot, will bring the total outlay required to over *twelve hundred dollars*—a very moderate cost for such an achievement, when you consider the exorbitant price of