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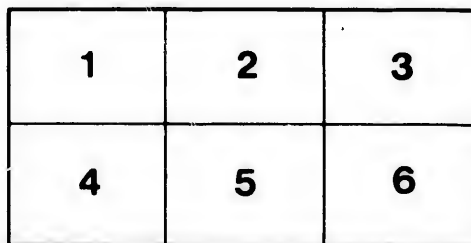
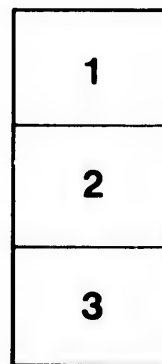
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Colonial Church Chronicle

1855

MISSION TO VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

"DEAR SIR,—Though the subject has already been more than once brought before the readers of the *Colonial Church Chronicle*, I would yet venture to call their attention once more to the importance and desirableness of establishing, with as little delay and with as complete organization as possible, a Mission in Vancouver's Island, or on the mainland. This can hardly be thought a premature step, when it is considered that "this is the only Colony of the British Crown, in which British subjects reside, in which no attempt has been made by the Church of England to preach the Gospel to the native inhabitants." We have, perhaps,

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no statistics to enable us to say, with any degree of certainty, what is the population of Vancouver's Island, which is commonly estimated at about 10,000; while the whole native population in the British territory west of the Rocky Mountains may be reckoned at from 80,000 to 100,000, among whom at present not a single Missionary Clergyman of the Church of England is to be found.

It cannot therefore be said that a Mission is not needed for so vast a field of labour, any more than that it is premature to send one; while, on the other hand, many circumstances contribute to render such a step most important at the present time. If, happily, we are blessed with a continuance of peace, it will hardly fail but that in a few years we shall become much better acquainted with the north-west coast of North America, and ports that are at present unknown will become the busy scenes of commerce; and it will be far better for the cause of the Gospel, that the missionary should precede the merchant, than the merchant the missionary. At present, the natives, if we may trust to the reports of those few persons who have had opportunities of becoming acquainted with them, offer an encouraging field to the Christian labourer. They are brave and manly, skilful and ingenious; resembling much, in character, the inhabitants of the Islands in the South Pacific. And if only a Mission could be at once established in all its fulness, with a Bishop to preside over it as earnest and self-denying as other Colonial Bishops, it would not be too much to hope that Vancouver's Island might prove to be the mainland of north-west America, what England herself was in former times to the north-west of Europe, the seat from which holy men should go forth to gather in the savage tribes within the fold of Christ's Church. Want of funds has alone prevented the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* from establishing a Mission in this island; but while prudence ought to be the characteristic of men of business, faith ought to be the distinguishing mark of Christians; and if the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* could be induced to send out a Mission there, I have no doubt that they would not have to repent having done so. In 1855, though the Finance Committee reported that the Funds of the Society were pledged to their full extent, no sooner did an appeal come home for help from the Bishop of Grahamstown, than a vote of 1,500*l.* was proposed by the Standing Committee, which sum was increased in 1856 to 2,500*l.*; and the Society has had no cause to repent having done so. As our blessed Lord healed the man who had a withered arm, by bidding him "Stretch it forth!" so when the Church desires in faith to stretch forth its arms unto the heathen, Christ will give it strength to do so, and provide the means. Only let the Society be faithful to its trust, and the hearts of English Churchmen will be warmed up to support it, and children that are yet unborn shall bless the day when the first Missionary band landed on the rich and fertile shores of Vancouver's Island.

In a few years the opportunity which now offers itself will most probably no longer exist, and the Mission will then have to be undertaken at a greater cost, and with less hope of success. Land is at

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present cheap. European vices are not so common as they will be in a short time ; and the expenses of the Mission need not be large. Only let the Society determine to establish it at once in all its fulness, and a grant of 500l. a-year would be of greater service now, than 1,000l. in ten years time.

Hoping that these few remarks may be the means of calling or recalling the attention of your readers and of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* to this too long neglected field of labour,

I remain, yours faithfully,

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VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

A GREAT opportunity is passing away unused, in the apathy and indifference of the Church to the spiritual wants of VANCOUVER'S ISLAND and the adjacent territory. From 80,000 to 100,000 population dwell there; but though British subjects, and for a long time within the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, no organized efforts have ever been made for gathering the natives into the Christian fold. To the colonist the rich mineral productions of the soil offer great attractions, for coal is found there in so great abundance, that ere long the harbour at Vancouver—the only safe one on the coast—must become the great coaling-station for English and American steamers in the Pacific. Gold, too, of fine quality, and in large nuggets, one of which has been seen weighing twenty-two ounces, has been found in Queen Charlotte's Island; auriferous quartz four times richer than that of California, and copper in abundance, have been also found. These and similar attractions are already bringing a lawless and reckless tribe of adventurers to the spot, who are making the uncivilized life of the natives more brutal and degraded still by the imported vices of a debased civilization. The natives are intelligent, and physically a noble people. Those of Queen Charlotte's Island independent and warlike; those of Vancouver more gentle and docile. Their abodes are yet, however, among "the isles that wait for" Christ; and races who might honour God by being transformed into the likeness of His Son, are being given up to the lowest lures of Satan by the apathy and selfishness of nominal followers of the Redeemer.

Some few minds, however, have been awakened to the need of stirring in this interesting cause ; and as the charter that was granted a few years ago, making Vancouver a Crown Colony, reserved certain lands for the purposes of religion and education, let us hope that the Church of the nation will speak through some of her members, and enter boldly upon her inheritance for the evangelization of the natives.

We have heard that more than one voice has been raised at the Monthly Meetings of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* in favour of the claims of these distant islanders. Why should not that Society step forward and ask of the legislature to be appointed trustees of the Church lands already assigned ? God would surely bless so wise, so just, and so faithful a movement to His own glory, and would raise up soldiers of the Cross to do the work of evangelists where they are so much needed.

M. M. K.

[The readers of the *Colonial Church Chronicle* will remember that this subject has before been discussed in its pages. There is an article upon it in the number for November, 1853, page 161 ; and a long and very interesting account of the island in the number for May, 1854, page 409.]

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VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

King's College, London, 13th April, 1855.

SIR,—While I sincerely rejoice to find you again endeavouring to bring before the Church the spiritual destitution of the West Coast of British North America, I am most anxious that no errors should appear in the statements made, or inducements offered by your correspondents, whether in respect of the character and condition of the people, or the position, productions, and capabilities of the country ; and as, in the short notice given in this month's *Chronicle*, there are errors which appear to me of sufficient importance to justify me in doing so, I venture to request permission to point out and correct them.

And first, the harbour of Vancouver is said to be the only safe one on the coast. As that in use is at Victoria, and there is no harbour named Vancouver, this must probably be a misprint, but in any case it is far from being the only one ; for the shores of Vancouver's Island are indented, as indeed is the whole coast, with sounds, gulfs, and bays, so numerous and so good as harbourage for shipping, that selection with our present amount of knowledge is impossible, but that of Victoria is not even among the best, being scant of water and difficult of entrance. The indented character of the coast commences at Juan de Fuca Strait, and extends north into the Russian territories, so that probably no similar extent of coast can show so many and so good harbours ; but between Juan de Fuca Strait and St. Francisco, California, there is no good harbour.

What is called Queen Charlotte's Island may now be considered as a group of islands, none of which can have a considerable area, and the production of any quantity of gold there is not to be expected from washing, but what has been brought to this country and said to be of average quality has been found richer than average specimens of Australian or Californian gold. I think, also, that it is not likely, as the islands are of a very irregular and broken surface, that auriferous quartz in any large quantities will be found. The true mineral wealth of this coast and its islands will be found in coal, if not in copper ; the latter is probably abundant on the main land, where gold in quantity is also most likely to be found, the hills in Queen Charlotte's Island being the extension of the coast line, which again

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corresponds to the auriferous range of California. More fruitful sources of immediate wealth than the minerals promise, will, however, be found in the vegetable productions, especially timber, and in the fisheries.

It appears to me, that though correct in fact, an erroneous impression is produced by saying that the natives have been for a long time under the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company. Those about the Columbia river, Juan de Fuca's Strait, have indeed, but to the North, and even in Vancouver, the influence of the Company was so slight, that in 1843 their Governor did not think it prudent to extend their first establishment till he had gained the confidence and respect of the natives; and not long since an American, *i. e.* United States, schooner, was burnt by the natives almost within sight of one of their forts. The influence which the Company does possess varies much, as it is the result, first, of their supplying the natives with what now have become indispensable to them, viz. British manufactures; and secondly, of the fear produced by their armed vessels, especially the steamers; it is therefore local and temporary in its action.

It should seem also that when the natives of Vancouver's Island are described as more gentle and docile than those further north, the impression produced must be that they are naturally so, no cause being assigned; but in reading the accounts of the early voyagers this does not appear: the truth is, they have become slaves, *i. e.* the few who remain about the southern portions of Vancouver's Island, while those to the north are still free, those of the islands to the north being of course more so than those of the coast.

You seem also to place before us our sins in this matter as of omission only. I venture to think that there is a deep and dark record of commission written down against us, and this will appear plainly on a contrast between the condition of the natives when first discovered by Europeans, and their condition since they have been brought into immediate connexion with them; and this, if you will allow me, I will place before your readers in some future number of your periodical.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

C. G. NICOLAY.

P.S. On referring to Mr. Baylee's letter in your May number of last year, I find what has no doubt been the authority for H. M. K.'s singular harbour.¹ "In this island is found the only safe harbour between the 49° of north latitude and San Francisco." Such an error in Mr. Baylee's letter can only be accounted for by supposing it in some way typographical.

¹ [By the "harbour at Vancouver," H. M. K. meant the harbour at Vancouver's Island, and that it was *the only safe known one.*]

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THE BISHOP OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THE following letter from the Bishop of Columbia, dated "Victoria, Vancouver's Island, Jan. 13, 1860," appeared in the *Guardian* of March 21 :—

"I arrived here on the 6th inst., the Epiphany of our Lord. May my efforts be indeed for the manifestation of Christ to the varied people in this interesting land.

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Victoria must be, I think, the most lovely and beautifully situated place in the world. I never saw anything before like it. In summer it must be exquisite. I was surprised to see the size and rapid growth of the town; there are some thousands of people who are putting up houses every day. It will be a large city ere a few years are over. How important is our work! The Church of England here is in a feeble state; had it been left long so, it would almost have been trampled out. Our only church is of wood, holds about four hundred, and stands nobly on a site which one day may be occupied by a cathedral. My iron church will come at the most fortunate moment, and we shall be prepared for the further influx of people in the spring. I shall work this myself for awhile, and superintend the supply of all the wants of the town and neighbourhood; whether my residence will be here permanently or not I cannot yet say. There is immediate want of a collegiate school or college. I shall require a good Head for this; it will be well supported, I doubt not. I should like to find a man who would take a lead here in education. I find there are several important posts immediately requiring to be filled up. As to the work now going on—Mr. Dundas, Court-house, Victoria, morning and evening; Mission Chapel at Esquimaux in the afternoon. Mr. Sheepshanks, New Westminster, much liked; three full services on Sunday; several Chinese under instruction; church will shortly be built here. This place during the present year is expected to make much progress. We begin now to expect the *Athelstone* with mission-house and church, and the *Heather Bell* with other three missionaries of my little staff, who are still on their long voyage. Some ships are out a long time, so they may be a month or two months yet before arrival. The work will, I believe, be deeply interesting; and, if well supported by the right men, and sufficient means at first, will lay a good foundation of true religion in this important colony of Britain. God give us all grace to spend and be spent for Christ's sake, and the souls of many, now scattered as sheep without a shepherd. There is no use having any man out here who is not an effective preacher; that must always be a qualification—better without him unless so gifted.

Some things here are dearer than in England considerably. Servants and house-rent are the worst. Beef, 10*d.* per lb.; excellent mutton, 1*s.*; butter, 2*s.* 6*d.* per lb.; coals, 32*s.* per ton. But other supplies are very reasonable.—Soft sugar, 4*d.*; loaf ditto, 6*d.* per lb.; tea, 2*s.* 6*d.*; fish, very cheap and good; also potatoes; flour, same as in England; milk, 6*d.* per pint; washing, *terribly* dear. Single men, however, live as cheaply as in England. Dundas pays 140*l.* per annum for board and lodging, and is very comfortable indeed. Prices are likely to fall much lower, and I should not be surprised if one could soon live here as cheaply as in England.

There are some pleasant people here. I have had many visitors. A good number of young men are waiting to be employed. Artisans of any kind can make enormous wages. Even gentlemen are day-labourers on account of the good pay, and doing anything rather than be idle. Very rich gold-beds have been discovered within the last two

months, and it is expected there will be a great influx of people in the spring. I must conclude; thank God I am well. Greet all inquiring friends with my best wishes and desires for their prayers. No mission, I feel sure, has left the mother Church with more powerful sympathy directed towards it. I am encouraged by this. We can expect no prosperity, no success, except we lean alone on our merciful and watchful Father who is in heaven.

Believe me, affectionately yours, G. COLUMBIA."

THE following is an extract from the letter of the Correspondent of *The Times*. It appeared on March 15, and was dated "Victoria, Vancouver's Island, January 25th":—

"The new Bishop has been here for three weeks. His fame as an able and efficient pastor had preceded him, and insured him a kind and hearty reception. His presence, social intercourse, and the performance of his sacred duties, have confirmed the estimate we had formed by reputation of his character. He has been exceedingly well received by all classes of Protestants—Dissenters as well as Churchmen. Much of the favourable impression which the Bishop has made is due to his very candid declaration from the pulpit, on the first Sunday after his arrival, that his Church is self-supporting, and unconnected with the State. He threw himself boldly and confidently upon the affections, zeal, and good feeling of the laity, for the future maintenance of religious instruction; and, as a large majority of the people is averse to State connexion, the declaration has had the desired effect.

My own individual opinion is of no weight or importance, but I shall not commit myself entirely to these sentiments. They are very pleasing in theory, and, as a general principle, have much to recommend them. I think, however, that a moderate endowment in real property in aid of religion, where, as is the case here, it can be done without any injustice to existing interests, is a duty incumbent on the State; such endowment not to be limited to the Church of England. This done, the further future support of every Church might, with a good grace, be left to the members of each persuasion.

A clergyman who knows his part well, and plays it, will find support under the voluntary system; but I have yet to learn that this system possesses vitality and attraction sufficient to induce the education, training, and devotion of such a body of learned men as the Church of England draws, under State endowment, to her service. Having seen much of the voluntary system, where it exists on a large scale, I cannot hesitate to declare that it has not yet produced, and is not preparing, an educated body of clerical gentlemen in any part of the world which comes up to the standard I have mentioned. There is much practical philosophy in Sydney Smith's doctrine of 'prizes' in the Church."

ADDRESS TO THE BISHOP OF COLUMBIA.

(From the "Weekly British Colonist,"—Victoria, Vancouver's Island,—
of February 4.)

THE Address to the Bishop of Columbia, which has been in the course of signature during the last week, was presented to his Lordship on Monday forenoon. . . . The following gentlemen attended :—

Rev. E. Cridge, Chief Justice Begbie, Mr. Wood, Mr. Frazer, Mr. W. J. McDonald, Mr. Crease, Capt. Gordon, Capt. Gossett, Rev. Dr. Evans, Mr. Southgate, Mr. Cusheon, Mr. Finlayson, Mr. Munro, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Gambitz, Mr. Little, Mr. W. B. Smith, Mr. McInnis.

The deputation was received by the Bishop, and the Rev. E. Cridge read the Address, which was as follows :—

"TO THE RIGHT REV. GEORGE HILLS, D.D. LORD BISHOP OF
COLUMBIA.

*The Address of the Clergy, Churchwardens, Members of the Church of
England, and other Inhabitants of Vancouver Island.*

We, the undersigned inhabitants of Vancouver Island, beg to approach your Lordship with the assurance of our heartfelt sympathy for the Mission which has brought you to this portion of your Diocese, and tender you our hearty congratulations upon your safe arrival.

The great public interest in the spiritual affairs of this and the sister colony, which your Lordship's advocacy was so largely instru-

mental in awakening throughout the mother country, merits our warmest acknowledgments : for, while it ensures the active co-operation of our fellow-countrymen in all that promotes the best interests of religion among us, it cannot fail to advance the material prosperity of these colonies.

Had an earnest been wanting for the hopes which we entertain of your future career, we have, happily, only to revert to your successful labours elsewhere, to feel every confidence that the zeal and ability which have hitherto directed you, will, under Heaven, be attended here with similar results.

Your Lordship's prompt declaration, so soon after your arrival, that you had sufficient confidence in the vitality of the religion we profess, to entrust the Church to the voluntary support of its members, has been received with much satisfaction ; it gives a great stimulus to individual exertion in the cause of religion, and ensures the devoted co-operation of the laity.

It is with peculiar pleasure we learn your Lordship's intentions to direct your experience and knowledge to the formation and maintenance of schools for the education of the rising generation—a benefit which we are rejoiced to find will be extended to the Indian race.

We cannot conclude this Address without expressing our heartfelt thanks to that Christian lady, who, by the endowment of a Bishopric in these distant colonies, has testified her generous interest in those who have wandered so far from their native land.

Hoping that it may please the Almighty to spare you to fulfil your important and arduous Mission, and that you may find it consistent with the effective discharge of your ministration to be much among us, and wishing you health and happiness, we remain your Lordship's faithful and very obedient servants."

The signatures amounted to about eight hundred in number, representing every class of the community. The Address having been read, was placed in the Bishop's hands, who proceeded to make the following reply :—

"GENTLEMEN,—I beg to thank you sincerely for this Address, and for the kind welcome you have given me.

Your allusion to my safe arrival leads me to express before you my deep and grateful sense of the mercy of God, that I was preserved from the sad fate of those who perished in the *Northerner*, by which vessel I had intended to come. The delay in my departure from England was occasioned by my desire to give such information as I could respecting these colonies. A wide-spread interest is the consequence, and I am glad my humble efforts have met with your approval.

Your expression of sympathy in my Mission encourages me to believe there will not be wanting an active support of all that is really beneficial and elevating in a Christian community.

There will be many objects in which we may all unite and happily labour for the common good, and for the glory of God.

As a Minister of the Church of England, I cannot expect the agree-

ment of all, and must look to those principally who belong to that time-honoured and greatly blessed portion of the Church Catholic for the support of our own institutions.

When we remember the early planting of this Church in Britain ; her part in the reformation of Christendom ; her encouragement of the free circulation of the Scriptures ; her preservation in many a storm, and her recent progress :—and believing in the promise of perpetuity vouchsafed to his Church by the Divine Head, we accept, without fear, the circumstances of any land to which we may be called, and with confidence can entrust the Church to the willing support of her faithful laity. From the State we seek no exclusive privileges—we ask only for liberty, a fair field, and no favour.

We desire humbly and lovingly to labour, that the principles of the doctrine of Christ may be established in the hearts of many by the manifest and felt blessings of the power of the Gospel ; and in openly and honestly avowing those distinctive principles, which, as Churchmen, we profess and revere as the truth in Jesus, with all charity, we are sure we shall have the respect, at least, of all fair-minded and generous men.

I rejoice to feel my future life is bound up in these two colonies, which form the Diocese of Columbia, and I trust I may never be wanting in any humble exertion I can render for their material as well as spiritual prosperity.

No inconsiderable part of my time must be occupied in this important Island, yet the chief part of my attention will necessarily be required in the neighbouring Colony, where distances are so much greater, the population, stations, and clergy, likely to be more numerous, and the peculiar circumstances of the gold regions requiring more personal visitation.

Thanking you once more for the kindness and honour you have shown me, and trusting we may have many opportunities in days to come of conferring together as friends and brethren, I desire to express my earnest prayer that God may bless you abundantly with his choicest gifts.

I remain, Gentlemen, your faithful friend and servant,

GEORGE COLUMBIA."

