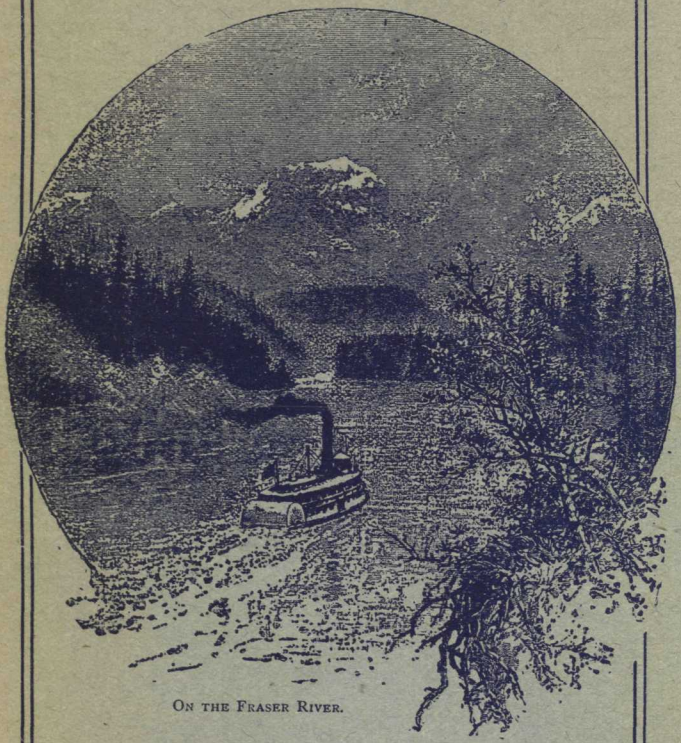
How Methodism Came to British Columbia



On the Fraser River.

BY

REV. E. ROBSON, D.D.

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By REV. C. W. SERVICE, B.A., M.D.

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REV. E. ROBSON, D.D.

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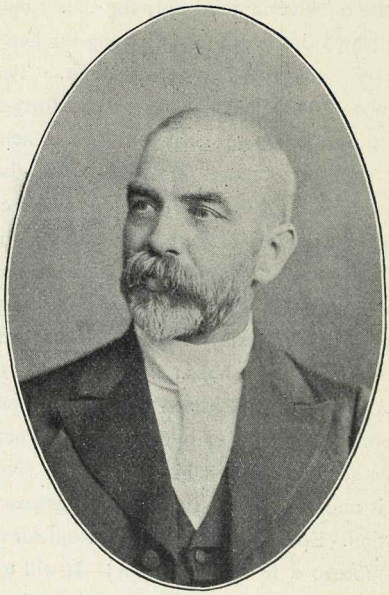
INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THIS little booklet contains only the barest outlines of a story which deserves a place among the heroic annals of missionary enterprise and achievement. The author, Rev. E. Robson, D.D., has, during the past forty-five years, accumulated an immense mass of data which will be invaluable to some future historian of Methodism in British Columbia. But the personal recollection, the thrilling adventure, the racy anecdote, the pathetic incident which would endow the story with life and action, these will be lost forever when such men as Ebenezer Robson, Cornelius Bryant, Thomas Crosby and James Turner pass on to their reward. Dr. Robson has frequently been importuned by his brethren to commit to paper some of those reminiscences of early days on the Pacific Coast which have so often moved his auditors to laughter and tears. It is understood that such a volume is now in course of preparation. Epworth Leaguers! look out for it! When it appears forego a meal and buy it! It will touch your hearts and kindle your enthusiasm for Christ and His Church.

JAMES H. WHITE,
Local Supt. of Missions for British Columbia.

Kamloops, B.C., April, 1904.



REV. J. H. WHITE,

Local Superintendent of Missions for British Columbia.

How Methodism Came to British Columbia

BY REV. EBENEZER ROBSON, D.D., VANCOUVER.

The Rush to the Gold Fields in 1858.

DURING the spring and summer of 1858 the first great rush of adventurers from California, Oregon and Washington to the newly-discovered gold fields of the Fraser River took place, and before the sands of that year were quite run out four missionaries, representatives of Canadian Methodism, were on their way to the new Eldorado. These were charged with the duty of preaching the gospel of a free and full salvation to the traders, miners, settlers and aborigines of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, then separate colonies.

The inception of the work at so early a date in the history of these colonies was largely due to the far-seeing sagacity of the late Rev. Enoch Wood, D.D., for many years superintendent of Wesleyan missions in Canada. He brought the importance of these territories to the notice of the English Wesleyan Missionary Society, and secured an appropriation of £500 to assist in the outfit and despatch of at least three missionaries, the selection of the men and their subsequent maintenance to rest with the Canadian Society. A number of missionaries promptly volunteered for service in the new field, of whom Rev. Edward White, of Smithville, and the writer, then junior pastor of the Montreal Centre circuit, were accepted. Rev. Ephraim Evans, D.D., of Kingston, was requested to undertake the chairmanship of the new district, he nominating Rev. Arthur Browning, of Artemesia, as the fourth member of the party.

Four Missionaries Sent Out—The Farewell Services.

A few weeks were allowed the missionaries-elect for preparation for their long journey to what was then little more than an unknown land to the average Canadian. On December 15th they met the Missionary Committee in Toronto for final consultation and instruction. On the evening following an intensely interesting valedictory

service was held in Richmond Street Church, and the next morning about 300 persons sat down to a farewell breakfast in St. Lawrence Hall. The "farewell" and "Godspeed" were heartily joined in by representatives of nearly all the denominations, by the Mayor of Toronto, the Hons. George Brown and J. Beverly Robinson, and such honored and historic Methodist names as Rev. Drs. Stinson, Wood, Green, George Douglas and Egerton Ryerson; Rev. John Douse and Richard Jones; and Messrs. John Macdonald and John Stirling. Dr. Evans and family left the same day for New York to make final arrangements for the journey.

From Toronto to British Columbia, Seven Thousand Miles.

On the last day of the year Rev. A. Browning and the writer were ordained by the President of the Conference and started for New York, being joined *en route* by Mr. White and family. The party was heartily welcomed by representatives of New York Methodism, and a large congregation gathered in St. Paul's M.E. Church, January 4th, 1859, to encourage them on their way. A princely layman, Francis Hall, Esq., occupied the chair, while Dr. John McClintock, the venerable Dr. Nathan Bangs and others took part in the exercises. The missionaries proceeded on January 6th by steamer to Aspinwall, thence *via* the Isthmus of Panama to the Pacific. Arriving at San Francisco on Saturday, January 28th, they were assigned work in several of the churches of the city next day. Proceeding north on February 3rd, and touching at Portland, Ore., the party reached Victoria on Thursday, February 10th, where they were heartily welcomed in the name of the Lord, and found shelter in a new building belonging to Mr. J. T. Pidwell, thanking God who had kept them all safe throughout a journey of nearly 7,000 miles by sea and land.

Victoria in those days had a mixed population estimated at 3,000 with two churches, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic. The old stockade fort of the Hudson Bay Co., with its frowning bastions and rusty cannon was still intact. In the preceding September Rev. J. F. Devore, Presiding Elder of Puget Sound District, accompanied by Rev. H. Rhodes, had ascended Fraser River as far as Fort Langley. Returning to Victoria they held services in a tent and on the street, but learning that missionaries were about to be sent from Canada they returned to the Sound.

First Services in Victoria held in the Court House.

The first services held by our missionaries were on February 13th, 1859, in a room in the Court House, the use of which was kindly granted by Governor James Douglas. Dr. Evans preached in the morning and Mr. White in the evening to a packed congregation. The missionaries were cordially welcomed by Rev. Mr. Cridge, now the venerable and beloved Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church, who for forty-five years since then has been the cordial and consistent friend of Methodism. They were also given a very hearty reception by Governor Douglas and other officials of the Government and of the Hudson Bay Co. On the following Sunday services were again held in the Court House, the writer preaching the same day his first sermon in the colony at Craigflower school house four and a half miles from the city.

The Gift of the Hudson's Bay Company—First Church Dedicated in Victoria, May 20th, 1860.

Organization was at once proceeded with. A class had been formed with ten members, which increased the first week to fourteen. The Hudson's Bay Company donated three lots on the corner of Pandora and Broad Streets for the use of the mission, on which a parsonage was erected, and on August 15th the corner-stone of a church was laid by His Excellency the Governor in the presence of a great concourse of people. The church was completed and dedicated May 20th, 1860. Dr. Evans remained in charge for seven years, being assisted first by Rev. D. V. Lucas, who had been sent out from Canada, and later by Rev. Arthur Browning. During the pastorate of Rev. A. E. Russ, M.A., who came out in 1868, the church became self-sustaining. Mr. Russ was followed by Rev. Wm. Pollard, and from that day to this the mother congregation of Victoria Methodism, now worshipping in the commodious and beautiful Metropolitan Church, has been served by a succession of godly and distinguished men, some of whose names are household words in British Columbia and in the Dominion. The old church has been a prolific mother. Methodism is now represented in the Queen City by the Metropolitan, Centennial, Victoria West, James' Bay, and Spring Ridge churches; by missions to the Indians, Chinese and Japanese; and by the handsome and commo-

dious Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, erected at Esquimalt for the accomodation of the men at the naval station there. Saanich Mission also has been largely fostered from Victoria. The hosts of saintly, consecrated men and women, whose self-denying toil through the years has contributed to this result, cannot even be mentioned by name. Many have "crossed the flood," some are "crossing now." Their names are written in heaven, and their record is on high.

The Work Begun at Nanaimo.

Just one week after the arrival of the missionaries Rev. A. Browning was despatched to Nanaimo to open work there. He was welcomed by Mr. Cornelius Bryant, a Wesleyan Methodist from England, teacher of the colonial school, who had come out in 1857, and who was, so far as is known, the first member of our Church in the province. It had been his custom to hold service with the people on the Lord's Day. He afterwards entered the ministry, sat in the General Conference of the Church as President of the British Columbia Conference, and still remains among us, saintly in spirit, ripe in wisdom, and abundant in labors for Christ and His Church. All the members of the original band of missionairies served the church at Nanaimo at various times, Rev. E. White and the writer spending the longest time there. The field was soon extended until it reached Comox, 70 miles north, and Salt Spring Island, 30 miles south. This territory now includes two strong self-supporting churches in the "Coal City" itself, and four flourishing mission fields. An honored name in connection with Nanaimo Methodism is that of Rev. Thos. Derrick, long since passed to his rest.

During the second pastorate of Mr. White at Nanaimo, July, 1869, the first camp-meeting in British Columbia was held at Maple Bay. It was attended by nearly all the ministers in the country, and by a number of devoted laymen and women from Victoria, Nanaimo and New Westminster. There were a number of conversions both among whites and Indians, and much good was accomplished.

The amount of physical wear and tear involved in doing the pioneer work on the fields just referred to, was great indeed—long and perilous trips in canoes and open boats on the salt water, amid fierce storms of wind, rain and snow, and equally fatiguing tramps and exposures upon the land in all seasons of the year. But it was work cheerfully done for God and His redeemed ones. Doubtless they who thus

toiled, often with blistered hands and feet, that they might sow the precious seed beside all waters, "shall return with joy, bringing their sheaves with them."

Fraser River Gold Fields.

It having been decided by the Chairmen that my mission was to be the gold fields and mining camps of the Fraser River, we left Victoria on an exploring trip March 2nd, 1859. We travelled by the *Beaver*, the first steamer to plough the waters of the Pacific. She had been built near London, England, in 1835, as a trader for the Hudson Bay Company, and was wrecked at the outer narrows, Vancouver, in July, 1888, her hull being as sound as ever, and her "Belton and Watt" engines being in good order. We dropped anchor the following day at Langley, the oldest Hudson Bay fort on the coast of British Columbia, having been established in 1827. On Sunday, the 26th, Dr. Evans preached in the morning in the dining hall of the Company's house, and the writer in the afternoon in the barracks of the Royal Engineers, Lower Langley. These were the first Methodist services held on the mainland of what is now the Province of British Columbia. On Monday we began the ascent of the river in a small canoe purchased from the Indians. After a difficult passage of five days we reached Fort Hope, where I remained, Dr. Evans and companion going on to Yale, fifteen miles further. On the Sunday following opening services were held in both places, after which Dr. Evans returned to Victoria. At Hope, Yale, and the mining bars from Murderer's Bar to the famed Hill Bar, I visited the miners in their cabins and preached to all who would listen the glorious Gospel of Christ, often paddling alone, in my little canoe *Wesleyan*, through Hell Gate, and over Emory's Bar and other "riffles" which mark the course of the turbulent Fraser in that region. Mr. Browning came to Hope and Yale in 1860, and remained in charge three years, spending the summer months mostly in the newer mining districts, including far-famed Cariboo. Among our hearers in those early days were many who afterward became prominent in the affairs of the country, as well as some who "died in their boots," being drowned, blown up, murdered or hanged. Though the work was trying and the results seemingly insignificant, yet we hope to meet some of both classes in the better land when we also shall have crossed the "Great Divide."

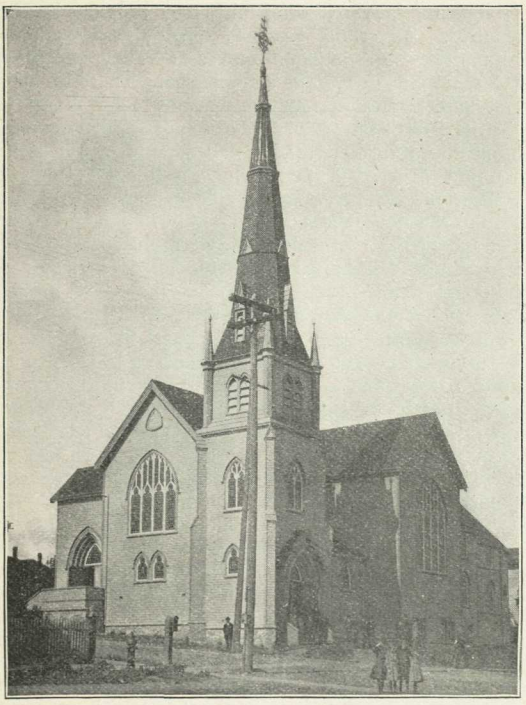
A site for the future capital of the colony was selected by Col. Moody, Commissioner of Land and Works, on a heavily timbered ridge on the north bank of the Fraser River. The town was called Queensboroug by the gallant Colonel, but Gov. Douglas preferring to spell it Queensborough, the matter was referred to the Queen herself, who gave the embryo city the name of New Westminster, hence called the "Royal City," the Queen being its sponsor.

To this location came Mr. White on April 1st, 1859, and held the first service on the town site the Sunday following, the congregation gathering in the shade of a large tree near the margin of the river. Fifty men and one woman were present, the latter still being a respected resident of the city. A week later the congregation met on the floor of the Colonial Treasury Building, the erection of which had meanwhile commenced. On the 22nd of the month Mr. White's family came up and were domiciled in a room 13 x 14 feet in a cotton tent. As soon as the Treasury Building was complete a large room was placed at the disposal of the Methodist congregation. In that room, on May 25th, Mr. White held the first public temperance meeting of which there is any record in British Columbia. The missionary at once began, assisted by four or five others, to hew out from the dense forest the two lots donated by the Government for a church and a parsonage. The shingles, weather boards and fencing for the parsonage, and a considerable part of the frame and furniture of the church were made by hand out of an immense cedar tree which stood on the property. Here, on April 8th, 1860, the first Methodist church to be completed in the province was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God. Mr. White was followed in 1863 by Mr. Browning, and he, two years later, by the writer, when the mission was enlarged so as to include Hastings (now Vancouver), Moodyville, Maple Ridge, Langley, Sumas, Chilliwack, Hope and Yale, beside the city itself. In fact, he was the only missionary of the Methodist Church stationed on the mainland.

Since then the growth of our Church has been very great. The ground then covered by one lonely missionary now comprises two districts, having two prosperous cities and many strong self-supporting churches. New Westminster itself was visited in 1898 by a disastrous fire, which destroyed most of the business portion of the city, including all but one of the down-town churches. But she has risen from her ashes with renewed strength and beauty,

and the central Methodist congregation is better housed than ever in their new and modern church on Queen's Avenue.

Though a connexional institution, yet, as having its home in New Westminster, mention should here be made of Columbian Methodist College. This was begun in 1892



NEW METHODIST CHURCH, NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.

by the British Columbia Conference and formally passed to the control of the General Conference in 1902. The college gives a full course in Arts in affiliation with Toronto University, and a full course in Theology under its own Charter, as well as commercial and ladies' college courses. It occupies beautiful premises, free of debt, in the centre of

the city, and under the management of its Principal, Rev. W. J. Sipprell, B.A., B.D., and his gifted staff has attained a place in the van of the educational institutions of the province.

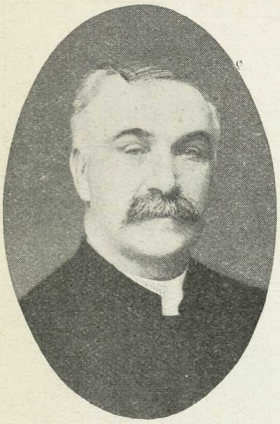
Two places, one included within the bounds of the Westminster mission, should receive special mention, *viz.*, Chilliwack and Vancouver. The former was visited by the writer in 1865, when the first religious services were held. In 1868 Rev. T. Crosby was appointed missionary to the Indians of the Fraser Valley, and carried the Gospel among the white settlers also. There broke out a remarkable revival of religion, during which a majority of the settlers were converted. The results were far-reaching and the beautiful Chilliwack valley, one of the richest agricultural districts in the province, is to-day dotted with churches and has the honor of having never permitted a license to sell liquor to be issued within its bounds.

Though of later growth, Vancouver has now become known as the "Terminal City," the largest city and the commercial centre of the province. In one of its sanctuaries the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, numbering 450 commissioners, held its session of last year. The first services on Burrard Inlet were held in 1864 by the writer. The following year the first service was held on what is now the site of Vancouver. When this spot was selected for the terminus of the C. P. R. a great city sprang up. Vancouver also has passed through her baptism of fire, being entirely destroyed June 13th, 1886. The family of our missionary barely escaped with their lives by taking refuge on a raft in the harbor. There are to-day Wesley, Princess Street, Mount Pleasant and Fairview churches. Vancouver is also the home of the only Scandinavian Methodist mission in Canada, and has beside flourishing and well-equipped missions to the Chinese and Japanese. In addition to these congregations, there are outside the city limits five school sections which have been regularly supplied with preaching every Lord's Day and with Sunday Schools during the past year without cost to the Missionary Society.

North Arm (now Richmond) and Ladner have also become strong self-supporting circuits.

The synopsis of early Methodist history would not be complete without mention of the Cariboo mission. This most famous of the gold fields of British Columbia was visited in 1862, and again the year following by Dr. Evans and Mr. Browning, the latter of whom again visited

Cariboo in 1864, and preached to the crowds of gold-seekers as opportunity offered. But the stationing of a resident missionary was not made practicable till 1868, when Mr. Thomas Cunningham generously contributed $500 a year for three years for that purpose. The first Methodist missionary so appointed was Rev. Thomas Derrick, who remained three years at Barkerville, during which time he erected a church and small parsonage and won the confidence and affection of all. Nearly twenty years of earnest and self-sacrificing labor was given to this difficult field, but in 1887, the population having greatly declined and another denomination having sent missionaries to the district, no regular appointment was made, and it has only been revisited since at irregular intervals, the last visit being made by Rev. James Turner in 1902.



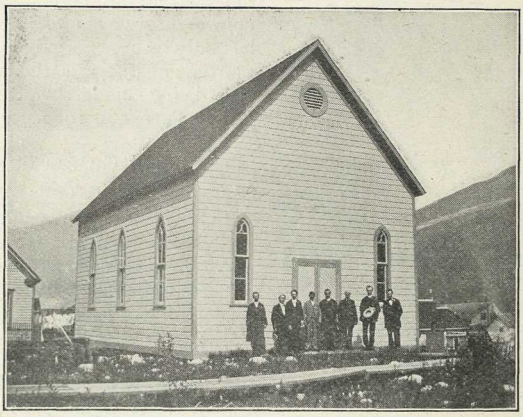
REV. JAMES TURNER, PRESIDENT B.C. CONFERENCE.

A famous "Saddle-bags" Missionary.

The Bunch Grass Country.

In 1875 Rev. James Turner, who had spent the two previous years at New Westminster and Burrard Inlet, was appointed to the Nicola Valley and Kamloops missions. This practically meant the whole dry belt of the Bunch Grass Country, or so much of it as he could reach. And no man could well have reached more than did James Turner, who, though not much given to writing up reports of his work, has probably seldom, if ever, been excelled as a "Saddle Bags" missionary. After prospecting and studying his field he pre-empted, in the name of God and Methodism, a section of country stretching from Soda Creek to Osoyoos and Keremeos; and from Lillooet to Spallumcheen. When at Soda Creek he was 274 miles from his home in Nicola, and at Keremeos was 270 miles in the opposite direction. To make the round required 1088 miles of travel, exclusive of numerous side trips. Mr. Turner was ever ready to undertake a ride of one hundred miles to visit the sick, marry a couple, bury the

dead, or eat a Christmas dinner with his friend, the cattle king, at Penticton. Bear in mind that his fifteen appointments were in many instances seventy or more miles apart, that the journeys had to be made on horseback in the hottest days of summer and in the severest weather of winter; that rivers had to be crossed without bridges, and the nights often spent in bloody warfare with millions of musquitoes; and that the missionary was only at home long enough to write a few letters and lasso a fresh bronco from the hills, and you will have some idea of life in the early days on Kamloops mission. Many faithful men have followed in his footsteps, and this vast territory now



METHODIST CHURCH, KASLO, B.C.

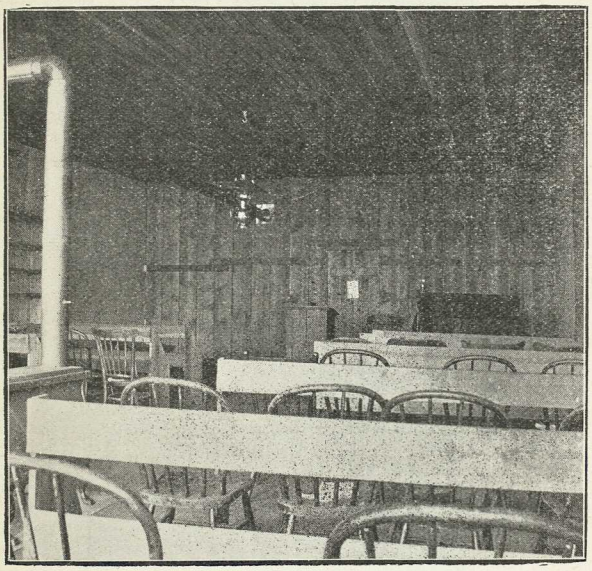
includes ten circuits and missions. There is considerable pioneer work still being done on Kamloops District by successors to the devoted "trail blazer," who now serves the Church as the honored President of the British Columbia Conference, and has once more returned to the scene of former exploits on the banks of the Thompson River. He is still itinerating and is greeted by hearty welcomes and crowded congregations wherever he goes.

KOOTENAY.

This, by far the greatest lode-mining district of British Columbia, has opened up wonderfully during the past few

years. Revelstoke, a divisional point on the C.P.R., first became the head of a mission, with Mr. Turner as its pastor, in 1888. It is now one of the leading charges on the district, while Golden, further east, is a thriving mission.

Nelson was first "staked off" as a mission also by Mr. Turner in 1891, some prospecting having been done the previous year by Rev. R. J. Irwin. Nelson has been for years a self-supporting charge, and in 1901 entertained the Conference at its annual session. Ainsworth, Kaslo,



INTERIOR VIEW OF YMIR CHURCH, B.C.

Slocan, Three Forks, New Denver and Nakusp have all been reached, while little Sandon, in spite of disasters from flood, snow-slide and fire, still clings to the mountain side and fights the battle without cost to the Mission Fund.

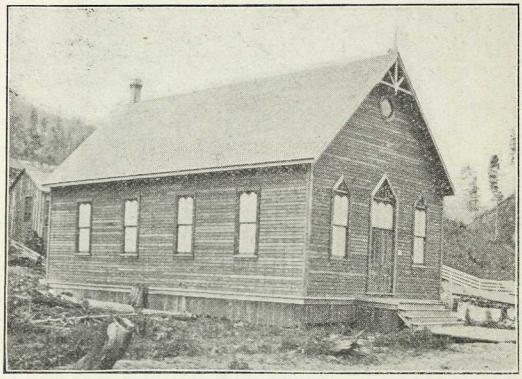
Rossland sprang into notice in 1895 and was "supplied" till the following year, when Rev. Chas. Ladner, then President of the Conference, was stationed there and a church and a parsonage were at once erected. Shortly afterwards the charge became self-supporting, and is still

INDIAN MISSIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA—THE METHODIST CHURCH, CANADA.

forging ahead as becomes the richest mining camp in British Columbia. Trail, near Rossland, and Ymir, south of Nelson, are being courageously worked as missionary fields. Trout Lake in the Lardeau District, is also a hopeful, though difficult, mission.

In the Boundary country, so called because of its nearness to the adjoining state of Washington, several flourishing towns and mining camps have sprung up, in which our cause has been established under the labors of faithful men. These are Grand Forks, where we have a vigorous self-supporting congregation; also Greenwood and Phœnix, which are still in the mission stage, but are making steady progress.

East Kootenay, including the Crow's Nest Pass region,



METHODIST CHURCH, TRAIL, B.C.

was made a separate district in 1902, having, as its contents at the present time, Cranbrook, Fernie, Michel, Morrissey, Coal Creek, Elko, Kimberley, Moyie and Creston. This work has all developed since 1899. The first two charges have been self-supporting for two years and are vigorous and well-equipped, while a third will probably go off the Mission Fund at next Conference. All the other fields, especially those situated in the great coal region of south-east Kootenay, have made satisfactory progress, considering the difficulties attending the opening of new work in a mining country. The work has called for a high order of ability as well as much sacrifice on the part of our mission-

aries, and they have been nobly sustained by the efforts of loyal, devoted and liberal men and women, intent on the salvation of their fellows.

This holds true of the domestic work in every part of the province. In no part of Canadian Methodism are there to be found more self-sacrificing, progressive and courageous people than in our British Columbian churches. They have been generously aided by the Missionary Society during the pioneer days. It has been money well spent and will be repaid with interest in due time. Meanwhile many precious souls have been gathered in.

Indian Methodist Missions in British Columbia.

The crowning glory of Canadian Methodism is its work among the Indians. To the present writer the name of Elder Case, James Evans, John Sunday, Peter Jones, Peter Jacobs, Henry Steinhauer and Allan Salt were household words, along with those of Rundle, Woolsey, Hurlburt, and McDougall, as representing the triumphs of the Cross among the red men of America. With all of them save two I had the honor of personal acquaintance. All except Allan Salt have passed to their reward, and the Church is rich in memory of their work.

The commencement of our mission work among the Indians of British Columbia was feeble and somewhat intermittent. While serving the white people on my first mission, Hope and Yale, and afterward at Nanaimo, I observed with grief the ignorance and degradation of the Indians in these vicinities, rendered all the deeper by their contact with white adventurers. The moral tide rip produced by the meeting of different races, in the swirling waters of which so many have gone down, is one of the saddest features of national expansion, whether in India, Africa or America.

During the winter of 1859 I fitted up the largest room in the parsonage at Hope as a school room, and, with the help of my young wife, tried to impart the rudiments of an English education, and above all, a knowledge of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Being removed to Nanaimo the next spring, I was constrained to seek, with God's blessing, to save the Indians round the town. There were 370 of them, and degraded enough. Nevertheless, with the approval of the chiefs, we fitted up a large outhouse in the rear of the parsonage and began a school, with twenty children in attendance, December 3rd, 1860. Next year a

school chapel was built close to the Indian quarters, and later rebuilt on the reserve. I meanwhile preached to the Indians every Sunday under the shade of some big trees. The coast about this time was scourged with a fearful visitation of smallpox, which, breaking out at Victoria, spread with frightful rapidity and caused the death of thousands of Indians throughout the colonies. The Indians were ordered by the authorities to leave Victoria, and as they passed north the dying and dead were left at every camping ground. All the Nanaimos and hundreds of others were vaccinated by the H. B. Co.'s surgeon and myself, and I had the satisfaction of knowing that the Nanaimos suffered less than any other tribe on the coast.

The spring of 1863 brought changes. I was removed to Fort Yale and Lower Fraser. Mr. White succeeded me at Nanaimo and Mr. Thos. Crosby took charge of the Indians as school teacher and missionary, entering the work with the greatest enthusiasm and soon mastering the language. It was not long till he was rewarded by seeing conversions. Amos Cusham, who had been my cook, canoeman and interpreter, and his wife were the first and second. Others followed, among them David Selasselton, an Indian boy attending the school. He became a spirit-filled evangelist, an orator of unsurpassed natural eloquence, and died a triumphant death in Victoria in 1872. His name is still as "ointment poured forth" in the memories of Indians, whites and missionaries who had witnessed his intense devotion and unselfishness.

During the next few years Mr. Crosby and his two helpers, Cusham and Selasselton, carried the Gospel to every accessible point, both on the Island and along Fraser River. The great revival, mentioned elsewhere, which visited the white settlers in the Chilliwack Valley in 1869, gave a wonderful impulse to the work among the Indians. A goodly number attended the first camp-meeting at Maple Bay, where they met converted Indians from Nanaimo and received a great uplift. In the following September the first camp meeting was held at Chilliwack, the forerunner of the annual feast of tabernacles continuing to this day, and which has greatly blessed both natives and whites.

In 1872 Mr. Crosby made a tour to Thompson River and Nicola Valley in search of openings for missionary work. He found several promising fields, but lack of men and means hindered and no permanent work has been done by our church in those regions.

REV. J. C. SPENCER, M.D.

REV. G. H. RALEY.

R. LARGE, M.D.

REV. W. J. STONE.

H. C. WRINCH, M.D.

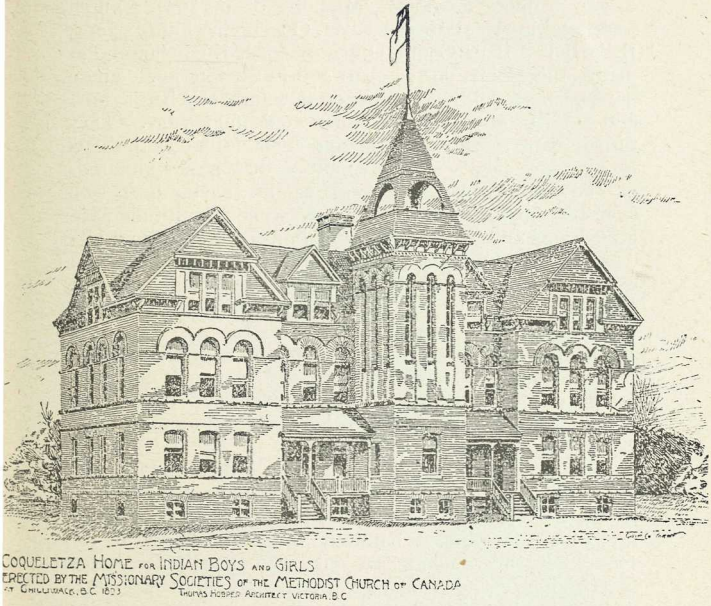
Missionaries to the Indians in British Columbia.

The same year a gracious revival visited the Indian mission at Victoria, which had been commenced by Mr. Russ, assisted by zealous men and women of his church, in 1869. The attendance was small and fluctuating until the remarkable conversion of Mrs. Elizabeth Deix, a chieftess from Port Simpson, and later of her son and daughter-in-law, who were brought all the way from Port Simpson, a distance of 600 miles, in direct answer to prayer. These were soon rejoicing in Christ their Saviour, and after spending some ten months in Victoria and learning the way of God more perfectly returned to their distant northern home supplied with Bibles, hymn and school books, and at once began preaching "Jesus and the Resurrection" to the thousands of T'simpsheans who composed the village population. Thus the way was being prepared for the opening of our mission at Port Simpson and other points of that country, a work seldom, if ever, excelled in the history of modern missions. The following year Mr. Pollard, Chairman of the District, visited Port Simpson and found 500 of the Indians attending religious services, almost the whole tribe having abandoned heathenism. After careful examination he baptized fifty, and assured them in response to their earnest request, that a missionary would be sent them. Mr. C. M. Tate, missionary teacher at Nanaimo, and now one of our most successful and widely known workers, was sent to hold the fort.

In June, 1874, Mr. Crosby, accompanied by his cultured and devoted wife, then a bride just out from Hamilton city, took up his residence at Port Simpson, and these noble workers for a quarter of a century, with brief intervals, spent their years and strength in establishing and extending the work thus auspiciously begun. They passed through trials sufficient to cause the stoutest heart to quail had it not been for the supporting presence and grace of God. Four of their precious children are buried at Port Simpson, several of them torn in rapid succession from the mother's arms during her husband's absence, by that fell disease, diphtheria. But the work went on apace. The writer had the privilege of spending a year at Port Simpson on the removal of Mr. Crosby, and saw with delight the marvellous transformation of the community wrought by the power of the Gospel.

A volume would be required to tell even in outline the story of the years that followed ; a record of heroic toil and victory unsurpassed in the annals of missionary endeavor. Only the most meagre summary can be given here. The

Macedonian cry began to come from other tribes, some of whose people had visited Port Simpson and seen the changed lives and happy condition of the people there. An earnest call for a missionary came from Naas River, which Mr. Crosby had visited, but the prayer was met by the humiliating confession that on account of lack of funds it would be impossible for the Society to extend the work. After a night of anguished prayer and weeping Mr. Crosby laid the matter upon the hearts of those present at the



COQUALEETZA INDIAN HOME, CHILLIWACK, B.C.

Saturday night prayer-meeting in good "Father" MacKay's house in Victoria. The appeal was irresistible, and $300 was subscribed to send a missionary to Naas at once. The God-sent messenger was found in the person of Mr. A. E. Green, now Chairman of Vancouver District. Those were grand days for old Pandora Street Church. Paying off debts, enlarging their own sanctuary, first supporting a missionary at Saanich, then to a large extent one at Naas,

at the same time contributing $640 to the General Missionary Fund and vigorously carrying on the work in their own church, as well as among the Chinese and Indians in the city! What wonders God can accomplish by a few spirit-filled men and women!

The work rapidly extended and God raised a number of native workers who carried the Gospel not only to their own people but to Alaska, where the Presbyterian Church, which came in at Mr. Crosby's urgent call, has now half a dozen or more missions. Missions of our own Church were established at Skeena River, Queen Charlotte Islands, Bella Bella, Bella Coola, Upper Skeena, Kitamaat, and at many other points on the coast and in the interior. These have been served by a succession of saintly and heroic men and women, whose names alone would fill a page. They turned many to righteousness and shall "shine as the stars for ever and ever." As the result of their labors hundreds of Indians are living the Christian life, having been won from the most degrading paganism, while a multitude have gone home and await their coming on the other shore.

At Cape Mudge a mission is still carried on under extreme difficulties. The Indian school still lives at Nanaimo. Rev. C. M. Tate and his wife, both veteran missionaries, have carried on work for the past five years among the Cowichan tribe. On the west coast of Vancouver Island we have two missions; one of them little more than a name and a rather expensive house. At Nitinat Rev. W. J. Stone is sowing beside all waters. Who can tell which shall prosper?

Indians being regarded as the wards of the Dominion, the Provincial Educational system does not make provision for them. Our own General Board and Woman's Missionary Society, working in harmony with and assisted by the Dominion Government, have quite a force of devoted men and women engaged in educational and industrial work. The Coqualeetza Industrial Institute at Chilliwack, the leading Indian educational institution of the Province, has one hundred boys and girls.

The Crosby Girls' Home at Port Simpson provides for forty girls, the Boys' Industrial School at the same place keeping up its end of the work.

The Home for Indian boys and girls at Kitamaat does similar work, while almost every mission station has its own school for mission children.

During recent years a number of medical missions have been established among the Indians, with well equipped

REV. THOS. CROSBY.

REV. D. JENNINGS.

REV. C. M. TATE.

REV. B. C. FREEMAN.

REV. W. PIERCE.

Missionaries to the Indians in British Columbia.

hospitals at various points. The oldest of these is at Port Simpson, where a large hospital was built some years ago by Dr. A. E. Bolton, the pioneer of our Church in that line. Four consecrated physicians are now in the field, who carry the gospel of healing for body and soul to the Indians, and are often ministers of mercy and help to the scattered settlers of the North Coast.

As these lines are written, there is an earnest call being made for laborers to take charge of several of the most important mission stations, the ranks of the workers having been depleted by various causes.

Chinese Missions.

Early in 1860 Miss Woodman (now Mrs. Thomas Cunningham, of Vancouver) opened a mission school for Chinese in the pioneer church, New Westminster, and continued it for some time. In 1869 a school was opened in Victoria in a disused bar-room and was taught by Mrs. Russ, the pastor's wife and others. In 1873, the "Sanford" Mission, supported by a liberal donation from the late Senator Sanford, was opened in Victoria. The attendance at one time rose to ninety and there were several conversions. The difficulties, arising principally from the lack of anyone who could speak the Chinese tongue, were very great, and the mission was discontinued in 1882. After an interval of about three years, there came to Victoria, on business, Mr. J. E. Gardner, the son of a Presbyterian missionary in China, and himself born and brought up in that country. He secured a position as interpreter to the Custom House, and spent his evenings and Sundays in preaching to and teaching the three thousand Chinese in the city. A room was rented, and both night and Sunday school started, with good success. Evangelistic services soon followed, Mr. Gardner's first text being Acts 26. 18, "Lai ome t'sau Kwong" (To turn from darkness to light). During the summer of the same year, 1885, Rev. D. Sutherland, General Secretary of Missions, visited the city, and was much impressed with the importance of the work thus providentially begun. He baptized eleven converts on his return from the North, the occasion being one of great joy to all concerned. In 1888 Mr. Gardner became a probationer for the ministry, and devoted his whole time to the work. The mission at Victoria now comprises a church, evening school, Bible women's mission, and Rescue Home for Chinese girls. Suitable buildings have been pro-

vided, and the work is carried on by the united efforts of the General Mission Board and the Women's Missionary Society.

Miss Woodman's school in New Westminster has been already mentioned, but permanent work among the Chinese of that city did not begin until 1883, when the present writer, assisted by his wife and daughter, Mrs. Monck, opened an evening school in the parsonage dining-room. The work in Vancouver was begun by the same persons, and almost in precisely the same manner, a little later. At both places there are now large and well-equipped premises occupied by the missions, which have been blessed to the salvation of many souls. At a missionary meeting held some time ago in Vancouver, the converts were asked to

REV. TONG CHUE AND MRS. THOM,
Missionaries to the Chinese in British Columbia.

relate their Christian experience, when it appeared that not one, except the missionary, had ever heard the name of Jesus till he came to this coast.

At Nanaimo, after various spasmodic efforts, a missionary was appointed in 1894. A church has been erected, and the work is being carried on with some degree of success. The Gospel has also been preached to the Chinese at the canneries on Skeena and Fraser rivers, at Chilliwack, Donald and Kamloops. At the latter place a small band of converts has been kept together and instructed for years. Our native Chinese missionaries at present are So Pui Kow, Victoria; Chan U Tan, Vancouver; Tong Chue Thom, New Westminster, and Fong Dickman, Nanaimo.

Chinese Rescue Home.—In the early eighties Canada was

receiving annually from one to two hundred Chinese women and girls, who were enslaved and brought into the country for the vilest purposes. Mr. Gardner was touched by the inhuman wrongs and sufferings of these poor creatures, many of whom before coming had been chaste as the morning dew. He began the Christ-like work of rescuing them, and for some time carried it on at his own expense. The first girl rescued was hypnotized and resold in Chinatown for $250 by a white man. Fortunately she was again rescued, and her abductor sentenced to nine months in prison. The present Rescue Home was purchased by the General Board, the Women's Missionary Society undertaking to run it. The first matron appointed was Miss Leake, and from that day a succession of noble women have sought to help the unfortunate victims of avarice and lust. Some of them have gone to the very gates of hell to snatch the prey from the teeth of the destroyer. The full story of a dreadful traffic, now happily almost destroyed, can never be fully told. From Chinese dens to courts of justice Mr. Gardner and his valiant helpers fought for the lives of these unfortunate ones. Mr. Gardner's ability as a Chinese scholar, his knowledge of Chinese methods, his Christ-like courage and pity, constituted him a foe of whom even the murderous "Highbinders" were afraid. All honor to the slender youth who came boldly forward, in the face of fierce and powerful opposition, even when a price was placed upon his head and the written contract for his assassination signed and sealed, and championed the cause of these shamefully wronged fellow-creatures. Each of the rescued ones has a history all her own, in many cases thrilling enough. It is a noteworthy and encouraging fact that of the numbers who have come into the Home scarcely one has returned to an evil life. More than a score have been married from the Home and are enjoying the blessings of Christian citizenship. What better reply can be made to those who question the utility of the work? From our Chinese missions and Rescue Home have gone forth those who, in our own Church, or in sister churches in Canada, the United States and distant China, have been true witnesses for Christ and self-denying laborers in the mission field.

It may be added that latterly quite a number of Japanese women have also found friendly shelter in the Home, for which kindness the thanks of the Japanese consul have been conveyed to the matron.

Japanese Missions.

The coming of large numbers of Japanese to British Columbia has furnished an additional field of missionary

REV. GORO AND MRS. KABURAGI,
Missionaries to the Japanese in British Columbia.

effort, of which Methodism has taken advantage. About 1888 we found a number of Japanese attending our Chinese

mission on Sundays and also coming to the evening school in Vancouver. These listened readily to religious instruction, and one, after three years' attendance, accepted Christ as his Saviour and requested Christian baptism, which was administered by the writer on September 27th, 1891, being probably the first case of the kind in Canada. It was interesting to see Kurakawa, the Japanese convert, kneeling beside a Chinese brother who was baptized at the same time, while the nations to which they belonged were at war with each other.

The following year Mr. L. W. Hall, our missionary to the Chinese at Cumberland (Union Mines), gave considerable attention to the Japanese, and several of these were subsequently baptized. Then followed Mr. Kobayashi, a student from Victoria University, on his way to Japan; Mr. Yoshioka, from Seattle, and Mr. Okamato, from the Methodist Episcopal Church in San Francisco. Other laborers were raised up who proved good soldiers of Jesus Christ, preaching the Gospel to their fellow countrymen throughout the province. A remarkable feature of the Japanese work in this province has been the amount of spontaneous effort put forth by the Japanese themselves, and their liberality in supporting evangelistic and charitable work. Numbers gave their whole time to evangelistic and hospital work, while others toiled at ordinary labor and gave all their earnings to the cause of Christ.

In August, 1896, Rev. Goro Kaburagi, a graduate of Evanston, Ill., and a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who had done good work in the Eastern States, came, on the invitation of the Japanese, to visit his countrymen in British Columbia. He was deeply affected by the condition of these scattered disciples, who were as a sheep without a shepherd, and when they invited him to remain with them he expressed his willingness to do so. The outcome was that he was received as a minister of the British Columbia Conference and stationed at Vancouver. He at once organized the Japanese work in connection with the Methodist Church, and suitable laborers were appointed. A Japanese paper, the *Vancouver Weekly*, was started, and is now published in full Japanese type. The hospital at Steveston was also brought fully under the auspices of our Church. The work is now carried on by recognized agents of the Church in Vancouver, Victoria, Cumberland, Steveston and Sapperton. In Vancouver a school for Japanese children was begun in 1902, during which year a gracious revival of religion visited the various missions.

Conclusion.—From the foregoing history of the coming of Methodism to the British Pacific coast, it will be apparent that in entering upon this work when she did the Canadian church acted wisely in the interest of the nation and of the kingdom of Christ. The two small colonies have become a province, not the least in the Dominion, and united to the others by bands of steel. British Columbia has such wonderfully rich and varied resources as to reveal almost limitless possibilities for the future. The Methodist Church has had a distinct and not unimportant part in Canadianizing the Pacific colonies, and so far conquering the land for Christ.

The latest statistics of Methodism in British Columbia show: Preachers, 85. Members—white, 4,416; Indian, 1,509; Japanese, 159; Chinese, 89; total, 6,173. Raised for church purposes during the year, $109,967.

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