

WHO WILL GO?

The following is from a letter by the Rev. A. R. Macduff, chaplain of Dharmsala, and private chaplain to the Bishop of Lahore, to the secretary of the Board of Domestic and Foreign Missions, Canada:

SIR,—By way of further preface, I may say that I am an "Old Boy" of the Montreal High School and a B.A. of McGill University, and that I have held two parishes in the Canadian Church, all of which may be taken as authorization of the following letter. At the risk of being egotistical, I must add one or two more personal items, so as to preface my application to your Board. I have the spiritual oversight of all Europeans in the romantic valleys of Kangra and Kulu—a parish remarkable for the fact that there is *no* dissent, but all belongs to the Church. Side by side with myself, the Church Missionary Society works among Hindus and Muhammadans. Thus the Church has it all her own way in these beautiful highlands. The Church Missionary Society has been obliged to extend her aggressive efforts beyond the frontier into Beluchistan and elsewhere. For this and other causes, her work in these hills is practically in the hands of a missionary's widow, who directs a native deacon with catechists and readers. I do my best to supply the sacraments, but I can do very little, as I have three congregations, one of them being an important civil and military station, viz., the Sanatorium of Dharmsala.

For the last ten years I have known these Himalayan valleys, as they were my "Play Ground" when I was chaplain of St. Andrew's, Lahore, and now that I am stationed in these parts I cannot help voicing a silent and long suppressed day dream, in which I have indulged for the period above mentioned.

These valleys of Kulu, Kangra and Kotgarh would climatically and in every other way form a compact and most desirable mission for the Canadian Church. Surely it would be far better for Canadians to have a definite district of their own, their very own child, than to lose the benefits of localized interest, as the Australians are losing them, by merely helping foreign missions generally. There are stone churches and mission houses and schools, but no missionaries.

A description of Kulu, Kangra, and Kotgarh, the three K's—to which I want, by way of alliteration, to add the hard C of Canada—may not be altogether out of place. I wish that some of my Canadian brethren could have stood at my side when I visited the Kangra mission on a recent occasion. A beautiful stone house just like an English rectory, with stone church and school adjoining, stands on an isolated sugar loaf hill. The house commands a magnificent panorama. The Kangra valley is fifteen miles wide and ninety miles long. Fifteen miles

across the valley, right facing the mission house, stands a great snowy range running up to seven-tens thousand in peaks and fourteen thousand in passes. I am sorry to say we cannot rival the real Himalayangiants, to wit, Nunga Perbat, Cinchinganga, and Everest; but we do our best, and a magnificent "best" it is, with pure white snow alternating with bright blue sky above and luxuriant vegetation below. Kangra is a very holy place, and boasts a golden temple which is the centre for pilgrims, who flock thither from all over India. The Christian services are said in Urdu, and the school is well attended. The church is built of stone, and would not disgrace an English village. On the opposite side of the valley is situated my own headquarters, which are fixed in the Sanatorium or Hill Station of Dharmsala. We have two native regiments and a contingent of British troops. The officers, together with civil officials (such as the deputy commissioner, the divisional and district judges, etc.), form a very desirable community, which is strengthened by summer visitors. The mission has a native church and a school here for Hindustani-speaking people, about two miles from the European church. The climate is quite temperate, the thermometer never going above eighty degrees in the shade in summer, while there is snow and frost in winter. The residents and visitors at Dharmsala have always shown a lively interest in the local mission, and the society there would be exceedingly pleasant and helpful to missionaries. Going up the valley from Dharmsala, you reach the tea-planting station of Palampur. Here there is a handsome stone church for Europeans, while in a village three miles distant there are thirty Christians. A catechist's house has been built, and stones have been collected for a future church. The valley runs up for many more miles, and contains numerous places where mission work amongst the heathen might be done. A pass of ten thousand feet takes you from the Kangra valley into the equally romantic valley of Kulu. This extensive field is held by an isolated catechist, although two ladies from Australia are also there for a season. It is very unlikely that they will remain, as they are Presbyterians, and the district belongs to the Church. Dotted up and down Kulu are about a dozen tea planters. I am only able to visit them once a year. Being "mingled amongst the heathen," they are in danger of "learning their works." It would, indeed, be a blessing if an earnest missionary were planted here. He could evangelize the natives and seek after the scattered sheep of Christ's flock. Again, climbing yet another pass and then crossing the river Sutley, the traveller reaches Kotgarh. Here the C.M.S. has a church and schools and several substantial houses and a small endowment. Only one thing is wanting, a clergyman. A veteran layman, Mr. Bentel, is in charge. He was for years