

The Spirit of Canada

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In the traditions of India there is a story of Krishna and Karna that shows forth a spirit of self-abnegation worthy the annals of any race or age.

On the eve of battle Krishna comes to Karna, the Archer, and with rare eloquence bids him desist from the impeding fratricidal strife. "Friend will fight friend—brother, brother. Cast away the bow and break the arrows—make a good peace before all is staked and lost," he implores.

With sublime sorrow and unshakable resolution Karna denies him. In such a holy cause there can be no turning back. No accommodation can meet the motions of his soul. True seer, he realizes that the giving of his own life and those of many noble companions will not be in vain. The war won, Righteousness will be restored and Might driven from its unholy seat.

In every age, in every nation, the call of country has had its swift reply from some devoted soul. To the singing shepherd of Israel's hillside came the cry of his dear fatherland.

For God, and King, and Native land stretch forth thine arm against the hosts of Philistia. Tender of lambs—slayer of lions—this day God hath chosen thee to be His champion.

And, by the grace of God, David triumphed over that earlier embodiment of Prussianism in the person of the Philistian giant.

Such a spirit was shown in our own beloved land, when Canada was young.

When spring sent forth her tender shoots in the great year 1660, Ville Marie was in dire danger of destruction at the hands of the terrible Iroquois. Indeed, Trois Rivieres and Quebec itself were included in the horrible programme of butchery and fire.

The first-fruits of French settlement were doomed. The wolves of hate incarnate would spare neither young nor old in their determination to uproot and utterly consume the last vestige of the new civilization in Canada.

Was there "hesitating doubt" as to the duty of the hour? None. Adam Dollard of the Elms and his companions, "The Immortal Twenty-Two," offered their living bodies to stay the tide of inhuman hate, and sanctified with their hearts' blood the ramparts of their race and faith.