

**THE BRITISH EMPIRE
AND ITS
SPIRITUAL EXPANSION.**

An Illustrated Address delivered at
Several Centres

By the BISHOP OF QUEBEC

IN VIEW OF THE

**Bicentenary of the Society for
the Propagation of the Gospel
in Foreign Parts.**

Just now there is a spirit of Imperialism in the air. Until lately the British Empire was only a name. But during the last few months the Mother Country has been drawn into a bloody war with the Boers of the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State in South Africa. The primary reason for this war was the fact that thousands of her children were being oppressed—were being called upon i. e. for heavy, arbitrary taxation, were at the same time denied the suffrage or any representation of their capital or enterprises, and were being subjected to hardships and outrages, too numerous to mention. But this is not all, for the ultimate object of this war was to bring equal rights to all races and consequently peace and prosperity to the vast continent of South Africa. Well, instead of its proving to be an easy matter, as most people thought it would be, to crush these armed farmers, and to bring them to a better mind, the British, as we all know, suffered at first a series of severe reverses, and found that, for successful conflict with such warriors, they had a very great deal to learn. It was under these circumstances that the British Colonies, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, feeling, no doubt, that on an emergency of this kind they could render most useful service to the Motherland, at once came forward and offered assistance. These offers were all gladly accepted, and the consequence is, that to-day we see for the first time our Colonial sons fighting bravely and helpfully side by side with the troops of the United Kingdom. Now, therefore, the British Empire has become a great and potent reality; and all men are beginning to see the marvellous possibilities underlying the active union of Great Britain with her Colonies, and, indeed, the further possibilities underlying the united action

of the whole Anglo-Saxon Race. Yes! now, everyone is beginning to realise that, in the Providence of Almighty God, it is not for nothing that English speaking people are pushing their way into every corner of the Globe, that it is not for nothing either that the English language is rapidly becoming the universal language of the world, and moreover, that it is not without its object that, in God's Providence, the English Church—the English portion of the Holy Catholic Church, is a Branch of the great Family of Christ, Apostolic in origin and reformed in doctrine, able to reach out with one hand to the old unreformed Churches of Rome and the East, and with the other at the same time to touch those who have quitted the old moorings, i.e., the visible foundations of the Church, as they were at first. I thought, therefore, it would perhaps be helpful to offer a few words of explanation concerning the expansion of the British Empire, and then to dwell more particularly on our Empire's Spiritual expansion, and to shew how the expansion of the British Empire has led, and is leading, in God's Providence, to a most marvellous expansion of the Empire or Kingdom of Christ. To do this will, at the same time, help you, I hope, to take an intelligent and earnest part in the Celebration of the Bicentenary of that great Missionary Society, to which in Canada we owe so much, I mean the S. P. G., i. e., the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Commemorations of this kind have, no doubt, fallen rather thick upon us of late; for, you will remember, we were celebrating the Bicentenary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1898, and the Centenary of the Church Missionary Society last year, and now the two hundredth year of the S.P.G. is the year which begins in June this year, and closes in June, 1901.

And since it has always been the object of the S. P. G. (1) to continue the privileges of the Church to those of our people, who leave England and go beyond the seas, and (2) to bring the blessings of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to those, who may happen to be living as aborigines or otherwise in the countries to which our English people emigrate, therefore, it is evident, that the work of this Society, when it was founded, was