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An April Day

WHEN the warm sun, that brings
Seed time and harvest, has returned again,
'Tis sweet to visit the still wood, where springs
The first flower of the plain.

From the earth's loosened mould
The sapling draws its sustenance and thrives;
Though stricken to the heart with winter's cold
The drooping tree revives.

The softly-warbled song
Comes from the pleasant woods, and colored wings
Glance quick on the bright sun, that moves along
The forest openings.

Sweet April! many a thought
Is wedded unto thee, as hearts are wed;
Nor shall they fail till, to its autumn brought,
Life's golden fruit is shed. —Tongfellow

A Missionary Policy for Canada

THE opening days of April, 1909, will go down into Canadian history as red-letter days. The Dominion has had conventions of leaders in all branches of commerce and many gatherings of the energy of various denominations, but never before have the laymen of any nation met together to consider and adopt a missionary policy for their country. This is the object of the Canadian National Missionary Congress now in session in Toronto, at which two thousand laymen—most of them leaders in commercial life—are discussing the great problem which has been crystallized into "the evangelization of the world in this generation." This great Congress is really the result of a trans-continental journey made by representatives of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, who, starting from Sydney, marked their westward progress by holding meetings at twenty-four centres, the last of which was Victoria. The question everywhere asked with confidence was: "Would Canada do her share in evangelizing the world in this generation?" The answer, everywhere given with enthusiasm, was: "Yes." And with the answer were given assurances that the money needed would be forthcoming. The great question before the Congress now is not "Will Canada do her share?" but "How will Canada do her share?" The Laymen's Missionary Movement, which has already shown itself possessed of such extraordinary vitality, is not yet two and a half years old. It dates its existence from a representative gathering of laymen in New York on November 15th, 1906, and it has spread practically throughout Christendom with results little short of marvellous. Perhaps the feature of the movement, apart from the fact that the laymen, and not the ministers, are most active in the work, is the thorough confidence that the result desired will be achieved. The world has known several forward movements along missionary lines, all of them founded upon a sublime faith that could move mountains, but none of them were daring enough to confidently look for the accomplishment of the work "in this generation." Taking it for granted that the world would be evangelized some time, the Laymen's movement has gone a step further; in this generation must it be done. Could anything be nobler or grander? And so modern Crusaders are forsaking their business, laying aside the mere raking in of dollars, and devoting themselves to Christ's business, laying up for themselves treasures where neither moth nor rust corrupt—the leaders of the movement tell us of scores of such instances in Canada.

They are bent on extending Christ's kingdom on earth, and to that end they are using that great agency of the successful business of the twentieth century—System—and are systematizing the work of spreading the Gospel to every creature. Two things are essential: men and money. The Movement asks for 40,000 missionaries, instead of 13,000, and \$80,000,000 a year instead of less than twenty-three millions. Canada's share is apportioned at 1,600 instead of 300, and \$3,200,000 annually instead of \$600,000. But we as a country have Home Mission work that cannot be neglected, so that a total of four millions and a half is being asked for to meet the mission work of the Christian Church at home and in the foreign field. This works out at five dollars a year for every church member. The twenty-four centres already mentioned promised to raise \$7.38 per member. Winnipeg promised \$10.00 per member, and Montreal and Toronto, \$8.33. The amounts promised by these twenty-four centres represent an increase of over a million dollars over what they raised for missions last year.

But lest there should be a tendency to emphasize too strongly the business side of the work, the executive committee gave prominence in its advance literature to a letter from the Bishop of Fredericton, in which His Lordship says:

"The great danger against which the Laymen's Missionary Movement must guard itself, and, I think, a very real danger—is the idolatry of facts and figures."

The Rev. Principal Sparling, of Wesley College, Winnipeg, says:

"A great wave of materialism has swept over this continent, if not over the world, in the last few decades. There have been influences at work which have tended mightily to make the dollar bulk big in the eyes of men. Some, I fear, have come to believe that the dollar is everything. But yet I am persuaded that it will be found that the hearts of the vast body of young people throughout the land are still loyal and true. The heroic in them is not atrophied. Signs are not wanting to indicate that our brightest and best young men and women are ready to sacrifice where sacrifice is necessary for a worthy cause. Give them to see their duty and they will do it."

Thus the question before the Congress is, not: "Will Canada do her share in evangelizing the world in this generation?" but, "How will Canada do it?"