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AN APOSTLE OF THE NORTH

(Written by the author of this book, when he first saw Bishop Bompas arrive at Whitehorse, in June, 1904.)

WE saw him come—there was no loud acclaim :
He stood among the crowd, so frail and spare ;
His humble garb marked his still humbler mien,
Whilst gently waved his scanty, silvery hair.
He stood alone, as stands some ancient pine
Amidst a stirring land and busy mart,
And strove to grasp the new and unknown ways,
Which were so strange to his intrepid heart.

But as I gazed upon that trembling form,
And marked the lispings words which slowly fell,
A vision rose before me, grand and clear,
Which thrilled my soul like some sweet vesper bell.
I saw a lonely region, cold and drear,
I saw the sad wild natives of the North
Pass slow before me, Christless, base, forlorn.
And as I thus beheld there passed straightforth
A lonely man—ay, more than common man—
'Twas one of God's great heroes, brave and strong,
Who gave up home and friends and comforts all,
And for Christ's sake passed forth to conquer wrong ;
In lonely wilds, in wigwams foul and drear,
Midst sickness, famine, plague, and sore distress,
He pressed straight on, true soldier of the Cross,
His only aim to comfort and to bless.