Indians

See Missionary Topic for August 29

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[Note.—The Editor has asked for "about 1,200 words on the topic "Indians and Negroes," as on the topic card, but one would need a lime-light to treat so dark a subject in so short a time, so we shall drop the ebony, for the present at least, and deal with the copper-colored race, alone.]

NDIANS! About ten millions of them in America! What NDIANS! About ten millions of them in America! What a study for but a few minutes but once in a year or years! Where did they come from? No one knows. How long have they been here? Again we must answer, "No one knows"—probably as long as the world has known anything of a Greece or a Rome. There are more than 125 different nations, speaking languages as widely different, in most instances, as Latin is from Greek, and such conditions must have required the development of many millenniums. How long will they last? As long as the world lasts. It is altogether erroneous to imagine that they are a dying race, True, individual tribes may disappear, but the Indian population of America is steadily increasing, probably about a million every century. million every century.

How shall we describe the Indian? He is generally said



KING OF THE WOLVES

to be "stolid and indifferent." He may be stolid, but not in to be "stolid and indifferent." He may be stolid, but not in the sense of dullness or stupldity, for he is anything but that; in a certain sense, too, he may be indifferent, but he does not lack appreciation. He may not be as profuse in his appre-ciation of kindness as some other races, but he does appreciate.

ciation of kindness as some other races, but he does appreciate. He is not demonstrative, not he; he neither kisses his wife and children when leaving home, nor upon his return from a two months' journey, but he loves them, nevertheless. Nor does he lack sociability. He never did review the white man with open arms. Why should he' I guess he gave us as warm a welcome as we extend the Orientals, while the white man's invasion was much the more alarming, and from an economic point of view far more disastrous. He has shown himself sociable enough to those of our race whom he has really proven to be his friends and not his enemies. How many real friends has he? Were the early traders who robbed them right and left their friends? Are those who still would dispossess them of their holdings their friends? The missionary finds him sociable enough after he has been proven true. Among friends he is all sociability. If you could sit ennotted at a social gathering and hear for once the chatter unnoticed at a social gathering and hear for once the chatter

and laughter, or be present at a marriage feast and listen to folk-lore from a gifted story-teller, or after partaking of his hospitality spend a long winter evening at his coay fire-side, or perhaps, better still, listen to his history and traditions on a long journey in cance, you would then be better able to judge of his sociability.

The Indian is also resourceful. In his earlier history he must needs be this. Many were the devices by which he procured his food and clothing from land and sea. To this day our hunters and fishermen study the artifices of the dexterous Indian, who in this realm of life has no peer. Many products of his skill and ingenuity have we borrowed, while such unique inventions as the snow-shoe and birch-bark cance should make him famous for all time, to say nothing of the tobacco-pipe, for which doubtless thousands from all nations would gladly stand and, with hats off, sing his praises. Our national game, lacrosse, we acquired from the Indian, as also the use of the toboggan, which brightens the winter season of many an Eastern Canadan city. many an Eastern Canadian city.

THE INDIAN'S RELIGION.

As to religion, the Indians of Canada particularly have been cited in religious controversy, by writers who should have known better, as having no religion whatever. Such writers would certainly change their opinions were they to make an investigation. The Indian, from Alaska to Patagonia, is religious. He believes in a divinity who is responsible for the creation of the world and the various races of mankind. By many tribes that delty is called the "Great Spirit," while by others he is thought of as some superhuman animal with creative powers-the raven god, the rabbit, the wolf, etc., with hosts of minor deities in fire, wind, water, sun, frost, cloud and the like. It is not surprising to find with belief in such a variety of gods, there are different systems of religion.

Totemism is widely prevalent throughout the Dominion.
It consists in the idea of descent from some original parent It consists in the idea of descent from some original parent in the form of some sacred animal. The Algonquin, Huron and Iroquois tribes of Eastern Canada often carry about religiously the skins of these venerated animals, believing helicity protection and guidance. Others reverently worship amall image of the animal defity carved of slate or stone. Among many of the tribes of British Columbia totemism assumes a neculiar form of ancestral worship. The Hydsha assumes a peculiar form of ancestral worship. The Hydahs assumes a peculiar form of ancestral worship. The Hydahs and Tsimsheans especially erect immense ancestral totems, some curved elaborately from top to bottom. In this system the crest—the raven, the eagle, etc.—is the unit, while the family or the individual are of secondary consideration. Members of the same crest are brothers, no matter how widely they may be separated. They never could be induced to interthey may be separated. marry, as their relationship is considered more sacred than that of blood relations.

that of blood relations.

Separate and distinct from this religious form is that of Shamanism, in which the medicine man is believed to possess, through his affiliation with nature, great and supersess, through shamanism are associated numerous secret societies, some of which practice most disgusting cerebrates are to the average of corporation councils in which monies, even to the extent of ceremonial canibalism in which

monies, even to the extent of ceremonial canibalism in which human flesh is actually eaten. Among most tribes is also found some form of hero worship. The hero may be purely mythological or he may be an historical personage who is ultimately believed to be supernatural.

In addition to the above more general objects of worship the indian believes in a guardian spirit. Early in life, by means of a long system of fasting and prayer in some secluded haunt, the young man is supposed to get a vision of his guardian. Preparatory to this ceremony some black their faces while others indulge in a series of baths, sometimes in cold water, sometimes in vapour. Baths are also resorted to by many indians, not only in the treatment of disease but also for the cure and expurgation of sin. By the same treatment, with the addition of emetics and purgatives, he also carneally seeks to gain the pleasure and favor of his same treatment, with the addition of emetics and purgatives, he also earnestly seeks to gain the pleasure and favor of his gods. So, though the system be crude, in it he finds a place for the decirine of sin. It goes further, embodying even a belief in immediately. Did you ever pass an Indian grave-yard without seeing evidence of this? Blankets, food, guns, and trinkets of various kinds are deposited religiously at the and trimets of variods kinds are deposited religiously at the grave for the soul's use on its long migration to "the happy hunting ground." Some are known to have perforated the coffin that the departed spirit may re-visit the body of the

we have already briefly hinted at our indebtedness to the Indian. Much more may be said. How greatly he has enriched our language! Every race from one end of our content to the other has contributed its quota of words. The Algonquins have given us many. Here are a few: Hickory, chipmunk, moccasin, moose, powwow, racoon, squash, squaw, toboggan, tomahawk, caucus, caribou. The Iroquois have named