



The Call

"Shall no one come forward to take up the standard of the Lord as it falls from his hands, and to occupy the ground?"

These historic words constitute the call which gave Rev. W. C. Bompas to Canada. Bishop Anderson was preaching the Anniversary Sermon of the Church Missionary Society in St. Bride's Church, London, England, on May 1, 1865. He told of the vast, lone lands of the Canadian North and West, where children of the twilight died without the knowledge of Jesus the Christ. He described one lonely mission-station on the mighty Yukon River, where a soldier of the cross, the Rev. Robert McDonald, with health fast failing, was standing bravely at his post of duty till some one should relieve him.

The service ended, the clergy retired, and the congregation began to disperse. But there was one whose heart had been deeply touched by the speaker's words, and, walking at once into the vestry, a Lincolnshire curate, in the prime of life, offered to go to Canada to relieve the missionary at Fort Yukon.

William Carpenter Bompas, this young volunteer, was born at 11, Park Road, Regent's Park, London, on January 20, 1834. He was the fourth son of Charles Carpenter Bompas, Serjeant-at-Law, one of the most eminent advocates of his day, and leader of the Western Circuit, and of Mary Steele, daughter of Mr. Joseph Tomkins, of Broughton, Hants. Serjeant Bompas, it is said, was the original of Charles Dickens's celebrated character "Serjeant Buzfuz" in the "Pickwick Papers".

William, in early youth, showed most plainly those characteristics which marked his whole life. He was a shy boy, owing partly, no doubt, to private tuition at home, which deprived him to a large extent of the society of other boys. Cricket, football, or such games, he did not play, his chief pleasure being walking, and sketching churches and other buildings that he encountered in his rambles. Gardening he was fond of, and the knowledge thus gained stood him in good stead years later when planning for the mission-farms in his northern Diocese.

The influence of a religious home made a deep and lasting impression upon him. His parents were earnest Christians, belonging to the Baptist denomination. Sunday was strictly observed, the father making it a firm rule never to read briefs or hold consultations on the Day of Rest. Bible reading, too, was carefully observed.

His father died in 1844, when the lad was only ten years old. (It is rather a striking coincidence that so many of the outstanding events in