

THE
NEW
CANADIANS



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Chapters

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Preface

Rev. John Cristea, the writer of this interesting booklet, is the dearly-beloved and successful Baptist minister who serves the New Canadian and English groups who worship in the Aubin Road Mission Hall, Windsor, Ontario. The pamphlet is entirely the product of his own brain and pen. It meets a long-felt need for information concerning New Canadian work. We express the hope that it will be widely used by our different Baptist missionary organizations.

Mr. Cristea was born in Transylvania on September 12th, 1901. His father was a husbandman. Mr. Cristea was converted at an early age and attended school both in Roumania and Hungary. He suffered great persecution in his own land for the Gospel's sake. After spending two years in the Baptist Seminary at Bucharest, in 1926, he came to the Baptist Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky, as a special ward of its President, Dr. E. Y. Mullins. Before leaving Louisville he completed his studies for the B.Th. and ThM. degrees.

Visiting the Border Cities, Mr. Cristea became very much interested in the spiritual needs and opportunities among his fellow-countrymen in these places. Dr. A. H. Fromow, pastor of the Walkerville Baptist Church, and Chairman of the local Home Mission Board for the Western Association, became acquainted with him and was an important factor in his coming to East Windsor. In 1931 he became Home Mission pastor of the work being carried on in the Aubin Road Chapel. He has not only accomplished much as a Home Missionary, but his services too as a Home Mission speaker are in great demand throughout the Convention. He is fluent, not only in the Roumanian and the Hungarian, but also in the English language.

—C. H. Schutt.

CHAPTER I.

Whence Come The New Canadians?

The Majority of the New Canadians in this country came from countries where the church is a department of the State. Those who came from European countries were members largely of the Roman and the Greek Catholic Churches, which are in a paralyzed condition. These churches have for ages kept millions of the people in superstition, immorality and the worship of images or ikons. They are systems without the message of life and without spiritual power. Their priests tell the people that out of the church—by which is meant the visible and hierarchical church, the Roman and Greek Catholic—there is no salvation. They, in many respects, look upon secular education as an evil thing and forbid the great masses the right to any education. They were and are largely responsible for the fact that a high percentage of the people, in some of these European countries that are dominated by the Roman or the Greek Catholic Churches, are illiterate. Actually most of the people cannot read or write. The clergy of these churches do not wish the illumination of the masses, because when the people have light they are able to choose between right and wrong and then the priests will not be able to lead them any more as they did when they were in ignorance. Furthermore, the people are taught by these churches, that progress cannot be achieved in any other way than by praying to the saints and ikons of the church. The people are so deeply sunk in ignorance even to-day in the twentieth century, that they really worship the priests instead of God. In many cases when a priest is passing along the street, there are certain families that kneel down in their own houses and if they are on the street they kiss the hand of the priest.

This is the situation in the lands from which many of the New Canadians came who are now living within the borders of this country. What does this mean for the Baptists of Canada? Does it not mean a great privilege and a great challenge? If these new elements are to be the material for building the commonwealth of Canada of the future they must first be Christianized. There are many who think that because almost all of the New Canadians came from non-democratic countries, therefore, they need to be taught democracy.

But history records the fact that democracy alone is not sufficient to uplift an individual, a country or a nation, and without the religion of Jesus Christ it is national suicide. Democracy needs a practical recognition of the fundamental doctrine of Christianity—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Oh, what a challenge does the New Canadian situation suggest to the Baptists! If we truly realize the spiritual darkness of the lands from which the New Canadians came, their former environment, their need of the saving Christ, the perils to Society they are without Him and the latent possibilities for usefulness which may be developed in them by bringing them to the foot of the Cross, we shall witness for our Master earnestly and constantly in our Jerusalem, in our home communities and in our home provinces, where multitudes of New Canadians dwell. If we as Baptists fail to furnish for them a better environment than that from which they come, if we are not going to uplift them socially, morally and spiritually to a higher plane, we shall be doing just what the Greek and the Roman Catholic Churches did and are doing for them to-day.

“Behold how many thousands still are lying bound in the darkness, the prison-house of sin, with none to tell them of the Saviour’s dying, or of the life He died for them to win. Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace, tidings of Jesus’ redemption and release.”

CHAPTER II.

Reasons for Winning the New Canadians to Christ

Many Canadians have asked me, "Why should we preach the Gospel to the New Canadians and especially to the Roman and the Greek Catholics since their respective churches are preaching it?" But when we know the fact that these people pray to the Virgin Mary instead of to Christ, that they believe that the priests can forgive sins, that they worship images and ikons, that they believe in the existence of purgatory, that there is more than one mediator, that they pray for the dead, and they sprinkle infants and believe that this ceremony washes away original sin and transforms them into Christians, etc., we are certainly justified and it is our duty to give them the real truth of God embodied in His glorious Gospel which will open their eyes to see Jesus Christ the only Saviour of mankind.

FIRST, we should win these people to Christ, *for God's sake*. Who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

SECONDLY, we should win them to Christ *for their own sake*. It has been said that the Roman and the Greek Catholic churches have something for the people that the Baptists cannot give them. What is it? It is faith in a man. It is the worship of Ikons. It is the belief that somehow in the hour of death salvation is delayed by the absence of the priest. It is the teaching that the time and the way in which a soul enters heaven depends upon human agencies.

Here is our great opportunity to tell them that no man has any right to come between a soul and God, that every soul has its own responsibility and stands alone, face to face with God, with no priest, patriarch nor pope, nor even any creed, except the Word of God written in the New Testament, that Christ alone is the Saviour of mankind (Acts 4:12).

THIRDLY, we should win them to Christ *for our own sake*. To every disciple of Jesus Christ who has experiences the saving

power of God's grace, missions ought to mean all that they mean to God. Any Christian or body of Christians who do not believe in winning souls for Jesus will die. So, if we were for no other reasons than that we desire to maintain our own identity and nourish our own life, it is essential that we win them to Christ. Someone has said that it is the privilege of every Christian to go to this and that man and give God to him.

FOURTHLY, we should win them to Christ *for our country's sake*. Having lived much of my life in countries where the Roman and the Greek Catholic churches are predominant, and having seen the intolerance, illiteracy and backwardness, as well as the low standards of morals in those countries, I must say that for the sake of our country we ought to win these people to Jesus Christ and thus save Canada from many perils which at present menace her.

FIFTHLY, we should win the New Canadians to Christ *for the world's sake*. The Baptists of Canada in evangelizing the people at home, are spreading the Kingdom of God to the ends of the earth, as witness the return of many of these New Canadians to their own countries. Here is an example:

A Roumanian Greek Orthodox woman from Banat, Jugo-Slavia, came to Canada with her husband after the World War. In 1931 this woman attended our Roumanian services in the Aubin Road Mission in East Windsor, and was converted. I can see her now, how happy she was when she found Jesus and accepted Him as her personal Saviour. On December 27th of the same year I had the joy of leading her into the waters of baptism. Yes, she wanted to follow the beautiful example of Jesus Christ.

Last year she decided to visit her own native town in Jugo-Slavia, where she still has a son. As she visited her town, she wept with compassion because there was no Baptist Church there. But her tears were recompensed with the great joy of seeing eleven souls brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ through the example of her Christian living. These eleven were baptized and the First Baptist Church in that town was established. She has returned to East Windsor, but the Kingdom of God through the Christians at Banat is winning many souls. Who could dream that this woman would be the instrument of establishing a Baptist Church in Jugo-Slavia? Who could ever imagine that our mission is winning souls for Jesus Christ, not only in Canada, but in far-away Jugo-Slavia?

CHAPTER III.

Some of the Difficulties in Bringing the New Canadian to Christ

There are 1,920,000 New Canadians, nearly two millions, living in Canada. Surely those who love Christ must feel the great responsibility of introducing this army of strangers to Him.

What are some of the difficulties in bringing these non-English-speaking people to Jesus Christ?

- (1) NATIONALISM—In most of the countries from which these people come here is a State or national church. They were taught from their childhood that those who abandon the national church—the Serbians for example—are not good Serbians any more. In order to be a good Serbian, Hungarian, etc., they must abide in the religion of their father and mother which, of course, is that of the national church. When I approach these strangers with the true Gospel of Christ as the Baptists believe it, many times I am told that I am Canadianized and am not a good Roumanian any more; and that I am fooled by the Canadian people who have the intention of making all strangers Canadians, and not Christians. So you can see how difficult it is to present to them the Gospel, for you see in their opinion I am really striving to make them both renegades to their church and traitors to their native country.
- (2) DENOMINATIONAL DIVISIONS.—As we present the Gospel to these strangers, they ask us, Who is right, the Baptists or the United Church, or the Anglicans? If we say that the Baptists are the nearest to the principles taught by the New Testament, they say, "How is it then you Baptists are not more loyal to your beliefs? You believe in the sanctity of the Lord's Day, you are saying, but if there is any business you have to attend to on that day you simply say it is impossible to neglect it. Did the primitive Christians compromise like that?" they ask. "Then after all there is not much difference between you Baptists and the rest of the sects."

- (3) PRACTICAL ATHEISM.—Many of these people do not deny the name or the existence of God. They believe that there is a Supreme Being. They were taught about Him, but were never taught the importance or the necessity of letting Him rule in their hearts and lives.
- (4) RECKLESS RADICALISM.—Communistic ideas have captivated the minds of the foreign people more than anything else. They were living before they came to this country under great oppression and stern discipline. They could not revolt or even show openly that they hated the situation because they would be put in jail for that at once. Here, there is democracy and they can openly express what is on their minds. They want to destroy the home, the school, the courts, the State and the church. When you present to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they tell you that the church always has protected the rich people and it has never protested vehemently enough against social injustice and the selfishness and heartlessness of the rich. They say that the church always glorified ignorance and sanctified poverty. "If the church," they say, "would do in regard to justice as much as it does for war when it is declared, it would justify its existence, but it does nothing. So down with the whole thing."
- (5) BREAKING DOWN OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM.—As you know, in many of the countries from which these people came, the father is the absolute master of the home. His wife and his children must obey his will. The boys and the girls who are earning give everything to their fathers. They cannot spend a cent without his consent. The wives must tell their husbands when they want to buy a dress or something else and if he consents she will get the money to buy it. If not, she must wait until he will let her have it. The children must marry the boys or the girls chosen by their fathers in most cases. Now they tell me that the education which the Baptist churches are giving to the youths creates discontent and strain between them and the older people, by the development of individualism and democratic ideas. They say that we want to tempt their children with candy to go to Sunday School, but our main object is to Canadianize them and separate them from their traditions and their languages. In other words they claim that our whole purpose is to break up their family life and to make them a prey to our ideals and aims. Allow me to say here a word that unless we lead the parents to Jesus Christ, in most cases we shall not be able to win their children either. They

will not let them come. And they have a mighty power over them. You see then the absolute necessity of having missionaries of their own race to deal with these people, their prejudices and their native customs and ideas.

- (6) **THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND THE WAR.**—I am asked very often, why do the Christian people go and kill their fellow-men, while Christ teaches us to love our enemies? "You see," they tell me, "You are not obeying the very Scriptures you yourself want us to accept. Your religion is simply a business and nothing else," and to quote one of their oft-used proverbs, "You are preaching water to others, but you are drinking wine at the same time." "If you are following some of the doctrines of Christ, why don't you follow Him in everything He says?"
- (7) **INDIFFERENCE.**—Due to the present economic conditions, many of these New Canadians have lost their confidence in the moral order of the world. They doubt if there is a God at all. Their horizon is so clouded that it is very hard to make them see any light, any blue sky beyond the clouds of life. So this causes them to be indifferent to men and inattentive to anything that may be said or taught to them. They are disgusted with their lives. Those of them who have their families here are not so bad, but those whose families are still in the old country are very bitter and indifferent.

Confronted with these deep problems in the religious realm, God has blessed the work among the non-English-speaking people in a special way. The work of the Kingdom of God made possible through the Home Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec has justified its continuation, its promotion and its extension in this great Dominion of Canada. An average of 58 New Canadians per year have been baptized during the last three years. Think of the influence these people have upon their countrymen and upon their families.

The greatest need of the non-English people in Canada is their need of Christ and of His salvation. They became members of the national church in their countries by birth. The church to which they belonged is dead, it is without the message of life. It is the duty of the Baptist Churches to give the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to these strangers—that light along which leads to the true knowledge of God and salvation through faith in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as well as

being the only power to make them good citizens, obedient to the laws and respectful to the ideals embodied in the constitution of this country.

No other agency will take this responsibility. The school will not, the press will not, the legislature will not. Only as the church, which is the body of Christ, does it, will it be done. If the church fails Him, He has no other designated body. Furthermore, the Bolsheviks will introduce to them that which is destructive of all that is so dear to our hearts—the family, the social order, the state and the church.

CHAPTER IV.

A Matchless Opportunity

To try to demonstrate whether it is possible to take men of different races, tongues, histories, customs and ideals, to mould them into one nation in a land of freedom is, in my humble judgment, one of the greatest experiments that has ever been attempted. Canada has undertaken this experiment when she opened her gates to the different people from all over the Globe. Viewed from certain angles, the experiment seems to have been highly successful. From other angles, it seems to have involved Canada in many difficulties.

As I see it to-day, there is clear evidence of a spirit of social unrest and agitation, for revolt is heard at many a street corner. Many of these strangers—the adults in particular—do not know how to read nor write and as I have observed there are not many organizations engaged in earnest efforts to teach these people English and to acquaint them with Canadian ideals. Here then is this great task left almost entirely to the Christian churches who sincerely desire to see these people become good Canadians. And the greatest possibility for Canada lies in unifying these people in the fellowship of Christ and the Christian brotherhood. It is one of the most challenging tasks that has faced the Christian church in any land or in any age.

Here is a tremendous task and a matchless opportunity for the Baptists who desire to make these people intelligent and loyal citizens and to bring them to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind.

FIRST, the Baptists have the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to these strangers. Due to the fact that most of these people are Roman or Greek Catholics, somebody might say, "Why those churches have already preached and are preaching the Gospel to them." But you know very well that is not so, because the Roman church clergy read the Bible in Latin in all their churches and in order to understand it, one must be a Latin scholar. What an absurdity! Then again, it would seem that the Greek Orthodox clergy chant the Bible as fast as they can in order that no-

body may understand it. No they do not preach the Gospel, for preaching is the gift of the Holy Spirit to saved men, who through the centuries have preached the Gospel of Good Tidings, giving to the world a practical interpretation of God and man, which brings peace and comfort to the heart, transforms character and inspires to right living.

SECONDLY, the Baptists have the opportunity of giving the New Canadians an open Bible, which is still kept closed by the said churches before these people. It is a priest's book and even the priests neglect it. They do not want the people to read it because they know that "The entrance of Thy word giveth Light," and that is the very thing they don't want the people to have.

A Roman Catholic woman came to me the other day and told me that after she heard me talking about baptism by immersion, she went to her priest and asked him about it. He told her that there was something wrong with her, that she wants to know too much. Then I remember about the Vatican Manuscript of the Bible in the Vatican Library at Rome, and how the papal authorities refused access to it when Dr. Tregelles, a most eminent scholar and student made an attempt to examine it. He says that they would not let him open the volume without searching his pockets and depriving him of pens and ink and paper. Even then there were two priests watching him and if he studied any part of it too long they would snatch away the book. No, they do not want the people to read the Bible.

THIRDLY, the Baptists have the opportunity of putting into the hearts of the New Canadians their great doctrine of the supremacy of Jesus Christ instead of the pope, patriarch, or priest.

To put the world's best in comparison with Jesus Christ, they are consumed, burned up, so to speak in the flaming splendor of His marvellous life.

Buddha, who numbers among its votaries a large proportion of the human race, had an uncleanly abjectness in some of its precepts, and a narrow selfishness in its morality. Its religion is atheism which tends to merge into idolatry.

Confucius, although he lived a life highly respectable, proclaimed a religion that is a conventional polytheism merging into atheism.

The pope has a crown of gold, while Christ was crowned with a garland of thorns. He wants to rule all the Kingdoms of the world, while Christ renounced temporal power. The pope has his feet kissed; Christ had His feet pierced whole He washed the disciples' feet. The pope lives in the most costly residence in the world, Christ had not whereon to lay His head. The popes killed their enemies—Christ loved His. The pope loves only his own and anathematizes all others. Christ is seeking to bless all mankind. The pope seeks to rule men with an iron will by keeping them in ignorance. Christ wants to free all men from sin. Popery declares the pope to be infallible. Christ *is infallible* and holy, with power to save sinners.

“As a sunbeam falls on a mud puddle and draws up a drop of water into the clouds, distils it and purifies it of all foulness and sends it back as a snowflake, even so could He lift up the stained life of a Magdalen and make it white as snow.”

Here He is manifesting His unique supremacy and power. We as Baptists cannot give to the New Canadians and to all those who are lost a better gift than to introduce them to Jesus Christ, who is the only hope of the World.

CHAPTER V.

Christian Patriotism and Home Missions

Every Christian man and woman in Canada cherishes those loyalties which are fundamental to a sound and progressive national life—loyalty to God, loyalty to the home, loyalty to the school, loyalty to the courts and loyalty to the nation

When Christ Jesus comes into a man's life He does not lessen his love for his nation or weaken his patriotism. We can see that in the letters of the master of the highest culture of his time, Paul, the Apostle, who shows how much Christ has deepened His love for His kinsmen and quickened the right kind of patriotism. Christian loyalty in Paul led him to exclaim, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," (Romans 9:2, 3.) And again in Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved."

There are no sublimer expressions of the right kind of patriotism and love of nation in any language than those of this splendid Christian apostle. Christ's spirit in Christian Canadians ought to lead us all to exclaim today, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Canada is that she might be saved." That is not the highest type of Canadianism that prays that Canada might be powerful, or rich, or might escape responsibility. The real Canadian, the highest type of Canadian, is he whose supreme desire and prayer for Canada is that she might be saved. Canada might be powerful and yet lost, rich and yet lost, escape responsibility and yet be lost.

Canada is a polyglot land. About one hundred different nationalities are listed in the census report and the list closes with "various" and "unspecified." This great stream of people (two millions of New Canadians alone) from all parts of the globe, which has flowed to the shores of Canada, spread over farms and filled up the cities of this land, affects the nation at the very heart of its be-

ing, for the character and destiny of the land is determined by the character of its people.

The problem of amalgamation of the different racial stocks in Canada culturally, politically, traditionally and religiously is a great one, and no doubt, it will be many years before they become incorporated to such a degree into the national life of the Canadian nation as to be able to share equally with it in its national aspirations and achievements. The retardation of the process of amalgamation is due to a number of influences as I have observed during the short time I have lived in Canada. The differences in cultural and social standards, not much intermarriage, segregation in blocks especially in the rural districts, where the people are much more isolated from the Old Canadians than those in the cities, etc. As I have talked with different people about the situation, I have observed that many think that the solution to all the above-mentioned problems would be the naturalization of this great army of strangers in Canada. But merely the intention of the New Canadians to make a more or less permanent home in Canada and the desire to share in the affairs of the country, does not mean that they have received the full status of citizenship by sworn allegiance to this country. On the contrary, I believe that premature naturalization may even be a great menace, for by extending the franchise to persons unfit to take part in governmental and social control is a great danger. Again others think that socialization would help the situation. But we all know that history abounds with proof of the inadequacy of socialization without moral impulse and spiritual power. We know about nations which are highly socialized, but that did not save them from the gangrene of their own selfishness. Then others would say that education is the only solution of the whole problem. But I would ask them to look to the gangsters of the United States and to tell me if they are not highly educated? They play with the government like a child would play with a kitten because they know how to do it. They are shrewd. No, education alone will not help the problem.

Let me venture to say that the only solution of the problems of Canada is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel which has given birth to spiritual kingdoms; the Gospel which has caused spiritual and moral transformation in every land, among all races or peoples where it was preached; the Gospel which has amalgamated peoples of all nationalities, of all races, of all creeds, of all colors into a great brotherhood of man. This is the only remedy for all evils in Canada and throughout the world. Education, democracy, socialization, are very good in their place. But these alone are not sufficient to make any country great. These, with Christ enthroned in the life

of the people of Canada, Canada of tomorrow will be a glorious country.

If every Canadian Baptist has a gold mine of human worth and promise, it is among the New Canadians and other peoples of this great Dominion. If every Canadian Baptist has a patriotic heart, it must say, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Canada is that she might be saved." If Canadian Baptists have the obligation for the extension of the Kingdom of God at home as well as abroad, the Home Mission Board is the medium through which they must discharge that obligation. If we all love this great country and desire to make it really great, let us say and mean it with Thos. E. Roach:

*"We claim our land for Jesus,
Its tales and towering hills,
Its cities full and hamlets,
Its brooks and gurgling rills.
We claim its wealth for Jesus,
Its lowly poor we claim,
Its native born and alien
Of every hue and name.*

*"Around us souls are dying,
They perish at our door,
The land is full of sighing,
And sin from shore to shore,
Gladly we toil to save them,
From death to make them free
For Him whose life He gave them
Yonder at Calvary.*

*"We claim our land for Jesus,
For Him and in His Name;
And, in the strength He gives us,
We'll press our righteous claim.
And when the day for Jesus
We've won, what joy complete
'Twill be to bring our trophies
And lay them at His feet."*