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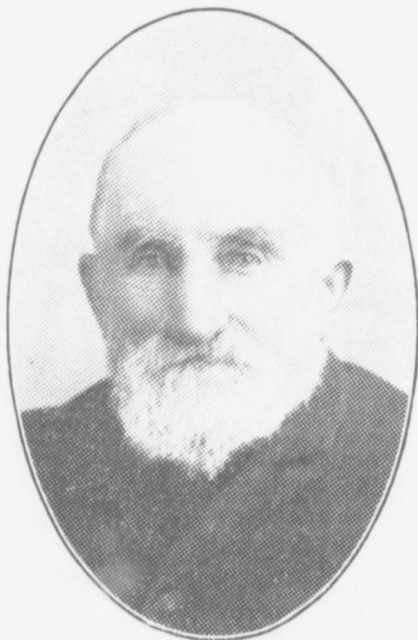
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*Mr. George Buskin, George*

## **Preaching Amid the Perils of the Great Wilderness**



MR. GEORGE BUSKIN

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Written for the "Ottawa Evening Journal" by Mr. George Buskin,  
Agent and Missionary of THE EVANGELICAL AND COLPOR-  
TAGE MISSION OF ALGOMA AND THE NORTHWEST.

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**Depots: 202 King St. E., Toronto and 17 Eagle St., Rochester, N.Y.**

# An Appeal to the Ontario Government.

BY GEORGE BUSKIN.

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TORONTO, March, 1908.

A delegation has been proposed to respectfully interview the Ontario Government with the hope and desire of obtaining from them a grant of \$500 to aid in meeting the cost of publishing the second volume of the Indian Dictionary in the Ojibway Indian and English languages : a work which has entailed considerable expense.

The first part of the Dictionary has been paid for by public subscription incurring also much labor and cost.

George Buskin, who is well known, has pursued a work of instruction among many of the Ojibway Indians, over a wide range of territory ; supplying them with books of instruction from the alphabet onwards ; without denominational bias or interest. Age and physical weakness now renders him unfitted for the arduous work of former years ; and the Ontario Government is respectfully asked to donate the sum of \$500 to honorably discharge the cost incurred in publishing the Dictionary ; the expenses incurred being typesetting, \$262 ; compilation, \$150 ; electrotypes, \$60 ; paper, \$40 ; binding and presswork, \$50. The large item of personal labor is left out of account.

The Dictionary is supplied to the Indians at a nominal price, as it has been found that they value it more when they feel they have paid something for it than when given to them.

The former edition incurred similar costs, which is a small portion of the educational work done by Mr. Buskin during the past twenty-five years.

Mr. James R. Roaf, Barrister, Star Chambers, King St. W., Toronto, Ont., has consented to be part of the delegation.

Many of the Ojibway Indians in Ontario are reported to be pagans still.

The members of the government and friends are respectfully asked to use their influence that the foregoing appeal may be responded to.

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**GEORGE BUSKIN,**

Depots : 202 King St. E., Toronto, and 17 Eagle St., Rochester, N.Y.

# Preaching Amid the Perils of the Great Wilderness.

Taken in part from the Ottawa Evening Journal, April 11, 1908.

I had designed to publish a second edition of my autobiography, with the title "More than 50 years in Gospel Harness," but as my health and strength are now failing I may be unable to do so, and the following sketch of the intervening days from September, 1854, to the present may be profitable to some of your many readers. As I am a debtor to editors as well as the general public for their encouraging help in the good cause of the Algoma and Northwest Evangelical and Colportage Mission as well as in previous exercises of a similar kind since the year 1855, I may say I have been a man of one book (the Bible).

When I then began to read the Bible to obtain a knowledge of its contents, other books of the best authors were to me in comparison but borrowed lights and borrowed sentiments. Teacher and preacher have all been helps to me but they and their teachings have had to be weighed by the balances of the Sanctuary, the Bible. I have labored day and night to instil its truths in the minds of young and old. In 1858 I had purposed to "preach the word" with a band of music in Hyde Park, Lon-

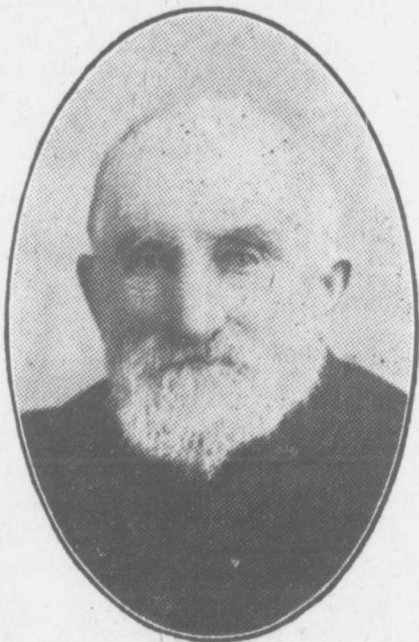
don, but failing health drove me into South Wales, where I became associated with a fervent man of God, Mr. Samuel Prichard, a highway gospel preacher who had previously been chaplain to a Baptist nobleman. Through him I learned to practice the liberty that I had learned from the sacred page. John Wesley said that all the world was his parish, and my authority was from the good book to go unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The present day's system are unknown in the Scripture and Justin, martyr, A.D. 140, tells of the equality of believers of the Gospel in his day, my deep reverence for the Holy Scriptures from my early youth has been the real cause of my activities in its dissemination and would that I could extend it ten thousand fold more than I have.

It was in Port Arthur and neighborhood in 1883 that the work partook of its present form, at which time a contractor, who told me he was not religious but said to me: "If I had your gift I'd go to the work and the money would have to come," and so I launched out into the deep and let down the net. Though I have caught some devil fish who have tried to swamp me and the little barque, yet the good Lord has sent me many who have strengthened my heart, my hands and my pocket, but for the instruction of any who may think I am making gain of professed godliness I may say my gain to the present time is debts of several hundreds of dollars

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and arrears of a very small salary of over \$2,500, so that in many things want has to be my comfort. Even my travelling expenses have sometimes been paid with I. O. U.'s. On one occasion a man picked



MR. GEORGE BUSKIN

me up when lying with my load under a fence and drove me and the load to the steamboat dock, when the wharfinger said: "I don't wonder at your finding him so, he puts more on his back than I would put on my horse. A man told me some time ago

that he had a pair of my old boots hanging up in his kitchen in remembrance of the long tramps that I had taken." I think, it was a pair that I burnt holes in by the stove of a lumber camp that day I tramped 30 miles and rode on a team 10 miles—being a journey of 40 miles, but I cannot do it now, but thank God I have not been grievously hurt, though once lost in the lake in an open boat during a fog and also lost in the bush, but I steered for the setting sun and came out right. So to-day I steer for the "sun of righteousness when He shall appear with healing in His wings," and He is faithful who has promised to bring us safely to his eternal home.

As I am now nearly 74 years of age I shall be thankful if someone will undertake the work in my stead. If any will serve the Lord there is no fear that He will not sustain them. People will go to Africa and India, but there is work that can be done at their own doors if they have a will to do it. There is an end to all flesh and for that reason I would like some strong and able man to continue what has been begun. The service of Christ is perfect liberty and will end in a great reward.

In 1875 I went into the Muskoka district intending to settle there with my family, so that I could preach the Gospel through the country. The following year I went to Parry Sound, where I continued two years and a half and sold the improvements on 80

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acres of land, which cost me \$100, for a barrel of flour, which ended for the time my residence in the bush. Later I went to Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., where I continued five or six years and finally left for Toronto. For 17 years I have had the depot there and have travelled with Bibles and books from the Atlantic to the Pacific—more than 44,000 copies I have supplied and taken account of and many thousands more of which no records have been made. Besides this I distributed a multitude of sound religious tracts and preached the Gospel in highways, halls, school houses, etc., as long as I had strength to do so. My work is with the Lord and my record in heaven—the only safe place for one's treasures being kept.

The foregoing has been a very brief statement of some of the various experiences in the work of the Mission. As some may be disposed to question the labor incurred, and the good accomplished during the 25 years of its operations, I wish to say that the success has not been in all places alike. On one occasion in a sawmill I sold 35 Scriptures and 89 other books, receiving \$21.75 for the same. I also conducted religious services.

At another mill, 20 miles distant, I supplied 34 Scriptures and 50 other books, and was paid \$18.46, being the work of two days. These books were all sold to employees in the sawmills. In the newspaper statement I mentioned the weariness in the

work to which some may take exception. In the same Indian reserve on another occasion. I was so discouraged that I felt like throwing the whole baggage into the river, but remembering that there



A LATER VISIT TO THE SAME PLACE.

was yet one more house at which I had not yet called, being a store having a very ungracious sceptic as manager, whose presence I preferred to shun (and later I learned that he had been educated for a Presbyterian minister). On arriving at the place I

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saw two men cutting stove wood. I hailed them in the usual way, saying, "Can I sell you a Bible or good book?" They said, "We need none, but go upstairs at the back of the building and you will find some women, may be they will buy some." I accepted the advice, and on arriving at the head of the stairs, I met a young woman who asked for a large print Bible for her father. I sold her one for \$1.00, the weight of which was between three and four pounds. The next sale was a large family Bible, for which I received \$8.50. After that I sold Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Holy War and other works, the total value being about \$14.00, with much regret that my spirit had been so much disturbed, but purposing in my heart to no more distrust the providence of Almighty God. One more experience in the same place. I had walked twelve miles through snow in some places up to my knees, carrying three or four family Bibles, besides other small Bibles and books, without any cash in my pocket. I was exhausted with my long tramp and resolved to tarry the night with a man I knew, but he was unable to accommodate me. However, they kindly furnished me with supper, and I was refreshed. When the workmen on the Soo branch of the C. P. R. came in I asked them the condition of the road to the camp. They said it was good. So I then concluded to continue my journey with my pack on my back. My first stop

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was at the shanty of the telegraph operator, where I asked to be allowed to leave the family Bibles for the night, as I was going to hold services in the camp. The answer I got from the operator was, "You cannot leave them here; I have no good opinion of you." To which I said, "I do not ever remember seeing you before." He said, "Oh, yes you have, and for spite you reported me to the Postmaster-General." He had been postmaster at a few miles from this place, on which occasion I got him to register a letter addressed to my wife at the Soo, and on returning from my trip some 100 miles further, found that the letter had not been delivered, nor yet any tidings concerning it. I then wrote to the Postmaster-General at Ottawa and received a courteous reply with the letter, and I suppose the man lost his situation. And this is why he had, as he said, no good opinion of me.

The incidents recorded here will help to show the good accomplished by this Mission over a large part of this Canada of ours. The accompanying photo was requested by the news editor of The Evening Journal, Ottawa. But if I could show the first photo taken some twenty years ago by the photographer at the Soo, the change time has wrought would be very apparent. He said, I have the photos of all the minister of the Soo, and I want yours. So I consented and appeared in the regimentals of my office, which were two flour bags with books,

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and also two large valises, and sundries in the shape of leather bags, to which he said I cannot take you in these. My answer was, I must be taken with my marching supplies. The picture was not a success and was not used. Later I had one taken at the Soo fair, with my horse and wagon, but that, like the first, was a failure.

I have before mentioned the poverty of my circumstances in being obliged to travel at times on I. O. U.'s. I will mention the closing scenes of my five years' residence at the Soo. I had gone through such vexations that I feared I should lose my reason by remaining longer, so I determined to leave for Toronto. But the extent of my cash, when ready to leave, was three coppers. So I placed my trunks and cases, horse and wagon, on the steamboat dock ready to depart, and waited until 10 o'clock at night for the boat to come in by which I expected to sail to Gore Bay. And being too tired to remain longer, I went to bed. In the meantime the boat called and sailed again without me. On the following day I was again on the dock when another steamer came in. When the officers of the ship hailed me with, "hello," are you going to emigrate? I said yes, to Gore Bay, and I have three cents with which to pay my fare; how will that do? I spoke out lustily, thinking to receive some compassion from some of the residents at that time on the wharf, but I received none. During my more

than five years' stay at the Soo, I received but twenty years' dollars of material aid toward the work, although Iauth had built two mission halls, at the cost of more than come one hundred dollars. The officers of the steamer vineo bid me go aboard, which we did—myself, daughter, big s horse, wagon and boxes—I promising to pay. We could landed at Gore Bay, receiving on the way very kind Th treatment from both officers and crew of the steam-going er, who assisted me to start my work in the town. ing 1 During the week I remained there I received \$20 for books and Bibles; also selling the horse and wagon for \$45. So when the steamer returned I went on board to go to Toronto and wished to pay my fare to the Soo, but the only charge they made was one dollar for the horse and wagon, the balance was given for the good of the cause.

I arrived at Toronto and commenced the work where now stands the Emergency Hospital (this was in 1891). The next year I removed to 202 King street east, where the depot has continued up till the present time, with abundant evidence of its Christian character to all except those who are willingly blind, and we have had occasional visits from those who are physically blind; but there are some who, although they see, have no pleasure in acknowledging the character of our work. One man who left Toronto not long since said, "Your work may be all that you represent, but I know nothing of it," he being a preacher who lived near by for many

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twenty years. A certain sceptical lawyer who doubted the authenticity of the Christian faith, was invited to come and get some of our books, which would convince him of his error. He said, "Is it where those big signs are?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Oh, I

We could not come there. Those signs frighten me." The following will in measure confirm the foregoing, being one of about a hundred similar, covering many years:

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A Returning Missionary.—Rev. Mr. Buskin, the Canadian Pacific Missionary, will return to the city in a few days, and will begin a series of street sermons. The Algoma Pioneer has the following to say of him: "Sault Ste. Marie cannot boast of having a Salvation Army and barracks, but it has a good strong-lunged street preacher, who holds forth every Sunday morning at nine o'clock; and thereby draws some sleepy people out of bed an hour or two sooner than usual. Keep at it Mr. Buskin, and by and by perhaps it will be possible to see a decent-sized congregation in one of our three Protestant churches at 11 a.m."—Montreal Herald, May 7, 1886.

In conclusion we would respectfully ask of all, if such is not practical Christian work? If not, what is? We are grateful to our heavenly Father for His

many kindnesses and the help we have received through all the years from so many of His true children. It also must be evident to all that the publishing of the many books, pamphlets, etc., in various languages, travelling and other expenses, are heavy, and we earnestly invite our many friends to help with the good work.

Concluding this little statement with the words of the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xi., 1, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

This is my pathway, therefore I exhort all to pursue the same.

Yours truly,

GEO. BUSKIN.

202 King St. E., Toronto, Ont., and 17 Eagle St.,  
Rochester, N.Y.

May 24, 1908.

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