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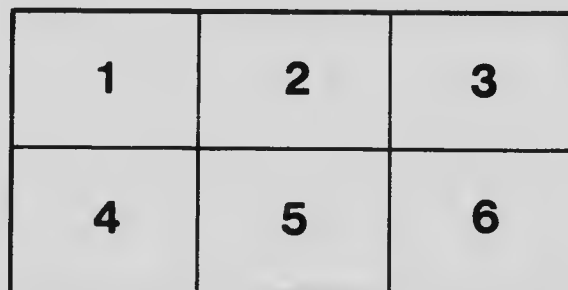
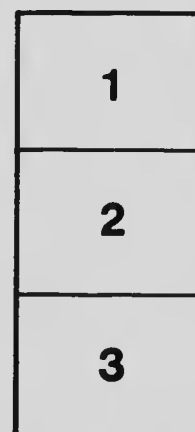
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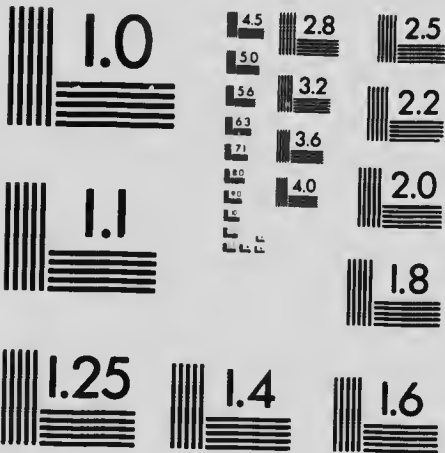
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Canada's Debt *to the* Missionary

BY
REV. CANON L. NORMAN TUCKER,
General Secretary, Missionary Society of the
Church of England in Canada

*Address delivered at
National Missionary Congress, Toronto
March 31 to April 4, 1909*

ANGELICAN CHURCH OF CANADA
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Canada's Debt *to the* Missionary

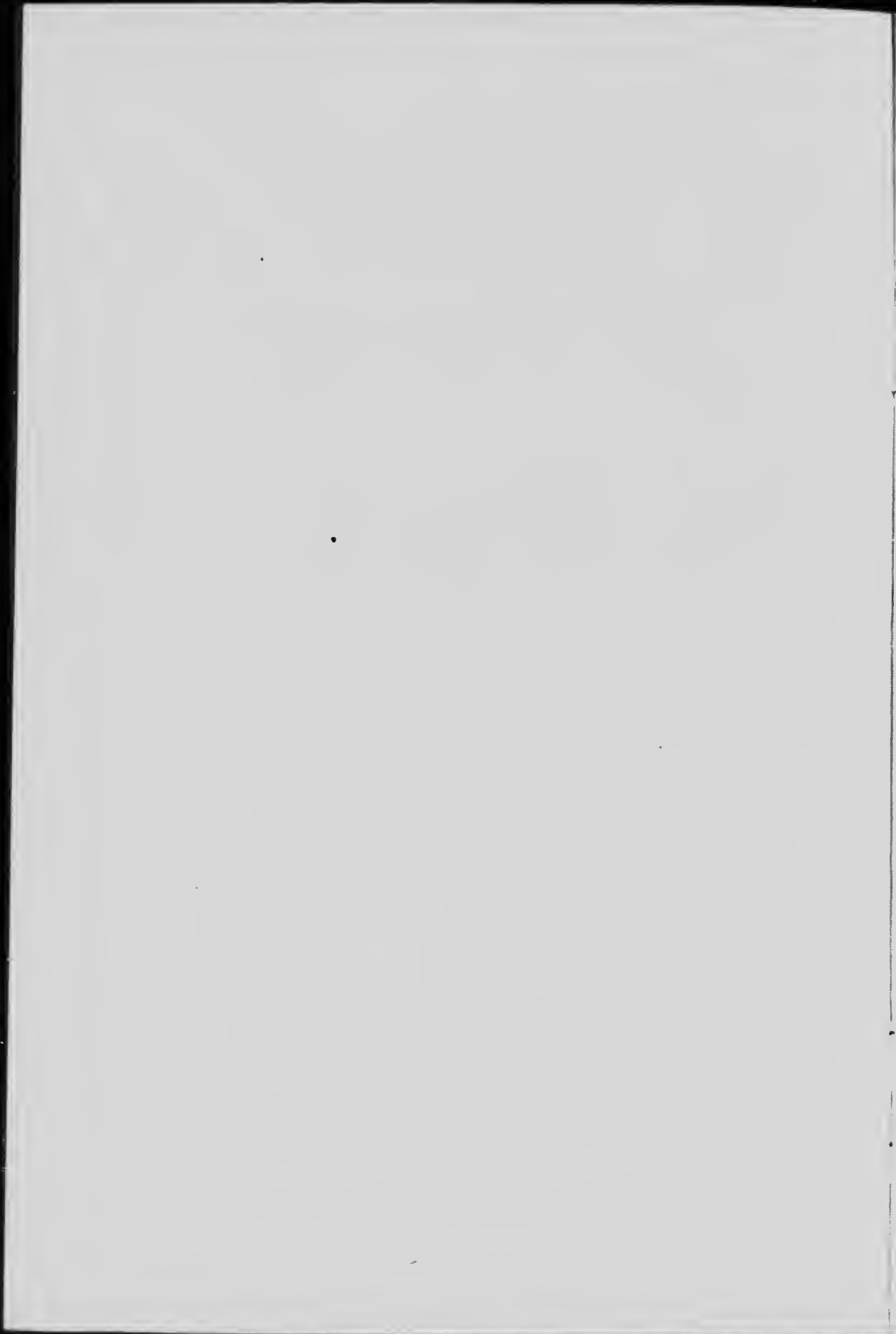
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CANADA'S DEBT TO THE MISSIONARY.

REV. CANON L. NORMAN TUCKER, TORONTO.

*General Secretary, Missionary Society of the Church of England
in Canada.*

I suppose it may be assumed here that Canada is now a nation. We are in possession of all the chief attributes of nationhood. We are free. We are self-governing. And what is more, we feel within us the stirrings, the ambitions, the hopes of national life. And this, let me say in passing, is the highest destiny to which we can be called, the greatest thing we can achieve in this world, because it is the instrument, the means of all other great achievements.

And we feel that, though the latest of the nations we are by no means the least; rather are we the Benjamin of the family, possessing a sevenfold portion of all the good things of life. Fronting the greatest oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific, and facing the greatest continents, Europe and Asia, and possessing resources that are beyond the dreams of avarice in sea and river, in plain and mountain, the heir of all the ages in the foremost files of time, we feel that it is in our power to become one of the great nations of the earth.

And already our place has been marked out for us; already there are obligations resting upon us in the natural order of things. We are daughter in our mother's house though mistress in our own; we feel by natural instinct that we have a share in the honor, the safety, the success of the Motherland. And as a sister in the family that makes up the British Empire, we feel by natural instinct that we are sharers in a world-wide heritage and in world-wide obligations.

Now this leads us naturally to take stock of our position and to inquire what are the assets with which we are to meet our liabilities and what attributes we have that fit us for the important mission to which we are called.

We find on the surface of our national life certain rugged qualities that cannot be mistaken—robust health of mind and body; and a thrift that has few wants and an industry that can suffer no failure. These things we owe in part to a worthy ancestry; but also largely to a bracing climate and to a productive but not over-generous soil.

But there are higher qualities which we, as a nation, possess, and which have the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come.

There is in every Canadian breast an ardent love of freedom, coupled with the qualities that fit us to enjoy its benefits and to discharge its obligations. And this is so far the highest level which human progress has attained.

But more fundamental than the love of and fitness for freedom is the love of truth and right, a sensitive though not always an enlightened conscience, and a sound moral sense that can be relied on to respond to a strong moral appeal.

Then there is ingrained in the fibre of our people a love of order and a respect for law that makes life and property as safe in frontier settlements and mining towns as in the centres of refinement and civilization.

There is also a wide-spread spirit of benevolence that, for the protection of the weak and needy, has built hospitals and charitable institutions through the length and breadth of the land.

There is an insatiable desire for learning that has made our national system of schools second to none in the world; so that no Canadian need be illiterate and any Canadian may be fully equipped for the battle of life.

Then morality with us is considered of universal obligation, in public and in private life. Marriage is a sacred institution. Divorce is almost unknown; and the home is so

guarded and honored that it is in reality the seed-bed of all the virtues. These are some of our national characteristics, and they furnish a pretty good outfit with which to embark on the voyage of national life.

Now the question arises to what or to whom are we indebted for all this? We reply, in part to the traditions and habits derived from our fathers, but, more than to any other cause, to the character and work of the early missionaries in our land. They laid the foundations on which this national character and these national virtues have been built up.

They led us to feel that our highest endowment was our spiritual nature and that our chief aim and object in life was to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. They came to us in the name of God. They came at a plastic period in our history and stamped this great truth indelibly on the national conscience. And that is religion, the source and spring of all virtues, personal and national.

They trained us in the love and study of the Bible as having the words of eternal life. And the teachings of that old Book still possess the best elements on which to nourish all high purpose and endeavor. The Bible is the foundation of England's greatness because it is the mould in which were cast the British character and British institutions.

They trained us in the habit of frequenting the House of God and not forgetting the assembling of ourselves together. They thus brought all the means of grace to bear on all people of the land and spread as widely as possible the stimulus, the contagion of exalted feeling and good example.

They taught us to observe and sanctify the Lord's Day. They placed thus a strong bulwark of protection around all other religious institutions and conferred an inestimable boon on all the toilers in our land by giving them a needed weekly rest and giving them some opportunity of cultivating the higher life.

They everywhere established Sunday Schools and so

brought up the young in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and trained the rising generation worthily to take the place of their fathers.

Their first ambition and effort was to glorify God by the salvation of souls; but the means they used and the institutions they established were of permanent value to the nation. They placed God's holy day, God's holy word and God's holy house at the very centre of our national life. Thus they stamped indelibly on the Canadian character moral and spiritual features whose value is beyond all price. And they have done this by coming in with the settler, standing by the cradle of all our infant communities and instilling into them from their earliest years divine principles and teachings and training them in the love and in the practice of righteousness. For it is as true of infant communities and nations as it is of individual men, "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

When we speak of the early settlers in Canada we must remember what, a hundred years ago, was the moral and religious condition of England from which they came. Dr. Johnson, no doubt with some exaggeration, told Boswell that he had never met a religious clergyman. The people, for the most part, spent their Sundays bear-baiting and cock-fighting and the mass of the nation was outside the pale of the Church. It is the period of which Macaulay speaks when he says: "Then came those days never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot and the slave." It was at such a time that God raised up a little band of godly men in the established Church, to raise the nation to newness of life, among whom were Wesley, Romaine, Newton and Top-lady. And it was that religious movement that gave rise to the great missionary societies of England, and that ushered in the era of modern missions.

In the Maritime Provinces 150 years ago the population was of the most heterogeneous character. They were Germans and British, soldiers and civilians. In Halifax it was said that half the population was engaged in selling liquor and the other half in drinking it. Not too much was to be expected from such a population if left to themselves. But in the providence of God, they were not left to themselves; the missionaries appeared with the earliest settlers and taught them their duty to God and their duty to man. A new direction was at once given to the whole life of the province. And now it is a region that, for law and order, religion and morality, is a model to the rest of the world, and furnishes more than its share of brains to the rest of the Dominion.

In Quebec the black-robed missionary came in with the settler; and it is not too much to say that he stamped his character on the people and the institutions of the province. For weal or woe the Province of Quebec is to-day what the missionaries made it. It is to the missionary that is due the survival of the French element and the French tongue after the conquest. And on the shores of the Georgian Bay the Jesuit Fathers wrote a chapter in the history of Canada that will never be forgotten and that deserves a place among the most heroic chapters written in blood by the early martyrs of the Christian Church.

The Eastern townships of Quebec, along the international boundary line, from Lake Megantic to Missisquoi Bay, were settled by a nondescript race of adventurers. They were a sturdy race of men but were profane, godless and thoroughly worldly. Among them also the missionaries came; the Hon. and Rev. Dr. Stewart, who became second Bishop of Quebec, made his centres in St. Armand and Hatley and wrought a complete revolution among them. His name is remembered and his influence felt even to this day. And there is not to be found in the whole Dominion of Canada a more law-abiding and progressive, moral and religious district than the Eastern townships of Quebec.

The shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie were settled by United Empire loyalists and others. They too were a sturdy race of men but, from the moral and religious standpoint, they also left much to be desired, and among them also the missionaries appeared. The Methodist itinerants early overran the Bay of Quinte and the Niagara districts. These pioneer missionaries, among whom was Nathan Bangs, were largely innocent of learning and of theology, but their very hearts were aflame with the love of God and of souls; and they with others of like mind laid the foundations of the moral and religious character of this province, which made it the premier province of the Dominion, and perhaps the most moral and religious, the most intelligent and progressive region of its size anywhere on the earth.

Long before settlement began to pour into the West there stood a man on the prairies, a prophet, a patriot, a great statesman, a missionary who foresaw the marvellous developments that were coming and who wisely prepared to meet them. Dr. Robertson staked out that great country, occupied its strategic points, early aroused his Church to its needs and opportunities and dotted the whole land with Presbyterian Churches and manses and thus enabled the Presbyterian Church of Canada to work its robust and manly spirit into the very fibre of our national life.

Every one feels that the native Indians of Canada have a special claim on us; for we have inherited this great country from them and we have deprived them of their livelihood and too often demoralized them with our whisky, our diseases, and our vices. Again it is the missionaries who have enabled us as a nation to discharge our debt to the Indian. They followed him within the Arctic circle and to the shores of the Arctic sea to give him the bread of life. And the result has been that the relations between the Indians and the Government of Canada have been relations of unbroken peace. Even in the two Riel rebellions the Christian Indians could not be induced to take up arms and join the rebels,

There have been no Indian wars in Canada, and no stain of Indian blood has been left on the pages of our national history.

And in that noble band of missionaries the name of Bishop Bompas stands conspicuous. He left behind him home, friends, cultured society, prospects of advancement, all that man holds most dear, and buried himself in the inaccessible regions of the north from which he emerged only twice in the space of forty years. What an example for mothers to hold up before their children or teachers before their classes in an age of rampant materialism and self-seeking, when men are tumbling over one another for the almighty dollar, to be able to say that there was at least one man who was willing to give up all for his Master, and like his Master, to carry to the poor, neglected people of the far north the unsearchable riches of Christ!

“Let us now praise famous men and our fathers who begat us. Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore. The people will tell of their wisdom and the congregation will show forth their praise.” Such is the spirit in which Israel, in the plenitude of his wisdom, at the highest point in his history, spoke of the fathers and founders of his nation and of his Church, among whom were Abraham the first missionary, Aaron the first priest and Samuel the first prophet.

“And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword; and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, evil entreated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and the holes of the earth.”

Such was the final eulogy passed by Israel, at the very

crisis of his fate, when he was about to be rejected or to be merged in the spiritual Israel, over the good and the great of his race who had made his glorious history possible.

Is there a better example for us to follow? Are there, in our national history, nobler men than the missionaries, who have made our past and our future history possible? Are there any more worthy of our grateful remembrance than they? And is there any exercise that can be more stimulating, more profitable to ourselves than to recall the memory of the heroes who have passed beyond the veil? Can we do better than imbue ourselves with their heroic, self-denying spirit for the pioneer work that has fallen to our lot, for the battle that has to be renewed in every age?

As we think of the glorious company of the apostles, the prophets, the martyrs, the missionaries, that so great cloud of witnesses by which we are compassed about, who have been the soldiers and servants of God in all ages and in all lands, may we not say with Abraham Lincoln on the immortal field of Gettysburg: "*We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men who struggled here have consecrated it far above our power to add or to detract. It is for us—the living—rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last, full measure of devotion,*" when they gave themselves, when they gave up their lives.

