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IGNIS.

A PARABLE
OF THE
THE GREAT LAVA PLAIN
IN THE
VALLEY OF "ETERNAL BLOOM,"
NAAS RIVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA.



By
The Rev. J. B. McCullagh, C.M.S.
Aiyansh, B. C.

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The Reason Why.

Even a little booklet of this birch-bark order must justify its advent into the world at any time, either on the ground of artistic conception, and literary value, or because of the importance of its message to the sons of men, if it convey one. But the present day is not "any time," it is a time of red, blazing war, of hell-fire intensity; there is no leisure to-day for dilettantism; either in art or letters, however pleasurable the pursuit of these may be, unless one may thereby help to win the war.

And yet, it is even in a day like this that—without any pretensions to literary merit, artistic value or inspiring message to the warring sons of men—"IGNIS" comes meandering through the papyrus into Metaphor, just as if the world were at ease. And why? Well, one might say, Because he is—"Fatuus!" But, preferring the serious mood, I say, Because necessity urges; and "necessity knows no"—ah! non piu mai! In other words, without using that discredited maxim, our Aiyansh mission, having been washed out by a great flood we are compelled to move the village to another place; where the church and rectory must be re-estimated, and the mission put upon a new basis.

This means that the missionary is up against an expenditure for which no provision has been made by Church or State. To meet this need, which will extend over a period of two years, he feels compelled to help in the pursuit of the nimble dime,—hence the fatuity of "IGNIS" and his fellows to follow. For, having in his portfolio several little sketches of local subjects, in prose and verse, the missionary has arranged them into a series of pictured booklets, which he hopes to print and send out on a prospecting trip of their own. "Ignis" is asked to bring in 4 patent Fire Extinguishers. Oh, nemesis—the irony of Fate!

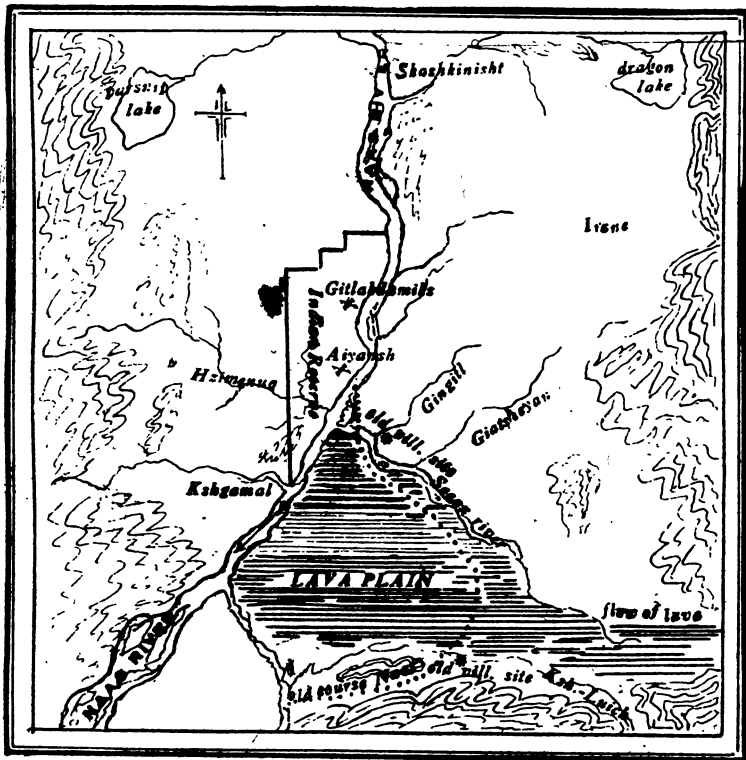
Aiyansh, B.C., 30 June, 1918.

James B. Lullagh





Map of the Naas Lava Plain.





The Indian Legend.

NIGI ya'it ðāt wī lahrmīſ ge, γum d^upraul_t wī lūnī'ſau^otquſ giat 'ſi da welt. 'Līnt'ly_t lahrhá ge, γat, at Alū-gīgiat, niſ yan welt. Zoγ_t giat at 'la γalān_t Kalſap, wīl kōi-bahr_t kōi-lū'ly γōn, at andau_t lahrmīſ; niſ gi giel_t ōá at q^uſit diſ-wel_t γalāγ_t kūpa tgiſqu, a' t' háq^udīt_t ſtimaun at γagīkō_t kalſap ge. Wai, hīyuſq^u weldīt, de ſiγaudquſ gīaul_t ſyu tgiſqu, Q^uſáſrſγāys 'ſi wat, at dumt na-γuſyōſdīt ſe γadū_t ſtimaun ge, dum'gi t' lū-maysandīt_t ſelda yanſ lāq^uſim ōkīniſt laut. Wai, niſ-weldīt ge, niſ gi lū-amām_t γa-γauddīt wīl t' giā^odīt_t wīla γabābaγs_t ſtimaun ge.

Fai hīyuſq^u weldīt ge de haγwin yēſ gīaul_t wīdeſim giat t'an lēldīt; gī γap anſiγōdīt_t hēt, niſ gi yai dī'γalyēſ weldīt, at ſiānſkwot^udīt_t haun 'ſi ginam_t Lalrhá ge laudīt at dum yan zezoγdīt. Wai, niſ yan wīl gi 'ſīnt'ly_t Lalrhá ge laudīt, niſ gi wan'net_t ōá ge wīl kōi-lrūh_t ſyāniſt, 'ſi hētqut at zōſgim γaim dō, niſ gi kōi-wetquſ wīdeſim mīſ laut. N'da 'ſa wīla bahr_t aks, niſ dī wīla bahr_t mīſ ge; ſīblik_t γanγan, niſ gi lī-d'thraks_t hanīzoγ at mīſ. Hōd_t Alūgīgiat, niſ gi γwulya limautqudīt; niſ gi āmſ γanaqwit 'ſa γalānt gi z'lrzoγdīt at Gitwīnkōilqu yanſ Gitlāhrāmīks.



1890



1891



1892



1893



D. H. H. H.



164434



The Naas Lava Plain.

THE most interesting, certainly the most picturesque, feature of Naas River scenery is its wonderful lava plain, which, in ascending the river, the traveller first comes into contact with at the canyon of Gwinoha, about 68 miles from the coast. Suddenly it opens up as a vista of amazing contrast to the common or spruce-garden variety of scenery to which the eye has become accustomed nearer the sea. The impression produced is one of mingled repulsion and attraction: repulsion, at the rugged brutality and vastness of the deposit as a thing in itself, and its material negation of purpose and charm; and attraction, at the way in which nature has overcome these negations, by making a thing of beauty out of a disfiguring scar. For, truly, never were rocks and boulders so beautifully browned and greyed; so tenderly lichened in chrome, verd and madder as are these rough, jagged masses of lava clinker! And not alone in the details of particular formations has this beautifying process been carried out, but the plain itself, in its entirety, has been rendered pleasing to the eye. All sorts of mosses, some of them like citrine coral, adorn its surface. Patches of unbroken pavement, preserving ripple-marks of lava in its molten state, are here and there verdured with a hardy creeper, bearing bright red berries, and with a sort of dwarf ice-plant which the Indians relish very much as a salad in the spring-time of the year. Hartstongue and miniature shrubs grow out of innumerable crevices, and in parts there are incipient boskets of stunted coniferæ. The cliff by the river is quite unique, and exhibits a wealth of artistic suggestion in form, colour, light and shade. Some day an artist will light upon this place, and his first joyful exclamation will be, — Eureka!

The central portions of the plain have not been so badly broken up as the circumjacent parts: the centre has fairly large sized areas of pavement intact; to the north every square yard is pulverised; while to the south, and along the river, large ebullition craters and trenches, with little surviving pavement between, form the chief characteristic.

Geologically, the lava formation is recent. There is no lack of scientific data to prove this, but not herein. The Indian legend is really an historical record, it is not myth. Standing today in lake Dihadal are the stumps of trees, and their charred but undecayed boles bestrew the shore, just as they were left by the eruptive fires, at what time the lake



was formed.

The enquiry, however, How far back in time do you suppose the eruption took place? may be answered at a venture, — say, 150 years. This fits in with the “seven-linked chain of men” of the Indian legend, counting 21 years between each link. Twenty years ago, cedar logs were being cut in a place where tradition avers the fugitive Indians made their first temporary camp. The trees, when sawn into logs, were found to be involuted, that is to say, having been stripped of bark on one side in the days of their youth, they had grown outside and around the stripped sides. The concentric annual rings showed they had been barked exactly 128 years before they were felled. We may assume, then, that the eruption occurred in the beginning of the last quarter of the XVIII Century.

Report says there is a petrified woman, a petrified house and a petrified fishing trap to be seen on the lava. But, while moulds of all sorts of natural objects may be had for the seeking, nobody in this generation has come across the lavafied form of a woman; and, alas, the old man who alone knew “where she lived” is dead!

Are there any possible uses to which this lava plain might be put? Oh, yes; many possible uses, commercially viewed. But I will not mention them here; being in dreamland I will be consistent, and stick to the dream. Supposing the government have not the imagination to turn it into a national park, and supposing I were a millionaire, recently converted and looking round for a new investment, I would try to do one good, big thing for those of our Canadian heroes who have been condemned by German poison-gas to-cough out their lives in sanguine despair. In this way, and to this end, you may dream of the building of a large modern Sanatorium for consumptives in the centre of the plain, while from the mountains behind earth is being conveyed for the making of gardens, pleasure grounds and park. The whole ten square miles of lava is being tracked by macadamised roads, cement drives, through avenues of aromatic shade trees of native pine, where Bath-chairs may take the air, and plank-walkers go to the show places. Here is air, pure and curative, such as may not be breathed in many, if any, other suburb of this planet. Yes; if I were a millionaire this afternoon, I would let the contract before night or on the morrow. As it is, I can do it in my dreams!

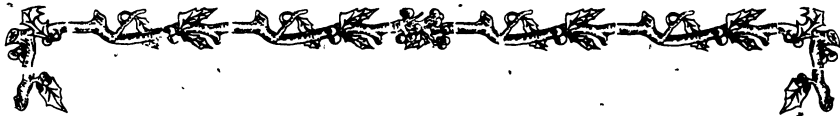
— THE “TRAIL CRUISER.”



Lasa



P. an.



The Story of Ignis,

FROM THE NAAS LAVA PLAIN.

Prelude:

IGNIS regnant! in the aeons when plutonic ergites wrought,—
Toiled like true caloric Peons—and mid fiery vapour sought,
With the zest of high achievement, all the embryonic store,
Rich and rare beyond believment, for Earth's new-created shore.

Standing o'er the fuming furnace, Ignis visions joy and hope;
Slaps his thigh and cries, Odds burn us, for my talent here *is* scope!
O'er this flambant orb with pleasure I shall reign for evermore.—
Hell-fire kingdom! brimstone treasure! suit me well on Earth's red floor.

Came the son of Schist and Granite, Lithos, kingly, stern and cold;
And both he and Vulcan ran it, for an age, with Ignis old.
Ignis heaved the molten magma, Vulcan smote it into shape,
Lithos stamped it '*kata pragma*',—ocean bed or free landscape.

Thus they swinged, each other urging, seemingly with common aim;
Every added substance purging in the elemental flame.
Live chaos! they cried; nor wondered whereunto chaos might tend,
Little dreaming, (had they pondered), of an ordered, glorious end.

Ages passed,—came Pluvius, pouring over all a cooling stream:
Great the ire of Ignis, roaring, he dispelled it all in steam!
Mighty rocks he rent in pieces; flung them high into the air;
Rolled and folded them in creases,—fought retreating to his lair.

Raged the fiery stour unceasing, Pluvius succoured Lithos well,
Till at last, the heat decreasing, they walled Ignis in his hell;
And on top of him they piled high mountains, rugged, stark and grim;
Saying, as they glimpsed his wild eye, That's the last we'll see of him.

* * * * *

Ignis dormant, in his dungeon, dreams of days and deeds of yore;
Fondly styles himself 'Peace Keeper' of Earth's cosmothetic core!
True!—for if he turn him over, heaving magma in his dream,
Then the peak that doth him cover trembles like a weaver's beam.

Hap that he should really waken, and essay him to arise,
Then the earth begins to quake in divers places 'neath the skies:
Aitné fulminates to heaven; Stromboli runs fiery flow;
Clouds grow black and thunder-riven: 'Peace depends!'—he lets us
[know.

The Legend:

By the mountain of *Kshi-luich*, where the Naas, since olden dawn,
Glides o'er snowy sands of *Alahl* where the *han-gimwezuch* spawn,
Stands a bosky Indian hamlet smoke-wreathed in the setting sun:
Pursuits of the day are ended, and the evening meal begun.

Long the golden gloaming lingers, and each youth, his skill to prove,
Eagerly his *sg'an-haql* fingers, racing for the willow grove.
Here the *stimoun* in the shallow wriggle on their upward way;
And the naked urchins wallow with the fish in sportive play:

Spears fly fast, bone hooks are jerked in, and the silvery prey is caught;
Each boy has a hank to bring home, and their hearts with joy are fraught.
Now they catch a fish unscathed,—‘*Haou*, what shall we do with it?
‘Quickly cut its dorsal fin off, in its hump now make a slit!

‘Put a blazing *skinisht* stick in; let it go now, torch on end!
‘See, the shadows fall and thicken where the channel makes a bend,—
‘It will be such fun to see it tacking up there all alight,
‘Like a shooting star in heaven, flying through the murky night.’

* * * *

‘Ha! ye fry of spirit evil, what is this ye frame to do?
‘Know ye not the lying *Thremshim* fain would fool the hearts of you?
‘Now the Chief who sits high o’er all will be angry with us here,
‘If ye do not cease’ this folly, and walk meekly in his fear.

‘To the Lord of Fire ye kindle sacrifice of high despite,—
‘What an should his answer mingle fire with ire this very night?’
Thus the speaker (weird old figure, standing on the bank in gloom,—
Indian prophet, robed in *gweeq* skins) uttereth the voice of doom.

But the boys impatient hear him, laugh his redecraft into play;
 Splash him from the stream, and flee him as he turns in grief away.
 Then again, their victim cheering, on they urge it with delight,
 Till the bend above them nearing,—lo, it vanishes from sight!

Seems it to their startled vision that a flash lights up the scene;
 That a laugh, as of derision, floateth back the trees between.
 Sooth it is, the welkin's blacken'd, rocks the earth beneath their feet;
 E'en the flowing water's slacken'd, and the wings of Thunder beat!

From the bourne of *Hichit* river, where the mountains centred stand,
 Comes a deaf'ning crash of ruin, echoing over all the land:
 Smoke and ashes fill the heavens, showers of calid pumice fall,
 And a mighty tide of lava flows and fills the valley all.

Ignis fulgent! clothed in thunder, snappeth Lithos' iron bars;
 Bursts the gates of hell asunder, and leaps forth beneath the stars;
 Splits with awful voice the silence of the unexpectant night;
 Throws aloft into the sky dense clouds of reek bestabbed with light.

Swiftly, like a meteor glowing, forth he bounds to seek his throne;
 Greedy, like a river flowing, all he laps up is his own:
 Vain the Forest Lords and Bushes his hell-blasting claims deny,—
 Up their boles the red flame rushes: root and branch and stock they die!

Nobly Streams and Watercourses rise to quench the burning wood,
 Pouring their united forces into one ensteeping flood:
 Onward strides the ruthless giant, with his eye-balls glaring red;
 And the must'ring floods are pliant,—flee in vapour overhead!

Shell-encrustēd, like a Chrysem's, on he rolls without defeat:
 When the brave, high-minded *Lishims* leaps undaunted to his feet.
 Straight across the fire his river in a slender line he throws!—
 He will die, or else deliver this fair land from hell-spawn'd foes!

But across the valley's ranges, in one devastating surge,
 Up to where the *Ksh'-g'amal* changes, Ignis doth his vantage urge.
 Then from far-off *Medziadin*, from *Kin-scoh* and *Ska-skinisht*,
 All the help that may be had in lake and stream is quick imprest.

Then the noble *Lishims*, drooping, fighting odds eighteen to one,
 Stands revived,—reserves come trooping in a swelling tide anon.
 And against th' advance of Ignis a long line of breakers beat;
 Quenching there his hell-born Dignis, till he suffers full defeat.

In the struggle, spent and sighing, fading fast his ruddy glow,
 Dazed with battle-reek, and dying, Ignis faileth in his flow!
 All the lands he hoped to master hedge him in on every side;
 All his triumphs spell disaster,—his demise is far and wide!

THE LITTLE CASCADES

The Little Cascade.



The most charming bit of scenery in the world.

The Glossary.

'Kata pragma,'—is used to denote the work of classifying materials according to their origin, quality, and destined use.

'Cosmothetic core,'—the assumed heart of the governed world.

'Kshi-luich,'—the name of a creek which, in antelaval days, joined the Naas at a point now lying beyond the plain.

'Alahl,'—is the Indian name of Sand lake, from which the stream Gimwezuch, now represented by the Seeaks, took its rise. The sands of this lake were white, and the salmon spawned therein were white also; therefore,—

'Hän-gimwezuch' is the name of the white salmon to this day.

'Sgan-haq'l,'—is a long lance-pole with a hook on the end for catching salmon.

'Stirmaun,'—the humpback salmon.

'Häou!'—an exclamation used to arrest attention; as, Ho! or Say!

'Skinisht,'—resinous pine-wood or gum tree.

'Thremshim,'—the name of the Indian demiurge or metamorphic superhuman being.

'Gweeq,'—the marmot or ground-hog, the fur of which was worn by the old Indians, and the single skins used as dollar bills.

'Wings of thunder,'—thunder is said to be caused by a large bird flapping its wings, while the gleam of its eye makes lightening.

'Hichit river,'—now Cedar river.

'Chrysem's,'—the chrysemys or American mud-turtle, gaily coloured in red, yellow, and black.

'Lishims,'—the Indian name of the Naas. Naas or Nass is an exotic word of doubtful origin.

'Ksh'-g'amal,'—the name of a changeful creek, flowing into the Naas.

'Ishq,'—a term used to denote all offensive odours; hence the hot sulphur spring near the plain is called hlqoo ishq or the Little Fetor.

'Medziadin,'—a magnificent lake at the head of the Naas. It is pronounced Medzee-ah-din, with accent on the ah.

'Ska-skinisht,'—a creek that takes its rise in Dragon lake. See map

'Kin-scoh,'—the name of a large creek.

'Crome-nim,'—a word coined for the occasion. From crome, a rod with a crook on the end, and nim, to take away by force, to steal. This is our old Byhook or Bycrook.

The Indian words are spelled after English mode; but the Indian language proper may be seen in the legend.

The illustrations are made from exceptionally fine photographs, taken (the view from lake Dihadal, at midnight in June,) by J. B. Daigle, as also the view on the lava plain itself. That of the Little Cascade (the most charming bit of scenery in the world) was taken by A. F. Priestley. I am much obliged for the use of these photographs.



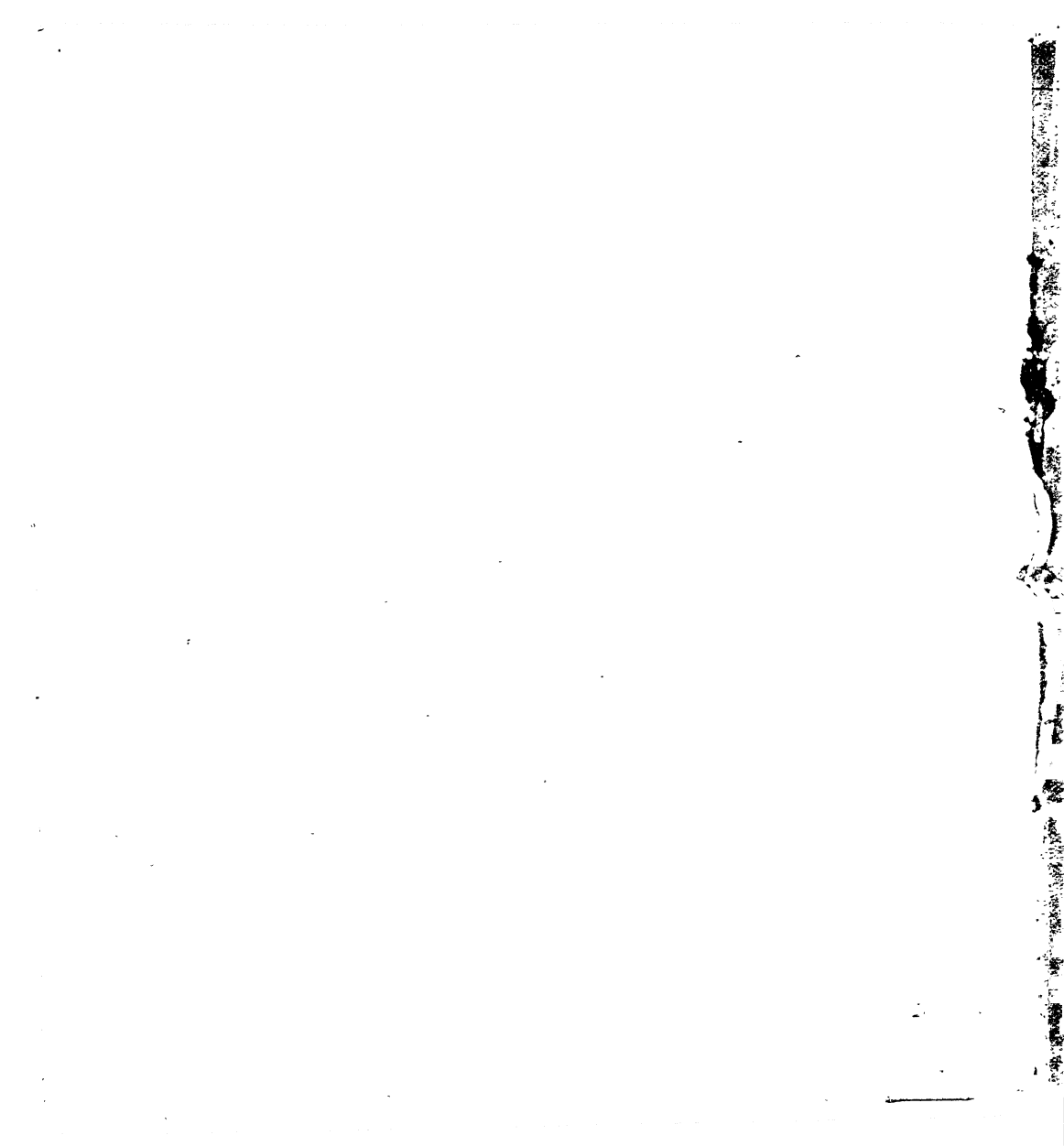
"I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to the light I have."

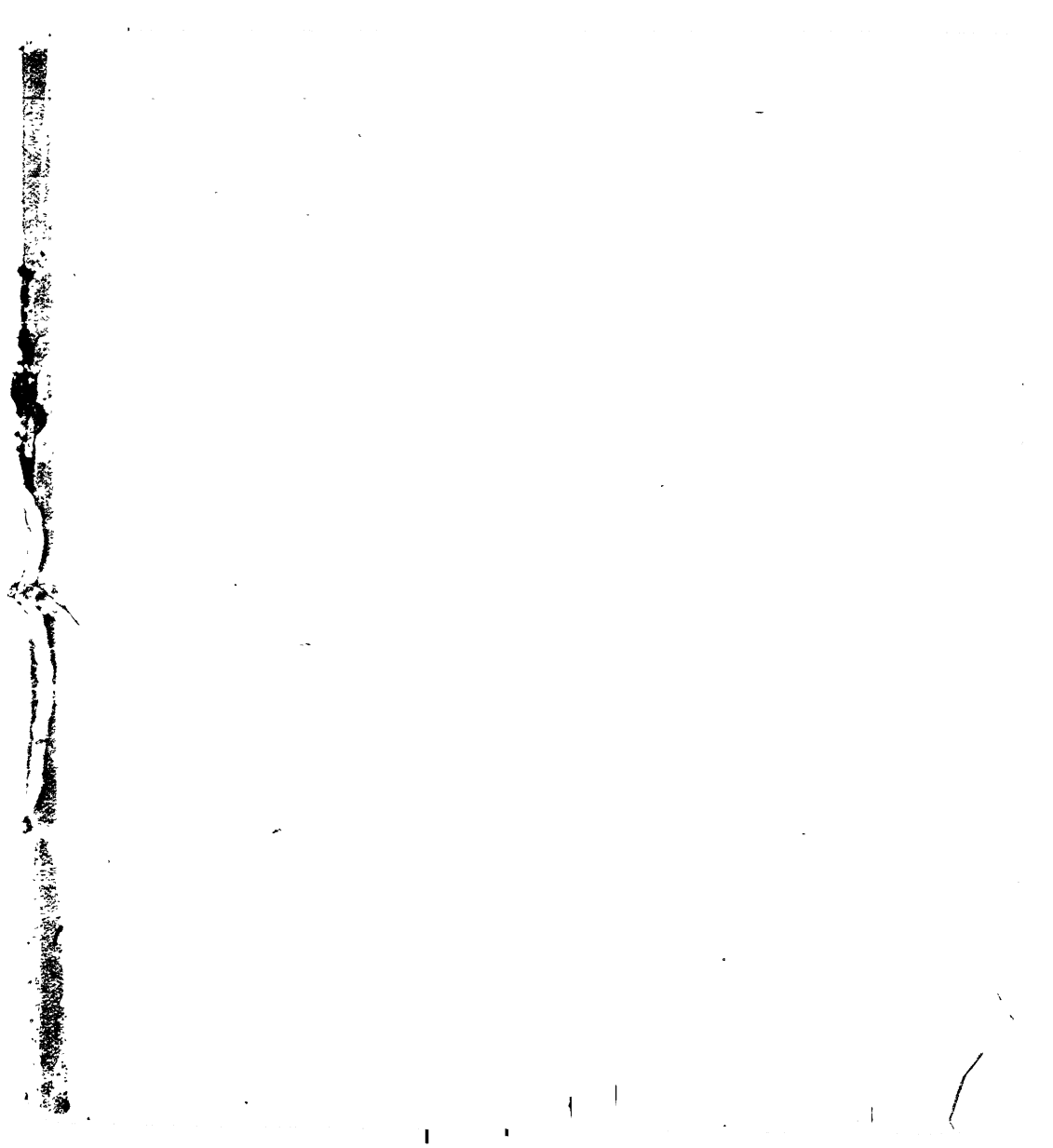
— Abraham Lincoln.

"Victory is of the Lord," —and if I am true, I am bound to win, for God cannot turn down the truth. If I live in the light, I am bound to succeed, even though living up to it bring me into the midst of death. The question is, — Am I willing to be true? Am I simple enough to follow the Light?

—The Cruiser.







Dedicated

To that glorious company of Backwoodsmen who left their little log-cabins in the Valley of "Eternal Bloom," at what time the Piery Cross went round, and hasted to the battle-fields of Mlanders to stay the onward march of Iguis, and to beat down his lawlessness under their feet.

Hail, Canadian Heroes; hail!

