

CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE RED INDIANS OF AMERICA.

BY EGERTON R. YOUNG.

What Livingstone and Moffat were to Africa, Mr. Young has been to the vast North-West Territory of Canada. He has travelled tens of thousands of miles by canoe and dog-train in order to carry the Gospel to the wandering tribes of Indians and Eskimos. He is *the* Missionary to the Red Indian.



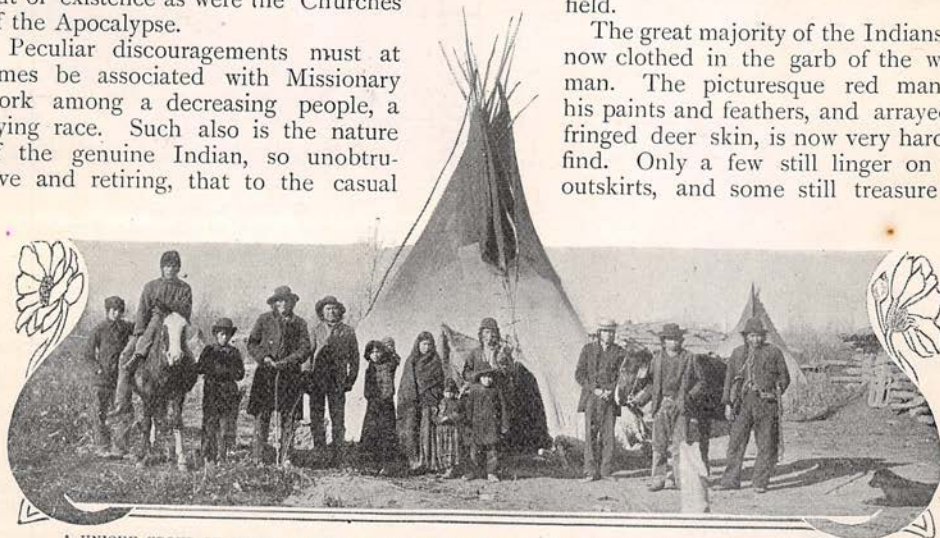
MISSIONARY work among the Red Indians of America has had the same phases of success and discouragement which have, at times, characterised the operations in nearly all the other great Mission fields. It has had its days of marvellous triumphs, when, as far back as in the times of Brainard, as well as often in more recent years, there have been scenes of spiritual outpouring like unto other Pentecosts. On the other hand, there have been years when wars have arisen, or the white man's greed has been paramount, and whole flourishing Missions, with hundreds of converts, have been as completely swept out of existence as were the Churches of the Apocalypse.

Peculiar discouragements must at times be associated with Missionary work among a decreasing people, a dying race. Such also is the nature of the genuine Indian, so unobtrusive and retiring, that to the casual

or careless observer, the actual results of Missionary work are not always easily seen. Those who would look for the converts among real Indians, and examine the genuine and abiding work that has been accomplished, must not look for them in the lazy loafers, mostly half-breeds, sitting around rail-road stations, but they must go to the flourishing Missions, where they will be pleased with the sight of a sober, honest, law-abiding people.

As is the case everywhere, there are some Indian converts who do not develop as high a Christian character as could be desired, but take them all in all, and considering their most discouraging environment, the work among them has been as fruitful and encouraging as that in almost any other Mission field.

The great majority of the Indians are now clothed in the garb of the white man. The picturesque red man in his paints and feathers, and arrayed in fringed deer skin, is now very hard to find. Only a few still linger on the outskirts, and some still treasure up



A UNIQUE GROUP OF SIOUX INDIANS.—SOME OF THESE MEN WERE LEADERS IN THE CUSTOR MASSACRE. These Indians, with hundreds of others, fled to Canada, where a reservation has been given them. The Presbyterian Church has now a fine Mission among them.



"OURAY," THE GREAT UTE CHIEF.
From a photo.

their old finery, which they bring out on special occasions. But long before the modern idea of Missions had found a place in any of the Evangelical Churches, genuine Missionary work was being carried on with a good degree of success among the Red Indians of North America. From the time of their arrival in the New World, the Pilgrim Fathers compassionated the sad, degraded condition of the Indians, and speedily began to devise means whereby they might send them the Gospel. Even Cromwell, amidst his engrossing cares, found time in which to write an earnest letter, in which he urged that the spiritual interests of the Indians should be well looked after by all who could in any way be a blessing to them. To emphasise his words he gave a large subscription for the work of Indian Evangelisation. This donation is the first authentic subscription for Modern Foreign Missions.



RED CLOUD.

The spirit of Christianity is the spirit of Missions. The constraining love of Christ will ever prompt the happy recipient of this love to strive to communicate it to others. So it was with these early pilgrims to New Eng-

land, of whom it was said: "God sifted three kingdoms that He might send over choice grain into this wilderness."

Such devout spirits soon began to make earnest efforts to win the New World for Christ, and some of the grandest workers that ever toiled in any Mission field were raised up. We need here but mention two of them. First the devoted, plodding, persevering John Eliot, who from manhood's prime until he was eighty-six years old, devoted all of his best efforts to the salvation of the Red Indians. His great work was the



EGERTON R. YOUNG,
The veteran missionary, traveller and explorer.
Photo by Ernest H. Mills.

translation of the Bible for these people. The first edition was printed in 1633.

The other New England Missionary, whose name will never die, was the saintly David Brainard. He died of consumption when a young man, and yet the story of his life and triumphs is one of the most thrilling and stimulating of Missionary records.

In the year 1735 the devoted Moravians began Missionary work among the Indians. As was the case with the Puritans in New England, so it was with the Moravians in

Georgia; great successes attended their efforts.

The Society of Friends have from the beginning of their residence in America been the good friends of the Indians. The tradition of William Penn still lingers among some of them, and "Great broad-rim," as they called him, was for generations their ideal white man.

In the glorious awakening of the Churches in these later years, the Red Indians are not being forgotten. All the great Churches have established Missions among them, and smaller organisations and noble individual efforts are at work, and not in vain, for the uplifting of this interesting people. And a very interesting people they are. A halo of romance has ever hovered about them, and although, owing to the progress of civilisation and religion, the plumed and painted Indian of Cooper and Catlin is almost a creature of the past, yet they will always be a source of interest and subject of study.

Many have been the conjectures as to their origin and as to when their forefathers reached America. My own opinion is that their progenitors reached America during those days of successful colonisation and commercial activity that existed in the days of Hiram, King of Tyre, and of Solomon, King of Israel. While many of their traditions show no resemblance to a Biblical origin, there are many that do, and the one of a universal deluge is perhaps the most universal among the tribes. However, as might be expected, the story varies from the erratic and comical doings of Nanaboozoo, of the Ojibways, to that of the tribe, one



TWO SARCE SQUAWS.

man. This He put into an oven to bake. When He thought it was well done, He took it out, but to His disgust He found that it was burnt black. This man He threw to a hot country, where he became the father of the black people.

Then the Great Spirit tried again. Taking another piece of clay He formed another man and put him in the oven to bake. As He kept the first man in too long, He did not keep the second one in long enough, and so when He took him out he was still very white.

Seeing this the Great Spirit was still very much annoyed, and He said, "You will never do either. You will get dirty too easily."

So He threw him across the sea to the land from which the white man comes. Then the Great Spirit tried again. He took another piece of clay, and forming it very nicely, He put him in the oven to bake. Watching this

one very carefully, and gaining experience by the other two failures, He cooked this third one a nice red colour. "Ha!" said He, "You just right, you stay here in America." This red man was the first Indian.

Their religion varies with different tribes, but there was an almost universal belief in a good and a bad



INDIANS OF THE PRAIRIES, THE ONCE FAMOUS BUFFALO HUNTERS.



PARRIS ISLAND CHRISTIAN INDIANS, GEORGIA.

Spirit. Some of them paid all worship to the good Spirit and gave but little attention to the evil one. The greater number of the tribes, however, were ever living in a state of dread and fear of the evil one. So to

propitiate and turn aside his tricks and threatened calamities, they continually ever resorted to various expedients. Many of them also lived in terror of what they called Windegoos. These they said were great creatures, half human, half demon, that haunted the dark forests and were always on the look out for unwary ones whom they could seize and devour. As a natural result there was but little joy in their life. It was an ever foreboding dread. They were the slaves of imaginary fears. "They dwelt in the land of the shadow of death."

The result has been that one of the greatest causes of rejoicing among them has been the breaking away from these foreboding fears. Christianity has introduced them to a new life. It has enabled them to burst the fetters that so long bound them down in superstitious night.



OJIBWAY INDIAN FOOTBALL TEAM.

They have four rules.
1st. Never get angry.
2nd. Never swear.
3rd. Never drink intoxicants.
4th. Win the game if it can be fairly done.



A CHIFFANA CHRISTIAN—FATHER AND CHILD.

Our Indian converts are a very grateful people. Nah-nas-koo-moo-we-nah "thanksgiving" is one of the most frequently uttered words in their worship.

During all my years of residence among Indians I have not heard a harsh or unfriendly criticism of Missionaries or teachers from any of the converts, but on the contrary, in their quiet way, they are not slow in expressing their gratitude to those who have brought to them the glad message of a Saviour's love. This gratitude is not a mere sentiment easily expressed in words only. I well remember one summer, when making a long canoe journey of some hundreds of miles in the northern wilderness, that for several meals my two canoe men hardly ate any food. On my endeavouring to find out the reason, they at first refused to tell me. However, when they saw that I was getting uneasy about

them and fearing that they were sick, one of them confessed that the food was running short, and that they had put themselves on short rations that there might still be enough for their beloved Missionary.

The Indians make good converts. They stand firm and true in as great a proportion as the converts in any other heathen land. Their respect and love for the Sabbath has won admiration even from others than those who keep holy that sacred day.

"I will give you two dollars," said a traveller, a white man, to a Christian Indian, "if you will take me to-day to such a place."

"I cannot do it," said the Indian, "your business does not press you. Stay and rest and worship with us on this, the Great Spirit's

incident from one of our Missionaries, himself a pure Indian and one of the converts from a once degrading paganism.

Said he, "A rich lumberman at such a place employs a great many men in getting out logs for his saw-mills. These men require large supplies of food. The roads are very rough over which these supplies are taken. One day a load shook loose and some of the supplies were missing when the waggon reached the lumbermen's camp. It was decided that it would be of no use to go back and search for the missing things as hunting Indians were known to be around, and it was supposed their sharp eyes would soon detect these things on the forest road. This surmise was correct, but the white men's idea that these



MR. AND MRS. EGERTON YOUNG VISITING A CHRISTIAN "OJIBWAY" INDIAN'S HOME.

day, then to-morrow I will take you to your destination for nothing."

Said a dilatory Indian Commissioner to Pakan, one of the grandest Christian Cree chiefs: "I will continue my hunting to-day, then to-morrow I will distribute the Government supplies to your people."

"To-morrow is the Sabbath, and hungry as my people are, we will not take your rations on that sacred day."

Noble was this answer, and such was the impression it made on the ungodly official, to whom it was so firmly addressed, that he was constrained to make such prompt arrangements, that the supplies were distributed among the Indians that very Saturday evening.

Christianity makes them honest. The Golden rule has entered their hearts and lives. Only last year I obtained the following

Indians would appropriate the things for themselves, was not the correct one; for, a couple of days after, the Indians came into the camp with all that had been lost."

This is the uniform testimony of all in reference to the honesty of the Christian Indians. The confidence that my good wife and I had in our Cree Indians was so great, that we never thought of bolting or barring a door or window, or ever putting anything under lock or key.

Such has been the progress and success of the Gospel among these American Indians that many of the old deeds of cruelty for which they were so noted are now practically things of the past. No scalping parties now steal forth to strike with tomahawk or war club the sleeping, unsuspecting foe. No war-whoops signal the return of fierce warriors carrying aloft the still dripping bloody scalps



MR. EGERTON YOUNG VISITING AN INDIAN CAMP ON THE PRAIRIE.

torn from the heads of the slain whites or Indians.

Christianity has wrought a wondrous change. The terrible war-whoops have been changed into the Songs of Zion, and fierce and savage warriors, who once gloried only in the excitements of war or horse-stealing, are now found in large numbers as honoured members of the Church of Christ, and useful and respected citizens in the land.

Happy homes have been established. Woman is now honoured by the men as she never was when paganism held these Indians in its blighting grip. Then the proud tyrannical men looked down upon all womenkind with haughty contempt. They treated them as their inferiors and left them all the hard and slavish work.

This was paganism. But darker still were those days, for in many places, when the poor women grew too old to stand the drudgery of such slavish toil, they were cruelly put to death. It was a sin to grow old in these pagan lands in the eyes of those merciless tyrants.

"Moo-koo-woo-soo," I once asked of a Sau-teaux chief, "what is that?"

"Oh," he replied, with a laugh that was much like a sneer, "that is where I strangled to death with a rope my mother and then burnt to ashes her body so that her ghost

would not be able to come back and haunt me."

"Why did you thus kill her?"

"Oh, she had grown so old that she could not catch fish or snare rabbits and I was not going to be bothered with keeping her."

That was paganism, cold, cruel, heartless and destitute of all natural affection. Yet even here, among these once cruel Saul-

teaux, the Gospel has won some of its most glorious triumphs. We have only to look ahead a few years from the time when Moo-koo-woo-soo coolly told of his killing his own mother. A large wooden church now stands not far from the place where the dark tragedy was enacted. It is Sunday morning. The devoted Missionary has asked us to take seats beside him upon the platform which serves as the pulpit. He wishes that we should see the gathering of the Indians in their House of Prayer. How reverently they come in! All talking ceased long before they reached the door of the house of God. See they come in families. The mothers are not ashamed to bring their little ones along with them. Even the wee babies in the moss-bags, carried on their mothers' backs, are here in numbers. See how cleverly the mothers swing the babies from their backs, and look, they are hanging them up on pins on the wall of the church! You need not get nervous about them. They are the quietest babies in the world, and even if the service should be, as it probably will, at least two hours long, not one of those babies will cry, or make the least disturbance.



GOOSE.

Still the people are coming in. You are interested in observing that the most popular seats are those on the clean hard floor. They sit thus on the floor in preference to

using the benches because but few of these people have yet begun to use chairs or benches in their wigwam homes. The result is that when they come to church they prefer to sit in the way in which they can best enjoy the service. Thus, the whole of the large vacant space around the front of the platform, as well as all the broad aisle, is now filled with devout worshippers. But now, just as the service is about to commence, there is an unusual stir at the door. Indeed both doors are now, for the first time to-day, being thrown open. What is the reason for this? You have not long to wait or conjecture, for there is a sight grand enough to make angels rejoice, a sight that consecrates the homely unpretentious log church, and makes it a place of interest to heaven, as well as earth. Two proud, happy, Christian Indians have made a chair of their united hands, and on it they are carrying their old invalid mother to her place in the house of God. They have thus carried her more than a mile.

As they enter through the double doors with their precious load, see, another son of this aged mother is just in front. Quietly he says to the crowd in the wide aisle, "Make way for mother!"

Quickly and quietly is this done, and the willing people crowd up to the right and left, that there may be room in the centre, along which these stalwart sons may bear their precious load. When the front bench is reached, we see that the third brother has carefully placed on it a folded blanket as a cushion, and here the mother is most tenderly seated by her careful sons. Then we observe that, as the bench has no back, one of her sons seats himself beside her, and putting his strong arm around her, lovingly and tenderly supports her. As we watch her thus cuddle up to him, and witness, not only his solicitude for her comfort, but his honest joy in thus being able to contribute to her happiness, in spite of all we

can do, there comes a mist into our eyes and a lump into our throats.

Memory carries us back to Moo-koo-woo-soo and his treatment of his mother, and now we are permitted to witness this marvellous contrast. What has produced the wondrous change?

There is but one answer possible. It is the direct result of the hearty acceptance of "the glorious Gospel of the Son of God." And thus it will be everywhere when that Gospel is accepted with believing faith.

Christian Missions have had to endure much obloquy sometimes even from professedly Christian people; but so long as the Missionary can point to an incident of this kind, happening simply and naturally in the daily life of a people once cruel, blood-thirsty and savage, it surely is a sufficient answer to those who, whether blinded by prejudice or misled by those who have no sympathy with the evangelising spirit of true Christianity, are in doubt as to the efficacy of Missions among the heathen.

So in spite of all rebuffs and obstructions, with our motto, "The World for Christ," we may with full confidence labour on until:



GROUP OF CANADIAN INDIANS AT TREATY TIME WITH THEIR MISSIONARY AND GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONERS.

"One song employs all nations, and all cry,
'Worthy the Lamb! for He was slain for us.'
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the glad Hosanna round."