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Ryerson Canadian History Readers

LORNE PIERCE, Editor

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FATHER LACOMBE

By

HOWARD ANGUS KENNEDY

Author of "The Story of Canada," "The Book of the West," "The New World Fairy Book," etc.

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FATHER LACOMBE

BRAVER than a lion—brave as the lioness with her cubs to feed and guard—that farm boy, Albert Lacombe, takes princely rank among the heroes of Canada.

Imagine that man, alone and unarmed, when an army of infuriated Indians threatened the little band of fur traders at Edmonton with destruction, and bullets were already whistling in—see him marching out of the fort into the night and simply commanding the enemy to stop!

A few months before—this was in 1870—travelling with an Indian comrade through the woods, he had come upon four miserable men, two of them wounded—the survivors of a Blackfoot band attacked by their constant enemies the Crees. Seven men had been killed, and these four, just escaping with their lives, were dragging themselves barefoot through the snow. For three days they had not tasted food. Lacombe bound up their wounds, gave them all he had to eat, and lent them his

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two horses to ride, while he and his companion trudged along on foot to the mission he had established at St. Albert.

Seven hundred Blackfoot braves vowed vengeance for the seven dead, and, as it was said the white men had backed up the Crees, the white men's fort should be destroyed. The danger was real. Serious fighting between white men and red was very rare, all through the long reign of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Company could only get furs by keeping the Indians in good temper; and the Indians could only get guns, ammunition, and a hundred European wares they had learnt to crave, by tolerating and protecting the Company. Still, quarrels would break out now and then, and a fort had been destroyed some years before.

The wooden stockade with its bastions could defy a hail of lead, but not a hail of fire. Fire arrows might burn the whole place down. The Company's head man, the Factor, knowing Father Lacombe's power over Indians, sent asking him to come and help.

He came, with thirty of his Métis, the "half-breeds" living around his mission

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FATHER LACOMBE AVERTS THE OPPOSITION OF CHIEF CROWFOOT AND THE BLACKFEET TO THE BUILDING OF THE C.P.R. THROUGH THEIR RESERVE. "GOOD HEART" GAVE THE INDIANS HIS WORD OF HONOR THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE THEM OTHER LANDS IN COMPENSATION FOR THE PORTION OF THEIR RESERVE REQUIRED FOR THE NEW RAILROAD.

station at St. Albert. The Métis brought their guns, but these were needless—the missionary, who never carried a weapon, had only to lift his voice.

He forbade the Blackfeet to attack. The white men, he gave his word, were their friends, and had nothing to do with the crime they sought to avenge.

The Blackfoot Chief, recognizing the familiar voice, called out that the tribe would consider what he had said. When dawn broke, the raiders had vanished. The missionary had spoken, and the danger was past.

It was like magic.

What gave that man of peace his extraordinary power over the most warlike savages?

Not courage only. It was chiefly his love for them all. Pure unselfish love, backed by indomitable courage, with a sympathetic understanding of the Indian's mind and tactful skill in dealing with it. He could play upon human nature as a skilled musician plays upon a harp, and make har-

mony where an unskilful and tactless man would only make discord.

A strain of Indian blood in his own veins, little as it was, may have helped him quickly to learn the ways of the Indian mind. An incident far back in the private history of his family, tragic enough as it seemed at the time, may have been one of the seeds which bore fruit in the enormous good he was able to accomplish in the public history of his country.

One day in the year 1695 a pioneer farmer on the St. Lawrence, about twenty-five miles below Montreal, went out with his wife to work in the field. While they were gone, a party of Algonquin Indians arrived, plundered the house, and carried off the eldest daughter, who had been left in charge of the younger children.

After five years of fruitless search, an uncle made the long journey up to Sault Ste. Marie with a party of traders. Among the Indians at the Sault, he asked if any of them could act as interpreter. Yes, it appeared, there was a woman who knew French.

She was his own stolen niece!

They gave no sign of recognition; but

when the trading was done, she stole away by night to the white men's canoes with her two babies—for an Indian had compelled her to be his wife—and, paddling swiftly away in the darkness, they escaped pursuit. The long-lost daughter was welcomed home, as one restored from the grave. One of those two children rescued from savagery became the ancestor of the great Christian missionary—who was born in 1827 on the same farm at St. Sulpice from which his ancestress had been carried off in 1695.

Albert Lacombe was the son of a poor farmer, and very young he learned to swing the axe and guide the plough. In his fourteenth year he was his father's "right-hand man;" but already he had the ambition to be a missionary to the Indians. The parish priest, who always called the boy affectionately "my little Indian," offered to pay the cost of his schooling. That over, he completed his studies at the Bishop's house in Montreal, and was ordained for the ministry of his church. Then he set off post haste for the *pays d'en haut*, the "country up above," where for the rest of

the century he was to lead a life of adventure beyond his wildest dreams.

Adventures met him before he got there. At St. Paul, now the stately capital of Minneapolis, then a pioneer hamlet of thirty shacks, he waited in the rough home of a brother missionary till a caravan arrived from the north. The journey from St. Paul to the British frontier, now made in half a day, took Albert Lacombe two months—two awful months of ploughing through mud with ox-carts. Stopped by swollen streams, the travellers had to build rafts and ferry everything across, load after load. They had taken a woodland road to escape the Saulteaux Indians, "the Plunderers," who infested the better prairie trail, and, like Robin Hood's outlaws, levied compulsory toll on travellers. But even in the woods the Plunderers held up that caravan and took whatever pleased them. The wayfarers were only saved from starvation by a party sent to meet them with provisions.

It had its bright side, however, that dismal first journey—like everything else—and Lacombe could always see the sun shining behind the darkest cloud. Every man

did his utmost to help the rest, where only unselfish team work could win through. One of the party in particular, an English-speaking Métis, a Protestant missionary, won the heart of the Catholic priest. "It is in journeys like that," Lacombe wrote long after, "that we come to appreciate the charm and value of a brave comrade." And this was only the first of numberless warm friendships that the good priest found among Protestants who love a noble man whatever his race or creed.

Arriving at Pembina, a frontier settlement of Métis and Indians, the young missionary passed two years of quiet apprenticeship. They were altogether too quiet for him, though varied by the yearly expedition of the buffalo-hunters, with whom he was delighted to go as chaplain.

Then the Far West called, and he went on. Once a year the Hudson's Bay Company loaded a flotilla of boats with trading goods, provisions, and the annual mail, for its posts on the upper reaches of the Saskatchewan and beyond. One of these boats in 1852 carried Albert Lacombe, as a passenger, to reinforce a little mission at Edmonton. The

future capital of Alberta was already a busy trading centre, where furs were collected from an enormous territory. Its population was only one hundred and fifty, the Company's servants; but here and there in the neighbourhood lived groups of Métis, descended from traders who had married Indian wives; while many thousands of Indians roamed over the Territory, and hundreds of these came every year to camp outside the fort and barter their winter's catch for the white man's goods.

Though the Company's officers feared the effect civilization might have on the future of their fur trade, they treated the civilizing missionaries with hospitality and helped them in many ways. At Edmonton they gave the newcomer a building within the stockade as a chapel and residence. He found a congregation ready to hand, as most of the Company's boatmen and other servants, French-Canadians or Métis, belonged to his church. They soon became devoted to the man who was so plainly devoted to them. The first school in the West beyond Manitoba was started for their benefit. Before long, however, Lacombe went out to

live at Lac Ste. Anne, fifty miles north-west, a Cree and Métis settlement where a mission had been started some years before; but he was constantly visiting his flock at Edmonton, and made many other journeys, even as far as the Hudson's Bay post at Dunvegan, up the Peace River.

The life was lonely and hard; but his heart was in his work, and hardship in that bracing air agreed with him. The little house, shared with another young missionary when neither of them happened to be out on the trail, he fitted up as neatly as he could, both for his own peace of mind and as an example to the rough uncultured folk around him. He was no savage, in spite of his love for savages.

One of the very rare white travellers who came that way, Lord Southesk, says he found the two missionaries "polished, highly-educated gentlemen." "Everything there," he goes on to say, "is wonderfully neat and flourishing. It is a true oasis in the desert. A well-arranged and well-kept garden with many flowers. The house beautifully clean."

The missionaries were very poor, and

everything they needed from the outside world was terribly dear, after thousands of miles of laborious freighting. Luxuries were not to be thought of. But a "high standard of living" does not depend on things that money can buy—it is won by keeping up a high standard of thinking and working.

The Indians, at first, the missionary could only pity in silence. But he was quick at picking up languages, and set himself to learn Cree like an athlete racing for a prize. He found a remarkable teacher in a Highland piper. This Colin Fraser had many years before accompanied Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Company, on his canoeing expeditions, and had wonderfully impressed the natives with his martial music. He had now a Cree wife and was expert in her speech.

Having learnt their tongue, Father Lacombe went about teaching the neighbouring Crees his religion—and with much success, though some of the older men struggled hard to keep their people from deserting pagan ways. He not only made them feel him their devoted friend, but established a

wonderful authority over them. They gave him an Indian name meaning "Noble Soul."

To convert the proud Blackfeet, though—that was evidently going to be a harder task. The Blackfeet, with their kin the Bloods and Sarcees, living far away in the south, only came up to trade at intervals. They came in strong bands, armed to the teeth, suspicious of the Crees and of the Crees' white friends—and hurried away when their furs were sold. They were reckoned so dangerous that the liquor, which all Indians demanded before they would trade, was diluted with special caution—seven parts water to one of rum. The Crees got theirs twice as strong. In either case the results were bad enough, and before long the Company forbade all liquor to Indians, as the Government wisely does still.

The fame of "Noble Soul" had already reached the Blackfeet when, in February of 1857, a scarlet-fever epidemic broke out among them. Their Medicine Men conjured in vain. The tribe sent an envoy begging the "divine man" of Edmonton to come down, and he hurried through a blinding snow storm to their aid. They crowded

around him, half-naked and crazed with fear and fever, clutching at his hands and at his clothes. Was he not a great white medicine man? Let him heal them, then. The children were dying like flies.

From tent to tent, from camp to camp the missionary went, day after day and week after week, nursing, caring, comforting, till all his little stock of medicine was gone. Then he himself was struck down by the disease. His faithful Métis servant and friend, Alexis, nursed him back to health, and by then the epidemic had burnt itself out.

The grateful Blackfeet gave him a new name, "The Man with the Good Heart." From that day on, though Blackfoot and Cree still fought when the hot spirit moved them, both claimed "Good Heart" as their hero and their friend.

Like a volcanic eruption, suddenly the war broke out afresh after a lull, with a furious night attack—and "Good Heart" awoke to find himself in the thick of it!

The winter of 1865 had set in when the missionary arrived at a Blackfoot camp on

Battle River. There he was received as a welcome guest in Chief Natous' own tent.

On the night of the 3rd of December, the tribesmen gathered round the missionary as usual, listening to his wonderful words of prayer. They had dispersed to their tents, and he had just fallen asleep when roused by a yelling close at hand.

Natous leapt up, gun in hand, and shouted to his braves. They rushed out yelling to meet the foe. An army of allied Crees, Assiniboines and Saulteaux, stealing through the dark, had burst on the unguarded camp. The air was torn with explosions of gun-fire and throat-fire.

Hell had broken loose. Bullets whizzed in from every side. The chief's tent was singled out for special attack. It was pierced with many bullets, stormed and sacked, torn down, and set on fire. If the Crees had suspected the missionary's presence, they would never have attacked. As it was, all his little belongings were stolen like the rest. An Assiniboine snatched up even his prayer-book, but was promptly shot down and scalped by a Blackfoot, who afterwards proudly restored the book to its owner.

Already Lacombe was out on his Master's business. After vainly shouting to the raiders, his voice being drowned in the din of battle, he went about heartening the defenders, tending the wounded and dying, soothing the old men, women and children, who seized his hands and robe beseeching him to save them.

A young woman fell mortally wounded at the door of her tent. "Do you want to die a Christian?" he asked. "Yes!" He baptized her, and her spirit fled. The missionary passed on, not knowing she had left a baby in the tent. A savage entered, killed the child, and took the mother's scalp.

The noise of battle reached the Blackfeet in another camp. They rushed to the rescue, great Chief Crowfoot at their head—the fighter of fighters. But the battle still raged on. Thrice the raiders burst in—thrice they were driven out, but a score of tents lay pillaged and destroyed. The women and children were digging feeble shelters of snow, with their hands.

That night of horrors! Would day never come?

It dawned at last—and the missionary,

FATHER LACOMBE IN THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE CREES AND THE BLACKFEET. "MY CHRILDREN, YOU CREES, YOUR FATHER THE MAN OF PRAYER IS HERE WITH THE BLACKFEET. FIRE NO MORE! STOP THIS BLOODSHED!"

holding aloft his red-cross flag, advanced towards the enemy, shouting at the top of his voice—

"My children, you Crees, your father the man of prayer is here with the Blackfeet. Fire no more! Stop this bloodshed!"

The war-cries and gun-fire of the enemy still drowned his voice, and they could not see him for the mist and smoke.

Then a bullet struck him. It was only a glancing wound, on the forehead, but the blood flowed down over his face, and Crowfoot saw it. In grief and rage, the chief shouted with all the force of his lungs—

"You dogs, you have shot 'Good Heart' —you have killed your friend, the man of prayer!"

They heard at last. Horror-struck, they shouted back—"We never knew he was there! We will fight no longer!" They fled in shame and panic through the woods.

Neither the constant risk of such attacks, nor deadly infectious disease, nor the disgusting plague of dirt, dogs, fleas and suffocating smoke in the tepees, nor wretched and often insufficient food, had the slightest

effect on the missionary's ardent spirit. His burning love for those poor folk and zeal for their welfare made him happier as guest in an Indian tepee than in the palace of a king.

For long, however, the Blackfeet would have none of his religion, charmed as they were by his self-denying religious love.

At last a little incident of war threw an opportunity in his way, and with the insight of genius he saw how splendidly it might be used.

Two years after the battle when he had been wounded, he met a Cree band returning victorious from a bloody raid. One of the braves had captured a Sarcee girl—and the Sarcees belonged to the Blackfoot confederacy. The missionary at once offered to ransom her. The Cree refused. He wanted a wife, and could not afford to buy one. The missionary bid higher—a horse, a new coat, shirt and leggings; tea and tobacco besides. The Cree could not resist such a price, and the girl was handed over to Sisters of Charity at St. Albert. She was carefully instructed and, becoming a Christian, was named Marguerite.

Next summer a caravan was formed, the

missionary at its head and a Blackfoot woman in charge of Marguerite, and travelled south to the Sarcee camp. Telling the girl to stay hidden in the women's tent, Lacombe went forward to meet her sorrowing family. Her brothers, they said, had sought her, but the Crees had carried her too far off. "We shall never see her again!"

"Never again?" said the missionary. "Marguerite, come here!"

Then out she ran, and fell in her rejoicing mother's arms. The delighted Indians escorted "Good Heart" to their camp in triumphal procession. From that time, Blackfoot opposition to Christianity ebbed away.

On that same journey, travelling home, the missionary found himself the guest of a small Cree camp. One day the war alarm was given—a party of sixty Blackfoot braves had been discovered, hidden in the brush across the valley, intending to attack by night. When darkness fell, Lacombe rode out alone towards their lurking-place, and shouted—

"Hi! Hi! Are you there and wanting to fight? Come on then! My Crees are

brave, and if you come to kill them you will see how they can fight. Come on, they are ready for you. Don't wait till the night is gone!"

The raiders knew the great man's voice, and slunk off home without a shot.

Starvation might stare him in the face—he only tightened his belt and went on, in prayer and faith. Once, in mid-winter, he set out on a tour of the Indian camps with Alexis, a team of horses drawing the new mission tent he had made of fifty tanned buffalo hides. Game was scarce, and the first Indians he met were starving: they had already eaten their ponies and their dogs. There were eighteen in the party. Never mind—he cheerfully gave them what he had, a little pemmican and tea, and five frozen fish, and all pressed on together towards a Cree camp where they hoped to find supplies. They came to the site of the camp—it was deserted! Hunger drove them on. One day, they caught only a rabbit and a partridge, which were divided among the children. They were reduced to making soup of old moccasins, scraps of

buffalo hide, and, worse still, the foul remains of a buffalo dead of disease.

The missionary's own horses, though used to rustling for dry grass under the snow, were growing weak. He resolved to sacrifice them, one after the other, for meat. The first would be killed next day. Meanwhile, all went supperless to sleep. Before morning, a party of friendly Crees discovered them, and led them, safe though exhausted, to a camp where food was plenty.

On another long snowshoe tramp through wintry woods, with a dog sled for their bedding and food, Lacombe and Alexis had just lain down for the night when they were roused by human groans.

"It's a ghost!" the startled Métis cried.

"No, my brave Alexis," his master assured him, "when it's as cold as this, the ghosts take care to stay at home!"

But Alexis still feared to go and see. The missionary went alone, tracing up the sound, till he came on a young woman lying wrapped in a buffalo robe with her baby—abandoned by a cruel husband. It was forty below zero, she had eaten nothing all day, and her feet were already frozen. The

clever Alexis, now ashamed and on his mettle, transformed the sled into a comfortable carriole. As the dogs could not haul the double load, Alexis made himself one of the team, while Father Lacombe pushed behind. Thus they reached Edmonton, and there the woman's feet were amputated. Both mother and child lived to become Christians.

Another time, the missionary himself had to amputate an Indian's limb. He had no surgical training or instruments, and no anaesthetics, but he saved the man, as he saved many others in every kind of emergency.

A plague of smallpox swept over the land like a prairie fire, destroying 2,500 lives. Father Lacombe and his friend, Father André, went about among the Indians like ministering angels, treating the sick with what little medical knowledge they had, and even digging graves with the axe to keep dogs and wolves from devouring the dead.

One day a sorcerer, a medicine man who had opposed all attempts to convert his tribe, came begging help for his loved and only daughter, herself a Christian. Lacombe

found her in the last stages of the disease, and gave her the sacrament for the dying. That night, the missionaries heard the sorcerer come into the mission tent and pray aloud to the God of the Christians.

"If you hear me," he said, "if you are truly the Master of Life, let my child live, and then I will believe that you are good and love us!"

The girl recovered, and her father kept his vow, becoming an earnest Christian.

Another plague now swept up from the south—the plague of drink, demoralizing and threatening total destruction to the Indians. Gangs of whiskey-smuggling scoundrels from the United States had already committed fearful ravages, robbing and murdering the red men whom they intoxicated, when the Canadian Government organized the Mounted Police and stamped them out.

The creation of that wonderfully successful corps was largely due to a report by General Sir William Butler, whose famous book, "The Great Lone Land," still thrills us as we read. The general was just a plain Irish captain when he came upon Father

Lacombe in the course of his travels, at Rocky Mountain House. He was deeply impressed by the missionary's intense devotion and sympathy for the Indians. "No other man," he wrote, "could pass from one hostile camp to another, suspected nowhere, welcomed everywhere—carrying, as it were, the 'truce of God' wherever he went."

Much as Lacombe loved the Indians, he loved their cousins the Métis no less, and spent much of his time and labour among them. He got the Lac Ste. Anne settlement moved to better land at St. Albert, within ten miles of Edmonton. There a church, a school and a hospital were one by one erected. For the crossing of Sturgeon River, he made up his mind to build a bridge, and called on the people to work. No one too lazy to help make the bridge, he said, would be allowed to cross it without charge. Not one man hung back, and the bridge went up like magic. It was the first ever built in the North West Territory, and a good bridge too!

Then one day the astounding news arrived that the Canadian Government had resolved to build a railway across the

Dominion, from sea to sea. It was a signal of danger as well as of hope. The old barbaric times were about to end. With the railway throwing open the West to settlement, "civilization" would flow in, a resistless tide. How could the primitive inhabitants of the country be prepared for such a transformation, such a revolution? Schools must be started for them at once, teachers quickly got, and the missionaries reinforced. Bishop Grandin sent Father Lacombe down east to seek the necessary help. Passing through Winnipeg, he had another commission thrust upon him by Archbishop Taché—to persuade French-Canadians to come and settle in Western Canada instead of drifting over the border from Quebec to the New England States.

How the brave man hated the task of going about making speeches and begging for money! But he obeyed, and with all his heart pled before his white fellow-citizens the cause of his beloved children, the original but disinherited Canadians. . . Then, instead of being allowed to go back to them, he was sent on across the sea, as delegate to a

great assembly of the Oblate missionary order to which he belonged.

It cannot be said he enjoyed the cities, the fashions, the feverish amusements and excitements, all the unnatural extravagances that men had come to think of as "civilization."

Such questions as he had to answer, too, about his native land! The ignorance of "educated" people appalled him. One refined French lady asked him—"In what part of Canada is Buenos Ayres?" Many expressed surprise that he could speak good French.

Even the gems of natural scenery in England and France, he wrote home, "can hardly excel what I have seen in the Saskatchewan Valley and on our beautiful lakes. I am writing to-day in a nobleman's château, but it is not worth my poetic tent in the wilderness, where I wrote on my knees my Cree and Blackfoot books."

The most curiously interesting of those Indian books of his was "written in pictures." All men can read that language, when they cannot understand a word from each other's lips. When Lacombe found the

Blackfeet so much more inquisitive than the Crees about the ancient history of the world, he took a buffalo hide, drew on it pictures of the main events in Bible story, and nailed it up to a tree or tent-pole. Afterwards he put his pictures on paper, adding many new ones, and thousands of copies were made for his distribution by generous printers in Paris and Montreal. He laboriously wrote Indian dictionaries too, first of the Cree and then the Blackfoot.

When the exile begged leave to return, his petition could not be granted—he must go round among the French seminaries to interest the young priests of the future in the Canadian missions. Even when he set foot once more in his native land and turned his face with joy to his adopted home in the wilderness, he was pulled up midway by an order to take charge of St. Mary's parish at Winnipeg. After several years there he was again sent overseas to France, and on his return a totally new flock was entrusted to him—the railway-building gangs, the lumbermen and the Indians, east of Winnipeg. The roughest track-layers of all nationalities learned to love him, and often to heed his

advice, in the two years he went about among them from his quarters on Lake of the Woods.

At long last he was free, and followed his heart to the Blackfoot camps on the far western plains. It was high time, for the railway builders were close on his heels, and his power for peace was more needed than they knew. When they started construction on the reserve which had been allotted to the Blackfeet by solemn treaty, angry braves pulled up the track, unaware that the Government meant to give them more land in exchange for the right-of-way. It was Father Lacombe who calmed their fear, securing peaceful passage for the track-layers by giving his simple word: the Indians knew that his word was always a "word of honour." When the first train reached Calgary, in August, 1883, and the directors got him into their car to lunch, the president gave up his chair to the missionary, who for that great day was elected head of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. Many a large gift for his works of benevolence came after that from railway leaders and others who were impressed either by the man's remarkable

personality or by a sense of his high value to the country.

To make peace and maintain it, that was a great achievement, and enough to earn the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen; but justice and mercy are of more value even than peace, and to the Indians we owe a peculiarly heavy debt of honour, of fairness and generosity. We white Canadians were fortunate indeed to be represented among the Indians by a man so devoted to their interests, so generous, so true.

The missionary now plunged once more into the task of getting the Indians educated. He cherished the hope, as we all must, that by degrees they would be absorbed into the main body of the Canadian people; he had no idea of keeping them for ever a race apart. But the early stages of their progress were bound to be most difficult. The Dominion Government was persuaded to start three industrial schools for their training, and one of these, at Dunbow, was put under "Good Heart's" care. A few years later, after pleading as if for his own life, he persuaded the Government to establish a hospital on the Blood Reserve.

When the Riel Rebellion broke out in 1885, it was largely the devotion of the Blackfeet to Father Lacombe, and their trust in his advice, that kept them off the war-path. When the heat of the conflict had died away, he went down to Ottawa with a plea for mercy and won pardon for the Cree Chiefs Poundmaker and Big Bear, who were suffering imprisonment chiefly for the deeds of their ignorant tribesmen. When a Blood Indian was tried by white man's law at Winnipeg for a murder, for which he had atoned according to red man's law, it was "Good Heart" who stood up in court and won a verdict of acquittal. When three Indians were arrested for executing a wild man who had run amuck and threatened to kill and eat his fellowmen, it was "Good Heart" again who secured their release.

No wonder the Government, when the gold rush to the Klondike started, and there was no saying what might happen along the trail, begged Father Lacombe to go north with their officials and persuade the Indians of Athabasca to make treaty. He was seventy-two, and protested; but he went, and

enjoyed the long trip by trail and river like a young man.

The next year, in fact, he undertook a third voyage oversea, to get help for spiritual work among the thousands of Ruthenian settlers then flocking into Western Canada from the Austrian Empire. At Vienna, Archbishop Langevin and Father Lacombe were granted a brief interview with the Emperor. Eager only for the success of his errand, when he thought the Archbishop had wasted enough precious moments in polite conversation without coming to the point, the old missionary flung etiquette to the winds, and broke in. "But the time is short," he pled, "and, Monsieur the Emperor, what we want is money for those Ruthenian missions in our country!" The Emperor turned to him, smiling, and promised him a gift, which duly arrived next day.

Royalty might smile upon him, noblemen entertain him in their castles, society might lionize him and crowds hang breathless on his words—but he would travel in uncomfortable third-class cars and dine on a crust to save money for the unselfish cause he had at heart. Begging often and hard for others,

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receiving great gifts for their welfare, he was quite content with poverty for himself.

In his evergreen old age, he devoted his enthusiasm, with his usual success, to the creation of a home for the aged poor and orphans at Midnapore, south of Calgary; and in the calm of that retreat, at the age of eighty-nine, he closed the heroic adventure of his noble life.

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THE RYERSON CANADIAN HISTORY READERS

1. HEROES

1A. *Sieur de Maisonneuve—*Lorne Pierce*
1B. *Count de Frontenac—*Helen E. Williams*
1C. Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville—*Norman McLeod Rogers*
1D. *Marquis de Montcalm—*J. C. Sutherland*
1E. †General James Wolfe—*J. C. Sutherland*
1F. Sir Guy Carleton—*A. L. Burt*
1G. †Tecumseh—*Lloyd Roberts*
1H. *Sir Isaac Brock—*T. G. Marquis*
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