

CANADIAN BAPTISTS AND LATE-VICTORIAN IMPERIAL
SPIRITUALITY*

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In 1899, Toronto Baptist pastor Elmore Harris published in the *Chicago Standard* an article entitled “The Boer War as Canadians See It.” Soon after the article was excerpted in the Toronto-published *Canadian Baptist*.¹ The essence of the article was an ardent defense of the British and Canadian imperial cause in the war in South Africa. Harris pointed out to American critics that, while Britain was not completely faultless in the months preceding the war, the war was just and had been forced upon the empire by the treacherous Boers.²

This ever-so-brief glimpse into the mind of a Canadian Baptist preacher reveals some of the late-Victorian imperial loyalty and fervor that marked Baptist life. While in the early twenty-first century Western colonial history is usually lamented, and scholars flood the market with books identifying the alleged anti-imperial mindset of the biblical authors, barely over a century ago imperialism was understood in a very different light. Canadian Baptists, like many of their co-religionists, were enthused about imperialism in general, and Canada’s role in the British Empire in particular. What makes their commitment to imperi-

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1. Elmore Harris, “The Boer War as Canadians See It,” *Canadian Baptist*, 12 April 1900, 232.

2. Harris also reminded his American readers of how Britain had stood alongside America during its recent war against Spain. Because of such support from Britain, Harris contended, it was America’s turn to show its appreciation and reciprocate in kind by supporting Britain’s war in South Africa.

alism so fascinating when examining spirituality is that imperialism and spirituality were, for many, virtually inseparable. This positive fusion of church and culture places them within H. Richard Niebuhr's "Christ of Culture" paradigm.³ The following is an examination of this late-Victorian Baptist "imperial spirituality." "Imperial spirituality" in this case simply means that Baptist spirituality was virtually fused to the reality, assumptions, and purpose of imperialism. Elsewhere it has been argued that the Canadian Protestant churches at this time were imbued with an ardent imperialism, and were firmly committed to the imperial cause such as the war in South Africa.⁴ This particular study confirms those observations, and reveals the unique way in which Baptist spirituality was shaped by—and fused to—that imperialism.

Baptist Spirituality

Devotion to Jesus has spawned countless forms of Christian spirituality. The broadest categories of Christianity are Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant, and within each of those traditions are numerous forms of spirituality much too diverse to be elaborated on here. The many streams within Protestantism also have their own particular characteristics: Lutheran, Calvinist, Anglican, Anabaptist, Pietist, Puritan, Evangelical, and Pentecostal spirituality (not to mention others) are in many ways distinctly unique. For this brief analysis, spirituality is understood to be the way in which one both conceptualizes and lives in society as a follower of Christ. It is, as Alister McGrath argues, "what drives and motivates . . . and what people find helpful in sustaining and developing" a life of faith, as well as the "outworking in real life of a person's faith"⁵ in concrete and culturally relevant expressions. While purists may hope to de-

3. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*.

4. Heath, *War with a Silver Lining*; Heath, "'Were We in the Habit'"; Heath, "Citizens of That Mighty Empire"; Heath, "Sin in the Camp"; Heath, "Passion for Empire."

5. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality*, 2.

velop a spirituality untainted by the world, the conceptual and actualized aspects of spirituality are often derived from and shaped by aspects of popular culture. As David Bebbington notes, “People are moulded by their circumstances and consequently the Christian community is swayed by its setting.”⁶

But what of Baptist spirituality? E. Glenn Hinson has stated, “Baptists have approached spirituality much as they have approached virtually every other concept or practice—with a great deal of diversity.”⁷ Baptist spirituality has been marked by Bible reading, hymn singing, local congregational life, ordinances (as opposed to sacraments), simplicity (as opposed to “high liturgy”—although there is a range of “high” and “low” Baptist liturgy in some Baptist denominations), statements of faith (as opposed to creeds), social justice, and missions. For this study the historic Baptist emphasis on justice and missions is most relevant.⁸ What the following research demonstrates is a Baptist spirituality marked by both justice and missions fused to popular imperialism. In fact, it was those two foci that bolstered their ardent imperialism. The symbiotic relationship among justice, missions, and empire provided a conceptual basis for thinking about the Christian life, shaped political commentary, focused prayers, inspired sermons, motivated actions, and made sense of their troublesome world. Here Peter Berger’s concept of “plausibility structure” is helpful.⁹ The socially constructed world of late-nineteenth-century Canadian Baptists was one in which God in his providence was understood to have established an empire for his purposes, in particular the spread of justice and the gospel. The fusion of justice, missions, and empire simply made sense of their experience, and was a concept bolstered by significant institutions such as church, schools, and government.

6. Bebbington, “Evangelicalism and British Culture,” 131.

7. Hinson, “Baptist Approaches to Spirituality,” 6.

8. For various descriptions of Baptist spirituality, see Allen, “Mining Baptist History”; Weber, “A Catholic Looks at Baptist Spirituality”; Grenz, “Maintaining the Balanced Life”; Hinson, “Baptist Approaches to Spirituality”; Fiddes, *Under the Rule of Christ*.

9. Berger, *Sacred Canopy*.

Contemporary readers may look back aghast at some of the claims and assumptions made during the heyday of imperialism, recognizing the dynamic of socialization on Baptist spirituality. But in doing so, contemporary readers need to remember that recognizing past socialization is easy, recognizing it in the present is a different matter altogether.

There were specific late-Victorian events that heightened imperial fervor, and in the Baptist commentary surrounding those events one can get a glimpse of the fusion of justice, missions, and imperialism. The following, then, provides a brief examination of Baptist imperial spirituality during the following critical events: Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee (1887), Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (1897), Queen Victoria's Death (1901), the Boxer Rebellion (1900), and the South African War (1899–1902).¹⁰ However, before progressing further it is necessary to make a few comments on the imperialism of the period.

*Age of Imperialism*¹¹

The latter part of the nineteenth century, and up to the First World War, has been coined the Age of Imperialism or the period of the New Imperialism. Imperialism was a widespread and popular movement in Western Europe and North America during a period marked by the rapid expansion of already existing empires, such as Britain's or France's, or new ones such as Germany's or Japan's. The United States was also beginning to flex its imperial muscle in its war against Spain.

Canada had celebrated its Dominion status in 1867, all the while remaining within the British Empire. While French Canadians were relatively unenthusiastic about the British Empire, and saw the world and Canada's place within it quite differently

10. Also referred to as the Boer War, Anglo-Boer War, or Second Anglo-Boer War.

11. For commentary on other late-Victorian Baptists and imperialism, see Hale, "Captives of British Imperialism"; Guy, "Baptist Pacifists in New Zealand"; Bryan, "Aiding Imperialism"; Cuthbertson, "Pricking the 'Nonconformist Conscience'"; Heath, "Canadian and American Baptist Self-Perceptions"; Heath, *Building a Nation*.

than English Canadians,¹² by the end of the nineteenth century English Canadians took great pride in belonging to the largest empire that the world had ever seen. The power and global reach of the idea of empire must be acknowledged, for as David Armitage notes, imperial ideology united and motivated disparate parts of the empire.¹³ Of course, it also needs to be remembered that notions of empire were fluid and often contested. In fact, while there may have been widespread support for the empire, there was no uniform idea of what belonging to the empire meant. "Imperialism" in late Victorian Canada enveloped a wide and diverse range of sentiments, and it was this ambiguity that was one of the reasons for its wide appeal.¹⁴ Carl Berger notes this ambiguity, and it is one of the problems that confronts historians who attempt to make sense of the whole imperial movement.¹⁵

The events of the previous decades had engendered this growing passion for the empire. International tensions and uncertainty, tariff concerns with the United States (not to mention a fear of invasion by the US), and the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 had all made closer ties with Britain seem not only natural, but necessary. It was during the war in South Africa, however, that Canadians displayed wild and enthusiastic support for the empire. Such excessive displays of imperial passion would not be seen again in Canada until the First World War.

12. Stacey argues that the French willingness to fight for the Pope in 1868 illustrates how differently Quebecers saw the world. See Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 7. Silver claims that there was a French Canadian imperialism, except that this imperialism saw its divine mission to be the preservation and promotion of Catholicism in North America and the world. In other words, Quebec took on the role of France as the protector of Catholicism. See Silver, "Some Quebec Attitudes."

13. Armitage, *Ideological Origins*.

14. Miller, *Painting the Map Red*, 4. See also Page, *Imperialism and Canada*, 2.

15. Page, "Carl Berger," 40.

Missions and Empire

At the same time that European empires were growing around the globe, Protestant missions were rapidly expanding. The nineteenth century has been coined the “great century of Protestant missions.”¹⁶ Until then British Protestants were relatively unconcerned about the spiritual condition of the non-European world.¹⁷ Over the course of the nineteenth century, however, Protestant missions grew from relative obscurity to a position of prominence within the church. British Protestant denominations were at the vanguard of this missionary movement, sending 9,014 missionaries out of a total of 17,254 Protestant missionaries from all countries.¹⁸ In fact, “by the middle of the nineteenth century, the ‘missionary spirit’ was being hailed by contemporaries . . . as the ‘characteristic feature’ of the religious piety for which the Victorians were rightly renowned.”¹⁹ Baptist life in Canada, like that of their Victorian co-religionists in Britain, was marked by a piety that had at its heart the spread of the gospel.²⁰

British Baptists such as William Carey were at the forefront of the creation of the nineteenth-century Protestant missionary movement. As the nineteenth century progressed, missionary societies were formed, funds raised, and an increasing number of missionaries sent. The nineteenth century focus for Canadian Baptists was mainly among the Telegu in southeastern India. At the very end of the century Canadian Baptists also began mission work in Bolivia. The exploits of foreign missionaries and the call to missionary work were continually presented to the churches,

16. Latourette, *The Great Century*, 1. As Brian Stanley argues, however, numbers alone would make the twentieth century an even greater century for Protestant missions. See Stanley, *Bible and the Flag*, 83–84.

17. Stanley, *Bible and the Flag*, 55.

18. The next greatest Protestant missionary-sending nation was the United States. Out of those 17,245 Protestant missionaries, the US sent 4,159. See Stanley, *Bible and the Flag*, 83.

19. Thorne, *Congregational Missions*, 5.

20. This concern for the non-Christian was not entirely new, for since at least the eighteenth century a key characteristic of Baptist spirituality was an emphasis on conversions. See Hinson, “Baptist Approaches to Spirituality,” 14.

and numerous missionaries were sent overseas. One significant connection between imperialism and missions was that Canadian Baptists believed that the missionary passion of their spirituality could best be actualized through the spread of the British Empire.

Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, 1887

Baptist zeal for the empire was growing during Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, and the Baptist press paid attention to such things as Victoria's coronation, the Jubilee itself, and even the use of the Jubilee for a church fund-raising event.²¹ These glimpses of the commitment to monarchy and empire foreshadowed the coming zeal for empire.²² What made Victoria's reign so glorious for Baptists was the connection between her reign and the spread of missions. The *Canadian Baptist* concluded: "no movement of Her Majesty's eventful reign has been more wonderful, either in extent or success, than the mission work of Protestantism."²³ The *Religious Intelligencer* claimed that the "friends of evangelical religion are more numerous, earnest and effective than they were fifty years ago."²⁴ These convictions that the reign of Victoria was a boon to missions would only grow stronger over the following decade. The *North West Baptist* had nothing to say about the Jubilee, but its June comments on the Anglo-Saxon race reveal the sentiment that Anglo-Saxons were a unique race that had a special affinity for Christianity: "The Anglo Saxon race, now numbering 100,000,000, are to be the rulers of this continent. They are the lovers of liberty and of Christianity, lovers of man and God, they are to be the dominant

21. "Her Majesty's Coronation," *Canadian Baptist*, 9 June 1887, 3; "The Year of Jubilee," *Canadian Baptist*, 23 June 1887, 4; "The Queen's Jubilee," *Canadian Baptist*, 23 June 1887, 8; "British and Foreign," *Religious Intelligencer*, 25 May 1887, 8; "A Waste-Basket Item," *Canadian Baptist*, 16 June 1887, 5.

22. For imperial sentiment among Baptists in the 1880s, see Heath, "Nile Expedition."

23. *Canadian Baptist*, 23 June 1887, 4.

24. "Fifty Years a Queen," *Religious Intelligencer*, 22 June 1887, 4.

race.”²⁵ With such assumptions, how could those passionate for the spread of Christianity not celebrate the empire, Anglo-Saxon supremacy, and the reign of Victoria?

Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated from the 19th to the 24th of June 1897, and during those days the British public was “able to gorge on a rich diet of ceremonial and display, speech-making and official processions.”²⁶ The highlight of the celebrations was the Queen's procession to St. Paul's with over 50,000 troops from around the empire escorting her. Canadian Baptist commentary on the Jubilee reveals a deep pride in the empire and Canada's place within it. Numerous times Canada was claimed to be the most important component of the empire, and the many accomplishments of the empire were considered to be Canadian accomplishments as well.²⁷ Commentary and sermons extolled the myriad benefits that Victoria's reign brought to Britain, Canada, and the entire world.²⁸ Both Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (BCOQ), and Western Baptists supported the recommendation of the Governor General to set aside Sunday, 20 June, for churches to offer special services of thanksgiving for the Queen.²⁹

One benefit that was frequently noted in the various commentary on the Jubilee was the advancement of the gospel under her reign. Victoria was deemed to be a faithful and godly Christian, and her reign led to the spread of the gospel.³⁰ The

25. “Manitoba's Future,” *North West Baptist*, 1 June 1887, 2.

26. Judd, *Empire*, 130.

27. For instance, the *Religious Intelligencer* referred to Canada as “the foremost colony of the Empire.” See “Notes on Current Events,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 9 June 1897, 4.

28. For instance, see “What Victoria Has Seen,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 16 June 1897, 1; “Sixty Years,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 16 June 1897, 4; Peter W. Gordon, “The Victorian Era,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 2 June 1897, 3; “Sixty Years on the Throne,” *Canadian Baptist*, 17 June 1897, 1.

29. *Baptist Year Book* (1897), 26; *Canadian Baptist*, 10 June 1897, 355; *North West Baptist*, 1 July 1897, 16.

30. For instance, a summary of one sermon on Victoria's reign concluded with the following: “In closing an admirable summary of Victoria's beautiful

following commentary on her reign provides an example of the connection made between the growth of Christian missions and the reign of Victoria:

The very great enlargement of the nation's territory, the development of its commerce, its industries and its wealth, the establishment of its mighty navy and forces of defence, the extension of learning, the culture of the sciences, the growth of literature, the extension of political rights and privileges, the splendid success of the colonization system, the vastly improved conditions in the life of the common people, the extension of philanthropic evangelistic work on behalf of the nation and the world: these are among the things which have given character to the Victorian age and splendor to the longest reign in British annals.³¹

This correlation between the reign of Victoria and the spread of Christianity was echoed by Rev. Adams in Nova Scotia, 20 June 1897, in his Diamond Jubilee Address. He declared:

The expansion of the Empire, and inflow of populations, the growth of commerce and the tributary trade from the countries of the world; the abounding great literature and the general education of the people; the circulation of the Bible and world wide evangelization, are the fruitage harvested through the long and laborious sowing of millions of heroic men and women, the founders and defenders of the Empire; our heritage today.³²

Adams went on to detail the virtues of the Queen, blessings of empire, and the ways in which organizations such as the British and Foreign Bible Society were able to expand dramatically their global outreach under Victoria's reign. In fact, Adams claimed, England had done more for the spread of Christianity than possibly all the other nations combined. The obvious conclusion of a reign so beneficial to Christianity, Adams declared, was that:

character he dwelt emphatically upon her religious principles and christian [*sic*] life. Her love of the bible, her faith in God, her loyalty to the Protestant faith and her personal piety." See "A Patriotic Sermon," *Religious Intelligencer*, 30 June 1897, 1.

31. "Victoria's Reign," *Messenger and Visitor*, 23 June 1897, 4.

32. "Diamond Jubilee Address," *Messenger and Visitor*, 7 July 1897, 2.

“God had made what it is, and England has made the Queen what she is. Therefore we must give God all the glory for England’s Queen, and for the Queen’s England, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”³³ The BCOQ resolution in support of the Queen reveals the same conviction that the reign of Victoria was a boon to the church. It read that she had conferred “unspeakable blessings upon the great philanthropic and Christian enterprises” during her “long and happy reign.”³⁴ Again, it would have been very difficult for missions-oriented Baptists not to support an empire that appeared to be so instrumental in spreading the gospel.

Queen Victoria’s Death, 1901

The death of Queen Victoria on 21 January 1901 sparked a dramatic outpouring of pro-monarchy and imperial sentiment, and Canadian Baptists were no different from other Protestants in the country.³⁵ Upon notice of Queen Victoria’s death on 21 January 1901, the executive officers of the BCOQ quickly produced a resolution of sorrow, sympathy, and loyalty.³⁶ Baptists meeting in New Brunswick in October that year expressed their Conference’s “sorrow” at her death, and “thankfulness” for her reign.³⁷ Details of the funeral service in London made it into Baptist publications,³⁸ and a number of churches such as College Street Baptist, Jarvis Street Baptist, and Dovercourt Road Baptist held memorial services.³⁹ Tributes

33. “Diamond Jubilee Address,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 7 July 1897, 3.

34. *Baptist Year Book* (1897), 19. See also report on convention, *Canadian Baptist*, 3 June 1897, 344.

35. Heath, “Were We in the Habit.”

36. “Editor Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 28 February 1901, 9.

37. “Minutes of the Sixty-Ninth Annual Session of the Free Baptist General Conference of New Brunswick” (5–7 October 1901), 61.

38. “The Queen’s Funeral,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 6 February 1901, 4; Rev. Alexander MacLaren, “In Memorium: Queen Victoria,” *Canadian Baptist*, 28 February 1901, 15.

39. “The Queen’s Funeral,” *Canadian Baptist*, 7 February 1901, 81; “Dr. Thomas’ Tribute to the Queen,” *Canadian Baptist*, 14 February 1901, 2.

to the Queen (and to her son, the future King Edward VII) also made it into the pages of the denominational press.⁴⁰

Boxer Rebellion, 1900

By 1900 there were approximately 2,000 Protestant missionaries in China and approximately 1,000 Roman Catholic priests and nuns.⁴¹ Canada's contribution to these figures was relatively small. Canadian missionaries began to go to China in the later part of the nineteenth century, the first departing in 1865.⁴² Approximately half of Canada's 120 missionaries to China in 1900 were missionaries with China Inland Mission, and among Canadian denominations the Presbyterians sent the most missionaries to Presbyterian mission stations, followed by the Methodists.⁴³

Despite the fact that most Canadian Baptist overseas mission work was in India and Bolivia, Canadian Baptists had much to say about the troubles in China.⁴⁴ In June 1900, Canadian Baptist publications began reporting extensively on the conflict. They quickly came to the defense of imperialism and missionaries in China, but they were also quite critical of the excesses of imperialism and willing to blame the Western powers for many of their troubles in China.

40. W. H. Porter, "Queen Victoria," *Northwest Baptist*, February 1901, 1; "To the Queen," *Messenger and Visitor*, 6 March 1901, 7; "A Coronation Hymn," *Free Baptist Banner*, August 1902, 171; "The Crowning of Kingship," *Free Baptist Banner*, July 1902, 147; "God Save the King," *Religious Intelligencer*, 27 February 1901, 6; "Lord Salisbury's Tribute to the Queen," *Messenger and Visitor*, 6 February 1901, 1; "Hindu Women and Queen Victoria," *Religious Intelligencer*, 27 March 1901, 1; "Queen Victoria," *Religious Intelligencer*, 30 January 1901, 4; *Canadian Baptist*, 31 January 1901, 1.

41. Austin, *Saving China*, 65.

42. *Ibid.*, 27.

43. For history of Canadian missions in China, see Austin, *Saving China*.

44. Heath, "When Missionaries Were Hated." Much of the following commentary is taken from this article. For a description of the events in the Boxer Rebellion, see Tan, *Boxer Catastrophe*; Keown-Boyd, *Fists of Righteous Harmony*; Martin, *Boxer Rebellion*; Purcell, *Boxer Uprising*.

Brian Stanley proposes that British missionaries in the later nineteenth century entered the political arena to protect their interests.⁴⁵ It was assumed, Stanley argues, that British imperial control could best bring about the much needed stability and rule of law (not to mention commerce and technology) that would aid the work of the missionaries. In the case of China, there were calls for imperial intervention to protect the missionaries. Like many British missionaries,⁴⁶ Canadian Baptists expected that Western governments should provide protection for missionaries in China. All Western governments had a “clear duty” to give the protection that was needed,⁴⁷ and the fact that missionaries had the legal right to be in China (due to various treaties) bolstered the claim made for intervention on their behalf.⁴⁸ One editorial pointed out that military intervention had saved previous Christian communities from extinction, and that such imperial intervention was needed for the crisis in China.⁴⁹

South African War, 1899–1902

It was normal for the churches to report on imperial matters in the years before the South African War. However, that reporting intensified during the war, for during that time there was a surge of imperial sentiment among Canadian Protestants—Baptists included—that manifested itself in numerous places, including the religious press. While the South African War has tended to be forgotten by post-World War generations, in its day it captured the imagination and fuelled the passions of Canadians. In an age of rapid dispatches from the front with war news, jingoistic newspapers, and imperial zeal reaching a feverish pitch, the “longest, costliest, bloodiest and most humiliating war fought by Britain between 1815–1914”⁵⁰ dominated the politics and policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Canadian government at the turn of the century. Like other Protestant churches in Canada, Canadian

45. Stanley, *Bible and the Flag*, ch. 5.

46. Greenlee and Johnston, *Good Citizens*, 108–10.

47. “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 21 June 1900, 1.

48. “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 28 June 1900, 1.

49. “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 16 August 1900, 1.

50. Smith, “Boer War,” 47.

Baptists supported the sending of Canadian troops to fight against the Boers in South Africa, in part, because of the impact that a British victory would have on mission work.⁵¹

The outbreak of war led to expressions of concern for the work of the church and missions in South Africa. Of course, Anglicans, who had a significant presence in South Africa, showed more concern than the Baptists who, by comparison, did not. Alongside these quite natural partisan matters was a shared concern for the safety and health of the wider church in South Africa. And what was considered best for the church in South Africa? Baptists in Canada agreed with those in Britain who believed “a triumphant Afrikanerdom would spell spiritual and material ruin for the region’s native peoples.”⁵²

Boer rule was considered to be a hindrance to mission work. Even before David Livingstone’s negative appraisal of the Boers and their treatment of the “natives,” British missionaries had experienced tensions with the Boers over differing views of how to treat the “natives.” As far back as the 1820s British missionaries had advocated for the rights of indigenous peoples of South Africa.⁵³ In the Baptist press the Boers’ treatment of the “natives” was decried.⁵⁴ The *Canadian Baptist* claimed that the Boers were “the enemies of progress, ignorant, bigoted, cruel without measure. They have even stood in the way of the mission worker. They treat the natives worse than dogs.”⁵⁵ The *Western Baptist* pointed back to the days of Livingstone as an example of Boer mistreatment of the “natives” and as an example of the Boer hindrance to mission work.⁵⁶ Elsewhere the

51. For an examination of the Canadian Protestant churches, the war, and missions, see Heath, *War with a Silver Lining*, ch. 5.

52. Greenlee and Johnston, *Good Citizens*, 88.

53. Neill, *History of Christian Missions*, 264.

54. The Boer mistreatment of the “natives” had been noted before the war. For instance, see “Robert Moffatt and the Boer,” *Canadian Baptist*, 20 February 1879, 2.

55. “A Missionary View of the War,” *Canadian Baptist*, 18 April 1901, 12.

56. “War in the Transvaal,” *Western Baptist*, November 1899, 1.

Baptist press painted an unflattering portrait of the Boers. The Boers were a primitive “seventeenth century” people,⁵⁷ were “unsophisticated, unkempt, unwashed, surrounded by a crowd of grubby children” and they had no desire to evangelize the natives.⁵⁸ If there was any doubt about the lack of Boer concern for mission work among the “natives,” statistics attested to the Boer disregard for outreach.⁵⁹ At the conclusion of the war the Baptist missionary publication *Canadian Missionary Link* printed an article that rejoiced in the British victory as an opportunity for missionary advance: “How many there are who have thanked God for the peace so long desired. Not for the ending of war’s miseries alone, but for the establishment of a better rule, and especially for the opening of a wider and more effectual door for the Gospel.”⁶⁰ Such rejoicing can only be understood in light of the conviction that Boers were active agents in hindering mission work.

Like their British counterparts, those concerned for mission work in South Africa believed that the spiritual stakes in the conflict loomed large, and that the war against the Boers must be supported. Such confidence that the mission work would be better off under British rather than Boer rule was rooted in the

57. “The Outlook in South Africa,” *Canadian Baptist*, 21 November 1901, 7. Also printed in the *Religious Intelligencer*. See “From South Africa,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 11 December 1901, 1.

58. “Sketches of Boer Life: By One Who Has Lived among Them,” *Canadian Baptist*, 13 March 1902, 11; printed again two weeks later: *Canadian Baptist*, 27 March 1902, 7. Also printed in the *Religious Intelligencer* (“Sketches of Boer Life: By One Who Has Lived among Them,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 26 March 1902, 1).

59. “Sketches of Boer Life: By One Who Has Lived among Them,” *Canadian Baptist*, 13 March 1902, 11.

60. “Africa,” *Canadian Missionary Link*, July-August 1902, 167. Roughly fifteen years earlier, the *Canadian Baptist* expressed almost the same sentiments after the British annexation of Burma. In its commentary on that annexation, it had argued that “however mixed may be the motives that led to the invasion, and however doubtful its justification, there can scarcely be a doubt that this, like so many other extensions of civilized government, will redound to the highest good of the benighted natives. A new door will be opened for missionary enterprise.” See “The Annexation of Burmah [*sic*],” *Canadian Baptist*, 5 November 1885, 4.

conviction of the relative superiority of the British Empire. Once again, this Canadian approach to the conflict mirrored that of many in British mission circles.⁶¹ Their shortfalls notwithstanding, the British form of government, rule of law, and treatment of the “natives” was considered superior. To pray and hope for a British victory was not in expectation of a perfect or sinless British rule, but for one that was relatively more just, and, of particular concern, was more conducive to the work of missions.

Summary

Stanley argues, “If you wish to mobilize Baptists (and evangelicals as a whole) on an issue that divides the nation down the middle politically, the way to do it is to persuade them that liberty to preach the gospel is at stake.”⁶² The examples noted above affirm his claim. Baptist spirituality was marked by a vigorous commitment to personal conversion and evangelical missions, and the events of the late nineteenth century fuelled that passion. It seemed as if God had providentially established an empire that aided in the growth of the church, and Baptists were not ones to argue with God. The empire was deemed good for missions, and therefore the empire had the church’s blessing. The Baptist reaction to the war in South Africa certainly confirms Berger’s claim that Canadian English Protestant imperialism was “infused” with religious emotion.⁶³ The war was deemed to be much more than a war to “Paint the Map Even More Red”; it was a war that was fought to ensure the continued expansion of the Kingdom of God. A war tinged with such religious sentiment also fit into the new Dominion’s perceived national destiny, whereby the nation, securely within the empire, began to help Christianize the world.

Nevertheless, Baptists were not completely naïve. During the Diamond Jubilee there was brief commentary on what was con-

61. Greenlee and Johnston, *Good Citizens*, 87–88.

62. Stanley, “Baptists, Antislavery and the Legacy of Imperialism,” 289.

63. Berger, *Sense of Power*, 217.

sidered to be the lamentable militarism of the festivities.⁶⁴ In regards to the problems in China, they acknowledged that the supposedly Christian empires, especially Russia, had committed unspeakable atrocities, and that the misuses of Western rule had brought the horrors of war upon themselves. They defended the innocence of missionaries, but were quite willing to point out the sins of the imperial governments. Andrew Porter's recent work shows that the relationship between British missionaries and empire was more complex and ambiguous than previously thought.⁶⁵ Canadian Baptist attitudes towards missions and empire reflect some of that complexity and ambiguity, which leads to the following discussion of justice.

Justice and Empire

Evangelicals displayed a passionate concern for justice from the very start of the movement, and the connection between Baptists and justice also has a considerable history. Walter Rauschenbusch and Martin Luther King, Jr. are perhaps the two most well-known figures in Baptist life whose spirituality was marked by a focus on justice, but there are others. For instance, Paul Dekar has proposed that nineteenth-century Baptist missionaries were acting implicitly as peacemakers when they acted as agents of reconciliation and fought against social injustices,⁶⁶ Brian Stanley has shown how Baptist missionaries were involved in the struggle against slavery and injustice,⁶⁷ and Marvia Lawes has illustrated how Baptists in Jamaica resisted slavery and colonialism.⁶⁸

The identification of the British Empire with liberty predated the late nineteenth century,⁶⁹ however, by the late nineteenth

64. "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 8 July 1897, 1; "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 29 July 1897, 1.

65. Porter, *Religion versus Empire*.

66. Dekar, *For the Healing of the Nations*, ch. 11.

67. Stanley, "Nineteenth-Century Liberation Theology"; Stanley, "Baptists, Anti-Slavery and the Legacy of Imperialism."

68. Lawes, "Historical Evaluation of Jamaica Baptists."

69. Armitage, *Ideological Origins*.

century it was clear to Canadian Baptists that there was no empire as righteous as their empire. While the empire had its problems and injustices, it was still considered to be the most benevolent and just empire on the face of the earth: where the Union Jack flew, liberty and justice reigned. Consequently, for Baptists concerned for justice, the best way to spread justice was for the empire to expand. Conversely, any contraction of empire was deemed a threat to peace, justice, and the advancement of human progress.

Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, 1887

The brief commentary on the Golden Jubilee demonstrates the correlation made between empire and justice. The advances made under her rule were many, and despite the sins of the nation and empire, Victoria's rule was cause for thanksgiving:

Thus it is in every phase of the life and progress of this memorable half-century. Good and evil are set over against each other. Light and darkness still struggle for the mastery. Much has been done, but more remains to be done. For the increase of peace, prosperity, knowledge, and civil and religious liberty, the people are indebted to the constitutional system of government which they have secured for themselves. The great and imperishable glory of the Queen is that she has established purity in her court and has set the whole nation a noble example of the domestic virtues . . . All good citizens throughout the British Empire may well unite in thanksgiving to God for the many blessings of her reign, and an heartfelt prayer that Victoria the Good may yet be spared for many years to rule over us.⁷⁰

The *Religious Intelligencer* noted the difficulties that she faced when she came to the throne, and how over the decades her influence and leadership helped Britain and the empire overcome them. It was claimed that the advances made during her

70. "The Year of Jubilee," *Canadian Baptist*, 23 June 1887, 4. See also "The Reign of Victoria," *Religious Intelligencer*, 4 May 1887, 1.

reign caused millions around the globe to thank God for her beneficent rule.⁷¹

Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897

Victoria was portrayed as one who loved her people and treated them justly, and as a result she was considered to be loved by her subjects more than any other monarch.⁷² Her empire was understood to bring progress in literacy, communication, science, social reform, transportation, electricity, canals, trade, religion, music and arts, tax reform, criminal laws, photography, and home comforts (e.g., soaps, glassware, sewing accessories, washboards).⁷³ There was more than just material progress, however, for under the rule of Victoria the domestic situation of Britons was considered to have improved, as well as the situation of those who found themselves within the boundaries of the empire. In other words, the empire advanced justice through its countless benefits and benevolent rule.

One author claimed that the empire was involved in the “uplifting of the races and the advancement of civilization.”⁷⁴ Another claimed that empire led to “vastly improved conditions in the common people” in the empire.⁷⁵ Yet another claimed that the unity of the empire expressed during the Jubilee bode well for the future, for such a united empire would strengthen the nation and lead to the “well-being of the world.”⁷⁶ The same author went on to say that “Believing as we do that the enlargement of British influence means good not only to the subjects of Victoria, but to the world at large, we cannot but hail with gratitude the evidences of expansion and of unity which the

71. “Fifty Years a Queen,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 22 June 1887, 4; “The Jubilee,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 22 June 1887, 4.

72. “Sixty Years,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 16 June 1897, 4; “A Patriotic Sermon,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 30 June 1897, 1; “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 15 July 1897, 1; “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 15 July 1897, 1.

73. “What Victoria Has Seen,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 16 June 1897, 1.

74. Peter W. Gordon, “The Victorian Era,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 2 June 1897, 3.

75. “Victoria’s Reign,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 23 June 1897, 4.

76. “The United Empire,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 30 June 1897, 4.

Jubilee celebration reveals in fact and prospect.” Other articles reveal the same sentiment that, despite its faults, the empire brought manifold blessings to those within its boundaries.⁷⁷ The BCOQ’s Jubilee resolution echoed these same sentiments when it declared the empire brought “unspeakable blessings upon great philanthropic . . . enterprises” which had “flourished” during Victoria’s reign.⁷⁸ The Baptist Convention of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories echoed the same sentiments in its meeting in Brandon Manitoba in June: “We recognize with thankfulness the extension and consolidation of the Empire, and the great progress that has been made in the development of the Arts and Sciences of civilized life, and the increase of material wealth, during Your Majesty’s wise, prosperous and benign reign.”⁷⁹ In regards to compassion, elsewhere it was declared that Victoria’s rule sparked concerns for philanthropy throughout the empire.⁸⁰ There was the realization that British domestic rule, as well as rule throughout the world, was imperfect.⁸¹ Nevertheless, comparatively speaking, Baptists were convinced that the way to bring justice to the world was to advance the empire.

Queen Victoria’s Death, 1901

One only needs to read a few of the numerous tributes to the Queen to get a sense of the conviction that she was an iconic and ideal monarch who had shaped the empire by the sheer force of her Christian character. Consider the praise from the *Messenger and Visitor*:

77. “British Colonization,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 28 April 1897, 1; “Mr. Depew on the Jubilee,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 28 July 1897, 1.

78. *Baptist Year Book* (1897), 19. See also report on convention, *Canadian Baptist*, 3 June 1897, 344.

79. *North West Baptist*, 1 July 1897, 11.

80. BCOQ resolution, “The Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada,” *Canadian Baptist*, 22 April 1897, 248; “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 27 May 1897, 1; “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 3 June 1897, 1.

81. “Sixty Years on the Throne,” *Canadian Baptist*, 17 June 1897, 1; “Editorial Notes,” *Canadian Baptist*, 29 July 1897, 1.

How much the influence of that pure womanly and queenly life upon the heart and conscience of the people has had to do in making Britain great who can tell? The universal confidence felt in the goodness of her heart, her wisdom and her love of righteousness, and the increasing reverence in which she has had been held not only by her own people but by the world at large have represented such an influence to hold the world in peace as perhaps never before was embodied in any human being.⁸²

Repeatedly it was the Queen who was considered to have embodied the Christian virtues of the empire. The poem “Victoria” expresses well this connection between the character of the Queen and the nature of the empire. Bessie R. Cogswell wrote “Victoria” in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, in response to the death of the Queen. Portions of it read as follows:

Reigns by example fair,
Influence fell-far and near,
For righteousness.
God’s holy Word her guide,
Her trust “The Crucified,”
Over her Empire wide,
She reigned to bless.

In countless hearts she reigns—
Still her pure life restrains—
Her good deeds live.
She reigns wrongs to redress,
To make earth’s sorrows less,
Still, still for righteousness,
Victoria reigns.

“Defender of the Faith,”
Faithful e’en unto death,
Our Christian Queen.
Still over land and sea,
‘Gainst slavery, tyranny,
She reigns majestically,
Empress and Queen.

82. “The Queen,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 23 January 1901, 4.

So shall old England's might,
Wielded for God and Right,
Still stronger grow.
Her Empire still extend,
Her supremacy ne'er end,
Jehovah's power, her Friend,
Will foes o'erthrow.⁸³

The significance of this type of commentary is that it reveals, once again, the view that Christian truth and justice would expand as the empire spread.

Boxer Rebellion, 1900

Imbedded within the commentary on the events in China was the conviction that European civilization in general, and British government, education, culture, commerce and technology in particular, was a blessing to the allegedly lesser civilizations that it ruled. Canadian Baptists shared this vision of an imperialism that blessed, not oppressed. For instance, the *McMaster University Monthly*, the student newspaper of the Baptist-owned McMaster University, printed a student's prize-winning speech (obviously a spin-off from Kipling's famous poem) entitled "The White Man's Burden" that expressed much of this sentiment.⁸⁴ While this sentiment was imbedded within much of the commentary on the rebellion,⁸⁵ one clear example of the alleged benefits of imperialism for China can be found in an article in the *Maritime Messenger and Visitor* entitled "The Problem of China."

83. Bessie R. Cogswell, "Victoria," *Messenger and Visitor*, 22 May 1901, 323. Also printed in the *Presbyterian Witness*, 18 May 1901, 158.

84. G. R. Welch, "The White Man's Burden," *McMaster University Monthly*, January 1901, 160–67. Support for imperialism among students in Canada was not uncommon. See Heath, "Citizens of that Mighty Empire."

85. "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 16 August 1900, 1; "Commercial Benefit of Missions," *Canadian Missionary Link*, September 1902, 6; Mabel F. Mode, "Where We Are in Missions," *Canadian Missionary Link*, September 1900, 13–15; "China," *Religious Intelligencer*, 25 July 1900, 4.

The problem of China, so the *Messenger and Visitor* stated, was a part of the larger conflict between the old world and the new.⁸⁶ China's conservatism had kept it isolated in the past, but that could no longer be the case; the world had advanced and China needed to be a part of the modernization. The Boxers, it was argued, were opposed to this modernization and sought by "fanatical methods" to stop such changes. It was conceded that modernization would bring disturbances to the traditional economy, and people would lose jobs because of the new factories. However, there was no way to stop the progress. Ultimately, the article concludes, the inexorable advance of Western influence and industry would be a blessing to China: "the change will come, and the people of China will yet be blessed with a Christian faith and a Christian civilization."

As Andrew Ross notes, by the end of the nineteenth century the idea of trusteeship had become very influential among British missionaries, and this idea of trusteeship shaped attitudes towards race.⁸⁷ Imperial sentiment among English Canadians also included a significant number of assumptions about race,⁸⁸ and these assumptions can be seen in commentary surrounding the Boxer Rebellion and other imperial conflicts such as the South African War. The Western powers were continually referred to as the "forces of civilization"⁸⁹ and the Chinese were often portrayed as "barbarians."⁹⁰ The rebellion sparked an interest in things Chinese, however, many of the articles published to provide information about the Chinese por-

86. "The Problem of China," *Messenger and Visitor*, 1 August 1900, 4.

87. Ross, "Christian Missions."

88. Rutherford, *Women and the White Man's God*, 152–53. Terms like "race," "breed," "stock," "native," and the like were quite common and, for most, were considered to be inoffensive. For instance, even a socially progressive leader like J. S. Woodworth used such racial categories. See chapter on "the orientals" in Woodworth, *Strangers within Our Gates*.

89. For instance, see "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 21 June 1900, 1; "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 16 August 1900, 1; "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 23 August 1900, 1.

90. "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 9 August 1900, 1; "Editorial Notes," *Canadian Baptist*, 16 August 1900, 1.

trayed them as culturally and morally inferior.⁹¹ The domestic debate over a special tax on Chinese immigrants in Canada overlapped with the events of the rebellion, and the prejudices of the domestic debate mirrored those surrounding the rebellion.⁹² These missionary and church reports played an important role in shaping North American perceptions of the Chinese.⁹³ By stressing the inferiority and “otherness” of the Chinese, these images would have also, whether intentionally or not, helped to justify the expense involved in the evangelization of China,⁹⁴ to defend the Western presence in China, and to reinforce the justice of the Western cause in the rebellion.

South African War, 1899–1902

When Canada’s first contingent of just over 1,000 troops prepared to board the 425-foot *Sardinian* in Quebec City on Monday, 30 October 1899, Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier declared in the presence of the Governor General, the Premier of the province of Quebec, other civil and religious leaders, as well as 50,000 exuberant spectators:

the cause for which you men of Canada are going to fight is the cause of justice, the cause of humanity, of civil rights and religious liberty. This is not a war of conquest . . . The object is not to crush out the

91. “Chinese Children,” *Canadian Missionary Link*, December 1900, 67–68; “Children’s Funerals in Peking,” *Canadian Missionary Link*, October 1902, 29; Rev. Francis Clark, “In the Land of the Bloody Empress,” *Canadian Baptist*, 5 July 1900, 10; “The Women of China,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 29 August 1900, 11; “Medical Practices in China,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 20 March 1901, 7. For an article that presents a generally positive view of the Chinese, see Joel Benton, “The Chinaman at Home,” *Canadian Baptist*, 22 November 1900, 15.

92. “Canada’s Chinese Question,” *Messenger and Visitor*, 11 July 1900, 1; “The Chinese,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 11 July 1900, 4; J. F. Vichert, “John Chinaman at Home,” *McMaster University Monthly*, February 1901, 212–16.

93. McClellan, “Missionary Influence.”

94. *Ibid.*, 476.

Dutch population, but to establish in that land . . . British sovereign law, to assure to all men of that country an equal share of liberty.⁹⁵

Baptists endorsed such lofty rhetoric. On 5 June 1902, the *Canadian Baptist* proclaimed the end of the war in South Africa by printing a map of the “New British South Africa” on the front page. Planted firmly in Pretoria was a British flag framed by the words “Peace, Liberty, Equality.”⁹⁶ From beginning to end, the war was deemed to be just that: a war fought for the good of others.⁹⁷

The *Canadian Baptist* was convinced that “Britain’s title as a world-power” was on trial in South Africa.⁹⁸ The strategic situation around the world was also at stake. Trouble was brewing in China and in India, and a loss of prestige would have serious ramifications for the empire.⁹⁹ Consequently, the war was worth its expense and challenge.¹⁰⁰ The *Canadian Baptist* painted a grim picture of what the world would be like if Britain lost: “Our only choice lay between the surrender of South Africa—which would have involved the breakup of our Colonial Empire, the setting of the sun of British rule, and the setting back of the clock of the world’s progress for perhaps a century—and the present war.”¹⁰¹ With such high stakes at risk, the choice to support the war was obvious. However, it was more than just a war to preserve British hegemony.

The Baptist press made it clear that, despite the abuses and various evils of imperialism, it was convinced of the positive effects of the empire and identified the benefits of belonging to the empire.¹⁰² The advantages of British rule over against the

95. As quoted in Page, *Boer War and Canadian Imperialism*, 13.

96. *Canadian Baptist*, June 5, 1902, 1.

97. See Heath, *War with a Silver Lining*.

98. “The War in South Africa,” *Canadian Baptist*, 11 January 1900, 8.

99. *Canadian Baptist*, 9 August 1900, 1.

100. “The Price of South Africa,” *Canadian Baptist*, 23 May 1901, 11; “England & America,” *Canadian Baptist*, 11 January 1900, 11.

101. Rev. Charles Phillips, “Was the War Inevitable?” *Canadian Baptist*, 8 February 1900, 7.

102. “A Fruit of Christian Civilization,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 27 March 1901, 1; *Canadian Baptist*, 18 January 1900, 1.

rule of other colonizing powers were also outlined, thus justifying participation in its expansion.¹⁰³ The *Religious Intelligencer* made this quite clear:

Instead of being tyrannical, the British Empire is an object lesson of rebuke to nations ruled with a rod of iron . . . Do some of those who allow themselves to be carried away by the racial prejudice realize what the downfall of the British Empire would mean to the world? . . . Let the British power be shattered and not only would our freedom cease but tyranny would soon place the shackles more heavily on those learning to look for emancipation in every foreign land. The honour, the glory, the power of the Briton means progress, civilization, freedom, to the world. It would be a sad day for humanity if the British Empire should ever fall, an evil hour for the people of this continent if the last vestige of British power should leave it.¹⁰⁴

Not only was the empire a force for good in the world, but abolishing or diminishing it in any way would be a catastrophe to the continent of Africa and the world. Consequently, how could Baptists not support the war? The Baptists were just as clear in their literature that the war in South Africa was being fought for the Outlanders and the “natives.” They assumed that Britain had a moral and legal duty to act in South Africa to further justice for all.¹⁰⁵

103. *Canadian Baptist*, 2 January 1902, 1; *Canadian Baptist*, 12 June 1902, 1; *Canadian Baptist*, 11 January 1900, 8.

104. “What British Power Means,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 22 August 1900, 6.

105. For examples, see B. A. Sherwood, “War—and Some Lessons,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 21 February 1900, 4; *Canadian Baptist*, 8 March 1900, 1; *Canadian Baptist*, 26 October 1899, 1; “What the Boer War Is All About,” *Canadian Baptist*, 2 November 1899, 11; “Lord Salisbury on the War,” *Canadian Baptist*, 16 November 1899, 7; *Canadian Baptist*, 29 March 1900, 1; “The Boer War as Canadians See It,” *Canadian Baptist*, 12 April 1900, 8; Rev. John C. Harris, “The Moral Issues of the War: A Johannesburg Minister to His Scattered Church,” *Canadian Baptist*, 12 April 1899, 15; “South Africa Blacks,” *Canadian Baptist*, 20 June 1900, 4; Rev. John Moffat, “The Cause of the South African War,” *Canadian Baptist*, 23 August 1900, 15; “How the Boers Treat the Natives,” *Canadian Baptist*, 9 November 1899, 7; Marshall

Summary

Prominent Canadian imperialist George R. Parkin argued that one aspect of British superiority was the ability to govern. He claimed that a “special capacity for political organization may, without race vanity, be fairly claimed for Anglo-Saxon people.”¹⁰⁶ The racial superiority assumed in this statement was echoed in Baptist commentary regarding the Queen’s Jubilees, the Boxer Rebellion, and the South African War. Canadian Baptists assumed the superiority of their race, nation, and empire, and were convinced that the expansion of justice went hand-in-hand with the expansion of the empire. For those uncomfortable with the language of righteousness or justice bolstering the imperial cause, it needs to be remembered that it was also this sense of righteousness that made for criticism of imperialism.¹⁰⁷

Conclusion

The late-Victorian era was marked by a potent mix of imperialism, missions, national destinies, jingoism, providence, racism, Social Darwinism, the creation of the other, and social justice. Canadian Baptists did not escape the impact of this welter of events, passions, and beliefs. There was no one view of imperialism, and there was no official Canadian Baptist view of empire. However, it is apparent that late-Victorian Canadian Baptist spirituality was shaped by the *zeitgeist* of the period. For many Baptists, to be Canadian was to be an imperialist and share in

Maxeke, “The Black Man’s Side in the Transvaal War,” *Canadian Baptist*, 1 December 1899, 7; *Canadian Baptist*, 22 February 1900, 1; “British and Boers, Again,” *Canadian Baptist*, 1 March 1900, 11; “The End of the South African War Draws Rapidly Nearer,” *Religious Intelligencer*, 8 August 1900, 5.

106. Parkin, *Imperial Federation*, 1.

107. In this regard Baptists were not alone among evangelical Protestants. For a discussion of the connection between righteousness, sin, and the support for (and criticism of) empire in Britain, see Bebbington, “Atonement, Sin, and Empire.” For Canadian Baptist criticisms of imperialism, see Heath, “When Missionaries Were Hated.”

the assumptions regarding race and empire that many of their fellow Canadians cherished.

The Baptist passion for missions and concern for justice, it was believed, could best be acted upon by taking advantage of all that the empire offered. In fact, the zeal for missions and justice contributed to the zeal for empire. Anything that promoted missions—and the empire seemed to do just that—was supported and exploited. Anything that furthered justice—and the empire seemed to do just that—was also supported and exploited. This fusion of Baptist spirituality with empire may seem to be an anomaly today, but for late-Victorian Canadian Baptists, it made the best sense of their world and of their faith.

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