

Noble, Wretched and Redeemable: Protestant Missionaries to the Indians in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900

C. L. Higham

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This comparative history explores the Protestant missionary gaze toward American Indians in the western frontiers of Canada and the United States during the nineteenth century. Canadian and American political systems, religious institutions, and frontiers developed along divergent paths, but Anglo racial attitudes transcended international boundaries and compelled Canadian and American missionaries to depict Indians in similar ways for literate white Christians in the East. Indian stereotypes evolved from the "noble savage" to "wretched savage" to "redeemable savage." Responding to financial and political pressures from missionary societies, governments, and secular scholarly institutions, field missionaries became government advisors and secular authorities on Indian affairs and portrayed Indians to fulfill the eastern expectations. The author has researched dozens of memoirs, letters, journals, diaries, reports, newspapers, newsletters, and other primary sources to piece together the missionary story in Canada and the United States.



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