

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, October 26th, 1916

The Christian Year

The Twentieth Sunday After Trinity, Nov. 5.

The Parable of "The Marriage of the King's Son," sometimes called the Parable of "The Wedding Garment," affords us a surpassingly striking picture of the joy and the tragedy which seem to be inherent in the great drama of life—at least as it finds itself staged on this world.

Mark, first, the joy. Life at its highest is spoken of as a bridal feast. It might be possible for an optimist to maintain that life in general is a feast—that each individual soul, as it is ushered into its incarnate career on the arena of this planet, is invited by the divine compulsion, which it is impossible to refuse, to a very feast of unfolding opportunities for sense and intellect and comradeship and action. But the life which Jesus compares to a wedding banquet is something higher—it is life lived in communion and co-operation with God; it is the life which knows the grace of the Saviour, the love of the Father, and the fellowship with others in the divine Spirit; it is life in that Kingdom of God, the flower and consummation at once of divine bestowal and of human achievement—a life which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Such is the life to which we are "called" by the Master; a life of boundless possibilities, which may be actualized for each of us; a life, here spoken of as a "feast," elsewhere as a "pearl of great price," or a "treasure hid in a field," to gain which any man with a true sense of values will gladly pay "all that he hath"; a life, in short, of ample satisfactions and of eternal joy.

Note, next, the tragedy. This feast, this joy, to which all are invited, was prepared at infinite cost by the King. We are often accustomed to think of God as a sort of omnipotent Sultan, who, without cost or trouble to Himself, can achieve His will by a mere whisper or a nod. Such a conception of God is a relic of heathenism. Entirely other is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. To prepare this feast, He gave His best and suffered to the utmost. The world conditions for the Gospel Banquet were prepared by age-long processes of travail, and by a mighty series of great souls, who suffered and who died for the cause of spiritual progress. And "in all their afflictions He was afflicted." The crown of sorrow, the crisis of the liberation of new powers, was reached on the hill that is called Calvary. The table of grace could now be spread. The wedding garment of righteousness could now be offered free. All that was possible had been done. All was ready, surely, for a grand success.

And so the King came in to see the guests. Mark his smile of joy as He recognizes now one and now another of those who have accepted and profited by His invitation. Note the undisguised grief which pierces His heart, as He sees a man who had scorned His gifts, and who, though present in body, declared himself utterly unresponsive to the divine programme. As far, at least, as he is concerned, all the King's preparations have gone for naught. God has failed. The man is lost.

And herein consists the tragedy of life. Each of us may misuse and lose the divinely given opportunities to reach the highest. Joy, sent

(Continued on page 680.)

Editorial Notes

Dr. Westgate's Release.

The feeling of relief that passed over the Church in Canada on receipt of the news of the release of the Rev. T. B. R. Westgate, at Tabora, German East Africa, cannot be expressed in words. His return to Africa from his last furlough was largely for the purpose of preparing the work there for his permanent retirement to take up the work of Field Secretary of the M.S.C.C. in Canada. Under ordinary conditions, he would have returned home in the latter part of the year 1914. At the outbreak of war, however, he was, with other British Missionaries in German East Africa, interned and only one or two brief communications have reached the outside world from him since. We have little conception of the anxiety that has hung over him regarding the welfare of his wife and children who were left behind in the Motherland, and the anxiety of the latter regarding him. The load has, we rejoice to say, been lifted and we thank God with full hearts for the merciful preservation of His faithful servant.

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Our New Serial.

That we were justified in introducing a serial story into the Canadian Churchman, has been amply shown by the large number of expressions of appreciation received. That it was written by a Canadian and dealt in the main with Canadian scenes added very much to its value. Like all things human, though, it has with this number reached its close. In the search for a story to take its place we have been fortunate enough to find another with a Canadian setting although a very different story in its characters and plot. The scene is in the far North-West, among the Indians on the River Athabasca. It is a boy's story and is full of life from start to finish. The Indian life portrayed in it is not that of the Christian Indian, but that of pagan days, and while the superstition and revenge that characterized the Indian in his heathen state are not contrasted with the changed life of the same Red Man under Christian influence, still the need of some elevating power is obvious. We feel certain that many older people among our readers will find the story quite as interesting as the boys.

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The M.S.C.C. Board Meeting.

There is a peculiar fitness about holding meetings of the M.S.C.C. Board in the City of Montreal. This is not merely because it is the great financial metropolis of Canada but rather because it was in that city that the M.S.C.C. held its first meeting and elected its first General Secretary. The attendance at the meeting last week was quite as large as the average autumn meeting and several matters of importance came up for consideration. The report of the General Secretary was, as usual, full of matter for serious thought. After referring to the disturbing conditions under which the work is being carried on at present, he outlined the changes that have taken place during the past year in the personnel of the staff, and the relation of the Woman's Auxiliary to the M.S.C.C. We have already given expression to our views on this latter subject and regret that we are not able to feel as hopeful

as the General Secretary regarding the present relationship of these two organizations. However, we trust that the heavy responsibilities placed upon them, and the greater demands that will follow with the complete taking over of the work among Indians and Eskimos, will gradually bring about the best solution. Reviewing briefly the work in both Canada and Overseas, the Secretary concluded his report with an able statement of the bearing of the War on Christianity.

The General Treasurer's report showed that the finances were in a healthy condition. Slightly over sixty-four thousand dollars has been paid on the general apportionment since the beginning of the year and over six thousand dollars on Jewish apportionment. The sum of \$13,097.45 had been received in the form of legacies, the largest item being that of \$10,000 left by the late Capt. Guy M. Drummond, of Montreal. The General Reserve Fund has reached the splendid total of \$57,041.86. Among the remaining subjects considered, the most important was that of work among Indians and Eskimos. This, however, with other matters, must be left over for consideration until next week.

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Simplicity in Ritual.

One of the encouraging signs of the times is the demand being made by Churchmen of different schools of thought for greater simplicity in our ritual. An elaborate ritual is not by any means necessarily a beautiful ritual, and, moreover, frequently defeats its own ends. We do not advocate a slovenly service; far from it. A certain degree of ritual is necessary in any place where a number of persons are performing a similar act together. Moreover, certain communities or congregations may demand a more elaborate or more simple ritual, as the case may be, than others. The main thing, however, is not the ritual, but that which it is intended to express, and, deprived of the latter, it becomes a mummery and a mockery. One of the most incomprehensible things to the average layman is to see reasonable men arguing over little points in ritual, especially when there are so many other matters of far more vital importance to be attended to. That which, after all, appeals to men more strongly than anything else is reality and unselfishness. The chaplains at the front, dealing with men who are about to enter the trenches, and who have in many cases only a few minutes more to live, do not stop to consider the details of their ritual, but seek to give a message of reality that will prepare those men to meet death. And the same spirit should characterize our whole Church work. We need more reality, both in pulpit and in pew, and not only on Sundays, but throughout the week, and we need simplicity and directness in our worship in order to win the masses, who seldom darken the doors of a place of worship.

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What shall it profit if you have acquired books and lost the love of reading; acquired influence and lost the joy of usefulness; acquired power and lost the pleasure of service? He that thus gains his life loses it in the gaining. This is an enigma. Ponder it.—Dr. Lyman Abbott.

Increasing Cost of Living

of concern even to those in the world. How intricate difficult is the problem poorly provided—for the unfortunate ones of the supporting care of husband.

insurance solves the problem the great majority it is solution.

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St. George's Church, - 82 "
St. Andrew's Church, Syracuse - 77 "
Convocation Chicago, Ill. - 76 "
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