

# Canadian Churchman

Toronto, July 18th, 1918.

## The Christian Year

The Ninth Sunday After Trinity, July 28, 1918.

Among the many wonderful things our Religion has to tell us, is the simple and yet most profound truth, that God is our Father and that He wants us to live a certain kind of life. He has created the world and "upholds all things by the word of His power," and "in Him all things consist." Yet He wants certain things done that are not being done, and wants certain things stopped that people are doing all the time. You and I have each to do something to help on what God wants. And so the first thing a Christian is to concern himself about is how he can live "according to His will." This collect is for those who want to "live according to His will." Experience teaches us this is not easy. "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." "We are not sufficient of ourselves to help ourselves." If we try to do God's will without God's help we soon cease and turn to doing our own will.

On the other hand, He enables us to do His will. This is a fact of Christian experience. "I sought the Lord and He heard me." God worketh in us "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." For those who desire to live according to God's will and realize their own inability and God's power to help, we have a very practical prayer this week.

First, it has to do with our thoughts, "to think such things as be rightful." Our Lord's words show us how important our thoughts are. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." These words illustrate the influence of our thoughts upon our actions and character. It is no wonder that the Psalmists are so concerned about their thoughts! "Let the . . . meditations of my heart be always acceptable." "Prove me and examine my thoughts." "Keep the door of my heart." "Make me a clean heart, O God." Our thoughts "colour" our lives. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." The Collect suggests careful thinking about our thoughts. "Keep thine heart above all keeping, for out of it are the issues of life."

Can we control our thoughts? We can to a much greater extent than we think. Perhaps we have never tried and so often find ourselves doing "thoughtless" things which always are hurtful.

1. We can see that we always have proper "food for thought." St. Paul is very particular about this. "Whatsoever things are true . . . honest . . . just . . . lovely . . . of good report . . . think of these things." "Give attention to reading," he tells St. Timothy. Whatever you read gives food for thought. Feed your mind with discrimination. Select your reading with more care than you do your food. The Psalmist found his mental food in the word of God, "Thy word is a lantern," etc.

2. We can deal harshly with evil and unkind thoughts. Be mentally rude to them. The way to be rid of an importunate canvasser who wants to sell you what you don't want is to be so busy that you have no time to be persuaded against your better judgment. Keep your mind occupied with good thoughts.

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## Editorial

### CONTROVERSY TABOO.

Too many people fail to distinguish between controversy and discussion. The latter tends to be positive and constructive, while the former is more likely to be negative and destructive with a strong tendency towards bitterness. It is this that has so often brought the Church into disrepute and that ties its hands in coping with difficult problems. We need discussion. There never was a time when we needed more than we do to-day the point of view of diversity of minds and it is for this reason that we have so frequently urged the value and necessity of conferences in connection with our Church work. No man, and no group of men, has a monopoly of wisdom, and the man, or group of men, who thinks he or it has reached a final conclusion is a stumbling block to any institution. Let us have discussion by all means, but let us set our faces like adamant against bitterness, jealousy, petty bickerings, and the attitude of mind that places loyalty to a certain conception of truth above truth itself.

Our object in referring to this subject is that it has a very real bearing upon the forthcoming meeting of the General Synod. There is great danger of controversy at that meeting and if we can do anything to ward it off we shall feel deeply grateful. The particular subject that we have in mind is "Prayers for the Departed," or, as some state it, "for the Dead." We are fully aware of the fact that it is "in the air," as we have been faced with it more or less in this office during the whole of the past year. It has, moreover, been discussed at Synods, and in at least one Synod definite action has been taken looking towards its being introduced into the discussion on Prayer-Book Revision at the General Synod. We are not going to discuss the merits of the subject here. What we do desire is to emphasize this fact, that if the subject is introduced and a debate ensues, we shall have controversy galore. It is one of those subjects that have been threshed out over and over again. Practically all the arguments pro and con are well known to everyone with any theological knowledge, and it can be taken for granted beforehand that no unanimity of opinion can be reached. Such being the case, it seems the height of folly to occupy the time of men who are assembled from all parts of Canada during a time of crisis in national, international, political, social and religious affairs, in travelling over time-worn trails which land one no further ahead than our ancestors were hundreds of years ago. Time is precious now in dealing with matters of vital concern to the living. Never were followers of the Crucified Son of God faced with a more serious situation. United supplication to God the Father of souls, both here and beyond, is absolutely necessary, and anything that interferes with this should be "tabooed." We know that many members of the Church are in sorrow and anxiety. We know that to pray to God for departed loved ones brings comfort to many a one at the present time. Let us not disturb them, but let us not, at the same time, thrust upon others who are just as earnest, as a doctrine of the Church and as a part of its corporate worship, a subject that to them tends to destroy trust in God.

We feel keenly on the subject. We want to see this meeting of the General Synod

work in unison with God the Holy Spirit in grappling with the crisis, let us repeat it, crisis, that faces it. May God grant, therefore, to each and every delegate a determination to allow nothing to interfere with this.

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The Cambridge Press has cabled Archdeacon Armitage, of Halifax, that it finds that it is now impossible to have the Draft Prayer Book as Revised by the committee in Canada before September. This means that it will be necessary to prepare in Canada a report covering all proposed changes since the meeting of General Synod in 1915. Archdeacon Armitage has this report in course of preparation and will send it to the members of General Synod at the earliest possible moment.

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The series of Summer Schools held by the M.S.C.C. and S.S. Commission again this year has been, as heretofore, most successful in point of attendance and interest. May they be successful also in after results. The Summer School has demonstrated its usefulness and is proving a powerful influence in the direction of a deeper and more intelligent interest in the work of the Church, as well as in the development of a strong spirit of harmony among different types of workers. If union of Christian workers, even within the Anglican Communion, is ever to come to stay, it must be the result of men and women of different types coming together to learn the will of God. \* \* \* \* \*

The remarkable statement was made recently by an alderman of the City of Vancouver that the gambling evil among Chinese in that city "would not have caused so much trouble but for a certain class of lawyers who aided the Chinese in evading the spirit of the law." Lawyers are expected to see that laws are enforced, not evaded, and any member of that profession guilty of such conduct should be deprived of his right to practice. It is men of this type who make it exceedingly difficult to suppress evil and who are among the first to sneer at the efforts of clergy and others in this direction. \* \* \* \* \*

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the United States is arranging to hold its annual convention this year at Northfield, Massachusetts. The convention begins on Wednesday, August 14th, and lasts for one week. The Brotherhood has obtained a strong foothold in the United States and includes among its active supporters many very strong laymen of the Church. It is difficult to understand why it has not had the same degree of success in Canada. Can it be that the Church in Canada has not produced as devotional a type of layman as the sister Church south of the lakes has done? This question is worth considering. \* \* \* \* \*

The chart issued recently by the Anglican L.M.M. in connection with the article on the payment of M.S.C.C. funds, entitled "Conservation," by the Bishop of Huron, shows in striking manner the present dilatory methods of forwarding these by the different dioceses. In the year 1917, \$77,799 was sent in during the first eleven months of the year and \$77,653 in the month of December. The monthly average for the year was \$14,635, but the highest amount received in any one of the first eleven months was \$10,928 in April. The present method means overdrafts and interest charges. Systematic monthly remittances is the only cure for this.

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