

## The Melting Pot

Charge delivered to the Synod of the Diocese of Caledonia assembled in St. Andrew's Church, Prince Rupert, Wednesday Morning, June 12th.

Reverend Brethren and Brethren of the Laity:

The closing of one great epoch and the opening of another is always a most critical time. There is so much to be done in the way of readjustment. At the present moment we are in a transition state. One age is passing away, another age is just beginning to dawn. It is inevitable that in such a transition period all weighty things should be thrown into the melting-pot, not to be destroyed, for the genuine metal still remains, but to be recast. Among these weighty things we must include all things connected with our religion and our Church.

The first thing which should be thrown into the melting-pot is our "unhappy divisions." The great war has forced us to see that, while the Church of Christ is divided, we can never win the world for Christ. Our branch of the Church of Christ, while making its contribution to the whole body of some vital elements, such as the historic episcopate, the Church Year, the beautiful liturgical service, should be willing to be itself enriched by receiving other vital elements from other branches of the Church of Christ, such as the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church. The now separated parts of the Church Catholic must get together if we are to fulfil our mission in establishing upon earth the kingdom of righteousness and brotherly love. While at present there seems but little prospect of the Roman Catholic Church relaxing from its rigid exclusive policy, there is the brightest hope that, taught by the war, the leading Protestant Churches will very soon close up their ranks and stand shoulder to shoulder in the great fight for freedom and truth.

The next thing which should be thrown into the melting-pot is our Church services. Why is it that such a small fraction of the population of any place attend church? Some would blame the clergyman, others the people. No doubt, a portion of the blame should go to each, but if it were possible in some way or other to make our Church services, including the prayers, the singing and the preaching, better adapted to meet the needs of the age, there would undoubtedly be a better attendance at church. We have a rich and noble heritage in our order of public worship and in the prayers of our Prayer Book, many of them hallowed by centuries of use, but, while keeping strictly to the order of our Prayer Book, which is based upon a psychological principle, we need more liberty in adapting the length and character of our service to the special occasion. As this is a missionary diocese, and nearly all our clergymen are engaged in pioneer work, our experience is almost identical with that of our Chaplains at the front. We have had to shorten services and use extempore prayer in many cases, gradually training the people to appreciate the fuller and richer service. The war has led us in all our churches to offer up special prayers in closest touch with our present needs, and we must never go back from this custom. While we should encourage the singing of some parts of our Church service, we should say in a simple, natural manner other portions. There should be nothing artificial about our tone when we humbly confess our sins to Almighty God. The note of simplicity and sincerity should ring through all our Church services.

Another thing which should be thrown into the melting-pot is our Church starchiness. We have sadly failed as a Church to exhibit the genuine Spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of fellowship and good comradeship. Class distinctions should have no place in the Church. As we kneel, side by side, in public worship we are all children of the one Heavenly Father. We all partake of the one loaf. "We being many, are one Body in Christ." Having learnt this lesson in the Church, we must carry it out into our daily business, and endeavour to spread abroad in every department of life the spirit of mutual service—each for all and all for each. This is what the world is waiting for—the witness of the universal Church to the universal Brotherhood. The strife between Capital and Labour can only be brought to an end by the spirit of mutual consideration, based upon the recognition of the highest welfare of the whole body. The tyranny of the Czar will only give place to the tyranny of the Bolshevik unless the principle of true democracy, which includes the whole people, is made supreme.

With our Church machinery overhauled and in good working order and with the motive power, the Spirit of Christ, strong within our hearts, we should endeavour as a Church to bring our religion to bear upon the practical concerns of social and business life. Both in this province, and also throughout the Dominion, much has lately been accomplished in the line of helpful legislation. I refer to the prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquor, the provision for Juvenile Courts, and the care of neglected, delinquent and defective children, the enfranchising of women, who will now have more influence in great moral questions, and the safeguarding of some of the rights of labour. Such helpful legislation needs to be followed up with voluntary work. For example, our Church people should lead the way in providing some social substitute for the bar-room, and in securing Christian women for Juvenile Court judges, social service workers, etc.

Some of the laws passed by the Dominion Government as a war-time measure should be retained after the war, as they make for a better order of things. Excessive business profits should always be taxed within reasonable bounds for the benefit of the whole community. This is one of the sanest ways of guarding against an excessive inequality in the distribution of wealth. The Idlers' Act is enabling the police to deal with a parasite class of men who are a disgrace to any community, and is helping these very men to become useful citizens. It should never be repealed, but enforced with discretion.

Some of the laws on economy and against waste should also be continued in the interests of the nation. It is well that, together with the spreading abroad of a true spirit of service, which is the duty of the Church, there should go, hand in hand, a reasonable amount of pressure brought about by a compulsory law.

Many social and industrial reforms have been hastened by the great war, but if these are to become truly effective in our midst we need more than ever the shedding abroad in our hearts of the Spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of sacrifice for the good of others. In this vast diocese, consisting of the northern half of British Columbia, we are hampered at present in our Church work by a shortage of both men and money, caused largely by the war, though we have also to record the retirement, through ill-health, of one of our veteran missionaries, the Rev. John Field, who for thirty-two years has been in charge of our Hazelton Mission. By spreading the work of our available clergymen over as large a territory as possible and linking up Missions we

are endeavouring to "carry on." Our Church people in this diocese must learn to do much more in the way of self-support. We must make more use of our earnest laymen in conducting religious services, remembering the priesthood of the laity. Under the present stress and strain it may become necessary for our clergymen to follow St. Paul's example and labour with their own hands to minister in part to their own necessities, but while this might allow them to conduct Sunday services, it would not allow them time for pastoral visiting, and in a pioneer country like this, where large congregations can never be expected, it is the man-to-man and heart-to-heart work which tells most for God and humanity.

The outlook for religion is exceedingly bright, but it must not be the selfish religion with which in the past we have been too much accustomed. It must be the religion of Christ, the religion of social service, the religion of fellowship—fellowship with God through His Son, fellowship with one another through the Spirit of His Son, the spirit of brotherly love, the spirit of ministering membership, the spirit of Him Who said, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

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## THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

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Christ. We have made it consist of "services," rather than of "service."

And at all this the healthy instinct of humanity rebels. The heart of the multitude is true to the great simplicities and the great realities. It cares not a whit for the fetish of rubrics. It is indifferent to "Articles," whether they be Thirty-Nine, Forty, or Four Thousand. But it does want the spirit of the Christ incarnated in a life. It responds to a God Who is not imagined in the aloofness of a temple rejoicing in hymns, but is seen at work among the masses of mankind, uplifting, energizing, purifying, by sharing their sufferings and sanctioning their hopes. It thrills to a God "Who goes through the world like fives and drums and banners, calling for recruits along the street."

And our duty as Churchmen is to endeavour so to live "God," that men may see Him and love Him—to try, briefly, to carry on the work of the Christian Heroes of the battlefield, who, by their supreme unselfishness, "have shown us God." When our Empire has caught this vision, when our nation begins fervently to pray "Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee above all things" . . . she will renew her strength, because she will once more be in vital touch with the Fountain of all strength; she will pass on to the ampler life of those divine promises, "which exceed all that we can desire."

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In praying for others, we are doing them a benefit, and we are apt to love those we benefit. Thus prayer, intercessory prayer, increases charity, mends the heart.

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There is a certain art in keeping ourselves happy. In this respect, as in others, we require to watch over and manage ourselves almost as if we were somebody else.—Sir John Lubbock.

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It is a fact that the habitual performance of the humblest duties has often developed the highest spirituality of character, with a vivid consciousness of God within and around us.—W. K. Inge.