



THE SOUL OF AN ARCHBISHOP

ONCE upon a time a Canadian born in England tried to make a speech at an English banquet. The pageant of dignitaries at the head table consisted of the Dean of the Cathedral, the Bishop, the Lord Mayor, the Lord High Sheriff, the Prebendary of Something-or-other, the Lord Somebody-Else, who lived in the town, the local M.P., and a number of other graduated steps in the staircase of aristocracy that reached down to the rank and file of whom the Canadian was one. All the other speakers, when they rose to address the chair, had mentioned everybody in the procession in the exactly proper order, as meticulously as a child says "doctor, lawyer, merchant chief, rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief." The English-born Canadian couldn't remember the lingo and said frankly:

"Mr. Chairman, and all other dignitaries present, in whatever order you belong—"

Then he paused. His speech thereafter was a vain thing. He had got in wrong at the start. England, especially the Church of England, must be regarded in order. The real head of the banquet was the Dean of the Cathedral; next him the Bishop. There was no other way to begin a right speech. It had always been so.

"I say," said an English newspaperman next morning, "they didn't seem to appreciate your—American humor, did they?"

In just such a frame of mind the writer sat a few days ago in a huge audience of Canadians waiting for the much-heralded advent of the Archbishop of York. The event had been staged with all the accessories. The audience itself was divided into four sections—front rows in the balcony for extra elects; rest of the balcony and most of the gallery for blue ticketers; and what few seats were left for the general public who had no tickets. The platform was similarly organized. The front row was reserved for bishops and their equivalents; all the other seats—200 or so—for the motley preferred list of dignitaries in their places.

Pomp and circumstance! I remember when that great fighting soul Henry George spoke on the same platform twenty-five years ago, he was accompanied by nobody but the chairman. The author of Progress and Poverty had no use for court functions on a stage. The gallery was full of 25-cent students. The lower part of the hall was about a quarter filled with 50-centers.

"I wish all you men in the gallery would come below. Let's all get together," said Henry George.

And they came. But the Archbishop of York, with just as plain a spiritual message to mankind, was compelled to take part in a pageant.

We are not enemies of bishops in this country. We do not believe that the soul of a bishop is the sort of trick-box that H. G. Wells made a fortune out of when he wrote the book by this name; or that a bishop never sees God until he gets drunk on some elixir; no, not even the Bishop of Wells. England must have bishops. Canada must have bishops in the making. Every Anglican Church we have is an outpost of the Empire. If Canada ever becomes a republic it will never be by the consent of the curates—whatever the bishops think—even though we have no Established Church. With all our round-hatted clerics—a thousand and more—we have never come to understand them. We don't even understand the average Englishman—if there is any such thing. It's only a few years since "no Englishmen need apply" used to be seen in our advertisements. A lot of people who imagine they are authorities on the Empire fall down badly in their estimate of England. That's one of the weaknesses of having a national character like John Bull, who never could have been at home in Bombay, Capetown or Melbourne, whatever he might feel like in Ottawa. John Bull never made the Empire. And we shall never understand the Empire until we in Canada know as much about the real average Englishman as we pretend to do about John Bull.

SO, when you ask whether it is worth while to pay attention to what is asked of you in the way of conservation of food, do not say it does not matter.

Of course it matters. If everyone said that, where would the cause of freedom be? It is not merely the value of the foodstuffs saved. It is that self-sacrifice more than anything else would be putting reality and moral power into our share of this great conflict. If it be true that we have come to the stage in this contest where endurance and endurance only will tell, and where every person has got to take his part, then it is plain to me that there are two things we need. First, a deepened faith in our cause.

Then we need moral strength, such as never came into our lives before. The only doubt I have when I think of my own country, and it sometimes haunts me, is whether we shall have, as a people, moral strength enough to endure this tremendous test. It is not enough to trust in our brave men at the front. Are we morally and spiritually strong enough to win through?

What I ask of you is not only admiration for our armies, not only enthusiasm for their deeds, not only sympathy for their sacrifice, but that we should raise and consecrate our souls to the highest that is in us, and to God, for the sake of our country. If so, can we doubt what will happen? Can we believe it is the will of God that the German spirit should prevail? No, no, not for one moment. The moral power that is available for



the allies is vastly stronger than any moral power that the enemy can bring to bear. Let us resolve that with firmness in the right as God has given us to see the right, we shall finish the task we have on hand, and, please God, we shall not lay it down until we have passed the great test and have won victory for the freedom of mankind.

And York was so splendidly simple because he had a deep message to deliver from the heart of England. Because he stood there not as representing the Church, but the people; as faithfully as Bottomley with his John Bull ever reflected the workaday masses of those that labor and fight.

If he had ever been only a prelate he was so no longer. If there was anything in the Church that could be discarded for the sake of England, let it go. He had but one cause—England and what that means to civilization. And he knew. If he had been ignorant before, the war had taught him. He has seen the war; his men of York in the trenches and on the decks of the Grand fleet in the North Sea. Not from idle curiosity or to have it said that he had been there as some people brag about shaking hands with the King. He had been there for what he could do better when he got back home to York; for what he could say better when he got out to the United States and Canada. They say that a year or so before the war York, in company with Sir Edward Grey, paid a visit to Oxford. Both men spoke. To the critical overseas crowd of that great university Grey seemed much the simpler man. York spoke more as an academic and a prelate. His hair was without a tinge of grey.

Then the war has changed him. His hair is white. And his speech was as simple as a bedside talk. His voice was never used to play tricks. His knowledge of the English tongue did nothing to advertise York or to make an occasion for the glory of the Church of England. He had a bigger cause. And there were times in his speech when only the unaffected talk of a great sincere prelate could have conveyed the conviction and the inspiration that he did.

And what was the one thing that animated this great average Englishman by practice? Not religion except as he himself said where religion was the highest form of patriotism. Not the Church, except in so far as all Churches can unite for the good of mankind in a war waged against all the best teachings of the Church in any and all forms of creed. Not society, except as the voluntary co-ordination of the best forces in State and country must be made

We might do well to begin on such men as the Archbishop of York. The Primate of England is a much easier person to understand than the average Canadian curate. A curate is expected to be something of a snob. As a rector he may still be a bit of a prig if his parishioners like him that way—and they sometimes do. As an archdeacon he may be fond of poor people and a friend of labor unions. As a bishop he may be a real democrat. By the time he gets to be an archbishop he is almost sure to be a plain man of the people, as close to the common everyday heart of things as John Bright or John Wesley ever was.

THE Archbishop of York would probably have preferred to come like an ordinary human being on to the platform, accompanied by the chairman, instead of having to stalk through a Giants' Causeway of bishops, archdeacons, parsons, general superintendents, college presidents, chancellors, editors, parliamentarians, financiers and professors. Because the reason for his being here was vastly bigger than himself he quietly laid off the rigmarole and the regalia, and forgot all about the seats of the elect. Somebody had stuck up slides of a lot of rummy little cathedrals on a screen, along with some of the really great ones that inspire the imagination. As an overture to York it was a failure. He was not on that platform as a cathedralite. He was there as a plain, average Englishman, even though he may have as Scotch a name as Cosmo Gordon Lang, educated first in Glasgow, and for all we know intended for the kirk. He had no oration to deliver. But he had the oratory of a simple speech, great sincerity, deep-rooted conviction and a voice of splendid music that played all over a huge audience as easily as though he had been in a parlor, without a shout, and almost never a gesture.