

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, October 11th, 1917.

The Christian Year

The 20th Sunday after Trinity, Oct. 21, 1917

"That we being ready," says the Collect for the Day. How necessary it is to be ready! How often we miss opportunities because we are not ready.

This is true in all sorts of ways in life—Opportunity came, and then, because we were not alert, were not watching, Opportunity passed by. But it is specially true in the things of God. Lack of spiritual alertness is the fruitful cause of missing great opportunities of blessing and power. The attitude to be cultivated is that of continual watchfulness and alertness, not only against temptations, but for blessings, for blessings often come at unexpected times. Sometimes we know that we have missed a golden opportunity, all because we were in an unresponsive attitude. Sometimes we say to ourselves, "It is a dull day; nothing bright and beautiful can come my way to-day. I can shut the door of my heart and mind; no glad messengers will visit me to-day." And so it is when the Angels of God's Grace and Mercy come to us with hands full of blessings they pass by the closed doors. We must leave the doors open. We must be ready, for we never know when, and under what guises, these Messengers may come. We must be expectant of blessing and help in all circumstances, even the most unlikely. God has a way of hiding His best things in unlikely places, and of offering His choicest blessings concealed in unpromising corners. The point is, we must be very responsive, very sensitive to all the good and blessed things with which our lives are surrounded, ready always to welcome the shy Angel called "Opportunity."

"Jesus said, The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, who made a marriage feast for his son." "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready." "The wedding is ready!" The Gospel for the Day is full of messages, but we think of just one aspect of one of those messages, because it is in line with the thought in the Collect we have been considering. The King is always ready. He has prepared the Marriage Feast for us. The good things of God are spread out for us to partake of. He has made all things ready. He is seeking to fill our lives with grace and blessing. "The wedding is ready."

A suggestion comes to us from the Epistle as to what in part makes up this watchful and alert attitude of mind which enables us to recognize the blessings and opportunities which may be enfolded in unlikely circumstances. St. Paul says, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is the joyful and thankful spirit which is most ready to see blessing and help, where others see none at all. We know it from our own experience that nothing makes us as blind to blessing as a cheerless and thankless outlook on our lives, and that nothing makes us so quick to appreciate the beautiful and helpful as the spirit of joy and thanksgiving.

Editorial

THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN.

"The only good Indian is a dead Indian." So say those who have little, if any, sympathy with the red man, and who would like to see the last of him. At the present moment, however, at least forty of these same red men from one little corner of Canada (Walpole Island) are in khaki somewhere at the front, to say nothing of hundreds of others from various parts of the Dominion as far west and north as Prince Rupert.

The future of the Indian is a mystery, the solution of which rests largely with the present generation of white men. Whether it is to be a merging of the two races into one, or a perpetuation of the two as separate races, matters little so far as our present attitude to the Indian is concerned. In either case it is for the well-being of Canada that the Indian be safeguarded against the evils of western civilization. The worst enemies that the Indian has to face are "fire-water" and the diseases that are largely the fruits of immoral intercourse with the white man. And the white man is reaping these fruits as well as the Indian, although the latter, being the weaker of the two and having fewer means of defence, is the greater sufferer.

Public opinion, always a powerful influence, is one of the greatest difficulties in the way of those who are working in behalf of the Indian race. We shall not attempt to explain the reason for this. We know that it is taken for granted by far too many, even within the Church, that the extinction of the Indian race is only a matter of time, and that, therefore, the quicker this takes place the better. What is the use, they ask, of trying to do anything for them? Such people forget, or do not care to remember, what their own ancestors were like in days gone by, before the power of the Gospel of Christ was brought to bear upon their race. They forget the many centuries that have passed since that time and the slow progress that even the white man has made. They forget the history of the coming of the white man to this continent and the struggles of the red man to hold his own against the intruder. They forget the heroic labours of the messengers of the Gospel, who have given, and are still giving, their lives to work among the Indians. And they forget the fact that wherever these workers have gone they have seen wonderful results for good, except where the white man's greed for land and gold and the white man's immoral habits have deprived his weaker brother of his former means of livelihood and have dragged him down into degradation and vice. We need to remember that sin always carries with it its reward, and that, apart from any obligations as Christian men, we cannot afford to neglect a single section of our population.

Our reason for referring to this subject at the present time is that the work of the Church among the Indians is sadly in need of greater support. Nor is it merely financial support that is needed. The older missionaries, one by one, are being compelled by age to step aside and younger men are not coming forward to fill their places in the numbers required. Many stations are either entirely, or inadequately, manned. That there are men of the right type to be had, perhaps not at

present, but certainly at the close of the war, is proved by the response made by the young men of the Church to the call to arms and to the call of the Foreign Mission field. It is evident, therefore, that it is our duty to remove the difficulties, whatever they may be, and to face the situation in a manly, Christ-like spirit, remembering always that the soul of the red man is just as valuable in the eyes of God as the soul of even a white man.

"It is notorious that certain classes of the community have never yet perceived the need for food economy at all; and the clergy can do notable service by reminding their congregation at large that the trouble of food shortage is with us still, and must be until the end of the war at least, and even afterwards; also by emphasizing the selfishness of individuals who refuse to bear their part of the common burden." The above is taken from an editorial note in "The Guardian," England. Does it not apply with equal force to us in Canada? We fear it does.

We were delighted to hear that it is the intention of our Bishops to make an appeal for fifteen thousand dollars in connection with the overseas Chaplain service. This should make it possible to give adequate assistance to the splendid men who are in charge of that work at the front and for the additional men whom conscription will make necessary. We were sorry, though, that the suggestion made by Canon Heeney, of Winnipeg, to appeal for another fifteen thousand dollars for work among returned soldiers was not agreed to.

We are in receipt of the Annual Report of the Commission of Conservation of Canada for the year 1917, and we cannot urge too strongly on all who have access to it a careful perusal of pages 155 to 182. They deal with the subject of venereal diseases in Canada, and contain some startling information. Too many people in Canada are living in a fool's paradise. They hold up their hands in horror the moment one begins to speak on this subject, as if it were something that should be left absolutely alone. This is one of the greatest obstacles to be overcome in dealing with this disease, which, according to Dr. C. K. Clarke, one of the ablest of Canada's medical men, stands "pre-eminent as a menace to the race and, incidentally, to the nation."

Citizens of German origin in the Province of Saskatchewan, we are told, have been planning to elect members of Parliament from among their own numbers. In addition to this, it is a matter of common knowledge in the same province that a large percentage of the public schools are controlled by German trustees and have teachers of German descent. One public school inspector reported the situation to the Government, but no steps were taken to remedy it. We hear a great deal about the situation in Quebec, but for some reason or other, known only to party politicians, the enemy that we are fighting in Europe is being allowed liberties in Western Canada that should not be tolerated for one moment. Now is the time to deal with these matters; not twenty or thirty years hence.

Others Say

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