

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, January 10th, 1918.

The Christian Year

The Second Sunday After the Epiphany,
January 20th, 1918.

The Epiphany is the manifestation of the Glory of Christ. To-day's Gospel ends with the words: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory, and His disciples believed on Him." What is this Glory which is manifested at the Wedding Feast of Cana? St. John, who tells about the sign, tells in another place about the Glory. "And we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father." It was the Glory of the Ineffable Godhead that was here manifested. By this sign the Glory of the Most High God flashed forth. I say, by this sign, because this act was distinctively a sign, a mark of the doer's power and grace and Divine character. But the Glory of Christ did not begin with that sign; the sign only manifested it. For thirty years He had been possessed of that power. It was not any the less Divine when unsuspected and unseen in Nazareth, than when in Cana it broke forth into visible manifestation. It was just as Divine in the simple daily acts as when shown in those more startling and wonderful. "It was just as much the life of God on earth when He did an act of ordinary human love or human duty, as when He did an extraordinary act, such as turning water into wine. God was as much in the daily life and love of Christ as He was in Christ's miracles. The miracles only made manifest the hidden Glory. The extraordinary only proved the ordinary was Divine. It was done to manifest forth His Glory."

Again, this miracle of Cana manifests His Glory in another way. Few things so wonderfully demonstrate the real breadth of a man's love for his fellows as this ability to share their joys and amusements. It requires even greater powers of sympathy to enter into the joys of people differently educated and brought up from ourselves than to share their sorrows and trials. Christ, the Son of God, is shown as sharing in the wedding festivities at Cana. He enters completely into touch with common life at every turn. He has to do with its joys as well as its sorrows; His sympathy embraces both. It has been said that the saddest thing in life is an unblest sorrow; surely there is one thing almost sadder—an unblest joy. Do not forget that Jesus Christ is concerned with the things which make you happy and glad, that the Unspeakable Glory of the Only Begotten of the Father is ready to embrace, transfigure and make beautiful your joys; that in them it will be manifested, if you ask in faith.

May we remember in all our ways that He, Who wrought the sign and thereby manifested the Glory that is always His, is still at hand to bless humble faith and simple obedience with like manifestation of His Glory. Has the wine of your life run out, and only weak water remains? Are the present opportunities, compared to the past, as water is to wine? Is the happiness of life, its brightness, its hope, threatened by some catastrophe? Are you weak where you once were strong? These are opportunities for you to let Him, Who worked a sign in Cana of Galilee, manifest His Glory in you.

Who overcomes by force hath overcome but half his foe.—Milton.

Editorial

PARISH FINANCES.

We have referred to this matter several times already, but in view of the approaching Vestry Meetings it is an opportune time to refer to it again. The haphazard financial methods employed in such a large percentage of parishes is sufficient excuse for doing so, if an excuse is needed. Moreover, during the past year, in a parish that we shall not name, we have seen an up-to-date set of books tried out, and we do not hesitate to say that, in this parish at any rate, the old system is gone for good.

We have said "set of books," but it would be more correct to say one book divided into three sections. It is a loose-leaf book, each leaf being fourteen by sixteen inches in size, which allows for all the columns that are necessary. The first section, of yellow paper, is for parochial purposes; the second section, of white paper, for extra-parochial purposes; and the third section, of pale-blue paper, is ruled for ledger purposes and has no printing. The sheets of the first two sections are ruled in columns for the various items of receipts and disbursements, covering all the ordinary sources of income, and the various objects receiving assistance. Receipts and disbursements are, of course, put on separate pages. The cash-ledger system is employed so that a separate ledger account is necessary only in a few instances. All money is deposited in the bank and all payments are made by cheque. Two separate accounts are kept, one for parochial funds and the other for extra-parochial funds. This is most important, otherwise it is almost impossible to prevent confusion. So much for the book. It may appear to some that it is too complicated for general adoption, but we feel certain that in ninety per cent. of our parishes some man can be found who, after half an hour's instruction, could handle it without difficulty.

This leads up to another point. In the particular parish referred to above, a treasurer has been appointed, who does all the book-keeping and banking, the Wardens, of course, counting the collections and signing cheques before issuing them. In too many parishes this work is undertaken by the people's Warden with the result that he finds it difficult, no matter how good his intentions may be, to keep the accounts up to date, and the different items separate. The wardens, moreover, like some church festivals, are not fixtures, and frequent changes in the personnel of those in charge of parish book-keeping are not beneficial. There is no reason why a treasurer should not be appointed who can remain in office for several years and we feel certain that it would not be necessary, except in a few of our largest parishes, to pay such an official.

One more reform is needed in the vast majority of our parishes. At present there are a number of organizations raising and disbursing money with a certain amount of duplicating and without co-operation or co-ordination. We would not advocate handing over all money to the treasurer of the parish but he should at least be given vouchers, say, every quarter, for all money received and paid out. Contributions from parish organizations towards the regular parochial or extra-parochial objects should, however, pass through his hands. At present a parish is asked for a certain amount for, say, diocesan missions, and payments towards this object are frequently made to the

diocesan treasurer by three or four organizations independently of one another. This should not be. In every parish there is needed an advisory board, meeting at least once each quarter and having on it, in addition to some half-a-dozen members appointed by the Vestry, one or two representatives from the Sunday School and from each permanent organization in the parish. In this way, not only the finances but also the missionary, educational, and social activities of the parish can be co-ordinated.

With the adoption of the envelope system of weekly giving, an annual every-member canvass, a business-like method of keeping accounts, united effort on the part of all organizations, and a spirit of earnestness and consecration, there is no reason why any parish should not do immensely more than it has done in the past.

* * * * *

The fuel situation in Canada is fast becoming serious. There are two classes of persons for whom one has little sympathy,—the man who lays by more than he needs and cares little what becomes of others, and the man who when he is able to lay by enough for the future, does not lift a finger to do so. There are thousands of others, though, who are unable, financially, to secure more than enough for a few weeks or a month in advance. There is no question that many a cellar contains far more than is needed for this winter and there should be no hesitation in compelling the owners of such to share up with those who are in necessity. Suffering, sickness, and even death in some cases will result from the present scarcity before the winter is over. It is too serious a matter to brook delay and we earnestly hope that those in whose hands lies the power to relieve the situation will take steps without delay to deal with it. In the meantime it is the duty of every person to do what he or she can individually, apart from any action on the part of government authorities.

* * * * *

A member of the Woman's Auxiliary in the Diocese of Columbia is bold enough to suggest an amalgamation of the Letter Leaflet and the Mission World. We realize fully the splendid service done by the Leaflet in the days gone by, but we hope that the day is not far distant when an amalgamation such as is suggested may take place. The interests of the whole Church are greater than the interests of any one organization in it, and we do not hesitate to say that the highest interests of the missionary work of our Church in Canada can, at present, be best served by one live missionary publication for adults. When the time comes for a second publication it should be for the junior members of the Church.

* * * * *

The death of William Wilfrid Campbell removes one of Canada's best-known and most popular poets. Times of peace and material prosperity are not the times of greatest encouragement for poets. At such times people's minds are too much occupied with earthly matters and find it difficult to grasp the beauty and the thought of the poet's verse. In spite of this, Canada has reason to feel proud of its poets, among whose names that of William Wilfrid Campbell will always occupy a foremost place. The war is producing much poetry of a very inferior order, but it is also producing some of a strikingly high order, and among our younger Canadian writers there are several who give promise of a bright future. Let us encourage them and not leave it to a future generation to discover their greatness.