

Editorial

The Children's Season

BY common consent, Christmas belongs to the children. Whatever sorrows and worries we may have, they must be kept to ourselves; the children must know nothing but joy and kindness. It is our practice here, as elsewhere, to give presents to the little ones. The practice will not be discontinued this year but the gifts will in many cases be more modest than formerly. This is no misfortune. In recent years the toy stores have so perfected their wares that the articles for sale are complete in every detail. Nothing is left to the imagination of childhood. This is the real misfortune. For a very little girl a rag doll, crude and shapeless, is in every way better than a gaudily trimmed fashionable beauty; for a little boy a rough wagon made from empty spools and a soap box is better than the highly-finished creation of the toy counter.

What children really require, however, is the gift of love and kindness. They cannot be satisfied with mere things. The best gift of all is a kind father, a loving mother. What fools we be to think that anything else will take the place of care and affection. There are two kinds of capital parents can leave their children—the capital of worldly possessions and the capital of character and power. The latter is the capital that endures.

At Christmas time children should think of more than the gifts and kindnesses they receive. All this should be secondary. The matter of chief importance is that they should be trained to minister to the happiness of others. Too often our giving becomes an empty form. We simply try to return kindness for kindness so as not to be outdone. Yet it is possible to put all giving on a different plane. It is possible to train children to think kindly of others, and to sacrifice for them, and even to give freely in an unostentatious way. This is what they really require and what the world requires. Giving must come from the heart.

"Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor and me."
There are so many opportunities this year for assisting others who are in need that there is every opportunity for training children in unselfish Christian service.

Christmas Peace

It seems inconsistent, does it not, for people to be singing anthems of peace when the country is in the throes of war? Yet that is what they are doing, and it is right and proper for them so to do, for there is no real inconsistency. The men who have taken the sword are doing so in the name of peace. They are able with clean heart and pure conscience to sing "peace on earth and goodwill to men," for it is for this very thing they are risking their lives, it is for this their wives and mothers, are permitting the sacrifice.

It is quite possible for one living in the heart of commotion to have peace in his own soul. Real peace depends not upon outward conditions but upon internal states. Those who believe that this struggle is for right and truth and liberty, and who feel that they are called of God to their task, will have in their souls the peace of assurance and hope. They can know nothing but peace.

The preachers tell us a story of a competition among artists to produce the best picture representing "Peace." There were pictures of quiet landscapes, glassy seas, quarrelsome animals feeding side by side, families at their devotions, children in their cradles, but the winning picture was that of a stormy ocean bordered by rugged cliffs, while away up on a cliff, sheltered in a crevice, sat a little bird upon her nest. She was free from the tempest, free too from all marauders, and to her storm and wind were nothing. She was at peace because confident of security. This is how it may be and should be with all of us at this time. Even though we can see before us the plains strewn with corpses, and can hear the roar of guns and the shrieking of shells, we can feel that there is continually a voice speaking peace and consolation. The voice of Him who sits within the shadow keeping watch upon His own.

The High Cost of Living

THERE is not a newspaper in the land that is not discussing the cost of living. There is not a group of people that does not make this the topic of conversation. There is not a home in the whole land that does not feel the pinch. There is not a grocer or tradesman who is not the object of somebody's wrath. Naturally enough, there is some rough and ready investigation and the people are forming conclusions. The government, supine or incompetent, has proven itself utterly useless in such an emergency, and it is as plain as the nose on a man's face that it is afraid to move. The public announcement of the main cause of our distress would be a death blow to the pet policy of protection, a policy utterly wrong in principle and ruinous in practice, a policy which imposes forty millions a year on western farmers. How great a tax it imposes on dwellers in towns and cities it is impossible to say. There is a remedy for all this, however, and that

remedy lies with the people, who will not be slow to express themselves when the opportunity is given. A national policy which enriches but four people in a thousand is a mighty poor policy at best, and when it is recognized that the few who benefit from it are chiefly responsible for the pitiable conditions in our political life, there are no words strong enough to condemn it.

Retailers and Wholesalers

NOW protective duty is but one of the causes contributing to the cost of living. Another cause is of course the war. One can understand how leather, wool, ironware should cost much more than two years ago, and can understand how there should be a raise in the price of flour and some of the vegetables. Yet the war will not account for the increases in certain staples that are as plentiful as before the war. A letter from an honest wholesaler recently explains how certain manufacturers and wholesalers have practically dictated prices to the retailers. They are said to be using the war as a covering for their sin—the greatest sin that could be committed against a people. For there can be no greater wrong than robbing a people in time of war. If there is nothing in the charge that has been made, then the manufacturers should welcome an investigation, if there is something wrong then it should be exposed. On the face of it, there is no good reason for the high prices we are compelled to pay. A government which is unwilling to take the initiative in a thorough-going and fearless investigation is unworthy of the confidence of the people.

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Low lies the world in awful suffering
Beneath the blood-red mantle of the war;
Scarce noting that high Heaven's clouds
Are rent,
Revealing still the Christ-Child's natal
star,
A holy diapason softly swells
Above the diabolic scream of shells!
Not meaningless the great cherubic song
Of "Glory, Peace, Goodwill," in golden
tones,
But a fair promise, God shall right the
wrong,
Redress the evil and repay the moans!
A world redeemed and robed in white
shall stand
Rejoicing 'neath the Babe of Bethlehem's
hand.

The Cost of High Living

THOSE who would have us forget the apathy of Parliament and the intrigues of the men who are manipulating the markets are lecturing us soundly on the cost of high living. Well, there is something in it. A man does not need meat twice a day; he can get along without it every day. He does not need to buy Quaker Oats in nicely-wrapped packages when he can buy ordinary meal quite as good for half the price. Nor does he require strawberries at Christmas time when a dish of preserved peaches may be had for one-tenth the sum. Neither is it necessary to wear all-wool garments when combination cotton-wool may equally serve the purpose. And so it is all around. This is no time for extravagance in food, dress or entertainment. It is only fair that we should practise economy, fair, too, that we should train our children to economize, for otherwise we shall become a nation of spend-thrifts. Yes, while we deplore the high cost of living, let us lessen the cost of high living.

The New Britain and the New Canada

THE war will bring about a reconstruction of the World and a reconstruction of the Empire. The latter fact was expressed by the Bishop of Worcester the other day in New York. Here are his words:

"Some day England with her Allies will win another world victory for the freedom of men. New aspects of the relations of capital to labor, new phases of religion, politics and domestic economy must find their place in our new house."

"When peace comes it would be indeed helpful if

the neutral countries lent a hand in the adjustment of all our furniture, in the adjustment of those social conditions which will make for a lasting commonwealth. That is what we aim at. We are tired of the word 'empire.' I do not think we want any longer to talk of the British empire. We want to talk of the British brotherhood and the British commonwealth."

This thought, coming as it does from a high authority in church and state, indicates how completely the idea of reconstruction has taken hold of the British public. Recent utterances by Lord Northcliffe are to the same effect. It is well that there is agreement on this point. Otherwise the war would end in a greater, because a civil war.

In Canada we must expect reconstruction also. Politically the rule of parties, controlled by moneyed interests, must give way to rule by the people. Fortunately this will be the easier, because in local politics the principle is now being accepted. In religion there must be no discrimination in law or practice in favor of any sect. In education there must be equality of opportunity for all citizens. This means a remodelling of institutions and courses of instruction in high schools, universities and technical schools. Above all, in the world of trade and commerce there must be a willingness to adopt the principle of co-operation with equitable sharing of profits instead of the present principle of individualism and the seizure of profits by the privileged few. In other words, democracy is coming into its own—not a democracy which recognizes the loafer and the meddler as equal to the industrious faithful worker, but a democracy which puts a premium on worth and honest endeavor.

The Third Party

LAST month in Winnipeg there was a happening that illustrated with wonderful clearness the necessity of legislation governing the actions of individuals and corporations. In Winnipeg a company known as the Crescent Creamery Co. delivers milk to 40,000 families. It has, in fact, a virtual monopoly of the milk business in the city. Whether it supplies good cows' milk or a semi-artificial product is not in question. No one has raised that question, although questions of all kinds will now be put regarding the milk supply. When any organization calls attention to itself, there are bound to be inquiries, touching all of its actions and methods. So we expect there will shortly be a first-class investigation of the milk situation in Winnipeg and other parts of the West.

But to get back to the disturbance of last month. The company as such hires its drivers. Neither Mr. A nor Mr. B of the company engages anybody. Everything is done in the name of the company. The men in their turn formed a company and asked recognition. In other words they thought that if "collective bargaining" was a good thing for the company, it should be a good thing for the men. This seemed reasonable enough, until it was found out, or said to be found out, that the drivers' company was a branch of a great international organization with headquarters in the United States. It was then urged that no Canadian company should be expected to recognize an international organization of this kind, and so the quarrel went on for a few days, and finally there was a compromise and a settlement; but in the meantime what of the third party to the quarrel—the people, and particularly the babies of the city? This is the question that is of most importance, and it is the one question that the two parties to the dispute failed to keep ever before them.

It is altogether wrong for employers and employees who are trusted to perform some great public service to begin squabbling to the neglect of the people. In all strikes and lockouts there are three parties concerned and not two, and it is the right and duty of the state, through legislation and fearless administration, to see that the third party receives fair treatment. Even although a compromise was effected in this case without the intervention of the state, it might have been otherwise. Though a state should interfere as little as possible with the free action of individuals and corporations, so long as the actions are fair and reasonable, it should always have the right of supervision and the right to assume dictatorship in case of trouble. And even if the control of a company—either the company owning a business or the company of workers in their employ—is in another country, the state should still be paramount, and have the right to take over a business and manage it in its own interest. In this case the carrying on of the milk business was a public necessity. Both men and company were absolutely out of order in suspending operations while a quarrel was being settled. No business is merely a private business. The people are always silent partners in every business. Both employers and unions are taking themselves too seriously. The power vested in corporations and unions is a menace to Canada. The state must protect itself. The little happening in Winnipeg is but an illustration of what might take place any day.