

A CHRISTMAS
MESSAGE—

To The Boys and Girls

From Manitoba's Minister of Education

THE poet, Tennyson, says in Ulysses, "I am a part of all that I have met," and in Locksley Hall he says, "I, the heir of all the ages." In these two striking phrases he conveys the idea that we are indebted to others around us for many of the advantages with which we are surrounded, and that many of our benefits to-day have been given to us as a result of the accumulated effort of men and women in days gone by. For example:

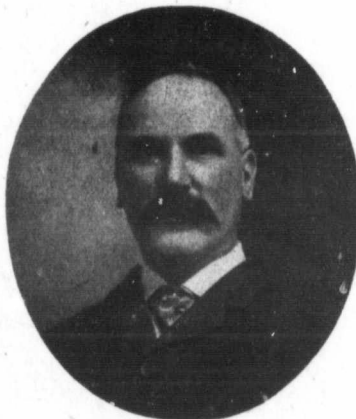
Any little boy will press a button for the electric light, and yet it is only forty years since electric light became of general use. A little lad, two or three years old, will go to the telephone and talk to his chum miles away, and yet many fathers and mothers can remember when there was no telephone. The automobile running about our streets and roads has become a permanent part of our mode of travel, and yet, twenty-six years ago, there were no automobiles. We are now getting accustomed to seeing machines flying in the air, yet it is only half-a-dozen years since this became possible.

But Tennyson's idea is true in other matters besides these which are physical and mechanical. Our wealth of literature, art and music is largely due to the efforts of men and women in other times and other places. Through great books we are able to talk with the men and women who wrote them long years ago, and to enter into the thoughts and ideas of others far away from us. Through pictures we are able to see the beauties of other lands, and appreciate visions of other minds. Through music we can share the moments of joy, of sorrow, of pathos and triumph of others.

But there is still another, and even more important matter to which these sayings of Tennyson apply—the benefits of Free Citizenship. To-day we live in a free land. We go to and fro on our daily business without let or hindrance. We have our various free institutions by which we govern ourselves and manage our own affairs. These have all been obtained for us by steady, prolonged effort throughout succeeding generations. At times there have been great struggles in the cause of freedom, and we have just seen the close of the greatest struggle for freedom in all the ages.

In August, 1914, Germany made a great attack upon the liberties of the world, including the liberties of the people of Canada. Germany was only prevented from reaching her goal because men and women from all over the world, including Canada

"Believe in the future, for none but you can. Believe in what is called the impossible, for it waits the help of your hands to show itself to be the inevitable. . . . Take up the thought and give it shape in act! You can and you alone."



HON. DR. R. S. THORNTON
Minister of Education, Manitoba

—our own brothers, sisters, fathers, sons—took up the conflict and finally triumphed. We are still free; we can say we are still free because men and women sacrificed even life itself to secure that freedom for us.

In all these things we are debtors to others in the years that have passed. How shall we pay the debt? We cannot pay it to the past, but we can discharge it by rendering like service to the present and future. We can strive, as they have done, to make of ourselves useful men and women, and so build up the Canadian Nation. We can do our work and meet our responsibilities in the spirit of willing service, and of mutual helpfulness which is, after all, the true spirit of Christmas.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas.

WHAT PETER WRIGHT SAYS

WE had hoped till the last minute to have a promised message from Mr. Peter Wright, President of the British Seaman's Union, who lately visited Canada to take part in the National Conference on Education.

Mr. Wright, on the eve of sailing for England, promised the editor to write a special message to young Canada while he was on the ocean, but while "Peter" is emphatically a man of his word, there are a number of reasons in his busy life, any one of which would be sufficient to explain why his message had not come to hand as our last forme goes to press.

No doubt we shall have it for our New Year's message, but whatever its import, it can never outclass his ringing appeal for the young folks when he addressed the conference in Winnipeg.

Mr. Wright does not pose as a superior person who feels entitled to "talk down" to the ignorant crowd at his feet. The very opposite. He is one of the humblest of men, gifted, however, with an unusual share of hereditary common sense—one of "Nature's noblemen," as one has called him—who has literally had to fight his way from early boyhood to the position he now holds in the esteem of the whole British Empire.

He is the father of eight children who are "especially his own," but he has, as he puts it, "something like fifty thousand kiddies" under his charge, and is on the senate of two Universities. He is one of those men who find their greatest solace under every trial in the companionship of children, whose hearts are big enough to take in every child in the universe, who believes that the state possesses no asset that will ever take precedence of its children.

As the children of Manitoba, and particularly those of them whose parents have come from non-English speaking countries to find a home with us in Manitoba, have long been accustomed to recognize, in Dr. Thornton, their "educational father," so is Mr. Wright exercising all the love and care of a father over the many thousands of children of British sailor-men whose welfare is, to a large degree, in his keeping.

"All I am out for," says this wonderful old seadog, "is to bring in this kingdom of God upon earth. The whole of my creed has been, and is, to-day, to do unto others what I would like others to do unto me." There is no humbug in that.



Some of Dr. Thornton's "New Canadians" at play on the ice