

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, June 21, 1917.

The Christian Year

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity, July 1st.

THE SUFFERINGS OF THIS PRESENT TIME.

1. "The Sufferings of this Present Time."—St. Paul had a right to speak of sufferings; his life was full of them. But he had a way of looking at them in their right setting. He placed them against the background of Eternity. He knew that they had in them possibilities of glory, and he rejoiced in them as vehicles of Divine Grace. It is his conception of "the sufferings of this present time" which we need to have before us during this time when suffering is coming so near to the life of our people. "The sufferings of this present time" is a phrase of special significance to us now. And it is exactly St. Paul's idea of the power of sufferings which will help us through these days. These things, so hard to endure, will bring us a rich return some day. The harvest of suffering is noble and imperishable. "The pleasures of each generation evaporate in air; it is their pains that increase the spiritual momentum."

2. **The Fruits of the Sufferings of Past Generations.**—On this day, when we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Confederation of Canada, we remember that it is to our forefathers in this country, to their courage, hard work and privations, we owe a debt we can never repay; that to the men and women who carved their homes out of the forests, whose lives were filled with hardships, is due the credit of that which is best and most enduring in our Canadian life. And so we believe that the pains of to-day, and all the sufferings which this War has brought will work out to the lasting benefit of our national life.

3. **Christianity Faces the Problem of Pain Boldly.**—It does not ignore or belittle the mystery of pain. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now." Christianity teaches that all pain and suffering, if rightly accepted, lead on to victory, and that all will be swallowed up in the glory which is to be. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Christianity faces the problem of pain. It is not on the defensive in this matter, rather it is on the offensive, for it sets up in the midst of the darkness the awful symbol of pain—the Cross of Calvary. It unveils the Divine Face for us, and that Face is thorn-crowned, tear-stained, and drawn with the pain of the world. This is the Christian's God, in the midst of the sufferings of this world, touched by it all, bearing it all, to Whom we can pray in fullest assurance of His complete sympathy and ever-ready help: "Increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy, that, Thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal."

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after one's own; but the great man is he who, in the midst of the crowd, can keep with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Editorial

FRENCH CANADA.

For over one hundred and fifty years Canada has been the home of two distinct races, and for nearly fifty years these races have been living under the same Federal government. For the most part, their relations have been of a most cordial character, each respecting the other's views, and realizing that, while difference of opinion on certain questions was inevitable, for the welfare of both races such differences ought not to be allowed to develop into bitterness.

During recent years, however, a new element has been at work in Québec which threatens to bring about disruption. The Nationalist Movement, led by Bourassa and his lieutenant, Lavergne, has gained considerable power, especially with the younger men of the province. It has, moreover, been difficult to counteract its influence among a people who take little interest in what goes on in other parts of the world, and who do so little independent thinking. The France of to-day, that drove out the Roman Catholic Orders, receives little, if any, more sympathy from this Movement than does England, which has been openly "accused of every form of degeneration and degradation and cowardice," and has been attacked in language that would not have been tolerated in a less liberty-loving Empire. The war has brought matters to a great extent to a head, as the relation of Canada to the Imperial authorities in military matters is one of the main planks of the Movement, which maintains that there should be: (1) No participation by Canada in Imperial wars outside its territory. (2) No recruiting for British troops or services. (3) No use of the militia or military colleges or Canadian officers for external Empire warfare. The same Movement seized upon the bilingual issue in Ontario as an excuse for incessant attacks upon everything British, and has poisoned the minds of thousands of otherwise peaceable and loyal subjects.

Under these conditions, is it any wonder that recruiting in Québec has not been up to the mark? Is it any wonder that the situation is looked upon as serious by English-speaking Canadians who are in close touch with it? Is it any wonder that thousands of loyal French-Canadians are anxious regarding the future? Wholesale condemnation of Québec by English-speaking Canadians in other parts of Canada will do no good, and may do a great deal of harm. But for the Government to allow the leaders of this Movement to continue their nefarious work is unthinkable. It has gone on far too long already, and if something is not done soon to remedy the situation, one trembles at the thought of what may happen in the not distant future.

It is plainly the duty of every loyal Canadian to do what he can in his own community. The barriers of isolation and ignorance and suspicion in Québec must be broken down, but not with weapons of war. Likewise, the ignorance in other provinces regarding the real situation in Québec, and the lack of sympathy with French-Canadians who cannot feel the same enthusiasm towards the British Crown that English-speaking Canadians do, must also be over-

come. For the sake of the great men that Québec has given the Empire, for the sake of the thousands of French-Canadians who sleep beneath the sod of South Africa and Europe, for the sake of Canada and the Empire, let clergy and laity alike study the situation and do everything possible to heal the breach and bring about a better understanding.

According to the latest bulletin issued from the Census and Statistics Office at Ottawa, the total acreage of wheat sown in Canada this year is nearly 10 per cent. less than in 1916. There is an increase, on the other hand, in the acreage of oats, barley, rye, and mixed grains. The serious nature of the situation should bring home to us our ultimate dependence upon God.

The decision of the Presbyterian Assembly to allow the question of Union to stand in abeyance until after the close of the war is surely a wise one. The situation following the war will demand the utmost harmony in all Christian Communion. It is better, also, to wait until it is more clearly seen what effect the war is going to have on organized Christianity.

The king of Greece has at last been compelled to abdicate his throne and evidently the only other monarch who sympathizes with him is his royal German brother-in-law. It has been difficult to understand why the Allies were so lenient with him. He did his utmost early in the war to gain sympathy from the United States but he can expect nothing from that quarter any longer. He is evidently a man of considerable ability whose ideas, whether from early training or from the influence of his wife, have been sadly distorted. It is to be hoped that his son who takes his place has a clearer insight into the cause of the Allies.

If the Dominion Government required any assurance that the vast majority of the members of the Church of England stand solidly behind it in the matter of conscription, it has received it through the resolutions forwarded from the various diocesan Synods. Last year the demand was for national registration, as it was felt by many that the time for conscription had not come. During the year that has passed the conviction has grown stronger and stronger that more extreme measures are required if the men at the front are to receive adequate support and the work they have so well begun is to be carried to a successful conclusion.

The demand being made in certain quarters for a referendum before putting conscription into force should be resisted by every loyal Canadian. In justice to the men now at the front, and in justice to those who have laid down their lives, those who have been given an opportunity to go voluntarily and have refused, should not be given an opportunity to vote to stay at home. The success of a democracy depends on the willingness of every one of its members to share in its responsibilities, and no man, or community of men, should be exempted in Canada from the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship. God grant that the words, "mene, mene, tekel, upharsin," may never be written over Canada.