

Editorial

Old Fashioned but Wise

IN reading history one finds accounts of princes, generals and whole armies engaging in prayer previous to the battle attack. Nor was this prayer mere form and superstition, nor the outcome of fear and faint-heartedness. It was a recognition of the fact that in every struggle God is the deciding factor and that He will give the victory to those who are working in line with His will. There is only one thing for men to do therefore at this juncture, —to perfect themselves so that God may work through them as His instruments, and to pray without ceasing that they may know His will and work according to His plans. It is therefore a great comfort to know that in the Premier of Great Britain, and in the President of the United States, and in the chief of their supporters we have men who are not merely religious according to form, but devout prayerful souls who in all humility and earnestness are depending upon the leadership of Jehovah. This is to thinking men in Christian lands the most hopeful omen. It is a recognition that in this as in all wars the victory comes not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Living God. Recently Secretary Daniels told how a Presbyterian elder, found at the White House, two other Presbyterian elders engaged in prayer. These were none other than Robert Lansing, Secretary of State and Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States. These men believe in prayer, and it is because of such men that victory will be accorded in good time to the allied forces. It will come when our people are at heart of the same mind and purpose as these our leaders. If this be not true, then God as an overruling Providence is a myth. It was no mere sentiment which led our greatest singer to say:

Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
One of our papers commenting upon the scene at White House truthfully says:

It is impossible for any one to maintain a truly efficient leadership of the people who does not bow before the Eternal and recognize the majesty of the tasks he has in hand. The present terrible struggle is leading us to recognize the ultimate dependence of the people upon spiritual realities and moral forces. Napoleon was wrong when he said, whilst at the zenith of his power, that God was on the side of the army having the most cannon. Whilst we must maintain a superiority in general military efficiency, the greatest asset of the Allies after all lies in the essential righteousness of their cause. The quiet prayer of the President in his little office is quite different from the blatant expressions of the Kaiser and his Prussian war-lords.

Lincoln's Prayers

THERE could be no finer illustration of the thought just advanced than the following story, narrated by General Sickles:

"It was on the 5th day of July, 1863, that I was brought to Washington on a stretcher from the field of Gettysburg. Hearing of my arrival, President Lincoln came to my room and sat down by my bedside. He asked about the great battle, and when I told him of the terrible slaughter, the tears streamed from his eyes. I asked him if he had doubted the result. He said 'No.' Then he continued: 'This may seem strange to you, but a few days ago, when the opposing armies were converging, I felt as never before my utter helplessness in the great crisis that was to come upon the country. I went into my own room and locked the door. Then I knelt down and prayed as I had never prayed before. I told God that He had called me to this position, that I had done all that I could do, and that the result was now in His hands; that I felt my own weakness and lack of power and that I knew that if the country was to be saved it was because He willed it. When I went down from my room I felt that there could be no doubt of the issue. The burden seemed to have rolled off my shoulders, my intense anxiety was relieved, and in its place came a great sense of trustfulness, and that was why I did not doubt the result at Gettysburg. And, what is more, Sickles,' he continued, 'I believe that we may hear at any moment of a great success by Grant, who has been pegging away at Vicksburg for so many months. By to-morrow you will hear that he has won a victory as important to us in the west as Gettysburg is in the east.'

Then, turning to me, he said: 'Sickles, I am in a pathetic mood to-day, and I know that you will get the doctors do not give me that hope. Mr. President,' I said, but he answered cheerfully, 'I know I will get well, Sickles.'

The Fuel Situation

WHEN reputable men with good judgment are appointed to office the only thing for the people to do is to accept their leadership. So it becomes us all just now to follow the advice to get our coal bins filled before the summer ends. If we cannot get hard coal we can use our own western fuel. Perhaps we shall profit from trying to use it for a few years. We shall easily learn to manage our furnaces so as to avoid the unpleasantness that accompanies the use of the softer coal, and then in the years to come we shall be independent in this matter of fuel. At the same time we should not be held up by the few operators who control the western mines. What happens to them at this juncture matters not a jot. They should get a fair price and no more. The people are sending their sons to this war. The people must get a fair deal. Profiteers in the coal business are just as objectionable as profiteers in munition manufacture or profiteers in the pork business. The common people deserve fair treatment, and every one of our controllers must see that they get it. The big interests have not yet died in Canada. Their endowed friends are yet in much evidence. But the public official is wise to-day who reads the signs of the times. The clean-up is about to be made.

Protect the Public

THE common people are not getting a fair deal. That is one outstanding fact—and no camouflage will hide it. Last week a gentleman bought eggs in this city at the farmers' market for 45 cents a dozen. They were labelled specially fresh. Next day he went to Birtle and bought equally large eggs and equally fresh at 30 cents a dozen, the express costing him three cents a dozen. The merchant in the country says that the wholesalers in Winnipeg will give only 28 cents. Now why should there be a spread of 17 cents on a 28 cent purchase? Again, we say, that the purchasers are not getting a fair chance. The statement of Mr. O'Connor who tells of the holdings of the cold storage men, explains things a whole lot. This week the controllers were forced to close down on the grain elevators and to regulate their purchases and manufacture. Next week they will require to regulate the activities of the cold storage operators. Cold storage is most necessary and should be encouraged. Every ounce of production should be conserved. This does not mean, however, that the owners of cold storage plants should plunder the public. Government control and operation of such plants would seem to be very necessary.

Quebec

IT is a great joy to observe the change that is taking place in Quebec. Young men are joining the colors, and the press is moderating its tone. Truth and reason are beginning to assert themselves. It is a great thing, this, for Quebec, for Canada and for the Empire. It would be harmful indeed should any one province voluntarily separate itself from the Dominion and it would be particularly harmful if this province differed racially from the rest of the nation. One can only imagine what would happen in Canada at the close of the war, should Quebec remain out of the conflict, and victory be won without her aid.

Education

HOW much the world has changed in a few brief years! For instance, the ordinary life in Canada from decades ago furnished occasion for the development of many qualities which go to make good men. Home industries supplied most material necessities. The production of these necessities demanded careful training, all of which was given in the home. This training constituted the main portion of a young person's education. The school merely supplemented this home training. The work done in school could not be called the means of the pupil's education. One professor will put it in this way: "I had but three months in the years of schooling, which left nine months to get an education."

With the decline of home manufacture the school has had to assume new duties. It must take up in part what the home neglected and this in the interests of the pupils and society. The school's main work to-day is to teach the arts of life. To reach this conception there must be a swinging away from the ideals of a century ago. As a writer in the Atlantic Monthly has said:

"In planning the education of a child it is our duty deliberately to determine as fully as possible what experiences and environments are necessary in order that he may come to his fullest development. The whole duty of the educator is this—to supplement the ordinary contacts of life with others, so that the entire environment will develop to the fullest the possibilities of the child. It follows that the content of formal education cannot be fixed, but must change continually so as always to supplement and complete the continually varying environment and experiences of every day life. With the unprecedented rapidity of changes in the modern world, only by intentional keen analysis of the situation, by maintaining a perpetual inventory, can

we hope to make the necessary adjustments. * * * That education is incomplete which does not keep open the vistas of life in every direction."

This will go hard with the workers of the old school. And the chief conservatives are not all in the chairs of the college. The greatest reactionary may be a worker at the bench or a tiller of the soil. The finest thing in the world in a man is his willingness to adapt himself to changed conditions. A progressive is the only man who really counts. The golden age lies ahead not behind us. There is a great change coming over our schools. The war will make even a greater change necessary. We shall do well to study times and seasons, movements and conditions. We do that in business of all kinds, in domestic life and in government. Why not be equally wise in matters of education?

The Winnipeg Strike

EVERY right-minded citizen is in sympathy with labor, but there are a good many people in Winnipeg, who during the last month have lost sympathy with labor unions.

Labor whether of hand, head or heart, is the greatest and grandest thing in this old world. Carlyle calls it divine. Only the man who labors knows what it is to live, and he only has a right to live. Vampires, sluggards, parasites should die. Those who produce that which is of value to society should be rewarded and encouraged. Those who live on the labor of their fellows, being a menace to society, should be ostracized. There are some in Canada, even in Western Canada, who to-day deserve nothing less than ostracism. If it require any stronger language than this to describe the attitude of The Western Home Monthly to honest labor and to useless leisure or capitalistic injustice let it be supplied as a substitute.

That, however, is not the point at issue just now. Affairs in Winnipeg were not due to a struggle between labor and capital. Although in the discussions these terms were freely used, they were echoes of past struggles and hatreds. The conflict may have been owing in a measure to the apathy and inertia of the City Council and to an unfortunate remark of one of its members, which was probably misinterpreted; but it was partly due to the misguided effort of the instrument which at this time dominates labor. Men acting as members of a union made decisions they never would have made as private individuals.

History is but a record of men escaping from one form of tyranny to fall into subjection to another. There is no form of tyranny to-day more relentless and at times more unreasoning than the union—whether it be religious, industrial or political, whether it be of workmen clamoring for a higher wage or capitalists working for greater profit. This is said despite the fact that unions when properly organized and controlled are of the greatest possible benefit—alike to the workers and to society. A union should be a means towards noble and useful ends. It should not be an object of worship, it should not be the centre of a man's religion.

The trouble in Winnipeg was unfortunate because it was a quarrel between the members of a family. It is quite possible that the electrical workers should have been receiving a higher wage. It may have been that the Council was dilatory and apathetic. Let us take all this for granted. Yet that did not justify a strike much less did it justify the sympathetic action of other unions. There was a better way out.

And even had the unions under normal conditions been justified in the action taken, they could not be justified on taking such action during war times. Schism at this time was a stroke at the men who are at the front. It was a blow at the Empire. It was unfair to the mass of citizens who while sympathetic with labor were the first to suffer from the action of the strikers.

It is doubtful if ever any speech delivered in Winnipeg did quite as much harm to the cause of labor union as that which asserted the right of the workers to ask for everything they could enforce. That is Kaiserism pure and simple. It contains a doctrine which is on a par with that of the railroad dictum—"Charge all the traffic will bear." It is on a par with the practice in the sweat-shop and the galleys. It is un-Christian and inhuman. And on the other hand no one can sympathize with the view that labor men have no right to strike. Yet some judgment should be exercised in declaring a strike.

While on this subject of strikes The Western Home Monthly wishes again to urge what it has already more than once emphasized—that neither side, in a dispute of this nature is justified in fighting it out to a finish without regard to the third party. The third party is the general public—and it is the chief sufferer. There seems to be only one solution to problems of this kind—co-operative industry. Every workman should have a share of the profits of the company in which he works. Is there any other solution?