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THANKSGIVING DAY.

The government of the country has appointed October 16th as a day of National Thanksgiving, and surely this is a public recognition of religion in which all may take part, without distinction of race or creed. To the devout soul every day brings its reasons for loyally acknowledging God's mercy, and its opportunities for showing gratitude for the giver of our mercies, but this is supposed to be a public and universal day whereon special acknowledgment is made of national mercies. That is a fitting thing, it reminds us that God is ruler of the world as well as the guide of the individual life. The nation is His creation and, as Israel was taught in ancient times it may be His servant. There has been discussion as to the best time for this day which is meant to be both a holiday and a holiday, it should not be too early, as it comes most appropriate when the harvest is complete, it should not be too late or it comes too near to the Christmas festival. Even in the appointment of such day many claims have to be discussed and many interests considered. We hope that the date chosen this year will suit all classes and that not only may there be an additional day of rest but that also many will devote part of the day to public worship in the spirit of real thankfulness.

There are many reasons for thankfulness which are as forcible now as ever they have been. We have had peace and prosperity and abundant harvest and much commercial success. As is pointed out in the sermon we print in another column these are not the highest things in a nation's life, but they are important matters, they form the material basis of the nation's life. If it is true that we cannot live by bread alone, it is also true that we cannot live without bread; and when we can look back across the year and find that no great calamity has marred the nation's life and that there is food for man and beast it behoves us to give hearty thanks to the Giver of all good.

In this country where severe and sustained

frost may be counted upon for four months or more the question of fuel has become very serious. So we trust that the efforts of the President and others in the United States will be successful and that this bitter and dangerous social war will be brought to a close. Our neighbours will not feel in a very thankful mood if their coal-bins are empty, and as we are so largely dependant upon them in this matter we hope that the settlement of the dispute will be a subject for thankfulness before many days are over. This can only come about by the manifestation of a humane Christian spirit.

In the sphere of Imperial politics we remember that the war which caused so much misery for two years and a half is now a thing of the past and we trust that neither Boer nor Britain will forget its powerful lessons. The crowning of the King is not a matter for grateful memory; the severe disappointment was we believe overruled for good, and when the hour came for this important function there was a real spirit of solemnity and reverence.

Within the spheres of our church life there is cause for gratitude; noble workers have fallen, great men have passed away but the work goes on and the church responding nobly to the demands made upon her enters into a larger life of worship and service.

THANKSGIVING NOT A HOLIDAY.

The action of the Dominion government in fixing Thanksgiving Day at an earlier date than was fixed for several years past, seems to meet with the approval of all who regard the day as a holiday. Those who regard Thanksgiving Day as a fitting time for special acknowledgment of God's goodness to our country are not so particular about the date—thanksgiving is in order at any time. Unfortunately Thanksgiving Day is not viewed by the great majority of people in the light in which it was originally intended—a religious recognition of God's care and goodness. This sentiment is largely thrown into the background. The faithful few assemble in places of worship and join in rendering ascriptions of praise and thankfulness to the "God from whom all blessings flow;" while the unreflecting majority, as if they felt they had nothing to be thankful for, turn Thanksgiving Day into a holiday, characterised by sports which are legitimate enough in themselves, but which are too often marked by accompaniments that are neither refining, healthy nor moral. This is not as it should be. The Doer and the Giver of all good has bestowed abundant blessings upon this country which should evoke sentiments and acts of gratitude from all who have shared in its blessings. Holidays are numerous enough in all conscience; so are times for the enjoyment of out-door sports. Surely the people of this country can give one day, or even part of one day, to enjoyment of the duty and privilege of rendering thanks to Him who has not only saved Canada from many calamities that have visited other countries, but has bestowed blessing and prosperity upon this highly-favored land from ocean to ocean. How fitting that Canadians of every nationality,

of every class, and of every denomination, should unite in songs of thankfulness which shall re-echo from our rock-bound Atlantic coast on through our golden west to the distant province whose strand is laved by the swellings of the Pacific, and then roll on in a wave of harmony which shall be heard in the distant confines of one great northern country. Let us have a genuine Thanksgiving Day.

EVANGELISTIC SERVICES.

It is felt that as the summer has passed away and ministers and people have settled down to steady work the time has come for discussion upon the ways and means of making the work of the canny writer more effective. This has, in some cases, led to the consideration of the important question of special evangelistic services. In the Presbyterian church this question naturally calls forth a variety of opinions, strongly expressed by men who are all equally anxious to secure the best results of faithful work. Our congregations have not been trained to look for "a revival" each winter, when "the back sliders" are drawn again into the fold and quickened to new consecration. Our ideal is that of steady rather than spasmodic effort. But every system has "the defects of its qualities" and it may be that we are in danger of falling into a dreary routine. At any rate it is well that we should face the question and find out whether we can receive a healthy stimulus by special means. Various testimonies are given as to the real and lasting effects of "revivals," that is the revivals that are worked up by itinerant evangelists. All agree that much depends upon the men and methods employed, as well as upon the kind of work that precedes and follows the special enterprise. Every case then, must be taken on its own merits, and it is almost impossible to formulate a general scheme to fit all localities. The experiment to be made this coming winter within the bounds of the Synod of Toronto and Kingston will be watched with keen interest.

It is easy to make commonplace remarks on this important subject but as a matter of fact here as elsewhere the commonplace is safe and significant. The "revival" must not be regarded as a labour saving continuance to make up for past laziness and make things run more smoothly in the future. It means more work not less, both before and after. Some revivals pass away like the morning cloud because they have no inside, that is while arrangements are made to draw the crowd there has been no real preparation in private and united prayer, and the special effort is not followed up with sufficient zeal and discretion.

Further every minister must be all the time an evangelist, "Do the work of an Evangelist" says a high authority; that does not mean neglect thoughtful teaching, or steady pastoral, but take care that the gospel is presented as a living appeal calling for prompt personal decision. There must be expectant faith that the gracious word will make an impression especially on the minds of the young.

Further the week of special prayer or of