

### The Local Option Campaign

It is now possible to review the situation in Ontario after the recent election. It seems that the Liquor Party did not make a single gain, for in every place in which they brought on repeal votes they were beaten. Another remarkable and encouraging feature is that even where the Temperance Party failed in several cases to obtain the necessary three-fifths majority, their principles are making progress in the efforts to overcome the liquor traffic. There is no doubt whatever that further changes will come in the near future, and it behoves all Church people who are concerned for the best interests of the community to be temperance people themselves, and to work with all their power to bring about an improvement in their immediate neighbourhood. The day is long past when our Church can afford to be indifferent to this enemy entrenched in our midst, which must be driven out if one of the greatest hindrances to the progress of the Gospel is to be removed.

## War and Religion

[In several months past special articles of a high order have appeared in the "Times" Literary Supplement. Most of these are now available in book form, "Thoughts on the War," by A. Clutton Brock. We reproduce one of these articles below as especially worthy of attention by our readers and we hope it will send them to the thoughtful book of essays already mentioned.—EDITOR.]

Christianity separated Religion from Patriotism for every nation which became, and which remained, Christian. It is possible, of course, for a nation to make of its religion an accessory to its patriotism; but when it does that, the religion ceases to be Christian, whatever its dogmas and ritual may be. This has happened again and again, and happens still; but the other nations do not recognize the Christianity of the nation to which it happens. We may call on our own God for victory, but we know that when the Kaiser calls upon his, he is not calling upon ours. There is a reversion from the world-religion to the tribal fetish, to that more primitive state in which every nation had its own God who fought for it with other national Gods, and shared the glory of its triumph and the shame of its defeat.

This conception of a God we have outgrown in quiet times, but at war we are apt to fall back into it. It has even been reported that the Kaiser speaks of his good German God, as other Germans speak of their good German conscience. We do not go so far as that; but, if we do not wish to become ridiculous as well as blasphemous, we too must be on our guard against such relapses, and we must ask our Bishops and clergy to help us in the difficult task of remaining intellectually, as well as morally, Christian. We say intellectually, because Christianity is a religion which appeals to the intelligence, and which ceases to be Christian when it ceases to be intelligent no less than when it ceases to be moral.

The essence of Christianity, as of all pure religion, is detachment, which is an intellectual as well as a moral virtue. It is a religion which refuses to be used for our own personal advancement, insisting that, when we use it so, it is no longer a religion at all. According to the Christian doctrine a man cannot know the meaning of religion unless he cares for something not himself more than he cares for himself; and in himself is included his own well-

being in this world or in any other. He that would save his soul shall lose it; for if your main object is to make your soul comfortable, you treat it as if it were a body, and that is to lose it indeed. Now it is true that when you care for your country you are not caring for yourself; but religion demands more detachment of you than that. You care for your country because it is your country. You may out of love of country do noble things; but, if you have religion, you will care for something above country, for something which is neither you nor yours, which has no connection with your own welfare or pride, and which your enemies can care for as much as you yourself. "The poet hath said, 'Dear city of Cecrops.' But I will say, 'Dear city of God.'" There the Emperor, who was an ordinary man, was by his goodness inspired to make one of the great sayings of the world. The city of God was not his city as the city of Cecrops was the city of the Athenians, and he could share his love of it with his enemies, because it was not his city or theirs, but for both something seen and desired from far off.

It is well to fight for your country and to die for it, but not to worship it. If you have a religion at all—and every man has some, whether he knows it or not—it is a danger to you and a false guide unless you purify the essence of it from all self-love. The religious emotion is for that which is not yourself, for that which would be unmoved and unchanged if you were not; and you must not feel it for country, or for father or mother, or wife or children. All of those are imperfect like yourself, and to think them perfect because they are yours is half way to thinking yourself perfect. It is to fall into a delusion dangerous to yourself and to them; dangerous to the world when a whole nation falls into it and believes that in fighting for itself it is fighting for God.

Your country may be right in its war; but you must not believe it right because it is your country, still less must you go farther and think it right to believe your country right in all cases. To do that is to turn patriotism into religion again; it is better to say that you will support your country right or wrong, so that it may triumph, and you with it. Then at least you are frankly animal and suffer no confusion of thought; nor do you misuse the religious emotion. But in the other case you use the religious emotion to glorify the animal in yourself, and in doing that you pervert your intelligence as much as your morals.

It is an absurd spectacle when two nations at war with each other both claim that their God is on their side, if they also profess to worship the same God. But if both desired, above all things, to be on the side of their God, the absurdity would vanish and so probably would the war. There is no possible harmony in the conflicting claims of the nations, if each thinks that its claim is just because it is national; but there might be a harmony if each worshipped a God of justice and forgot itself and its claims in that worship. Individual men can do that already, but hardly nations, for the national claim is not the selfish claim of one man, and when individuals fight to maintain it, there is, and we cannot deny it, something heroic and unselfish in their sacrifice of their own selves to the national self. And yet the national self remains human and not divine, for it is made up of human individuals and the mass is no more divine or free from human vices than the individuals.

All this does not mean that it is always wrong for a nation to go to war, any more than it is wrong for a man to resist injustice to others or to himself. War is a horrible method of resistance; but there may be no other. If you see a man trampling upon a

woman, you may walk away or you may knock him down, but it is vain to argue the point with him while he tramples. Those who are for peace at any price are like the man who walks away. They are for peace, not on moral grounds, but so that they and their countrymen may not suffer from war. They have ignored morals just as much as the nation which goes to war so that it may conquer. They are peaceful for the same reasons which make that nation warlike, and they may be wiser, but they are not more virtuous. But if a nation goes to war for a just cause, it still needs to preserve the religious detachment, so that it may not feel the religious emotion either about itself or about the war. A nation fighting bravely in a just cause may be proud of itself, but it must not worship itself. It must be aware of its human imperfection all the while; it must also be aware that its war is an evil and, if a necessary evil, made necessary by the evil that is in mankind. There are people, not only Germans, who would glorify war, telling us that it is God's will and a means by which He purifies men of their vices; or, if they use another jargon, that it is a necessary part of the process of evolution. But we might say of any evil done by man, or of any pestilence caused by man's ignorance and carelessness, that it is the will of God or a part of the process of evolution. Pestilence, like war, provokes heroism, and yet we all know it to be an evil in itself; and so war is an evil in itself because men at war do evil to each other, and it is caused by the evil that is in man, like any single quarrel or murder, not by the good that is in God.

Religion will tell us this, so long as it is pure, so long as we care for some good outside ourselves more than for our own cause or our own country. And, even when the high religious passion is weak in us, we can still use our intelligence to keep it pure. In war we feel the need of a passion to sustain us, a passion of belief in our own cause, of love of our country, of hatred of our enemies. There is in us a strong desire, since we suffer so much from war, to find some compensating joy in war itself. But this joy, when it comes to us, is a poison as well as a stimulant to the mind. It makes us reason wrongly, because it makes us feel wrongly. We accept the warm, comforting emotion greedily as if it were the religious emotion, and it becomes to us a spurious religious emotion, so that we feel towards that which is evil as if it were good. Only so can one explain the sophistries about war or the very fact that war still continues.

### HYMN FOR AIRMEN.

(Set to music by Sir Hubert Parry.)

Lord, guard and guide the men who fly  
Through the great spaces of the sky,  
Be with them traversing the air  
In darkening storm or sunshine fair.

Thou who dost keep with tender might  
The balanced birds in all their flight,  
Thou of the tempered winds be near,  
That, having Thee, they know no fear.

Control their minds, with instinct fit  
What time, adventuring, they quit  
The firm security of land:  
Grant steadfast eye and skilful hand.

Aloft in solitudes of space  
Uphold them with Thy saving Grace.  
O God, protect the men who fly  
Through lonely ways beneath the sky.

M.C.D.H., "Times."