

A MERRY CHRISTMAS

TORONTO, THURSDAY, DEC. 11, 1913.

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Hymns from the Book of Common Praise, compiled by Dr. Albert Ham, F.R.C.O., Organist and Director of the choir of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT, (December 21st)

Holy Communion: 232, 235, 236, 243.
 Processional: 10, 64, 442, 476.
 Offertory: 319, 325, 504, 596.
 Children: 58, 66, 488, 726.
 General: 60, 412, 471, 481.

CHRISTMAS DAY (December 25th)

Holy Communion: 77, 256, 259, 262.
 Processional: 72, 73, 397.
 Offertory: 76, 78, 81, 514.
 Children: 80, 668, 712.
 General: 74, 75, 79, 599.

The Outlook

Everybody's Birthday

The late Bishop Collins, of Gibraltar, tells of a little coloured boy whom he was taking to Hayti suddenly announcing on Christmas morning that it was his birthday. "Why, Jim," said the Bishop, "I thought you said you were born in June." "Christmas Day is everybody's birthday," replied the boy; and the Bishop's comment was, "Is not this lovely and true?" Yes, most assuredly, Christmas Day is everybody's birthday—"Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night," as Bishop Phillips Brooks used to sing. And as we rejoice in what Christmas Day means, we must not forget the multitudes of those made in God's image, whom God came to save, to whom Christmas is still unknown. There are millions and millions to whom it is still as though He had not come at all. It is, therefore, at once our privilege and duty to do our utmost by prayer and gifts and efforts to make known to the whole world the birthday of Christ and what His coming means.

Overlapping Cheer

A letter appeared the other day in the Toronto "Mail and Empire," calling attention to the way in which families have received Christmas help in past years from numerous organizations as a result of a lack of widespread co-operation. The writers actually said that in one case a woman complained bitterly that she had received only seven Christmas baskets, whereas her neighbour had received nine. Another case is recorded in which a man gave up his job for three weeks, his family living on Christmas gifts which had been too generously supplied. Another family sold groceries for a week after Christmas as the result of having too much. Now, while it is doubtless true that some overlapping is inevitable, and perhaps is not likely to be very harmful, it is impossible to deny that such cases as these show the abuse of kind efforts, and the matter is all the more serious when it is known that at the expense of these families others were neglected and lacked Christmas cheer of any sort. We are, therefore, glad to know that the Joint Executive of three organizations, representing fifty-six social agencies in different parts of Toronto, are this year establishing a strictly confidential Christmas Exchange, and are requesting co-operation. They will be grateful if private individuals and groups would enquire at their Confidential Exchange to prevent duplication, and they would be glad if lists of names and addresses, and specific needs of deserving families be sent to the Secretary, 82 Gerrard Street West. This is an effort of the right sort, and so far from checking any beneficent and kindly sympathy it will go far to assure the givers that their kindness will not be misplaced.

S.P.U.G.

These letters stand for a Society which was formed about a year ago, called "The Society for the Prevention of Useless Giving." The intention is not to give less, but to give with discrimination and intelligence. It is pointed out that a number of people at Christmas time expend valuable money, which they really need, in gifts that are almost entirely useless. Although the Society has been in existence for so short a time it has already enrolled a remarkable number in its membership, and it bids fair to do useful service. Whether we belong to it or not, the principle underlying it will commend itself to many people who would otherwise feel bound to purchase gifts which are in reality unnecessary to the person to whom they are given, and a real burden to those who have to pay for them. Every member of this Society pledges himself to aid in the fight against useless Christmas presents, and if the reports in the daily papers are correct the forthcoming Christmas will see some admirable results of the Society's operations. We do not really need to join the Society, but we certainly do need to adopt the principle, for many become enslaved to the tyranny of a habit that often means hardship. Let us, then, have courage enough to deny our well-meaning but often misguided impulses, and remember that we are stewards of God's gifts and have no right to incur any extravagance that limits our obligations to use our money aright. Simple kindnesses will often express genuine

love and mean infinitely more than an extravagance which we cannot afford. Christmas gifts, to be worthy of Christmas, should be in the spirit of Him Who gave Himself at this time.

A Warning from the West

According to recent accounts, the situation in Western Canada is becoming, if it is not already, very serious. In the midst of abundant opportunity the average man is feeling the neglects and injustices of the social conditions. A letter from a representative man calls attention to the way in which monopolies are fattening on the necessities of the people, and with coal at a high price, and a hard winter approaching, people are looking forward with dread to the next few months. To the same effect a well-known Westerner has said that real estate speculation has sapped the economic vitality of the community and has done more harm than gambling at Monte Carlo. Further, a resolution was adopted a fortnight ago referring to the way in which real estate business is being conducted, resulting in the high cost of living, congestion in cities, and depletion in rural districts, with the attendant impoverishment, and development of the desire to get wealth easily and quickly. Any economic theories which do violence to moral realities stand self-condemned, and it seems clear that life in the West is becoming a matter of profound concern to some of the most earnest-minded men of various Churches and communities.

The Clergyman's Wife

A clergyman, whose wife has had to resign the work of organist after a service of more than twenty years, has been writing some plain words to his parishioners as to the requirements of the Churches from the wives of the clergy. He says it is taken for granted that the clergyman's wife shall be as much at the call of the Church as the clergyman himself; that the more she does the more is expected of her. He also points out that the doctor's wife or the solicitor's wife are not expected to "tout" for patronage and to assist in their husband's work. There is, of course, some difference between these cases, but the general truth of the clergyman's position is undoubted, and there is no reason why the clergyman's wife should be expected to give more attention to the Church than any other Christian lady in the congregation. The clergyman's wife and children owe just as much to the Church as others do, and no more, and no burdens should be laid upon them that cannot be shouldered by others as well. Every Christian home should have the joy of offering service, but this is very different from demanding it. All honour, therefore, to those earnest wives of clergymen who toil in their husband's vineyards and do their utmost to help forward the cause of Christ; but let us pause from time to time to remember that after all they ought not to be expected to do more than others. The home of a clergyman is, in some respects, the finest testimony to his worth, and no service in the parish can ever make up for neglect at this point. The words of St. Paul about "showing piety at home" are perhaps pre-eminently true of the clergyman and his family, and nothing should be permitted to interfere with this essential principle of glorifying God.