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The Churches and National Welfare.

The grand aim embodied in the Christian churches is to minister to the spiritual needs of mankind. But men cannot be helped spiritually without benefit to their condition in other respects. Every local church in which the spirit of Christianity is finding true expression is a powerful influence in its community not only for the saving of souls in the sense of delivering them from wrath to come and fitting them for heaven, but also for promoting intellectual and moral life, for education in all that makes for good citizenship and beneficent relationships among men. We hear a great deal of the advantages which Canada offers to the emigrant and of the importance to Canada that her great western reserves shall be occupied, the efforts made to attract people to the country and congratulations that immigrants are now coming into the country in larger numbers than in the past. But while increase in numbers is desirable, we can by no means afford to neglect the question of quality or character. It is possible for Canada to receive increments of population which, especially if left to themselves in respect to religious and moral influences, would prove a curse rather than a blessing, a source of weakness rather than of strength. It is in this connection that the Christian bodies of Canada are doing a good work which, if quiet and unostentatious, is of the deepest significance not only for the spiritual interests of the people to whom they minister but to the social, political and industrial interests of the whole Dominion.

A Recognition.

Of the work that is being done in the Northwest and other parts of our country, through various religious organizations by humble pastors and missionaries toiling hard for little remuneration in pioneer settlements, little is heard in high places. But those influences are none the less significant for the upbuilding of our young national life, because, like the forces so beneficently active in physical nature, they work without observation and with small recognition of their value. It is quite possible that the 30 minutes sermon of the unknown missionary, speaking to a little company in a rude school house in some pioneer settlement, means immeasurably more for national welfare than the five hours of sounding eloquence poured out by some distinguished political orator on the floors of Parliament and embalmed in Hansard for the wonder of coming generations. It is gratifying, therefore, to find in an editorial article in the Toronto Globe a hearty recognition of the value, from a national point of view, of the work which the Christian churches of Canada are doing in promoting wholesome life and elevated ideals among the people who now, at the rate of 50,000 a year, are seeking and finding a home in the Northwest. With high statesmanship and energy, the Globe says, the churches are seeking to meet the need of the hour. "They believe that the Bible and a Biblical religious faith and educational system founded thereon will, apart from spiritual results to the individual, fuse this alien mass into one common citizenship, and prevent deadly schism in ideal and type between east and west. Acting upon this belief, churches are being founded, schools and colleges built, and strong men stationed in all the centres, whose whole work is directed towards the moral and intellectual advancement of their communities. Nothing is more encouraging than the type of men who are giving themselves to this noble task. To give this fact emphasis one needs only to mention such names as Archbishop Machray, Father Lamont, the late Principal King, and his successor, Dr. Kil-

patrick, Egerton Young, William Black, the late Alexander Grant, Dr. McDiarmid, Dr. Robertson, the Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions, and Rev. A. J. Vining, Superintendent of Baptist Missions. The work done, the hardships endured, the plans projected by these men and others like them, are quite the equal of the most thrilling chapters in foreign missionary history. With an aggressive and spiritual church, led by men of statesmanship, ideals and patriotism, with a complete and efficient system of public schools, with every facility for higher education as yet undivorced from religious culture, with wise Governmental assistance and control of immigration, with limitless undeveloped resources to absorb the energies of our new citizens to their great pecuniary profit and contentment, with a closer economic, political and social affiliation to the older and richer life of the empire, it is safe to predict that the new Canada so swiftly taking form in these history-making days will prove herself worthy of the noblest traditions and aspirations of our past, and abundantly fulfil the promise of the future."

Canadians in Battle.

The people of Canada have had this week a sad reminder that war costs much besides the money voted by Parliament or contributed from private purses and the withdrawal of men from remunerative industries. It exacts a terrible tribute of suffering and blood upon the battle field. It flings the black shadow of anxiety and sorrow over many homes and brings irreparable loss to many families. The despatches of Wednesday last brought news of heavy loss suffered by the Canadian contingent in an engagement which took place on the previous Sunday. At present writing exact details are still lacking, but the battle of Sunday, in which the Canadians suffered so severely, is understood to have been that fought at Koodoosrand on the Modder river, in which General Roberts' forces were engaged against General Cronje's retreating army which had been brought to a stand-still at that point. There is still some uncertainty as to the exact figures, but the losses of the Canadian contingent as given in the despatches were about 20 killed, 60 wounded, and 9 prisoners or missing. Of the killed three were from Montreal, one from Quebec, three from Vancouver, B. C., two from Victoria, B. C., two from London, Ont., two from Ottawa, and one each from Windsor, Ont., Haldimand, Ont., Barrie, Ont., Toronto, Charlottetown, P. E. I., and St. John, N. B. The name of the St. John man killed is Pte. Patrick McCreary, of Norton. The Charlottetown man was Roland Dennis Taylor. Among the wounded are four from New Brunswick and four from Nova Scotia. The N. B. men wounded are Arthur Hayden, St. John, William Hunter, St. John, Johnston, (either Joseph M. or James) St. John, and John Scott, Golden Grove. The N. S. wounded men are W. A. Adams, Halifax, W. J. Regan, Wolfville, R. McCallum, Halifax, and G. F. Robertson, Dartmouth. In the Dominion House of Commons, on Wednesday afternoon, fitting reference was made by the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition to the news which had just been received from the seat of war, and the honorable gentlemen united in paying eloquent tributes to the bravery of the Canadian soldiers who had so nobly sustained the honor of their country on the field of battle. The following cable was sent to Col. Otter at the front by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, with the concurrence of Sir Charles Tupper:

"I desire to convey to you and your men the grateful thanks of the Government and Parliament of the Dominion for the gallantry displayed on the battlefield. Canada warmly appreciates the sacrifices made by her sons for the honor of the Empire. The wounded have our sympathy and our prayers for speedy recovery. Those who have given up their lives will ever be held in remembrance by a grateful people."

On Thursday, Lord Roberts, Commander-in-chief of the British forces in South Africa, cabled as follows to Lord Minto, Governor-General of Canada: "The Canadian regiment has done admirable service since arrival in South Africa. I deeply regret heavy loss it suffered during the fighting on the 18th inst., and beg you will assure the people of Canada how much we all here admire the conspicuous gallantry displayed by our Canadian comrades on that occasion."

The War

The week ending Saturday the 24th, has been characterized by anxiety and expectation deferred, rather than by definite results in respect to the war. All the week Lord Roberts' forces have had General Cronje with his little army, estimated at from 4000 to 8000 men, surrounded at Koodoos rand on the Modder river, in the Orange Free State. The situation for Cronje on Wednesday appeared so desperate that it was thought that his surrender could be only a question of hours, but the week passed, and though there were numerous rumors to the effect that the Boer leader had succumbed, there was no confirmation of them from the war office or any source that could be regarded as trustworthy. In the battle of Sunday, the 18th, 146 men were killed on the British side, the Highlanders and Canadians who were employed in an attack upon the enemy's laager—or supply camp—suffering most severely. The Highlanders had 63 men killed, and the Canadians 18 or 19. The attack was no doubt a most gallant one, but the terrible rifle fire of the Boers saved their position. The conditions under which the British attacking party fought, are said to be similar to those experienced in the Modder river battle, the men having to lie flat on the open veldt all day, suffering terribly from thirst, as well as from the fire of the enemy, until a thunder storm somewhat relieved their sufferings. General Kelly-Kenny has been criticized for exposing his men in the open to the rifle fire of the protected enemy, but criticism on the part of experts at a distance from the scene of battle may, or may not be, of any value. The fight of Sunday was succeeded by a bombardment of the Boer position on Monday, with heavy artillery. General Cronje is reported to have asked for an armistice of twenty-four hours, in which to bury the dead. As this was understood to be a ruse, to gain time for strengthening entrenchments, or in hope of obtaining reinforcements, the proposal was refused by Lord Kitchener, and the bombardment was renewed with terrible effect. The bombardment on Tuesday afternoon, according to the description of correspondents who witnessed it was of a most terrible character, and it seemed madness and a wicked sacrifice of life for the Boer commander to hold out against it. In the neighborhood of General Cronje, small bodies of Boers under General Botha and other leaders have appeared, and have been successfully engaged by General French's cavalry and other British forces, so that they have been unable to unite their forces with Cronje's. The scene of the fighting at Koodoos rand or Paardeberg, is said to be one of the prettiest spots in South Africa, the river at the spot held by Cronje's men resembling some parts of the Hudson. The ground all around slopes toward the stream, and all these highlands are held by British artillery. The Boers appear to be confined to the bed and steep banks of the Modder river, which, according to a correspondent, form a ditch two miles long, 150 feet wide, and 50 feet deep. Their position offers good shelter as the bed of the river is nearly dry, with many rocks in it, and dongas or cave-like holes piercing the banks. The wives of many of the Boers are with them. General Roberts has offered a safe conduct for the women which has been refused. Lord Roberts has taken a large number of prisoners—over 500 in all, and a considerable number of Boers have deserted from Cronje's force, who report his situation to be desperate, and strongly condemn the useless sacrifice of life in attempting to hold his position. But every day that the Boer commander can hold on delays Lord Robert's advance, and means a consequent advantage to the forces besieging Ladysmith. Cronje is said to have had a good supply of provis-

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