

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, September 27th, 1917.

The Christian Year

The 18th Sunday After Trinity, Oct. 7th, 1917.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL.

The closing words of the Collect give us the ideal of the Christian life: "with pure hearts and minds to follow Thee the only God." That is our work, that is our vocation—nothing less than this. It is a great and glorious calling. The ideal is the loftiest possible, and the very greatness of the ideal should stimulate us to the greatest endeavours. We are not to be content with a mediocre performance. We are all called to be saints. Holiness is to be the goal of each one of us. People sometimes seem to think that some are called to be saints as we say, and some to be "plain everyday Christians." All are called to be saints. Personal holiness is required of each man, woman and child. Nothing lower than this must be our objective.

And then we pass from the ideal to the actual. How far short we fall! How we limp along the road that leads upwards! How often we seem to be standing still, and, alas, how frequently we seem to be going back! "The temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil," of which the Collect speaks, are so close and strong. Yes, sometimes it would almost seem as if that holy vocation—"To follow Thee the only God"—is not for "the likes of us." Well enough for the people who find it "easy to be good"; but for ourselves, how can we expect very much of ourselves? We are so weak, our wills are so uncertain, and our natural strength cannot be depended on. We find so often that "the spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak."

Now it is at this place that some of the other messages of this Sunday come in with their inspiration and comfort. We were quite right, our wills are uncertain, and our natural strength cannot be depended upon. We are not supposed to depend on these things. We are to depend on Grace. And so we pray: "Lord, we beseech Thee, grant Thy people grace." It is the Grace of God which makes that which was weak strong, which brings to pass that which before was impossible. No wonder St. Paul, the Apostle of the Grace of God, in the words of the Epistle for the Day, offers his thanksgiving, saying: "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge." We are to fall upon the Grace of God which is sufficient for every need.

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity."

Speech is but the broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken. —George Eliot.

It is not much business that distracts any man; but the want of purity, constancy, and tendency towards God.—Jeremy Taylor.

Editorial

THE NEED OF UNITY.

A few days ago one of our Canadian Bishops from the far west stated to the Editor of the "Canadian Churchman" that conditions at the present time demand that all who believe in the divinity of Christ shall stand together. He was speaking particularly of the presence and activity of such organizations as Christian Science, New Thought, etc. The existence of war is making very many people think seriously along religious lines, and advantage is naturally taken of this by every religious organization in the country. The fact, moreover, that such a large percentage of people are without the knowledge that enables them to distinguish between what is false and what is true makes them easy victims. In addition to this the apparent lack of co-operation on the part of the orthodox Christian bodies is used as a weapon against the latter.

In the midst of all this, one great central fact is standing out more and more clearly,—that Christ was not only man but God. This is being more fully recognized every day as the most crucial point in Christian doctrine, the one that is attacked most frequently and insidiously, and the one around which all faithful believers must rally. Differences of opinion regarding ritual or even orders wane into insignificance when placed beside this fact. When the "Church Times" can go so far, as it did in its leading article of June 29th last, as to say that "the Catholic Church knows that priests ordained according to the rites and customs of the Church are validly ordained; it does not know, and cannot know, whether other kinds of ordination are sufficient. These things are God's secret. St. Paul was raised to the apostolate 'not of men, neither by man,' and others may be in the same case," there seems every reason to believe that difficulties regarding orders are not beyond solution. We do not pretend for one moment to say what form the co-operation or union should take but we do say without hesitation that not to co-operate with one another by every means in our power is simply playing into the hands of the enemy. In Missionary work, in Sunday School work, in Social Service work, in Evangelistic efforts, a multitude of ways will be found in which all Christians who believe in the great central fact of Christ's divinity can stand and work together. The differences cannot be solved at once, as they were not created at once. Agreement on the one great point will, however, tend to draw us more and more together. The nearer we get to Christ the nearer we will get to one another, and the more we hold aloof from one another the greater the danger is that we shall lose sight altogether of that which transcends everything else in importance.

We regret the mix-up that occurred regarding the date fixed for Thanksgiving Day. Owing to some misunderstanding on the part of departmental officials at Ottawa or newspapermen, many papers announced October 1st as the date. The correct date is October 8th.

Query: Who is raising the greater objection to the fact that large numbers of people in Canada of alien birth are to be denied the privilege of voting at the next Dominion elec-

tion? Is it the alien voter, or is it the candidate who sees the possibility of losing some votes? Why should men who are relieved from going to the front, legislate for those who do go?

The far-sightedness and aggressiveness shown by the Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the United States in its war plans stand out in sharp contrast with the action of the leaders of that organization in Canada at the beginning of the war. Because it "stands pre-eminently for personal man-to-man work," it is particularly suited to the task of work among the men in camps. It is working in hearty co-operation with the Y.M.C.A. as well as with the leaders in the Church and provides just that connecting link that is lacking here in Canada.

The recent opening of the new Mission Church of St. Luke, in St. Thomas, Ont., reminds us of what the attitude of mother parishes should be. This mission was opened and a beautiful little church erected largely through the sympathetic assistance of the two mother churches. The Church as a whole in the city is working in absolute harmony. Unfortunately, too often one finds jealousy and suspicion not only between older parishes but even between a mission and a mother church. This ought not to be. If the work of the Church is to be truly successful it must be based on love, not on strife and ill-will.

The children of to-day will be the men and women in a very few years' time. And their interest and intelligence regarding the work of the Church will depend largely on what the adults of to-day are doing for them. The Sunday School Commission represents a definite effort to do something worth while for these boys and girls, and Children's Day affords an opportunity to the rank and file of Church members to take a definite share in this effort. The work of the Commission is as yet small in scope compared with its possibilities, but it is as large as its present income and staff can make it. An extension of its work rests entirely with the members of the Church. It is an investment that will produce dividends that cannot be measured in dollars and cents, but in better Church-members, better citizens, better fathers and mothers. Let us see that the investment is in keeping with the opportunity.

The announcement has been made that China is prepared to send 24,000 soldiers to France to fight on the side of the Allies, as a first contingent, provided that money, equipment and shipping are available. We are also told that France is eager to receive the contingent. While we value the sympathy of China in the present struggle we cannot help feeling a certain degree of regret that the use of Chinese soldiers is contemplated. We do not say this on account of any color distinction as we believe that the day for such lines of cleavage is about gone. The unsettled condition of China itself, the lack of a national spirit and of a strong central government render any such participation in external affairs of doubtful value either to China or to the Allies. Before sharing in any such struggle, China needs first of all to establish a more permanent government at home.

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