

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, December 20th, 1917.

The Christian Year Wrecked Churches in Halifax

The Sunday After Christmas Day,
December 30th, 1917.

EMMANUEL.

"And they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." "Emmanuel, God with us"—this is the secret of all true Christmas joy. The great Festival brings with it on its annual visit the assurance of the fact that God has come into human life and has shared our joys and sorrows. No wonder it is the day of happiness.

The happiest day in the year is founded on a religious event. It is strange that we should associate religion with sorrow and gloom. God is as near to us when we laugh as when we weep. Does not Christmas—with its associations of happiness—teach us that? Laughter, good cheer and merriment are as much from God as sorrow, tears and separation. We can be just as religious when we are happy as when we are sad. But Christmas happiness is based on the fact of Emmanuel. It comes to us from the sacrifice of Bethlehem. It is happiness grounded in sacrifice. All the Christmas giving is but an indication of that. The Christmas gift is a symbol of the sacrifice of the Great Giver, Who "so loved the World that He gave His Only Begotten Son," and of the love of Christ, "Who counted it not a prize to be equal with God but emptied Himself." Christmas stands for happiness based on sacrifice, and every Christmas gift is a kind of sacrament of that. Again, this happiness is based on trying to do good, and to make others happy. Our unhappy moods and tempers, our selfish hugging of our sorrows and wrongs—these are the things we banish on Christmas Day. These are just the things which bring so much sorrow into the world. When the depressed person comes into a room, gloom goes forth from him. It is all wicked and unchristian. His sorrows are not worth it. These are not the people who have the privilege of any great sorrow. Great sorrow usually elevates and softens. A great secret has been whispered to them—they have been lifted up near God's Heart. They have been where the balmy breezes blow from the Eternal Hills, and they walk almost buoyantly. Yet we all try to banish this spirit at Christmas-time. Could we not do so always? Our moods are more under our control than any of us would care to admit. The reason Christmas is a happy time is because so many people for a few days actually are Christians. May the Christmas spirit—the desire to help on the good cause of happiness generally—be extended beyond Christmas Day. Remember, the Christmas spirit is the Christian spirit! Remember that this was the spirit in the strength of which the Early Christians conquered the World. They conquered it by their laughter, their songs, their joy, their extraordinary happiness!

These times of distress constitute an opportunity for us to show that we have a religion which is meant for the wear and tear of ordinary life, a religion which stands amid the shock of these days, a religion which has in it a joy that this world can neither give nor take away. For we remember, especially at this Christmas-time, that ours is the religion of "Emmanuel, God With us." "Then was our mouth filled with laughter: and our tongue with joy."

The following information regarding the loss suffered by the Church of England in Halifax was received by the Canadian Churchman on Saturday last by telegram:—

St. Mark's (Rev. N. Lemoine)—Church, school and rector's house total loss.

Trinity (Rev. L. J. Donaldson) formerly the Garrison Chapel and built by Bishop Binney—Church and school total loss.

All Saints' Cathedral (Very Rev. J. P. D. Llwyd, Dean)—All glass gone.

St. George's (Rev. H. W. Cunningham) Old Round Church—Church, school and rectory badly wrecked.

St. Paul's (Ven. W. J. Armitage), oldest Protestant Church building in Canada, begun in 1749—Parish hall and mission hall extensive damage.

St. Matthias' (Rev. T. H. Perry), recently enlarged and new organ just installed—Church practically gone, parish hall and rector's house extensive damage.

Christ Church, Dartmouth (Rev. N. Wilcox)—Church, parish hall and rectory badly wrecked.

Emmanuel Church, North Dartmouth—Total loss.

St. John's, Fairview; St. James', head of Northwest Arm; St. Augustine, Northwest Arm; All Saints', Bedford—All glass out and badly damaged.

Church of England Institute—Badly damaged; used for some days as medical headquarters for American Red Cross and for clothing distribution. Upper portion since abandoned on account of danger.

Archbishop, all clergy and their families safe except for a few minor injuries.

Many vestrymen, a great number of parishioners of St. Mark's killed. Heavy death list among people of St. George's, Trinity, St. Paul's, St. Matthias, and Emmanuel, Dartmouth. A large proportion of the seriously wounded and homeless are Anglicans. Plenty of doctors and nurses on hand now. Food, clothing, medical supplies, and building equipment coming in splendidly for immediate needs. All clergy aiding in general relief work at hospitals, homes, and cemeteries. Money needed at the disposal of Archbishop Worrell for the relief of cases of distress known to clergy among those who will not apply for public relief; and also for the purpose of equipping temporary churches, of restoring churches and schools, and of aiding mission board funds for support of clergy in poor districts.

The above speaks for itself more loudly than any words we can use. The Canadian Churchman will gladly do anything it can to help in this terrible calamity. It will expedite matters, however, we feel certain, if assistance is sent direct either to Archbishop Worrell or to the Rev. Canon Vernon at the Church of England Institute, Halifax.

Editorial

SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF THE WAR.

By the time this number of the Canadian Churchman is in the hands of its readers, the Dominion election will be past and the question of who will control the course of events for the next four or five years will be settled. At the time of writing, however, the issue is still undecided. What we say, therefore, has no bearing on this decision, but on some of the aspects of the situation facing us as a Church.

One feature of the present election that must have occurred to many persons is the part played not only by our own bishops and clergy, but by ministers of all religious communions. The utterances of our bishops have been strong and fearless, while many of the rank and file of our clergy have taken a very active part in the campaign. For this, they have naturally laid themselves open to a certain amount of criticism, but we have no hesitation in saying that had they done otherwise the criticism against them would have been of a very much more serious character. In an ordinary election where the issues are largely of a financial character we rightly consider that it is wise for our clergy to refrain from taking any part other than to impress upon the electors the duty of exercising their franchise in a thoroughly conscientious and fearless manner. In this election, however, the paramount issue was not financial but moral and when moral issues are at stake our leaders in spiritual matters cannot remain neutral. To attempt to do so means that they lose the respect of every serious-minded person and the cause of the Church suffers.

The above only serves to emphasize the moral and spiritual aspect of the struggle in which we are engaged, and this cannot be emphasized too strongly. At the recent meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Armagh, Ireland, the Primate of the Irish Church laid great stress upon the need of keeping the spiritual issues of the present struggle constantly in mind. "Otherwise," said he, "we can never hope to endure patiently to the end, when the end is still so far away."

That there is a growing consciousness of the moral obligation resting upon nations as well as upon individuals, is seen in the emphasis that is placed upon the righteousness of our cause. It is the one great answer to all objectors. It is that that is holding all parts of the British Empire as well as the different nations of the Allies together. It is that that more than anything else led the United States into the war. Many a meeting in connection with the present election has been opened with prayer. The vast audience that assembled recently in Toronto to listen to ex-President Roosevelt was asked to bow their heads in silent prayer following the singing of a verse of "O God Our Help in Ages Past," and in the city of London a Unionist meeting of more than 2,000 persons was opened with prayer by the Rev. Canon Tucker and all joined in repeating the Lord's Prayer. This cannot fail to exert a powerful influence on our country and it gives one great hope for the future. The place of Organized Christianity in our everyday life is being recognized more fully day by day and the responsibility resting upon it of

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