

The Council for Social Service

Rev. L. N. TUCKER, D.C.L., London, Canada

ABOUT ten years ago an organization was formed, under the name of "The Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada," whose objects are sufficiently indicated by its name. It was composed of members of nearly all the moral and religious forces in the land, including the Farmers' Grange and The Trades and Labour Council. Inasmuch as the units represented could only be bound by the decisions of their own courts the organization was limited to action that was practically unanimous; so that the Church of England could not be involved in any action that did not meet with the approval of its representatives. At the Session of the General Synod held in Ottawa in 1908 a Joint Committee of the two Houses was appointed to represent the Church of England officially in the organization. Thus all the Churches in Canada, except the Roman Catholic Church, could take united action on behalf of Moral and Social Reform. The weakness of our Church in this connection lay in the fact that we had no separate organization by which we could take independent action, and no money at our disposal to defray even the limited expense entailed by the action of the General body. The name of "The Moral and Social Reform Council" was subsequently changed into the more appropriate title of "The Social Service Council of Canada," which has also Provincial Branches to deal with issues of a Provincial character.

For many years previously the Methodist Church had had a special department for the promotion of Moral and Temperance Reform which, under the able direction of Rev. Dr. Chown, became a power in the land; and, at a later period, the Presbyterian Church formed a special department of Social Service and Evangelism, which, under the leadership of Dr. Shearer, exerted a wide influence in the settlement of all Moral and Social questions. These two organizations, backed by the moral influence and financial support of their respective Churches, were enabled to plan and carry out far-reaching efforts for the betterment of the Social condition of various sections of the community; and they have been the driving force in the Social Service Council of Canada. Because of our lack of organization and of financial resources, we have been unable to take any independent part in active and aggressive work; ours has been the all-too-modest lot of acting, through our Joint Committee on Moral and Social Reform, merely as one of the units composing the Social Service Council of Canada.

To remedy this unsatisfactory state of things and to enable our Church to exert its legitimate influence in the solution of all the great Moral and Social questions that affect the National life, the General Synod that met in Toronto in 1915 enacted a Canon creating a Council for Social Service. This Council is composed, like the Sunday School Commission and the Board of Management of the M.S.C.C., of the Bishops of the Church in Canada and two clerical and two lay representatives from each of our Canadian Dioceses. By the direction of the Primate, the first Meeting of the Council was held in Toronto on Wednesday, May 3rd; Archdeacon Ingles, of Toronto, was appointed Chairman and Precentor Tucker, of London, Secretary. Owing to the absence of many delegates from the far East and the far West, the Council only took action of a preparatory character. It recommended the appointment of a general Secretary for the Council as soon as practicable

Spectator

Comments on Matters of Interest from
Week to Week.

The call for men to enlist in the Canadian Army is becoming more and more urgent, even frantic. Where shall the two hundred thousand men that have yet to be raised come from? is the problem that is perplexing the recruiting officers of every battalion that is not now up to strength. "Canada's last man and last dollar" was the splendid pledge given by our Premier before hostilities were declared, and Canadian citizens from coast to coast cheered the generous faith and patriotism of our first Minister. But promises are one thing, fulfilment is an entirely more important thing. Just now, when perchance the decisive features of the war are about to be fought out, is the time when the full strength of the Empire should be available. Nowhere on the horizon is there any sign of the last or second last man coming to the aid of his country. The call for men to-day is something of a cry in the wilderness. Where formerly the response was in scores, to-day it comes in units. The call of the land to the farmer, in these beautiful spring days, may account for the lack of response in that quarter. But the land that is in deadly peril of seizure should first be protected. "Safety first" is the precedence of sound judgment. Just why patriotism should wane with a rising temperature may be left to the psychologist to discern. We wonder, however, if there are not some other reasons which might, with justice, be assigned as in some measure accounting for the failure of so many of our young men to face their obligations as citizens in this hour of peril to the Empire?

Is it not more than probable that the press of Canada is doing much to divert the mind of youth in Canada from the more serious responsibilities of life at this solemn hour of world-destiny? Every one will freely acknowledge the great obligation under which the press has laid this country for its splendid patriotism in sustaining British and Canadian ideals in this unusual crisis. The portion of the newspaper, however, which is specially intended to appeal and does actually appeal, most strongly to the youth of our country, is the sporting page. In this section of the press heroes of peace are still acclaimed in time of war. Young men are led to suppose that it is even more important to learn the latest results in baseball than to know of the progress of the war. Postscript editions of the Metropolitan press are daily issued to inform the youth of Canada

and the setting apart of a Sunday in the year when the objects and claims of the Council could be placed before all the congregations of our Church. It also appointed a Committee to draft a memorandum on the work which lies before the Council for submission to the larger Meeting that is to be held in the Autumn. In view of the many and important questions that are now pressing for solution in this sphere, such as temperance, purity, citizenship, and all allied questions, some of which are likely to become extremely acute at the close of the war, the work of the Council for Social Service will surely make such an appeal to the interest and support of all members of the Church as will ensure for it from the outset a large measure of usefulness and success.

how the batting average, or the pitching record of American ball players stands. It isn't a question how goes the battle in Flanders, but what of the conflict on the international diamond. Extra editions are bought and eagerly scanned, not for the record of the heroes of Ypres or Verdun, but for the latest reports of the success or failure of the highly paid ball artists of this or another country. Does it never occur to the editors and directors of our Canadian press that no matter how the question of patriotism and heroism be set forth in editorial and news column it will avail little if the amusements of youth be magnified upon the sporting page of the journal. The justification of the sporting page in times of peace was the effort to develop manliness and endurance in our youth so that when a test of their manhood came they would not be found wanting. To-day the call and test of manhood has come with everything at stake—country, home, honor, freedom—and still the amusements of the campus are magnified as all important. Is it any wonder that thousands of the young men of Canada, who are physically fit, and of military age, should still turn a deaf ear to the summons to service? Spectator calls to the press of Canada, in these hours of fate to direct the mind of youth away from the paltry games of pleasure to the greatest and only game that ought now to engage the attention of the full-blooded men of our country, the circumventing of super-devils of Teuton origin.

* * * *

Readers of *The Canadian Churchman* have noticed, no doubt, the most telling cartoons which have been given to the world by the well-known English publication, "Punch." Many of these cartoons are brilliant in their suggestion of the essence of difficult and intricate situations. By a few deft lines the philosophy of the occasion is revealed so that he that runs may read. The non-malicious satire and humour of this publication has amused two or more generations; and not only amused but instructed. It is, therefore, with much pain that one sees in these times of war, when almost every family in England is represented directly or indirectly in the deadly conflict, that in a central position, with unavoidable prominence a whole page is devoted to the advertising of a certain brand of whiskey. In face of the call and example of the King, one would think such an act was not up to the high standard of propriety that this paper usually sets before it. But the special point of objection to the thrusting of the supposed merits of an intoxicant under the eyes of its readers is that the advertisement is illustrated by some real or fancied incident of the war. A soldier in the trenches is represented as sampling it with great advantage to himself, or the enemy is made to flee before its courage-giving qualities. In a country that is calling to its citizens to conserve their resources so that they may endure even unto the end, it is rather surprising that the government should allow their appeals to be so negated. But more significant than all is the readiness with which a paper of the "Punch" type, entering as it does the best homes of England, should thus commercialize patriotism to its own financial advantage. It makes one feel that even in the hour of the Empire's greatest peril there are those at the heart of the Empire who play upon the sacred sentiments of sacrifice in order to promote a most questionable enterprise. Whatever may be the rights of citizens to participate in intoxicants, this of all times is not the occasion to thrust such things under the eyes and noses of a people fighting for their very existence, nor is it a time to trifle with their patriotism.