

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, February 28th, 1918.

The Christian Year

The Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10, 1918.

God's method of working in human life is one of the many lessons illustrated by the wonderful passage which constitutes to-day's Gospel.

Five loaves and two small fishes made up the whole supply for five thousand people. It seemed impossible to Philip that the situation could be met with their poor means, and while to St. Andrew there appeared to be enough for a few, yet the feeding of the multitude was to him also quite out of the question. And they were both right so long as they forgot the One Who said, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" The pitiful little supply placed in His hands became more than sufficient for all their need. "Which things," to borrow St. Paul's words in to-day's Epistle, "are an allegory"—an allegory, indeed, reminding us of what may be accomplished with our "pitifully imperfect best," if we place it in His hands. They gave Him the best they had, and, insufficient to cope with the situation as it appeared, they found it would do. Here is the simple secret for turning our poor gifts, insufficient supplies and meagre opportunities into great instruments of usefulness and blessing. It is not the greatness of the gifts we possess that matters most. It is the fullness of their surrender and the quality of the faith with which we trust them into His hands. In His hands five loaves and two small fishes are such an abundant supply for five thousand people that they "filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten." This is something to be remembered in regard to our Lenten devotions and self-discipline. Whatever we may be doing during Lent, whatever special opportunities we may be having, we must make sure that we put them into His hands.

But there is another phase of the lesson which is brought out in the Gospel. How was the food distributed to the companies of people sitting on the hillside? Was the bread conveyed by miraculous means to each person? No. Then did the Saviour Himself walk up and down through the waiting crowds, and with His own hands give to each his share? No; neither of these pictures are the ones given to us in the story. What is the picture? Through the crowds of hungry people there moved humble men giving out the bread and fish to the Lord's guests. "And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down." The use of human instruments is one of the basic characteristics of God's method of working upon earth. The miraculous disappears at the earliest possible moment. No miracle is worked when ordinary means will do.

The Redeemer's use of the human instrument, His respect for the work that men can do, His willingness to use it at every turn, and more, His undoubted resolution to limit Himself and His power on many occasions to the human response, and His willingness to co-operate with us should make us realize our solemn responsibility as co-workers with Him.

Editorial

WRECKED CHURCHES.

The appalling disaster in Halifax harbour on December 6th last was a very heavy blow to the Church life of that city and the adjoining town of Dartmouth. There are six Anglican parishes in Halifax, including the Cathedral, one of which, St. Mark's, had three church buildings, two being on the outskirts of the city. Dartmouth had two churches, but only one parish. There was another small church across what is known as the North-West Arm, St. Augustine's, connected with the Cathedral, making a total of eleven church buildings. Of these, three, besides two comparatively new and up-to-date parish halls, were completely destroyed and all the others more or less wrecked. Old St. Paul's, the mother church of the city, and the oldest Church of England building in Canada, was almost miraculously preserved, and suffered the least. Not even its memorial windows were broken, although two tablets on either side one window were loosened from the wall. The Cathedral, although further away from the explosion, was caught in its sweep. All its large windows were completely destroyed, besides considerable other damage, amounting, in all, to some \$25,000.

An official appraiser has been engaged and we expect to be able next week to give the result of his work.

The cost of reconstruction will be even greater, however, than the value of the buildings destroyed as they were all wooden structures. In the case of at least one church (Trinity) brick must be used in rebuilding, as this is required by the city's fire regulations, and even in the case of the others it is the part of wisdom to use a more durable and more fireproof material than wood. In addition to this, advantage should be taken of the situation to provide for future growth, especially in the newer districts in Dartmouth as well as in Halifax.

As to the financial situation, it has been announced unofficially that the Dominion Government will probably make good the loss to some extent, but the Archbishop of Nova Scotia estimates that at least \$150,000, over and above Government aid, will be required. A generous response was made to relieve the suffering and destitution caused by the explosion, and it was realized that it was a calamity that affected every part of the allied countries. The Church has shared in this terrible misfortune, and is now appealing to Church people in other parts of Canada to come to its assistance. The mother diocese of the Dominion has suffered a staggering blow at the very heart of its activities. It has given freely in years gone by to other portions of the Church and will do so again. In the meantime it calls for help, and we are convinced that the generous, patriotic and statesmanlike members of our beloved Church can be depended on to respond generously to the call. The Primate has signified his desire that the Church throughout the Dominion should help provide the funds needed. Up to the present we have been unable to give our readers anything like an adequate estimate of the needs, but now that they are more clearly known, we have no hesitation what-

ever in urging you to render every assistance in your power.

The "Canadian Churchman" will be pleased to forward any money that is sent to it. It would save time and expense, however, if this were sent direct to the Archbishop, the Most Rev. C. L. Worrell, Halifax, N.S.

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We drew attention several months ago to the serious nature of the school situation in the Province of Saskatchewan. In times of peace certain evils flourish, and it seems to require a great calamity to open our eyes to what is taking place. The question of allowing more than one language will have to be fought out in more than one province. It is a question that should be settled at the time that newcomers arrive, and should not be left to be fought over several years after they have been in the country.

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The result of the vote of the soldiers overseas is now being made known and as was expected will increase the majority of the Union Government considerably. This government has, with the exception of the two provinces of Quebec and Prince Edward Island, the vast majority of the people of Canada behind it. It has no easy road ahead of it, but the cause at stake is great enough to make men forget petty and personal matters. We regret that there should be any exceptions at such a time and we hope that the people of the two provinces referred to will come to realize their mistake.

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The President of the American Bar Association, addressing the Empire Club in Toronto, gave expression to some very valuable thoughts. "We have erected," said he, "instead of the crucified Son of God, Whose whole life was a sacrifice, and Whose death was an atonement, the image of a false humanity, which looks upon suffering, physical suffering especially, as a great evil, and death the greatest—a religion of humanitarianism." He claimed that the lack of a virile Christian faith was responsible in great measure for the present war, and it is only by making the ideals of Christianity all-powerful that we can hope to make impossible a repetition of such a war.

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The appointment of the Dean of Durham, Dr. Hensley Henson, to the Bishopric of Hereford, has created a great deal of discussion in the Church in England. The orthodoxy of the Bishop-elect, particularly with regard to certain sections of the Creeds, was called into question. However, his reply to a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury seemed to give the quietus to the discussion and the consecration was proceeded with. The bearing of the whole situation on the relation of the State to the Church in the matter of such appointments, and of the Church as a whole to the interpretation of its Creeds, gives to it a much wider significance. The former is a matter that concerns the Church in the Motherland but the latter is one of general concern and will have to be faced by the Church in all parts of the world. There can be no doubt that the experiences through which the world is passing at present will affect the forms in which we give expression to our faith. We need to be careful that we do not over-emphasize the form and lose sight of the underlying truth, and we need also to get clearer in our minds the real truths on which we stand.