

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, June 13th, 1918.

The Christian Year

The Fourth Sunday After Trinity, June 23.

THE COLLECTS AND THE WAR.

To so behave during the school-time of earth as to attain the prize of heaven, to effect in safety this pilgrimage through time to the Beyond, to "so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal"—such is the burden of our Collect.

And it does not appeal to the modern mind. Let us frankly admit that, to begin with! The prayer savours too much of 'other-worldliness'; it smacks of that medieval outlook which regarded this world as, inscrutably if you like, but certainly incurably bad; which looked upon life as a second-rate and incommensurable inn to be quitted without regret at the earliest opportunity by the traveller possessed of a passport to better quarters.

But are we thus to condemn our Collect off-hand? Think again. This life at best is very short, and eternity is very long. The hedonist, the materialist, the man who lives for pleasure may well sing—

"One moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One moment, of the Well of Life to taste—
The stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—oh, make haste!"

But the hedonist is not alone in his consciousness of the brevity of life. For the greatest of religious thinkers, also, men "fade away suddenly like the grass." Do all you can and all you should to make this world better, right the crying wrongs of ignorance, outrageous custom and tyranny, live so that men shall arise and call you blessed—and yet it remains true that for them as well as for yourself, granted the fact of immortality, the endless years of the Beyond are of the profoundest moment.

The truth, of course, is that there need be no antithesis between interest in the life of this world and in that which is to come. The partial stress of our ancestors on heaven to the neglect of social reform illustrated the one-sidedness of human nature. Our crudeness will be no less if in our commendable passion to help men here and now we lose sight of the august sanctions of immortality.

And the War is bringing us back to a truer attitude. The countless dead beckon us to the Unseen and the Future, while the urgent problems of reconstruction keep us alive to the call of the Present. If we are able to reach the true balance, to grasp the fact that the best use of this life has promise, also of the life that is to come, then we shall be nearer to the mind of Christ who fed the hungry, healed the sick and championed the poor, and yet urged that a man's treasure should be in heaven; nearer also to the attitude of the Apostolic Church which launched the experiment of complete communism; and yet kept their faces ever towards the sunrising, "looking for that Blessed Hope."

Before you can get religion into anything else, you have got to have a contagious case of it yourself.—Henry Sloane Coffin.

Tact is not merely shown in saying the right thing at the right time, and to the right people. It is shown quite as much in the many things left unsaid and apparently unnoticed.—Lecky.

Editorial

CHAPLAIN SERVICE.

It came as welcome news that the Chaplain Service in Canada was being reorganized, or rather, created. There has been, in reality, so little of it that it was scarcely deserving of the name. This does not mean that much admirable work was not done. On the contrary, it is remarkable what an amount of work has been done largely on a voluntary basis, and the excellence of this is, we believe, in the main responsible for the change.

The change means briefly that Canada will have a Director of Chaplains' Services for the whole Dominion. Under him will be two Assistant Directors, one for Eastern Canada from the Atlantic to Fort William, and the other for Western Canada from Fort William to the Pacific. Under each of these in turn there will be a Senior Chaplain for each of the present Military Districts with other chaplains working with them. Where the Senior Chaplain is, say, an Anglican, his associates will represent other religious Communion, and in this way the spiritual needs of all men will be cared for. The whole plan is simple and sane and we feel certain that it will prove a great boon to the work and will relieve many parish clergy of a burden of responsibility which they have been endeavouring to discharge to the best of their ability. It means also that this work has been recognized as a military necessity and not as a sort of necessary nuisance.

Few people realize the diversified character of a Military Chaplain's work. It is too frequently imagined that it consists mainly, if not solely, of services rather than of spiritual service. The courage of the Chaplains at the front and their usefulness have been recognized and a large number of them have been honoured by the King. Moreover, many of them have laid down their lives in the performance of their duties. They do, of course, hold services for the men, in camps, in the open air, and in dugouts. They visit the sick and the wounded in hospitals, in trenches, and often between the lines in "No Man's Land," seeking to take comfort and cheer to the brave lads who are called upon to bear the brunt of the fight. They carry with them the word of God and have distributed hundreds of thousands of copies of the Bible in whole or in part. Thousands of letters to friends at home are penned by them for men who are unable to write and they are able to convey countless messages of comfort and assurance to the anxious friends in the home land. They are a link between the living and the dying. They seek to warn our boys against the dangers of camp life in Canada as well as in England and France. They provide means of wholesome recreation in the form of excursions, theatre parties, baseball and football leagues. They distribute quantities of literature, papers, magazines and books, sent to them by those at home, and wherever possible provide for the physical comforts of the men. They are endeavouring by every means in their power to minister to the whole man—body, mind and soul,—realizing that it is the whole man, and not the body alone, that must enter into the struggle if he is to play his part successfully.

And when the war is over and this horrible carnage becomes a nightmare of the past, what more valuable asset can the nation have than this body of devoted followers of Christ? They are dealing with men under exceptional

conditions, it is true, but it is only thus that men can fully grasp the real seriousness of the normal. It is only through such experiences that we can be led to realize as we ought the fundamental nature of the work that the Church is called upon to do at all times, in peace as well as in war.

To supply men for this work will necessarily mean sacrifice on the part of many a parish, but we feel certain that this will be borne cheerfully once the need of the sacrifice is realized.

REMEMBER: Sunday, June 30th, has been appointed a day of special prayer and humiliation. Every Sunday between now and then might well be utilized in preparing for it. We trust, moreover, that something out of the ordinary will be arranged for the services of that day. Let us remember that the whole day and not merely two or three hours should be given up to definite and persistent prayer on behalf of the cause for which our men are fighting and dying, and let us show ourselves worthy of them and in earnest in our desire for a righteous victory.

The experiment of holding a conference before Synod, has been tried this year by at least two Synods—Niagara and Toronto—with decided success. It was the verdict of all who attended these that they should be repeated next year. In the meantime, though, we hope that something will be done along this line in connection with the General Synod. Two Conferences, one of clergy and the other of laymen, could be made of great value in discussing such subjects as Prayer Book Revision, or the character of the Evening Service. There is considerable feeling on both subjects that should be given an opportunity for free expression.

The retirement of Bishop Montgomery from the secretaryship of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel is a great loss to the missionary cause. The fact, however, that he will probably be available when required for consultative purposes will lessen the loss to a great extent. Those who had the privilege of meeting him or hearing him speak when in Canada a few years ago will recall his attractive personality and his statesmanlike grasp of the work in which he was engaged. He is a Churchman of strong convictions but also of wide sympathies and he has many warm friends amongst all Christian Communion. We hope that he may be granted many happy years of rest from active labour.

The Executive Committee of the M.S.C.C. at its last meeting decided to make a special grant of \$1,200 towards the salary of a man to undertake work in the colony of returned soldiers in the Temiskaming District of the Clay Belt of New Ontario. According to figures secured by Canon Gould from the Ontario Government, of the total 96 members of the colony, forty-four, or nearly one-half, are Anglicans, nineteen are Presbyterian, eleven Methodist, six Baptist, six Roman Catholic, and ten of other faiths. This reveals at a glance the responsibility of the Church and we must feel grateful to our Missionary Society for the step it has taken. Such action as this should spur the members of the Church to support more liberally than heretofore the work it is endeavouring to do.

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