

Editorial

REINSTATING THE SOLDIERS

CANADA'S war programme consisted of two parts, putting an efficient army in the field, and providing for the men after their return. We are just entering upon the second part of the programme, but sometimes it seems as if the chief performers were not prepared to play their parts. In other words, our national government appears to have no definite plan prepared for the reinstatement of the men, or for suitable provision for them in cases where reinstatement is impossible.

Here in Winnipeg as in other places local committees are at work scouring the shops and manufacturing establishments looking up jobs for the returning men. This is very commendable insofar as these local committees are concerned, but it does not say much for the Federal Government, which should have had the whole matter arranged beforehand. Local effort can never take the place of national foresight and national organization. The placing of men in positions is part of the national programme, and the war is not ended until every man is properly placed. More than that, unless the men are properly placed, a second war, more serious for us than the Great War, is quite possible. Civil unrest is based on discontent. If any people have a right to feel discontented it is those who feel that their loyal and whole-hearted sacrifice has not been appreciated.

It is invidious to make comparisons, but when one reads what has been done in England and in the United States, he must feel that we have failed in one part of our work. The following extract from the U. S. Employment Service Bulletin, illustrates the point, and no excuse is made for quoting at length, since the problem is upon us and serious action is imperative.

A model demobilization camp, where a personal record is made of each soldier, before he is discharged, insuring to the discharged man a place of employment, is the admirable achievement of Maj. Gen. Henry P. McCain, former Adjutant General of the Army, now commanding officer at Camp Devens, Ayer, Mass.

Working in conjunction with the United States Employment Service, Gen. McCain has placed behind the Employment Service representatives in the camp, and their work, every means necessary to get results. Figures for December show that 12,559 men were discharged. Of these 6,954 stated they did not need assistance, 2,777 had assurance of getting their old jobs back, 902 were referred to new positions in that vicinity, and 1,926 were given letters to their local United States employment office, where they have also been listed.

"The general scheme which has been adopted at this camp, and which worked out to our entire satisfaction, is to get a line on the number of men in camp and those coming into the camp every day, then to follow these men up until they are about to be discharged. This information is essential in order to keep ahead of the discharges so that the men can be ordered to the employment office, which is a separate building set apart in the central part of the camp for this particular use, where nine army clerks, with Capt. Allen in charge of the office, represent Maj. Gen. McCain.

"The battalion or regiment about to be discharged are ordered to report, a company at a time, usually about 24 to 72 hours in advance of their discharge, at the employment office, where the men were given a talk on the employment question, telling them that the Government was anxious to see all men discharged from the service placed in some employment and to that end had placed the United States Employment Service at their disposal.

Men are Classified

"The men were put through a process of elimination. Those who had no work to return to, we advised we had jobs for them. We impressed this upon their minds by repeating several times so that there will be no misunderstanding. To the men who are not sure of their jobs and wish to return to their former employer, we furnish him a card which he is to present to his former employer to be marked by him and returned to us with the inscription at the bottom whether he has been employed or not. Men who are positively sure of their positions we take their names and addresses, their army serial number, the names and addresses of employers to whom they are returning. When men are going to states outside of New England and have no jobs to return to, we give them a card to the nearest Employment Service office or community board in his district, who will look out and see that he is placed.

What is Done for Him

"Having classified the men into groups each man is then questioned as to the kind of work he desires and which in our estimation he is best fitted. Having obtained this information we furnish him with one of our postal cards, directing him to some employer, or where we find that we have no jobs on hand in his town, we send him to an employment office of the

United States Employment Service Community Board in or near his home town.

"To the men sent to the United States Employment Office, duplicate forms are made, one copy of which we send to his home office with a letter asking that the man be placed in the job he desires. These duplicate cards are sent out at least 2 to 4 days before the man is discharged from the camp, so as to prepare the United States Employment Office where he is going to apply, and they will be ready to place him.

Follow-Up System

"When cards are returned to us and we find that the man has been placed at work, we so note on the back of his card which is on file at the camp. If, however, we find that the man has not been placed at work, we have a follow-up system where we write to the concern to which he was first directed and ask them why the man was not placed in his former job. If we find that it is impossible to place him with his former employer, we get in touch with the discharged soldier again, also the nearest employment office, asking the latter to place the soldier in a position. You can readily see from foregoing that every man who is discharged must pass through the employment office at this camp and, if he hasn't a job to go to, we will direct him to one."

It is satisfactory to note that some of the ministers are sufficiently alive to sense the seriousness of the situation. One of them has made an appeal to all interests in the country to join in providing for the returning men. Other ministers apparently think their duty is done when they announce that a budget expenditure of \$60,000,000 is to be provided. The public will not be satisfied with this any more than they are with banquets and speeches and cheers. What they want is well-planned organization to meet a real situation. And the burden of this should be not on municipalities, nor provincial governments, but upon the Federal Government. For the settlement of soldiers in positions is part of the war programme.

THE CHURCH OF TO-MORROW

IT is quite true that the war has changed our viewpoint of view on everything. In what respect is the viewpoint of religion changing?

It is not so difficult to answer this if one reviews the experiences of mankind during the centuries that Christianity has been operative as a power in the hearts of men and in the life of the world. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of professed disciples, notwithstanding their inefficiency because of differences in belief and practice, the fact remains that the Church of Christ is and must continue to be, the most powerful agency for the promotion of peace and righteousness. Even when men misinterpreted the teachings of the Master so as to put comparatively unessential doctrines and practices in the first place, they were unable to dim the glory of the message conveyed by Him Who spake as never man spake, and Who, because He went about doing good was able to say to men of His time and of all time "Follow Me!" The bickerings and disagreements of men as to creeds, ceremonies and interpretations, no doubt prevented Christianity from finding its true place in the hearts of men, but somehow, even when beliefs and expression took on the grotesque or extravagant, there was still something uplifting and strengthening in the messages given.

Away back in the centuries there lived men who having caught a view of the Perfect One, sought to make themselves like Him, by prayer and fasting and seclusion. Now, purity of soul is most commendable, but it is not enough. It was not enough for the Master Himself, for He mingled among men, preaching, teaching and doing good. It is clear that Christianity of the future must have in it the idea of service. Prayer, communion and fasting are valuable chiefly as they are related to this end. If the recluse through centering his thought on himself rather than upon the work he should do for others, took a distorted view of things, he was no more extreme than the evangelists of a later day who so strongly appealed to the selfishness of men in warning them to flee from the wrath to come. Nor have these evangelists all passed away. Writing in the Atlantic Monthly, Harry Emerson Fosdick describes these as they appear to him to-day.

"The churches for generations have been urging upon us an individualistic and self-centered gospel. We have been continuously supplied in hymns, in liturgies, in sermons with Jonathan Edwards' dominant ideal, 'I make seeking my salvation the main business of my life.' Even when this self-regarding motive has not been centered on a 'post-mortem' heaven it has been centered quite as selfishly on the present life."

Now in this appeal to men to save their souls by forsaking sin and seeking forgiveness there is a great truth. The publican of Scripture took the first step towards service when he cried out in his humility, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Yet it was only the first step. Christian service is not perfected in

humility. There is, moreover, something suggestive in the fact that the sinner here was a publican, or tax gatherer, whose sin was doubtless that of robbing the public. The evangelist of to-day usually gives the word a narrower meaning. He connects sin with certain practices such as card playing, smoking, dancing and the like, and his gospel becomes one of prohibitions and restrictions. On this point Fosdick pertinently remarks:

"I remember the minister who preached a long Sunday evening sermon for the acknowledged purpose of persuading a few of us to sign a pledge never to drink sweet cider as long as we lived. I remember with resurrected wrath that as a boy I missed my one and only opportunity to hear Edwin Booth in 'Hamlet,' because some brethren stirred my sensitive conscience on the wickedness of the theatre. . . . For years the solicitous paternal attempt of the churches to build a protecting hedge around their people's character has been confirming the idea that the marrow of Christian duty is 'Thou shalt not.'"

Now it is clear that in the religion of the future the message must go beyond this. Life is not summed up in negatives, it refuses to be bounded by restrictions. In the message of the Master there stands out in splendid majesty this one great thought, "I came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

And so the religion of the future will incorporate all that was good in the ideas of the past. It will make a place for prayer and meditation, it will insist on purity of life with its willingness to sacrifice the trivial and unworthy for the permanent and the really important, but it will place over everything the idea that a man must win life through losing it. In other words, as Fosdick says:

"Let the churches proclaim social aims worth fighting for, not a mere selfish gospel of safety; let them lift up the central faiths of the Christian life, with the fringes hanging how they will; let them make ethical negations only the shadows cast by the great light of positive ideals; let them practise as well as preach fraternity; let them draw together in one common cause, because they have learned how much they all agree and how insignificantly they differ."

OUR GOOD NAME

ONE of the most satisfactory things in connection with our part in the war is that nobody seems to be jealous of the good name that Canada has won because of the good deeds of her soldiers and the sacrifices of her womenfolk. There are two or three good reasons for this. In the first place the Canadians behaved themselves in a worthy manner throughout. They never allowed themselves to descend to brutality nor indecency, and when it came to fighting they never flinched. They did their duty and more, without boasting. It is this absence of boasting that has caused Canada and the Motherland to be loved and respected by the world at large. After all, trumpet-blowing is a mighty small business. Thank Heaven we have for the most part got beyond it. Now that we have a good name abroad it is for us to respect ourselves at home. Self-respect is necessary to happiness and prosperity. It is dependent upon the cultivation of such traits as courage, honesty, justice and brotherly-kindness. In other words we must make our own the Christian virtues. A good man is of more value to the state than a wealthy man. An unprincipled wretch is always a drag on society. May we have good reason to be as proud of the behavior of our men at home as of the conduct of the men who went overseas.

DIRECTION BY EXPERTS

THOUGH autocracy in any field is to be condemned, leadership by experts or those able to speak with authority, is to be commended.

This is just where we may easily get off the track. In a democracy it does not follow that any Tom, Jack or Harry can successfully direct the affairs of state, nor the affairs of industry, religion and finance. There are some individuals in every country who are worth more than a million common men. Such men we find in Lloyd George, in Hoover, in Foch and other men of this stamp. So, too, in business there are natural leaders, men with clear insight and organizing ability, who stand out above their fellows. It is absurd to talk of reducing men to a common level. Yet so inconsistent are we in matters of government that we permit men with no practical knowledge of great departments of government to take charge of them, and in industry and finance we are often at the mercy of those who lack information and ordinary discernment. The day is coming when the Finance Minister of our country will be a real financier; the Postmaster General a man who has a real knowledge of the postal service; the Solicitor-General a lawyer of admitted ability, and so on. We cannot much longer endure government by those whom political necessity has forced into prominence.