

THE WEEKLY ONTARIO.

THE DAILY ONTARIO is published every afternoon (Sundays and holidays excepted) at The Ontario Building, Front Street, Belleville, Ontario. Subscription \$3.00 per annum.

JOB PRINTING—The Ontario Job Printing Department is especially well equipped to turn out artistic and stylish Job Work. Modern presses, new type, competent workmen.

THE WEEKLY ONTARIO and Bay of Quinte Chronicle is published every Thursday morning at \$1.00 a year, or \$2.00 a year to the United States.

W. H. MORTON, Business Manager. J. O. HERBERT, Editor-in-Chief.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1916.

HERESY.

Rev. Dr. Scott, the new pastor of Bridge Street Church, in his remarks in response to the various addresses of welcome at the meeting at his church on Tuesday night last, is reported as having said,—"A pastor should not be confined to the pulpit. He ought to be a man with the courage of his convictions, taking an interest in political and civic affairs."

The popular conception of what a pastor ought to be is strongly at variance with Dr. Scott's ideal.

Generally speaking, we believe the people look for the clergyman to be an etherealised mollycoddle, a hermetical bookworm, a sublimated gazer upon the starry heights, a sanctimonious visionary, a funeral purveyor of pristine platitudes, a solemnly impartial distributor of periodical pastoral visits, a conscientious patron of the ladies' aid, the W.M.S., and the band of hope, an antediluvian deliver into forgotten and meaningless theology, a bellicose enunciator of distinctive church doctrines and dogmas, a ponderous and persistent proclaimer of what everybody knows, an eloquent expounder of what nobody disputes, an unctuous trimmer, a theological once-was.

But "politics"! "Civic affairs"! Surely, gentlemen, this is heresy!

The Ontario has been foolhardy enough on one or two occasions to recommend the very thing that Dr. Scott suggests. Although not headed for high treason we have been much anathematised by people who would like to have all opinion cast in the one narrow groove of uniformity and stupidity. We do not worry because of this sort of opposition. We rather welcome it as an indication of nascent thinking upon the part of those with whom thought is considered a crime.

But, honestly now, why should a minister resign his citizenship when he enters the ministry? He has taken a long course of academic training. He is usually well versed in the principles of philosophy. Of all the callings and professions that of the ministry ranks about the highest in education. He has six days in which to prepare, to study, to mature his message before he gives it out on the seventh. He has time for reflection and is sufficiently removed from the practical entanglements of business and politics to view the great movements impartially, critically, reflectively and dispassionately.

Surely the advice and counsel that emanate from such a source ought usually to be mature, reliable and worthy of acceptance.

But is ministerial counsel much prized and sought after? As a rule, we should say not.

If a minister talks about anything more recent than the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or closer to present-day interests than the Millennium, he is pretty certain to stir up the ire of some of the dead-at-the-top wooden heads in his congregation. And said wooden heads can cause discord and annoyance out of all proportion to their numbers or importance. They are experts at bulldozing and intimidation. The poor preacher either has to beat a hasty retreat and say he never meant nuthin' by it or run the risk of seeing his usefulness negated by undermining processes that can never be openly met or challenged. The minister would often do his duty and speak out honestly and courageously but bitter experience has told him of dire consequences. He must live.

In conversation with us the other day a clergyman was deploring the marked decline in church attendance that is becoming a most serious matter, threatening the very existence of many once flourishing congregations. He had some theories about the cause.

Our own theory is that the real cause of falling church attendance is due to lack of vital, moving, life-giving messages from the pulpit. Too many preachers are feeding their congregations upon the husks of a barren and outworn theology. They revel in the past; they speculate about the future; they ignore the present. Much of the blame—perhaps most of it—lies in the pew. We have an intimidated ministry. We have been getting the kind of preaching we wanted, or, at least, that some of us wanted.

As Dr. Scott has stated, a minister should

have courage. He must indeed have courage if he would be any more serviceable or influential than a phonograph record, rehearsing arid ritualistic formulas or theological commonplace that arouse no one out of somnolence.

It requires courage and a lot of it to be different, to be original, to say or do things that the mob does not endorse, to take a stand that may be right but at the same time unpopular.

It needed mountains of courage for the Ministerial Association of British Columbia to come out two years ago and sign their names to a document that exposed with all the pitiless logic of irrefutable facts the shameless exploitation of one of the fairest possessions of the British crown. The government of Sir Richard McBride was overwhelmingly popular, but the ministers knew of the criminal spoliation that was going on and the price the deluded people would later be compelled to pay. The ministers never hesitated. They went to their task, believing and knowing they were right. They were held up to public scorn and ridicule. They were the victims of unbridled abuse and billingsgate. They endured it all. A great victory was lately won. The Liberals and Sir Hibbert Tupper have been accorded all the praise. But the real power that aroused the public conscience and set the corrective forces at work was found in the strong-minded, honest, courageous, independent, fearless Ministerial Association of British Columbia.

Were the ministers right? Was what they have accomplished worth the doing?

They are content that others should have the glory as long as they know that the cause for which they labored has triumphed.

About half-a-dozen years ago the clergy of Winnipeg and of Manitoba began to protest against the outrageous political corruption that was causing the name of their province to become a byword throughout the civilised world. Then upon every public platform Sir Rodmond Roblin and his fellow pirates discharged their floods of ditch-water.

But Manitoba was cleaned up and the ministers deserve the lion's share of the credit.

When "Cap." Sullivan and his merry men, taking advantage of the weakness of the Ross administration in Ontario, brought about an orgy of political debauchery, such as tarnished the good name of the provincial Liberal party for years afterwards, it was the ministers of Ontario who spoke out against the spreading and blasting plague and helped to usher in the honest and efficient administration of Sir James Whitney.

We all remember the splendid battle for prohibition carried on by the ministers of Ontario in the election campaign of June 1914, and we also have occasion to remember the torrents of slander and abuse to which they were subjected.

Does anyone believe that Ontario would now have a prohibitory law upon her statute books if the clergy of the province had maintained a cowardly silence in the famous "Abolish-the-Bar" campaign?

In these few familiar instances it will be seen that the ministry of the churches added immeasurably to their usefulness by having the "courage of their convictions" and standing up fearlessly for what they conceived to be right. The public have derived untold benefits and the clergy stand far higher in public estimation.

Religion does not consist of certain mechanical repetitions and genuflections. Religion is a life.

A speaker in one of the church conferences the other day was bestowing great praise upon his denomination because it had had so little to do with bringing about prohibition in Ontario.

We can see nothing to glory about in an attitude of that kind. The milk-and-water route is easy and pleasant to travel over but it never gets you anywhere. Prohibition is a moral question. As such it is either right or wrong. If it is right, no church, as such, can afford to be neutral upon it. If prohibition is wrong in principle, and as it works out in practice, then the church ought to oppose it might and main. There may be independence but there can be no proper neutrality for any church upon moral issues.

We do not consider it wise for the clergy of our churches, as clergymen, or for our churches, as churches, to become political partisans and to incorporate in their programs such subjects as the tariff, the Single Tax, or the regulation of joint stock companies. But wherever a political question comes up, with a moral issue the prominent factor about it, then we believe the ministers could be heard from with great advantage to themselves and to the public at large.

Not insipid, colorless neutrality, but sane and not silent independence is what is required.

The Ontario would oppose to the last ditch any attempt to create a union of church and state in Canada or to extend the temporal power of any denomination. We would even endorse the sweeping away of the compromising favors the churches now enjoy, such as exemption from

the payment of taxes on church property. But we would fain hear from our ministers far oftener than we do upon "political and civic affairs."

All our churches can be filled at every service if the sermonisers will more nearly touch the individual and community life. Give the people something that they feel they need and there will be no difficulty about church attendance.

Aimless reviewing of Jewish history and dismal threatenings about future eternal torment no longer inspire or intimidate. All are agreed that our status in the future depends upon how we conduct ourselves in the present. The life that now is and how we can achieve our highest destiny in that life should therefore be the primary interest and concern of both pulpit and pew.

To preach to men about the lives they are leading requires that ministers "should have the courage of their convictions," and in preaching they may occasionally turn with profit to "political and civic affairs."

Dr. Scott is headed in the right direction.

THE FIELD OF HONOR.

"The 15th of September will ever be a historic day for Canada. Our men have won a signal victory over the enemy. They look confidently forward to others." With these words the "eye-witness" at the Canadian headquarters in France concludes his narrative of the glorious part played by the sons of Canada in the capture of the village of Courcellette which Mr. Frederick Palmer of the Associated Press, and Mr. Philip Gibbs of the London Daily Chronicle two brilliant war correspondents, have signalized as one of the most remarkable achievements of the war. The "eye-witness" narrative, based as it undoubtedly is upon official information, confirms the testimony of those experienced writers and tells how brilliantly the attack was carried out by our gallant boys and how resourceful they showed themselves in overcoming the most adverse conditions and in consolidating and holding the advantage won. The story of their bravery stirs the emotions and fills our hearts. They have added new lustre to the name of Canada. To us in Eastern Ontario it is occasion for special pride that the Battalion which is particularly dear to the hearts of the people of this part of the Province was foremost in the fighting and, as the official report states, played a brilliant part in the execution of the attack. Their countrymen are proud of their valor, and their splendid courage. Major Roscoe Vanderwater and his men did "magnificent work," they fought a good fight, they maintained the honor of the British name. The Canadian soldiers have once more proved their mettle in one of the most desperate encounters of the war. The success they won appears to have been of the highest importance. The cost was heavy, but the sacrifice was not in vain. We salute the memory of Lieut. Allen, Pte. Milton Vandervoort, Pte. Caddick and the other heroes who have fallen on the field of honor. We send to those who "carry on" our grateful congratulations upon the glorious victory that they have won for Canada.

FUTILE "FRIGHTFULNESS."

Hasty generalizations about anything in this war are to be avoided, but the failure of the last Zeppelin raid, in force, when only three of the thirteen raiders were able to approach the outskirts of London and one of these was brought down in flames, seems to confirm the confidence of the British press in the efficiency of the gun and aircraft defences of London. This is not to tempt Providence, for it is always possible that a Zeppelin raid on a big scale may by an unlucky fluke inflict considerable local damage and loss of life. But the Westminster Gazette thinks that there has been enough experience of these attacks to enable it to say with much confidence that the German airship has no serious importance as a military factor operating by itself.

As a scout for the navy its value is undeniable, but as an attacking force in land warfare it is fatally handicapped by its inability to hit its target with any certainty. In war it is hitting, and not the mere discharge of a projectile that counts. The most powerful Dreadnought armed with the largest guns would be mere lumber if it could do nothing better than shoot vaguely at the horizon. It only becomes formidable when behind the gun is the skilful gunner able to spot his target and send his shot home. The Zeppelin throwing bombs out of the mist into the darkness, uncertain whether it is over town or country or even land or sea, mistaking a ploughed field for an arsenal, or a church for a munition factory, can effect no military purposes except by accident, unless its opponent is unwise enough to display his vulnerable points.

The result is seen in repeated efforts on an increasing scale with diminishing results, the damage done by the whole series being altogether negligible and the total casualties less than in almost any quite minor engagement on the front. These conditions are the total condemnation of the Zeppelin as a legitimate weapon of war. Raids on definite military objectives,

by aircraft under control and able to aim deliberately at a visible target, are undoubtedly according to the rules of war; and if incidentally they do damage to the civilian population, that does not condemn them, provided that their object is clearly military. But raids in the darkness by airships which do not know where they are going, which cannot pick out their targets, and which must discharge ninety-nine out of a hundred of their bombs upon undefended towns and villages, are mere exhibitions of frightfulness and ought to be disallowed by any code which admits that the civilian population is entitled to protection.

But, as the Westminster Gazette remarks, the Germans have got Zeppelins on their brains, and their rulers feed them with the most fantastic tales of the results of their raids. To read German newspapers, one might suppose that a large part of London was in ashes, and its population a prey to panic which will shortly result in a humble suing for peace and mercy. The mob became delirious at Hamburg three weeks ago when the aged and homicidal Count Zeppelin addressed them from the balcony of his hotel and said that he had behind him a man "who was over London last night." To the German imagination England is a small country, so densely populated that a bomb can fall nowhere without killing men and women and destroying factories and arsenals. That "vastly the greater part of its area is still rural and that the immense majority of the bombs fall harmlessly in unfrequented fields does not occur to them. After each raid there is an army of neutral observers from England, which they have hastily evacuated as no place for inoffensive foreigners, and eager to tell the German newspapers of the devastation and consternation which have been wrought by German bombs. And so the cry goes up that a way has at last been found of dealing with the hated islanders, and the worst charge that can be laid against the Imperial Chancellor by his enemies is that he wishes to restrain not only the submarines but the Zeppelins. Even the mild theologian Harnack, who has been employed to make speeches for the "honorable peace" campaign, was obliged to explain hastily after one of them that he has no scruples against the ruthless and unlimited use of Zeppelins.

"The German General Staff," says the Westminster Gazette, "must know the truth about this business, but they are hopelessly committed to Zeppelin sensationalism; and we may suspect that the raids are continued not so much with the idea of hurting us as of pleasing the Germans. If our gunners and airmen can repeat their splendid feat of the recent Sunday morning, that may soon become a too expensive luxury."

The close season for Zeppelins in Galicia is over, and from now on we may look for Brusloff's daily bag of war prisoners.

Mr. S. S. McClure, one of the Ford peace pilgrims, is telling shamefacedly of how he was loaded up while in Germany with lying tales of great damage done to Liverpool and Manchester by Zeppelin raids, when, as a matter of fact, as he has now established by personal investigation, no Zeppelin has ever visited either city. Mr. McClure will not be such an "easy mark" for German lies in future.

A PRAYER.

Oh! Father dear, draw near to me and hear
The humble prayer of this Thy little child
Help me to feel that Thou art always near
And make me honest, truthful, good and true

Lord, in the early morning of my life I
Thee,
(Oh! hear my prayer) to have my sins forgiven,
Wouldst clasp my hand in Thine and comfort me,
When life is dark, and write my name in Heaven.

And when the sun shines bright, no clouds are in the sky,
When life is one glad song from morning until night,
Then help me still to feel that Thou art nigh
And keep the image of Thy Heavenly face in sight.

Teach me to feel another's bitter woe, to hide the fault,
I see in those whose hearts are wrung with bitter pain,
To give a friendly hand and try my best to show,
The sun has always shone again, however dark the rain.

And when at last my earthly toils are o'er, and I can see
By my declining strength that earth will soon know me no more,
Then may I gently sink to rest as does the setting sun,
And be at peace with Thee at last forevermore.

—Wild Rose.



Flour is your Winter and you will W. Phone 8

THE latest of the and sure neighborhood in an interesting manner.

Word reached that two towns of Capt. A. E. Gordon E. B. in France in movement of water was a Battalion of and had been three months. Bywater took training in England in reference to his injuries on date, but it is many friends of Sergt. Gordon first man to High School. He ton but trained short time before He went across (ingent, 21st B. England and on was taken across he has been doing ever since. For from "Somewhere a few weeks ago transferred to where he, with Canadians have injured. Two brothers are both here the former being Gordon recently Fred in England unusual interest when Gordon another while to trenches in Belgium seen one another Gordon's many for further injuries.

Mr. W. Wild

NILES
Mr. and Mrs. are sporting a The rain on welcomed by all needed.
Mrs. F. Neas dandy new jump Mrs. C. R. S. visited Mrs. C. Mr. and Mrs. (ained a full ho Mr. and Mrs. son, Herman, a guests of Mr. on Saturday.
Mr. Benj. E. Clapp made a ton on Monday.
Mrs. Harry D. Mrs. Ryan on a number from