

## MONTHLY NOTES

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE NEW CENTURY.

It must be a matter of gratification to all lovers of the Christian faith, with its vast and unlimited resources of truth to contemplate the change which has come over the Secular press within the last quarter of a century. This potential agency, upwards directed, may be a great factor with the church in moulding the minds and thoughts of the people in the principles of righteousness, and assist in leading them to all that the Christian faith teaches in its element of ennobling and sanctifying the human race. The Toronto press is worthily leading in this system of journalism and may it more and more recognize the vast good it is calculated to confer upon the community at large, and of having the warm appreciation of the Church's many and various adherents. We therefore reproduce from the Globe of Saturday last a most inspiring and interesting article worthy of extensive perusal, referring to the important achievements in progress for a fitting inauguration of the new era.

"To those accustomed to imagine that vitality has died out of the Christian faith the movements going on at the present moment in England and on this continent among the churches must be in the nature of a revelation. The British Methodists are well along in the raising of a century fund amounting to 1,000,000 guineas. The Baptists and other denominations are following suit, and the ease with which these vast sums are being raised is not the least surprising feature in the case. In Canada the Presbyterian body has launched, with the statesmanship and vigor for which that denomination is famous its \$1,000,000 movement. The Methodist and Baptist communions are also entering upon similar enterprises, and, judging by reports the outlook for a successful issue in all cases seems very bright. These funds are to be applied to the reduction of church debts, to the endowment of educational institutions and to the expansion and strengthening of missionary movements at home and abroad.

While these efforts to raise great sums of money as monuments to mark the passing of the world into a new century have to do mainly with the external in church life, there is no doubt that behind them all there is an awakening and enlarging of moral consciousness. The forward movements register themselves in dollars, but they are essentially movements of thought and feeling. The deepening of the sense of debtorship, the broadening of sympathies and the quickening of those spiritual impulses which are the peculiar contribution of the Christian faith—these constitute the forward movement. It is significant that at a period when our country is passing swiftly into the greatest era of material prosperity and expansion it has ever known the churches are seeking to enlarge their sphere of influence and strengthen their forces all along the line. It would augur ill for the future of Canada if vast numbers of alien people were

to come in and great material expansion ensue without corresponding progress on the part of those agencies which must furnish the spiritual and intellectual impulse to the country.

To those who understand history better on the assumption that

"There is a destiny that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them how we may,"

the happenings of recent years are full of teaching. The conflict between Spain and the United States was precipitated in a way almost inexplicable, and yet out of that small war there have sprung most momentous issues. At a period when the United States had reached the point where it must take its place among the nations of the earth, where it must have a foreign policy, where it must have foreign markets for its products, this war came as the means of uniting north and south in a common sentiment of patriotism. At the time when the English-speaking civilization finds itself thrust into the world-arena, disputing for supremacy with almost all other civilizations, this insignificant conflict gave the occasion for the reuniting in sentiment and sympathy of all branches of the Anglo-Saxon stock. And in our own country simultaneously with the era of material expansion there comes out of the mysterious unseen, from impulses and depths beyond the ken of any man, a great awakening in the churches as to their opportunities and responsibilities. To some old-fashioned folk events like these seem to point to the presence of a Presence in the affairs of men which some call fate, but others prefer to name God.

The new century will lift its light upon the most stupendous battle-ground mankind has ever known. Amidst the din of conflict meaningless noises and confusion and the hurrying of great shapeless forces it can be seen by those gifted with vision that a great truth is battling to enthrone itself in human life :

"Right forever on the scaffold,  
Wrong forever on the throne,  
But that scaffold sways the future,  
For behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above His own."

Right shall triumph. The warm tides of brotherhood and sympathy, the imperial sense of debtorship, these are the mighty hands that are to lead mankind along the sunlit pathway of progress. The churches, depositories of a supernatural energy prove their right to leadership only in so far as they recognize the need and duty of the hour. It is for them to speak peace to the stormy passions of men; to light upon all home altars erected by alien hands within our borders the fires of devotion, of idealism, of faith; to inbreathe the quick energy of our young nation with noble patriotism and high ideals; to furnish the spiritual impulse needed to carry forward a people's life. For this great task the churches are preparing themselves, and instead of the new century being left to sink into