

The Wayside Philosopher

ABRACADABRA.

NOTE: This month the Wayside Philosopher expresses views on the "K. K. K.," which we are not at all sure will commend themselves to our readers generally. But if others are disposed to present different viewpoints on this or other questions we shall welcome them. (Ed. B. C. M.)

The Klu Klux Klan.

We are informed by the press that the Klu Klux Klan has an organization in Vancouver. From other sources we learn that this organization is already a strong one—counting a number of our best citizens among its members and seeking to enroll all who are essentially British in ideals and aspirations.

We are further informed that the plea, on which the supposed necessity for an organization of the sort in Canada, is based, is this: "All the anti-British forces—all those who seek to destroy British rule, British institutions, British culture and ideals—are organized. Therefore, those who cherish and support this rule and these institutions and this culture must organize to preserve them."

It must be admitted that there is much to be said for this plea, much that must be granted as existing in our midst, by way of lawlessness, disorder, unrest, ideals as separate and apart as the poles, themselves, from British ideals: e. g., anarchy of different types, dissolutism and decay, such as may well arrest attention and cause thoughtful enquiry.

Granting all that, the presence of such an organization as the Klu Klux Klan is not only needless, but it is, in itself, a great peril. The plea is appealing, perhaps, but unconvincing.

Something in this question, no doubt, depends upon one's viewpoint, and we write from our own particular viewpoint. This, shortly, is that God is the Supreme factor, nay THE ONLY FACTOR to be considered in such a question. GOD, Supreme in Power, in Mercy, in Love—whose Law will not and cannot be gainsaid though the world unite to order otherwise.

If God, as we believe, is the final and only arbiter of all destiny, individual, national, universal—then it is in His laws that the answer to any question comes.

First—we premise that only truth can stand, only it may live. We believe with Carlyle that "All the artillery of Europe cannot enforce a lie," and say, further, what he no doubt meant, that "No earthly power however great, can give wrong the victory."

For example, in the apparently darkest hour of defeat, the prophet learns that he is not alone, that "There are 10,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal." We are all too timid, too short-sighted, in this manner of vision, and, as Lowell tells us:

"Daily with souls that cringe and plot,

We Sinais climb, and know it not."

However that be, there can be no question, in our mind, that "The will of God shall prevail."

If it be true that only goodness or truth can live, then it follows, to our mind, that an individual, or a nation, lives just in proportion as he or it makes goodness and truth his, or its, own.

The greatest heights that man ever climbed were the heights of simple truth, love and goodness, simply and naturally lived, and to those heights the people of to-day—ourselves included—can only look from the pigmy hillocks of intellectualism, or some one or other of the "isms" that reveal our inefficiency, moral turpitude and decay.

Britain's present standing and future position depend, therefore, on her approximation to God's laws in her national life, or, to put it more plainly, in the individual lives of her subjects.

This, and this alone, is and will be the barometer of her life power.

If this be true, how can righteousness in the individual life be reached? Certainly not through organization, per se at all events. Who would be fool enough to think that a human soul could be "organized" into a knowledge of saving grace or made thus fit for Heaven? Yet, it is presumed that by organizations the power of God can be infused into British national life and it thereby preserved.

What we need is not organization, but a wholesome sense of our need of God, and acceptance in every life, of His truth as the only way of salvation—a humble seeking to know His will and to do His pleasure.

Let those who have rallied to the standard of the Klu Klux Klan in Canada forget its darkling star and turn to the One who alone is light, power and truth. Then they may do something to preserve Britain, or Canada—which is all one from our standpoint.

Let them remember that their organization has three inherent and irreparable weaknesses. First, it is conscious of its own virtue, and this, in itself, shows that virtue to be a sickly and secondary one.

"They that are healthy know not of their health, but they that are sick." This is a well known truth. The moment we know our virtue, it has lost its Godlike relationship and character.

When you hear a man talking of his honesty, you deal carefully with him and know him to be dishonest. When a man is truly insulted by the suggestion that he acts dishonestly, you know that you can trust him with your all, and yet, he will never claim to be an honest man, will in no wise accept any particular honesty as his due.

Those who follow consciously the light of the Klan, the service club, the fraternal society, and other partial lights, are like Carlyle's gouty man "Walking with a vengeance—no whither."

Next: The Klan finds its virtue in organization. "Organize and ye shall live" it cries. What says history? Does the Klan hope to rival the excellences of the Roman army in its organization? Where now is

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