

May 11, 1916.

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, May 11th, 1916.

The Christian Year

The Fourth Sunday After Easter.

We lose immeasurably by relegating our thoughts of God to the sphere of the supernatural. We look for His footsteps, indeed, but with our eyes fixed upon the abnormal; we expect to hear His voice, but only in the cataclysmic and the extraordinary; we desire signs of His fatherly interest in us, and wait eagerly for what we may have some reason to consider as a special providence. And so we look and listen and wait largely in vain—not because God does not speak to us, but because He has been speaking to us all the time in the usual and the ordinary, and we have failed to catch His accents because our attention has been directed elsewhere.

For the whole mighty scheme of Nature and all the varied relationships of our human life are sacramental. They point to truths deeper than themselves. They are words of the language by which God half conceals and half reveals to us His thoughts—dimly makes known to us His character.

Our deepest need is insight to read the mystic lore. Our hankering after the miraculous and our contempt for the ordinary are signs of a stunted development. Our true power of spiritual perception is largely atrophied. A film has formed over our eyes, veiling from us the light that shines from God's world, hiding the meaning of life's deeper symbolism. It is profoundly instructive to notice that Wordsworth won his remarkable power of vision by deliberately crushing ambition and love of money, and by determining to confine himself to "such objects as excite no morbid passions, no inquietude, no vengeance, and no hatred." In other words, he fulfilled the condition laid down of old by the Psalmist, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord: or who shall rise up in His holy Place? Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart: and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity." He proved the truth of the memorable words of John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist: "Good men . . . while they are thus conversing with this lower world . . . find God many times secretly flowing into their souls, and leading them silently out of the court of the temple into the Holy Place."

It is significant that our Church, upon this Fourth Sunday after Easter, when we are already beginning to lift our eyes towards the heaven entered by our ascending Lord, should remind us that this world too is one of the many mansions of the Father's boundless universe, and that it is enriched by His gracious bestowings. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." The true attitude for the Christian is not that of a sullen asceticism nor of an all-too-easy license, but the thankful and innocent receptivity of a child. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely," these things should be the trysting places of the mind; here, surely, our hearts may be fixed, for here, as well as above, true and divine joys are to be found. What choice avenues of enrichment lie open to the man who has his spiritual senses skilled to catch the heavenly gleam in the wondrous pageant of the unfolding spring, and to glimpse the love of God in the face of a friend!

Editorial Notes

The Woman's Auxiliary.

Each year as the annual diocesan meetings of the Woman's Auxiliary come around one is filled with admiration at the enthusiasm and *esprit de corps* of this wonderful organization. For over thirty years it has been at work, first in Eastern Canada and later on in the Western Provinces, until to-day it has its branches in every part of the Dominion. It is by far the largest and most progressive organization of women in the Church of England in Canada. From the very beginning it has been most fortunate in the selection of its officers, who have had no easy task in shaping its policy and in guiding its course amidst the difficulties inseparable from a new organization.

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The W.A. and the M.S.C.C.

When the Woman's Auxiliary was organized in Canada in the year 1885, there already existed in the Church in Eastern Canada an official missionary organization known as the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. The W.A. was from the first called an auxiliary of this society and later on, in 1902, when the above society, together with the Canadian C.M.S., was merged in the M.S.C.C., the W.A. became an auxiliary of the new organization. In its work at the home base it has proved of inestimable value in disseminating information and in overcoming opposition and prejudice. Until recent years, however, its work in the mission fields had but slight connection with that of the M.S.C.C. owing largely to the fact that the latter had no definite spheres of activity. When the M.S.C.C. became responsible for all work of the Anglican Communion in the diocese of Honan, China, the diocese in Mid-Japan, Japan, and the district of Kangra, India, it became evident that greater co-operation must take place in the home forces and the agreement was entered into whereby the W.A. became responsible for the work among women and children in those fields. In the mission fields in Canada the same degree of co-operation has not as yet been reached although considerable progress has been made. With the handing over by the C.M.S. in England to the Church in Canada, within the next five years, of the whole of its work among the Canadian Indians, and with the development that must take place in work among Asiatics in Canada and in other directions, vastly greater burdens will be placed upon the whole Canadian Church. It is necessary, therefore, that both the M.S.C.C. and the W.A. should take steps without delay to secure such co-operation as will enable the Church to meet the situation.

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The W.A. in the Parish.

We have referred to the plan entered into between the W.A. and the M.S.C.C. whereby the former became responsible for the work among women and children in the foreign fields of the latter. This arrangement was a long step in advance of the condition that existed previously and has in the main worked successfully. We cannot, however, believe that it is a permanent arrangement. It has a tendency, for one thing, to set up a dividing wall between work for women and for men, and while it made possible greater concentration of forces in the

mission field it undoubtedly has the opposite effect in many of the home parishes. The M.S.C.C. is the whole Church organized for missionary or extension work, and in the parish should be supported by every Church member. The above arrangement, however, tends to make the W.A. the missionary organization of the women of the Church and the M.S.C.C. the organization for the men, the children belonging partly to one and partly to the other. Moreover, it is very doubtful if the plan can be extended to include the work in Canada.

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Is There a Solution?

The question facing both the M.S.C.C. and the W.A., therefore, is: Is there any plan whereby the freedom of action of the W.A. can be preserved without interfering with the most complete co-operation of the various units making up the parish? The ideal, of course, would be to have all Church members, young and old, male and female, working for one object in one way without any division. But that would be scarcely human. We do believe though that there must be an extension of the apportionment system to include the work of the W.A. Of that apportionment a certain percentage each year, not necessarily the same every year, could be allotted to the W.A., just as another percentage could be allotted to the Sunday Schools or to any other organization. In allotting the different percentages certain concrete objects could be included in each in order to preserve the benefit to be derived from such, and these again could be varied from time to time in order to extend the interest and to prevent staleness. Such a system could be applied to any field, Canadian or Foreign, and would, we believe, go a long way towards unifying our home forces and towards keeping the whole work before the whole Church. We offer this as a suggestion, trusting that it will be received in the spirit in which it is given and, if nothing more, will at least provoke a serious consideration of a most important subject.

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Personal Liberty.

We have heard a great deal lately on the subject of personal liberty from the standpoint of the drinker, but little, if anything, has been said regarding the liberty of the wife and children in the home of the drinker. Surely these are just as worthy of consideration as anyone else, and probably more so. The home is one of the great bulwarks of our Western civilization, and its character determines to a very great extent the future of the nation. The most important inmates in the home, so far as the future is concerned, are the children, and anything that tends to mar its purity and happiness should, so far as is possible, be eliminated. One of the greatest destroyers of home life is the drink traffic, and we fail to see how any person who knows anything whatever of the conditions that are only too common can feel morally justified in perpetuating in the slightest degree these conditions. There is only one true kind of personal liberty, and that is the kind that is in harmony with the character and teaching of Christ. It is not a liberty that allows a man to sink to the level of the brute creation, but a liberty that leads a man to deny his appetites in order that he may become more and more Christlike and at the same time lift up others with him.

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