

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, May 23rd, 1918.

The Christian Year

First Sunday After Trinity, June 2nd, 1918.

In the Collect for the day we have a most pointed prayer to offer God. We ask the help of God's grace in order that we may please Him, and of this we pray, desiring to please Him not only in acts, but in intention and motive, and so we say, "that in keeping of Thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed."

In the Epistle and Gospel we have it set forth in different ways that the thing which pleases Him is Love, and that it is by Love we fulfil the law and keep His commandments "in will and deed." St. John in the Epistle tells us a great deal about love. He tells us that "love is of God," and comes from God, for it is His gift to us. How are we to love God? We are to look to Him for the grace to love, and we must say, "because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace." Again, the Epistle gives us the supreme illustration of love—it is God Himself in the gift of His Son to the world. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." It is here we are brought back to the thought, so prominent in the New Testament, of the Father's perfect satisfaction in His Son—"This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." He it is in Whom we are found acceptable to God, and in Whom we can do those things which are pleasing to Him. Through Him we are united to God. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

But both in the Epistle and the Gospel another note is struck. It is that of love for our fellowman. The commandments of God and true love that pleases Him include also our human relationships. "Beloved, let us love one another." "And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also." Dives must look to Lazarus if he is to stand before the God whose name is Love. How solemn, how striking, how insistent are the messages of this Sunday in this regard: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." "And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, and desiring to be fed!"

The God of love can be satisfied only with our love manifested in devotion to Him and to His children. It is this love which is that which is pleasing to Him, and which is, in the truest sense, the keeping of His Commandments, for "love is the fulfilling of the law."

This is a hurrying age, as we often remind ourselves, and many tasks which we would like to accomplish must perforce remain unattended to. But for some things there is always time. Duty can always be done, kindness can always be shown, wayside ministries need not be neglected. There is never an excuse for the haste that makes waste; there is always room, in the case of a man who, with divine help, plans his life for a certain amount of self-culture and social necessity.

Editorial

"SELFISH CHRISTIANITY."

We have put these words side by side in order that their relation to each other may be realized more clearly. Is it possible to have a genuine Christianity that is selfish? Anyone who has thought on the subject will at once say, "No!" And our Christianity is just so far tinged or mixed with paganism as it is selfish.

Our reason for referring to this subject is that a few days ago, in conversation with a prominent Anglican lawyer, who takes a very live interest in Church work, he made the statement that the Church was all wrong; that, instead of cultivating the great Christian virtue of unselfishness and self-sacrifice, it was encouraging and developing selfishness. For the vast majority of Church people the be-all and end-all of their religious life seems to be to go to church once or twice on Sunday, and to give to the support of the church in proportion to their fellowmen. In return for this they expect to have a comfortable church, good singing and good preaching. The aim of it all appears to be to get something and not to give anything except money, the amount of which will depend largely on the value they place upon what they consider they get. Sunday is a day of rest, that is, a day on which to lounge, or to have a social chat, or a game of golf, or a run into the country. Sunday was made for man, of course, and why shouldn't he use it as he likes?

A young soldier who had been at the front, and felt a little more free to express his views on returning home, gave it as his opinion that churchgoing was all a matter of temperament. Some people like that sort of thing and indulge in it, but it does not appeal to others.

Another man will tell you that it really does not matter what Church he attends, as we are all "heading for the same place." His point of view evidently is that the Church is what has been called a sort of "fire insurance company," something to help a man to get to heaven and to escape hell-fire, and that so long as he accomplishes this, it does not really matter very much what else he does or what happens to other people during the process.

The idea far too prevalent is, as we have already stated, that the Church is a place for services, for getting something for one's self, rather than a power-house for service, for giving and doing something for others. And it is just here that we believe that much of our process of reconstruction must begin. The Church member must be brought to realize that he is not a receptacle into which so much religion must be poured, but a channel through which the grace of God can be brought to bear upon other lives, and that it is most important that the channel be kept pure and unclogged. Our clergy, on the other hand, must realize that the main thing is not to get so many people to attend services, but to set people to work, the going to services being part of the necessary equipment for the work. Religion and going to church are not necessarily synonymous terms, and the test of a man's faith in Christ must be the work that he does in an effort to bring others to Christ and to set up the Kingdom of God on earth. A good Churchman should not be one who merely attends services faithfully and gives generously on Sundays, necessary and laud-

able as these are, but, in addition to this, he should be a man who spends himself for others, whose Christianity is a blessing to others, and whose life is, so far as he can make it, an imitation of Him Who went about doing good.

The House of Bishops, which meets in Ottawa to-day, has several most important matters to consider. And we are certain that among these the question of uniting with our Allies to the south in the day of prayer will receive serious consideration. It would emphasize our union in the present struggle in Europe if the great Anglo-Saxon peoples of North America could unite in this way at home.

We referred recently to the dangerous situation existing in the city of Vancouver. We are now in receipt of a petition drawn up and signed by eighteen prominent Chinese in that city and addressed "to the people of the City of Vancouver." They set forth the evil effects of gambling among the Chinese, its extent, and the weakness of the present laws against it. The whole appeal is a severe indictment of the city government and should stir those in authority to take strong measures to remedy the evil.

The large number of boys who have gone from the cities to the country to help in the production of foodstuffs throws an added responsibility upon our rural clergy. If the city clergy would secure the names of all boys of their parishes who go to the country and forward these to clergy in the places where such boys go it would expedite matters considerably. The responsibility does not, however, rest upon clergy alone, as the parents of these boys, as well as the employers, are in duty bound to see that their moral and spiritual well-being are safeguarded. Otherwise, what is intended to be a blessing may become a curse.

Because some of the farmers of Ontario have not shown the spirit that one should like to see in relation to the Man-Power Bill, we must not jump to the conclusion that they are as a body lacking in loyalty. Hundreds of them have already sent their boys to the front, and hundreds of other were quite willing to follow suit once they knew that men were needed more than production. Unfortunately, too many farmers have shown more anxiety to make money out of the war than to defeat the enemy, but they have not been alone in this respect. The same spirit can be found among men of every occupation.

The Church of England Institute in the City of Halifax is, so far as we are aware, the only institution of its kind in Canada. It is the property of the Church in that diocese and apart from the regular Church services, is the centre for Church activities of every kind, social financial and religious for all classes, old and young, rich and poor. It is the Church's everyday "workshop." And, strange to say, it is a success financially. In 1906 it was over \$11,000 in debt with \$500 as its only investment, while to-day it is free from debt and has over \$4,700 of invested funds. It is an institution that is worth duplicating in every diocese in Canada and its experience should be of great value to any diocese that is contemplating establishing such a centre.

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