

August 3, 1916.

# Canadian Churchman

Toronto, August 3rd, 1916

## The Christian Year

The Eighth Sunday After Trinity, August 13.

The remarkable advance of Modern Science is due to the use of the Inductive Method in research. During the Middle Ages Science was practically at a standstill, owing to the fact that the Deductive Method dominated the minds of the thinking men of the time. That is to say, the "Schoolmen," as they were called, believed in a certain ready-made set of rules and laws, largely inherited from Aristotle, and tried to make Nature fit into these rules. If they came across some obstinate and awkward fact, which seemed to prove that their theory of things was wrong, they at once proceeded to try to accommodate the fact to their theory—never to alter their theory to correspond with the actual fact. The result, of course, was a foregone conclusion. They made no progress in discovery. They never got beyond their few miserable rules and preconceived theories.

Francis Bacon (he of fictitious Shakespearean fame) has much of the credit for altering this deplorable state of things. He realized that no advance in Science could be made until men adopted the Inductive Method; that is to say, until they collected the actual facts of Nature and then made their theories accord with the facts, instead of futilely trying to square the fact with an antiquated theory. The result of the adoption of this method, the only scientific and rational method, because the only method based upon reality, was the almost immediate advance of scientific discovery, leading to the amazing intellectual triumphs of the modern era.

Now, it is instructive to notice that only in the sphere of religion has the antiquated Deductive Method succeeded in surviving. In this one region of life claims and theories still largely rule the field. The possession of exclusive privileges and prerogatives is loudly proclaimed, and men are asked to accept the theory and blink any awkward fact. But the Modern World is insisting, with an ever louder and more urgent voice, that modern method be extended into this sphere also. Men are demanding from the Church not empty claims, but proof of those claims. "Show us not your words, but your power. Are you efficient? Are you achieving anything? What is your work? What, briefly, have you done?"

In this demand the world is entirely right. Our Lord Himself commanded the use of this practical test. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." If the Church were obedient to her Master, there would be a startling breaking down of middle walls of partition between many Christian Communions, which, judged by this test of spiritual efficiency, are, indeed, living members of the Church of Christ.

Mark, finally, that in the "Epistle" St. Paul applies the same test to the individual. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God; they are the sons of God." Not theoretical privilege, but actual fact is the test. Are you "led by the Spirit of God" in your daily walk? If you are, all is well. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Have you this inward and convincing testimony? If each Church member judged his own life by these vital tests the world would soon be satisfied that the Church was achieving something, that she was possessed of a divine efficiency, which maketh not ashamed.

## Editorial Notes

### Forest Fires.

From earliest times one of the greatest dangers that new settlements have had to face has been that of fire. Many a settler has seen his home, that he has worked hard to construct with his own hands, wiped out of existence in a few minutes, whether in the forest or on the prairie. When to the loss of property is added that of life, the sympathy of the whole country is called forth. Five years ago a large part of New Ontario was swept by terrible fires and hundreds of settlers in village and country lost their lives or were left maimed and destitute. The fires of the past week have not been so widespread, but for rapidity and destructiveness have probably been unsurpassed. Flourishing towns and villages and happy and hopeful homes of less than two weeks ago are masses of charred ruins to-day. In every loss of this kind the Church must bear its share both in the destruction of life and property. The Diocese of Moosonee, in which this fire was located, is one of our missionary dioceses, and one of those least able to bear such loss. No word has as yet come from the Bishop, the Right Rev. J. G. Anderson, who makes his headquarters in Cochrane, which is reported to have suffered severely, and no particulars can be given of the loss sustained. We can, however, take it for granted that he needs all the help the Church outside can send him and that any assistance that can be rendered will not only be deeply appreciated but will be put to the best possible use.

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### The Revised Prayer Book.

The announcement has been made that copies of the revised Prayer Book have been printed and will be distributed to members of the various Provincial Synods in time for the meetings to be held this autumn. Those who were privileged to attend the meetings of the General Synod when this matter was being debated will not soon forget the spirit of earnestness and fairness that characterized the discussion. We sincerely trust that the subject will be discussed in the same spirit in the forthcoming meetings. Difference of opinion there must be on such matters and it is only by a frank and courteous expression of different points of view, guided by the Holy Spirit, that we gradually reach the truth. A strong effort will doubtless be made in certain quarters to block the movement towards revision but it is more generally realized now than even at the time of the General Synod that something must be done to provide more elasticity in our services. More variety and choice in the prayers, and in the psalms and scripture lessons would do much to enable clergy to adapt the services of the Church to the varying conditions of this country.

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### The Church and the Chaplains.

We have referred several times to the problem that will be created by the return of large numbers of soldiers from the war. We have said nothing hitherto of the returning Chaplains. We believe, however, that the solution of many of our difficulties will rest with these clergy who have been living with men in their camps or in the trenches. They are dealing with men who are facing death in its most horrible shapes, who are suffering untold mental agonies, and who despise much that we at home lay stress upon in our religious life. Those who minister to the spiritual

needs of such men are compelled to go to the very heart of things, and they must be collecting experiences and ideas that will be of inestimable value to the Church in the future. They are, moreover, looking back at the Church at home from a distance where they can see things in a different perspective. Surely an effort out of the ordinary should be made to secure and conserve these experiences and ideas. The Archbishop of Canterbury stated at a meeting of Canterbury Convocation that a series of questions had been sent to the whole of the Chaplains of the Army and Navy as to what they "were finding to be the things that emerged as to difficulties that had led to the present ignorance, or apathy, or indifference, or sin." While we doubt the advisability of asking for this information at the present time, there can be no question regarding the importance of this step. We trust that the information will be placed at the disposal of the whole Church. The Chaplains, and the Chaplains only, are able to give us the views of the men in the trenches. Such views are not necessarily of great value in themselves, but they should prove of tremendous value as a side light and corrective. We trust that steps will be taken as soon as possible after the return of our Canadian Chaplains to secure from them, either individually or collectively, similar information.

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### Holidays for Clergy.

No person can do his or her best work without an occasional period of relaxation. Constant contact with the same surroundings sooner or later dulls one's mind and energy and makes effective work practically impossible. In a busy parish life there is a constant drain on the sympathies, energy and mind of a clergyman. Sunday to him in place of being a day of physical and mental rest, as in the case of the vast majority of his parishioners, is a day of strain and exhaustion. The multiplicity and complexity of organizations in the modern parish gives him little opportunity for rest on other days, with the result that in too many cases our clergy are compelled to take what rest they get in snatches here and there. Added to his other duties he is expected to be effective in his preaching, which entails constant study and thought. We are aware of the fact that some parishes make small demands upon the clergy, and that there are some clergy, just as there are men in every other occupation, who pay little attention to the demands made upon them. We have in mind the average parish and the average clergyman, who is quite as conscientious as the average man in any other calling, if not more so. It stands to reason, therefore, that at some time of the year, not only for their own benefit but also for that of their parishes, the majority of our clergy should have a period of complete change. And it will, moreover, pay parishes to provide the money to make this possible. The present is a particularly trying time for the clergy. To comfort the bereaved or to announce the death of a son or husband, are among the most trying tasks that can fall to the lot of a human being. We are grateful to them for what they are doing. Let us show our gratitude in some practical way that will be a blessing to them and to the cause they are trying with God's help to serve faithfully.

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