

The Western Churchman

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN MANITOBA AND THE WEST

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THE DUTIES OF MAGISTRATES.

The other day we had the pleasure of receiving from our old home across the sea a newspaper, containing an account of what is known as "Mayor's Sunday," when it is customary for the newly elected mayors and aldermen to attend church in a body. In each city and town special sermons are preached bearing on the duties and responsibilities of magistrates. This year the special preacher at Berwick-on-Tweed was the Rev. M. B. Hutchison, M.A., rector of St. Ninian's, Glasgow. We know him well, and esteem him highly. Few men have done so much real solid work for our sister church in Scotland. Although a convert from the Presbyterian faith, he was educated at the Anglican university of Oxford. He is a cultured, scholarly man, as his utterances on the occasion referred to show. We cannot afford space for the reproduction of the entire sermon; but we give extracts, which we venture to think may be well worth bringing before the newly-elected mayors and aldermen and reeves in this great new country.

"You understand clearly enough that Christian men and women are not set in God's scheme for the benefit of His ministry, but the Christian ministry is set for men. And so, likewise, are magistracies also (of whatever grade) for men, albeit they are an ordinance of God, and "The powers that be are ordain-

ed of Him." For men they give ungrudgingly their hard earned hours of leisure time, and for men they bestow their care and anxious thought. For men's security of life and property, for better housing, for larger comfort, for increased prosperity and a fuller life, magistrates deliberate and endeavor. But in these all, while our rulers are serving men, God is glorified; and while they rule and judge for man, they do it also unto the Lord. For the time is past—and happily past—for that sharp line of distinction to be drawn (sometimes it was antagonism) between things sacred and secular. To the Christian there is no secular, but all is sacred. He will not indeed be for ever using pious expressions, nor occupy himself at all times with what is called church work; but he will quicken and energise his whole life, both of thought and diction, with the spirit of Christ, and will transmit (by that wondrous alchemy) the base metal of the commonest duty into the pure gold of the service of Jesus. . . . To the Christian all is sacred, and the most secular service rendered to his fellow (as men esteem it) he regards as rendered to God . . . How much more then shall not this be the case with our Christian magistracies, whose will is not less, and whose opportunities are greater than those of others in the service of men—that they deem their daily diligent discharge of this world's duties and government as a sacred trust. . . . God's providence has placed in your hand the opportunity of subserving—in what are called secular concerns, but are really sacred—His beneficent purposes towards your illustrious town. You rule for the Lord. Be it yours, as in his sight, to do what in you lies to promote, not only as private citizens, but as holders of exalted office—temperance, purity, higher and wholesomer modes of living . . . You are to 'ring out the false,' and 'ring in the true,' to ring out (as may be granted you) the want, the care, the sin, and ring in the love of truth and right—the common love of good. And although these now mentioned, temperance, education and wholesomer conditions of life, be not themselves the gospel, still (like St. John, the Baptist, who made ready the way of his Lord, who followed hard after) they prepare the gospel's way—they level up the deep dark valleys of squalor and ignorance, so that the way of the Lord may be made