

of sight of the reader and letting the narrative stand alone? Shakespeare is always present in his excellences and elegancies. Macaulay is present when we follow the march of his stately sentences. But in the Old Testament the writers are hidden from view." Sometimes we read of the lack of literary qualities in parts of the Holy Scriptures. That very lack is a testimony that they are far removed from artificialness and written in the living language of the people. It is also well to remember that there is high testimony to the unparalleled excellence of their beauty. And this is not so remarkable when we remember that the Bible is God's Book.

The Need of Thinking

The Bishop of Oxford in a recent letter complains that the members of the Anglican Church have not for many years practised the painful process of thinking out their own principles, and, therefore, they do not really understand what their Church stands for. This charge may or may not be true, but there is no doubt of the danger indicated. Burke once said: "It is the day of No-Judgment, I fear," and it is certainly quite common to meet Church people, otherwise intelligent and well-informed, who have a very hazy idea of what their position means. Yet the matter is really quite simple and clear. The great German thinker, Hegel, once said that "For Protestant peoples the Bible supplies means of deliverance from all spiritual slavery. In [Roman] Catholic countries there is in this respect a grave want." If anyone will take the trouble to look into the New Testament he will easily find a central point in which principles become clear and spiritual freedom becomes possible. In union with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ we realize our true standing and are able to give "a reason for the hope that is in us."

The Power of Life

A leading scholar and teacher has just given expression to the following ideas about the ministry:—

A minister to-day is afraid of being clerical. He must be just like other men. He must smoke and play golf and go to the theatre, and have all the same indulgences as other men. For myself, I accepted the burden of more self-denial in such matters than I would require of anybody else. I believe that self-indulgence of any kind in the Christian minister weakens the force of the message that in Christ's name he delivers to man. If a minister's pleasures are at all prominent in the eyes of his congregation the passionate power of his preaching will very largely be made null and void.

This seems to go to the heart of the matter, for assuredly any kind of selfish indulgence in a minister weakens the force of his message. It is a well-known truth that while all things are lawful, all things are not expedient, and it is the bounden duty of a clergyman to face the problem of what is generally regarded as "self-denial," and to be ready to do without things which are common among other people, if thereby he can make fuller proof of his ministry. This is no call for mere asceticism, but for that Christian grace of self-control which helps the man, influences others, and glorifies God.

"A Pretty Good Average"

A pointed story is told of a farmer who prided himself on his morality, and who, when pleaded with to become a Christian, always replied that he was doing pretty well as he was. Employing a man to build a fence

around his farm, he went out one day to see how the work was progressing. "Is the fence good and strong?" he asked. "It's a good average fence," answered the man; "if some parts are a bit weak, others are extra strong. There are gaps here and there, but I will have made up for it by doubling the rails on each side of the gap." "What," exclaimed the farmer, blind to the point which the workman was seeking to drive home, "do you mean to tell me you have built a fence with gaps in it? Don't you know that if a fence is not perfect it is worthless?" "I used to think so," said the man; "but I hear you talking so much about averaging matters with the Lord that it seemed to me we might try it with the cattle."

➤ Our Empire ➤

God, loved ones and country are the most sacred things a man has. For none of these does he hesitate to give his life. Life retained at the cost of any one of these would not be life. Universal judgment deems a man unworthy of life who is unwilling to sacrifice himself for these sacred things.

Necessity has come upon us that we should defend our own shores for a vigilant enemy and send troops to help our Motherland. The necessity comes not from the greed or pride of our Empire, but from the rapacity and hatred of another people. Never have the King and his counsellors made greater efforts to secure the peace of Europe and of the world. But the "mad man" of Europe was not to be checked in his headlong career. He had driven the rowels deep at the first sight of a chance of battle. Instead of a ring of countries cowering before the "mailed fist," he has found a continent infuriated at the spectre of war which his madness has brought on.

The British Empire is absolutely united in spirit and endeavour against this enemy which has magnified himself. There are no parties anywhere. The Socialist and Labour candidates and supporters all through the Empire see that there is left only the dread abatement of war. Fourteen years ago this was not the state of the Empire. At the time of the South African trouble some considerable part of the people were not convinced that war was a necessity. But to-day, while there are no recriminations against the two members of the British House who have resigned because of the state of war, the men are rather pained for their blindness to a great emergency. The attitude of the Labour men to their leader is significant. They feel and say that he has made a mistake. The war is based on the common judgment of the Empire. Defence is the only reply to the malicious assaults of an enemy.

"War is hell," and nobody doubts it. For the men at the front and the women and children left behind, for the wounded, mutilated and racked with pain, and the homes of the slain left desolate, war is hell. It is that because passions born in hell are the cause of war. From pride, vainglory and hypocrisy, from envy, hatred and malice, springs the desire for war. For all the wealth of his "Fatherland" we would not change places with the "madman" of Europe, who has caused this war to spread over the whole continent and perhaps the world. He is the man who slipped the leash on the dogs of war, the hounds of hell. How war does loose the devil in men! We read of the helpless and defenceless butchered by the "mad man's" troops at the capture of Vise. We are proud with all humility that there is no such thing on record against British troops anywhere. But the worst

is not yet. Starvation, disease, and crime are the gaunt crew which hunt with the dogs of war. God grant the war may be short and decisive. We honestly wish that the "mad man" himself may feel personally in his own flesh and blood and family some of the hell of the war he has started. It would check his ardent passion on any other occasion. His father heart may bleed for the pains of *his people*, but the wholesome deterrent of his own pains and the sorrows for his own family might be more effective. He would not be so ready to have his people die for the expansion of the Fatherland.

War means Sacrifice. There is something other than hell in war when people are defending their own country. The holiest passions and the best of man's nature are aroused. War is a sacrifice and not a slaughter. The spirit of sacrifice is the only thing which can hallow a war. Everybody must have this spirit, not only the volunteers and their families, but also those who are compelled to stay at home. The main business of the Empire at present is to defend itself and cripple its enemies. Unless God grants us success in that, our mission as an Empire is at an end. Confidence in that mission will create the spirit of sacrifice.

The mission of the British Empire is a real thing, as shown even by the efforts of the King and Ministry for peace. Some have thought that the Empire was losing sight of her mission and yielding to a boastful and selfish spirit. But the events of the last fortnight have shown that some nations, notably one which was remarkable for equipment and organization, have not the same spirit, nor do they apparently desire it. The British Empire certainly has a mission and message while such nations remain. That message is the only abiding message, love towards God and man. That mission is the application of these principles, which alone can make a nation great.

The Church of England in Canada speaks with one voice in this matter. Clergy and laity alike think only of the British Empire as the instrument in God's hands to do His will. We are confident that no other word will be heard from our pulpits. It is no use to cry Peace! Peace! when there is no Peace. And there has been no Peace in the past years. There has been pause, but not peace. The Peace of Christ is not built on armaments and battleships. It is built on the goodwill of hearts of flesh. But hearts of flesh can be given only by the Holy Spirit of God. Our clergy must strive more and more in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No misgivings regarding our personal duty of defence is in the heart of any man. War is a hateful thing, but since the appeal has been carried to that court it must be answered in the language of that court. We sought no fight. We tried to pacify our enemies. Now we may ask God's blessing on our arms. *Blessed be the Lord my God who teaches my hands to war and my fingers to fight.*

We must pray for our Empire—that God will keep it true to its mission. We must pray for our soldiers and sailors—that God may be their help and defence, and that in their own lives they may be the soldiers of the Heavenly King as well as an earthly monarch. God grant that every man who goes to battle may be prepared by having made his peace with God. We must pray for our King and his statesmen—that they may be guided and may guide according to God's will. We must pray that God may bring the war to a speedy and effectual end—that men's lives may be saved and a lasting peace secured. We must pray that the most deluded man in Europe may be restored to his right mind and spirit, and seek to build the greatness of his nation on the best and truest foundations.