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## Letters of a Prairie Parson

DEAR ALLAN,—Last week I attended a Diocesan Synod for the first time. Sometimes it was tedious, sometimes instructive, sometimes inspiring—on the whole, quite interesting. I was particularly struck with my own ignorance, especially regarding the mysteries of Church finance. Discussion of matters financial occupied the greater part of the time. I was sorry for that. I felt that the Saviour would have preferred it otherwise. It seemed to me, in my ignorance, that since most of those who took the lead in these discussions were on the Executive Committee of the diocese, much of the discussion could have been carried on in committee before Synod was held and a great deal of crowded time saved for consideration of matters of more general interest to ordinary mortals.

We had several Indian delegates, clerical and lay. One old man slept peacefully through the discussion of financial reports. Occasionally one was tempted to feel that it was a waste of time not to sleep.

Yet it was not wasted time. I was impressed with the keen interest of the laymen, and as I heard one of the Archdeacons answering their questions, I thought of Goldsmith's schoolmaster:—

"And still they gazed and still the wonder grew  
How one small head could carry all he knew."

All the speakers in Synod, clerical and lay delegates, were a credit to their Church, but the majority of the clergy made no contribution to the discussions. Perhaps they were so awed by the mysteries of finance that they remembered the words of the wise man of old, "There is a time to speak and a time to keep silence." Perhaps some of us were selfish enough to be satisfied with the pleasure of hearing others talk. The Synod was not entirely free from the tedious talker, who tells his family history and gives a selection of conversations he has had with all sorts and conditions of men; but there was little room for complaint. The most tedious speakers talked sense sometimes, and most of those who spoke knew what they wanted to say, and said it.

It was a pity that more time could not have been spent in the consideration of the report of the Committee on the State of the Church. It touched on such vital questions as the lack of clergy, Church Union, specialization in the ministry, positive Bible teaching as an antidote to the "isms," the Bible in the day school, proportionate giving, divorce. It is to serve as an outline for further discussion in Deanery meetings.

The reports of Archdeacons and Rural Deans brought a forceful reminder of the great need there is of more workers in the Vineyard, and of a more Christian distribution of those already there. A General Mission in Advent might do much to meet the need of men for the ministry. Why not aim at a definite number of volunteers for the Battle of the Cross, as we aimed at a definite sum of money? Now that we have better equipment, why not get a better army to equip?

When will the Church of England be more sociable? I was almost a stranger in Synod on the first day. I was almost a stranger in Synod on the last day. Is the Church of England parson an unsociable animal? I began by introducing myself to one or two men. They gazed languidly upon me and did not tell me who they were. I felt I ought to give myself a vicious kick for being so disgustingly "fresh." I did not repeat the experiment.

I hate the gushing person with the pitifully patronizing air and the

smile that, unfortunately, won't come off. But we in the Church of England are painfully frigid. Or is it that we have a wrong sense of dignity, and connect it with gown and cassock and hood rather than with manhood? Or do we suffer from that self-conscious reserve that is a form of pride? Or have we no sense of brotherhood and sacred comradeship? The Synod helped me to realize with fresh force the greatness of the Church and the grandness of her task. We who work in scattered parishes are apt to lose the sense of corporate-ness. Few though we parsons are, what can limit our power if each soldier is filled with the Spirit of God, and feels that every other soldier is a real comrade-in-arms?

Sincerely yours,  
K. ANON.

## ANNOUNCEMENT RE NEW CYCLE OF PRAYER.

THE Sub-Committee of the Anglican Continuation Forward Movement, which has for some months devoted itself to the preparation of the new Cycle of Prayer, has now completed its important work. The result is a Manual of very great value; which it is hoped will commend itself to all Church people. It is issued with the approval of the Sub-Committee of the House of Bishops.

The new Manual is more than a revision of the former Cycle. It has been enlarged and divided into two parts: the first for individual use, the second for Family Prayers. Both of these are also suitable for use at various services and meetings.

The Ven. Archdeacon Bliss, Acting Commissary of the Bishop of Ottawa, writes his impressions of the new Cycle:—

"I cannot begin to tell you with what deep feelings of joy and thankfulness I have just finished reading, from cover to cover, the truly splendid Manual of Prayer your committee has just issued. It is beyond compare, and I long for the time when it will be in circulation throughout the whole Church. Most admirably conceived and carried out, it will at once attract, and in a short time will become the daily handbook of thousands throughout our land. What a wave of Intercession! I never saw anything in the line of a prayer manual that so deeply moves me, and with a very full heart I want to thank your committee, for they have done a work which, under God, will give life and light to His Church throughout our land."

The first edition of 50,000 copies is now ready. These will be mailed upon request to any who may apply for them. Such applications should be made to Rev. Dr. W. E. Taylor, Secretary of the Continuation Committee, 131 Confederation Life Building, Toronto. The general distribution will take place in the early autumn through the Women's Committees, which will be fully organized for this work.

It is earnestly hoped that the Church people of Canada will use these prayer helps. At the very basis of all Church lies the increase of the spirit of faith and of co-operative prayer and intercession.

On behalf of the Chairman,  
W. E. TAYLOR,  
Secretary,  
Continuation Committee.

Archbishop Matheson was the preacher in Westminster Abbey on June 8th, the occasion being the formal closing of the Archbishop's Western Canada Fund, according to advices received in Winnipeg recently. When the fund was finally closed it was found that about £50,000 will be available as the last contribution.



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