

# The Chronicle

Banking, Insurance & Finance.

ESTABLISHED JANUARY, 1881

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

R. WILSON-SMITH, Proprietor

Vol. XXVII. No 44.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1907

Single Copy - 10c  
Annual Subscription, \$2.00

## The Earth is the Lord's and the Fullness Thereof.

**Thanksgiving Day, 1907.** FOR what does Thanksgiving Day stand in the minds of most Canadians to-day? As a public holiday it was never more generally observed, but is it not tending to become a holiday, rather than a holy day? In other words, is it not losing something of its essential religious character? In the mind of one man, it is associated chiefly with feasting and merry-making, in the mind of another chiefly with junketting, jaunting, or sport. We are not pleading for a solemn, puritanical, celebration of the national festival, because it is difficult to dissociate the twin ideas of thankfulness and happiness, and the manner of expression is not nearly so important a matter, as the thankful heart. It is well nevertheless, to remember, that "the Lord He is God," that "it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." It is well to "enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise, to be thankful unto Him and speak good of His name." But do not let us confuse two distinct and separate ideas. Psalms and hymns and songs of praise are only the expression; thankfulness is rather a mental and spiritual attitude. Sir John Lubbock in a lecture on "The Duty of Happiness" remarked: "I cannot but think that the world would be better and brighter if our teachers world dwell on the duty of happiness, as well as the happiness of duty, for we ought to be as cheerful as we can, if only because to be happy ourselves is a most effectual contribution to the happiness of others." He admits, however, that: There is no doubt, some selfish satisfaction in yielding to melancholy and fancying that we are victims of fate, in brooding over grievances, especially if more or less imaginary. To be bright and cheerful often requires an effort, there is a certain art in keeping ourselves happy, and in this respect, as in others, we require to watch over and manage ourselves almost as if we were somebody else. That is about the attitude of mind signified by the word thankfulness.

Preachers and moralists are fond of advising people to take a kind of mental census, to take account of all the things they have, for which they ought to be thankful, and sometimes they supplement this idea with the further suggestion, that people should also take account of the troubles and trials they have not, and which other people have, as further cause for thankfulness. But how many people are capable of discriminating between what is matter for thankfulness and what is not? The man who associates the idea of thankfulness only with his personal possessions, is very apt to give himself a great deal of the glory. "Why is one man richer than another?" asks John Ruskin, and he answers himself. "Because he is more industrious, more persevering and more sagacious." "Well," he demands: "Who made him more persevering and sagacious than others?" The mental attitude of the man towards his God on this subject, is likely to affect his attitude towards his fellow man. Ruskin asks: "What do you suppose fools were made for? That you might tread upon them, and stave them, and get the better of them in every possible way? By no means. They were made that wise people might take care of them." The man who thanks God, or thanks himself, as the case may be, only for the abundance of things he possesseth, is apt to be as egoistic as he is egotistic. Thanksgiving Day is above all things, if not exclusively, the day of the nation's thanksgiving for national blessings. But let us not mistake national glorification and boasting for national thanksgiving. Statistics of wealth, population, trade, and agriculture, and comparisons with countries not so blest, are all very well in their place, but they are not thanksgiving and are not to be regarded as the only or even the chief cause for national gratitude. By all means let us be grateful to the Lord of the Harvest of the land and of the sea, but do not let us attempt to measure the debt in dollars, or to pay it in words only. Of all the blessings of this life, probably the greatest are the least recognized.