

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, April 27th, 1916.

The Christian Year

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

"The Good Shepherd," as a symbol and title of Christ, has from the first appealed in a unique manner to the affections and the imagination of the Church. In the dark days of Roman persecution—dark, politically, but radiant with the glory of a deathless hope—the early Christians portrayed upon the subterranean walls of the catacombs their conception of the Redeemer. They painted Him as "The Good Shepherd," young and blithe and debonair, bearing a lamb upon His shoulders.

Nor is it difficult to understand the reason why this symbol thus appealed to the heart of Christendom. The Eastern shepherd was the living embodiment of utmost care, and, if need be, supreme self-sacrifice, for his sheep. As we are reminded by that most exquisite lyric of the Bible, the Shepherd Psalm, it was he who, with unerring knowledge, led his flock over the bare uplands to the verdant recesses and carefully constructed cisterns among the hills. He it was who rescued the life of a wandering sheep, forfeited by her own carelessness or disobedience, from the grip of some watchful foe. Did the path lead through some dreary Vale of Shadows, it was his rod and staff which secured the confidence of the flock as they fearlessly followed the champion at their head. In country infested by lion and bear and snake, the shepherd's bravery and skill ensured for his charge, even there, a quiet pasture ground. And at the close of a long day (the sheep now folded safe from harm) it was their shepherd's hand once more which held the healing oil or supplied the refreshing draught.

Such a record by itself would be more than enough to attach to the very name of "shepherd" a wealth of exquisite associations. But two further facts complete the potency of the appeal. All this care was not diffused in a vague generality. It was concentrated, personal, and special. Each member of the flock was cared for with an individual love. And further, this individual love was intense enough to lead the shepherd to sacrifice life itself, if occasion called, for the safety of the one in need. Such was the title—this name of Shepherd, with all its wealth of connotation—which Jesus claimed for Himself, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep . . . and I lay down my life for the sheep." The words have echoed down the ages, for they have spoken to the heart of Christendom with an appeal that was irresistible.

Mark again. If the title, "The Good Shepherd," defines Christ's relation to us, it also defines our duty to Him—and that very simply and concisely. For the sheep have one duty to their shepherd, and one only—to follow him. St. John described a Christian as "He that hath the Son." St. Peter, in our Epistle for to-day, suggests an equally concise and equally adequate definition: "He that follows His steps." Such is the distinctive mark of the Christian as he passes on his pilgrim way through this Vale of Tears. And when at length he has reached the Celestial City he still retains this character. There, amid the glory, he remains one who, in the sublime imagery of the Apocalypse, "follows the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

Editorial Notes

"Trying Days for Church Papers."

We are grateful to the editor of the Montreal "Churchman" for his kind reference to the change in editorship of the "Canadian Churchman." We agree with him that these are trying days for Church papers in Canada. The increasing price of the material required in the shape of paper and engravings, and the increased difficulty in securing subscriptions and advertisements, owing to the awful war in which our country is sharing, is making it exceedingly difficult for newspapers of all kinds to hold their ground. However, we realized what was ahead before entering upon the work, but we realized, on the other hand, that each week brings us nearer the close of the war and nearer the great problems that must, sooner or later, be faced by the Church and our country. We are told that the greatest task of to-day is to bring the war to a successful issue, but we must not forget that that very success is inevitably bound up with the future, if it is to be success in the true sense of the term. To-day is, therefore, the time to prepare for the future, and we are quite willing to face adverse conditions for the time being in order that we may be ready when the time comes to face those other conditions, and to take our share in bringing them into harmony with the will of God.

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The Late Canon Powell.

In the death of the Rev. Dr. Powell, Rector of Holy Trinity Church, Toronto, the Church of England in Canada has lost one of its most consecrated workers. A strong preacher and a clear thinker, he gave himself unsparingly to the cause of the Church. In the work of education, in which he spent so much of his life, he had marked success, and he has left a strong impression on a large number of young men who came under his influence. He always took an active interest in the work of Sunday Schools, and has from the beginning been a tower of strength to the Sunday School Commission. In the Brotherhood of St. Andrew also he has been one of the most popular preachers, as he exerted a marked influence over boys and young men. For two meetings of the General Synod he was Prolocutor of the Lower House, and was eminently fair in his decisions, and did much to make the meetings effective. Wherever he went his influence was felt, and no one doubted his sincerity. A man with strong convictions, he did not hesitate to express his views, even if it meant disagreement with his friends. The "Canadian Churchman" extends to his wife and mother and sisters its deepest sympathy.

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The Kyte Charges.

A Minister of the Crown has been charged with a share in a plot to rob the Empire of several million dollars, and he has hurried home from England to answer the charges before a Royal Commission. The people not only of Canada, but also of other portions of the Empire, are waiting, and, we trust, reserving judgment until the situation has been investigated. In view of the revelations connected with the purchase of boots and horses earlier in the war, we must confess

that there is a strong suspicion that there is some truth in the charges. Still, it is obviously unfair to pronounce judgment before the accused has had an opportunity to clear himself. That the Minister referred to has done magnificent work since the war broke out is conceded by every fair-minded person, and it seems scarcely possible that a man who has shown such zeal in the defence of the Empire should at the same time be guilty of such bare-faced robbery as the charges would lead one to believe. The temper of the Canadian people at the present time, however, is such that nothing less than a thorough investigation and adequate punishment for the wrongdoer will satisfy them. The life of the present Government will depend to a great extent upon the manner in which such charges are dealt with. It is of much greater importance, though, that the good name that our country has had in the past should be maintained, and that graft and robbery, even in high places, should receive the punishment they deserve.

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Women and Vestry Meetings.

For the first time in the history of the diocese of Toronto, women were allowed to vote for the election of wardens and other parish officers on Easter Monday last. They have not yet been granted the privilege of voting on the election of delegates to Synod. This is not the first diocese to grant women this privilege, for at least one other diocese, the oldest in Canada, Nova Scotia, had already taken this step. The diocese of Huron, where the matter has been discussed for the past two years, has as yet refused to grant it, but we feel safe in predicting that the day is not far distant when even this diocese will fall in line. And why should it not? There is very great fear in the minds of some that once women are given this power, the men of the Church will absent themselves from vestry meetings, but we are inclined to think that if this is the extent of their interest in the work of the Church it might be just as well if they did. As matters stand at present, in parish after parish, those who do the bulk of the work and know best what is needed, are denied any say in the most important meeting of the year. Their work and their money are expected but further than that they must not go; while men who seldom darken the doors of the Church and outside a small financial contribution do nothing to assist in the work of the parish are allowed to say what shall be done and in some cases even hold office. This is wrong, and the Church is suffering as a result. The main thing is to have the work done in the most effective way possible whether by men or women or by, what will probably be found best, both working together. Each has a contribution to make and both are needed.

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Let us learn that if we are bent on doing our duty we must be prepared to suffer for it. Never to suffer for doing our duty may be to fail in doing it at all.—Bishop Thorold.

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Unloving words are meant to make us gentle, and delays teach patience, and care teaches faith, and press of business makes us look out for minutes to give to God, and disappointment is a special messenger to summon our thoughts to heaven.—E. M. Sewell.

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