

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY THE REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

HEADNESS OF HEART

"A good and perfect heart" (Luke viii. 15). Our Blessed Lord Himself explains the gospel. The seed is the word, the faith, the grace of God; and we understand that He Himself is the sower. Undismayed by the knowledge that so many would receive the seed, and yet that failure would be the only result, the divine Sower persevered bravely in His work. It is not the forecasting or experience of men that tells us of the widespread failure, but Christ Himself it is that testifies that so many—three out of four—classes of men receive the word of God and yield no fruit.

He tells us of the wayside, where the seed was trampled on, and the birds of the air devoured it; He tells us of the rock, and how the seed, being sprung up, withered away for want of moisture. He tells us of the thorns, that growing up choked it. All the hopes of the harvest depended on that seed that fell upon the good ground, that would yield forth fruit a hundred-fold. Let us treasure these last blessed words: "But that on the good ground are they, who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word of God, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience."

This is the all-important matter, for us to have a good and perfect heart. First, then, what is meant by this? A heart where God is Master; a heart ready to obey and respond to His divine Will. The heart, like the ground, to be in good tith, must be ploughed and harrowed, by self-discipline, by care, by nourishment. Secondly, a heart from which the world is banished. The thorns, as our Lord explained, were the "cares and riches, and pleasures of this life." These thorns have to be cut down and uprooted. This is no easy task, for briars and thorns will spring up again, and it is continuous work, year after year, to keep them down; and so it is with our heart. The world does not take one refusal, one denial for an answer, but, insidiously, cares, desire of riches, pleasures steal back into our hearts; and the growth of the seed of faith, of grace, of the service of God is ruined.

And thirdly, a good and ready heart is one from which the devil is kept at a distance, otherwise he cometh, as the gospel says, and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved." The crafty enemy tries dissipation of mind; suggestions of evil; sneers at authority; the spirit of unbelief and disobedience—against these the good heart must be on its guard.

This, then, is the readiness, the preparation, which makes the good and perfect heart, that is required. Then let us try and learn to ensure our having such a heart. This must be our aim, our endeavor, our life-long prayer. A good and perfect heart! A readiness, a willingness, a desire to do all that is required to gain it and maintain it is what we need, so that we may truly say, "My heart is ready. O Lord, my heart is ready" (Ps. cvii. 1): to face the labor, not to be afraid of it; not to shrink at it. It is a lifelong task that we are called upon to face, for our enemies—the world and self and the devil—cannot be routed and crushed once and for all. Constant watchfulness, a ceaseless struggle are demanded of us. This is far beyond our own powers; but we must have trust in God. Learn from a grain of corn. How long it lies in the chilled and wintry earth; yet it shoots forth its tender blade, piercing the sodden soil, and braving the frost and snows and biting winds that threaten its fragile life. But far more life has the grace of God; He will guard it and cherish it, if we are ready and willing and brave to do our best.

And we have means to help our heart to bring forth fruit—means given us by God. Prayer, the blessed gift of humble, constant prayer, will bring down the dew from heaven, the gentle rain of grace, and give life and growth to our endeavors. To our prayers is needed patience: our Lord's own word, "and bring forth fruit in patience"; our prayers, our readiness to do, our aims must be strengthened and made able to endure and persevere by patience "which hath a perfect work." Poor weak human nature often murmurs and complains, how long? How often? How long has unfulfilled hope to endure? Till the blessing is given and the hope becomes joy attained! How often have we to pray? As often as poor creatures need God's pardon or assistance. Look forward to the harvest, and hope will renew our patience.

If our heart is ready to respond, God's help is never wanting. Our heart must be ready to accept and to do His Will, whatever it may be. The heart that is ready trusts in this word, "Delight in the Lord, and He will give thee the request of thy heart" (Ps. xxxv. 4). So in sunshine or showers, wintry blasts and snows, or the heat of summer—anything is acceptable, for our heart relies on God, in peace and joy, and He will give the increase. Our heart keeps willing and brave by remembering the harvest-time. We may be humbly afraid that we shall never in our lifetime be able to produce anything that even the

good God could call a harvest. It is all His goodness. He sows the seed, He gives the life to it; He can see it grow, though we may not. It is He that brings it to perfection, and then He blesses His own good work—for it is all His doing—because our heart was ready, and He has made "the good and perfect heart bring forth fruit a hundred-fold."

CANDLEMAS DAY

The use of religious signs and symbols is one of the means the Church uses to impress vividly upon the mind the essential truths of Christianity. On the Feast of the Purification the Church places before us one of the oldest and the most distinctive of her symbols, the blessed candle. On this day when the Blessed Virgin appeared at the Temple with her Divine Child to comply with the twofold custom of purification and presentation according to the law of the Jews, she heard from the lips of holy Simeon his prophecy that her Child would be a Light to the revelation of the Gentiles and the glory of the people of Israel. The prophecy of Simeon is symbolized by the blessed candle, for it typifies Christ enlightening the world. Hence the 2nd of February is known by the Feast of the Purification or Candlemas Day.

The candle may be a thing of utility or a religious symbol. As a practical means of shedding light it has outlived its usefulness in these days of electric illumination. But the Church still clings steadfastly to the candle in her liturgy and will not allow it to be supplanted by any modern lighting device, because it is symbolic of Christ, and so rich in historical associations.

In the ancient liturgies the supposed virginity of bees, from which the wax candle is made, is insisted upon as typifying the flesh of Christ, born of a Virgin Mother, the wick was taken to symbolize the soul of Jesus Christ, and the flame the Divinity which dominates both. The great Paschal candle thus represents Christ the true light of the world, and the smaller candles represent each individual Christian who tries to reproduce Christ in his life. Thus the Church places a lighted candle in the hand of the child at baptism and in the hand of the dying Catholic, to show that the light of Christ should guide their footsteps alike through time and through eternity. In every liturgical function of the Church one or more candles are burning brightly to send forth the same message.

The candle is moreover rich in historical associations. In the Old Testament the candle was a prophecy, in the New Testament it was the fulfillment of the prophecy. In the early ages of the Church, when Christians were driven into the bowels of the earth to worship God, and assist at the sacred mysteries, and bury their dead, the candle was always used both to give light and to suggest its religious meaning. Today every time a Catholic sees a blessed candle burning on the altar he is reminded of those ancient days, when martyrs and virgins in the darkness of the catacombs gave forth that splendid evidence of faith that has inspired and enlightened souls in every age.

Candles blessed on Candlemas Day are blessed for the use of the people as well as for the use of the Church. She urges them to take these candles into their homes and to use them at the times she has indicated. No Catholic home should be without its blessed candles. In sickness, in danger, in temptation, they are safeguards, sacramentals instituted to instill courage and to promote devotion. When the priest comes into the Catholic home bearing the Blessed Sacrament to the sick or the dying, he is met by the devout Catholic with a lighted candle. During the administration of the Sacraments candles are kept constantly burning, and as the hour of death approaches the blessed candle is supported in the falling hand of the dying Christian, that he may have before him the symbol of His Redeemer Who is his light, and his strength during his passage from time to eternity. Candlemas Day is not a holy day of obligation. Yet it is a day when all Catholics who can do so should go to Mass, procure a blessed candle for their own use, and offer some in memory of the offering of the Blessed Virgin on the day of her Purification, to be used on the altar during the Divine service. Candlemas Day is one of the glorious heritages from the ages of Faith that should not be allowed to pass unheeded.—The Pilot.

NEW LAMP BURNS 94% AIR

BEATS ELECTRIC OR GAS

A new oil lamp that gives an amazingly brilliant, soft white light, is ten better than gas or electricity, has been tested by the U. S. Government and 35 leading Universities and found to be superior to 10 ordinary oil lamps. It burns without odor, smoke or noise, no pumping up, is simple, clean, safe. Burns 94% air and 6% common kerosene (coal-oil).

The inventor T. T. Johnson, 246 Craig St. W., Montreal, is offering to send a lamp on 10 days Free trial, or even give one Free to the first user in each locality who will help him introduce it. Write him today for full particulars. Also ask him to explain how you can get the agency, and without experience or money make \$250 to \$600 monthly.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI.

OUR HOLY FATHER THE POPE

In recent months our members have been asked to pray for our priests and bishops, the substance of our prayer being that God would guide our spiritual leaders in their government and give efficacy to their labors in the interest of souls. During the present month we are asked to perform a similar duty for the chief of both priests and bishops, the Sovereign Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ. It is Pius XI. himself who, in blessing the present General Intention, recommends himself to our prayers. Although not yet a year on the throne of Peter, he undoubtedly feels the weight of the burden which has been laid on his shoulders, a weight which he must bear during the rest of his life, and he feels the need of the help prayer alone can give, and which it is the power of his children to give.

In responding to the wish of our Holy Father, we shall follow the example of the members of the Primitive Church, for we read that the early Christians "prayed without ceasing for the Chief of the Apostolic College." How reasonable this duty seems, and how pleasant its fulfillment should be for sincere Catholics! What the members of a family do for a father who feeds and clothes them out of the fruit of his labors, what good citizens do for a ruler whose wisdom and benevolence is a pledge of public peace and prosperity, the children of the Catholic Church throughout the world should do for their spiritual head. The specific reasons are so evident that they need only be hinted at. In asking prayers for our bishops in October last, we recalled the fact that few of us ordinary folk ever reflect on the obligations attached to the office of those chosen to govern the Church, or are we aware of the responsibilities which press upon them. Very few of us would undertake to solve the questions which are constantly put to them for solution. Few of us without supernatural aid could make the decisions they are often called upon to make in the difficulties inevitable in human intercourse. Our lives are lived in other and restricted spheres and we rarely have occasion to consider the multiple interests that enter into conflict among people professing the same faith; or the intricate questions which must give proof of in fostering the welfare of the Church; or the constant guard they must keep over their flocks; or the strength of character they must show when reproof of erring children becomes imperative.

But if such cares and anxieties are the lot of the heads of the dioceses, how much heavier must be the responsibility resting upon him who is the Bishop of Bishops, who has the government not merely of the flocks but of the shepherds as well, whose jurisdiction is not restricted to this diocese or that but extends over the whole Church. The worries of a bishop are local, but the worries of the Pope are as wide as the world. Seeing that the wielding of spiritual power is always a heavy cross for the one who wields it, what must be the weight of the cross borne by the common Father of the Faithful whose power and jurisdiction as Universal Pastor is limitless, penetrating as it does to the marrow of every Catholic life, even to the conscience. For is it not the Pope who watches over the integrity of the faith and the moral teaching of Catholics throughout the world; is it not he who defines, directs, encourages, blesses, chides and condemns? He is the supreme arbiter in the realm of Catholic belief, and as such claims the submission of all who profess Catholicism. His claim is a spiritual one, his kingdom, which is that of his Master, not being of this world. However, as his subjects are not angels but frail men, and as they are at the same time free agents and temporal commonwealths, it may happen—as it has often happened in the past—that human legislation may clash with the eternal laws of justice and right. In such cases the duty of the Pontiff is to teach, as his predecessor St. Peter taught, that it is better to obey God than man. Clashes like these are inevitable in the government of a worldwide Church, but they are not the lightest of the crosses the leader has to bear.

What sorrow is his when he is obliged to condemn not merely error but the erring as well, for even the erring are sometimes in good faith and are persuaded that they are promoting the welfare of the Church. He knows that for many of them it is a breaking away from which they will not rise; that for others it will be a scandalous revolt. And yet he must not be inactive; he must judge their work. In prayer and long reflection the Pontiff becomes convinced that it is his duty to speak. And when he condemns, he does so as the guardian of faith. He forces the enemies of the Church, seeing at his decisions and marshalling their forces in opposition to him. He counts upon his thoughts and words being turned from their true meaning and his intentions being defamed before the whole world, in such a way as to

scandalize even the well-intentioned, and to anchor the unbelieving in their obstinacy against a Church which they consider retrograde. The Pope knows all this before he takes action; he suffers, and yet he must not be silent. He must act and act promptly unless he wishes to be untrue to the obligations of his office.

And it often happens that questions of policy are mingled with the affairs of practical life as it affects the Church. How often in history, and even in recent years, have we met with human legislation which was irreconcilable with the constitution of the Church. Notwithstanding the consequences the shepherd must watch over the flock. He must reject such legislation, for he is the preserver of the discipline of the Church.

We had striking examples during the late War of the treatment our revered Holy Father, Benedict XV., had to submit to. Those who were most bitter in previous years in condemning what they called the political interference of the Pope, were during the War the most violent in reproaching him for his silence and inactivity. There were even Catholics who marvelled at his neutral attitude and found him weak and indifferent to their ills. Astonishment was shown that the representative of the Prince of Peace, having children in the opposing armies shedding one another's blood, was not prompt in rushing in between the combatants and putting a stop to hostilities. When he did speak, those whom his words were aimed at accused him of partiality, while those who looked for his intervention were perplexed because he was so irresolute. Even a Sovereign Pontiff find it hard to please everybody, but the difficulties of his high office are not less occasions of keen suffering for him.

These are a few of the instances that give us a faint glimmering of the life of the Vicar of Christ on earth and of the difficulties that beset his path through life. On the other hand, he has undoubtedly many reasons for being consoled when he sees the Church of which he is the head spreading in all parts of the earth, growing in membership and in influence and bringing forth fruits of holiness. It is a great consolation to our Holy Father to witness the zeal with which his bishops and clergy are preaching the doctrines of Christ to millions, to see the alacrity with which the laity are responding to the call of their leaders in works of charity of all kinds, to see seminaries and novitiates filled with future apostles of both sexes. But the most intimate consolation that we can give him is to make him realize that ours is not a mere formal acknowledgment of his leadership, but a filial love that draws us to him as our common Father whom we can love for his own sake. Those of us who, in recent months, had the privilege of kneeling before him and receiving his blessing know what a distinguished man sits in the throne of Peter. He is a Pontiff of whom all Catholics may be proud, one who will always prove himself not merely a great leader, but a father who will welcome and prize the prayers which we as loving and dutiful children shall say for him and for the success of his Pontificate.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

NEW YORK STATISTICS

Catholics constitute the largest religious body, numerically, in the city of New York, according to statistics published by the Jewish Tribune, which show that the Jewish population has practically doubled during the past twenty years and that Protestants have failed to maintain an increase proportionate to their numbers.

The Catholic population is given as 1,948,780, or 34.2% of the entire population. Protestants number 1,941,847 or 34.56%. There are

HAS NEVER FELT THE RHEUMATISM

Since Taking "Fruit-a-lives" The Famous Fruit Medicine

P. O. Box 123, PARISHBORO, N.S.

"I suffered with Rheumatism for five years, having it so badly at times I was unable to get up.

I tried medicines I saw advertised, and was treated by doctors but the Rheumatism always came back.

In 1916, I saw in an advertisement that "Fruit-a-lives" would stop Rheumatism and took a box, and got relief; then took "Fruit-a-lives" right along for about six months and I have never felt my Rheumatism since."

JOHN E. GULLDERSON.

50c a box, 6 for \$2.50, trial size 25c. At dealers or sent postpaid by Fruit-a-lives Limited, Ottawa.

WRIST WATCHES! to be GIVEN AWAY

to advertise our Perfumes. If you would like one, send your name and address at once for full particulars FREE. Excelsior Perfumes, 45, Waterford, Ont.

1,648,012 Jews, or 29.23%. The Greek Orthodox Church has 91,450 followers, or 1.63%.

Protestants outnumbered Catholics in 1900 by more than 400,000, according to figures given by the Tribune, which indicate that Protestants at that time numbered 1,29,240 and Catholics 1,210,388. There were then 697,674 Jews.

The rate of increase among the Jewish population, according to the Tribune was much higher from 1900 to 1910 than in the succeeding decade, probably due to the War and the new immigration laws. New York has more Jews than any other city in the world. It is estimated that there are 17,000,000 Jews and New York has close to one-tenth of that number.

EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Dublin, Jan. 11.—Teachers are still complaining of the poor attendance of pupils in the primary schools. As compared with many other countries the percentage is surprisingly low. A demand for the enforcement of compulsory attendance was recently made and is daily gaining in strength.

The practice of employing child labor was condemned by the teachers. It was also suggested that no child should be allowed to leave school until he or she had attained the age of sixteen years.

Catholic periodicals have been attacking "blind alley jobs" for boys. As a result many large firms and public offices are insisting that the boys whom they employ shall follow a technical evening-school course that will fit them to do remunerative work when they are men.

God justified one man at the last moment that none might despair; but only one, that none might presume.



Gall Stones

Stomach disorders, Indigestion, Appendicitis and Kidney Stones are often caused by Gall Stones. Many persons are misled until they have attacks of Gall Stone colic appear. Marlett's Specific will relieve without pain or operation.

FOR SALE AT ALL DRUGGISTS J. W. MARLETT & CO. Dept. L, 211 Gerrard St. E. TORONTO

Two Doctors Advised Operation; First Bottle Passes Many Gall Stones; Each Bottle Did Good Work; Well Satisfied With Results.

Mrs. W. J. B. Somerset, N. S., was advised by two doctors that she would have to undergo an operation. A friend advised her to take the full course of "MARLETT'S SPECIFIC," which she finished September last. She claims she passed a lot of gall stones and after taking several bottles she passed only a very few. Each bottle did its work and Mrs. B. has received great relief from MARLETT'S SPECIFIC.

MRS. W. J. BAMFORTH.

"My Heart Would Palpitate, I Had Weak Spells"

Mrs. L. Whiting, 202 King St. West, Brockville, Ont., writes:—

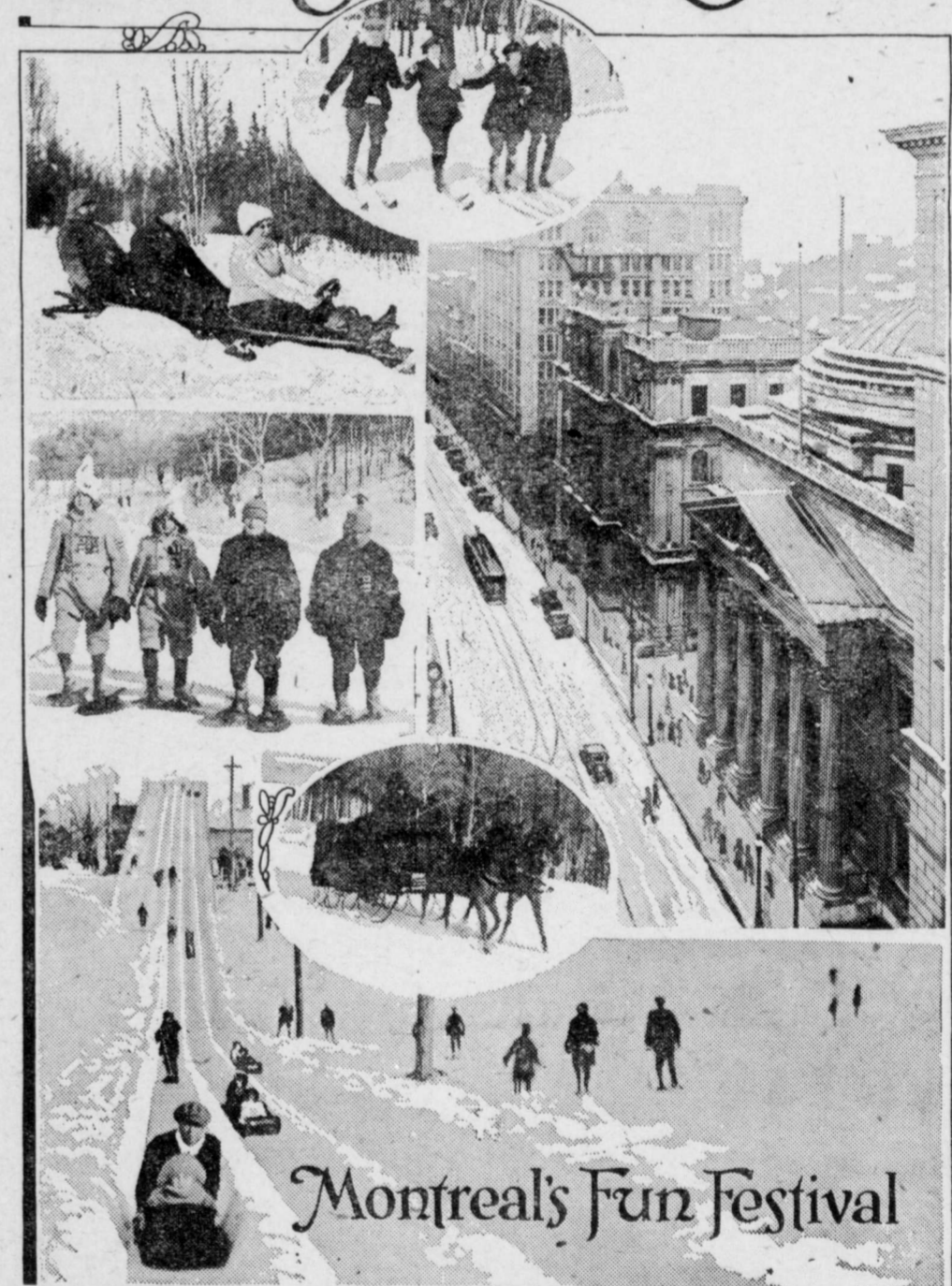
"I took very sick with my nerves and stomach, and seemed to be all run down. At times my heart would flutter and palpitate so and I would take such weak spells in the pit of my stomach that I sometimes thought I would never get better. I had almost given up hope when a friend advised the use of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food. I did not stop until I had taken twenty-five boxes. It has done wonders for me and I want to recommend it to everyone."



DR. CHASE'S NERVE FOOD

50 Cents a box, all dealers, or Edmanston, Bates & Co., Ltd., Toronto

Winter Sports in Canada



Montreal's Fun Festival

Among the countries of the world Canada has long been without a peer as a summer resort. To-day it challenges the hitherto undisputed supremacy of Switzerland in the realm of winter sports. Who has not heard or read of St. Moritz, the pride of the Swiss people and for long years the winter time Mecca of Europe? Canada has a score or more of places where all that St. Moritz can offer in the way of winter sports is not only duplicated but surpassed. The fame of these is spreading beyond the confines of this continent to lands across the seas. No longer is the Dominion pictured as a land which hibernates through a long and trying winter period. The truth regarding the invigorating and exhilarating winter climate of this country, with its toy giving and health imparting sports, is as great an advertisement for Canada as the enthusiastic laudations of the glories of its summer and early fall.

Quebec, the ancient and picturesque, Ottawa, a capital to be proud of, and a host of other cities and towns might be named as worthy claiming the attention of those who delight in the season's sports. But the Canadian winter of 1923 belongs, for many reasons, to the old, substantial, and progressive city of Montreal. If that municipality, in which the past and the present, the old and the new so harmoniously blend and combine, had nothing else to point to but Mount Royal it would still have much to boast of. But in addition to the famed toboggan slide of that same beautiful height, there are many attractions to charm and delight every visitor. It would indeed be almost impossible to detail in a single article the variety of the winter sports and recreations that Montreal will afford throughout the balance of this month and all of February. The Winter Sports Committee, selected by the citizens, is responsible for the arrangements which hold particular appeal to all interested in skating, skiing, curling, snowshoeing, hockey, ice-yachting, tobogganing and the like. Every Saturday in the period named, special ski

contests and exhibitions are held at the Montreal Ski Club, while every other winter sport has its special place on the program. It is doubtful if there has ever been anywhere such a remarkable program for winter sports, varied as it is by masquerades, balls and other social functions, and torch light parades amid the most striking natural surroundings. There is the glamor of romance over all, but there is also behind it the spirit of real Canadianism that knows how to blend its play and recreation with its work and its belief in the land that it loves.

Montreal has spared no effort to show that Canada as a winter resort need take second place to none. Even now the success of its undertaking is assured. One of the greatest auxiliaries to that success is the Canadian National Airways, which sees in such plans and programs an opportunity not only of developing business, but of spreading knowledge of Canada beyond its own boundaries as well as among Canadians themselves.