

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, October 23rd, 1919.

Editorial

TO Churchmen who are thinking long thoughts there is no more pressing and significant subject than that of the training of our theological students. There used to be a time perhaps when people would attend church services no matter what kind of minister they had. We have a careful canon framed in the long ago that the untoward life and conversation of the minister did not invalidate the sacraments he celebrated. On the technical point we do not enter, but anyone who has kept his eyes open during the last generation could not escape the conclusion that the personality of the clergyman was no negligible quantity in the ministrations of the church. As far as we have been able to gather from men overseas, the chaplains who conducted the most helpful and most acceptable services were those whose personal life and conduct won the respect, if not the admiration, of the men.

The years of the theological course—anywhere from four to seven—are a formative period for the student. True enough he comes up to college with his aptitudes and characteristics, but anyone who has observed the progress of the man in college has realized that the aptitudes may be enlarged or lost, and the characteristics modified or strengthened. One of the advantages of college life is, that the man shall learn how to meet and co-operate with his fellows.

It has occurred to us that sometimes a college man might well be trained to co-operate with men outside the college, for college men, however they may differ, have a common viewpoint. If a young man can gain the viewpoint of the average citizen before he undertakes his parish work it would save many mistakes and some disasters. We should like to see included in every course for theological students some scheme which would lead him completely into sympathetic contact with his fellows. It is not always attained by sending him to conduct services and in other ways to take the position of a minister before he is actually ordained. Rather it would be the result of some of the long vacations being spent in the business or industrial world.

Current opinion to some extent is demanding that theological colleges should leave behind them the line of subjects which are concerned with times that are past instead of times that are present. We heard out west of a diocesan who held that a course on horse- and house-keeping, home nursing and gasoline engines would be about the best preparation for a theological student for his field. One appreciates the point that a minister must be all things to all men. But considering the limitations of time there is not room for everything in the college course. Motives, as well as methods, must be kept in sight. And a student's training does not cease when he leaves college.

The man who would "scrap" all studies relating to the past has still some distance to go in his thinking. It is impossible to see the significance and trend of present tendencies without adequate knowledge of the past. Human thought seems to progress by spiral ascent. We come round again to the same point but on a higher level of approach. (It is only a cynic who dashes the hopes of progress in human thought by talking about a swing of the pendulum.)

It would be folly to attempt to construct a theological course which would leave out the study of the history and development of church doctrine, the history of our Church's growth, the history of our Prayer Book, and the study of the rich past in which our roots are planted so firmly, and from which we draw such nourish-

ment. The right angle of study of past subjects will give us the motive and spirit of approaching our new problems to-day. For example, the careful study of the Reformation period, one of the times of great religious and economic upheaval, gives an admirable outlook on the problems of to-day.

The report of the HOUSE OF BISHOPS on the question of THEOLOGICAL TRAINING, as printed in this issue, is a document which has been carefully drawn up by the Committee of the House under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Ottawa in consultation with the heads and representatives of our theological colleges. It will repay painstaking study. For the present it bears in mind the training of theological candidates only. It may also later take up the question of the training of the clergy. (It is not right that some of our clergy pass the intellectual dead line on account of the lack of definite stimulus and guidance in study.)

It is the desire of the Bishops that the report shall be fully and thoroughly discussed. We have on our subscription lists over one thousand clergy, and we look for a discussion of a high order in our columns. If the clergy will review the curriculum suggested in the light of their parish experience and ordination vows, there will arise not only the question of subjects of theory but also their emphasis.

THE barroom must go. The people of Ontario have said so emphatically.

How tremendous has been the change in public opinion in the last five years or so. Do you recall the line of argument which assailed opponents of the barroom? It was a necessary adjunct to the hotel business. Without it the hotel could not be profitably run. Events have given the lie to that. No longer are the travelling public put to the chagrin of eating meals and sleeping in beds partly paid for by the man drinking in the barroom. And in Ontario at least, the occupation of "mine host" has been lifted clear of a doubtful connection.

Then we were told that unless we had the green shuttered doors of the barroom swinging out on to the town or village street, our youth would grow to a neutral, spineless, manhood, without self-control. Temptation should be left in their way to develop moral muscle. This quite overlooked the fact that there were a few traps and pitfalls in life beside the barroom which were developing moral muscle or showing the lack of it. From this argument, one might have imagined that the barroom was the one last thing that prevented earth from becoming heaven.

Then we were told that the barroom was the workingman's club and that it was the sole light to enliven his drab existence. The way the workingman has got on without the barroom to his own economic betterment, has shown that the barroom was the chief cause of the drabness of his existence. His own clubs and lodges have looked after the social end of things and something has come of his forgoing. Of course, there are some who make the mistake of cynical levity about the matter and urge that a befuddled workman is a contented, or at least a harmless, workman who is too confused to think, for his thinking is an embarrassment to the old regime.

All these arguments were given their quietus in Ontario by the vote last Monday. The poor barroom was kicked and cuffed about like some bedraggled orphan.

And the liquor traffic too was told in no uncertain voice that its room was better than its company. Ontario has said that the beverage use of liquor is not necessary for the development of sane and solid citizenship.

The Christian Year Circumspect Walking

(TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY)

ST. PAUL frequently descends from high elaborations of the doctrine of God, and of the glory of Christ, to specific and definite exhortations as to individual and personal conduct. The opening of the epistle for to-day is an instance of apt and telling phraseology, which appeals to prudence and common sense as well as moral responsibility. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." In the collect prayer is offered that we may be kept from all things that may hurt us. This is consistent with the teaching concerning the preventing grace of God by which the Christian is guided, and kept from harm to soul and body. While this all-sufficiency of grace is fully recognized in St. Paul, ample allowance is made for the responsibility of the individual Christian, whose growth depends upon his voluntary and free exercise of the gifts and opportunities which God has put in his hands. Fools do not recognize the consequences of their actions, either in their own lives, or upon the lives of others. Their blindness prevents them from discerning the relationship in which they stand to their environment, and the reaction of environment upon themselves; they have no sense of responsibility for others. Believers are not blind, and accordingly are expected to be awake to their inheritance and responsibility more than others who have not been enlightened; they must cultivate prudence and careful thoughtfulness because of the significance of the witness their lives bears before men. Enlightened men must not walk as if their sensibilities were asleep; "walk circumspectly."

OBSERVATIONS IN DETAIL.

The apostle then proceeds to define in detail in what particular ways circumspect walking is to be observed.

(a) In the first place it is "understanding what the will of the Lord is," the immortal quest of the spirit of man. The will of God as revealed in Christ was not so clear and simple among Christian converts in the midst of a pagan world, when the force and influence of old habits and customs was strong upon them, as it is to-day. Blindness to-day is due to the fact that people look to their own opinions, and their own will, rather than the will of God, and "there are none so blind as those that will not see." The mind of to-day is insubordinate; it is wont to attribute infallibility to its own wisdom, rather than to inquire as to what the will of God is. It is what people think in their own minds that governs their conduct, and of these irresponsible opinions desire is the prolific mother. This attitude of mind is not common prudence, because in the long run, the will of God is irresistible. When conduct is determined by our own mind and desire, rather than by the will of God, we make a mockery of the light that has come down from Heaven, of which every believer enters into possession.

(b) The second consideration in circumspect walking is sobriety. To be drunk with wine is excess, and all excess is sinful. Drunkenness is therefore a sin. A spirit-filled people are to be controlled by the spirit. The spiritualized mind, not the desires and passions, is to be the dominant element in conduct. The one belongs to the kingdom of God, the other to the kingdom of the world. Anything that delimits the kingdom of God is sin against the will of God. Hence in-

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