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The Outlook

The Fire at Ottawa.

The destruction of the beautiful pile of Parliament buildings at Ottawa and the deplorable loss of life connected with it, has sent a thrill of pain and horror throughout the Dominion, and, indeed, through almost the entire world. At the moment of writing it is still a mystery how the fire originated, though most people are of opinion that it was the work of an incendiary. It is certainly surprising that the fire, is accidental, should be so appallingly rapid and destructive. If it should prove to be due to German intrigues, as is confidently asserted in several quarters, it will do nothing more than stiffen the determination of Canada to prosecute the war to the end. If it should be shown to be accidental, the Dominion will meet the disaster in a spirit of courage and self-sacrifice which will be seen all over the land. We have no doubt that the enquiry to be instituted will be rigid and thorough. It is not surprising that the suspicion of German work should be felt, because we know what has been done in the United States by German gold and German cowardice and German cruelty. The Zeppelin raids in England show that Germany will not stop at anything to impress the world with her policy of "frightfulness." But already the futility of it is apparent. For the present we must rest content to await the searching enquiry which is sure to reveal the cause of the fire, and meanwhile our deepest sympathy goes out to those who have lost their loved ones under such tragic circumstances, and we pray that the God of all grace may be their strength and stay. Whether in the individual life, or the family circle, or in national affairs, the one message is, "The Lord reigneth."

Church Bible and Prayer Book Society.

One of the most useful organizations in our midst is that which bears the above title. It was authorized by the General Synod of 1911, and is supported by leading and representative Churchmen throughout the Dominion. Its object is the spreading of Christian knowledge by free grants of Bibles, Prayer Books and Hymn Books to the poor, to soldiers and sailors, and in missionary districts, and also the supply of Bibles and other works at lowest possible cost to members. The Society has been instrumental in giving Prayer Books to soldiers before leaving for the front, and every Diocese in the Dominion has also received grants. During the past year no less than four thousand Prayer and Hymn Books, besides Bibles and other works, have been distributed over Canada. It is claimed that the Society is doing a work that is not done by any other Canadian organization, and on this account alone its efforts are deserving of the best and most practical sympathy. Full particulars can be obtained from the Organizing Secretary, Mr. S. J. Boyde, 578 Clinton Street, Toronto. There are few more valuable ways of helping forward the cause of truth than by the distribution of such books as this Society endeavours to provide.

"Scholarly Incompetence."

One of the most striking articles that has appeared for many a day is found in the current "Hibbert Journal," prompted by the war, and discusses the "incompetence of the mere scholar to interpret Christianity." Religion can only be properly understood by those who have a spiritual experience of it and such themes as are involved in the Biblical revelation cannot be handled aright except by reverent and obedient believers. For far too long a time scholarship in England, the United States and Canada has been unduly dominated

by the thought that intellect could settle all the problems of the Bible, but we are being taught in a variety of ways the futility (not to say the fatality) of a good deal that passed for scholarship in Germany and the utter impossibility of settling questions concerning Christ and the Bible by such means. While our scholarship must always be thoroughly adequate, we must never forget that the deepest truths are only properly realized by men who bow before the revelation of God in Christ and who seek to interpret that revelation in the light of their own experience. As a thoughtful writer has said, "the musical know what is music," and the spiritual know what is spiritual.

A Striking Proclamation.

Some of the most important Englishmen have just published to the world this proclamation which speaks for itself and conveys a much needed lesson for Canada:

- I have killed more men than have fallen in all the wars of the world.
- I have turned men into brutes, and have made millions unhappy.
- I have transformed many ambitious youths into hopeless parasites.
- I make smooth the downward path for countless millions.
- I destroy the weak and weaken the strong.
- I make the wise man a fool, and trample the fool into his folly.
- I am known to the abandoned wife, the parents whose child has bowed their gray heads in sorrow and to the hungry children.
- I am a greater foe to the Empire than the Germans.
- I have almost brought defeat on the Empire through drunken workmen.
- I am doing my best to bring this about.
- I am still "Going Strong."

I am Alcohol.

In view of the special effort now being made in Ontario to further the cause of temperance, these statements are particularly timely and show what is thought in England of the great evil of alcohol. The drastic regulations for the liquor traffic are already proving decidedly fruitful in England, because at last it is being realized that only by loosening the grip of Kaiser Alcohol can we expect to defeat Kaiser Wilhelm. At any ordinary time the whole country would have been up in arms against such autocratic prohibition, but this revolutionary restriction has been made possible under the Defence of the Realm Act. It behoves Canada to heed this temperance call and to set her own house in order.

"The Immorality of Non-Resistance."

A preacher has just taken this subject as the theme of a powerful and most striking sermon. This is how he put the matter:—

Every Christian must hate, loathe, and detest war, but there were circumstances in which war was a duty. The doctrine of non-resistance—that violence was always to be met with passive submission—was based on (1) a misinterpretation of Scripture, (2) a misreading of history, (3) a misunderstanding of morality. To-day we realize that it is not merely the future of the British Empire that is at stake, but the freedom of the world, including the freedom of the German people themselves. Better to die as free men than live as slaves.

These words sum up the truth on this subject, and we are glad to have the position put with such clearness and force. In the Canadian Magazine for December a striking article appeared by Dr. Guillet, entitled "We Must Fight." It has now been issued in pamphlet form and shows beyond question the justification of the present action of Great Britain.

The Calendar

Septuagesima Sunday.

This and the two following Sundays form the first stage of the second period of the Church's year, a transition between Christmas-tide and Lent. It depends on Easter and is preparatory to Lent. The second stage closes with Easter Eve, the third stage extending from Easter to the Sunday after Ascension Day and the fourth being Whitsuntide. The names given to these Sundays are peculiar to the Western Church and are possibly derived from the forty days of Lent, *Quadragesima*, *Quinquagesima* (*dies*, day) is the fiftieth day before Easter; the other names given to the two preceding Sundays are simply convenient, but not numerically exact.

The Proper Lessons for Septuagesima commence with the story of creation and are introductory to a series on the historical books of the Old Testament. With rare appropriateness the second lessons are taken from Revelation, ch. 21, in which is found by contrast the story of the new heavens and the new earth. The first lesson makes the *Benedicite* peculiarly appropriate for this day. Septuagesima is one of the few Sundays for which a second Proper Lesson is chosen.

The Collect.—Taken from the Sarum Missal, it emphasizes the two main thoughts of Lent, confession of sin with its punishment and prayer for God's mercy. This is one of the few Collects which closes with a doxology to the Trinity. "Justly punishe" represents the Latin "justly afflicted" and the words "by Thy goodness" were added in 1549.

The Epistle.—This comes from 1 Cor. 9: 24-27, and dates from 1549. In the Sarum Missal it extended to ch. 10:4. It emphasizes the idea of discipline in the Christian life.

The Gospel.—Drawn from St. Matthew 20: 1-16, but apparently with no thought of Lent, except by contrast. It has been suggested that the passage supplies the correction to the abuse of asceticism showing that we must not rely on our own works, but on Divine grace. Many who appear to be first will be last, while many who are invited and respond outwardly are not selected in the end.

Hymns from the Book of Common Praise, compiled by Dr. Albert Ham, F.R.C.O., Organist and Director of the Choir of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto.

Septuagesima Sunday. (February 20th.)

- Holy Communion: 232, 237, 448, 516.
- Processional: 470, 505, 573, 653.
- Offertory: 103, 483, 611, 641.
- Children: 422, 660, 687, 708.
- General: 50, 412, 620, 658.

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