

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, October 12th, 1916

The Christian Year

The Eighteenth Sunday After Trinity, Oct. 22.

"Temptation"—the very word rings with a knell of doom. It recalls memories of those perilous seasons of the soul, when the personality seemed bewitched by some strange draught of the enchanter, when the judgment was befooled by false lights, when siren voices lured, and desire urged, toward a land where seemed to gleam the fairy palaces of satiety and of pleasure. And then the memory tells how, if the halcyon course was taken, the scene changed with cataclysmic rapidity. The glamour was gone, the lure had vanished, the storm had broken, the darkness had fallen with the terror of eclipse—and the shipwrecked mariner found himself battling with the choking waters of disappointment, disillusionment, despair.

"Temptation"—its danger is not lessened by the fact that its approach to the soul lies, as our Collect reminds us, through varied avenues. Sometimes it comes through a man's environment, the "world," with its glitter and its questionable standards, enticing him to adopt its outlook and its practices. Sometimes it comes through a man's bodily nature, the "flesh," with its animal cravings and passions. And sometimes it appeals to all that is perverted and degenerate in man's spiritual complex. The temptation is of the "devil." But the main point to remember is that, by whatever avenue the approach be made, the danger-point is only reached when the personality itself yields to what has, for the moment at least, become a dominant and overmastering desire.

How, then, may the imminent danger be surmounted? What will guarantee victory over temptation? The answer is clear. Let the personality be dominated always and everywhere by a desire, a controlling motive, which is utterly and altogether good. A man, whose inner life is so garrisoned, need not fear the glamour of lower desires and aims; he is under the control of a nobler lure, a dominant desire, which protects him from deviating and leads him ever along the right path. Temptation is conquered by "the explosive power of a new affection."

And where may such a dominant desire be found? The "Gospel" replies to our question. Such a desire is found in love, supremely to God, and then to man—that is to say, in a settled spiritual gravitation away from the self-life, first towards the great Father of spirits, and then towards those other souls who form the individual units in His great Kingdom or Universe of Love.

Love! The supreme requisite. Love—the conquerer of temptation. Love—"the long-sought remedy for all the blind confusion of our days." It is an old story. But it is a true story, and it is a new story—a story ever to be learnt afresh and acted out in life. God is love, and man's only ultimate task is to learn love—a love that will drive him out from the cabined centre of the self-life to live for those others whom he may reach and help; a love which will always place service before acquisition; a love which will compel him with its irresistible compulsion through the dark portals of vicarious suffering and death into the boundless amplitudes of the eternal life.

Editorial Notes

Thanksgiving.

It may seem a difficult matter for some to see what they have to be thankful for at the present time, but a little thought should reveal a good many things for which we should be devoutly thankful. We have reason to thank God for the peace that reigns in our own land in spite of our share in the Great War across the seas. The number of sad homes is increasing, it is true, day by day, and Canada will assuredly be a sadder country after the war than before it. Nevertheless, our homes have so far been left unmolested by physical attacks from without or from within, and we have been allowed to sleep in peace and to go about our daily duties very much in the usual way. A moment's thought of the shattered homes of Belgium, Serbia, Poland and Northern France, of the thousands of Armenians and others who have been slaughtered in cold blood, or have been forced to flee for their lives, should scatter any doubts that we may have regarding our own blessings. There is, moreover, another matter for thanksgiving, namely, that so many of our young men have shown a true sense of duty and have been willing to lay down their lives in defence of what they believed to be a just cause. There are worse things than physical death. As the present Archbishop of York so truly said: "The wealth of a nation consists ultimately not in its exports or imports, but in the number of noble lives that are being lived therein." The greatest blessing that any country can enjoy is high moral and spiritual character in its people. Canada will, we are convinced, be richer for the terrible losses she is suffering. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die," and with God's help we can build up in this country on the noble deaths of those at the front a type of character in our manhood and womanhood that would not have been possible otherwise. Let us, therefore, thank God, not for the war, but for the courage, and faith, and sense of duty called forth by this awful carnage.

Christian Science.

We all have heard the old saying about the devil quoting Scripture to suit his purpose, and we know how frequently the enemies of the truths of the Gospel, by taking texts or portions of texts apart from what precedes or follows, often make these appear to teach something very different from what is actually meant. In a recent issue of a leading Ottawa paper there appears an advertisement with the heading, "Anglican Minister's View," and extracts are given from an article that appeared in the "Canadian Churchman" of April 6th last. Two sentences are taken from the beginning of the article and two sentences from near the end. The whole tendency of the advertisement is to lead people, many of whom have not read the article in question, to conclude that the writer was in sympathy with Christian Science. Let the reader of the advertisement, however, place side by side with the extracts quoted the following sentences from the same article: "This system, based, as it is, on a philosophical blunder, is riddled through and through with inaccuracies, fantastic interpretations, misstatements, and illogical conclu-

sions"; or, "The great count against Christian Science is that it blocks the road to all progress, for it says we have no right to investigate with our mental faculties—for, after all, we have none"; or, "Christian Science has sounded strongly and continuously one note, and men say, 'We never heard that before'; but the sounding of one truth does not give us the music of the Gospel." The weakness of a man's position is never more clearly shown than when he resorts to such practices as the above, and if Christian Science has to resort to tactics such as these to attract attention or to draw people to its meetings, we do not hesitate to class it as an instrument used by the powers of evil to draw people away from the truth.

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A Cowardly Act.

One of the most cowardly acts that any man can be guilty of is to hit another behind his back. And when the attack is made on a man who has left his home to serve his country at the front it becomes all the more cowardly. No one who knows the Rev. Canon Davidson, rector of St. John's Church, Peterborough, Ont., and chaplain of the 93rd Battalion, needs to be told anything regarding his honesty of purpose and his whole-hearted desire to accompany his battalion to the firing line. When he reached England, however, he found, as large numbers of other Canadian chaplains have found, that battalion chaplains either become brigade chaplains or are transferred to some other work, and the latter is what happened in Major Davidson's case. The editor of the Peterborough Daily Review, however, in the issue of September 29th, has stated that a Salvation Army adjutant in that city had been asked to become chaplain of the above battalion and adds that "when the battalion reached England, the Major (i.e., Canon Davidson) had other plans in view which he immediately carried into effect." The latter had, it states, "secured the appointment of chaplain of a training hospital in England" and that his only connection with the battalion was that his name was on the pay roll. The ignorance of the facts of the situation displayed by the writer and the imputation of dishonest motives to a man of unblemished character, merit the contempt of every right-thinking person, and we trust that the good people of Peterborough will see that he gets the punishment he deserves.

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The Spirit of Suspicion.

We received a letter recently in which the hope was expressed that we might get rid of the spirit of suspicion that is so prevalent in the Church. We fail so often to realize that others may differ with us on certain points and yet be quite as honest and earnest as we. The fact that two men do not see eye to eye on religion or any other subject does not necessarily make them enemies, and, while they may not always be able to work together, they can at least treat each other with Christian charity and brotherliness. The spirit of suspicion breeds hatred and spite, and not only makes it more difficult for those guilty of this sin to worship and serve God, but it tends to prevent others from coming to Christ. It is better to be deceived in others occasionally than to carry around, day after day, in one's bosom that canker which eats at the very root of one's life.

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