

Canadian Churchman

Toronto, May 24, 1917

The Christian Year

Trinity Sunday.

There is nothing that can be conceived of that is of greater practical importance to people than that they should have a worthy conception of God. What we believe about God is of more importance to our lives than anything else. A right doctrine of God—that is what the Church presents to us on Trinity Sunday.

When we begin to attempt any kind of definition of the being of Our Great God we realize the inadequacy of human thought, and the still greater inadequacy of human language, for we are conscious that our words narrow even our limited thoughts. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is the attempt on the part of the Church to account for all the facts about God as those facts have been revealed in Holy Scripture, and to interpret to the world her experience of God in the light of those facts. It is the highest, truest, and most adequate expression of God and His relation to the world.

We must remember also that this doctrine is not merely a difficult series of definitions given by theologians, but that it is Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself Who has made this doctrine inevitable. "Christ, glorious with light of Divine love and holiness, known on earth and in Heaven as the Son of God, was so full of grace and truth that men not only learned the Father from Him, but beheld the Father in Him." We often forget that one of the basic reasons of this definition of God is the adoration of the Christian heart for Jesus Christ, which found its expression in St. Thomas when he cried, "My Lord, and my God." What should we do with Him if we had no Trinity Sunday?

The opening words of the Epistle and the closing words of the Gospel seem to have a very close connection. "After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in Heaven." "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Son of Man has opened the door to Heaven by His death, and the door stands open for all men. And through that open door we hear the sounds of Heaven's worship, and it is the worship of the Blessed Trinity, for we hear the voices of those who "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." And above all we seem to hear the Voice of Him Who sits upon the Throne, saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The doctrine of the Trinity has to be spiritually apprehended. We enter into its meaning by worship. For those who never worship this doctrine must be meaningless. But for those whose habit it is to enter into the Holy of Holies and to cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, this doctrine is a reality, and expresses their experience of the Godhead.

"For the Catholic Faith is this: That we WORSHIP one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."

Faith is all-powerful; it conquers everything, and despises worldly goods, since it is sure of eternal bliss.—Savonarola.

Editorial

ARMENIAN AND ASSYRIAN RELIEF.

Viscount Bryce has stated that the aim of the rulers of Turkey in seeking to root out Christianity was political rather than religious. "They wanted to make the whole Turkish Empire Mohammedan in order to make it uniform, with only one creed and no differences between one class of subjects and another." And he adds that "of the seven or eight hundred thousand of Armenians who have perished in the recent massacres, many thousands have died as martyrs, by which I mean they have died for their Christian faith when they could have saved their lives by renouncing it." "Many a Christian child was torn from its parents to be brought up as a Mussulman. Thousands of Armenian Christian girls were sold in the market or distributed among Turkish officers to be imprisoned for life in Turkish harems and there forced into Mohammedanism. But many more thousands of Armenians, women as well as men, were offered their choice between Christ and Mohammed, and when they refused Mohammed were shot or drowned forthwith."

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour states that "of the one million eight hundred thousand Armenians who were in the Ottoman Empire two years ago, one million two hundred thousand have been either massacred or deported."

The ancient Assyrian Church has likewise suffered from massacre, disease and famine. It was attacked by Turks and Kurds, and some 35,000 escaped to Persia, where one-third of the latter perished from lack of food, clothing and shelter.

To help the remnants of these peoples, a strong relief committee has been formed in the United States with the assistance of Mr. Paul Shimmon, who has for some time been working in connection with the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission to the Nestorian Christians.

In Canada the matter has very recently been taken up by the Primate, who has issued a letter to the different Metropolitans, asking that an appeal should be made. Steps have already been taken by the latter, and Mr. Shimmon addressed the congregations of Christ Church Cathedral and St. George's Church in Montreal on Sunday last.

The "Canadian Churchman" has been asked to co-operate with this effort, and it is scarcely necessary to say that it will be glad to do anything in its power to help on such a worthy object. As suggested by the Bishop of Montreal, amounts reported as having been received in the various Synod offices for this object will, if desired, be reported in its columns from week to week. In addition to this, contributions will be received and acknowledged from subscribers, who for any reason cannot or do not wish to contribute through the various diocesan channels.

It is doubtful if anywhere in the midst of the suffering and sorrow caused by this war is there greater, or as great, need for help. The anxieties and sorrows in England, to quote the Archbishop of Canterbury, "are dwarfed in comparison with the unutterable misery and devastation which has been wrought in the lives and homes of the Armenians and Syrians in Eastern Turkey and on the Persian frontier." Canada knows nothing yet of such suffering, and we pray that it may continue to know nothing of it.

This, however, should make us pour out our sympathy and help all the more freely to those who need it. Approximately 2,144,000 persons, mostly women and children, destitute, homeless and helpless, are dependent on such relief as is sent from outside sources. Will you help? "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto Me."

No matter what one's views may have been earlier in the war regarding the advisability of resorting to conscription, we feel certain that it was with a sigh of relief that the vast majority learned on Saturday last that it was really coming. The need of reinforcements, coupled with the lamentable falling off in recruits, made it inevitable. With the United States in the war on the side of the Allies, Canada has little to fear from the alien-born population within her borders. We trust that in carrying conscription into effect all classes and creeds in Canada will be treated alike.

It may not be generally known that the small publication known as "The Bible Students' Monthly" is published by the followers of the late Pastor Russell and should not be given house room in Canada. After Canada's experience with both Mr. Russell and his successor, Judge Rutherford, one wonders that this publication has escaped the eye of our Canadian censor. Do not leave it lying about for young people to read. Consign it at once to the fire.

The Church Bible and Prayer Book Society has just concluded one of the most successful years in its history. It has, with the assistance of the fund raised by the Bishop of Toronto, distributed since war broke out, some 30,000 copies of the Prayer Book, among soldiers going overseas. The book used is very convenient in size and has been much appreciated by the men. Since beginning its work it has distributed free of charge over 115,000 copies of the Prayer Book alone to over 1,100 missions in every diocese in Canada.

Canada has lost two more valuable military officers during the past few weeks, and the Church two of its earnest, active laymen in the persons of Col. Britton, of Gananoque, and Col. Denison, of Toronto. Both were men highly respected as well in times of peace as of war. We are once more reminded very forcibly of the price Canada and the Empire are paying for victory. We are reminded also of the burden of responsibility laid upon those who are spared, of safeguarding the heritage they are purchasing with their blood.

King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia, has under its new president, the Rev. T. S. Boyle, D.D., undertaken to raise the sum of \$100,000 for present and future needs. King's is the oldest College of the Church in Canada and is controlled jointly by the two dioceses of Nova Scotia and Fredericton. Many of the leading men of the Maritime Provinces, clerical and lay, have received their University training there and it has still an important work to perform in supplying the Church in that part of Canada with a consecrated and well-trained ministry. We wish Dr. Boyle every success in his undertaking.

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