

The Bishop of Ottawa's Charge

AT the last Diocesan Synod of Ottawa, the Bishop, after reading an appreciation of the late Archbishop Hamilton, and referring to matters of diocesan interest, touched on the following subjects among others:—

INDUSTRIAL UNREST.

"The gravity of the crisis through which we are passing must come home to us all at this moment. For several months past, facts and rumours have been reported to me, which have caused me not a little apprehension. To-day the crisis is upon us. It would be wrong in any way to minimize its urgency, and the elements of serious menace that it contains. I am happy, however, to see in the present situation strong elements also of confidence and hope."

After reviewing the nine labour clauses in the Peace Treaty and mentioning the Royal Commission, the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on "Industrial Problems," and the Statement of Twenty Quaker Employers in England, the Bishop said:—

"The attitude of returned soldiers under the leadership of the G.W.V.A., has been of a steady influence. The sympathies of very many of them must be with the demands that labour is making, but they have stood steadily for law and order. In this, our citizen soldiers have again proved themselves to be a great asset to the nation.

"Liberty, civil and religious liberty, as Bishop Butler taught us long ago, is a severe and restrained thing. It implies, and for its very existence requires, authority also and is as much damaged by too little of the same as it is by too much of it. The one great safeguard of liberty is found in stable, constitutional government. This must be upheld at any cost. The constitution may change, the personnel of government may change, but where the authority of constitutional government is undermined, liberty is lost.

"Lasting reforms are not born of impatient resentment. Drastic changes are called for and must not be refused, but time is also called for, and patience to allow for readjustment of conditions. Without this our very ideals will be the cause of much avoidable and undeserved suffering, and may well hurry us to national disaster.

"The great need of the moment is production, of food, clothing, houses, and the necessities of life. There is a world shortage of these things, due to mobilization of vast armies, and to the furnace of destruction that has been raging for four years and more. We are in danger of being caught in a vicious circle. The high cost of living is one chief cause of unrest, and unrest (because of necessity it lessens confidence and checks production) itself constitutes a chief cause of the high cost of living. The only way to escape an even greater scarcity is to work at production while we work at reform.

"Work and thrift were never more necessary than now if we are to live and pay the war debt also.

"There is a solution of difficulties which, in the conflict of material interest, men are still forgetting. It is hard to be told by a prophet to go and wash in Jordan when the cry on all sides is for some spectacular act of healing. There is a distinctive Christian message—the message of humility and of setting duties before rights, because we all depend wholly upon God; of stewardship, because God alone is the Supreme Owner of all things, and we hold our property and our powers whether of management or of labour from Him; of Brotherhood, because each man bears the image of his Maker and all Christian men are redeemed and renewed in that image by God's own Son, whose love brought Him to us with that intent; of repentance, and self-sacrifice, of prayer and worship, and the daily need of the help from God, of the pledge of help and the consecration of life in the risen Christ and in His Holy Spirit

who is with us still, and through the Sacraments of His own ordaining. We must have open hearts and minds for the ideals and for the troubles of to-day. We shall not otherwise be able to commend our message and promote its influence in the life of to-day. Nevertheless it is the unchanging message centered in the living unchanging Christ that we are all commissioned to give.

PROHIBITION.

"I have been asked to make some statement regarding prohibition, upon which the Province will be called upon to make its decision in the fall. Church of England people are free to make up their own minds upon this and upon other social and economic matters. Nevertheless, I am quite ready to tell the Synod where I stand in this discussion. I see no reason to change in any particular the statement I made to the Synod in 1916. I pointed out then that while prohibition in itself is not the Church's way of dealing with moral evil, yet special circumstances call for special action and warrant our voting for a curtailment for individual liberty. I am of the same mind still. If prohibition was necessary in time of war, it is necessary still and should have a longer trial, for conditions of war are not yet over. The external reform brought about by prohibition has been very great, not in every locality, but in very many. Evidence for this brought before us at the General Synod was widespread and strong. The law has been evaded it is true, but this is also true of the license law which prohibition superseded. There are influences promoting the liquor traffic which are sinister, powerful and unscrupulous. The times are not normal, and the less open access we have to liquor during days that lie before us, the better it will be for us all. I hope the Ontario Temperance Act will be sustained. Only one consideration would make me decide otherwise, that is to say, evidence of an increase of the use of drugs, such as could be traced to prohibition. I have no evidence of such increase though I have inquired of those who I thought would be able to guide me.

CHRISTIAN REUNION.

"Of Christian reunion I cannot speak very fully to-day, and yet there are some phases of the discussion upon which I have been asked to speak by some of our own members who are disquieted, and that from opposite points of view. My thought is running on the following lines. We must look upon the whole movement and upon the eager desire that lies behind it, as an evidence of the stirring of the Holy Spirit in divided Christendom. We must also study it as it appears against a wide historic background. It has been suggested, and I believe it to be true, that the great force which manifested itself in the 16th century in the direction of individualism and division is spent, and that the pendulum of human thought is rapidly passing full swing to the opposite extreme. In the 16th century the Empire of the West was finally broken up into individual nations. The United Church of the West was broken up into national churches and national churches into sects. The great trade guilds and crafts disappeared, and men sought self-realization in unrestricted individual enterprise and competition. It was not all wrong, but it led to over-emphasis upon one of the two great master keys of progress. For these master keys are two, not one. The inherent value of each human person and the value of fellowship and unity which is no less inherent in human nature. It is the second of these that is now chiefly swaying the minds of men. The dream of a new world empire, based on conquest has been shattered. But in its place has risen the ideal at least of a League of Nations based upon justice, freedom and peace and the restoration of international law. Individualism in industry is yielding everywhere to some form of collectivism. The broken fragments of Christendom are many of them moving toward each other, eager for a fellowship and unity which has long been lost. This sway of the pendulum is no new thing, almost to the first records we have of human thinking we can trace the eager, often stern debate, as to the relation of the one to the many, and the many to the one. The debate is still acute, and the solution will be found only when on a high

(Continued on page 432.)

Divine Providence

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THERE can be no doubt that the physical and moral evils which accompany a great war have raised in many minds a very acute problem regarding the providence of God. How if God is loving and omnipotent can He have permitted so great a catastrophe? To the philosopher the world-war has presented no new problem. Because it only presents on a large scale the same problem that he has steadily faced in all ages. Physical and moral evil have always been with us. They are not new things. But they do present a problem on which we can find light only if we are prepared to do some hard thinking. A philosopher once described this as the best of all possible worlds. And Voltaire in a well-known book has done all that human satire can do to make such a view look ridiculous. And yet Voltaire has not said the last word. Of what nature must the world be if it is to be the best possible? Plainly the best of all possible worlds will be a moral world. But a moral world of any worth cannot be a paradise of pleasure. A moral world conducted to its goal will issue in the highest happiness. But before this goal is reached much must be endured.

CONDITIONS OF A MORAL WORLD.

A moral world is a conditioned world. The primary conditions of a perfect moral world seem to be three:—

(1) Its author must be loving, wise, consistent, and all-powerful in order that there may be some guarantee that the goal will be reached, and when reached worthy of the travail entailed.

(2) The world which is to be the theatre of moral experience will not be like the world of Alice in Wonderland, where anything may happen at any time. Because in such a world there is no room for the exercise of thought, or prudence, or moral determination. A moral world must be an ordered world, where fixed laws prevail, and cause and effect have their ordered play. For unless the world is ruled by law, freedom is impossible. Alice could not be free in a world in which she never knew what might happen next. In the world in which we live we have the maximum of freedom because we can count on the world, and our calculations are not confounded. We can lay plans and by obedience to the laws of nature we can arm ourselves with all the powers put into our hands by the study of the stable constant law-abiding realm, in which our lot is cast.

(3) The moral agent in such a world must be free. If he is not free he is a mere automaton and not a moral being.

CERTAIN CONSEQUENCES INEVITABLE.

If God be such a Being as we have described we must not think of Him as we would think of an easy-going indulgent parent, but rather as of one determinately set on the accomplishment of a great purpose, and steadily facing the stern accompaniments of so great a plan. Moreover, we must not think that because God is Omnipotent that, therefore, He can do contradictory things. He must let us work out our experience in the world without interfering at every turn with our freedom, or with the law of cause and effect in the world in which we live; otherwise He would be continually defeating the very object of our being here. We should never learn, nor make moral progress under such conditions. The world would cease to be a moral world, and therefore, the best world, if God continually interfered to ward off from us the consequences of our mistakes and blunders. It necessarily follows that physical evil—pain and suffering—will be one of the by-products of life in a law-controlled world. Nature does not forgive even ignorance or a child's carelessness. But the child learns at last to walk without falling, and man labours to overcome the ignorance, carelessness, or disobedience, through which he has suffered. So God's purpose

(Continued on page 433.)

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