

Citizenship

As Treated by Miss Mary Waugh, Fourth Vice-President of the Strathroy District Epworth League, at the Recent Convention at Watford.

IN studying this subject the first thought I have considered is the

GOVERNMENT OF SELF.

The end of all government is the cultivation of good citizenship, and the initial lesson for the coming citizen to learn is the government of self. A good citizen is one who lives a useful life, and no person can be useful who has not acquired the power of self-control. There is a sphere of activity for every member of society. Each person has constant duties to perform, and if he neglects these duties society suffers loss.

A popular opinion prevails in many quarters that only a few persons succeed in life, and that the human race in its progress sustains the theory of "The survival of the fittest." There can be no theory more unsound if the Christian

life less perfect. The duty of every citizen begins in the family.

If children learn obedience to parents they readily become obedient to the authority of the country. As they advance in years, in discretion, and in education, they realize that all local authority has its centre in the constitution of the country. The more they are led to see the value of the government under which they live, the better they become fitted to discharge their duties as citizens. Unselfishness is learned in the home as well as obedience and respect for authority.

In the home are fostered habits of kindness and consideration for the younger and weaker members of the family. It appears, therefore, that whatever helps to make a good father or mother, a good husband or wife, a good son or daughter,

ing any single advantage that the school affords. He will understand that without intelligence he can never become a capable and useful citizen.

Good citizenship must recognize the value of those virtues which make good men. There can be no liberty without truth, honor, industry, temperance, kindness, charity. "You may build your capital of granite," said Wendell Phillips, "and pile it high as the Rocky Mountains, if it is founded on or mixed up with iniquity, the pulse of a girl will in time be detected." To teach without grammar or chemistry without teaching them that passions uncontrolled, impulses unrestrained, and appetites unregulated, are sure to bring irretrievable ruin, is to omit the best training for citizenship.

THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENT.

Ever since civilization began people have in every land associated with one another. Even among barbarous tribes men have little desire to live solitary and independent lives. That each person is not free from certain responsibilities towards other members of the human family was taught as far back as the time of Cain. As communities improve in intelligence the relations of life become more complex and the advantages of intercourse are more clearly felt.

No man can live to himself. A country cannot live to itself. Nations as well as individuals find it beneficial to have dealings with one another, and those that keep to themselves make little progress.

The feeling which impels people to associate is universal and natural. Controlled by this social instinct, individuals form groups, communities and federations, united by special kinds of friendliness. To enter into the different forms of government would require too much time. I simply mention some, such as monarchy, absolute and limited, aristocracy, democracy, republic.

We as Canadians are proud of our country. It is natural that every person should have a special feeling towards his own country. If the nation has had a memorable history, if the country is strong and prosperous, if the laws and institutions have helped to secure freedom, and if the policy of the government has made for righteousness, a sense of affection and loyalty may be expected to govern the citizens.

The words of St. Paul, "I am a citizen of no mean country," may be repeated in substance by every Canadian. If the Great Apostle of the Gentiles had reason to be proud of being called a citizen of Tarsus, the people who live in Canada may also with pride regard themselves "citizens of no mean country."

A look at the map will show the great extent of the Dominion. It forms thirty per cent. of the area of the British Empire, and one-eighth of the world's land. Its striking natural features, the grandeur of its mountain ranges, the beauty of its rivers and lakes, its magnificent forests, and its vast stretches of fertile land, are recognized by all travellers. Its great extent of timber lands, its almost boundless treasures of valuable minerals, its extensive and world-renowned fisheries, and its geographical facilities for commerce, give Canada superior advantages in view of the growing importance of natural resources in the development of nations.

Its prospects do not, however, depend upon the extent of its territory or the abundance of its natural wealth. The country has been settled by an intelligent, an industrious, a sober and a law-abiding people. Anglo-Saxon ideals of liberty have guided our statesmen. The democracy which controls is one which has been the growth of centuries under



KASLO B.C. METHODIST CHURCH AND PARSONAGE.

view of life's purpose is to have acceptance.

What is success in life? What is failure? No person need spend a wicked life. Everyone has the privilege of being good. A person who does his duty in life cannot be said to fail. A good person is necessarily a benefit to society. No good man neglects to improve his opportunities for usefulness.

It should therefore be understood, that what young Canadians need most is not an extensive knowledge of civics—valuable though this is—but such a training in habits of self-control as will enable them to follow readily in the path of duty, to strive to be useful members of the community, and to feel that the conscientious pursuit of what is good and noble brings certain reward.

GOVERNMENT OF THE FAMILY.

The family is the school of all virtues. Within the circle is awakened the spirit of obedience, love, self-sacrifice and proper ambition. Investigation of the home conditions of criminals give overwhelming proof of the enormous influence which the family life has upon the careers of its members.

It is, therefore, or should be, the first effort of the Church as well as of the State jealously to guard against any influence which will tend to render family

a good brother or sister, also helps to make a good citizen.

GOVERNMENT OF THE SCHOOL.

The aim of the school is to make good citizens. Successful citizenship is the highest product of education. True education promotes intelligence and strengthens the moral faculties. The higher and more complex the duties of life become the more education is needed. The teacher leads his pupils to think. It is thinking that drives the world.

The reference to school at once brings up the question of education. People often have a wrong conception of education, and generally associate with it branches of learning such as arithmetic, grammar, history or chemistry. They take it for granted that knowledge and education are synonymous. They assume that children who acquire much information of the ordinary subjects of the curriculum are making educational progress, and they fail to recognize the true functions of the teacher.

It should not be forgotten that the main purpose of the school is to train, and that the acquisition of knowledge is only a means to an end. Education is therefore the formation of character, and this has to do with the entire nature, physical, intellectual, moral and religious. The wise scholar will be jealous of los-