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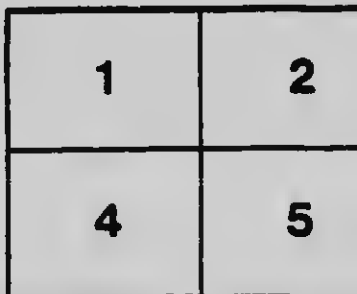
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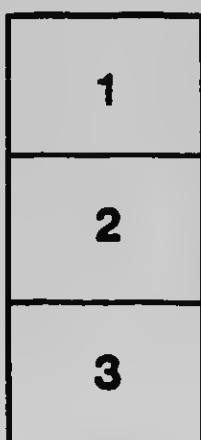
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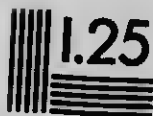
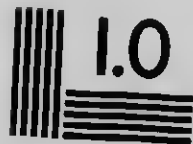
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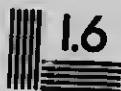
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PROPORTIONATE
GIVING
AND THE
FORWARD MOVEMENT
PEACE
OFFERING

m.p. m.p. m.d

①

By Principal Clarence McKinnon

Handwritten notes

BV 772

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1919

Proportionate Giving

and the

Forward Movement Peace Thankoffering

By Principal CLARENCE MacKINNON

Old Testament Militarism.

Out of the treacherous desert four kings swooped down on the five that ruled the cities of the plain, and that had dared to unfurl the standard of freedom. The four were more than a match for the five. The walls of the cities were pierced, the cattle plundered, the inhabitants enslaved; and laden with booty the invaders disappeared again into the grim silence of the desert, taking Lot with them.

But swift as was the inroad, swifter still was the justice meted out by the patriarch Abraham. Like a hawk he descended upon their trail, nor did he cease his pursuit until he had reached the very outskirts of Damascus and had recovered his nephew, the prisoners, and all the plundered goods.

An Old Testament Thank-offering.

On his triumphant return Abraham was confronted by a mystic personage, the prototype of our Lord Himself, whose very name, Melchizedek, meant "king of right-

euonesss," the name of whose kingdom Salem signified "peace," and who bore the august title "Priest of the most high God," as if to indicate that justice alone could secure peace, and that both were impossible apart from the Supreme Ruler of the world.

In humble acknowledgment of this profound truth even the great Abraham, conquerer though he was, gave immediately a tenth of the spoils to this representative of Deity, and not a mere tenth, but, as the word suggestively implies, a tenth that comprised the choicest portions. This he did, not in obedience to a direct command, but as a spontaneous and devout recognition of the inestimable boon of victory and peace.

The Modern Parallel.

It is all forshadowed there so vividly and impressively in that ancient biblical scene. Only the actors are changed. The fierce Teutonic drive bursting the frontiers on August 4th, 1914, the ruin and havoc that threatened the world, the deep realization of the truth that peace can only rest on righteousness, and righteousness only on God, and then the consequent triumph of Right against Might and the crowning victory. Now remains but the final act of the drama, the consecration to God of an offering worthy of the deliverance that has saved to us our country, our homes, our property and our lives.

Men of old Time Made it a Tenth.

Abraham gave a tenth. Jacob promised a similar proportion; and what a text his vow makes for every returned soldier and for the parents of every returned son! "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, . . . so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God . . . and of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."

The precedent became a law. The tithe became general with the Jew. Sheep were enclosed within a pen, and then as they passed out, a vermilion brand was placed on every tenth one: it had "passed under the rod," and had become dedicated to the Lord. Cattle and goats were subjected to the same exaction; and so too was the herb in the garden and the fruit on the tree. Indeed the practise was by no means confined to the Jew. Greeks, Romans, Carthaginians, Arabians were known to dedicate a tenth to their heathen deities in gratitude for a victory won, or for the promotion of some beneficent service. To neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor barbarian did this seem an excessive proportion to bestow on the happiness and progress of mankind.

Christianity Fixes no Standard, but Expects More.

It was the genius of the Christian religion to set no limitation to gift or sacrifice.

Its watchword was, "The love of Christ constraineth me,"

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

To meet the unsentimental, practical business man Paul, however, uses the phrase, "As God hath prospered him." In the early and enthusiastic days of the Christian faith this was no vague ideal. Liberality had no restraint: "for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them and brought the price of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet." Barnabas was one of these, and doubtless when the Kingdom of God comes with power, there will be many more of his type, and widow's mites ringing down the brazen throat of the treasury will fill the world with their unselfish music.

The Presbyterian Peace Thankoffering in Canada

But while it is true that the Christian religion as such fixes no arbitrary limit to our giving and states no definite proportion of our income as belonging to God, it implies the use of reason and discrimination in its activities. All things are to be done decently and in order. Consequently it was fitting that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada should survey the whole field of responsibility that

lies before it and estimate the extent of the gift that would in some measure discharge that responsibility. This has been carefully done, and the figure of our thank offering fixed at \$4,000,000.

The Gift Very Reasonable.

While this amount may seem very large to the ordinary wage earner, it is really very small in comparison with the resources of Canada, or with the standard of proportionate giving in the Old Testament or the expectation of the New. The gifts of Abraham and Jacob far exceed it in this respect. Alongside the liberality of Barnabas and his associates it is but a faint expression of our faith in Christ. It is one third of the \$12,000,000 which is approximately the financial objective of the United National Campaign of the Protestant churches in Canada; and we may estimate Presbyterians as making about one seventh of the total population of the Dominion.

Figures That Speak.

It is not a little startling to discover what a small proportion of the country's wealth these apparently large figures really are.

Take first the trade returns for Canada for 1918: Total exports \$1,627,412,590; total imports \$1,114,762,400; total trade \$2,742,174,990.

One tenth of the trade for 1918 would be \$274,217,499; and the Presbyterian share, one seventh of that, would be \$39,000,000. The \$4,000,000 asked is, therefore, but a tenth of a tenth.

Or take the Bank clearings for 1918, which give a fair indication of the prosperity of the people. These are almost \$14,000,000,000. One tenth would be \$1,400,000,000, and one seventh of this, \$200,000,000, or fifty times the amount desired.

One tenth of the bank deposits is more than \$160,000,000, and one seventh of that nearly \$23,000,000. If every time the Presbyterians of the Dominion made a deposit in the bank during 1918, they put aside one tenth of it for the Lord, they would have accumulated enough to pay practically twice over the whole thank-offering asked from all the Protestant churches of Canada.

The Presbyterian farmers alone, if they tithed themselves, would give that whole peace offering of \$12,000,000; while, if the fishermen had given every tenth fish they caught in 1918, their contributions alone would have reached \$4,000,000.

But even if consideration were restricted, not to the wealth accumulated during 1918, but merely to the increase in trade over 1916, and a tenth just of that increase were asked, the demands of the Forward Movement would be far more than satisfied.

That increase was over \$1,400,000,000; one tenth of which would be \$140,000,000; and one seventh of that, \$20,000,000, or five times what the church is asking. In other words the request is for one-fiftieth of the increase in trade over what it was two years ago; or one-fiftieth of what the people loaned the government in the war loan which amounted to \$1,400,000,000.; or just about one-twentieth of the contributions given to the voluntary patriotic funds during the war.

Proportionate Giving.

These figures afford but a slight indication of what proportionate giving would do for the world. It would mean its evangelisation within a reasonably short period, the conversion of millions of souls, the universal recognition of those principles of justice and love, without which even the Treaty of Versailles will become a scrap of paper, and the coming of the Kingdom of God to the earth with all its joy and hope. Proportionate giving is just devoting to God that portion of our gains which is His due and which His work requires.

Issued by the Committee of the Forward Movement of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Copies may be had free on application. 255 Confederation Life Building, Toronto.



