

300 Words and 6,000 Numbers

By Dan Poisson

When June-Etta Chenard asked me to write something for this issue of *The Canadian Friend* with its theme of finances, she was very specific. “Not more than 600 words.” My answer was, “Not a problem. What about 300 words and 6,000 numbers?”

I had just returned from Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) Finance Committee meeting. Numbers were all over me. Income, Expenses, Revenue, Expenses, Donations, Expenses, Balanced Budget, Deficit.

But I also know that finance is more than numbers. Much more.

Finance is also Love in action.

Why would eight Friends, who are on the Finance Committee, spend a beautiful fall day away from home, away from their spouses, children and friends, and be confined in a room, poring over numbers, if it was not for the love of our Religious Society of Friends ?

And this Religious Society of Friends is YOU, who are reading these lines.

So, I won't bother you with 6,000 numbers. Unless you insist.

CYM is about to celebrate its fiftieth year as a united Yearly Meeting. My Monthly Meeting is 200 years old.

Both CYM and Yonge Street Monthly Meeting exist today because Friends of yesteryear were generous. Generous with their love, their time and their money.

I always feel a tremendous sense of responsibility about the “heritage” those past Friends entrusted me with. My responsibility for this inheritance, not unlike the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), is certainly to keep it safe but also to increase it, to make it grow and, when my time comes, to hand it over to the next generation.

We Canadian Friends are faced with many challenges. We are few, we are scattered, we are not getting any younger, nor any richer. And we are all busy with our ‘other’ lives: family life, work life, social life, etc.

And we have this huge responsibility to keep our Canadian Yearly Meeting going. Not just for the sake of CYM but for our own personal, individual and spiritu-

al benefit. Without CYM, and its predecessors, it is doubtful there would be a Religious Society of Friends in Canada today. Scary thought.

In closing, and before the editor cuts me off because I exceeded my 600 words allowance, I would like to quote another story from the Bible. Jesus saw a poor widow put two small copper coins in the collection box while the rich were tossing in their gifts. Jesus said “Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance but she, out of her poverty, has put in all she had to live on.” (Luke 21:1-4)

Friends, if you have not already done so, can you spare two small copper coins ? Your donation is important, let it be the gift of the rich, or just two small copper coins. With your donation we are all, today's Friends, able to benefit from the inheritance of earlier Friends, and we will also be able to pass it on to the next generation. In modern parlance, it is a win-win situation. Thank you. ☺

Editor's note: Dan's article contains 517 words.

Dan Poisson is a member of Yonge Street Monthly Meeting.