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The Churchman

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Editorial

In order that the valuable papers read at the Oxford Conference in June may be in the hands of our readers as soon as possible, we are issuing this fourth quarterly number of THE CHURCHMAN for 1942 a month in advance of the usual date. There will, of course, be no further issue until January, 1943.

IN this issue of *The Churchman* it is our pleasure and privilege to present the papers read at the recent Oxford Conference of Evangelical Churchmen and also to record the Findings of the Conference itself. The Bishop of Chelmsford and Bishop Linton spoke from notes only and in the case of the former, what appears is only a very brief summary of a very practical address on the Regeneration of Society in the light of present conditions. The Bishop's mind can be better understood by a perusal of his recent book "It Can Happen Here," in which his subject is more fully outlined.

Fortunately, from the sketchy notes of his talk which we submitted to him, Bishop Linton has been able to make the dead bones live again, and all our readers will find his contribution challenging, arresting, and in the case of clerical readers, a cause for deep heart searching and prayer.

We are grateful to Almighty God that in these days it was possible for the Conference to be held—for the spirit of Fellowship which pervaded the Conference—for the high standard of sanctified scholarship which the papers reveal—and for the opportunity to place on permanent record the mind of Evangelicals at this time of world chaos and upheaval.

May the messages from the printed page be an inspiration to all readers, to "buy up the opportunity" and go forth in the name of Christ conquering and to conquer, as the fact is brought home that Evangelism IS the World's need.

We much regret that owing to war restrictions on our space we are unable to give any reviews of books in this number of the magazine.

Evangelism and the Church

THE CHAIRMAN, CANON J. R. S. TAYLOR,
Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford

THIS is the first meeting of the Oxford Conference of Evangelical Churchmen since April, 1939, and it is the first held at Wycliffe Hall. On the last occasion we met, as in former years, at St. Peter's Hall under the presidency of the Master, the Reverend C. M. Chavasse. And to-night it is my happy privilege to welcome him in our midst as one of the speakers at this Conference, and to tell him in the name of all of you how delighted we are that he has been called to the Episcopate, and that his gifts of energy, courage and comradeship, which made him so well known and loved in this city and University, have already made their mark in the diocese of Rochester, in spite of the terrible handicap with which he has had to contend. To-morrow also we shall have the pleasure of welcoming the Bishop of Chelmsford, who was the first Chairman of this Conference in the days when it met in Cheltenham.

This is also the first meeting of the Conference since the outbreak of the war which has become world-wide and devastating beyond all comparison. In spite of the difficulties of transport and catering, our Committee has thought it right to call us together to consider the spiritual condition and needs of our country in this time of war, and the responsibility before God that lies upon the Church of England in particular to bear witness to the one Hope of the world. It does not require much imagination to perceive the relevance of our subject, "Evangelism," to the present situation. After two and three-quarter years of war we have seen nothing that can be called a revival of spiritual life in this country. The response to His Majesty's summons of the nation to prayer and the impression made by "the miracle of Dunkirk" have been sporadic rather than permanent in their effect. There have been many hindrances to the maintenance of the normal worship and work of the Church—the restrictions of the black-out, the wholesale evacuation of children and other members of the regular congregations, the encroachment of war work and national service, especially in the Home-guard, on the sacredness of Sunday, and the destruction by enemy action of churches and parish halls. More dangerous and destructive of spiritual values have been the subtle influences which war disseminates, the relaxing of discipline in home and school, the new temptations which swollen incomes bring, the loosening of moral sanctions within and without the Forces, the artificial reactions of war-weariness and nervous strain. All this has brought upon some of the clergy a spirit of pessimism and defeat. They despair of recovering the ordered round of Church worship and organisation: the parochial system is for them a memory of the past. A diocesan Bishop recently said that he never expected a morning congregation of more than sixty people when he preached in his city churches.

But that is only one side of the picture. On the other there is ground for encouragement and thanksgiving. Many churches are as crowded as ever; in this city some are better attended than they were before the war. Generally in the country there is a friendly feeling towards the clergy who have been brought into close touch with the people through their work in shelters, in A.R.P. depots and in other war-time associations. There is a deepening interest in definitely religious education, and in spite of the destruction of so many churches the contributions to Christian causes both at home and abroad have been maintained at a high level. Reports from Naval, Army and R.A.F. Chaplains vary just as the Chaplains vary in character and efficiency. While there is often resentment against forced attendance at parade services, there is friendliness towards the padre and an obvious desire to know what Christianity has to say. The impression which I have gained from the recent letters of a large number of Wycliffe men serving as Chaplains is that the opportunities are great, especially with the troops abroad, and that they like and admire the men. One of them writes from Iraq, "Ever since I left England I have had a most encouraging time. I have found an increasing interest in religion and a desire to learn more. At a discussion group on the voyage out the attendance averaged eighty and there was never any lack of speakers." He goes on to tell how Bishop Graham-Brown recently held a Confirmation service at which he presented eighty-eight candidates and another Wycliffe padre sixty-five. So there are causes for joy as well as anxiety. This is a day of need and of opportunity.

It falls to the reader of the next paper to deal more fully with the diagnosis of the present situation, so far as it reveals the World's need. My task is to consider the Church's attitude and response to the present opportunity. And at this point I would remind myself and you of the purpose of this Conference. If I interpret it aright, it is not to report upon, and make recommendations for the improvement of, the present position of any department of our Church's life or work. Rather, it is to review the principles which lie at the foundation of our Christian faith and practice, that we may catch again a vision of God's purpose for the world which He has created and redeemed, and in the light of that vision may like Isaiah of old be cleansed and consecrated anew to the service of that holy purpose. We draw up and publish findings at the close in order that we may share that rediscovery with others. So in this year we are summoned to review the fundamental principles of Evangelism, and my share of the task, as I see it, is to examine the relation of the Church to the Gospel. And I propose to do this by setting before you three propositions to consider and discuss.

(1) *That the Church is the product of the Gospel.* She is the creation of the life-giving Spirit through the Word, "having been begotten again . . . through the word of God, which liveth and abideth . . . And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you." (I Pet. i. 23, 25). This means that we think of the Church not primarily as a great institution but as a living organism, animated and controlled by the free, sovereign, creative Spirit of God, Whose relation to the Body of Christ which He indwells is always to be thought of in terms

of personal influence, not of mechanical operation. And that He deals with us as moral personalities is implied by the means that He uses, the Word, which quickens our consciences and influences our wills by way of our understanding.

And the passage quoted above from St. Peter's first Epistle shows clearly that the Word means the preached message of the Gospel. This meaning of course is closely linked with that secondary meaning in accordance with which we speak of the Scriptures as "the Word of God." For they are the record and interpretation of God's message which He gave first 'unto the fathers in the prophets,' and more completely 'in His Son' and in His apostles. It is for this reason that the second paper tomorrow morning, when we shall consider the content of the Gospel or Evangel, is entitled "God's written word."

If then the Church is the product of the Gospel, it follows that the view which gives to the Church an authority that is superior to that of the Word is based on a fallacy. Just because the writers of the New Testament were members of the Christian Church, it has been argued that the Church produced the Bible. But the Doctrinal Commission's Report (on page 113) rightly exposes that fallacy when it says that "the Gospel contained in Scripture is in no sense the work of the Church, though of necessity it rested with the Church to decide what writings authentically contain it." St. John the Divine did not write as the spokesman of the Church: he was commissioned of God to write "what the Spirit saith to the churches."

And there is a practical corollary to this first proposition, that the Church is the product of the Gospel, which is all-important to-day as always. It is that the Gospel is needed in the Church both for the unconverted and for the faithful, that is both unto justification and unto sanctification. I must take these two needs in turn.

First, the Gospel needs to be preached to the unconverted people in the Church. One of the greatest hindrances to the spread of Christ's Kingdom on earth is the inconsistency of professing Christians. God knows how greatly each of us offends, and how far we come short of real saintliness: but we are to a large measure conscious of our failure, and repent of it. There is a multitude, however, of baptised and even confirmed members of the Church who are not sorry for their inconsistency: they are not aware of it, or they have no desire to be like Christ, just because they have never really known Him. As Dr. J. H. Oldham has put it, "All existing Churches are in greater or less degree mixed bodies. They cannot exclude from membership those who are in need of instruction, education, help and healing. There is an inescapable tension between the holiness of the Church and the universality of its mission and ministry. The Church has an actual existence in history, and is real only in its actual historical embodiments. But we cannot attribute to these mixed bodies the characteristics of the true Church of Christ, or expect from them in their corporate capacity the action which can rightly be demanded from those who have committed themselves whole-heartedly to Christian discipleship. . . . Within the Church as an organised society the true Church has to be continually re-created, and to find new embodiment in the faith and obedience and devotion of those who hear and respond to the voice of Christ." And for this continued re-creation there is only one

power, the power of the Spirit through the Word. Therefore, brethren, we will preach the Gospel frankly and deliberately in our churches that men and women, and children too, may be converted to God.

And secondly the Gospel needs to be preached to the faithful in the Church. For it is the good tidings of the grace of God which is received by faith, the grace that makes forgiveness possible and the faith that makes it actual. And both ultimately are God's gift. As the new Archbishop of Canterbury has expressed it, "All is of God; the only thing of my very own which I can contribute to my own redemption is the sin from which I need to be redeemed." Our Reformers were right in giving such prominence in the Articles to Justification by Faith, for it is the basic doctrine of man's salvation. And I believe that much of the flabbiness and ineffectiveness of our so-called Evangelical preaching to-day can be traced to the lack of the understanding and experience of that truth which was the dynamic of the message of Wesley, and Luther and St. Paul. Only in the knowledge of God's free, generous love, shown in the cross of Jesus Christ,—love so utterly undeserved and unimagined—and in the assurance of forgiveness that comes with it, can the soul of man enter into that full, spontaneous relationship with God, which St. Paul calls "the liberty of the sons of God." Henceforth his life is one glad response of gratitude to the Lord who has won his heart's devotion. It is a life of faith, "from faith unto faith," for sanctification as for justification. And heart's devotion needs to be fed with the message of the grace of God.

This leads us directly to the second proposition.

(2) *That the Church is the trustee of the Gospel*—and that in both senses in which Timothy was charged to 'guard the deposit,' and to 'do the work of an evangelist.' Everyone who knows in experience that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" must realise that he cannot keep it to himself, but that like St. Paul he is a debtor, both to the cultured and the ignorant pagans around him. For we have to face the fact that conditions in the so-called Christian countries are now closely akin to those in the mission field. Shall we regard this fact as a ground for feeble self-excuse and a defeatist attitude, and not rather as a challenge and a stimulus, as our fathers did in the early days of the Evangelical Revival? Here is the Church's opportunity: but it can only be met with their single-hearted loyalty to Christ, and their passion for souls.

Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,

Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings,

Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,

Sadly contented in a show of things:—

Then with a rush the intolerable craving

Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call,

Oh to save these! to perish for their saving,

Die for their life, be offered for them all! (F. W. H. Myers).

"Yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."

Tomorrow morning we pass on to consider the nature of that Gospel. Here I anticipate only to say that we shall agree, I know, that it must be a full Gospel, a Scriptural Gospel, and a relevant Gospel—

a *full* Gospel because nothing less will satisfy,—‘the whole counsel of God,’ not a repetition of trite shibboleths worn thin, but the full message of God as Father, Saviour and living Spirit ;

a *Scriptural* Gospel, because that alone will carry conviction of truth and form an integrated and balanced whole, with the New Testament firmly based on the Old, and the Epistles properly related to the Gospels,—and (may I hope) Scriptural, not merely because it quotes proof texts but in the profounder sense that it observes those proportions which reverent scholarship has brought to our understanding of the Bible ;

and a *relevant* Gospel, that applies to the kind of predicament in which men find themselves to-day, and thereby meets their real needs.

And here let us remember that a considerable part of men’s felt needs to-day is focussed in their life as members of a community, and they are asking what the Church has to say about that. This is where the Bishop of Chelmsford’s subject tomorrow on the Regeneration of Society fills an important role. We do not want the so-called ‘social Gospel,’ but we do need a Gospel for society, as well as for the individual.

So much in our organised Church life seems archaic and irrelevant to modern thought. The clergy themselves often appear to live a life apart, and so the impression deepens that religion is just a hobby for those who like it. This tendency further underlines the necessity for lay evangelism, which is already patent in the fact that the work has far outdistanced the capacity of the clergy. By lay evangelism I do not mean only the co-operation of trained lay workers or of ecclesiastically-minded laymen, though there is a place for both : but I mean the sharing of this great responsibility by the men and women who are carrying on the ordinary affairs of life in home and school, in office and factory. We can find illustrations of this Christian witness to-day in the Services. And here I should like to pay a special tribute to some members of the “Oxford Group Movement,” who as I know from personal testimony are setting a fine example of lay evangelism in the fighting forces. It is extraordinary that the rise of a new Movement should be required to emphasise a truth that was clear to the early Church, that as the gift of the Spirit was for all its members, so also was the privilege of witness. One reason why this truth has been forgotten is that the clergy have failed to teach the third and last proposition, namely,

(3) *That the Church is part of the Gospel.* This I believe to be true in two senses.

(a) first, because it is an object of faith, not a human device, but God’s gift to the world. That is why we recite in the Creed, “I believe in the holy Catholic Church.” In other words, as the Doctrinal Commission’s Report says “the Church is for Christians an object not only of sight, but of spiritual discernment and insight. It emerges in history, but it is essentially a Fellowship, constituted by a relation between God and Man, which in the last resort must be discerned and apprehended by faith . . . it is bound up with that Gospel entrusted to it in such a sense that to accept the Gospel in its fulness must involve membership in that Community, so that the Church is part of its own creed.”

This view is not perhaps widely recognised or taught by Evangelical Churchmen, but I believe that it is essentially true. We are saved as individuals, but we are saved into the fellowship of the redeemed society. And this is to be part of our message. "We preach not ourselves," writes St. Paul to the Corinthians, "but Christ Jesus as Lord." But he adds at once "and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." Yes, Christ is the centre of our message, but we are involved in it, because we are His Body, carrying on His work in the world. This is a truth that is needed to-day in a world in which rival views of community life are contending for the mastery. The Tambaram Conference demonstrated undeniably that the Christian Church is an international society overcoming all barriers of race and colour, of class and sex. To the founding and building up of these young churches Evangelicals have contributed so much in the past. Shall we fail to learn the lesson of their maturer development? In that case we shall only have ourselves to blame, if men regard us as good pioneers, but poor consolidators, able to evangelise but not to edify.

(b) and the Church is part of the Gospel, because the Christian message is truth through personality. That is the meaning of the Incarnation. "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." We are experiments as well as exponents of the Gospel, and our lives often speak louder than our lips. Like St. Paul we have sometimes to bid men be imitators not only of God, but of us. This is our truly "awful" responsibility. What manner of men ought we to be!

Here is the point at which the last division of our subject at this Conference becomes relevant and urgent. The question of Reunion has always been one of the main interests of the Conference of Evangelical Churchmen since the days of its inception at Cheltenham. But it has not for that reason been dragged in to our present programme. It is vital to the Church's God-given commission to evangelise. In His wonderful High-priestly prayer for the Church our Lord prayed that they all might be one, that the world might believe. And unity, like charity, should begin at home. Recently there has been a good deal of correspondence in the 'Record' on the question of unity among Evangelicals, and the first paper at tomorrow night's session will be devoted to this most important matter. Our "present unhappy divisions" are, I believe, nothing less than a device of the devil, to prevent us from doing the work to which our Master has called us. But Evangelism is also the practical remedy for disunion. Hence Reunion can be regarded as a Fruit of Evangelism. As the experience of the Churches on the Continent has reminded us in recent years, it is when we stand together against the attacks of the common foe that we find that we are brothers in arms. Yet we must not forget that unity cannot be manufactured by men. As Dr. Visser T'hooft wrote in his book on the Church, in preparation for the World Conference on Church, Community and State, held in Oxford in 1937, "It is with unity as with all the gifts of God: we can prepare for it, we can pray for it, we can watch for it, but we cannot bring it into being."

Neither can we command the day of spiritual awakening, or fix the date of revival. Elijah could not command the fire from heaven on Mount Carmel. But like him we can prepare for its coming.

Elijah called the people to the mountain of decision, and we can make clear the moral and spiritual issues that face our people to-day. Elijah built again the altar of Jehovah that was fallen down, and laid the wood in order and the bullock for sacrifice. We too can set the Lord always before us and renew the consecration of our whole lives to Him. We also can wait upon God and pray for the fire from heaven, even as Elijah at the time of the evening sacrifice lifted up his voice and prayed "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou, Lord, art God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again." Then the fire of the Lord fell.

The Failure of Humanism

THE REV. J. P. THORNTON-DUESBERY, M.A.

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THOSE who are about to sit for examinations frequently receive some such counsel as this: "In a certain type of question, before you really begin the discussion, make sure that you have so defined the terms in which the question is set that both you and the examiner will really know what you are talking about. An adequate definition of terms is often the accomplishment of half your task."

To discuss the 'failure of humanism' is to attempt an answer to a question of precisely this type, and, at least for the clarification of my own mind, if no one else's, it will be well if I begin by practising what I have so often preached to others, namely by attempting some definition of 'Humanism' from which it will be possible to advance to an examination of the origins and history of Humanism as an intellectual and spiritual force, to probe the nature and causes of its failure, and so, I hope, to prepare in some measure for the lines of constructive action with which as Christian evangelists we are concerned. For 'humanism' is a protean monster, and it is all-important to decide with which of its changing shapes we are dealing here.

The Oxford English Dictionary provides four such definitions or explanations of the term, and these (or rather the third and fourth of them combined) will come near to giving us what we want, though we may, in passing, slightly regret the fact that 'H' comes early in the alphabet and consequently that particular volume of the Dictionary is already fairly old. The term has not remained wholly static in the last forty years, and the inclusion of modern instances of its use (since the rise of Barthianism, for example) would have been of real value.

The first Dictionary definition (of 'Humanism' with a capital 'H') is "belief in the mere Humanity of Christ." Somewhat fortunately, in the interests of clarity, this use of the term as equivalent to Psilanthropism never became common, and is now obsolete. It is not primarily with Christology but rather with the Christian Doctrine of Man that the explorer of Humanism has to do, though again we may observe in passing that even this obsolete use of the term is not without significance for us. Nestorianism and Pelagianism are justly linked

together in a celebrated epigram and inadequate ideas alike of the Person of Christ and of the nature of Man will always react upon and encourage each other.

Secondly, humanism is described as "the character or quality of being human; devotion to human interests." This is of no importance for our present purpose. We pass to the third and fourth descriptions,—with which, in combination, we are really concerned. "Humanism," says the O.E.D., "3. Any system of thought or action which is concerned with merely human interests (as distinguished from divine) . . . the 'Religion of Humanity.'" And again: "4. Devotion to those studies which promote human culture; literary culture: especially the system of the Humanists. The study of the Roman and Greek classics, which came into vogue at the Renaissance." In these extracts we have alike the essential description of humanism as an intellectual force, with which theology must reckon, and a clear indication of its origin and history.

For, reduced to its plainest terms, the 'humanism' whose failure we are here considering is a system or better (since it is not really systematic) a *mode* or *tendency* of thought to make man and his achievements alike the centre of all interest and the criterion by which to judge both the truth of ideas and the value of material things. It is, in fact, dressed up in garb of modern science, the old sophistic position with which Socrates and Plato had to deal—"man is the measure of all things." "Glory to Man in the highest! For Man is the master of things."

Socrates and Plato, alike in destructive dialectic and in constructive exposition of the Idea of the Good, gave short shrift to this humanist conception, and it finds no place in the New Testament. The teaching of Jesus Christ, and above all the fact of the Incarnation itself, did indeed give to human personality a wholly new value which Christians in all ages will neglect to their peril. "In my Baptism I was made . . . *the child of God.*" "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." But the love and care of Jesus Christ are love and care for *all men*, not for the concept of Universal Man; not for the abstractions of a "Religion of Humanity," but for each and all of the individual, personal victims of disease and sin whom He met and healed in the hot unhealthy towns of Gennesaret and along the dusty roads of Judæa. It was the utter dependence of a little child which formed the essential qualification for those who would see the Kingdom of God.

Constantly suspected, often outlawed and violently persecuted, the Christians of the first three centuries were not likely to depart far from their sense of human dependence upon God, and neither the influence of Greek philosophy upon Christian doctrine nor that of the conversion of Constantine upon Christian security made any great difference in this respect. In the ensuing Dark Ages, neither the inhabitants of the Empire, harried by barbarian fire and sword, nor the simple primitive barbarians themselves were likely to set up Man as the equal and supplanter of God. It was only as modern Europe began to take shape in the days of the Schoolmen, and Aristotelian influences made themselves felt in Western lands, that the humanist spirit may be said to have been reborn in Christian circles.

Even the Renaissance itself, however, though often and rightly

described as the starting-point of Humanism, was of a very different spirit from the 19th Century. For the spirit of the Renaissance is that of a boy becoming conscious for the first time of his own strength and capacities, and from such a boy we do not expect the mature ripeness of experienced judgment. A certain carelessness, a certain unselfconscious concentration upon self,—these may well be regarded as natural, almost inevitable stages of growth. The right kind of experience, rightly interpreted and used, will soon supply the necessary correction to this youthful exuberance. It is a very different matter when a man of later middle-age displays similar tendencies. What was excusable and even attractive in youth, becomes repellent in later life. There is a whole world of difference between the Humanism of the Renaissance (to which after all, we owe the thought of Erasmus, Colet, and More) and the intellectual climate of Voltaire, the Encyclopaedists, and "the Religion of Humanity." When we speak of "the failure of Humanism" it is of this latter spirit and its 19th century development that we must think.

That "human wisdom has failed" will be generally admitted in this country to-day even by those who are not as yet prepared to put it in St. Paul's theistic form "The world in its wisdom knew not God." But this was by no means the attitude of the 19th century, and it will be well to examine Victorian humanism a good deal more closely, since it is our business as Christians not merely to recognise the failure of Man but to proclaim the victory of God,—and that in such terms that our contemporaries may accept for themselves the freely offered fruits of that Divine Victory and use them, or be used by them, for the re-building of the New World. For this, it is of great value to realise where and why our grandfathers went wrong,—not for the pleasure of crowing over their failures (for we ourselves are no 'wiser' than they), but in order that we may not merely avoid their mistakes, but see and follow up the constructive lines of action which the study of history may suggest.

The French Revolution and the (largely abortive) revolutionary movements of 1848 were the natural product of the century of 'Enlightenment' and the Romantic Movement applied experimentally to the political and social structure of Western Europe. The large measure of superficial overlapping between "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality" on the one hand and the Christian principle of love on the other, obscured the radical differences between the Revolutionary-Romantic and the Christian presuppositions. For the Christian, love of one's neighbour is the fruit of the primary love of God for man and of man for God. Neither the Enlightenment nor the Romantic Movement saw any such necessary connection. 18th Century Deism had prepared the way by the removal of its transcendent God from the immediate arena of ordinary life. The Revolution decided to do without Him altogether. Man was to be the centre of everything, and good neighbourliness would be the fruit of the new enlightened education.

Nor were the apostles of this mode of thought disheartened by their early failures, though we, looking back on the last hundred and fifty years, may perceive much more than mere accident in the fact that "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" soon gave place to anarchy and the Terror, followed in equally inevitable sequence by the "whiff

of grapeshot" and the autocracy of Napoleon. Similarly, the revolutionary movement of '48 was soon succeeded in Germany by the rapid expansion of Bismarck's Prussia and in France by the Empire of Napoleon III, whose fall made way only for the uneasy Republic, with its constant rise and fall of Governments from 1871 till its destruction two years ago. There is deep significance in the instability of political structures based only upon Humanist foundations.

The failure of the Revolutionary-Romantic idealism was due to its defective doctrine of Man, to its refusal to recognise those stark and terrible facts which Christian theology expresses in its teaching of Original Sin. This refusal to face the real corruption of human nature exposed the humanistic idealists to a political disintegration from which Germany and France alike were rescued (if rescue it may be called) only at the price of submission to an authoritarian régime. If England has hitherto escaped more lightly, it has been in a large measure due to the strength of the Puritan tradition of the Commonwealth; for, in this country, the men who fought for and won Parliamentary freedom were not "enlightened" agnostics, but sternly righteous Ironsides who took the Bible as well as the sword on their campaigns and whose battle-psalms were the expression of the passionate conviction that they fought a Holy War, not primarily for Man, but for God.

Neither the Weimar Republic nor the France of Clémenceau had learned the lessons of these historical events,—which is why Hitler and Laval rule to-day. It is *the* crucial question of the future whether we have really learned the truth (forced home upon us once more by Warsaw and Rotterdam and Hong Kong) that man (even modern, mechanized man) is not an inherently noble and enlightened being, but a fallen creature; whether thinkers and men of action, in sufficient numbers and with adequate conviction, will turn their self-examination to the passions within themselves and recognise the tiger and the ape still lurking in the forests of the mind; whether the contemplation of Nazi or Japanese brutality will rouse within us not the Pharisaic complacency "Thank God, we are not as others are," but the sober recognition of our own personal and national condition: "It *can* happen *here*! There, but for the grace of God, goes England too!"

The watchword of 19th and early 20th century Humanism was Freedom,—but though the *word* is the same, this humanistic freedom is whole worlds removed from that "perfect freedom" which the Christian finds in the service of God. Economically, it expresses itself in the doctrine of "laissez faire"; internationally, in the principle of national self-determination; intellectually, it claimed complete freedom for thought; morally, it was destined to issue logically in free love! Since the vocabulary of the Christian and the Humanist is so frequently the same, it is necessary at every point to differentiate as sharply as may be between their basic pre-suppositions.

Thus "laissez faire," being fortunately freed from the necessity of considering such details as Original Sin, could give first employer and then employee untrammelled freedom to consider first his own interests, and could even hoodwink itself into the delightful belief that if everyone considered first his own personal profit, that must lead

inevitably to the greatest possible profit for all. We are learning now, and shall learn still more bitterly in the future, how hardly the profit-motive, once established, dies.

Internationally, the unrestricted pursuit of national self-determination has been among the major causes of the present war. It left us, after Versailles, with a Europe already falling into disintegration, with a host of small weak states whose helplessness presented an appalling and overmastering temptation to an aggressor. The organisation of the League of Nations was an attempt both to have the cake and to eat it,—to enjoy national self-determination without paying the price. But the root cause of the failure of the League was its assumption that unchanged, unredeemed human nature would behave in nations according to the pattern of the highest personal virtues of the saints. Since the standards of large bodies of men are almost always lower than those of at least the better individuals composing them, this was in any case a dangerous assumption. Had Christian theologians of adequate experience and insight been consulted, they might well have pointed out that nations, whether small or great, were not likely by some mysterious miracle to escape the virus of that avarice against which even the redeemed individual is called to constant battle.

But here we reach what is for us the most important aspect of the whole question, and one from which, in this historical survey, I may seem to have rambled far. The Christian Church of 1919, even if it had been officially consulted about the Treaty of Versailles, would have been wholly incapable of giving adequate counsel, since it was itself so deeply imbued with the very Humanism against which it must fight. Even the events of 1914-18 had not been sufficient to do more than trouble superficially the placid waters of complacent Gradualism,—indeed some (with what truth I do not propose here to ask) might even say that the pre-occupation with "Life and Liberty" characteristic of the Church's life at the close of the Four Years' War, well-intentioned and idealistic though it unquestionably was, was itself a classic example of the Humanist spirit in action,—the belief that problems can be settled by improved organisation and more adequate knowledge without the radical change wrought by the Eternal Gospel in the human heart.

It is, indeed, long—lamentably long,—since the Church of England was able to speak upon any topic with one clear voice—and this, alike in matters of Faith, of Order, and of Common Morality, is the fruit of the humanist claim to intellectual freedom which in practice (whatever it may say in theory) sets Man up as judge over God, His Word, and His Church.

That there is a sacred duty to protest against error, we as Evangelicals and heirs of the Reformation are solemnly bound to maintain. But it is itself a lamentable error to confuse that sacred duty of protest with the claim that every Christian is wholly 'free' to decide his beliefs and his practices for himself. And this is the error into which at the floodtide of Victorian progress, the Church unhappily fell, as may be seen both in Ritschlian Christology and the *Leben-Jesu* movement, and in the breakdown of any pretence at uniformity in public worship. We must not, indeed, be over-harsh in our judgment

upon the failures of that age, even though it is we who are largely reaping their fruits in the moral rot which is visibly attacking society to-day.

In the third quarter of the last century, it was natural enough to suppose that history was really on the march for the millennium,—natural, that is, for anyone who has forgotten (as men did forget) that the new Jerusalem is not attained by any human marching at all, but descends direct from God. We who, with far less excuse, equally ignored the facts of human nature in the easy optimism of 1919, should be the last to *blame* our grandfathers, whose eyes were dazzled by the glories of the Great Exhibition and the glowing dawn of Victorian science.

Facts, however, remain facts, and the trouble is that the Church was so carried away on the swift current of scientific optimism that it lost the greater part of its power to direct the set of national thought. For in that age the old Absolutes of the Word of God had largely disappeared, and their place had been taken by a relativity whose main standard was that of increased material comfort.

Further (and here we as Evangelicals will see one of the most serious features in the whole process), the humanist claim to freedom stretched out its hands to embrace the Bible in its all-absorbing grasp. Here again, we must be on our guard against too easily blaming the first exponents of modern 'criticism.' Whether we accept their more radical conclusions or not, we need not accuse them of irreverence or impiety merely because we happen in greater or less measure to disagree with them. Christians have no cause to fear anything in any genuinely scientific search for truth, and truth itself has certainly nothing to fear from such an enquiry. I am in no way here concerned to discuss either the conclusions or the hypotheses of modern scholars ; but I *am* concerned to suggest that it was a very serious defect in much of the earlier work (a defect still to some extent present to-day) that so many scholars did in fact approach the Bible from the essentially humanist position that *they* sat in judgment upon *it*, not *it* upon *them*. Many of them would no doubt have strongly denied that this was so, and indeed their error was largely unconscious ; but for that very reason it is all the more important for us to expose it ruthlessly to the light. For it is never enough for Christians to diagnose a disease ; our business is with cure ; and if we are to overcome the failure of humanism in the past, it is (I submit) absolutely essential that we should make a clean, conscious break with the humanist approach to the Bible which has insinuated itself into the work of so many scholars even down to the present day.

That does not mean that the work even of the most radical critics must be thrown aside without further ceremony or examination ; much that has been put forward will, I believe, stand the test of such scrutiny ; much more, even if ultimately untenable in its present form, will provide starting-points and stimuli for further study yielding the most valuable fruit. But the essential thing is the *attitude* with which the scholar approaches this task,—whether he will sit in judgment on the Word of God, or It on him. Here, between Christian and Humanist, a great gulf is fixed.

This is of special importance in view of the final point which I wish to make, and which is concerned with the nature of Authority. Ultimately, Humanism spells disintegration. That is inevitable in view of its basic assumption that man (by which the humanist finally means personal predilection) is the measure of all things. We are witnessing the breakdown of humanist economics to-day; 'laissez faire' is dead. We may shed a tear for some of the virtues which it incidentally engendered, but there is universal recognition that in some shape or other a 'planned economy' is essential. We are witnessing, too, the breakdown of the humanist international system; a horde of small sovereign states, walled off from one another by tariff barriers and mutual resentments, is a peril which the world will not again be prepared to tolerate.

But we are witnessing, too, the disintegrating effects of humanism upon the moral and spiritual life of individual and nation alike. Black Markets, juvenile crime, lengthening divorce lists and the like are all the outcome of the relativity in morals which Humanism breeds. They are, of course, enormously aggravated by that other Humanist assumption,—the old Pelagian one,—that each man can be not only the Adam, but also the Redeemer, of his own soul.

As the realisation that Humanism has failed spreads across the world, men are turning desperately to one "super-human" remedy after another. The power of National Socialism and Communism alike rests upon the fact that they do in a sense provide such a "super-human" Authority as disillusioned human nature craves. Having drunk the heady wine of humanist freedom (falsely so called) down to the bitter dregs of unemployment, war, and moral rot, men are searching for some more satisfying draught, and in the mood of reaction they turn to the potion of Authoritarianism. That has happened in Germany; it has happened to some extent in France; it might easily happen here in England. But the authority of the ideologies is as false as the perverted freedom which it replaces. Humanism made Man the Equal of God. Totalitarianism reduces him to the level of a cog in a machine. But men are neither gods nor machines. Weak, fallen, sinful,—they yet have not lost the whole image of God from their nature; by His grace, they are capable of the service which is most free when it is most enslaved to Him. To the failure of Humanism we must bring the victory of God; to the broken-down relativities of humanist morals the Absolute Standard of Jesus Christ: to the hopeless defeat of man's attempt to lift himself by his own efforts above his sin and shame, the Gospel of God's Forgiveness and God's Power,—the Cross, the Resurrection, Pentecost.

But it must be the Gospel preached with Authority,—no secondhand interpretation of the scribes. We are sent as physicians and surgeons to God's people in a day when they are sorely sick; we have to decide once for all, whether they can be lightly healed with good advice, or whether redemption means the drastic cure of a major operation. We are sent to bring tidings in a day of perplexity. We have to decide, once for all, whether the message that we bring is the word of man or the Word of God. Humanism has failed. History will judge whether we Evangelicals of this day of crisis have been able to succeed out of the overflowing of God's action in our own lives.

What is the Evangel?

The Miracle of God's Grace

ALBERT MITCHELL, ESQ.

I.

THE question put to us is *What is the Evangel*; and the answer suggested is *The Miracle of God's Grace*.

What do we mean when we speak of God; and Whom do we mean when we name Him as God? The two questions are quite different.

What do we mean when we speak of God? We are not thinking of a far-off First Cause: of a remote impersonal Origin of Being: of an ultimate Destiny to which the cycle of things visible and invisible is inexorably tending. Still less do we think of an Immensity which sums up and includes all life and motion in a Pantheist envelopment. We mean a Personal Being of Infinite and Absolute Righteousness, with whom the individual soul is able to come into personal contact and fellowship: the great One who is at the same time Transcendent and Immanent—summing up alike the Semitic and Aryan conceptions of Deity—God over all and God all-pervading: the God that made the world and all things therein, and in whom we live and move and have our being; as St. Paul told the Athenian philosophers.

But before we can consider the Grace of God, we have a second question to answer: *Whom* do we mean when we speak of God. That is a more difficult question. Perhaps the readiest reply that would commend itself to us might be—We mean the God and Father of our Lord JESUS Christ. But are we sure that this would be the right answer? Some weeks back a divine of another school or group of thought than that to which most of us here belong, writing in a Church newspaper, asserted roundly that the bulk of members of the Church of England were either Arians or Tritheists. The gibe is unjust: but it touches us near enough to the quick to hurt. It must be admitted that overmuch of the theology of popular hymns and religious talk gives point to the gibe; and the practical disuse in our worship of the wonderful commentary upon the simpler creed of our baptism that we once (no doubt in defiance of strict historical accuracy) used to associate with the name of Athanasius and regard (as our Articles regard it) as a third Creed has ministered to the trend to a limited conception of the Godhead. So I venture to say that when we speak of God, without further definition, and particularly when we are about to turn our thoughts to the conception of God's grace, we mean the Holy and Blessed Trinity, One in Three, and Three in One, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Yet always in the expression of our Trinitarian faith we are careful to preserve strict Monotheism, regardful of the old rule *Omnia opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*.

II.

What do we mean by *grace*? The word so translated in the New Testament is χάρις. As used in the LXX it may not be pressed to mean more than beauty, gracefulness, loving kindness, goodwill; and those meanings go over into the New Testament. But Dr. Alexander Stewart writes "The special use, however, of χάρις in the New Testament is in reference to the mind of God as manifested towards sinners, His redemptive mercy, whereby he grants pardon to offences, and bids those who have gone astray return and accept His gift of salvation and everlasting life." And again, "the great work of grace is redemption, which has its origin in God (1 John iv. 10-19), in His eternal good pleasure (εὐδοκία) Eph. i. 3-6, and is carried out by His will and power. Therefore . . . the Christian revelation is called 'the grace of God,' 'the grace of God our Saviour,' 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' or simply 'grace'."

E. A. Litton (*Dogmatic Theology*, p. 149) says "Grace, in Scripture, means free favour, or free aid, to the fallen: the term is inapplicable to Adam's state before the fall. The work and the result of regenerating grace must be considered as of another and a higher quality than that of original righteousness: it is more than a mere restitution." With this agrees C. Neil (in *Protestant Dictionary*): he defines grace first as "God's free, sovereign, undeserved favour or love to man when in his state of sin and misery by reason of the fall": this he chiefly relates to the purposes of God the Father. Second, he relates it to "grace as manifested in the provision made by God for man's salvation" (Titus ii. 11): this he refers to the work of God the Son. Third, he says it is "used for grace as manifested in the application of the plan of salvation, viz. the grace enabling the sinner to embrace the means provided for his recovery and restoration": this he regards as the influence of God the Holy Spirit. And he points out "purpose and grace" are joined together when tracing redemptive privileges to their source in 2 Tim. i. 9.

May we not here recall St. Paul's words Rom. v. "For if by the trespass of the one the many died much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ, abound unto the many": and also "the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness": and he speaks of "this grace wherein we stand" and again of "the free gift" which elsewhere he defines as "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

So then by "grace" we mean the spontaneous, free, unmerited loving kindness and goodwill of God towards us "While we were yet sinners."

III.

What do we mean by *miracle*? Archbishop J. H. Bernard quotes with approval Thomas Aquinas: "A miracle is contrary to the order of all created nature: seeing therefore, that God alone is not a thing created he also alone is able to perform miracles by his own peculiar virtue." And Bernard adds, for himself, "It is important to observe that the very idea of a miracle, in this view, presupposes the existence of a supreme spiritual agent." Bernard, after stating that "The

possibility of miracle involves the existence of God; it does not at once follow that the converse is true, and that the existence of God implies the possibility of miracle" goes on to deal with the argument of Spinoza and the view that a miracle is an intervention which can only be demanded by an imperfection in the existing order and so is inconsistent with the perfection of God's creation; pointing out that this world is not the best of all possible worlds. "At some remote epoch in man's history, his progress was violently interrupted . . . as things are man has not fulfilled the Divine intention for him." Then in a sequence of thought that harmonises with our definition of grace he adds "From the consequences of his sin, he cannot be saved by the mere normal operations of natural law, by the orderly development of his own nature. That redemption can be brought about only by an act of Divine mercy, which may involve—which perhaps necessitates—a perturbation of the established order. But the real marvel is not the intervention of grace, but the sin which demanded it. For sin is ἀνομία, lawlessness, (1 Jn. iii. 4); it is a violation of moral law, which may be—and we can see reasons which suggest that it is—a far greater anomaly than any apparent violation of physical law could possibly be. There is an incongruity which we cannot reconcile between our conceptions of an All-Wise and All-Good God and the existence of sin; but that incongruity being frankly recognised, there is no further difficulty in conceiving of God as intervening, in an exceptional way, at an exceptional moment, to save man from the consequences of his own rash acts." Bernard goes on to point out, on an objection to the use of the word "intervention," as suggesting imperfect workmanship or foresight on the part of the Creator, that "one who upholds 'all things by the word of His power' cannot be spoken of as *intruding* either in nature or in grace": therefore the word "intervention" best expresses "a special and extraordinary manifestation of purpose on the part of Him who is ever immanent in nature," . . . "at certain critical moments in the history of the human race the uniformity of His rule has been departed from 'lest one good custom should corrupt the world.'"

So then by *miracle* we mean the deliberate intervention of our personal God, the great One in Three, in the affairs of life to correct some evil that has resulted from the condition of ἀνομία (lawlessness), due to the wrongful dealings of man.

IV.

What then is the miracle of God's grace which constitutes the Evangel? Here I am irresistibly reminded of a verse of an old hymn that I have not heard sung for more than fifty years

He saw me ruined in the Fall,
Yet loved me, notwithstanding all,
He saved me from my lost estate,
His loving-kindness, Oh how great!

Archbishop William Temple—and how glad we are to welcome a recognised theologian to the Primacy of all England—in his valuable *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, accepts the view that the sixteenth

verse of the third chapter is part of our Lord's own words, and not (as Westcott suggests) the evangelist's comment. He writes "So we come to the central declaration, more central for Christian faith than even *The Word became flesh*; for that depends for its inexhaustible wealth of meaning on the actual mode of the Incarnate Life. But here is the whole great truth. *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone that believeth on Him may not perish, but have eternal life.* This is the heart of the Gospel. Not "God is Love"—a precious truth, but affirming no divine act for our redemption. *God so loved that He gave*; of course the words indicate the cost to the Father's heart. He gave; it was an act, not only a continuing mood of generosity; it was an act at a particular time and place. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel"—it is not a universally diffused divine essence of which we speak, but the Living God—"for he *hath visited and redeemed His people.*" No object is sufficient for the love of God short of the *world* itself. Christianity is not one more religion of individual salvation, differing from its fellows only in offering a different road to that goal. It is the one and only religion of world-redemption. Of course it includes a way of individual salvation as the words before and after this great saying show. But its scope is wider than that—as wide as the love of God. It is the *sin of the world* that Christ takes away (i. 29)."

It is no accident that our Lord's own deliberate declaration of the redemptive act of the Father and the Son is placed by him in the immediate context of his assertion of the necessary action of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, linked with it by his words "If I told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things."

The redemptive Divine action is stated by St. Paul in 2 Cor. v. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again. Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more. Wherefore if any man is in Christ there is a new creation: the old things are passed away: behold, they are become new. (I heard Arthur Burroughs, the late Bishop of Ripon, translate this "His old environment is passing away: mark you, it has already become new!") But all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were intreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf: that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." With this we may put his words in Colossians (R.V. Marg.) "For the whole fulness of God (pleroma) was pleased to dwell in him, and through him to reconcile all things unto him, having made peace through the blood of His cross." On this latter passage Archbishop Wm. Alexander of Armagh writes "The whole Fulness of the Divinity abode permanently in Him."

But on the former passage Dr. Henry Wace (in *The Sacrifice of Christ*) says "It was God Himself, in Christ, who was bearing the consequences of human sin, rather than inflict those consequences on His creatures. The Atonement of Christ on the Cross is thus essentially an exhibition of Divine Love, not merely, nor so much, in its original intention, as in its execution." And he prefaces "The mystery of the Trinity, involving the mutual action of the Divine Persons within the Godhead, alone makes such a conception possible." Gustaf Aulén, bishop of Strängnäs (in *Christus Victor*) claims that what he terms the classic idea of Atonement (which he contrasts with the Anselmian and Abelardian theories) is that it is from first to last a work of God himself, a continuous divine work : and he says "the work of Atonement is accomplished by God Himself in Christ, yet at the same time the Passive form also is used. God is reconciled with the world (Cf. Art II). The alternation is not accidental. He is reconciled only because He Himself reconciles the world with Himself and Himself with the world." This he asserts to be the view of the early Fathers both in East and in West. God Himself enters into the world of sin and death, that He may reconcile the world to Himself. Therefore Incarnation and Atonement stand in no sort of antithesis ; rather they belong inseparably together.

J. S. Stewart writes (in "*A Man in Christ*") "The two great realities which confronted Paul at the Cross—the condemnation of sin, and the revelation of love—held in their arms a third, the gift of salvation. Not only had Christ by dying disclosed the sinner's guilt, not only had He revealed the Father's love : He had actually taken the sinner's place. And this meant, since 'God was in Christ' that *God* had taken that place ; and he quotes Brunner that the cross "represents an actual objective transaction, in which God actually *does* something, and something which is absolutely necessary." Stewart goes on to say that Paul could never stand in thought before the cross without hearing an inward voice which said "He died instead of me." He points out that those who seek to eliminate the vicarious (Here he clearly means substitutionary) principle do not see that to surrender this is to make an end of the Gospel : "if God in Christ has not borne our sins, there is no good news to preach" : and he adds "the essential correlative of the substitutionary idea is that "*God was in Christ*" : many critics of the idea have forgotten this." But, as Stewart also sees, the thought of Christ as our substitute goes hand in hand with the thought of Christ as our representative—"One died for all, therefore all died" ; this is more the aspect on which Westcott loved to dwell : the unity of humanity in Christ. But this is secondary to the main theme of our thought. Truly "if God in Christ has not borne our sins, there is no good news to preach." But God in Christ *has* borne our sins : this is the miracle of God's grace : this is the Evangel. And "all things are of God."

In the Cross of Christ I glory ;
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
 All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its Head sublime.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

What Is the Evangel?

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER

WHEN St. Paul (1 Cor. i. 21) speaks of the foolishness of "The Preaching" which saves believers, he uses a Greek word (*κήρυγμα*) which signifies the content of a message rather than the persuasive eloquence of an orator. Professor C. H. Dodd of Cambridge (in his lectures on *The Apostolic Preaching*) holds that, in the New Testament, a clear distinction is drawn between Preaching on the one hand, and Teaching or Exhorting on the other. Preaching (as also the usual verbs, *καταγγέλλω* or *εὐαγγελίζω* show) is the proclamation or announcement of a town crier, or a herald, calling attention to some definite piece of news. The Gospel, therefore, (which means "good-tidings") may be said to be the special content of Preaching.

Thus, the Gospel is the word employed in the Septuagint to describe "good news from the battle-field," and is so used in II Samuel iv. 10, where David speaks of the messenger who came with the news of the death of Saul, as "thinking to have brought good tidings." Later, in the days of the Exile, the word Gospel acquired a technical meaning—namely, the announcement of deliverance from captivity. It is so used twice over in Isaiah. The one place is Isaiah lii. 7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth the Gospel, that publisheth peace, that bringeth the Gospel of good, that publisheth salvation"—a passage quoted by St. Paul (Romans x. 15) in mourning the refusal of his fellow-countrymen to hearken to the Gospel of the Messiah. The other place is in Isaiah lxi. 1, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach the Gospel"; the content of which is then defined as "to proclaim liberty to captives"—a passage claimed by our Lord, in the synagogue of Nazareth (Luke iv. 18), as fulfilled by Himself. In both instances the Gospel is the good-tidings of something that has happened—namely a deliverance, which is proclaimed publicly by a messenger or herald.

Now St. Matthew in chap. iv. 23; and again in identical language in chap. ix. 35, describes our Lord's mission as three-fold in its scope—teaching, preaching the Gospel, and healing. It seems indeed as if the Evangelist is here quoting a familiar and early catechism for catechumens. St. Luke also (xx. 1), makes the same distinction between our Lord's *teaching* the people," and His "*preaching* the Gospel"; and so does St. Mark in the first chapter of his Gospel (vv. 14 and 21). When, therefore in St. Mark's Gospel (which describes itself as "the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ") our Lord no less than four times (i. 15; viii. 35; x. 29; xiii. 10) refers to His revelation of God as "The Gospel," we are to understand by the term, the announcement of something that has happened which is good-news for the hearers. He means more than a teaching about God, or a sermon on the good life. *What then is the Gospel, which is the content of the preaching, first by Christ, and then of the*

Apostles? What is it that necessity lays upon the ministers of the Gospel to preach, or woe betide them? (1 Cor : ix. 16). Several answers have been given ; and the question "What is the Gospel?" is often taken as synonymous with the question "What is the *Summum Bonum* which Christ proclaimed?"

(1). *Some say it is the Kingdom of God.* "Jesus went about preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom"; thus St. Matthew, whose Gospel might be called "The Gospel of the Kingdom." The Kingdom of God is a conception that is popular with Christian Humanists. They hold that the proclamation of a New Order is equivalent to preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom ; and advertise Social Gospel Campaigns as "the new evangelistic technique."

But Scriptural evidence is against such a view.

1. First, the Kingdom of God is decribed in the New Testament as at once a present possession, and also a future event.

2. Combining these two conceptions, the Kingdom is declared by Christ to be God's righteousness ; and not a matter of food, and drink, and clothing (Matt. vi. 31, 33).

3. The Lord's Prayer, therefore, defines the coming of God's Kingdom as the doing of God's will. This definition is entirely in accord with the idea of the Kingdom in the Old Testament, where the Kingdom is equivalent to the Rule of God. Just as the Scribes of our Lord's day gave to the Kingdom of the Psalmists and Prophets a national and spatial interpretation, which expected the Messiah as an earthly king ; so, Christian Humanists to-day confuse a Christian Society where God rules, with bricks and mortar and political ideologies.

4. The conception of the Kingdom of God, both in the Old and New Testaments, is intensely personal. It is equivalent to God Himself as Ruler and His personal claim upon the wills of His creatures. The Rule of God must certainly affect not only the behaviour of God's children but also their outward environment. But if we examine the schemes of proposed New Orders we find they are concerned with housing, hygiene, and education ; with everything in fact, except with God. That can never be the Kingdom of God where God is not the be all and end all of the whole process, however admirable the social reconstruction may be in other ways.

5. But in any case there is an obvious difference between the conception of the Gospel as being itself the Kingdom, and (what the New Testament calls) the Gospel *of* (or about) the Kingdom. The Kingdom is the personal rule of God ; and our Lord *teaches* the truths of the Kingdom in the sermon on the Mount, and in His parables. But the Gospel of the Kingdom, means good-news that is preached about the Kingdom. Something has happened which is a matter of good tidings ; for it makes a difference to man's relationship to the Kingdom. What, then, is this Gospel? It is that Christ has "opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers."

(2). *Eternal life was the Christian goal* proclaimed by Evangelist to burdened Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress. "Life ! Life ! Eternal Life !" cried Christian as he fled the City of Destruction and ran toward the wicket-gate which opened on the way that led to the Celestial City. Eternal Life is the counter-part in St. John's Gospel to the Kingdom of God set forth in St. Matthew's Gospel ; but empha-

sising its essentially spiritual character. As with the Kingdom of God, it has both a present and a future aspect. The Apostles were bidden to gather, now, harvest fields of souls into Eternal life (John iv. 36). On the other hand our Lord tells us that if we hate our lives in this world we shall guard them unto Eternal Life, hereafter. (John xii. 25). Those who make their Gospel the Kingdom of God regard chiefly its present and earthly connotation. Those who think of the Gospel as Eternal Life are liable to fall in to the opposite error of making "other-worldliness" refer almost exclusively to the next world; instead of seeing that it means an "over-world" which includes *all* life, both here and hereafter, in its spiritual reality. Eternal Life is, simply, to share the Life of God, in contradistinction to possessing human life only. Man has latent within him the possibility of uniting himself with God Who is Life, and thus of acquiring, here on earth, that fulness of life which death cannot touch. With all his supremacy, man may be as mortal as the animals; or with all his frailty he may be as immortal as God. Such is the burden of St. John's Gospel and First Epistle. But the mere fact and possibility of Eternal Life is not the Gospel. In 2 Tim i. 10 St. Paul speaks of "the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, Who *abolished death*, and brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel." That must mean more than that Christ, by preaching the good-tidings of Eternal Life, brought Eternal Life to light. The good-tidings was that a Saviour had abolished death, and so made Eternal Life the gift of God to believers (Rom. vi. 23). In well loved words, the Gospel is that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him, should not perish, but have Eternal Life." (John iii. 16).

(3). *The Scotch Catechism* sees the Vision of God as the chief end of man; and the Bishop of Oxford has expanded the theme in his Bampton Lectures of 1928. According to him the Vision of God as the *Summum Bonum* emerges from the Beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God (Matt. v. 8); and Worship becomes the supreme activity and purpose of life. Once more, the idea of the Vision of God as the Christian ideal regards the Beatific Vision both as of present attainment and also as a glorious prospect. God "shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6). The Vision is for us now. "We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is" (1 John iii. 2). The full reality of the Vision is the rapture of heaven itself. The truth is that the Presence of the Person of Christ among men is the Vision of God, and thus at once the coming of the Kingdom outwardly in the world, and the possession of Eternal Life inwardly in our hearts. And this was the Gospel or Good-tidings of great joy announced by the Angel at the Nativity (Luke ii. 10). But as Dr. Vincent Taylor has pointed out in *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (p. 198 ff.), the conception of the Vision of God as the Christian ideal is incomplete: for it rules out Love as the supreme gift and manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the invariable expression of Love—namely, service for others, is lacking if worship is considered as the sole, or even the chief, end of man. The idea of the Church as the

Worshipping Community with the Vision of God as its *Summum Bonum*, leads to its becoming an esoteric cell in the world of men, with no concern for those outside its sanctuary. The Vision of God as mirrored in His Son is that of a Shepherd, with bleeding hands and feet, going after lost sheep, or that of a warrior fighting to the death against evil. And, though there is exaggeration, there is food for thought in Stevenson's picture of God's eye with careless look passing worshippers by, to rest with approval upon those who do the work of the world.

For those He loves that underprop
 With daily virtues Heaven's top,
 And bear the falling sky with ease
 Unfrowning caryatides.
 Those He approves that ply the trade
 That rock the child, that wed the maid,
 That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
 Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
 And still with laughter, song and shout,
 Spin the great wheel of earth about.

Be that as it may, the Vision of God, though it is presented to us as the quest of faith both in the Bible and in the Life of the Eternal Word, cannot itself be the content of the Good-tidings Christ came to proclaim. That there is a God to be seen by the pure in heart is no news, but a recognised tenet of all religions. The Good-news consists in the amazing assurance that we *may* be pure in heart, and so see God. Like Isaiah, we all realise that there is a God to worship; but, like the prophet again, we are conscious of unclean lips that must be cleansed before they can join in the Trisagion of heaven. Similarly the Good-tidings of the Angel at the Nativity was not simply that the tabernacle of God was with men; but that a Saviour, Christ the Lord, had appeared on earth to give sinners the free right of entrance into the Holy of Holies itself. (cf. Matt. xxvii. 51; Hebrews x. 19 ff.)

I have spent some time in trying to show what the Gospel is not, in order that thereby it may become the more clear what the Gospel actually is. Christ certainly proclaimed the Kingdoms or the Rule of God; but His Gospel, as the 8th of Hebrews sets forth, is that Jeremiah's (xxxii. 31-34) hope was at length fulfilled and man's will can be inclined to keep God's Law.

Christ, too, had the words of Eternal Life, and roused as never before the longing in men's hearts to share the life of God. But His Gospel was that His Atoning Death had effected the union of mortal man with the Eternal Source of all life.

In the same way Christ came to reveal the Father, and in order that in His Face the light of the knowledge of the glory of God might shine in men's hearts. But His Gospel was that minds blinded by sin could be purified to see the Vision of God. In a word, Christ came to *teach* the *Summum Bonum*—call it what you will, the Kingdom of Heaven, Eternal Life, or the Vision of God. But the Gospel which He *preached* or proclaimed was the Good-news that man could now realise the *Summum Bonum* and rise to the Christian ideal—his will

liberated to enter the Kingdom, his heart quickened to receive Eternal Life, his mind purified to see God. Surely, then, the great tragedy of our Church witness in these tremendous times is that it teaches Christianity and exhorts to Christian living, but all too often without the Gospel that makes Christianity possible: a well-meant effort about as cruel as offering a drowning man good advice on how to swim, instead of throwing him a rope.

(4) *To the question, therefore, "What is the Gospel?" the right answer is that of the Church Catechism which it derives directly from the Bible—namely "I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that He hath called me to this state of SALVATION, through Jesus Christ our Saviour."* The Good-tidings of great joy which Christ came to earth to effect and to proclaim, was the Gospel of Salvation.

We cannot be too thankful that recent years have witnessed a return to a Bible Theology. We had got into the way of first forming our own theological conclusions, and then of searching the Bible to find authority for them. Anything and everything can be proved from the Bible by quoting isolated passages. But now we begin by asking, "What saith the Scripture," and then we draw our conclusions from the Bible as a whole. Thus, the Kingdom of Heaven, Eternal Life, and the Vision of God, are all found in the Bible as important aspects of the Gospel message. But the Gospel itself, as preached in the Bible, is summed up in the one word "Salvation." Salvation is indeed the Gospel theme throughout the whole Bible. It begins with the Protevangelium of Genesis, iii., 15, which (in the words of the late Professor R. L. Ottley) "strikes at the outset of *redemptive* history the note of promise and hope." It ends with the Hallelujah Chorus of Revelation (vii. 10.), "Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb."

The idea of Salvation was born from Israel's experience of God and His dealings with them. Jehovah was first and foremost a Deliverer; and His Salvation was indelibly impressed upon the national mind by the great deliverance from Egypt. From the date of the Exodus, Israel was a saved People; and Salvation, as the Jew knew it, was originally a "Deliverance" in its simplest meaning, the same indeed that we pray for to-day, the deliverance of a nation by "a high hand." Later, this experience of national Salvation developed into an expectation of deliverance from the afflictions that afterwards overtook them. Thus, as we have seen, the word "Gospel," became a technical term for the Good-news of Deliverance from the Babylonian Captivity; and similarly, Salvation came to mean the looked for Messianic Age. Unfortunately, owing to the rise of fierce national feeling during the heroic revolt under the Maccabees, the concepts both of Salvation and of the Kingdom of God assumed an earthly and political interpretation; so that by our Lord's Day they signified a Jewish hope of universal sovereignty.

Then came Christ, bitterly antagonising Jewish national feeling by proclaiming Himself the Saviour of the world and by preaching the Good News of Deliverance from Sin. Thereafter, the burden of the Gospel of the first century was the story of a personal Saviour and what He had wrought. Indeed, the recognised name for Christianity was "the Way of Salvation," (Acts xvi. 17). Hear, for example, St.

Peter before the Sanhedrin, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins" (Acts v. 30, 31.)

As with the Kingdom of God, or Eternal Life, or the Vision of God, Salvation is at once a present experience and a future prospect. It is a present experience. Salvation is deliverance from *spiritual* death; that is to say, we are saved from missing God in this life—a condition which Christ terms as "being lost," and to rescue from which He came to seek and to save and to give His life. Salvation is also a future prospect. It is also deliverance from *eternal* death. But it is never really possible to distinguish between the two. Eternal life is now to possess God, Who is life, and to enjoy Him for ever. To miss God is to lose Eternal Life, both here and hereafter. To save us from this fate (to which sin condemns by alienating us from God) was the supreme mission of God the Son by becoming Man and dying on the Cross. Thus, Christ had the words of Eternal Life; He came preaching the Kingdom of God; He was made flesh to reveal the Father. But in order that man might live with God, and obey God, and see God, He was above all else a Saviour. Therefore His name was to be called Jesus, because on the Cross He was to save His people from their sins. The Gospel is the Good News of His Atoning Work which makes the Christian Life possible. And to preach the Gospel is to declare to men and women their blood-bought right of possessing conscious assurance of restored relationship with God, through Christ.

The saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ can best be understood by recalling a story of Bishop Westcott. When asked by a Salvation Army lass whether he was saved, the great theologian replied in some bewilderment, "O, my dear young lady, what do you mean? Do you mean *σώζομενος* (I am being saved), or *σέσωσμενος* (I have been saved), or *σωθήσομενος* (I shall be saved)." Salvation is a combination of all three. By His death Christ has saved us from the guilt of sin. By His Risen Power with us, He is saving us from the power of sin. By His Ascension, He Who is preparing a place for us will save us from the presence of sin. It is all set forth by St. Paul in the Romans; where the key note of the Epistle is the "Gospel of Salvation", and has been paraphrased as "The power of God you see in people's lives when they trust Christ (Rom. i. 16, 17)."

St. Paul's doctrine of Justification is, simply, that if we trust the Gospel and act upon it, we thereby possess conscious assurance of a life united to God in Christ. His doctrine of Sanctification is, simply, the unfailing result of thus living with God—namely, the peace and power of a life unified in itself because in Christ it is united to God. Then one word in conclusion. By far the most important feature of the Gospel of Salvation is that its entire emphasis is laid on God's part in man's redemption and upward progress. Salvation is the Good-news of how God has intervened, broken into human history, and Himself effected man's deliverance from the slavery of guilt, from the shame of moral defeat, and from the death of a dog. It is Good-news of victory from the battle-field, proclaiming what God Himself has done and what God is still doing. It is Good-news, in

the achieving of which man played, and plays, no part. It is Good-news of a Salvation man can never merit, but only accept. We are saved by faith—by just trusting ; not by works.

By trusting Christ we are saved from the blindness of sin, and so become pure in heart to behold the Vision of God. By trusting Christ we are saved from the frustration of sin, and so are empowered to co-operate with God in the building of His Kingdom.

By trusting Christ we are saved from the death of sin, and so possess Eternal Life.

Moreover, the gratitude that is all we can offer, makes us feel that we are “ saved to serve ” : an incentive that has proved all down the Christian ages the supreme urge to Evangelise, to proclaim the Good-news of Salvation to others. In short, Salvation is that redemption of our nature, through Christ, which puts us into a right personal relationship with God and our fellows. By Salvation we enter Eternal Life—that is the life of the children of God. Thereby, as regards God, the chief end of life becomes the Vision of God and His eternal worship.

As regards man, our purpose in life is to bring the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, both by bringing men and women to God, and by striving to produce an environment in which they can grow to full Christian stature. So it is that St. Paul calls the ministers of the Gospel the Ambassadors of Christ’s Reconciliation (2 Cor. : v. 18 ff.) ; and I would end by venturing to re-echo the Apostle’s exhortation. God has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. As though God were entreating by us, we beseech you on behalf of Christ, re-affirm to yourselves the Good-news of your own reconciliation with God, and so become the ambassadors to others of Christ’s Reconciliation.

The Salvation of the Individual

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP J. H. LINTON, D.D.

IT is only possible to discuss “ The Salvation of the Individual ” in this separate way because of the complementary paper being read on “ The Regeneration of Society.” For the whole teaching of the New Testament is that we are saved to serve : “ That we, being delivered . . . might serve.” Deliverance first ; then service. There can be no such thing as a solitary Christian. We belong to a fellowship, and part of the responsibility of that fellowship is the regeneration of society. Christians are “ the salt of the earth.” One function of salt is to preserve. Probably our Lord often watched the fish being sent from Capernaum to Jerusalem, packed in two hampers slung one on either side of a donkey. But first, the salt was thoroughly mixed with the fish. If the fish had been packed in one basket and the salt in the other, the salt would arrive in Jerusalem in perfect condition, but the fish——! And the salt wouldn’t have carried out its preserving function.

LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS

I asked permission not to read a paper but instead to give you a bunch of concrete instances of the way the Salvation of the individual

happens in the ordinary life of a parish. I have only been in parish work for seven years. I had never been a curate. So my experience of parish work is no greater than that of most of you in this conference. We have had no parochial Missions, etc. These conversions have been almost entirely through the normal work that goes on in every parish, such as Confirmation classes, talks to godparents, talks to young couples before marriage, appointments made after morning and evening service, etc. Much of it is the result of personal work done by lay members of the Church for whom training classes are held from time to time. I regard this co-operation between a rector and his lay people as vital.

A TEAM OF LAY PEOPLE

The value of training lay folk in personal evangelism is (1) *They learn how to diagnose.* A medical student has his text book, he works with a specialist, he has class work, and then he experiments on his own. The parallels are obvious. (2) *They learn to talk in the vernacular.* When we glibly use such terms as "being born again", "accepting Jesus Christ" etc., are we always sure that the man we are trying to win understands what we are saying? Do we understand it ourselves? Could we say it in the vernacular of the man in the street? (3) *You have your lay people working with you as a team.* The strength of a team is far greater than the strength of any individual. And when lay people are out with you on this work, their witness often counts for more than the equivalent witness of a clergyman. Also, the very youngest member of the team counts. Every fisherman knows that a very small fly can catch a very big salmon. In one place where I was holding a mission, one morning the team was meeting when in walked a young fellow. After a bit he asked if he could speak. He said he was the curate of a neighbouring parish. That morning a member of our team had asked him if he was winning men for Christ in his parish. He said he knew nothing about that. His job was visiting and taking services. But the member of the team did not stop till that curate had come into a real experience of Christ as his Saviour. The curate himself told us. Now my point is that the man who won the curate was the very youngest member of our team. He was only a fortnight old himself in his new life. It is not unfair to ask whether our own life, and our enthusiasm for winning men for God, sets a standard high enough to challenge these lay folk of ours. If we are convinced that Jesus Christ, and He alone, is the life of men, the only way to God, then the ordinary man just cannot understand our lack of enthusiasm about conversion! A man in my parish is a "Social Credit" enthusiast. He haunts my house day and night to talk Social Credit. Are we as enthusiastic as that for God? I heard of a woman in an Underground train late one night who got up and said, "Listen, you people! I have something very wonderful to tell you." The theatre crowd listened. It was only about some patent medicine! When she had finished a girl got up and said, "I have something far more wonderful than that to tell you." And she told them how that very night she had come into this new and glorious experience of Christ as her Saviour. That sort of enthusiasm grips.

And I do not believe there is all this indifference about God in these days. It certainly is not true in my own experience. Once when I gave a Broadcast Evangelistic talk I had forty letters a day from people, some as far away as Sweden, later from Canada. These led to many conversions. There may not be a very evident theological conviction of "Sin," but I am all the time meeting people with a very real conviction of definite specific "sins" which they can and do name.

BUSINESS WORRIES

One day I was rung up on the telephone. A man at the other end asked if he could come and see me. It was Friday, and I was pretty busy. I suggested Monday. He said "Oh!" Something in the way he said "Oh!" struck me. I said, "You mean you want to come at once?" He said he did. "Have you a car?" for he lived a good way off. So he came and spent the whole afternoon with me. When he had gone our maid asked "What was the matter with that man?" "Why?" "Well," she said, "he looks like a man going to commit suicide." Which was exactly what he was going to do. If I hadn't seen him that day I should never have seen him. His trouble was business worries and tampering with accounts. He could see no solution except suicide. But that day he found a better solution. He got peace with God; peace in his heart: peace in his mind. He faced up to his problems with renewed mind and to-day looks the whole world in the face.

MORAL PROBLEMS

One Sunday evening after service I was talking to some men in the vestry. One man said, "Sir, what you said in your sermon to-night was no use to me." "What did I say in my sermon that was no use to you?" "You told what God could do for a man who had touched bottom." "Well?" "That's no use to me. *I've gone through the bottom.*" He had, too! But there he found that no matter how far through the bottom a man has gone, down into the mire of sin, underneath are the everlasting arms. Those arms lifted him up that night and set him on a rock.

MARRIAGE PROBLEMS

These past seven years I have had twenty-five cases of broken or breaking marriage to deal with. They have come to me from all over England. They would have gone to their own vicar if they were sure he would try to help them. Why don't we let them know we will? Somehow the news had got into the Press of a "School for Marriage" I was having, and so these people came to me. Ten of these have got right, all on a basis of God. I say flat out to them that "forgive and forget" is not good enough. They need God. Three have gone through the divorce court. They had actually begun proceedings when I met them. For the rest I cannot yet say what the end will be. One couple had been married twenty-nine years. Another only two years. Each of these had already put their case into the hands of lawyers. In each case some days later I had a letter or a telegram to say they were "having another honeymoon." For now they were new people in Christ Jesus.

INTELLECTUAL PROBLEMS

Once we were having a special invitation meeting in another town, to try to reach people who were not in touch with the Churches. One lady I remember, was a very brainy person. At the end of the meeting I asked "Have you taken Christ into your life to-night?" She said, "No." "Why not?" She said, "How can I pray to a God in whose existence I don't believe?" "Is that all?" I asked. "No. I have other intellectual problems." I said I had found that when people's moral problems were settled, their intellectual problems usually settled themselves." I got her to go away with an experienced lady worker. Some time after midnight she confessed to a moral problem in her life, which she resolved to put right. Next day she came to see me, and, telling me her side of the story, said "And this morning for the first time I taught my children to pray."

You see, her intellectual problem was a real one. But she had a cataract which prevented her seeing the answer. When the scales fell from her eyes the answer came clear and she taught her children to pray.

I have given you illustrations from various areas of life, home life, business worries, personal problems, intellectual problems, moral problems. Always there has been real sin to be dealt with.

(In the space of this paper it is not possible to quote many of the instances given at the Conference. But those given here are representative.)

OUR ENGLISH RESERVE

Someone referred earlier in this Conference to our English reserve in speaking about these things of the soul. When I was taking meetings in Germany, they said "You English people are so different from us. You talk easily and naturally about God. But we Germans are so reserved!"

In Switzerland they said exactly the same. In Persia they said the same. And here am I, a Scot, and we are said to be the most reserved of all people! I believe it is just the devil, trying to shut our mouths and keep us from witnessing to the most glorious and thrilling experience of all life. And when people tell me I have a flair for breaking in on people, I know it is not true. For I am naturally a veritable clam, and I only open out and witness because of what Christ means to me.

And I find this invariably, that when you do open out and speak, people are glad and it helps them to speak too.

Anyhow it is our job, and we are called and sent for this very work. Once when I was Bishop in Persia I became aware that for some time past I had not been used of God to win anyone for Christ. I said, "Yes, but I am a Bishop, and a Bishop is a Pastor, a Shepherd, and a Shepherd's work is looking after sheep." That was a let-down. Then God showed me that part of a Shepherd's work is seeing that sheep are being born!

And again, it is not just because I am a Bishop. What I know of personal work in winning people for God is mostly what I have learnt from our Lord's own methods of personal work in the Gospels, plus forty-three years practising it. I did it first, after my own conversion, when I was engineering, and I have done it ever since.

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Lastly, I want to say two or three things :

1. Use your Bible in this kind of personal work. Good stories are all right in their way. But it is vitally important that the seeker after God should have God's own word to rest on. That "liveth and abideth for ever."

2. Somewhere the man under conviction must bring his sins to the Cross. We are not forgiven *because* we have confessed our sins to God, but because of what Christ has done in His death. Confession is a condition of forgiveness (1 John i. 9.) It is "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, that cleanseth us from all sin."

3. But it is important to know what you are aiming at. If you aim at a target you are more likely to hit it! Work for actual conversion. Talk about God in a language understood of the people. Believe in the Holy Spirit who will Himself convict and convert. These days are no more evil than any other days. During one day in my parish, five men and three women sat in my study and ended by taking Christ as their Saviour. On another occasion three men and two women. A few weeks ago thirteen in a fortnight. But if we ourselves hardly believe in conversion the doubt can get subtly conveyed to our hearers, then why should they believe? The promise of Christ still stands: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

The Regeneration of Society

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD

(The Bishop did not read a paper but gave an address from carefully prepared notes of which the following is a brief summary.)

On the subject of Evangelicals at work in the Regeneration of Society, the Bishop found the title a little obscure. There is no prospect at all of a total Christian State. The historical examples of Geneva and the Commonwealth period in England were not altogether successful and gave little hope that it ever would be realised. In fact it is very doubtful whether the complete regeneration of society was ever contemplated. Many New Testament passages seem to suggest the very opposite. The Christian life is spoken of as a strait and narrow way. Our Lord went further to say 'when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith in the earth?' and subordinate passages from other parts confirm this thought. Thus we are thought of as 'strangers and pilgrims' having here no continuing city.

It must not however be forgotten that there are on the other hand, complementary passages in the New Testament which suggest that the Christian influence would penetrate the whole society. We remember the parables of the leaven and mustard seed; the sayings to Christ's disciples that they are lights in the world; the salt of the earth. How far can the Christian message impregnate legislation? How far can it act as an antiseptic to the corruptions of general society? The first question is perhaps the more important. If the Christian

Church is to be this influence, saving, purifying, illuminating, it must recognise facts. This is a time of extraordinary difficulty not merely as a time of War, but because of the pre-war and post-war conditions, and in the general attitude to Religion, i.e. not that Religion is not true, but that it does not matter. It is far easier to face actual opposition than this.

For a long time now the popular view of the influence of Education and Civilization presupposed a continuous improvement, that we are getting "better every day in every way." This is simply a delusion which constitutes a grave danger and is undoubtedly responsible for the moral and spiritual collapse throughout the world, for we cannot doubt that everything is in a low state everywhere. Moreover, this popular idea that man can improve himself and is his own saviour, is a deadly enemy of the Christian faith. The basis of the Christian message is that man is a lost creature until he has been 'found' from outside. He cannot save himself but needs something from outside himself. To-day in the world at large we see the awful results of sin which illustrate the truth of the Christian Doctrine of the terrible results in man of the fall. It is the gravest of blunders to think of the Christian Religion as one that simply improves man. As it is the only one that recognises man as fallen so it is the only one that recreates, redeems, and so renews. For this truth we must stand unflinchingly.

As a programme subordinate to this fundamental principle there are various factors to consider. In this day of crisis we must remember that there have been special turning points in the history of the world and I believe that this is one of them. "I am not a believer in what is called the social gospel, but I think that at this time one of the things the Christian Church must demand is that all legislation shall be at least Christian in ideal." We may be thankful that the minds of people are turning from a preoccupation with the sanctity of property which for the last thirty years has been the only consideration, to a stress now on the sanctity of man. "I believe that when the world and social life is again reconstituted the rights of big business will be trampled on. Men are not annoyed so much by the possession of money as the power of money which reduces men to the state of serfs." Soldiers in the battlefield are prepared to suffer and endure but they demand better conditions for their children. If the Christian Church fails to recognise the justice of this demand it will miss the day of its visitation.

Another matter for grave consideration for a new society is the power of the Press. Let us face the facts. There was a lot of talk a little while back when Parliament had a word of warning for the 'Daily Mirror,' and much was ventilated on the freedom of the Press. But the Press is not free. "Do you realise that five people alone dictate the policy of seventy-five per cent of the papers, including the large dailies?" (Here the Bishop quoted various startling illustrations). There is no true freedom of the Press!

The moral state of the Country is even more depressing, the family ideal is distinctively a Christian conception but under stress of War this is breaking up and presents a most serious feature of the National life. The home life is being squeezed out as it were, by a 'pincer'

movement. Fathers are away on service, Mothers are in munitions, communal meals are a vogue, children are evacuated. Divorce is of course easier. On the other hand the Registrar-General in his report for 1938 showed that of the girls married in that period under twenty years of age, forty per cent were pregnant at the time of marriage. Juvenile crime figures also disclose a grave situation. The percentage of criminals under eighteen years of age is enormous and nearly fifty per cent of the crimes have been committed by young persons little older than mere children.

All this is traceable to one thing—the failure to recognise the finality of God's Law. Children are no longer taught that a thing is wrong because it is contrary to the will of God. Their cry is "Why can't I?" They do not realise what sin is and why it is sin. Thus there is no occasion for surprise that young people do not react to the Gospel, for they do not know their religion. The inefficiency of Religious education to-day lies at the root of all this.

There are two great needs that are necessary for the life of society to-day, especially among the young. First of all it is that there should be a movement to teach them their religion. Neither parents nor children know it. In the Roman Church they have a Catechism of the Creed which is used even in the prisons. We need to have some such manual which by simple question and answer sets out the teaching of the Christian faith. Secondly, young people do not know how to pray and they must be taught.

We must begin again, starting from such foundations if we are to make any headway in the regeneration of society. God has given us a great opportunity in these days. May we all do our part and fulfil His purpose in the work.

Evangelical Unity as a Fruit of Evangelism

THE REV. T. W. ISHERWOOD, M.A.

(*Home Secretary, C.M.S.*)

IF Evangelism is a primary charge upon the Christian Church in respect of her temporal life and work, and, by sheer force of the very title they claim, a primary responsibility of Evangelicals within that Church, not less is it true that Unity is both a primary test and a primary "desideratum" both of the Church in general and of Evangelicals in particular. And if we are all in general agreement, as it may be assumed that we are, that each of these statements is true, it can hardly be possible that they are unrelated to one another. "But where shall 'unity' be found?" The story of the search for it is not altogether encouraging. Credal formulæ seem to say "It is not in us": certainly, they cannot produce it. Liturgical experiments at discovering forms of worship acceptable and helpful to Christians of quite different tempers and traditions have not proved

more fruitful. Their promoters are apt to assume a unity which does not in fact exist, at any rate in the intensity necessary to give to the experiments that spiritual spontaneity without which they must inevitably "fall flat." Or, more realist but vaguely uneasy about the lack of adequate and antecedent basic unity, our liturgical experimentists seek a refuge in the lowest common measure of Christian sentiment, or a frankly freakish creation which may not satisfy anyone but is sure at least to surprise everybody! Social concern for human welfare, our chief modern expedient, will not prove more productive of true unity than its predecessors. As an activity pursued within the terms of its immediate and confessed reference it has much to be said in its favour, and Evangelicals ought not to be conspicuous only for loud-voiced suspicion, and parrot-like criticism, of it. But to assume that a co-operation born of social concern is either an expression of, or a means to, Christian unity is merely to shut one's eyes to obvious and ugly facts, and, worse still, to do serious hurt to the cause which we profess to serve. We can forget for purposes outside the cause of Christian unity facts which we simply cannot ignore when that great issue is before us. No progress will be made unless and until those same facts are treated with the realism that they demand.

"What shall we say then to these things?" Shall we solve our problem by asserting a spiritual unity which is content to seek no outward expression in the Church's corporate life and work? Or shall we fall back upon the time-honoured device of belief in the unity of the Invisible Church—a reality, indeed, but too often used only as a Protestant expedient for postponing the problem to the Greek Kalends,—the Invisible Church meanwhile being also the Church Inaudible and the Church Inoperative? No one with the New Testament in his hands can seriously maintain that such a policy would have commended itself either to the Divine Intercessor Who has left us the evidence and the challenge of His 'High-Priestly Prayer' recorded in St. John 17, or to the great Apostle of the Gentiles who saw his converts as "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Either such a vision means a measure of such corporate and discernible unity as the whole Church has not yet attained or words and metaphors would seem to be meaningless. And it is by that revelation of the will and purpose of God for His Church that we must always be guided, even more than by recognition of the tragic enfeeblement and ineffectiveness that are produced by our historic failure to achieve it.

But some man will say—How is the vision to be realised and, in any case, what is the relation of this dissertation to the proposed topic of the paper which, quite specifically, is supposed to be Evangelical Unity as a fruit of Evangelism? Actually, we have not strayed very far from the limits imposed upon us. For, to begin with, Evangelicals, even within the limits of the Anglican Communion, have their own share of responsibility for the disunity that we deplore, and no more effective step towards curing our ills, and promoting

the New Testament ideal, can be imagined than precisely that of "putting our house in order" in this particular matter. It would be tedious and embarrassing, but happily it is unnecessary, to detail the points of such disagreement among us as constitute genuine and grave disunity. Some of them result "from magnifying our certainties to condemn all differences," some "from magnifying" a particular system or interest for wordly policy, some from arrogance, and not a few, to speak quite plainly, from sheer ignorance of the true and basic nature of essential, as opposed to merely apparent or incidental, Evangelicalism. I know no one who does not, in the secret places of his own soul, deplore this state of affairs however incapable he may feel of setting it right, or however publicly involved in permitting it to continue. Further, almost every one of us would agree that to leave matters where they now stand within the limits of our own school of thought is to render impossible any practical contribution to the wider problem. It is both tragic and futile for Anglican Evangelicals to pay lip-service to an œcumenical idea while we stereotype our own divisions. And we shall have only ourselves to blame if the growing œcumenical will and movement of our day produces developments to which we can neither consent nor conform, and which, indeed, we have done nothing to control, by the sheer and simple fact of our own blundering divisions. But how are we to set right what is wrong in our own fellowship, or lack of fellowship? Experience clearly indicates that certain well-tried and well-trodden paths, which seemed to lead toward unity, are nothing better than blind alleys with repeated frustration and intensified bickerings and unprofitable disputations at the end of them. Unity among Evangelicals will not be achieved merely by the promulgation of findings, nor by the careful compilation of a doctrinal formula, nor, least of all, by liturgical uniformity. Not even within the limits of the Oxford Evangelical Conference would there be unanimous agreement for any theory of Biblical inspiration or on the North Side-Eastward Position issue. Such external and detailed unity could not be discovered. I would go much further and say that, in the judgment of many of us, it ought not even to be pursued!

"Evangelical Unity" is a phrase susceptible of at least two interpretations. Its surface meaning may well be Unity among Evangelicals. But it also suggests to my mind something much deeper, much nearer to the heart of the problem that we have been facing, and something of great promise for its solution. Evangelical unity, surely, means unity in the Evangel. That interpretation of the phrase suggests if not a new, at least a different approach to our problem. The issue is simplified and focused in terms of mission and message, rather than in others of more introspective origin. It is a good thing to be "taken out of ourselves"!

Divine in origin, human in membership, the Church of Jesus Christ is unique among historic institutions. She realises her nature and promotes her fellowship as, and only as, she lives in two realms at once. Heavenward, she is a community of worship. Earthward, she is a community of witness. Liable to a thousand enticements to dissipate

Him and frustrate herself. Our present concern is with her temporal mission, which is to be the age-long organ of witness by which the living Word of God is spoken to sinful man and sinful society. That witness is borne in many ways but chiefly by the proclamation of a distinct and peculiar message, and by the manifestation in an otherwise decadent society of a new and miraculous quality of life. The two are not independent of each other. The characteristic New Testament word for the new and miraculous quality of life is "fellowship"—a supernatural principle of human unity. And the more completely and loyally she discharges her mission of witness in the power of God's Spirit, the greater will be the degree of her realised fellowship. But what is the Word of God, the Evangel, entrusted to her? Neither Holy Scripture generally, nor the example of the Apostolic Church in particular, leaves us in any serious doubt on this all-important point. "When they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness . . . And with great power gave the Apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts iv. 31, 33). "And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ" (Acts v. 42). "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ . . . They believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ . . . Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts viii. 5, 12, 14-16). The parallelism in these passages between the Word of God and preaching of the Lord Jesus is too close and too sustained to be merely accidental. And when we hold it in relation to other quite typical New Testament utterances its force is intensified. St. Paul sums up the essence of his Evangel, which he obviously regards as not his alone but that of the whole Church of his day, in two phrases—"We preach Christ crucified" (1 Cor. i. 23) and "We preach . . . Christ Jesus as Lord" (2 Cor. iv. 5). St. Luke has left it on record that the Master's parting commission to His followers was "Ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8). St. John tells us that "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth" (St. John i. 14).

The Evangel of the New Testament is declared beyond the possibility of doubt or misunderstanding. The Apostolic commission was to draw the attention of all men to the fact that "When the fulness of time came God sent forth His Son" to be both the embodiment of His Word and the supreme Agent of His redemptive purpose. The Apostolic witnesses were so to proclaim Him in all His fulness that men, led by the Spirit of God, would hear and accept and obey that Word. And because that living Word became, so to speak, supremely vocal at Calvary, it is, in particular, "the Word of the Cross" (1 Cor. i. 18)—by which St. Paul meant not *our* proclamation, still less our explanation, of Calvary, but the Word which the Cross itself declares,—that is

the word of spiritual judgment and of dynamic creative redemption. It "is to them that are perishing foolishness: but unto us which are being saved it is the power of God." In short, the first Evangelists went out into their world so to proclaim Jesus Christ in the totality of His Person, His Teaching, His Work, His Mission, that men might hear for themselves what God was saying about Himself and His nature, about man and his need, about a supreme redemptive purpose for individual man in the fellowship of a new Society. That mission and message bound them together in the living fellowship of an authoritative and imperative Crusade. And the crying need of Evangelicals of this generation is for such a change of perspective, such an adjustment of outlook, almost such a new mind and heart, that we, too, discover in the prosecution of this same Crusade a condition and an expression and an instrument of our true unity. That unity would be so self-manifesting that issues which divide would no longer enjoy an influence altogether disproportionate to their real significance.

It is the closing concern of this paper to suggest some specific and immediate applications of this principle of Evangelical fellowship. Let us see how it operates both negatively and positively. Take for example, our attitude toward "God's Word written." No true Evangelical is in practical doubt of its unique authority, an authority inherent in its total relation to the Word Incarnate. What really matters is that we should learn so to expound it that "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets" He should still be able, through His witnesses, to interpret "in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (St. Luke xxiv. 27). In the perpetual and ever-deepening discovery of the power of the Scriptures to illuminate and interpret Him, there is all that we need to know about their inspiration. New light continually breaks through them; their pre-eminence is evident in dynamic and creative effectiveness. The Bible approves itself an effectual Sacrament of the Eternal Word. If we are able so rightly to divide the word of truth that it witnesses to the Word made flesh, it becomes the instrument of regeneration. Any worth-while consideration of Biblical inspiration is always qualitative not quantitative, dynamic not academic. Of what avail would be even an inerrant formula of inspiration, unless it also ministered to the more effective preaching of the Word,—the Word which God has, in Christ, for this generation? And, in point of simple fact, no such inerrant formula is to be discovered, nor would it in the least degree help us to do our primary work even were this Conference so to prove itself a supreme Council of Wisdom that we succeeded where everyone has hitherto failed! On the other hand, let our modern Evangelicals set themselves, in dependence upon God's Holy Spirit, to preach Christ Jesus, and they will soon discover the relevance of the Bible as a vehicle of the Word relative to Him. On the other hand, to make a theory of Inspiration a test of Evangelicalism is merely to ensure a perpetration of our divisions.

Let us briefly notice another issue upon which Evangelicals within our Church have often been conscious of division—doctrinal interpretations of the Person and Work of our Lord. Let no one imagine that it is intended to suggest that false doctrine is unimportant or

innocuous. Any such judgment would be superficial, and false to the plain facts of Church history. The obvious danger in inadequate or erroneous doctrine is that it misrepresents the truth about Him Who is the Son and the Word of God, and may so seriously misrepresent that truth as to make it impossible for men to hear and obey His redemptive Word for them. But does anyone seriously suggest either that the New Testament Evangelists went out to proclaim doctrinal interpretation of the Incarnation and the Atonement or that the modern Evangelist is likely to make full proof of his ministry by so doing? Origen's Ransom Theory is a sad but significant witness to what happens when an illuminating idea, a word which is a picture, becomes a crystallised doctrine. Then, Anselm must correct Origen, and Abelard must supplement Anselm. And, with great seriousness, we evaluate the substitutionary view of the Atonement, the Representative view, the Ethical view, and, as if Christian truth were some sort of concoction, discuss how much of each doctrinal ingredient is required for a nutritive—by which we often mean merely a palatable!—interpretation of the Cross. In the end we produce a multitude of different recipes, confidently assert the vitamin values of our own and roundly denounce the poisonous qualities of many of the others, and do but little to feed the flock. Is this wholly an outrageous caricature of the actual facts? I think not: and at least it serves to emphasise the point that concerns me most—that the substitution of doctrines for Evangelism is productive chiefly of controversy and disunity. Sound and systematic doctrine has its vital place—had I not believed that I would not have tried to teach it for eleven years—but that place is after, not instead of, Evangelism. Let a man so proclaim—rather than explain!—Christ crucified that the Cross tells its own story, speaks its own word, and there comes into being a fellowship of those who hear and recognise and obey the Eternal Word. The preaching of the Cross *is* productive of discord, but between those who hear and those who resist its searching judgments. It is productive of fellowship among those for whom it proves itself a savour of life unto life.

Lest I seem to be merely labouring a theory at the expense of concrete facts, let me bring to your notice a simple experience from my family life. When, about ten years ago, my Mother to whose expression of Evangelicalism I owe more than I can ever acknowledge, visited me in Toronto, she began to attend, with some regularity, a certain non-Anglican Church, the minister of which, she had been told, was a great 'prophet of the Word.' Such indeed she found him to be, and through his pulpit ministry the living Word nourished her spirit and rejoiced her heart. Now it so happens that "after the most straitest sect of our tradition she lives an Evangelical"! And had anyone conversant with the facts been unwise enough to indicate to her, in advance, the points of doctrinal divergence between that prophet and herself she would have been horrified and scandalized. She never suspected them, despite no inconsiderable dexterity in such matters as I know from first-hand experience! When, late in the day, someone did, rather jokingly, hint at the peculiar views of this particular prophet her reply, far more in justification of him than of herself, was "Well, it doesn't matter, he preaches the Word!" So, indeed,

he did,—in the truest, deepest, sense of the phrase. Evangelism united, where doctrinal interpretations would have divided.

It would be fascinating to pursue this principle and discover exactly how far it would take us, and whither it would lead us. Time, if nothing else, forbids our so doing, but I should like to throw out, in the baldest form, an idea which seems to me to be worthy of some consideration. What of the differences which exist even among Evangelicals—to go no further afield—as to Sacramental doctrine and practice? Is the time not overdue for a distinctively *Evangelistic* approach to this whole question? I am not sure that we ought not to review the whole of our approach to the alleged twofold ministry of the Word and the Sacraments. Is it in fact a twofold Ministry, or one and the same ministry under two complementary forms? Is not true preaching itself a Sacrament of the Word, and are not the Sacraments a dramatic preaching of the Word? St. Paul certainly seems to have thought so as regards the Holy Communion. “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. xi. 26). And is not the distinctively Evangelical apology for the practice of Infant Baptism to be found in the fact that it asserts in the clearest fashion the priority of divine grace, the profoundly important truth that, always, “the initiative is with the Eternal”? The Sacraments are “Sacraments of the Gospel” in a much deeper sense than that they are merely Sacraments related to the Gospel. They are declarations of the Gospel, Evangelistic media, more potent and prophetic than most of us have yet recognised. And if we came so to regard and to use them, might we not both find in them a new kind of usefulness and advance toward the clearing-up of a whole field of irrelevant, and therefore unnecessary controversy. It is a somewhat startling reflection that even the Roman brother and the Plymouth Brother are not anything like so far separated in their sense of the importance and use of the Lord’s Supper, as they are in their doctrinal interpretations of it. Certainly it is high time that Evangelicals began to use the Sacraments far less as institutions productive of doubtful disputations, and far more as opening up a new approach to Evangelistic activity. Too many of us use them as though they were unrelated to the preaching of the Word, and, in consequence, we loudly lament, but do little to remove, the superstitions that attach to them in the popular mind.

If it is true that to keep clearly before us the Evangel with which we have been entrusted, and to preserve intact the loyalty that we owe to it, is also to save ourselves from unnecessary and disastrous pre-occupation with the issues that divide Evangelicals, not less is it true that the preaching of the Word, and the results that by God’s blessing follow it, are alike positive instruments of the unity for which we pray. We refer again to a most significant text already quoted from the Acts of the Apostles. “And with great power gave the Apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all” (Acts iv. 33). True prophecy, like true prayer, is possible only in the power of God’s Holy Spirit, and where that Spirit is operative fellowship, not less than liberty, results. A quickening and extending of New Testament Evangelism within the ranks of the Evangelical Clergy of our day would lead soon and

inevitably to a new fellowship among us. Nor would it stop there. Apart from our own manifold failures to fulfil God's conditions, there is no reason why it should not be written of the twentieth Century, of this Century, as it was of the first, that "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul" (Acts iv. 32). And, incidentally, we need continually to bear in mind that Evangelical Unity is a much wider thing than unity among Evangelical parsons—a fact which may easily be overlooked at such a Conference as this!

A quite different approach to this whole problem has, so far, been deliberately omitted, partly because of lack of time, but chiefly because it is more self-evident to all of us. Is there not sheer tragedy in, and the judgment of God upon, the fact that we permit divisions among us in view of the prevailing paganism in this nominally Christian land,—again to look no further afield! Look out upon the England of the middle twentieth Century, and ask yourself whether bickerings about the position of the Celebrant at the Lord's Table, the use or non-use of the Occasional Offices in the forms presented in the Revised Prayer Book, the number of the Psalms and the length of the Lessons in Morning and Evening Prayer, are anything other than the most futile ecclesiastical equivalent for Nero's fiddling while Rome was burning. "Let us not therefore judge one another any more," but address ourselves to every form, and every opportunity of proclaiming in a darkening world-order the living Word entrusted to us, which is also the only Word that speaks to its condition. Controversy from time to time there must be, but let us see to it that it is allowed only when there is danger that the Word of the Lord is either adulterated by human sophistries, or so smothered by ecclesiastical accretions that it cannot reach the souls of sinful men. And incidentally let it be acknowledged (in all honesty) that the accretions are not the exclusive prerogative and possession of a school of thought different from our own! It is significant that the New Testament only twice, so far as I can discover, establishes an issue of quite absolute controversial import,—and each has an Evangelistic relevance, the one for our message, the other for the quality of life which conditions it. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God . . . Every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already" (1 John iv. 1-3): and, "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans viii. 9). Not less challenging is it to contrast two recorded words of the Master: "He that is not with *me* is against me" (St. Matthew xii. 30): and, "He that is not against *us* is for us" (St. Mark ix. 40). Where He, the living Word, is an issue, compromise is intolerable, controversy inevitable. But let us beware of ostracising those who are, demonstrably, casting out devils in His name!

Hear the words—I would venture to suggest the almost inspired words—of our Church: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." These familiar words from Article XIX do more than offer a definition; they also assert a twofold condition. If "a congregation of faithful

men " means anything it means a fellowship in which spiritual unity, after the New Testament pattern, is at least beginning to be realised. If it is indeed to find even a measure of realisation, the pure Word of God must be preached, the Sacraments *duly* administered. If there is any validity in the contentions of this paper Evangelism is therefore both a *sine qua non*, and an effective instrument, of Evangelical unity.

The Fruits of Evangelism Intercommunion

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP A. W. T. PEROWNE, D.D.

I HAVE been allowed by the Chairman to take the subject of Intercommunion without too much reference to its being a fruit of Evangelism. For to tell the truth I am still in doubt as to whether the one is the outcome of the other that way round, though I believe that Evangelism is at least an outcome of Intercommunion, or could be made so if Intercommunion were more common. But I must be fair to those who chose the subjects. I have come across the following statement in Hugh Martin's quite excellent little book entitled "*Christian Reunion—a plea for action*"; "It is a fact never to be forgotten that the S. India Scheme, the most daring of all unity Schemes, had its birth in a joint evangelistic scheme." That of course is not strictly an illustration of Intercommunion being a fruit of Evangelism, but it does illustrate the fact that Evangelistic effort is bound to result in a desire for closer fellowship all round and Intercommunion is involved in that desire inevitably. The only movement that I personally know of which might be said to be an instance of Intercommunion being a fruit of Evangelism is the experiment made by Canon Guy Rogers at the Parish Church in Birmingham, where after some years of joint effort in Evangelism, with occasional open communion according to the Anglican rite, reciprocal Intercommunion was started and seems to have taken place with very little opposition. In "*The Church and the 20th Century*" a full account is given of this experiment (pp. 181-2) and I take this paragraph from Canon Guy Rogers' own statement "No greater testimony to the value of careful preparation through a period of years and to the wisdom of the policy that sacramental fellowship is something to be earned, could be found than the quiet acceptance of this service by the religious community of Birmingham as something really guided and inspired by the Spirit of God."

That Intercommunion ought to be a fruit of joint Evangelism, I take it we should all desiderate. And I propose now to examine the actual situation as it exists to-day, and see what it is which is holding back a forward movement in that direction—and what we as Evangelicals can do to remove obstacles and clear the ground for such action as our Free Church brethren think is long overdue.

Let us go back to Lambeth 1920, when the Bishops produced that

Vision of the great Church awakening, *inclusive* not *exclusive* any longer, "gathering into its fellowship all who profess and call themselves Christians, within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ."

Now note this particularly—I quote from the Lambeth Report 1930 p. 116, "In laying this emphasis on (Episcopacy) our own heritage, we emphatically declare that we do not call in question the spiritual reality of the ministries now exercised in non-episcopal communions. On the contrary, we reiterate the declaration of the Conference of 1920 that 'these ministries have been manifestly blessed, and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace.'" To this may be added the statement of the Lambeth Committee of Anglicans and Free Churchmen appointed after the 1920 Conference, and of which both Archbishops Lang and Temple were members. "It seems to be in accordance with the L. Appeal to say, as we are prepared to say, that the ministries we have in view in this memorandum—ministries which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's Word and administer the Sacraments as Christ has ordained and to which authority so to do has been solemnly given by the Churches concerned—are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church." Dr. Carnegie Simpson says that this is the most momentous declaration the Church of England has ever made.

Having gone so far, it was confidently expected that a further step would have been taken, and that a measure of real Union, such as that contemplated in the S. India Scheme, or of Intercommunion with our Free Church brothers would have followed, but no such step has in fact been taken. A grudging permission is given to any Bishop, especially in the Mission Field—and then only in very special conditions—to allow 'open' Communion and some reciprocal action, in the following terms, "The Bishops of the Anglican Committee will not question the action of a Bishop who may in his discretion so exercised sanction an exception to the general rule in special areas, where the ministrations of an Anglican Church are not available for long periods of time, or without travelling great distances, or may give permission that baptized communicant members of Churches not in communion with our own should be encouraged to communicate in Anglican Churches when the ministrations of their own Church are not available or in other temporary and special circumstances."

It would surely *seem* as if the Bishops were trying to shuffle out of the admissions already made, with regard to the validity of the Free Church ministries. Even that small concession is left to the individual Bishop to act upon or not as he may think fit! The Bishop of Derby, in whose Diocese Swanwick is situated, went so far in the other direction as to refuse an open Communion at the Student Christian Movement Conference—a step which I heard Dr. Raven recently declare to have put back the cause of Reunion twenty years.

There are two special points I would make here. (1) The Anglican representatives in the Lambeth Conversations made a statement which is historically incorrect when they said "We regard this rule of Episcopal Ordination as much more than a mere rule of internal discipline.

It embodies principles to which the Anglican Church has *throughout its history adhered*, and which contribute to the special position which it claims to hold in the Christian Church." This is not quite true.

In the 17th Century men who had been ordained by Presbyterians abroad were allowed to hold benefices after the Restoration—and from that day to this there has been a succession of Bishops and Theologians who held that Episcopacy is not of the essence of a Church.

Dr. Hunkin says "It is historically certain that the Church of England while deliberately and on various grounds retaining the historical episcopate does not unchurch nor deny the validity of the ministries of other Christians merely because they are without them ; and further in times of transition and in special circumstances certain *temporary* deviations from what has been regarded as the norm have been admitted."

Surely if our Church did not lose its Catholicity by allowing an irregular ministry for a time in the 17th Century, why should there be such danger of de-Catholicizing it in the 20th Century if for a certain time, for a definite purpose, and under certain conditions during the interim period before all are episcopally ordained, when a Union Scheme is in being, the existence of non-episcopal ministers side by side with our own should be tolerated, and themselves recognised as real ministers of the Universal Church, and not merely in and "for their own several spheres?" If this could be conceded by those who are holding up the S. India Scheme, that great experiment could be tried out there, while the fact that all fresh ordinations are to be episcopal would secure the Catholic Order which might otherwise be imperilled. The whole S. India Scheme is in jeopardy of being jettisoned, and the acceptance of Episcopacy as the norm for the future United Church in S. India endangered because of the rigidity of some of those who profess great keenness for Reunion, but are in fact the chief stumbling blocks.

(2) *And my second point* in this connection is this. In another of their statements I feel sure that there is a confusion of thought in an important paragraph of the 1930 L. Conference Report. It is in effect demanded therein that Inter-Communion should be regarded as the goal of Reunion projects and not a means towards Reunion. Remember, they have reiterated that these Free Church ministries are real, and spiritually efficacious.

The Free Church negotiators of the S. India scheme are leaders of the Communion desiring Union with us : yet this is how they are summarily dismissed, "We cannot regard the maintenance of separately organised Churches as a matter indifferent or unimportant. The will and the intention to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the Body of Christ must of necessity underlie all its organisation ; and where that unity has been broken, the earnest desire to restore union makes possible a recognition by the Church of ministries which in separation must stand on a different footing. The will and intention of Christians to perpetuate separately organised Churches makes it inconsistent in principle for them to come before our Lord to be united as one Body by the Sacrament of His own Body and Blood. The general rule of our Church must *therefore* be held to exclude indiscriminate intercommunion or any such intercommunion as expresses acquiescence in the continuance of separately organised

churches . . . From *what has been said* it will be evident why we hold as a general principle that Intercommunion should be the goal of, rather than a means to, the restoration of union." It is certainly to me a *non sequitur*!

On the contrary I should have thought that the very fact that these Communion are discussing with us schemes of re-union would at once render them most fit to partake with us of the Body and Blood of our Lord: because that shews that they do not wish to maintain their separate lives; and again, surely there is no suggestion anywhere on the part of those who want re-union that they would countenance indiscriminate intercommunion. They implicitly lay down two conditions, both of which are fulfilled.

It is rather sad work following the reasoning and the conclusions of the Bishops in their treatment of the whole subject in 1930, and many, both Anglican and Free Churchmen, have regarded the 1930 Report and Resolutions as distinctly retrograde. Let me here, therefore take respectful leave of the Bishops, and give some further considerations which may help to the setting forth of a practical programme.

As a mere matter of fact it has been found that Intercommunion is quite certainly a *means* towards Reunion. Dr. CARNEGIE SIMPSON has put it on record that had it not been that Intercommunion had been freely practised there would not have been the ghost of a chance of the Presbyterian Union in Scotland.

Dr. HENSLEY HENSON in his book "Re-union and Intercommunion," is surely right when he says "Intercommunion is the *necessary expression* of full recognition (of each other's ministries) and therefore is the true preliminary to any useful discussion of corporate union. When the churches have entered into the religious covenant of Christian fellowship, of which the common reception of the Holy Communion is the appointed symbol, then they can discuss without suspicion or humiliation the further questions whether they should or should not merge their separate organisations. The fatal defect of the L. Conference Resolution consists of the disregard of this natural and indisputable order. In making intercommunion follow corporate re-union instead of leading up to it, they destroy the possibility of any equal treatment of non Episcopal Churches, and sterilize their negotiations in advance."

Dr. INGE in his "Present Discontents" in answer to the question which he asks, "Is there nothing to be done?" says, "Yes, the most important thing, Intercommunion. It needs no legislation: it cannot be stopped as something illegal and intolerable. It certainly may be distasteful to many Anglicans but it is actually allowed as a special measure by the Lambeth Conference in certain circumstances, and with great safeguards, and it would clearly seem to be according to the mind of Christ, which is sufficient warrant for our following His lead." It is a precarious argument, I know, claiming to know the mind of Christ better than one's opponents: but let these considerations have their weight with us as we make that claim. (1) It is now almost universally conceded that Christ laid down no one single method of securing a valid ministry in His Church. (2) It is a fact, though not as well known as it ought to be, that there is no real obstacle to

complete union with the main Free Churches on the score of the *Common Faith* we all hold alike. That was shewn at Lausanne, at Jerusalem, and at Edinburgh in 1937. Are we, as Evangelicals, to allow our Anglican Church friends to equate order with Faith? (3) It is a fact that apart from this ill-founded claim to the "Apostolic Succession" there is really no other great obstacle in the way of Home Re-union. (4) There is a tremendous call from the Mission Field to close our ranks and present a united front to Heathenism, to Materialism, to a new Paganism in so-called Christian Europe. At Tambaram, though re-union was not on the programme as a subject, it could not be prevented from dominating the whole atmosphere. This is what the younger Churches said in their appeal to the Older Churches—"we appeal with all the fervour we possess to the Missionary Societies and Boards, and to the responsible authorities of the older Churches to take this matter seriously to heart, to labour with the Churches in the Mission Field to achieve this union, to support and encourage us in all efforts to put an end to the scandalous effects of our divisions, and to lead us in the paths of union: the union for which our Lord prayed, through which the world will indeed believe in the Divine Mission of the Son our Lord Jesus Christ." The refusal to take the decisive step comes from I believe a comparatively small though extremely vocal section of the Anglo-Catholics—but they have neither Scripture nor Church history on their side. (4) The cry is raised that there are no short cuts to re-union, when we have been come to a point after fifty years of talk, discussion and resolutions not acted on—when, if some forward step is not taken negotiations will be broken off, as they have practically been in the case of our approach to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, because we will not implement that statement about our acknowledging the Free Church ministries as real and valid. (5) I for one simply cannot believe that God's grace is less efficacious when ministered to me through the hands of Dr. Garvie than it is when ministered to me by a young man ordained last Trinity by laying on of hands of a Bishop. (6) By their fruits ye shall know them. Hugh Martin puts this issue very plainly when he says "The Free Churches have spread over the world. They have preserved the faith of the Apostles, and shewn the fruits of the Spirit. It is a fact that the grace of God is not fettered to Episcopacy. There is no evidence—I feel almost ashamed of arguing in such a way, but the arguments of some "Catholic" writers demand it—that God even prefers Episcopacy. It is singularly unimpressive to be told that the Churches of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions are maintained by the "uncovenanted mercies" of God—on sufferance as it were. If God acts at all, how can it be proper to suggest that His action can be "invalid" or "irregular"? I make bold to claim that re-union is in accord with the mind of Christ, and that Intercommunion is a real *means* to that end. When we ourselves, with all our differences within the Church of England are preparing a joint Mission or other Evangelistic effort in parish or Deanery or Diocese, our first and natural impulse is to assemble together at a service of Holy Communion, where we realise our fellowship and oneness in Christ. It really seems monstrous that we should be prevented from widening the fellowship and deepening the inspiration which seem to be inseparable

from that service because of what I must needs call a secondary cause—a point of order, an unproven theory which the whole Evangelical section of the Church of England repudiates. They refuse to believe that grace and valid sacraments depend on Apostolic Succession. That theory breaks down at the very beginning of the Church's history. St. Paul himself was not made an Apostle by Episcopal ordination—a point which is fatal to the theories of those who maintain its necessity.

What then can we do to further Intercommunion, and so give fresh impetus to our Evangelistic effort?

1. We must *educate our people*. It is quite lamentable to find amongst our lay folk—yes, and even our Country Clergy—such strong prejudice against schemes of re-union, or at least a passive indifference. We must help them to realise not merely the waste caused by our present differences, but the *sin* of perpetuating the divisions which keep us in separate camps and destroy the witness we might give in unified schemes of Evangelistic effort.

2. Why cannot more of us copy the example of Birmingham Parish Church, and work towards Intercommunion deliberately as a means of cementing the unity already existing in joint effort in social welfare and Evangelism. It is more than likely that such a line of action may be dubbed as disloyal, or illegal, or precipitate. But, N.B., nearly all forward progress in the Church of England has come from such bold moves. We should never, I imagine, have been able to welcome to our pulpits Free Church ministers, as now we do almost as a matter of course even in our Cathedrals, unless Hensley Henson had braved Gore's wrath and edict of excommunication, and preached in Carr's Lane Chapel at the invitation of Dr. Jowett! The United Communion on the Mount of Olives on Easter Day, 1927, has not been repeated at Tambaram, but it is impossible to think that the Spirit of Fellowship can long be dammed up, and pour itself through every other channel and ignore the Sacrament of fellowship itself. I have myself taken part in a Holy Communion Service on the Mount of Olives when a mixed party of S.S. Teachers from East and West were gathered there, and it seemed inevitable and quite natural to cement our fellowship in such a service.

3. Our position as the "Bridge" Church lays upon us the obligation of going forward. The very fact that in the Church of England we have solved in part at any rate the problem of men in the same Communion holding such different views of episcopacy, the ministry, the real Presence in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the grace of Baptism, and the grace of Confirmation, calls us to the responsibility of acting as the Bridge Church, and teaching our people more than they certainly now know about its history, its ethos, its power to adapt itself to circumstances as our political constitution has adapted itself to times and circumstances in true English fashion.

4. We must be more courageous in our witness to Evangelical truth than we sometimes have been. I do not know how many Clergy there are still in England who call themselves Evangelical. In 1934, 1,200 of the A.E.G.M., passed a resolution on this subject of Intercommunion, of which some of us are hardly aware, which ought to have been proclaimed from the housetops, "That this Conference of the A.E.G.M. records its conviction that the time has come when

further steps should be taken in the matter of Intercommunion between the Church of England and those non-Episcopal Churches whose ministries have already been acknowledged to be real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church, and respectfully urges the Bishops to foster and regulate such Intercommunion as may seem desirable in the general interests of Re-union." We might well endorse that Resolution to-day as a beginning.

5. And last, but not least, we must cultivate more close relations with our Free Church leaders wherever we may find them, and discover what they are thinking, and how we may work with them without a trace of condescension in our manner, and with humble acceptance of their help. It is amazing how long they have borne with us and our assumption that in some way their ministry is incomplete and spiritually invalid, notwithstanding the fruits they can show for their work, and notwithstanding that we use with real gratitude and profit their writings and their commentaries. We are one in Christ in spite of our divisions. At the 1937 Edinburgh Conference the sense of our unity became more and more impressive as the days went by, even through all the acknowledged diversity, culminating in the great affirmation of unity solemnly made in St. Giles Cathedral. "We could not be seeking union if we did not already possess unity," said the Chairman, Dr. Temple. The same assurance came to the conference at Madras. "This is not just 'feelings.' It is of the very stuff of reality. It is unreal to deny such unity its one expression at the Table of the one Lord." H. Martin, *p.* 133.

Let me close with some sentences from Canon Guy Rogers article in favour of intercommunion in "The Church and the 20th Century", in which he gathers up phrases from the report itself verbatim: "*If* we 'acknowledge all those who believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, and have been baptized into the Name of the Holy Trinity as sharing with us membership in the Universal Church'; *if* 'we believe that God wills fellowship'; *if* 'we think of the great non-Episcopal Communion, standing for rich elements of truth, liberty and life which might otherwise have been obscured or neglected'; *if* we admit that it is 'the Holy Spirit of God whose call led us all to our several ministries, and whose Power enables us to perform them'; *if* 'the times call us to an adventure of goodwill'; there might well seem to be a case for intercommunion without delay"... "What doth hinder that these Churches should receive the Holy Communion together? as a means of fulfilling and deepening our Evangelistic efforts."

The Findings

The following Findings were agreed upon at the final session of the Conference. They are to be taken, as in previous years, as expressing the general sense of the Conference, and not as representing in detail the views of individual members.

1. The state of the world to-day constitutes an urgent call to the Church to Evangelize, particularly in view of the complete failure of Humanism.

2. The root cause of the moral and spiritual collapse of the world is the failure to recognize the finality of God's Law. The basic fact with which Christianity has to deal is that man is a lost creature and needs Salvation.

3. The Evangel is the good tidings of the Grace of God effective in the redeeming work of our Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins, and rose again, according to the Scriptures.

4. Salvation is appropriated only by personal faith in the living Saviour. This faith involves personal witness and Evangelism.

5. Christianity is a religion of redemption, not of mere improvement ; nevertheless it is the duty of the Church to promote the application of Christian principles to the social order.

6. One of the prime responsibilities of the Church and an essential part of true education is the adequate evangelization of the children.

7. Effective Evangelism is hindered by disunity among Christians, but co-operation in Evangelism fosters fellowship which naturally seeks expression in Intercommunion.

8. The Conference holds that Intercommunion must be on the basis of Faith rather than of Order and such Intercommunion with other Reformed Churches should be regarded as a step towards the attainment of corporate re-union and not merely as the goal.

9. The Conference urges upon all Evangelical Churchmen the need and the duty of removing causes of disunity within their own ranks and of promoting fellowship amongst all Christian people.