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A NEGLECTED TASK.

"IS religion a force in the spiritual life of our age?" asks Dr. Schweitzer, and his answer is in the negative. Religion, he says, "lifts up its voice—but only to protest: it cannot command. The spirit of the age does not listen, but goes its own way." Loyalty to Christ may lead to persecution, but indifference can only spring from our failure to represent Him truly. We have prayed "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," but have we asked how our prayer was to be answered, or what part we had ourselves to take in bringing it to pass? Prayer that is the mere utterance of words, or that ends in a protest, will not take us far. Yet most of us are content to go on with no clear idea of the way in which that for which we pray is to be achieved, or even attempted. "The Church," says Canon F. R. Barry, "tends to be asking: How can we save the Church and strengthen it against hostile forces? But it ought to be asking the very different question: How can the Church save the world, even at the cost of its own life?" That is our problem, and no answer can be satisfactory unless it is given, not in words alone, but in deeds also. Now if we are to save the world we need an effective method, and power adequate for the carrying of it out. The Christian's

power is from God, and we do not propose to discuss here how he can make it his own. Nor do we intend to consider the method by which our inner disharmony can be overcome, and Christ become our personal Saviour. We are here concerned only with the way in which that inner apprehension of Christ is to be expressed in social relationships. By what practical steps may we begin to bring about the reign of God in the life of our time?

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE IN THE PAST.

Jesus had much to say about the Kingdom of God, but this conception fell into the background among the early Christians. The explanation, perhaps, lies in their outlook on the future. They had, they thought, but a little while in which to proclaim their Master's message and to gather out of the world His Church. Then He would Himself come and set up His kingdom. The storms might gather about the little company of His people, but they looked to share His triumph at His appearing.

The years passed and He did not come. Meanwhile the Church grew in numbers and in influence, and the idea took root in the minds of men and women that the Church might establish Christ's reign on earth. Religion should dominate the whole of life, and all men should bow the knee to Jesus Christ. The mediæval system was the outcome and we see how the Church influenced the politics, economics, art, drama, amusements, and dress of the time. No sphere of human activity was considered to be independent; everything was subject to control by Christianity. But this attempt to apply Christ's teaching over so wide an area led to a lower standard being accepted as His, for no nation could be made to live on the moral level He proclaimed and exemplified. And so, in later days, when increasing knowledge and widening horizons challenged the system, it had no reserve of moral power whereby it might bring under control these new discoveries. One by

one men's interests passed out of the sphere of the Church's influence, until to-day Christianity, instead of being the controlling force, represents only one side of the life of a minority of people.

Much of the old conception of the Church's place in the nation was retained at first by the Protestants. The belief in the Church's control of life, to which Calvin's Geneva and Cromwell's England bear witness, is similar to that which was previously accepted. Gradually, however, a more individualistic outlook arose. The Church was no longer to pronounce an opinion on business or politics, but each Christian must apply his faith for himself to his own particular circumstances. How could the Kingdom of God come till all men were Christians? The duty of the Church was to evangelize the world and not to worry about economics.

"Christianity and the Crisis," published last year, claims to give the Christian solution of our modern problems. The Archbishop of York in the closing paper calls us to repentance for the international and economic sins of our time, and concludes: "It is only through such repentance on the part of a sufficient proportion of men to control policy, commerce and industry, that our political and industrial ills can be cured. Nor is there any practical hope of such repentance until men effectively believe and act on the good news concerning God which was given to the world through Christ." It seems then that this solution is of very little use, because inapplicable, until we have more Christians. Canon J. S. Bezzant confirms this when he writes: "A new social order can only be built up of new men and women, and such cannot be produced by organising them from without: they must be 'born anew' from within." The fact, that the basis of society must be new men, does not, however, absolve us from the effort to achieve social betterment, "For," he says, "if men are nurtured in an order that continually suggests and impresses the need of selfishness, and the consideration of others only when it can be

indulged without any cost to self, no amount of preaching will itself prevail against it." The Christian then has a twofold task; he must do his utmost to change the adverse conditions under which men live, but, knowing that this of itself is insufficient, he must seek also to bring the individual into personal contact with God.

All these views as to the establishment of the Kingdom have truth in them, but each seems also to have some inherent weakness. When we consider the triumphs won by Christian effort over intolerance, slavery, and industrial evils, it is difficult to believe that we can do nothing but wait in patience until Christ comes. The breakdown of the system in the Middle Ages, and the failure of Prohibition in America, are indications that the Kingdom cannot be set up by legislation. Are we then to succeed by the winning of individuals? This policy seems rather to have led to the gradual isolation of religion from the main stream of the nation's life. The idea that we might combine social effort with the winning of individuals remains. But where is the evidence that in a better order of society more people follow Christ? If there is none, and if the Christian solution of our problem waits until a sufficient proportion of men to control policy has accepted it, we seem as far as ever from any practical step.

PERSONAL PROBLEMS.

The theories considered leave us with very little hope of any rapid Christianisation of society, and do nothing to solve the real practical problems that face each Christian. What line of conduct shall we follow in a society which appears to make a full Christian life impossible? Ought we to remain at all costs loyal to our principles, or is compromise permissible? George Muller of Bristol found among the people he visited some who worked fourteen to sixteen hours a day. They had, therefore, no time for the cultivation of their spiritual life. He suggested that they should give more time to God, but they

replied that only by working the long hours could they earn enough to support themselves and their families. They had no real belief that, if they put God's kingdom first, all other things would be supplied. He therefore longed for a visible proof of God's faithfulness, and the orphan homes were the outcome of his desire. On the other hand a question by a young woman, who supported her widowed mother, was answered some time ago in a monthly magazine. She had been told to pack one pair of faulty stockings with each dozen pairs, and asked for help in deciding what she ought to do. In reply it was first made clear that, finally, all decisions rest with ourselves; no one can make up our minds for us. Some guiding principles were then laid down. Here they are:—

1. In a competitive system of industry the best men and women cannot escape some compromise with conscience. Our environment makes an absolute Christian ethic impossible.

2. God only expects us to do as well as we can under the difficult circumstances in which we are placed.

3. We may rightly make sacrifices that entail suffering upon ourselves alone, that would not be justified when others are involved.

4. No choice will result in moral deterioration which is made from an unselfish motive after an honest endeavour to know the will of Christ.

What are we to say to a Church, which began by making provision for its widows, but which now after nineteen centuries can only remind a girl in this position that, if she loses her job, her mother will probably suffer. The Friends would seem to be the only Church to take seriously its obligation to those who are in difficulties for conscience sake.

But there is another point which needs examination. Muller's attitude to this kind of problem is quite different from that taken up in this reply. He maintained that we should render absolute obedience to God and leave the consequences

in His hands, while here we are told that compromise is unavoidable. It is difficult, however, to recall the occasion when Jesus compromised with His conscience, and hard to understand how "Be ye therefore perfect" can be made to mean "Do as well as you can." It is surely true, as the Oxford Groups are emphasising to-day, that Jesus did call men to the acceptance of absolute standards, and to utter sacrifice in obedience to them. But, it will be said, compromise is literally unavoidable, and it is no use shutting our eyes to the fact. What Jesus asked of men could only be fully given in a social system that was truly Christian. Whatever the Christian ideal may be, it is not at present practicable, and we cannot do other than accept a lower standard while we work and pray for the improvement of social conditions which will make it increasingly possible.

JESUS AND SOCIETY.

As Christianity is a way of life rather than a theory, we shall be well advised to look very carefully at any attitude of mind that leaves us in an impasse. One feels that there is something wrong with the conclusion that makes a full Christian life impossible and which indicates no immediate steps that can be taken to make its realisation practicable. It would seem probable that on this particular matter our understanding of Jesus must be deficient. Let us then reconsider His relationship to the social and political ills of His time. We are sometimes told that Jesus was not a social reformer, that He had little or nothing to say upon such matters. Neither Roman rule nor slavery, to mention but two things, were governed by that spirit of love which was central in Jesus' teaching, yet He did not condemn either. But we shall misjudge the outlook of Jesus on these questions if we are content to consider only this negative side of it. True, He was no reformer, He had not come to change society piecemeal. The alteration of a few external details would be of little use if the new order was to be as selfish as the old. No! It was not His intention to tear a piece from the new garment to repair

the old, but He did propose to provide the world with a new garment. Jesus had come to turn the world upside down; He was a revolutionary. Over against the old system He set up the new, the Kingdom of God, not based on the old selfish interests, but on the principles of love and service. "You are a colony of heaven," says Paul to the Philippians, and surely he meant that among them it was no longer the laws of Philippi that held sway, but the laws of heaven; that they were henceforth controlled, not by their own desires, but by the spirit of love.

Did not Jesus intend that we should apply His teaching to our social life as well as to our individual actions? We can scarcely expect the world to obey Him, but it might have been supposed that Christians would do so. We have proclaimed what we considered to be the application of Christ's message to a great many subjects; we have advised governments to put Christian principles into practise in our national affairs; but, except in isolated groups, the Church has made no serious endeavour to express, in the social relationships of its members, the religion it professes. Jesus showed us the perfect individual life, and the Church should be an example of that perfect social life which God intends to be realised among men. In such a Christian society we should begin at once to find the solution of our modern problems. The Church has had little to say about this matter, so let us try to see what it would mean with regard to one or two subjects which are of living interest to-day.

APPLIED CHRISTIANITY.

We should do out utmost to Christianize the life of our nation, and we are grateful for every evidence that this process is going on, but the fact remains that Christian principles can, in a very real sense, only be carried out by men who have been renewed by Christ. One aspect of the way in which that inner change affected the outward relations of some Christians in the past, is expressed in Vol. XI of the Copec Report, where we

read: "We recall the days of the early Church, when Christians had all things in common. We recall the later communism of the great Christian guilds and orders, when those who were bound together by a common Christian purpose or responsibility shared a common purse and a common lot. And we assert that though the times are different and the ideal more difficult of attainment amid the complexity of modern life, the principle of the early Christian communism and of the later Christian orders still holds true. Christian people have such a community of spirit and equality of standing before God as their one Father that they cannot, in principle, suffer each other to endure wide differences of fortune and hardship we do say that the passion to share material and cultural advantages is the natural passion of the Christian heart, and that we should expect it to manifest itself in all kinds of ingenious and stimulating ways." Groups of people have acted in this spirit, but this Christian brotherliness ought to be seen in the Church as a whole, and the needs of each of its members should be the concern of all. It is difficult to imagine a family in which one sits down to a crust, and another to a good meal. When, in the Christian family, will each hold his possessions not for himself alone, but for the common advantage of his brethren? Knowing that the required amount must be obtained by higher taxation, it is useless to suggest that larger sums be paid for the relief of poverty if we are not prepared to tax ourselves that our fellow Christian may not be in want. There is of course a good deal of charity administered by the Christian community, but something more is needed. We must frankly admit that the present state of things is unjust, determine that it shall be no longer tolerated in the family of God, and give practical expression to our decision.

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(To be continued.)

WHY PACIFIST?

THE horrors of war cannot be depicted, and space forbids the attempt. There is a glint of chivalry in generosity to prisoners and wounded, also bravery arouses admiration wherever exhibited; but beyond these all is devastation and death, and gives play to the basest passions. Yet history is full of it. Nor is that altogether surprising. As long as from the human heart evil thoughts and murders proceed, strife will continue. The principle is at work when a boy gives his fellow a black eye; but when nation hurls itself against nation there is "hideous ruin and combustion."

Universal disarmament would ameliorate the position; but the defences of the countries vary so much that statesmen have not been able to agree where it is to begin. Our own reduction in arms has not at all influenced others. The League of Nations awakens a faint hope. In 1918 there was a prospect of setting up an Arbitration Board to whose decisions all nations should be compelled to submit. The refusal of America to ratify the convention blasted the proposal, and every year has made it increasingly difficult. In submitting cases to arbitration evil passions are not allayed; but disputes would be settled in a rational and equitable way.

Until over the nations there is a power that beareth not the sword in vain, they are in a condition of anarchy; each one has to be its own defender. While aggressiveness is suspected in any one of them, all the rest feel bound to increase their armaments, and there ensues a baneful race for superiority. "To establish peace one must be prepared for war" is a proverb against which objection is justified, for the bloated armaments of twenty years ago were ineffective. But it must be remembered that if Serbia had been as strong as France, Austria would not have demanded the humiliating conditions whose refusal led to the Great War; and if Belgium had been stronger, her country would not have been overrun by Germany. It appears that, however unwilling a nation may be, it must multiply the most destructive weapons it can discover, and often the only defence is a threat of reprisals. The outlook is awful; humanity demands that every possible influence should be exerted in support of every honourable movement to prevent war.

The Church has a standard higher even than humanity. We own Christ as Master, and are anxious to know His will.

The New Testament gives no guidance on politics; even slavery is not explicitly condemned. The action of our Lord cannot be our example because His circumstances were so different. Jesus might have compelled Rome to relinquish her hold on Syria; but that would have been to forego the very purpose of His Incarnation. He did not come to establish political freedom, but to put an end to strife altogether. The more He succeeded in the lesser good the more impossible He would have made the greater. The king was not blamed for having an army of 10,000 men; his failure was because it was too small; hence, he had to submit to terms dictated by his adversary, however oppressive they might be—unless (as the picture suggests) he was prepared to sacrifice everything for liberty. The Christian life is compared to warfare; but no hint is given whether the physical conflicts on which the figure is based are condemned or approved by God. We are to render to Cæsar his due, to be in subjection to the higher powers, and so on; but there is nothing more definite. While the world was under the heel of Rome, instructions suitable to a free, self-governing people would have led to turbulence, bringing the Gospel into disrepute.

Before the mind there floats the vision of a nation refusing to contend. Would this lead Mohammedans and those covetous of our possessions, to relinquish their ambitions? Experience gives no hope. As well might one expect that leaving one's doors open would make thieves spare the inhabitants. At present this country has no quarrel with any, our interest is the maintenance of everything as it is; but from economic or other causes disagreements are sure at some time to arise. If a foreign government should connive at injury to the property or lives of our fellow-countrymen, should they be left helpless? We should defend them if the outrage occurred in this country; should they be unprotected because they are abroad? Paul did not scruple to claim the protection of his Roman citizenship. A small army would be as inconsistent as a large one. Besides this, power involves responsibility; we have no right to lay aside what God has committed to us. When pirates ravaged and slavery was rampant it was only by arms that they could be destroyed, and we should have been blameworthy if we had not helped in their extinction. Christ died to make men free, and the spirit of liberty towards God makes bondage to men hateful everywhere. If to the oppressed we give nothing but

pity, the failure will be a judgment on ourselves. When Belgium was invaded we should have been as Meroz if we had not come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

The fundamental question is whether force should be used to maintain righteousness. This is supported by the commands of God in the Old Testament and by prophetic visions; it is thus that God acts, for He punishes wrongdoers in this world and the next. He has appointed governments to be His avengers for wrath to him that doeth evil: police carry out this mission within their own country and soldiers supplement them where they cannot act. The duty to love one's enemy has no more application to them than to the Lord when He was denouncing the Pharisees.

The differences between civil and military principles are often exaggerated. Of war the brutalities are emphasised, while the behaviour of our police is described as restrained and equitable. But they are not fair specimens of policedom; they are the wonder and admiration of foreign visitors. By bloodshed and centuries of struggle we have obtained this security. When rulers are despotic, civil forces are instruments of oppression. Germany and Russia are striking recent instances of what has been in all countries, and is still almost universal.

Each body uses the weapons most suitable to its work. As a rule, police find truncheons sufficient; but when these do not accomplish their purpose they use rifles. Armies need weapons more terrible, and the devastations of war are incomparably worse because, not individuals, but whole nations are in conflict.

Wars are not reformatory; victory in a good cause only punishes wrong acts, and when pursued "to a finish" it is that the offence should not be repeated. The same is true of police arrests. *Of recent years* the punishment of criminals has been so administered as to encourage them to become good citizens; but that is not the essential reason for police. If it were, when a criminal was beyond hope of reformation, he would be left alone; whereas the sentences are made increasingly severe.

In warfare also there have been developments. No longer are prisoners and the inhabitants of conquered cities massacred. Until the invention of aeroplanes civilians were immune from wilful attack, and there is the possibility (may we not say probability?) that bomb-dropping may be barred by national agreements. The Red-cross van on the battlefield is an

anomaly. These contradictions of the spirit of war suggest that further modifications are inevitable.

Lives are so intimately connected that a wrongdoer cannot be punished without bringing suffering to others. Even in police charges some are injured who are not implicated in the disturbance. A State is an entity; if it consents to a predatory policy, no individual member has the right to complain that he has to suffer.

It is not easy to understand how a man approving of the police can have conscientious objections to supporting an army. It is vain to say that war ought not to be, that is obvious; but often a right object can be attained by no other means. While a man is himself enjoying freedom and privileges which have been won and maintained by suffering, it does not seem noble to decline to join in their defence. There is a distinct admonition to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. To justify disobedience it is not sufficient that a man regards the edict as distasteful, or foolish; he must have the conviction that it is distinctly wrong. In all our actions the motive is seldom single, and consciences are easily influenced by our predilections. All the implications involved must be carefully considered.

The Scriptural antidotes to war are clear. First, prayers and *thanksgivings* are to be made for *all* men, for kings and all that are in high place. Yet the detachment of churches from the affairs of the nation is amazing. It was noticeable during the late war; and now, while security pacts are being discussed in every Court in Europe, there is often no congregational intercession on behalf of those who are spending themselves for peace, no pleading against a destruction comparable to that of Sodom. Also, it is our duty by the preaching of the Cross to make men realise that life does not consist in possessions, and that meekness and unselfishness show true manliness. Where a people knows the Peace of God no government can be bellicose. Further, "As much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." When folk are filled with panic and passion because of some insult or entrenchment on British interests, it is ours to leave public opinion with patience and forbearance, and to urge the use of every possible means whereby war may, righteously, be avoided.

THOMAS GREENWOOD,
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PEACE WITH HONOUR—A DEFENCE OF PACIFISM.

IN 1878 Lord Beaconsfield returned from the Berlin Congress and announced to the proud jingoes of that day: "I bring you peace with honour." The occasion was his reinstatement of the "unspeakable" Turkish despotism over a Christian population which had vainly risen against it, and a settlement which provided that Russia, the British bugbear of those days, should be again shut out of the Mediterranean and denied her place in the sun. No one can now gainsay that he had sown the dragon's teeth, dangerous seed whose abominable growths are strangling European progress to this day. What he called peace was an unjust and unwise provision for future wars. Honour meant that Great Britain had declined an imaginary bullying, and done real bullying herself.

Our task to-day is to find a new content for this all-important phrase.

In a time when the remedies for this most malignant of spiritual diseases are the subject of such much ignorant and well-informed exposition, no Christian can remain unaware of the real issues with a clean conscience. In a short account such as this many questions must remain unanswered, but it will be necessary to outline the present situation, and the policies actually in operation before presenting the pacifist view.

Who shall attempt to describe the present situation, or the causes which led up to it? A war waged at first ostensibly with the aim of gaining "satisfaction" for the assassination of an Austrian Archduke led to the deaths of ten million men who were not archdukes, an international futility unparalleled in history, ending with an unjust treaty. It was unjust not because our leaders were out for all they could get, but because public opinion clamoured for the complete humiliation of Germany. Again—peace with honour in the Disraelian sense—peace which has been a constant threat of war, and honour which consisted chiefly in the assertion of British "rights."

To-day, the very things for the defence of which Great Britain entered the war are held to be barriers to our progress, namely freedom and democracy. The Fascist regime in Italy, the Nazi domination in Germany, the totalitarian state in Russia, are held up as examples of Statecraft which a conservative England might do well to follow.

In this country peace propaganda flourished to such an

extent that it was deemed advisable to pass a Sedition Bill against the time when it might be needed, while a Fascist movement recruits thousands of youngsters whose grandparents felt that their self-respect was inseparably bound up with democracy.

In a word, the great illusion still prevails, that to ensure peace the State must be organised for defence. It is an illusion because it is impossible, under the present system of individual national defence, to decide what is adequate defence. Adequate for what? By adequate the militarist means "second to none." This leads to the arithmetical absurdity that for the preservation of peace each nation must be stronger than any possible rival or combination of rivals.

Isolation is impossible, while the system of alliances which is so large an element in present European policy is as useless for the prevention of war now as it was in 1914. What are the salient features of our dilemma?

Firstly, Germany has claimed and intends to maintain equality of status, whatever that means. And according to all the antecedents of German thought (and for that matter, of European political theory) she is fully entitled to it. The Versailles Treaty was dishonoured first of all by the signatories who had promised to disarm down to the German level by multilateral agreements.

Small wonder that in the new Germany, inspired by the Nazi leaders, there is a mistrust of endless disarmament conferences which have achieved so little. This country has only gone as far as public opinion would allow, and public opinion has been, and still is, dominated by a militarist Press, and by mass suggestion in various forms. As Sir Norman Angell has pointed out in his recent "Preface to Peace," war is not made by governments, capitalists, financiers and armament makers, but by John Smith acquiescing in predatory policies, so that although war is the last thing he wants, it is inherent in the policies he imposes on the governments.

The results are widespread. The nation which has supposedly gone as far as possible towards disarmament, has spent since the war 5,600 millions on new defences, while a new race in arms seems imminent. The aim is parity. But the supposed necessity levies such a toll on the material resources and spiritual energy of the people that many of our pressing

social and economic problems go by default. Let us examine the solution most generally favoured, the collective system of defence.

The true test of our desire for peace is our willingness to sacrifice in order to obtain it. If the preservation of peace means submitting to the decisions of a neutral court, "the man who feels that war is supremely bad above almost everything else would not allow some microscopic material disadvantage resulting from a defective arbitral award to weigh in the balance against getting rid of war"—at any rate it is not a sacrifice comparable with the loss of millions of lives.

Now there is one price which all the great States have shown themselves unwilling to pay for peace, the surrender of armed defence. That being so, it is the duty of all, pacifist and non-pacifist alike, to support the collective system of defence as involving less danger than the old individual method, with its everlasting intrigues in the interest of a precarious balance of power. Half a loaf is better than no bread.

Assuming for the moment that this is a real method of securing peace, and that with the waving of bayonets and brandishing of bombs on all frontiers, Germany is likely to see any other meaning in it but a ring of States determined to deny her claims; assuming that the League of Nations can yet be made an effective instrument, and that a neutral court could effectively police Europe, assuming all this, will it be peace with honour, in the highest sense of the word? Under the existing system honour is non-existent. That is not to cast aspersions on the *motives* which led the rank and file to give up everything. But it *is* to recognise that prestige, or power, or pride in supremacy still bulk larger than honourable considerations in international diplomacy. There is, it is true, a real sense of justice in the League's collective proposals, though the danger seems evident that a disagreement in arbitration backed by arms is bound to result, in the last instance, in the old appeal to the sanction of force.

An increasing number of people believe that Christian pacifism is the only way out, based as it is on the faith that the best solution in this, as in all situations, is that which accords with the revealed will of God. The problem is to know what *is* the will of God, and the index we seek is the mind of Christ.

Put plainly, this means that to be a pacifist, I must first

be persuaded that Jesus was, Himself, essentially all that I understand by the word, and secondly, that obedience to Christ is a possibility, nay more, an obligation, in the modern world, that "His will is our peace," and the best means for securing it.

Proof tests are of little value. The real evidence we seek is the principle of non-resistance which plainly underlies the Sermon on the Mount, the attitude of Jesus to His opponents, and the Cross itself. Serious students of the Gospels are bound to admit that this is the ideal. But it is still necessary to show that idealism is a practical creed.

Pacifists are in bad odour. Many have been unwise, some have counselled an easy, arm-chair pacifism. There is something contemptible in choosing non-resistance as an easy way out, or as an escape from danger. Actually it is neither, as any future conflict is likely to show. How, then, can this attitude be regarded as the best policy?

The pacifist does not ignore obvious facts, he faces them, the first being the fact of modern warfare, stripped of its flag-waving sentimentality, and the acknowledged fact that no increase in arms can guarantee immunity from air attack. The second fact is that history repeats itself. War breeds war. There can never be a "war to end war." Peace is not cessation from war, but something which must be developed and prepared for as assiduously as its opposite. That is the positive side of it—the knitting together of a world brotherhood which shall confound the war-mongers.

The League of Nations has been a splendid gesture, but it has not dared to demand the outlawry of war, nor has it had the power to inspire its members with the ethical standard guaranteeing the hope of a permanent peace.

The pacifist will support the League, but in the event of the League's failure, he will accept the authority of Christ, believing that he is not called upon to engage in the mass murder of civilian populations by the most cowardly means. He will not accept the terms of modern warfare, which demand that the slaughter shall begin not with those who wage war, but with defenceless women and children. In the last resort he knows that no participation will really defend his friends and loved ones, but that pacifism *may*, if there are enough to influence public opinion.

It may be the surest protection—it would be if the

Christian Church would seize her opportunity, but if we are overridden, and it means a cross—"it is the way the Master went." At the root of all Christian progress in a sub-Christian society there is a cross, not the Cross, however noble, of those who died *pro patria*, but of those who lived and died *pro Christo*. Any other way, the prophets are put off with a compliment, and we come near to patronising Jesus, when we might be expected to obey Him.

W. R. BOWELL,
(Liverpool).

THE REORGANISATION OF THE MINISTRY.

AT the last meeting of our Norfolk Ministers' Fraternal I spoke on the above subject. The title was not of my choosing. I have not what O. Henry has called "a stranglehold on infinity." My design was to speak on the matter of equalisation of ministerial stipends. We recognised, however, that the wider question of reorganisation would be involved. You can approach your vicious circle at any point. I chose an entry at the point of finance.

The men present had seen my article in last November's "Baptist Times." This was supplemented by some material that the Editor had not allowed. Here follows a summary of my remarks and of our informal discussion, which issued in the drafting of the resolution which, I believe, has already been made public.

Dr. Graham Scroggie recently wrote (also in the "Baptist Times") that he feared that "The Christian Church has broken down at the points of prayer and finance, and these are vitally related." Perhaps our disappointment over the Discipleship Campaign is partly due to our not tackling our financial problems. Missionaries are practically the same as one another, differences being due to varying family responsibilities or local circumstances. At any rate, their stipends do not present the great range that those at home do. If a man is good enough (in his church's and brethren's judgment) to be in the home ministry, he is deserving of parity of financial treatment, whether his church be small or large. Academic attainments,

and general ability and personality, should be no occasion for procuring larger stipends. They are not such on the mission field, where (it goes without saying) there is, as always, a great range and variety of personal effectiveness, and that apart from any measurable diversity of devotion and consecration. Let the same principle hold at home. It is apostolic. Churches should pool their resources. Ministers can appeal with more force for a central fund than for their own stipends directly. Men will not be thought of (horrible yet authentic expression!) as “£500 men” and “£300 men.” We shall not try to out-preach one another, except for the loftiest reasons. If this leads to connexionalism, let us face that possibility without either a scampering fear or a short-circuit thinking. Perhaps most of our ministers are ready for this system. At present, Headquarters has both too much power and not enough—too much for independency, and not enough for centralisation. Are the difficulties of a change great?—the dangers of the present lack of system are greater? How can we be effective when so many men are restless and anxious and, perhaps, bitter? Do not the Churches know and reflect this? Let us face facts as frankly as one of our leaders, whose *bon mot* that “in our Denomination, stipend is status” was quoted by our missionaries in China with delight, and also with consternation.

So we proceeded. One brother thought all this “sordid.” It seems to me no more so than the sentiment of John xxi, 5. What *is* sordid (in the real, classical sense of “dirty,” as you might hear the word on a football field) is to shirk the challenge of Christian graciousness; yes, and of ordinary man-in-the-street fairness. Difficulties? Walls of Jericho and the empire of Darius!—a mere simulacrum of opposing difficulties! But I must stop—I shall be accused of substituting for logic what the American Universities solemnly study as “rhetoric.”

One final word of appreciation is due—to Mr. Tebbit, who was kind enough to be with us, and at whose suggestion I am writing this summary. Later on, with the Editor’s permission, I will give more particulars, particularly if further evidence of interest and concern is evoked.

L. T. COMBER,

(Great Yarmouth).

At the meeting referred to in the article the following resolution was unanimously passed: "Feeling that the question of greater equalisation of ministerial stipends is vitally associated with the spiritual condition of our churches, we urge every Fraternal throughout the country to discuss the question of formulating to this end a definite scheme likely to be accepted by the denomination as a whole."

HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION IN THE GOSPELS.

IS Mark's Gospel purely historical, or does it contain elements of interpretation reflecting the beliefs of the Early Church? This is the main question which Professor R. H. Lightfoot seeks to answer in his 1934 Bampton Lectures, which have just been published by Hodder and Stoughton at half a guinea. Dr. Lightfoot sketches the study of the Gospels up to the time when it was thought that the priority and historicity of Mark had been established. Wrede pointed out that much attention had been devoted to source-criticism, but less to historical

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evaluation. People used to pick and choose within the narrative, although the Gospels knew no such line of demarcation. We must, therefore, beware of identifying Mark's Gospel with facts as they occurred, and try to understand what the story meant to the evangelist and his purpose in relating. Wellhausen shortly afterwards laid down three propositions for the study of Mark. Mark is made up of little sections which at first had separate existence and were later joined, not necessarily in historical order, but rather in accordance with similarity of theme. They were subjected to revision before the Gospel reached its present form. Thirdly, Mark gives information about the life of Christ, and about the beliefs and circumstances of the Early Church at the time when the Gospel was written.

This line of thought was developed by the successors of Wrede and Wellhausen, and there came a change of view regarding the character of Mark's Gospel. Like the Fourth Gospel, it is the production of the Church, with definite doctrinal influence; and it is a compilation of materials of different date, origin, character and purpose, many of which may have had a history before being finally inserted. Accordingly in the last fifteen years a new method of studying the Gospels has arisen, which goes by the name of *Formgeschichte*, or *Form Criticism*. The new school, led by Dr. Martin Dibelius of Heidelberg, attempts to account for the existence of the Gospels without necessary reference to second-century traditions, and to work back, through various stages, to what was spoken and written in Palestine. The Early Church was not likely to have been literary at first, and memories of Jesus were handed down orally, valued mainly for their importance in solving problems of the young churches. There were two forms of traditions and they assumed fixed shape through repetition. Many of them, it is thought, are discernible in the Gospels, especially in Mark. The first form goes by the name of *apophthegm* or *paradigm*. The scene is a framework for an important utterance of Jesus. Any action of power is subordinate to the saying. The story is marked by simplicity and brevity, and issues in a suitable conclusion, rounding off the whole. The original shows no interest in biographical detail. The second form is a miracle story, or *Novelle*, as it is called. It gives a wealth of detail, and has no climax in a universal saying, as the emphasis is on the act of power. Jesus is the worker of supernatural deeds, not the proclaimer of an imminent king-

dom. The effect on witnesses, or on those who hear of the event, is strongly emphasised.

The author, after this lucid exposition of Form Criticism, examines the doctrine of Mark's Gospel, which is based on the fact that Jesus is Messiah. Mark tells his readers at the beginning that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and tries to set forth a narrative of His public life. But Jesus had not been generally recognised as Messiah on earth. This contradiction between outward fact and inward faith is accounted for by the secrecy ascribed to the Messiahship. The content and structure of Mark are then examined in the light of the main thesis.

A Passion Story, with notes of time and place, took shape as a connected whole earlier than the rest of Mark, and was probably an established tradition. In the story of the rent veil of the temple, the centurion's confession, the Last Supper and the night session of the Sanhedrin, allowance must be made for the influence of interpretation on the history. Similarly, Matthew and Luke were influenced, though in different ways. Again, all the synoptists see symbolical importance in the story of Jesus's rejection in the patris, though they do not interpret it in the same way.

Dr. Lightfoot concludes that the Gospels were written partly as a record, but mainly as a statement of what was valuable to the Christian society. Paul's Christology, especially the "kenosis" passage, has bearing on the interpretation of the Gospels, which are attempts to set forth the meaning of God's "speech" in a Son. As a result the Gospel becomes, in the author's words, almost a kind of mystery play, and the form of the earthly Christ is for the most part hidden from us.

The theory advanced is highly speculative, as the writer well knows, and some of the objections to the oral theory will be levelled against it. The historic Jesus is gone, or at any rate in a mist. The book is very valuable, however, for its exposition of Form Criticism, for its emphasis on the Cross, and for the relating of Paul to the Gospels. Dr. Lightfoot has done much to prove that Mark is not so purely historical as was once supposed.

RONALD A. WARD,
(Felixstowe).

THE MINISTER'S BOOKSHELF.

WE give first place this month to a book by one of our own members, and published within our own denomination. It is called *Light Your Beacons*, by Dr. F. Townley Lord (Carey Press, 2s. 6d.). Dr. Lord can write exact theology, as witness his D.D. thesis *The Unity of Soul and Body*; he can also write more popular works, such as *The Master and His Men* and *Man and His Character*. His latest book, however, comes under neither category. It is indeed a volume of talks to young people and is uniform with his earlier volume, in the same series, called *The Man in the Dark Room*. There are twenty-six addresses in all, and they are all off the beaten-track. Dr. Lord is obviously a very observant man, and many of these talks are based on what he himself has noticed. And they are all *usable*, which for most of us is the test of a good children's address. It may be safely said that no Baptist minister—or any other person who has to give addresses to children—will regret spending half-a-crown on this book.

We are all interested in psychology nowadays, even when—as some do—we affect an attitude of superiority towards the newest of the sciences. But as ministers we are not necessarily interested in every branch of the subject—apart from other considerations, we have not the time. We must of necessity, however, have some real concern to know something about the main contacts of psychology and religion, especially in the region of psychological healing. A recent book that will help us in this direction is *Religion and Psychotherapy*, by A. Graham Ikin, M.A., M.Sc. (Student Christian Movement Press, 3s. 6d.). Miss Ikin is both a lecturer on psychology and an expert practising psychologist, and in this book she deals with the very practical aspects of the subject, especially as they concern ministers and doctors. In fact, it is largely a plea for co-operation between these two, and also psychologists and educationalists, in the great task of enabling men and women to attain a healthy spiritual and physical life. The chapters on "Suggestion," "Some Mental Maladjustments," "Faith" and "Spiritual Healing" are extremely helpful—in fact the whole book is a very suggestive treatment of problems and questions that crop up in the experience of every one of us.

The name of Nicholas Berdyaev, the Russian philosopher, is rapidly becoming very well known to thoughtful people in

this country, as on the Continent. Its owner is a profound and original thinker who has already achieved considerable fame through his previous books *The End of our Time* and *The Meaning of History*, especially the first named. Quite recently he has written a kind of sequel to *The End of our Time*. It is called *The Fate of Man in the Modern World* and is published by the Student Christian Movement Press at 3s. 6d. Nicholas Berdyaev is very concerned about the modern situation, though he is not a pessimist, and attempts an analysis of the deeper movements of human life in the present age. "More keenly than ever," he says, "I feel that night and shadow are descending on the world, just as was the case at the beginning of the Middle Ages, before the mediæval Renaissance. But stars shine through and dawn is coming." Our age, as he sees it, is a time of crisis, a time when decisions of far-reaching import for the future of the race are being taken, some of them unconsciously. Nicholas Berdyaev raises a warning voice against the anti-personalistic and dehumanising tendencies of the absolute State, of the elaborate technique of the developing industrial system of civilisation, and of the growing mechanisation of human life and thought in almost every department; and both Fascism and Communism come in for some shrewd, yet vigorous, critical blows. The final chapter on "Culture and Christianity" may not be altogether to our liking in its criticisms of historic Christianity, but few of us will want to disagree with his thesis that "a new Christian piety must be revealed to our world. And upon this new Christian piety depends the fate of the world and that of man." Berdyaev has a touch of real genius in his intellectual make-up, and he has given us a great book in small compass—a book which none of us can afford to pass by.

Rev. F. Warburton Lewis, M.A., has already two excellent books to his credit, viz. *Jesus, Saviour of Men* and *Jesus of Galilee*, both of which are concerned with the Central Figure of the Christian Faith. His latest volume also makes Christ central and in a sense carries on the lines of thought of the previous works. It is entitled *The Christian Religion* (National Sunday School Union, 3s. 6d.), and its aim is "to see and expound that religion as it springs from its fount in Christ and becomes a life with God through Him, a life with God amid men on earth, culminating in an eternal city." Mr. Lewis has

a deep insight into human experience, an extensive knowledge of Scripture, and the pen of an attractive and ready writer. He has given us a book that we may well read ourselves and certainly can recommend to our young people.

Mr. Henry J. Cowell is known to us all as the Sub-Editor of the "Baptist Times." He is also known to many of us as an acknowledged expert in the realm of Protestant history and principles. In view of the forthcoming 250th anniversary celebrations of the Revocation of the famous Edict of Nantes, he has written an interesting and instructive little brochure entitled *The Edict of Nantes and Afterwards* (Lutterworth Press, 3d.). It tells in part the story of the Huguenots and of "The Church under the Cross," and helps us to realise how glorious is our Protestant heritage and how great an enemy of religious liberty fanatical Romanism can be. Mr. Cowell's useful little brochure may be obtained through any bookseller, but any minister sufficiently interested to send a three-halfpenny stamp to "Huguenot," c/o Kingsgate Press, 4, Southampton Row, W.C.1, will receive an autographed copy free of charge.

What is Patriotism? is the title of a very interesting symposium edited by N. P. MacDonald and published by Thornton Butterworth at 7s. 6d. No less than twenty-one men and women undertake to set forth the answer to this very provoking and even disturbing question, and they represent almost every major "walk of life." To many people patriotism is nothing more than "the last refuge of a scoundrel"; to others it is a synonym for the most exclusive and narrow nationalism; to yet others it is one of the noblest sentiments that can nourish the human spirit. In this "omnibus" attempt to answer the question, the Churches are represented by Dr. J. E. C. Welldon, Father C. C. Martindale and Miss Maud Royden. The three political parties also have their champions; so have the three "services." Mr. C. E. M. Joad writes as a philosopher, and Prof. A. M. Low as a scientist. Lord Davies presents "An International View," Lady Cynthia Asquith "A Woman's View." There are also the views of the Young Man, the Man-in-the-Street, the Economist, the Historian, etc. It is altogether a very stimulating and informing volume, and can be recommended without reserve.

JOHN PITTS.