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POLITICIANS OR PROPHETS?

CAPTAIN BALFOUR, Under Secretary for Air, addressing an after-lunch gathering in London, demanded a policy of constant ruthlessness in the prosecution of the war. Speaking of the future, he added: "Already we can see an orgy of controversy as to how we should deal with the Hun after the war. Some leaders of ecclesiastical and political thought have told us that we must not hate the German. But every German who lent himself to Nazi rule must bear his share of guilt. Let there be justice, but let it be tempered with memory—and a devil of a lot of memory."

It is not for us to discuss the terms of peace, but the Under-Secretary may take it for granted that ecclesiastics of Baptist persuasion are not likely to take a lead from the negative and threatening remarks of an after-lunch politician. As hearts become increasingly embittered, more of this talk is likely to be heard. Granted that retribution is necessary, there is a world of difference between retribution and revenge. The prophet of the Lord is he who has the vision to discriminate between the two, and who has the courage to speak the vision forth. The soul of Britain will be saved alive, but the man to do the job is not the politician with a devil in his memory but the prophet with the grace of God in his heart.

We hope that the inference of the speech may be true, and that Britain may gain such a victory as to be able to dictate

the terms of peace. There is, however, another possibility—that Russia may be the chief instrument in the defeat of Germany; in that case a different situation will obtain. With Communism triumphant in Russia, resurgent in Germany and France, and more than a little alive in Britain, a Communism atheistic at the core, the path to peace will be complicated indeed.

On the other hand, it may well be that the dominant voice in the settlement of peace conditions may come from the other side of the Atlantic.

Whatever the situation, it is certain that a negative policy of vengeance is futile, and the only aim worthy of a Christian nation is a post-war world where the ordinary man, whether German, Italian, Russian, British, or American, may have his just and equal opportunity. It is the vision of such a world which we as ministers must keep in our own hearts and in the hearts of those to whom we speak.

Perhaps a final word on this matter is that the whole situation impels the feeling that we are in the grip of mighty world movements which are beyond the wit of unaided man to control. If the Prophet cannot see the way ahead, he can at least point the people to the God who alone can guide the hearts of men and make present calamities to serve His glory and the good of the whole human family.

THE OBJECTIVE ELEMENT IN THE ATONEMENT.

THREE seems to be a deep-seated instinct that demands an "objective" interpretation of the Atonement. When we ask: "What is the Gospel?" the answer is not simply "God is love." That is indubitably the basis of the Gospel, but the Gospel itself is defined in the words: "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." And it is the interpretation of that little word "for" that gives rise to all the difference of opinion.

All theories of the Atonement that have any claim to consideration agree in making the Cross of Christ central for man's salvation but there is a feeling that "subjective" theories—that the Cross is simply the supreme revelation of the saving love of God—are not simply inadequate to the Biblical language about the Cross, but in particular fail to make a real connection between Christ's death and the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. When we hear a simple Christian fervently thank God that "Jesus paid it all," we feel that there is something there

in harmony with the persistent survival of "objective" conceptions and with the language of Scripture.

Yet examination makes all purely substitutionary and penal views untenable. Not merely does the modern conscience revolt from the idea that God punished Jesus, but the Socinian and other criticisms are really unanswerable. The penal views prove too much. I once heard an evangelist earnestly assure his hearers that "God cannot demand the same penalty twice." To which the natural rejoinder rose in the mind: "Then why worry?" If the substitutionary atonement of Christ paid the penalty for the sins of all mankind, then all are saved and there is no need to preach. And God's salvation is no more of grace, but of law.

Hence there has been a return to views either subjective or objective of another type. Bishop Aulen has recently defended the "classical" interpretation of the Cross as God's victory in His Son over sin, death, and the Devil, for which he claims the merits that it makes God the sole author of salvation, transcends the legalism of the "God-ward" theories, in which man offers some satisfaction to Divine honour or justice, and restores the note of triumph to Christianity. He claims Luther as being in the classical rather than the Anselmic tradition, but as giving a profounder interpretation of it by including the Law and the Wrath of God among the enemies from which Christ has delivered.

This is certainly true to some aspects of New Testament doctrine, particularly that of Paul, as, for example, in Colossians. But all theories claim a Scriptural basis, and the "classical" view as thus interpreted, where it is not mythological, involves a very difficult conception of Christ's action in "humanity," apart from any operation in the hearts of individual men. As R. S. Franks says: "Humanity is but an abstract name for all those human individuals Christ came to save, each of whom is a moral personality"; and he quotes the objection of William of Ockham: "How then can human nature be saved in Peter and damned in Judas?" This difficulty is partly but not altogether met by insistence on the continuation of Christ's redemptive work through the Spirit who unites men with God and reconciles them individually to Him. The difficulty is inherent in all theories which construe the matter in terms other than those of personal relations.

This is, in fact, recognised by those who offer a modified form of the penal theory. Even Dale, whose masterly analysis

of Scripture and tremendous moral earnestness have done so much to maintain the necessity of an "objective" atonement, and who uses penal language freely throughout, "in his last chapters makes some suggestions from a very different standpoint, not easy to reconcile with the penal pre-suppositions of the rest of his book. In attempting to describe the relationship which the phrase 'In Christ' denotes, Dale lapses, in a not very lucid manner, into mysticism. And just so far as his language becomes mystical the substitutionary element seems to vanish out of his theory, and his emphasis is placed on the essential unity of our life with that of Christ." (Grensted: *A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 318). Denney, arguing for a propitiatory interpretation of the Cross in his sermon to the Baptist Missionary Society in 1911, uses the illustration of a husband who deeply wounds his wife's love and in proportion to the fineness of her nature hurts her more than he can comprehend. There is no reconciliation, but after a time the offender begins to forgive himself. "That is what often happens.... But sometimes what takes place is quite different, far more wonderful, far more divine. There is in such an experience a real reconciliation, in which the offender does not forgive himself, but is forgiven. And what is the peculiarity of this experience, by which it is differentiated from the other? It is this: the centre of moral interest is transferred at once from the offender to the offended. The centre of passion by which sin is overcome is not in the sinner, however pure and deep his repentance may be; it is in the purer and diviner spirit which has borne his sin and is forgiving it."

Here, in the language not of penal substitution but of personal moral relations, is the heart of the doctrine of the Atonement. Here is something "objective," but not legalistic, something capable of being expressed adequately in the theories often dismissed as "subjective."

In any "moral influence"—or, to use Frank's expression, "experimental"—theory which does justice to the Incarnation such a conception of Christ's atoning work can be set forth. It is true that a vicarious confession of sin (in Macleod Campbell's phrase), or Moberley's "vicarious penitence" may be strictly as impossible as vicarious guilt or punishment; but they are true to aspects of human experience, and harmonise with Denney's illustration. "Do you know," said William Morris, "when I see

a poor devil drunk and brutal, I always feel, apart from aesthetic perception, a sort of shame, as if I myself had a hand in it?" In the same sense as a mother or wife may feel shame, sorrow, and anguish for the misdeeds of son or husband, her redemptive suffering may also be described as penal, since it is the direct consequence of sin. Just in proportion as she loves she must suffer to forgive; must take the poisoned barbs of sin and crush them into her own bosom, or the spirit of forgiveness cannot have free course. So in an infinitely deeper sense Christ's love, which is God's love, is not merely revealed, but released, with saving power, subduing the heart to penitence and trust. Objections to the "subjective" view of the Atonement often imply that the revelation of God's love in Christ is thought of merely as the unveiling of something static, instead of the release of something dynamic. If "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," He was "doing" something within the realm of moral and spiritual relations that was far more than merely "subjective"—something for which the most daring language of Scripture about Christ being "made sin" or "bearing the curse" is not too bold.

W. HOLMS COATS.

FINALITIES.

JOHN OMAN, in his last book entitled "Honest Religion," heads one of his chapters with the above title. The whole book is a convincing vindication of intellectual freedom in religion as well as impressive testimony to the author's own sincere reverence for all that is lovely and of good report. The material destruction brought by the war of which many of us have had first-hand experience, and the natural tendency in such times to seek for the abiding and the eternal amid the ruthless shaking of things temporal, cannot but stimulate any thoughtful mind to a reconsideration of the religious finalities wherein both mind and spirit may find a true serenity.

Oman mentions three wherein men have sought rest; fixed organisations, fixed ideals, fixed theologies.

It is a commonplace these days to assert that the Church's external forms of organisation are relative to their age and environment, and are in no way sacrosanct. Yet it seems to me that wrong conclusions are frequently drawn from this, in my view, legitimate assumption. There is, for example, the belief, very sincerely held by many, that the main challenge to the Christian Church in our day and generation is to achieve or

regain its unity, as one flock with one Shepherd, a unity to be expressed not only in the common apprehension of the same spiritual realities, but in one comprehensive ecclesiastical organisation. It has always seemed to me—and I speak, I hope, as a good Baptist—that if this is our ideal of what the outward form of Christian fellowship should be, then the Roman Catholic Church has a very good claim to supply this need. One cannot help feeling that this attitude implies assumptions, perhaps unconsciously made, which are not self-evident. One is that the fusion of external forms of religious organisation will of itself guarantee a quickening of true faith in the individual heart and mind. No one advocates reunion simply because of the increased efficiency or the economic advantages, but because it is believed to be a step forward in the advancement of the Kingdom. Yet history seems to offer very little support for this linking of close-knit organisation with religious spontaneity and vitality. Is there not as much to be said for the contrary view that a true religious revival in this country would lead to greater institutional variety rather than less, as in the great days of the Protestant Reformation? Since when has fresh spiritual life come into the world from corporate bodies, and have the world's pioneers in religion, science, or art ever waited for the lead of organised bodies before pressing forward into new realms? This should make us beware of the somewhat naive hope that Christ can be uplifted in our day by a sweeping reorganisation of the Church's institutional life, however desirable and expedient this may be from other points of view. Is it not a fact also that we have all been influenced, whether we like it or not, by events in modern Europe, and that the swift action of the totalitarian States, where the one party is dominant, has compelled our reluctant envy, and that we secretly see ourselves acting with the same energy and impressiveness, only in a Christian way, and that we think this will be possible if we are united? Yet the Christian Church can never play these people at their own game unless we are prepared to adopt their methods, which the Roman Church has done, or rather has anticipated them, with its highly centralized monarchy served by a bureaucracy of loyal bishops and priests. We Baptists turned our backs on that solution of the problem centuries ago, and it does not seem to me progress to go back to it.

This is not to say that the principles implicit in believers' baptism can be adequately safeguarded only by the present form

which religious independency has taken in the Baptist churches of our time; perhaps a more pressing task than the union of the Free Churches is for us Baptists to make our own polity more expressive of our basic convictions.

What of fixed ideals and fixed theologies? Here again there is a danger of thinking that the way of spiritual renewal is by retracing our steps. We are to "return" to Calvin or Aquinas or some other notable Christian thinker of the past for our theology. It is rarely true that the way forward is to go back, and it is extremely doubtful whether we can ever return to these men in the sense of making their particular theological formulation of God's revelation to us in Christ the dominant mental framework for the thinking of the modern man. Perhaps we are truer to their deepest purpose when we strive to do for our own day, in our own way, and employing our own categories of thought what they did for theirs. While no man would wish to deny the prophetic zeal or the brave Christian piety of Karl Barth, it remains to be seen whether he has done a real service to the cause of Christianity on the Continent by driving such a deep wedge between secular culture and God's saving word to us in Christ. We can never be satisfied with such a sharp antithesis unless we are to give up the hope that the kingdoms of this world may one day become the Kingdom of our God, and surely we must work for this as our ultimate goal, even if the Kingdom awaits its perfected expression in that realm beyond death, where all the generations of men and women who have passed through this life enter into the joy of their Lord.

R. F. ALDWINCKLE.

IF I HAD MY TIME OVER AGAIN.

IF I had my time over again I would be a Baptist minister. I know, from 43 years' experience, that a pastor's life is not a bed of roses. The office has its special temptations, difficulties, and disappointments, but there are joys and compensations that outweigh all the things which depress. As I review the disappointments of the past I have to admit that I have been my own greatest disappointment. I have not done all I set out to do or expected to achieve. It is possible that, if I had my time over again, old mistakes would be repeated, and perhaps worse ones made; but that does not preclude speculation concerning what one would wish to do and be if the opportunity were again

given, especially as such speculation, set down by me here, may be of help to some who are just entering upon the ministry.

1. I would pray with greater earnestness that God would implant within me a worthy motive in all my preaching and pastoral work. "Zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of men"—the great motives which are required of those about to be ordained to the Scottish ministry—would be, I trust, my chief inducement. Lower motives are possible, especially in our pulpit work, and from these I would ask to be delivered, especially from an exaggerated respect for man's opinions, and a desire for self-glorification.

2. I would give more attention to the cultivation of my own spiritual life. Dr. Rushbrooke has told us that the central message of the Atlanta Congress was that "only changed men can make a new world." If that is true of men generally, it is specially true of those who are in the Christian ministry. Our mission is to be leaders in the making of a new world, and our chief qualification is to be new men ourselves, changed men, not only in the sense of that changed attitude which we call conversion, but in the sense of that progressive change known as sanctification—"changed into the same image from glory to glory." This will not happen inevitably, even in our experience, but only as "with unveiled face we behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord." For such a transformation we must take time. We must have ample opportunity for prayer in private, not allowing anything to break in upon our tryst with God. Fellowship with our Lord is essential to our power and influence and the secret of inward serenity and courage. It is also the condition of that Christly personality which is needed for the reinforcement of our preaching. So if I had my time over again, I hope I should realise, more than ever, the absolute necessity of taking full time for prayer and Bible study, reading not simply to find texts for sermons, but to nourish my own soul. I would pray that it be not true of me "they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept."

3. I would try to exercise more self-control and tact in dealing with my people, especially when presiding at church meetings or deacons' meetings. We have in all our churches those who still retain, together with their saintliness, much of the old Adam, and sometimes we have to contend with stupid

and sensitive individuals who try our patience sorely. Even the most godly among us ministers are human, and it behoves us all to watch carefully lest we, by fretfulness of temper or tactlessness of speech, accentuate any bad feeling that may have been engendered by the awkwardness of some cross-grained church member. Wise words and a Christian persuasiveness on our part may do much towards calming any rising storm. We can so easily say the injudicious word, especially if we find it hard to suffer fools gladly. We can just as easily, remembering our own frailties, seek to cast oil upon the troubled waters.

4. I would be more assiduous and discriminating in pastoral visitation. Preaching is all important; visiting the flock is hardly less important if a man is to fulfil his ministry. Only, as I say, the visiting must be done with judgment. I would avoid partiality and endeavour to resist the temptation to restrict my calls to people who were specially pleasant and friendly. I would pay particular attention to the sick, the bereaved, and the troubled. I would make a point of seeing newcomers in their homes. Finally, I would avoid that kind of visit which begins and ends with useless gossip, but would seek opportunity to make the occasion a means of grace.

5. More diligence in preparing for the conduct of public worship should be given. I would prepare my sermons as thoroughly as possible, and deliver them in such a way that they would be audible, exegetical, evangelical, concise, and arresting. I would not regard what are called the preliminaries as things of less account than the sermon. I would not be afraid of doctrinal preaching. I would give it at least as large a place in my ministering as I would the topical and ethical. Further; I would avoid that pulpit exaggeration which consists of harping too much on a pet theme, such as Divine Sovereignty (belittling human responsibility) or the Second Coming of Christ (making the present age of small account). I would like to be able to say with Paul "I have not shunned to declare the *whole* counsel of God."

6. I would restrict the number of those public and social engagements which lie outside our immediate church work. There may be opportunities for service on Education Authorities, Public Assistance Committees, and such like. We should, if possible, take advantage of these opportunities, as representatives of the Free Churches, as well as for the sake of the good work we may do. Still, our regular work comes first, and we must

not allow things of minor importance to take too much of our time.

7. Finally, if I had my time over again I would more constantly encourage myself by a whole-hearted belief in the promises of God concerning the success which must surely attend the efforts of every faithful servant of God. Too often we have grown despondent because results have not been visible. Yet all the time the promises of God have been on record—"Ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord," and "We shall reap if we faint not." Speaking for myself, I should have had much more happiness in preaching and fewer of those after-Sunday feelings of frustration had I believed these promises without doubt.

Ah, if I had my time over again; but there is no second chance.

H. SPENDELOW.

ON SLOVENLINESS IN THE PULPIT.

I KNOW a man who last year was invited to prepare a series of radio talks. They were to be translated into a foreign language and broadcast for propagandist purposes. And because the subject of these talks was one to which the man in question had given years of study, and because, moreover, the general theme lent itself to the expansive treatment of the principles of our democratic faith, the invitation was accepted. But enthusiasm for the task gave way to dismay when instructions were received that the time limit allowed for each talk was five minutes. "You must please," he was told, "compress what you have to say into 600 words." On the other hand, the talk must *be* a talk, not a bald recital of summarised facts; it must be unhurried and facile and leave upon the hearers the impression not of a vehement and laboured essay but of an easy conversational comment—a "story," not a homily. How was this to be done? What was to be the technique? How could one say anything worth broadcasting to the ends of the earth on any of the great principles of democracy within the compass of 600 words? And here I am able to supply the sequel in the writer's own words:—

In my perplexity I thought of the Parables of Jesus, and began to study them with my own particular problem in mind. And I found them miracles of compression, yet so perfect in craftsmanship that there is no appearance of compression at all. For example, the Parable of the Prodigal Son is told (in the Greek) in less than 400 words. I next

sought the secret of this verbal economy, and I found that while the *verbs* were quick and powerful there was hardly an adjective or an adverb in the whole story! How seldom an adjective is used in any of the recorded discourses of Jesus, and therefore how effective it is when it is called in!

I am tempted to prolong the quotation, but it is enough to say that the "talks" were written and broadcast, some twenty or thirty of them, and that a Department official, complimenting their author on his technique, wrote: "They read like little parables." And well they might!

Now I suspect that all this has some application to our sermon preparation! We may regret that the spacious days when ministers could preach for an hour or more are gone by, and it is possible to argue that the brevity imposed upon the modern preacher discourages any attempt at expounding the great themes of the Faith. Who could expound the doctrine of the Holy Trinity or the Incarnation or Justification by Faith in a quarter of an hour? Much can be said on this side, but our friend's experience with his five-minute talks suggests a different reflection. I remember that when Arthur Hird commissioned a writer well known to me to write a certain book, he said: "Make it a MSS. of 100,000 words and then sweat it down to 50,000." Sweat it down! Probably many of our sermons would be the better for that process. Whenever Alexander Whyte re-preached a sermon he abbreviated it.

Let us confess it: many of us are apt to be slovenly in our style. We waste time by prolixity; we clutter up our affirmations with overlapping clauses and verbal impedimenta. We multiply our adjectives and adverbs, our "veries" and "extremities," sprinkle our discourses with wearisome *clichés*, or even descend to that last vice of the untidy thinker and speaker in which everything becomes "sort of" this or "sort of" that. I heard (in America) a once world-famous preacher who began or concluded every other paragraph of his discourse with the protestation: "I am most profoundly convinced." Surely it would have been enough to say: "I am convinced." The verbal loud pedal cannot be put on continuously without losing its effect. Mendelssohn got more powerful effects than Sousa.

Someone has suggested it is time we had a World Controller, who should be empowered to issue licences (like driving licences) to all writers and public speakers, and that all found using to-day such expressions as "*vital necessity*," "*serious con-*

sideration," "*virtually* surrounded," or what not, should have their licences either cancelled or endorsed. And what about those preachers who must always speak of "storm *and* stress," "stress *and* strain," careless *and* indifferent. A while ago almost everything and everybody were "at the cross-roads"; to-day everybody and everything is being "challenged" or is "facing up to" a "crisis." Nothing could be more true, but the repetitive use of these smooth-worn and pointless expressions betrays the lazy mind.

One hardly dares to think of the vice of slovenliness in public prayer, the circumlocutions and verbal perambulations, the false eloquence and redundancy of expression that so easily beset us. How good it would be for us all to put ourselves to school to the clean and strenuous devotional English of Cranmer, or, better still, if we bethought us of the Lord's Prayer as our model! When I was a village pastor at Morcott, near Uppingham, my old friend, the Rev. J. T. Swift, took me aside one day and asked me if I prepared my pulpit prayers. I hastened, with some sense of offended virtue, to assure him I did no such thing. "But you prepare your sermons," he said, "why not your prayers too? In your sermons you are speaking for God to the people; in your prayers you are speaking for the people to God. Both, I should think, call for preparation." Another time he gave me this: "Whet your scythe before you begin to mow." GWILYM O. GRIFFITH.

"THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL."

THE Duke of Wellington said that his constant concern was what the man on the other side of the hill was thinking. That, too, is the concern of every minister, and the path over the hill is hard to find. The opportunity has come to me, during the last eighteen months, of making that journey. The way over the hill was the way into a camp. The men have been drawn together from every stratum of society. They have found in their new contacts freedom for exchanging their views and expressing their thoughts, and they have made me welcome to join their groups around a fire while they have talked frankly of the kind of world they hope to see when this business is over. Inevitably the talk has turned to religious subjects, and then I have found I was over the hill biding awhile with the folk who lived there. The experience has been both bewilderingly disconcerting and surprisingly encouraging. This kind of journey has been no con-

ducted tour, such as we have suffered from newspaper articles; it has been finding one's way to some cottage fireside and listening to the common man tell his common tale.

I want briefly to refer to three strains of thought and to confess right away that I shall be guilty of the sin of generalisation.

First, I have found out something of what they think yonder of the Church. It is disconcerting to discover what little hold the Church has, how little men understand about the Church, and how small a place it holds in their minds as a factor in shaping a better world order. I have met "our ain folk" there, men from our churches who fear not to make their witness; but then they were from my side of the hill. It does not matter what Church one has in mind; Church in this reference is a generic term. One fact about the Church is without rhyme or reason—that is, that the Church which claims loyalty to One Lord appears to face the world split up into irreconcilable, and, it is asserted competitive sections. Now, we believe that we do not stand at the judgment bar of the world; we "commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Therefore we do not think we are called upon to explain our divisions, and we do not believe that, because men say this is a stumbling block, that it is so. There may be adequate reasons and variety may be the sign of virility. We must, however, reckon with the fact that in our appeal for loyalty to Christ and His Church, we shall hear the question as I have heard it, Which Church?

There has flashed through my mind, as I have overheard these comments, the significant text in John's gospel, "And the high priest asked Jesus of his doctrine and his disciples."

There is to be recorded an unexpected encouragement. The same men who will tell you they have no use for the Church will loudly, and genuinely, affirm a kindly feeling toward "parsons." This speaks well for the work of the chaplains, and many of them are doing yeoman service. It points back also to the days spent in "Civvie Street," especially when "Civvie Street" was bombed. This is suggestive that what matters in evangelism is not the institution which supports it, not, at first, the doctrine which is proclaimed, but the witness of a life which endorses the message of the saving love of God.

Secondly, it is disconcerting to discover the ignorance which prevails of the simple elements of the gospel message. This is a

reminder of the slight hold of the Church, and is a reflection on the educational system of the past few decades.

Speaking generally, with all the perils in so doing, the idea seems to be that the Church stands committed to an outworn doctrine with a policy of a closed mind to all modern thought, is mainly concerned with a problematic future with the prospect of unattractive bliss, is unconcerned with the pressure of material needs and the existence of obvious social injustices, is opposed to all hearty fun and laughter, and is out of touch with life. No one seems to have heard that the Church preaches a gospel of good news. Even here, though, one discovers encouragement. In very few cases is there doubt expressed about the reality of God; of providence perhaps, but not of God. I have met only two atheists, and they had no support from the rest of the group. The fact of God is taken for granted. I do not suggest that this is a reasoned conclusion; it is an intuition, the one thing which makes it possible for a man to preserve his sanity in a world like this. The need of this age—and here the encouragement grows stronger—is to discover, or rediscover, the reinforcement of the spiritual potencies of life. One fact must be noted; the Church is not blamed for the war; men can hardly blame an institution they have discarded; that blame rests upon the politicians. The ferment seems to mean that this is a day of judgment on a way of life or, as the men say, on an inadequate social system, and in some vague way God is related to that judgment. In the re-adjustment that is called for there is a demand, not so much for new systems as for a new type of citizenship, and therefore for a new way of life. That will involve the realisation of values, the functioning of the new spiritual qualities, and the present ferment is concerned with securing such an issue, that out of this travail men and women shall live worthily in a worth-while world.

The third strain is concerned with how such citizenship is to be realised. The main hope is education, and it is readily admitted that the idea and the end of education needs revision. It was never enough to train children to become efficient technicians; they have to be trained for citizenship. The old way of educating a boy only to earn his living was to submit him to the tyranny of money-power, and money power has to be broken. I have heard that said again and again with a strength of conviction that is impressive, though I have never been successful in discovering all that is meant by the expression.

If this is a moment of judgment, then God is related to all this ferment, and the question arises as to how men are to find God; it is never supposed that God will find them, as we believe.

We answer that God is to be found seeking men in Christ, and Christ is to be found in the Church. But that talk about the Church falls on stony ground, and the talk about Jesus is rather mystifying. I have found a widespread notion that the story of our Lord is a myth and that we "parsons" know that, and have hidden the secret in our breasts.

There is need for a new order of apologists to do for our generation what the apologists did for the second and third centuries.

This hope of redemption by education faces the awkward problem of human nature. Can you educate human nature? Or must it be regenerated? The Educationalists confess to their haunting fear, and there are enough men in a group to remind them that Germany was an educated country. There is no attempt to evade the issue, and it is pathetic to listen to the way in which the curriculum is to be altered so as to educate children in comradeship and courage and in an idealism of service. The schoolmaster is to drive out the devil who makes greed and fear the servants of his evil will. And the men frankly do not think him adequate to the job, and neither do we, for we never thought that was their job.

"Ah," sighed a man to me at the end of a long discussion on this very topic, "you can't have God in the world unless you have God in your heart." So much for my discoveries. I do not doubt the efficacy of the gospel, or the power of the love of God. How can we persuade these folk on the other side of the hill? Just now they are like sheep without a shepherd. There will be other pastures they will seek if they find not the "Green Pastures" of the "Good Shepherd."

My one shining hope is that kindly feeling towards parsons and that because some of our brethren have acted the brother. May we not take heart at that, and go forth to adventurous evangelism, seeking, serving, saving, in the footsteps of our Master who went forth seeking, though the quest took Him to a Cross? He made credible to men the love of God the Father. It is that love which will educate and regenerate, if we can only bring men to believe in it and to trust Him who loves. It is possible to have worthy men and women in a worth-while world, and every crisis of history sharpens that possibility.

J. O. HAGGER.

A PADRE REFLECTS.

A C.F. has a double commission. He is commissioned by the King and given fairly high rank. Some feel that he should not be given officer status. I entirely disagree. Often his standing as an officer enables him to give more effective help to the men, and if anyone suggests that the wearing of officer's uniform creates a barrier between Chaplain and men I would reply that the esteem of the men depends on the kind of man the Chaplain shows himself to be in his dealing with them, and on nothing else.

But the Padre must ever remember that he is commissioned also by the King of Kings, and his supreme tasks are to win new recruits for that greatest of all armies and to strengthen those already in its ranks. It is not always easy to be absolutely loyal to this second commission. The fellowship of the Church and of brother ministers is often sadly missed; office work is pressing; private devotions can be neglected; it can be argued that the atmosphere of a Sunday Parade service is not conducive to impassioned preaching; it can also be argued that the atmosphere of the mess does not always tend to deepen one's spiritual life. But such difficulties and temptations must be overcome, and the Padre must remind himself that if he is merely an officer of the King and not also an ambassador of the Christ, then, judged by the truest standards, he is a failure.

What are the opportunities of winning men for Christ? They are strictly limited. If a man has not decided for Christ before joining up, it is not easy to get him to do so afterwards, unless he can be reached almost the moment he enters upon his new life. Here let me speak a word to my brother ministers at home. When a boy leaves your church for active service write to the Chaplain of his unit without delay. Such prompt action may mean the saving of a soul. When a boy goes to his first camp his emotions are deeply stirred. He has left behind his home, his loved ones; the life before him is entirely new. Usually he feels strange, lonely; then is the Padre's great chance to be a friend, a counsellor, pointing the way to that knowledge which is Life Eternal. But let the boy be overlooked during those first few days, then, having no firm anchorage, he easily drifts with the crowd and the Padre's chance is gone.

There are other opportunities, but they are limited. A Padre has many jobs and makes many contacts. Men come to him for advice on all manner of subjects. Sometimes he is able

tactfully to lead the conversation on to deeper things. Then there is preaching, but judged by the number of conversions the results are disappointing. The Padre may pour out his heart in the sermon, and afterwards wait expectantly, but only in exceptional circumstances does a man come forward and profess allegiance to Christ as a result of the preaching. These circumstances are, I believe, found more often in battle areas than elsewhere. I well remember a service I held one Sunday morning during the dark days of withdrawal in France. For several nights we had been moving back under cover of darkness and were tired. That Sunday morning I announced a service on the village green. To my surprise nearly everyone attended. Perhaps they felt as I felt, that with the enemy pressing ruthlessly on we were not very far from that narrow borderland which divides time from eternity. Afterwards a young officer came and shook me by the hand and said simply: "Thanks a lot, Parson, that Peace is for me." And I knew he meant it.

Would that there were more such experiences. I have been forced to the conclusion that, whilst ever on the watch for souls, the Padre nevertheless finds that his main task is the building up of those who are already of the Faith. This is done in many ways—at the Sunday evening service, attendance at which is voluntary; at the Bible study meeting; by inviting men home, if he is fortunate enough to have a home near the camp; by introducing them to Christian families in the district, and to the nearest church of their own denomination. All this, I feel, is worth while, but it touches only those men who have been trained in the Sunday schools and churches at home and are already surrendered to Christ.

I wish I could close by saying that the attitude of the men in the Forces to religion is encouraging, but that would scarcely be true to facts. In the main there are three types of men—those who follow Christ and who, amid many difficulties, witness nobly; those who are interested in religion, but who, when pressed, declare that their interest is only intellectual; and finally there are those who are definitely not interested, and in some cases even antagonistic. This last class is probably in the minority, but their presence in a camp is very noticeable.

So there are disappointments and difficulties for the Padre as he goes about his work; but when has the task of the Christian minister ever been easy? Thank God there are encouragements too. I recently left one station to begin work at another. We

were having a prayer meeting at the old station. One boy, a grand young Christian, scorning the usual phraseology, prayed thus: "Thank you God, for our Padre; you've helped him to help us all." I will treasure the memory of that prayer!

What of the future? When the chaos and tragedy of war have been left behind, what then? What of our churches? Will they be able to face up to the new situation? Neither time nor space will permit a detailed answer, but I will declare my faith. I know that Christ cannot fail. I know that revival must come. I pray that it may come in my day and in my heart.

O. F. M. CAMPBELL.

ERSATZ ETHICS.

WAR-TIME has familiarised us with all manner of substitutes. The disappearance of the genuine article has led to the discovery of innumerable alternatives which profess to be "just as good." It is a process which has been carried to greater lengths in Germany than in other lands, so that they have Ersatz rubber, leather, and cloth, and in diet Ersatz coffee, butter, etc. But it is in the moral realm that this principle has been applied most widely; and though Germany has no monopoly in Ersatz productions it has adopted them on a larger scale than any other country.

We are inevitably possessed by the war, and the mad career of German leaders has fascinated us. We had thought of Ethics as a science securely based, so that it came as a surprise to find that in this field also alternatives were being presented, first to the German people and then to the rest of the world. We have frequently observed how the patience of Hitler has been strained to the breaking point, and have been profoundly affected by his sobs. A leader longing to bless mankind has found his benevolent purposes constantly frustrated by a wild mob of Jews, Freemasons, and bloated plutocrats. It is a spectacle for gods and men.

Let us look into this phenomenon more closely. It would manifestly be a great gain if all Germans could be persuaded to think alike, provided that it was the way the Fuehrer wanted them to think.

A decade ago the variety of opinions prevailing in Germany made unity seem impossible. Yet unless all spoke with one voice

Germany could not hope to rise from the dust, which was the alleged reason for the suppression of all parties except the National Socialists. This, however, had the unfortunate effect of damping down all enthusiasm and sapping all energy. Only great ideals could furnish the nation with the requisite dynamic. The mind that directs the Nazi movement had to determine what ideals would accomplish this end. What appealed to the working classes left the capitalists cold, and without their support the sinews of war would be lacking. The Socialists could provide the fervour and drive and so were essential. Clearly the movement must bear the appearance of Socialism. To win capitalistic support it must also profess to be National. Until the capitalists were fully committed, and their resources placed at the disposal of the party, the Socialist voice must be reduced to pianissimo. The Nationalist flag having been waved and the requisite funds secured, enthusiasm was turned on to revolutionary ideals. The party was designated National Socialist, ignoring the contradiction involved.

In all this the real motive was kept out of sight. What the Nazis really wanted was control of the machinery of government, domination and power. This was a secret known only to the inner circle. Before the masses great ideals were flourished, such as were likely to move them. Numbers of Germans living in surrounding lands were happy enough with their neighbours. They must be persuaded that they were suffering from great injustices. So Hitler's heart bled for them, and the slogan was adopted of "the rights of minorities." To plead the rights of minorities seemed so worthy an aim that no person with a sense of fair play could possibly object. Hitler repudiated the suggestion that he was out only for power; he did not want any people not of German blood. People would make sacrifices for so fine an ideal. Of course the professed ideal was not the real motive; it was only a bit of Ersatz ethics useful in the pursuit of power. When it had served its purpose it could easily be discarded for some other equally useful slogan.

While this short paper is concerned to exhibit the use of Ersatz ethics by the Nazis, its main purpose is to expose the subtlety of the plan and the ease with which we ourselves fall into similar practices. It is almost fatally easy to cover up sordid aims with a mask of high-sounding purposes. We claim admiration for the loftiness of our intentions, when if the truth were known we should be scorned as low-down cads. Religious

history can furnish us with many instances of play-acting, and the Pharisees who for a pretence made long prayers were not the first pretenders; nor will the Nazis be the last. Who has not laughed at Bunyan's pungent description of Messrs. By-Ends, Money-Love, and Hold-the-World? "Suppose a minister, a worthy man, possessed of but a very small benefice, and has in his eye a greater, more fat and plump by far; he has also now an opportunity of getting it, and because the temper of the people requires it, by altering some of his principles: for my part I see no reason why a man may not do this, provided he has a call, etc." The call is the mask, the money is the object. We would have men think that we are moved by lofty enthusiasms, but the real motive power comes from a lower region of which we are ashamed.

Pascal made great play with the teaching of the Jesuits, as in the case of the Father who explained: "I am anxious to show you how we have smoothed the use of the sacraments, and particularly of penance. It is here that the benignity of our Fathers shines in truest splendour; and you will really be astonished to find that devotion, a thing which the world is so apt to boggle at, should have been treated by our doctors with such consummate skill that, to use the words of Father le Moigne in his *Devotion Made Easy*, 'demolishing the bugbear which the devil has placed at its threshold, they have rendered it easier than vice and more agreeable than pleasure.' Is not that a marvellous change now?"

The present international conflict is really one of ethical ideals. The worth of sincerity is being tested and displayed. The Duke of Wellington in other days said that Napoleon was bound to fail because his despatches were full of lies. He was a true prophet and to-day would say the same of Hitler and for the same reason. Though lies may provide an initial advantage the ultimate issue is never really in doubt. The courage inspired by falsehood yields to terrible reaction when the truth becomes manifest. "Magna est veritas et praevalebit." The debacle may be postponed but cannot be averted.

If lies are useless on the international scale so are they on the individual and personal one. Our whole system of conventional and business falsehoods is ultimately doomed. We wonder that Hitler so often gets away with it; but we ought to be more surprised at our own eternal readiness to be taken in.

Satan never appears in public except when fashioned as an angel of light. Looking deeper into the heart of things, we are amazed how God can overrule the weakness and error of men. "Beata culpa" said the fathers when they contemplated the glorious salvation in which it issued. It is the supreme moral achievement to discern clearly through all shadows; and when the Beatific vision is granted we perceive that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

R. C. FORD.

A CONFERENCE ON ANGLO-AMERICAN POST-WAR RELATIONS.

IT is impossible adequately to summarise in a limited space a conference whose speakers included such intellectuals as Sir Arthur Eddington, Vera Brittain, Professor Catlin, Professor Conelly, Mr. Herbert Elvin, Miss Barnara Ward, Professor Norman Bentwich, Mr. H. N. Brailsford, Professor Saurat, Senor De Madariaga, and Mr. H. D. Liem. I can record only a few leading ideas.

Much of the discussion ranged around the problem of a closer union between the British Empire and the U.S.A. It cannot be taken for granted. If these two mighty peoples are to unite in facing the after-war problems of the world, their unity will have to be definitely cultivated and planned. They will not drift into united action. The Englishman needs to do some thinking on the subject. He knows so little, for example, of the deep cultural differences which lie like the Atlantic between English and American ways of life and thought. America is not a second edition of England, perhaps a little wayward and wilful. America is a nation, separate and distinct, with a cultural development of her own; each nation needs to give time and effort to understand the other. It would be good if, after the war, cheap travel could be organised to facilitate personal knowledge and fellowship. But the Englishman would need to go with an open mind, ready to learn, and ready to show the best side of our national character. One of the minor tragedies of our day was the death of our Ambassador, Lord Lothian, who did a great deal, by his frank and humble bearing, to promote good feeling for us in the hearts of Americans. He was not what they call over there a "stuffed shirt." As a grand example of the right way to approach the U.S.A. we may take the visit of the King and Queen in the spring of 1939. The present writer can testify to

the amazingly happy impression their Majesties made. They won the hearts of Americans everywhere.

Then there will be economic problems to face, with the world's gold gathered in the United States. If the standard of life of the world is to be raised even to a reasonable subsistence level money will be needed with which to purchase goods which a country like the U.S.A. can produce. The Governments of the world must take steps by definite policy and action to keep their people in employment. The problem of the world has been under-consumption, never over-production, the latter doctrine resulting in the dumping in the sea of food which people elsewhere desperately need. Difficulties may arise in the mind of a layman in such matters, but they are not difficulties which should baffle the intelligence and resolution of Englishmen and Americans working in unity. The danger will lie in war weariness and in an after-war moral slump, when the strain of the conflict is over. This must be guarded against now and thought out before the war ends in order to meet inevitable reactions. By her economic position the U.S.A. will be able to play a predominant part in the political reorganisation of the world. This may create some resentments among other nations: that is another reason why the closest bonds of friendliness should be cultivated at this moment between Great Britain and America.

The racial problems in Europe will not be eliminated by war. They will need the patient attention of men with moral purpose and ideals. Here again there is scope for the best leadership of Britain and the U.S.A. working together. In this country sympathy must be linked to imagination. It is said in some parts of the world that England is always in favour of the under-dog; but he must be a dog. It is well for us to know what other people think of us. And we must not be too sure that the nations of Europe are going to be grateful to us, or as grateful as we are expecting them to be, when things are being straightened out. The greatest work to be done will be in the moral and spiritual realm, and we must examine ourselves as to our adequacy for that. Surely there are moral and spiritual resources in our two great nations sufficient to raise the whole world on to a new level if we are ready to act together.

It was said in the general discussion that one of the possible tasks after the war will be to rescue the Germans from the rest of Europe, and we must not let the crimes of the Nazis blind our

eyes to the vision of a world at peace. There were at the Conference a number of people who were refugees from countries in subjection to the Nazis. Some of them had suffered and lost a great deal. In their speaking they expressed no resentment, but they did most vehemently attack the whole pre-war economic and political system of Europe and America. One could see that the trend of thought amongst these peoples is towards entirely new principles of organised society. In this connection satisfaction was expressed that Russia would have to be considered, and would play her part in the world that lies ahead.

This Conference, in the nature of the case, could not make plans for action. But it is a good thing that problems can be discussed, and a purpose generated, to bring the highest moral impulses to bear upon a war-weary and devastated world.

A. H. HAWKINS.

CHRISTIAN PROPAGANDA.

IN the last twenty-five years vast changes have taken place in the thinking and living of the people of our land. Behind those changes there has been powerful, persistent, and infinitely varied propaganda.

It is therefore imperative that much thought should be given to the business of Christian propaganda in relation to the modern situation. The methods of fifty years ago will not prove effective to-day.

Our first task is to realise how terrible the modern situation is. We must not continue to live in a fool's paradise.

Many children in this land have grown up without any adequate knowledge of the historic facts of Christianity. They are indifferent to religion. They are antagonistic to the Church. They hold dangerous views about life. The desire for economic security and "a good time" compasses the range of their ambition.

Home life, too, is in a sad way. Many marriages crash in failure. Sex indulgence is almost openly sponsored. Religious influence is conspicuous by its absence from millions of homes. The parents of to-day had religious influence in their lives when they were younger. They say they had too much of it. So they have given their children freedom from the discipline and training of religion. Many of those children, now in the advanced adolescent stage, are avowedly pagan.

Moreover, people who have no use for the Church declare that Christians are no different from other people. They are just as selfish and mean as non-Christians. It is worse than useless to be angry with such criticism. If we receive it humbly and honestly face the facts of our own lives, we may find a most effective weapon for propaganda.

In such a world we have to undertake our Christian work. There are some things we can do together.

First, by books and pamphlets, by preaching and films, and the use of the Press—all of them adapted to meet the modern situation—we must do our utmost to reach the minds of people. With all the ability at our command and with undaunted persistence, we must increase our “assaults” upon the human mind, seeking to win its allegiance to Christ.

Secondly, we must get busy in the realm of political and economic life. A vast field for Christian propaganda awaits us in world relations, and economic life and social contacts. Dr. Temple's excellent little book on “Christianity and Social Order,” published in the Penguin series, ought to be carefully studied by all of us. It will greatly help us to prepare our minds for the special Christian propaganda which our age requires.

Thirdly, we must be more deeply concerned about religious education in the schools. On this issue the old controversy between the Churches is dead. Anglicans and Nonconformists have no time now to fight one another. The fight is of another kind. With the right approach to this question, I believe the Government and the teachers will not be found to be unsympathetic. We must support all such efforts, urging parents to interest themselves in the religious education of their children at school and to provide a helpful influence at home. In a generation the results of such propaganda might be overwhelming.

Finally, there is the responsibility of the individual Christian in this matter of propaganda. If that is undischarged all the united effort of the Church will fail. The individual Christian must live a life of utter honesty and friendliness. One professing Christian running his life by wrong ambitions may ruin much that the Church tries to do. That consistent life is indispensable. But it must be followed up by personal propaganda. We must overcome our reluctance to talk with our friends about Christ and what He stands for. By such methods we have seen Com-

munism and Fascism grow from the enthusiams of small groups to some of the mightiest movements in the world. We too must believe in our movement. We must go everywhere to make our converts and declare our faith and live our creed.

To-day we have a great opportunity. There is much talk of a new world, though few people believe it will really come by political ingenuity. Multitudes are living their lives under a cloud. They are haunted by a sense of futility. This is our opportunity for propaganda. Other voices are speaking, calling out their wares. We must not be silent.

It is to some such activity Christ calls us in 1942, when He says to us what He said to the first disciples : "Come ye after Me and I will make you to become Fishers of Men."

R. GUY RAMSAY.

WHY?

WHY? Why have milk bars had to close down for lack of supplies, while beer bars are to be opened in canteens for munition and other war workers? Why, when the age of reservation in practically every case has been raised or abolished, has the age reservation of brewery trade employees been lowered? Why are eleven leaders of the Oxford Group de-reserved, while thousands of brewery workers are reserved? Why has the Government allowed in the third year of this war 19,000,000 standard barrels of beer, but in the third year of the Great War (March, 1917) the total was fixed at 10,000,000 standard barrels? Why are brewers actually receiving more grain than they were before the War, while industrial, agricultural, and poultry users are heavily reduced?

Following the publication of the above paragraph in "The Northamptonshire Nonconformist," we understand that the editor, Rev. H. W. Janisch, M.A., has called down upon himself some vilification.

WHY? Is it a confession that he has touched the brewers on the raw?

ON BOOKS.

"SIX hundred words about books by Tuesday," commanded the Editor; and who can deny him—the other end of a telephone? Only later I remembered the omniverous reading and catholic choice of a former editor, who surveyed recently published books to our greater discrimination, and thought by

contrast of my own discursive and arbitrary choice. So this article is not about books you ought to read, but about books I have enjoyed.

First come two books recommended for Lenten reading. One is D. R. Davies' *Secular Illusion or Christian Realism?* a vigorous protest against humanist optimism about man's self-sufficiency, and a restatement of the doctrine of original sin, issuing in the conviction that only the new humanity which Christ creates gives us hope for mankind. A stimulating and provocative book. The other is Canon Raven's *Lessons on the Prince of Peace*, a book marked by penetrating insight into the relevance of Christ's message to our present need. Don't be put off by the title.

Of books on preaching there is no end. Dr. H. H. Farmer's *The Servant of the Word* is a fresh and unusual treatment of a well-worn theme. The final chapter has an acute analysis of the points of approach to the contemporary mind.

A volume of sermons by Dr. Fosdick is always welcome, and *Living Under Tension* will rank with the best of its predecessors. Dr. Fosdick does not hide the fact that he is "a Quaker in my convictions about war"; but these sermons give a perspective to war-time preaching that lifts it above the temptation to interpret the signs of the times in the light of the words of the Ministry of Information rather than of the New Testament.

The findings of the Malvern Conference have been severely handled by some, both "left" and "right." Nevertheless Malvern is significant of the Christian concern about the social and economic position of the future, and the proceedings of the conference, along with the Archbishop of York's *Christianity and the Social Order* (Penguin Series) deserves serious study.

The reprinting of Dr. Temple's two volumes on St. John's Gospel affords an opportunity to commend a book of rare insight and scholarship. Here is a rich mine of suggestion to quarry in one's devotional hours.

Ernest Payne's newly published book, *The Church Awakes*, deals with that upsurging of life in the Church of a hundred and fifty years ago which brought to birth the modern missionary movement and much else, and in the troubled days of Napoleon's ascendancy in Europe. This is a book to hearten us all, and with Payne's brochure on *The Call to Prayer* might well be pondered in our fraternals.

Many of us have greatly profited by reading C. S. Lewis' *The Problem of Pain*. He has now written a remarkable little book called *The Screwtape Letters*. In it an elderly tempter writes to his nephew, coaching him in the art of leading humans astray; and by this intriguing device the author imparts a wealth of sage counsel about the strategy of Christian living.

Finally, for light-hearted reading, beg, borrow, or give up your coupons to obtain Hartzell Spence's delightful life story of his father, an American Methodist minister, in *One Foot in Heaven*.

W.T.B.

OUR FRATERNALS.

WE gladly comply with the request of the Spalding Fraternal and publish a paper contributed by H. Spendelow. The article is itself helpful, and also welcome as the revelation of a lovable personality and a man who rendered yeoman service to his church and town during his long pastorate.

Study.—The following are some of the subjects under discussion at various Fraternals:—*Birmingham*.—“The Original Jesus,” “The Church and the World,” “The Greatest Humanist,” “Bonnet Bee,” “The Minister’s Devotional Life.” *Nottingham*.—“What I believe,” subjects suggested by the Apostle’s Creed. *Newcastle*.—“Faith,” “Youth,” “Religious Education,” “Social Implications,” “Evangelism.” *North London*.—“The Minor Prophets,” “Church Covenants,” “A Covenant for Ministers.” *Watford*.—“Epistle to the Romans.” Several Fraternals have considered “Church Union,” and many have devoted special sessions to the report of the Polity Commission.

Amongst recent accessions, we give a special welcome to a small Fraternal, consisting of four members, in Shetland and Orkney. We bespeak for these brethren farthest North an interest in the prayers of the Fellowship; let us remember them at the Sunday morning Watch.

The Library.—The success of our Fellowship brings embarrassment to our Librarian in that the demands on the library exceed his resources. When it is remembered that out of our subscription 6d. only remains to meet all expenses, it is evident that the Treasurer has very little with which to purchase books. We are grateful to one of our laymen who recently sent us a generous donation.