

dogma it is "dogmatic." We admit we have not defined what is the Gospel, that is impossible in one article, but what a paradox it would be if the Christian Church could not define its own Gospel.

So we come on to the third term, namely theology. What is theology and what is its relation to dogma? It may be expressed this way; dogma is the permanent element in the Christian faith and theology the transient. Theology is the intellectual interpretation of the Word—the Gospel. And the Gospel does not tell us simply what God is, it tells us what God has done. It records the mighty acts of God in Hebrew fashion, it can only be expressed in active verbs. God *sent*, He *came*, in Christ, He *reconciled*, He *took* our nature. And so it is that the Gospel can only be expressed in a story, the story of God's acts. That story is the essential, it is the Word, it is dogma; when we seek to explain, then we make theology.

So we have examined the Christian faith as it is being explained to-day with regard to its form. In short it is conservative, and we have examined it under three heads, Revelation, Dogma and Theology. This threefold stage has been illustrated by drawing attention to the poet in creation of some work. First there comes the blinding flash, the moment of inspiration, that is revelation. Next comes the arduous task of expressing that experience in language, which has to become the vehicle; necessarily something is lost in trying to transfer the revelation into language but choice is made of a suitable form and a poem results; it tries to capture the feeling as well as the idea at the moment of inspiration. The poem then is like dogma. Thirdly we have the paraphrase of the poem, enlarging upon it and explaining it—that is theology.

Christian Education.

BY THE REV. R. PERFECT, M.A., CAMB.

Headmaster, St. Lawrence College.

LET us begin with an attempt to define terms. What is "Christian Education?" Is it the same thing as "Religious Education?"

Let it be noted that the latter is invariably the term employed in official or semi-official publications and pronouncements on the subject. Is there any essential difference between the two terms? Does the adjective "Religious" in this context mean as much as, or less than, the adjective "Christian?" This is not mere splitting of hairs. There is a growing interest in this subject, which the Press in particular seems keen to foster, and in many quarters the interest is hardening into a clamant demand for action. Yet some of the definitions of "Religious Education," which are being widely broadcast through various channels, can hardly be said to apply *pari passu* as definitions of "Christian Education." Standing by itself, without further qualification or definition, the term "Religious Education" is capable of being watered down to such a pathetic thinness of meaning that it becomes in time little distinct from "Moralistic

Teaching," a sort of cousin several times "removed." Let me quote you an example of this kind of watering-down, which came to me through the post not long ago in a pamphlet produced by a group of Headmasters. They define in brief what they want "Religious Education" to mean in the Schools. "There can be no solution to this problem until the facts are squarely faced. What is needed before religious teaching can become effective in the schools is a re-interpretation of the Christian faith in the light of modern thought and knowledge. There is no difficulty over the "Sermon on the Mount," which should form the basis of religious instruction in the schools, but there are great difficulties, both for teachers and for senior pupils, over mediæval creed and dogma, which should be left to the Churches. The former should form the heart of the religious instruction in the schools; the latter should be left to the Churches."

I suspect that most of you are fairly familiar with this kind of demand for a creed-less Christianity, purged of accretions and brought up-to-date, which often means brought into line with nineteenth-century thought that has been discarded for years by the best modern minds. Of course, it may be said that this is not the language of official sources, but merely of individual schoolmasters. True; but it still remains valid that however explicitly "Religious Education" might be defined by official sources (an unlikely thing to happen), the term is sufficiently loose and general to be interpreted, in the actual practice of teaching, in a wide variety of ways, some of which might be distinctly sub-Christian.

In this paper I shall therefore keep to the term "Christian Education," partly because I believe it to be in fact what most people mean and desire when they speak of "Religious Education," and partly because it conjures up a more distinct and definite picture of the end envisaged by the term. Having thus far "cleared the decks," let me go back to my original question. "What is Christian Education?"

I think it is not too much to say that few people possess a mental definition of the term which is on the one hand clear in its aim and on the other capable of being put into some sort of practice in the actual environment of a present-day school. There are two distinct points here. Let me take them separately.

I. THE MEANING OF "CHRISTIAN EDUCATION."

Modern education is a specialised process. It is much more than the business of dividing up certain days and weeks in the year into a Time Table of school "periods," in which a fixed proportion of time is given to a settled number of subjects, the time allotted varying according to the importance of the subject. But I doubt whether most people not actively engaged in the profession go very far beyond that kind of mental picture of education, judging by some of the statements which are at present being voiced and written on the subject. The result is some seriously loose thinking when we come to consider the implications of "Christian Education." For on this limited view of the educational process considered as a whole, the requirements of a specifically "Christian" education seem to be met in the minds of many people when three conditions in particular have been satisfied :

- (i) That in every school, where conditions make it possible, the day's work shall start with a corporate act of worship by the whole school assembled together.
- (ii) That periods for religious instruction shall be given their due place in the school curriculum.
- (iii) That the "subject" of religious instruction shall be taught only by convinced and qualified teachers.

If we add to these three points certain supplementary conditions which naturally arise out of them, have we then got the "Christian Education" which we are seeking? In my own view, most emphatically we have not. We may have arrived part of the way towards a true definition, but not the whole way. Of course, it may be argued that this definition of "Christian Education" takes us as far as it is possible to go under the actual educational conditions with which we have to reckon. That is a reasonable contention, whether we accept it as valid or not; but we surely ought not to accept a definition of "Christian Education" which is less than the whole truth, simply because present conditions seem to prevent us in practice from realising a full ideal. In this matter, Christian people ought not to be content with a partial ideal; in other words, we must know what we mean by "Christian Education," in the full sense of the term, and then refuse to accept a limited meaning, even though necessity may compel us to accept a limited practice of our ideal.

Let me now try to justify my assertion that the ends and meaning of "Christian Education" are not adequately covered by the three conditions which I have just briefly enumerated. Two points are worth particular consideration, one of which is often entirely overlooked in discussions of this question.

In the first place, it has many times been pointed out by teachers, quite correctly and in justifiable self-defence against a good deal of uninformed criticism, that in a large number of the country's schools, whether State-controlled, State-aided, or independent, it is now and has been for years the rule that the day's work starts with an act of corporate worship, and that religious instruction forms an integral part of the curriculum. Moreover, the work has often been done in a spirit of deep sincerity and devotion to Christian principles. Yet I doubt whether any but a small minority of teachers would be so bold as to say that the work which they themselves were allowed and able to do in this way gave their schools as a whole any title to be called establishments in which "Christian Education" was practised. Education does not become Christian simply because it incorporates in a part of its system Christian worship and teaching.

This leads straight on to a second consideration, which is the really vital factor in the problem under discussion. Granted an opening act of corporate worship, sincerely and devoutly performed; granted also a full measure of religious instruction, carried out by devoted Christian teachers; it still remains true that a great measure of the good accomplished at these times can be almost entirely undone, and the whole position largely prejudiced against the Christian standpoint, by subsequent teaching given in another subject by another teacher. We must be entirely fair in this matter. A teacher who sincerely holds, for the sake of example, a strictly "scientific" or materialistic

philosophy of life can hardly be expected not to impart something of his views to his pupils in the classroom. With all the good-will in the world, restraint is impossible if his views, a vital part to him of the subject which he teaches, are strongly and sincerely held. Yet the results, from the Christian point of view, can be and naturally are sometimes disastrous. I would go so far as to say that, whenever it can be proved that boys and girls lose an incipient Christian faith through teaching given them at their schools, it is not normally due to incompetent or pernicious religious instruction, but much more often to frankly anti-Christian views propounded elsewhere in the curriculum, or absorbed through books which have been recommended for reading in connection with a given subject. This comment applies to the boarding-school system as well as to the day-school, though certainly the Chapel of the boarding-school, along with the varied opportunities for teaching and witness which it automatically admits, does provide a powerful corrective influence against anti-Christian teaching which may be absorbed elsewhere.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that education as at present constituted is root and branch anti-Christian. Indeed, my gorge never fails to rise at the suggestion sometimes put forward that the pagan condition of much of the country's youth can be ascribed almost entirely to the shortcomings of education. The teaching profession as a body is tacitly admitting that all is not as it should be within its own camp, by the almost universal desire which its members are showing for religious worship and instruction to be incorporated in the daily routine of all schools. It is totally unfair to infer from this that the educational world alone is responsible for the widespread ignorance among the young of the elementals of the Christian faith. This is a digression, though it is worth making in the interests of fair-play.

To return to my point, I have tried to show you that an educational system is not ipso facto made Christian by the mere provision of times for worship and religious instruction. Undoubtedly the ideal of "Christian Education" is brought nearer, but it is not accomplished.

What then is "Christian Education?" It is very difficult to give a definition which is concise and at the same time comprehensive. Let me make the attempt, however, by saying that "Christian Education" is the synthesizing of all knowledge in the light of the Christian revelation. That involves the impartation of knowledge in a particular way. It means that all teaching about man, his nature, his development, his doings, the world in which he lives, his past and present achievements and his future hopes, will be given against the background of the essentially Christian doctrine of God's creative, purposive, redemptive activity, unfolding itself throughout the ages and culminating in the revelation of Himself given through His Son. This is not to say that explicit Christian doctrine is perpetually to be dragged into the History and Biology lessons, to take examples, but simply that "Christian Education," if the term is to have real meaning, must be fully comprehensive in its range and synthetic in its purpose; its aim must always be to impart knowledge in such a way that the various branches of truth are seen as an indivisible whole, unified by the only factor that ever unifies knowledge, namely, the comprehen-

sively redemptive purpose of God for man and his world of existence. The colours of the rainbow blend into a unity within the setting of the bow and against the background of the sky. In much the same way, the different branches of knowledge combine into a unity when they are viewed within the setting of the Christian interpretation of life. We must posit nothing less than this for the scope and purpose of "Christian Education."

One word should be added, before we leave this part of our subject. It is a commonplace that the business of education is not merely to implant the facts of knowledge, but equally to foster the full growth and development of personality. From what has been said so far, it should be perfectly clear, without further stress, that in "Christian Education" the proper development of the characters of the taught is a paramount obligation on the part of the teacher. It should hardly be necessary to add that in "Christian Education" the development of mind and character will proceed the more unitedly and harmoniously, just because of the Christian conception of the essential wholeness and unity of all truth, a conception which is fundamental to a Christian interpretation of life. The point need not be laboured, not because it is unimportant, (on the contrary, it is of cardinal importance), but because it so obviously follows from our previous premises, based on the true meaning of "Christian Education." Yet it must not be inferred from all this, as is sometimes done, that the development of Christian character, springing from conversion, is the sole or even the primary end of "Christian Education." That is supremely the responsibility of the Church and the home. Education's primary province is the mind, and its primary duty is to instruct.

In the Christian view, it is obvious that mental and moral developments are inseparable, but in admitting that we must not confuse the relative order of obligations to which "Christian Education" is committed as an educative process.

II. THE PRACTICABILITY OF "CHRISTIAN EDUCATION."

I pass on now to a second consideration, namely, whether "Christian Education" as thus defined is attainable under the actual educational conditions with which we have to reckon now or in the future.

Clearly, this question answers itself; for "Christian Education," on the terms outlined, is only possible for teachers who are Christian, and these constitute only a part of the whole teaching body. "Christian Education" will be practised wherever men and women are teaching who have a Christian outlook on life, but only there, at least with any deliberate intention. To this limited extent only, therefore, the ideal is practicable and actually being practised. As in every other sphere of Christian living and witness, the problem centres itself in individual personalities.

The Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich is reported to have said recently: "The best and highest contribution the Church can make towards the educational system of the country is to provide from among her members Christian men and women who will enter the teaching profession as a vocation." In my view that exactly hits the central nail on the head. It correctly focusses the essential problem of "Christian Education" and at the same time suggests

the right method for its attainment in practice. It stresses the direction in which the energies of the Church ought to be expended, and in my estimation has a clear bearing, for example, on the very vexed question of the Dual System in education. I cannot claim experiential knowledge in this matter, and therefore speak with some diffidence. Nevertheless, it seems to me that if even a part of the time and energy and money, which the Church at present expends in a frequently losing fight to keep pace with the demands of modern educational equipment, were diverted instead to the supply and training of Christian teachers, there would be a vastly richer return in the matter of "Christian Education." We must put things in their right order of importance, the spiritual before the material, the equipment of the teacher before the equipment of the establishment. If the Church cannot find the means for both these needs in her own schools, she should fearlessly concentrate on the more important, the human factor, and by so doing engage on her true, her essential task in this particular matter, to make the country's education as a whole more Christian by her constant supply of Christian teachers to the profession.

This argument gains increased weight from the present public demand that is being so insistently made, namely, that religious instruction and the opportunity for daily worship should be given in all schools of the country. The Church looks like being presented with an unparalleled occasion for service, if she can call out consecrated men and women to enter the teaching profession. The present demand constitutes the clearest imaginable invitation to the Christian community to exercise its real, its redemptive function in society. It is well to face the fact that in some quarters at least the present demand does not spring from the highest motives, being occasioned by mere fright at the juvenile delinquency figures and their obvious connexion with the loss of Christian teaching and moral standards. But that makes no difference to the scope of the spiritual opportunity in education which is likely to be offered to the Church in the near future, when the new Educational Bill comes to be drafted. In this connexion, consider also another equally insistent educational demand which is being voiced at the present time, namely, the demand for equality of opportunity in the schools. This demand is not being made specifically in the light of Christian principles, but few would deny that an essentially Christian principle is in fact involved in the demand, and the realization of equal educational opportunities for all would automatically present the Christian teacher with a more congenial atmosphere and a wider field in which to carry on his work.

Viewed from every angle, the challenge to the Church is very great, which is only another way of saying that she is being presented with an almost unprecedented opportunity to translate into action the ideal of "Christian Education." It would be mere blind optimism, and would go contrary to the facts of Christian experience, to suggest that the ideal of "Christian Education" can ever be fully attained; like every other Christian ideal, its effectiveness in practice is limited, being conditioned on the one hand by the supply of Christian teachers, and on the other by the imperfect human situation in which it has to be worked out. Yet we must not on that account either water down the ideal which is set before us in "Christian Education," or fail to

recognize the opportunity which is being offered to the Church to put the ideal into greatly increased practice, through the supply from its ranks of Christian teachers deeply imbued with a sense of their vocation.

To sum up, "Christian Education" is preferable as a term to "Religious Education," because it gives a more distinct and definite picture of what we mean and want as Christian people. By "Christian Education" we mean the process of imparting knowledge to the young against the background of the Christian interpretation of life, in such a way that all life and truth is seen to make sense and form a composite whole, through the unifying purpose of God's creative and redemptive activity in man and in his world of existence. To be able to educate the young in this sense, a teacher must of necessity himself possess the Christian outlook on life. Therefore in practice "Christian Education" can never be anything but a partially realised ideal, because there will always be some teachers who either in part or in whole do not subscribe to the Christian outlook. The Christian community must not on that account limit the embrace of its ideal; with a clear conception of what it means and wants by "Christian Education," the Church must strive to turn the ideal into an increasingly practised reality, by training and equipping members from among its ranks to enter the teaching profession with a full sense of engaging in a God-given vocation. In this way, the Church will not only be concentrating on the essential core of a problem which concerns her most intimately, but will also be answering the challenge of a remarkable opportunity which is being tacitly presented to her, to engage in the redemptive service which it is her essential function to give, in the name and power of her Master, Jesus Christ.

Public Worship.

FACT—CAUSE—REMEDY.

BY THE REV. RUSSELL B. WHITE, M.A.

WE are constantly reminded in these days that the Christian Church is a minority movement, and that this minority tends to grow less rather than more. It is easy enough for us to imagine that the problem of church attendance is peculiar to our own time, especially when comparing the numbers who present themselves for public worship to-day, with those vast crowds who went tidily to church every Lord's Day during the Victorian era. Yet in essence this problem is one which like the poor "is always with us," in greater or lesser degree. Men sneered at the Psalmist (Ps. xxii), saying "He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver him, seeing he delighted in Him." The times of the prophets were times of neglect of public worship. So too in our Lord's own day, and throughout the whole course of subsequent history, even in spite of the seemingly harsh legislation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there has never been a full worshipping community in the ideal sense.