

# The CHRISTIAN PACIFIST

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THREEPENCE

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## THE CURRENT OF AFFAIRS

### Mr. Chamberlain

Neville Chamberlain will go down in history as a peace-maker. Even though he failed to make peace and became instead the Prime Minister who declared the most devastating of world wars, it is not his national policy, war or pre-war, for which he will be remembered but those courageous flights across Europe when for a moment, before the eyes of an astonished world, pride and prestige were thrust aside and common humanity and common sense were seen to prevail in a historic act of fellowship. In that moment of brilliant and (it must be confessed) rare British initiative how near for a few days this country and Germany seemed to come in understanding! What glimpses of a new era of European peace suddenly appeared, as suddenly to vanish! The Munich agreement certainly did not represent peace in our understanding of the word though at the time we felt that it might have led to it. Why "Peace in our time" so quickly changed to "No relaxation of rearmament," why Mr. Chamberlain so soon abandoned the role of peace-maker in which he had won such universal popularity, why he cast aside the only weapon that could prove effective with dictators,

that of Friendship, the world may not learn for many years to come. Perhaps it will never know. We cannot believe that in staving off the war until Britain should be ready to fight he fulfilled the whole of his intention. Perhaps it is because he is typical of a world which while pursuing policies that made for war yet at the same time clung desperately to peace that the world will hold him in affection recognising in him something which belongs to us all. The cartoonists, depicting the new chivalry which wields the umbrella in preference to the sword expressed in caricature a deep yearning of the human heart. Thus even a world at war instinctively honours one who has even attempted to make peace and is ready to forget his failures and even his less glorious successes, in wistful remembrance of what might have been.

### Coventry

Public horror of aerial bombardment has now been focussed upon Coventry where the appalling destruction and loss of life, and even worse perhaps, the cheerful callousness with which in some quarters it has been reported, must be recognised as one of the more hideous

features of war. To claim it as an instance of deliberately indiscriminate bombing is to go right outside the truth. As one correspondent in the daily Press said,

"... Coventry, in spite of its Cathedral and romantic tradition, is known to the world as an important industrial centre. Do we really imagine that our own gallant Air Force, in accomplishing the success of which we are so proud, can avoid the killing of women and children, however much they would wish to spare them? ... Either some kind of agreement should be made with the enemy whereby neither they nor we shall attack populous centres at all—a solution of the problem which, however quixotic it may appear, is yet in accordance with the humane spirit of international law. Or, if this be found impracticable, there ought to be an immediate evacuation of all who can be evacuated from military or industrial centres."

It is only as the world realises how absurd it is to attempt to fight a war decently that the world will give up war.

#### War Aims

No doubt there are reasons for Mr. Churchill's persistent refusal to state the Government's war aims. Any reduction to plain terms of the objects for which Britain is fighting would of necessity be in some measure controversial and therefore would risk the alienation of some part of public opinion. It is easier, for the present at least, to unite the nation in a fight for its existence than to attempt to state how the mixed ideals of the nation are to be realised in social and economic not to say international terms. There are, on the other hand, dangers in this continued reticence. A people of whom ever greater sacrifice and ever greater endurance is to be demanded must begin to ask what it is all for. It is obvious that all sections of the British public do not cherish the same hopes for the outcome of the war. Mr. Ernest Bevin, for instance, would bring out of the war a new economic order from which unemployment will be banished, and he would do this by substituting for the motive of private profit that of providing "social security." We heartily applaud Mr. Bevin's proposal and would like to give it all the support we can, especially when we hear that he is not going to wait to establish the new order till the war is over but is to begin now, for the prosecution of war must surely be the worst conceivable preparation for the abolition of unemployment. But how many of his fellow citizens—how many of his fellow Cabinet Ministers, for that matter—will share such war aims as these? Mr. Bevin asks "How long can we stand great combines not producing for plenty but restricting enterprise because of capital investment?" But most of his colleagues have hitherto been able to bear capital investment with great fortitude. Of course we all want social security—for ourselves. But increased social security for the many means diminished social security for the few. If this is the sort of thing that was discussed in the Cabinet, no wonder no public statement was made. Yet it would be encouraging to see some

indication that the war had brought us to repentance of our social sins and our international follies. It is easy to pour contempt on Hitler's rumoured plan for a new European order. However well such contempt is deserved it would be more convincing to let the world know what counter-proposals Britain is prepared to make.

#### Goodwill to Aggressors

The offer of a *de facto* recognition of Russian government in the Baltic States raises some perplexing questions. As one newspaper put it, "The methods by which Moscow 'acquired' the Baltic States differ only in degree from those employed by the Nazis in seizing territory they coveted, and our willingness to recognise a *de facto* incorporation of the Baltic States is defensible only on grounds of realism." Would not realism then recognise the *de facto* occupation of East Poland by Russia? And if so why not of West Poland by Germany? When we remember that Britain is fighting to maintain among other things the Christian religion it is embarrassing to read the reflections of the Militant Godless Movement on the opportunity that now opens up for that missionary society in the Baltic States. The *International Christian Press and Information Service* quotes an article in the *Godless Magazine* for August in which Comrade Yoroslavsky, leader of the Movement, says, "Of course the religious question is particularly important in the republics which have just been attached to the U.S.S.R., Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. The religion which was inculcated in the people by the Bourgeois régime is still powerful there . . . In our endeavour to enlighten these people we must use therefore special tactics in insisting upon the harmful character of religion."

#### The Bells Stop Ringing

At the same time the Editor of the *Forsamlingsblad*, a Swedish Church magazine, writes, "What is happening during these days in the Baltic countries, and what happened a short time ago in Eastern Poland and in parts of Finland, was aimed at a no less vulnerable point than the heart of European civilisation. . . . To-day is closing time in three countries. Old bells stop ringing. Among all the things which are happening now, there is certainly nothing which is more dangerous, nothing more devastating, nothing which is such a deadly threat against everything which is dear to us." The view may be taken that the suppression of the Churches would be no great blow to real Christianity just as it might be said the suppression of the British Empire would not quench the British spirit. We should be the last to denounce any gesture of friendship. To hold out the hand of goodwill even to the wicked and violent man is, we have always contended, the right thing to do. We only ask, How far should it be allowed to go? Should it be done in China, for instance, or in Holland? If it can be done without

dishonour to help the prosecution of the war, would it be wrong to do it in the interests of peace?

#### India

The Viceroy's statement on "India and the War," published as a White Paper is to be welcomed for its conciliatory tone, but it ignores the chief point at issue between the Congress and the Government. The Viceroy relates how he made liberal proposals to the Indian political leaders which would have placed real power and real responsibility in their hands but that he had not secured from them the response for which he had hoped. The reason is that the proposals made were proposals for co-operation in the war effort whereas the Indian grievance is that their support of the war was announced without their having been consulted and that until the Government's war aims are more clearly defined they cannot but suspect that the war is being fought to save Imperialism "of which India is the greatest victim." This is made clear in Mr. Gandhi's letter to Lord Linlithgow in which he says "The Congress is as much opposed to victory for Nazism as any British can be. But their objection cannot be carried to the extent of their participation in the war. And since you and the Secretary of State for India have declared that the whole of India is voluntarily helping the war effort, it becomes necessary to make clear that the vast majority of the people of India are not interested in it. They make no distinction between Nazism and the double autocracy that rules India. Had His Majesty's Government recognised the freedom required in the special condition of India, they would have justified the claim that they were receiving from India only such effort as they could voluntarily."

#### Freedom of Conscience

We are grateful for Dr. J. H. Oldham's vigorous defence of liberty of conscience in a recent issue of the *Christian News-Letter* all the more valuable for the pen of one who does not himself share the convictions of the conscientious objector. No pacifist in a nation at war can expect to witness to his faith (as of course he must if it is his faith) with complete security. That would only be possible if his cause were already won, or if it were so hopelessly lost that the nation could afford to disregard him. But members of the Church who refuse to participate in the war effort of loyalty—however mistaken from some points of view—to their Lord, do expect that whatever they may have to suffer at the hands of the secular State they will not lose the understanding and fellowship of their brethren in Christ. "This is a matter," writes Dr. Oldham, "about which it is vital that we should think clearly. What kind of a world might conceivably justify the cost of the present war? An essential part of the answer is that given earlier in this letter—a world in which men and women are free to be persons; free, that is to say, to be true to what they believe to be the highest, even if their judgment should be mistaken. The State cannot

give unqualified recognition to this freedom, since the individual may err, and to allow the individual to be a law to himself would be anarchy. A nation fighting for its existence cannot sanction activities that would contribute to its defeat. But a wise community will never forget that the loyalty of individuals to truth and conscience is among the most priceless of its possessions."

#### Professor Raven's New Book

"Jesus defeated evil and delivered man from the dominance of an undefeated and apparently omnipotent sin. The method which Jesus chose should be the universal inheritance and central fact in Christian teaching and Christian experience. It ought to be the very heart of the gospel as the Church proclaims it; that you can overcome evil, but only on Christ's terms, and by Christ's way, and at Christ's cost." These words are the theme of a new book by Professor Charles E. Raven entitled *The Cross and the Crisis*. The five chapters of which it is composed are substantially the lectures which Dr. Raven gave at the Fellowship of Reconciliation conference at Cambridge last August. A short work of only some 90 pages it is not only a very important contribution to the theology of Christian pacifism, but a pronouncement of Christian faith which bears the authority of earnest conviction and clarity of thought. Every preacher will wish to read it, but it is a book for all both in the church and out of it. Published by the F.o.R. at 2s.

#### International Office Bombed

International news is not available this month, for the regrettable reason that on the night of November 12th the office of the International F.o.R. was completely demolished by a bomb which struck the middle of the road. We are very glad to say that no one was hurt. But unfortunately not only were furniture, typewriters, a valuable duplicating machine and other equipment entirely destroyed, but all the records seem likely to have been made completely useless by water. By invitation of the British Fellowship, the work of the I.F.o.R., Embassies of Reconciliation and the Council of Christian Pacifist Groups is being temporarily carried on from 17, Red Lion Square, to which office correspondence should for the time being be addressed. Tables and chairs are available there on loan, but an attempt must be made immediately to reconstruct the rest of the office. It would be a great help if those who are able to spare back copies of the International News Letter and other issues and also of pamphlets and books, would make presents of them. The gift or loan of one or two good typewriters would also be very much appreciated.

Contributors and correspondents are requested to address their communications to The Editor, 17, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1.

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## AN ABSOLUTE PACIFIST ?

David Mace Replies to his Critics

THREE types of letter I prefer to pass over with little more than a comment. First, those who wrote to thank me for the article require no reply save my earnest gratitude for their kindness. Secondly, I shall avoid the tedious repetition which would be involved in dealing with points which would in my judgment be fully answered by a careful re-reading of my original article. And thirdly, I can see no useful purpose which would be served by a reply to the correspondent who described my article as "simply nonsense from beginning to end"; particularly as I fear I found his statement almost as incoherent as he did mine!

The points raised in the remaining letters fall into three distinct groups.

First, a number of issues were raised relating to the procedure of the tribunals. It will be remembered that my article commenced with the story of a case at which I had myself been present. Some of my correspondents felt that I was "criticizing those young men who have to appear before tribunals," and that "at a time like this they ought to get all the support and encouragement we can give them." My answer is that I have myself appeared before a tribunal on seventeen occasions to stand by young men who had asked for my help; and that what prompted me to write my original article was the fact that I had seen a young fellow obtain a very severe judgment through what I felt to have been a bad presentation of his case, and I wanted to warn other applicants, and those who seek to guide them, to avoid the same pitfall.

Several letters speak of the "bullying attitude of the tribunals," which are composed of "war-minded officials," and one refers to the questions about remedial work such as first aid to the wounded as "a trick, designed to catch the applicant." I can well understand this sort of feeling. There have been occasions on which the attitude of tribunals I have attended has seemed unhelpful, and I have not hesitated to tell them so. Yet on the whole I have gained the impression that the members were sincere men trying to do their best; and any unprejudiced observer would have to admit that, while there is occasionally room for improvement, the tribunals might have been very much worse. More often, in my judgment, the trouble has been that the applicants themselves have failed to present a clear case. They have relied on vague statements which, when pressed to their logical conclusion, have landed them in hopeless contradiction. This has been especially the case where men have tried to establish the distinction which existed for them between compassionate action within the military organisation and outside it. This is admittedly one of the most difficult points which an applicant may be required to make, and a man would be well advised to get his position crystal clear in his own mind before going to the tribunal. It is quite untrue to suggest, however, as some of my correspondents do,

that the only effective way out of the difficulty is a point-blank refusal to do remedial work of any kind. Unless a man really holds this view (in which case I maintain that he cannot call himself a Christian), to say that he does so as a way of getting round an obstacle sounds suspiciously like "a trick, designed to catch the tribunal," and is surely a very poor Christian witness. Besides, as the case with which the whole discussion began illustrates only too clearly, it may end in a result which is the very opposite of satisfactory.

The second group of questions raised by my correspondents concerns the principle of conscription, and involves a confusion of thought and, more especially, of language which I am glad to have the opportunity to attempt to unravel.

Here is a good example of the point which is made by many letters. "The absolutist position," says the writer, "is more truly based on resistance to conscription . . . than on an effort to avoid assisting the war effort."

With this interpretation I cannot agree. The term "absolute pacifist," as used by the vast majority of people, connotes a person whose aim is to give no support whatever to the war effort. The man who resists the principle of conscription, on the other hand, is more accurately described as the "unconditionalist."

The question of resistance to conscription did not come within the purview of my article at all. It is the confusion of these two terms which has found the basis of all the criticisms (with one exception) which have been made against the case I put forward. However, since the issue has now been raised let us look at it.

"Conscription for military service," says another letter, "is a violation of the sanctity of the human personality which Christ taught us to value supremely, and the unconditionalist feels that the withstanding of this system, whatever the cost, is a service he must render to his fellow-men." I have no quarrel at all with that statement. It is not the view of all Christians, or even of all Christian Pacifists; but those who hold it have every right to do so. By all means let a man resist conscription, if his conscience tells him it is something evil. Indeed, the law allows him to do so, for it may grant him unconditional exemption from conscription in every shape or form, placing him as completely outside the operation of the Act as are those whom, because of their age, sex or calling, are not affected by it at all. In that case he has made good his objection to the whole principle, and borne his witness before his fellow-men.

The tribunal, however, may not grant him this complete exemption, but may lay down the condition that he must remain in his present work, or undertake other work of a nature which he has declared his conscience would permit. In those circumstances the true "unconditionalist" will not accept the ruling, even if it coincides exactly with his own wishes and intentions. He will appeal against it, claiming unconditional exemption. If

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## ARE THE GODS CYNICAL ?

E. L. ALLEN

MR. LEONARD WOOLF, in his recent book *The War for Peace*, has painted a somewhat terrifying picture of our present situation. Imagine, he says, that you wake up in the night to find your house on fire. You open the door of the bedroom to find flames cutting off your approach to the stairs; you look out of the window and see a drop of 30 feet into the garden. If you remain, you will almost certainly be burnt alive; if you jump, you will almost infallibly break your neck! That is where we stand to-day, between Nazi tyranny and war. On the whole, the better course is to jump and hope you will survive, to resist and hope that a way back to decent conditions will not be impossible at the end. Of course, he adds, you can if you like stay on in bed and draw 'the bed-clothes of pacifism, communism, isolationism or some other -ism over your head.' But what is the good of that? 'You will be burnt alive just the same and, as the smoke of your burning body arises to heaven, the cynical gods will not applaud the sacrifice.'

I am not concerned at the moment to advise the central figure in this scene what he should do; what haunts me about the picture is that group of cynical gods in the top right-hand corner.

I seem to have seen something like it before. Perhaps it was in the pages of Lucretius, where he describes the calm spaces to which the gods have been banished by the energetic atoms which have contracted to run the world in their place. There they recline at ease and smile in secret, looking over wasted lands, Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands, Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.

Does not Homer describe how the gods sat on Olympus and 'laughed in their hearts' at the toil and slaughter of men on the plains of Troy?

### God and Non-Intervention

But it will be objected that this is to press unduly the language which Mr. Woolf employs. Surely he is only concerned to maintain that the universe is morally indifferent, that we must act as wisely and bravely as we can in it, but not look for anything beyond the human to come to our assistance. Exactly; but still I would urge that the use of that adjective 'cynical' contains an important admission. The neutrality of the universe is inconceivable; not to take sides in a conflict between good and evil is to reinforce evil. Mr. Woolf knows that, and by the word 'cynical' he passes judgment on the powers which leave helpless man to such a dilemma. Non-intervention on God's part in the world's affairs would be in fact what the non-intervention policy of the democracies came to be in

Spain; it would be coming down on the wrong side. Here therefore is a man who has decided on intellectual grounds that the universe is impartial as between our fears and our ideals, and who, on moral grounds, is thoroughly ashamed of it for its declaration of neutrality.

But how is such a result reached? This is a question which leads to some important conclusions. Our author goes on: 'The choice is there, dictated by the situation, events, and facts. It is a choice of evils in which a reasonable decision can only be made by a cool calculation of probabilities.' In other words, the situation is purely human in character, and the only criterion for action in it is that of a careful study of the consequences. There is no room for a consciousness of duty which overrides all other considerations, no insight into the will of God is possible. Luther's 'Here I stand, God help me, I can do no other' is merely a curious instance of fanaticism.

The last hundred years or so have been marked by a very praiseworthy attempt to advance beyond politics to political science, to substitute, that is to say, the cohesion and clarity of a systematic body of knowledge for mere riot of individual opinion. The procedure of science is always the same, abstraction and specialisation with a view to the mastery of some element of our experience. It selects from the total riches of reality some one aspect and gains an exhaustive knowledge of it. There is, of course, a danger in this, for the scientist may become so absorbed in the particular field he is working that he may forget, or even actually deny, that there is anything outside it. Thus the physicist may come to think that there is nothing at all in the world except what is measurable and the economist that the motive of personal gain will explain all the phenomena of human life and history.

### Foretelling the Future of a World That is Not There

The procedure of the political scientist, Mr. Woolf for example, is the same. He selects one particular set of facts, those which make up human life in so far as it is capable of being socially organised by means of law, and devotes himself to its study. Within that sphere he is concerned solely with men and women as they are and with what is practicable. In order to determine what is practicable, he begins by assuming that human nature can only change slowly and within certain limits, since only thus can he obtain a basis on which to make his predictions for the future. He must work only with the calculable, and consider each suggestion for action as running out into a series of foreseeable consequences; he then arrives at the decision which of the alternative proposals is the more desirable, or at any rate the less objectionable. He gives us thus a purely human and calculable world as the sphere of political science.

Here, however, arises the danger: he falls into the error of supposing that this is the only world there is. Whereas in fact it is a distortion of the real world. It has left out, for example, the whole realm of personal relations: since these cannot be organised by law, they simply drop out of the picture. Equally it has left out the element of accident and chance which plays so large a part in human affairs. To suppose that 'a cool calculation of probabilities' is a sufficient guide is to fly in face of the facts. Of the course of history the late Mr. H. A. L. Fisher said: 'I can see only one emergency following upon another as wave upon wave, only one great fact with respect to which, since it is unique, there can be no generalisations, only one safe rule for the historian: that he should recognise in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and the unforeseen.' What person in the world to-day is not hoping for some utterly unforeseen turn of events? Is a 'cool calculation of probabilities' at all adequate to a condition of things which might be transformed overnight by a germ in a dictator's system?

Just as the physicist finds everything measurable because he has refused to consider anything which is not measurable, so the political scientist finds everything purely human and to be judged in accordance with its consequences, because he has shut his eyes at the outset to the non-human and the unpredictable. But the universe is richer in either case than the categories which are brought to it.

#### Christian Assent to the Banishment of God

The reason why the political thinker finds God to be an inactive partner in our human affairs is that he began his study by deciding to leave Him out. That omission may be necessary in order to avoid an easy resort to supernatural hypotheses, after the fashion of the medieval municipality which met the plague by having the images of saints carried in procession, but it clearly shuts us off from ultimate truth. It is all the more to be regretted that leaders of the Church have accepted without questioning such an analysis of our situation as Mr. Woolf has given, not seeing that by so doing they are acting precisely as they would if they took over ready-made the account of the human mind and character given by a materialist. For the politician there is only a choice between two evils, between breaking one's neck and being roasted alive, because he has first left out of the picture anything but the human, the social, and the predictable. But the concern of the Christian is to point out that this is to substitute an artificial world for the real one.

The fact is, surely, that in the sphere of political action—whatever may be the case in that of political thought—it is just the breaking-down of this artificial boundary which is of creative value. The politician who appeals to the common man is the one who speaks, not of probabilities and consequences, but of moral ideals, who makes his fellows feel that they are acting for God in an hour of destiny. Hence the influence exerted by men like Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow

Wilson, because they have made the prophet's assertion of absolute obligation impinge upon the political problems of the hour. Hence the necessity for any government in time of war to appeal to its people in the name of their Christian faith or of some great human cause, be it individual liberty or social justice or world-peace. The dictators, with all their contempt for their fellows, know well that politics must be fired with religion if it is to win the common man: only they work with a national religion instead of a universal one.

Pacifism would apply this more drastically than any other type of thought would do. It sees that we are in danger of becoming slaves to a world of our own making, the cold world of political science in which the practicable rules, human beings are incapable of conversion, and compromise is the only method of advance. A nation which goes to war shatters this in an instant and enters into a world in which the impossible does not exist, the slums of our industrial cities breed heroes and heroines, and rulers urge their people to stand fast unto death for the Christian faith and moral values. It therefore urges men to live always in this world, not to enter it once in each generation for purposes of death, but to accept citizen-rights in it for life and peace.

#### ERIC GILL

1940 has not come to a close without removing from the ranks of the pacifists one more friend who had obtained a more than national reputation. It was quite possible for the wireless and for the Press to refer with real admiration to the position of Eric Gill in the world of art and of craftsmanship without making any reference to that side of him for which the pacifist movement is particularly grateful—his courageous witness for peace.

Very rightly the Press referred to such famous works of Eric Gill as the Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral and some of the figures outside Broadcasting House, and to what he had done in the peculiar and rather lovely craft of lettering. Yet those who have had the privilege of hearing Eric Gill speak or of reading his closely reasoned work have realised that they were in touch with somebody who is more than an artist—great artist though he was; more than a dreamer—bold though his dreams may have been; someone who was a clear and logical thinker with a nice command of the English language and an ability to express his mind in a way which a philosopher could admire and a peasant could understand.

Our friends in "Pax" face a special loss in the passing of Eric Gill, but must feel also a special pride in what he accomplished for the Church Universal and in what he has attempted for God's scattered and perplexed family. Some of us will not hesitate to join in the prayer that they will be offering that "Light perpetual may shine upon him and he may rest in peace."

## THE NATURE OF OMNIPOTENCE

STEPHEN HOBHOUSE

IN the year 1913 Messrs. Longmans published, in the form of a big volume of about 380 pages, *The World's Redemption*, by C. E. Rolt, Vicar of Newbold Pacey, Warwickshire. Rolt was also responsible for an admirable edition and translation of the chief work of the profoundly mystical fifth-century Greek known as Dionysius the Areopagite. In this we are informed that he died (about 1920) at the age of 37. The publishers tell me that his 1913 work had a slow but steady sale till 1932, when the balance of the edition, 188 copies, were destroyed.

I think my attention was drawn to *The World's Redemption* by William Wilson, whose book *The Problem of the Cross* (James Clarke, 1929) is one of the few outstanding contributions to the theology of the Atonement on lines in full harmony with Christian pacifist faith. The only copy of Rolt's book known to me is in the library at 17 Red Lion Square. On reading it I recognised the same fundamental ideas as to the "wrathless" action of God's will on the world which had already captivated me in the writings of Lily Dougall, and later in those of William Law. There is no sign that Rolt owes any debt to these two pioneers. With much of the mystical literature of the Catholic Church, and particularly with Origen, Augustine and Aquinas, he was certainly familiar; and he appears to be well-read in the field of evolutionary science, especially in biology. To some readers the at times florid and emotional exuberance of his style will probably be rather trying, but there is an eloquence of deep enthusiasm in it; and the value of his thesis seems to me so great that, in the hope that this neglected book will find fresh readers, I will try to sketch very briefly its main underlying ideas in the paragraphs that follow.

As a Catholic Christian, Rolt naturally starts with the assumption of a personal God as the perfection of every good quality and of a world, originally His faultless creation, which has, in some way that must ultimately remain a mystery, very largely fallen from its original harmony with His will and being, so that moral evil and physical discord and pain have been chief elements in it from time immemorial. Further, as Catholic theology teaches, each of the attributes of God is identical with His being and equivalent to His highest attribute. This is Love; and therefore God's Power, Justice, Wisdom, Holiness, Joy are identical with His Love. Love, which is meek and gentle, working by attraction and persuasion, has no analogy with physical force, the capacity to compel and to destroy. Moreover, "a right conception of omnipotence is the key to most of the problems of theology"; and most Christian thought (even, at times, that of St. Paul) is defective through a false idea of the omnipotence of God consisting primarily in coercive force and compulsion.

The central theme which runs through the whole long book, repeated with numberless variations of language, is that the only omnipotence of God, the *only* power which God uses or even possesses, is that of Love, which by its own inherent goodness and beauty attracts and draws other beings, *never* compels them. The first step in creation was when a God-filled eternity attracted into being the age-long process of time. Cosmical evolution, both physical and biological, is one infinitely varied story of the interplay of divine love with brute forces and desires (the result of the primal Fall), continued in human history, until at last the emergence of the incarnate God in the person of Jesus displays the eternal drama in naked and beautiful simplicity. Thus from the first God has been dealing with these blind, chaotic forces of nature, not by Himself exerting force and compulsion, but by manifesting the attractive loveliness of His own goodness, harmonising and co-operative, by suffering with changeless patience the shocks of discord and hatred and by thus transmuting them into beneficent vital energy. In this way more complex, co-operative, and beautiful forms of matter and life have been very slowly and gradually built up, culminating, in spite of innumerable defects and set-backs, in spite of disasters and degenerations, in the personality of man, itself so full of potentialities for both progress and regress.

By denying strife and evil and yet enduring, suffering them with infinite humility and patience, by being the Servant of all, God gradually extends the bounds of good. There is a seed of goodness, of God-likeness, inherent in everything, and as this is vitalised by the beams of the heavenly sun, self-assertion and egoism become self-sacrifice and co-operation, and chaos gives place to cosmos. God, in virtue of His own nature, is "powerless," our author maintains, to act in any other way than by the attraction and persuasion of manifested and suffering love, quietly waiting throughout the ages for the return of His creatures to Him. He not only will not, He "cannot" bend them by violence to His will. His justice is never retributive punishment, but the willing and doing of that which will be best for the offender as well as for all else in His universe. When sin is followed by suffering, strife by destruction, it is not by any personal or external will of God—it is just a self-acting law of all being that is divorced from Him. (The metaphysical problem of regarding, as we implicitly must here, God both as Personal Love and as impersonal law is, however, hardly discussed by our author.)

Of this continual work of God in the time process and in history the incarnation, life, death, and rising again of Jesus Christ are both symbol and evidence. The manger, the cross, and the empty tomb display the

central symbols of all existence. The life of Jesus shows forth love perfect through suffering and joy present in the midst of sorrows. His teaching of the Kingdom, based on forgiveness and service, sets out the same truth. "Like Jesus, God triumphs, not through any force of compulsion, but solely through the immovable firmness of love, which surrenders itself eternally, and in that self-surrender is conscious of its absolute glory." Throughout the ages God, like Jesus, humbly and patiently "endures the contradiction of sinners." "If Christ was dumb before His oppressors and 'resisted not the evil,' then God in Heaven cannot resist through all eternity, but must be dumb and silent." (By a remarkable paradox Rolt maintains that the "power-miracles" of Jesus, like the "compulsive prayer" of the saints, were only temporary gifts, adapted to His incarnation in material flesh, and cease to be attributes of the risen, spiritual life.) He regards it as significant that Jesus never follows Jewish thought in speaking of God as "Almighty," as the "Lord of Hosts," or the like.

The great temptations with which Jesus had to grapple were to despair of God's ultimate reign, without compulsion, over creation and therefore to wish to use compulsion instead of suffering love to redeem mankind. He rejected the crown of a conquering Messiah and fought His way through the lonely desolation of the shameful cross. His physical suffering, though mystically comprehending all human pains, was as nothing compared with His agony of sharing all the unutterable evils and sins of mankind and of all creation. He died literally of a broken heart, but in so doing He entered fully into God's joy and peace, which is inherent in the bearing of the burden of the universe. If He had died a physically "painless" death, His agony would have been the same. God's joy consists in the know-

ledge of His own perfection and in realising the inherent goodness of everything, and this makes the immeasurable anguish intelligible and therefore bearable to a Being who is Perfect Love.

Rolt thinks that, as we cannot believe that God determines the course of events and of our lives, so He cannot be held to foresee them in detail. He sees ever the eternal present, the eternal sonship of His creatures. He feels the divine roots, the seeds of goodness in all, and He knows that all things can and will find their true end in Him. Jesus said that the angels of little children see the face of God; and this implies that all children will grow into men and women whose destiny is to abide in the Divine presence. The freedom of the individual will is an absolute truth, and yet all are predestined to endless joy, to come to it, sooner or later, after wanderings and sufferings age-long perhaps, by their own free choice.

So the omnipotence of Love, though with no element of compulsion, is the absolute and psychological necessity that the God without and the God within must unite in the end and bring all spirits to salvation—to wholeness; that the outer Light must in the end attract and coalesce with the never quite quenched inner Light. (Because of the persistence of the Catholic doctrine of Hell and the words of Jesus supposedly confirming this, Rolt is not altogether consistent and confident here, but such universalism, "the restoration of all things," is, I think, implicit in his creed.)

Two final aphorisms of this true son of the mystics—blessings be upon him! "Theology (even cosmological) justifies herself only so far as her theories explain the experience of the human heart." "In mystical experience, as in the world process, redemption begins with creation, is only another way of describing it."

## THE RELEVANCE OF AN IMPOSSIBLE IDEAL

G. H. C. MACGREGOR

*This is the third in a series of articles in which Professor Macgregor deals with the views of Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr.*

I SHALL try to deal in this article with the first of the two main theological foundations of Niebuhr's position, leaving over meanwhile the criticism of the practical superstructure which he builds upon them. One—and that is the starting-point of the whole argument—is his doctrine of human depravity; the other is his view that Jesus' teaching envisages a Kingdom of God wholly transcendent and future, and His perfectionist ethic therefore has no immediate relevance (save as an ideal standard and a principle of "discriminate criticism") to the practical problems of to-day. The first, I shall argue, springs from a quite unscriptural view of human nature; the second from a failure to grasp the really characteristic and essential elements in Jesus' teaching concerning the Kingdom of God. On purely rational grounds Niebuhr's case appears exceedingly formidable. But when examined in the light of the New Testament it is seen to be quite inconsistent with any but

a badly maimed doctrine alike of the Incarnation, the Church, the Holy Spirit, the Cross and the Kingdom of God.

### Niebuhr's View of Human Nature

First then, argues Niebuhr, man is so corrupted by sin as to be incapable, even if he would, of the sublimation of his selfish and anti-social instincts which obedience to the ethic of Jesus would demand. Between the "perfect" Father in heaven, to whom Jesus points as our exemplar, and the sinful creature which is man there is a gulf fixed which no striving after a perfectionist ideal can ever bridge. Man as a slave of sin is incapacitated from co-operating with God in the building of His Kingdom, a Kingdom which cannot be advanced by any human endeavour, but which will come only when human history is wound up by an

apocalyptic act of God. Here Niebuhr is, of course, much influenced by the transcendental theology of Karl Barth; and over against the facile and shallow humanism of yesterday Barth has supplied a much-needed corrective. Complacency and self-sufficiency is man's fundamental sin; the confession that "our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" is the first condition of his forgiveness; the denial of the reality and power of evil is his final apostasy. All that Barth and his school have to say about the nothingness and sinfulness of man before God is true. But is it the whole truth? If the world is indeed a sink of iniquity for which there is no hope of progress within the span of history; if all striving towards the Kingdom of God is mere unregenerate arrogance; then clearly the pacifist renunciation of war is little short of blasphemous presumption.

### Is it the View of the Gospels?

But the Gospels give us a very different picture. So far from teaching that God is "wholly other" than His world and His creatures, Jesus saw the world always and everywhere as God's world. He drew His lessons from birds and flowers, from the processes of growth and the handiwork of men; and when He wished to teach us what God is like he pointed to the God-like in men. Even in the worst sinner he could discover the hidden good and appeal to it, knowing that the good and not the evil is the essential man. He tells us that it is when a sinner "comes to himself" that he "arises and goes to his Father: the truly human in man, the man's true self, is that within him which responds to God. One little parable, that of the "Seed Growing Secretly," seems to suggest that the very nature of the world, so far from thwarting God's purposes, fosters their growth. Whatever mischances may befall God's Word, nature itself, if left to itself, is on God's side. Indeed to the Jesus of the Gospels the whole world is plainly sacramental. He is amazed that men are so blind to the care and presence of a Father God in His own world and to the "signs of the times" in all that befalls it. This faith in an ever-present Father never blinds Jesus to the reality of sin or to the eternal warfare between light and darkness. Yet He believes that, if a man will but "lose his life" in order to "find it," then God's will can "be done in earth as it is in heaven"—even though that will may prove to be a cross.

### And is it Paul's View?

Now this teaching concerning the kinship of God's world with Himself is clearly Jesus' own. It can hardly have been imposed upon Him by a later age, the trend of whose thought was all in the other direction, towards the same kind of pessimistic dualism which is rampant to-day. Therefore the Gospels must be taken as normative, even if Paul should at first sight appear to give us a different estimate of human nature. But, rightly understood, Paul only corroborates Jesus. Here I cannot do better than quote C. E. Raven: "If St. Paul's view of nature had been the unrelieved and total condemnation which Paulinism has often ascribed to it, the power and poignancy of his teaching would have been impossible.

It is because creation is redeemable and redemption is offered to it, that its continuance in sin becomes an outrage that cannot be tolerated . . . Depraved as the world is, Christ's coming has revealed it is to be in some measure *capax deitatis*, able to respond to and co-operate with His purposes, endowed by virtue of His creating and sustaining relationship to it with a value which makes the dominion of evil all the more detestable but which evil cannot utterly eradicate . . . If Pauline claims are true, then there is always and everywhere a relationship, a gracious, personal relationship, between God and His creation. This does not for sinner or saint imply perfection or minimum responsibility . . . But it excludes the type of theology which rigidly sunders the natural from the redeemed, regards the world as a mass of corruption, and treats Christ as a divine intruder rescuing out of a wholly estranged and otherwise godless universe those who are elected to receive His salvation . . . Creation is redeemable in virtue of its relatedness to Christ as its source and of His will to redeem it." (*The Gospel and the Church*, 40-42).

### A True "Theology of Crisis"

The estimate of human nature on which Niebuhr's case so largely depends is one of pessimism and gloom entirely out of tune with the joy and hope of the whole New Testament. It seriously distorts the New Testament doctrine of the Incarnation, for it makes Christ's nature exclusive rather than representative, and sees Him as a "divine intruder" into an alien world rather than as "the first-born of all creation." It gives little or no meaning, as we shall see, to the Holy Spirit, and it makes nonsense of Paul's claim that "we are fellow-workers together with God." It is fair to remember that it was the last war which, in the Barthian "theology of crisis," gave a fresh lease of life to this reactionary theology of despair for which there is no justification either in Scripture or in the Christian creed. Certainly the world's agony has taught us this much, that "progress" is not the easy, inevitable evolutionary process of which once we dreamed. As C. H. Dodd has said, "the Gospel does not speak of progress, but of dying and rising again. The pattern of history is revealed less in evolution than in crisis" (*The Apostolic Preaching*, 238). But a true theology of the present crisis will point us along another road than Barth's—'not to a denunciation of secular effort as irrelevant nor to the acceptance of a godless and irredeemable State over against a pietistic and other-worldly Church, but to an insistence that no sphere of human activity is or can be purely secular, and that everywhere there is need for penitence and faith, since all things secular and sacred work together for good to them that love God, and will work only for disaster on any other terms' (Raven, *op. cit.* 221).

### "Immoral Society" and the Doctrine of the Church

But if it is possible for the redeemed Christian individual to co-operate with God in the achievement of

His perfect will, is it any less possible for a redeemed fellowship, in this case for the Christian Church? For it is fair to remind Niebuhr that by his own definition the question at issue is "Why the *Christian Church* is not Pacifist." It is Niebuhr's thesis that "human collectives are less moral than the individuals which compose them" and that therefore there is a radical difference between personal and collective ethics. Now, the question of war apart, the average Christian would almost certainly repudiate the suggestion that he may legitimately live by one set of principles as an individual and by another as a citizen. Yet this assumption underlies practically every statement of the Christian non-pacifist position.

But is this thesis of "moral and immoral society" really tenable on Christian grounds? Surely it is questionable even with respect to ordinary secular society. No doubt there is a superficial truth in the view that the group mind tends to revert towards the primitive and the savage, and that the morality of the crowd falls below that of the individual. But a group can rise above the sum of its members as well as fall below it. There is an inspiration in fellowship which enables comrades to rise to levels impossible to the mere individual. "Esprit de corps" raises and does not lower morale! But the needful condition is inspiration by a common enthusiasm and a common purpose. It is this that distinguishes a fellowship from a mob; and though Niebuhr's thesis may be true of a mob it is emphatically not true of a fellowship. And the classic example of the fulfilment of such a condition is the Christian Church "continuing steadfastly of one accord" at Pentecost. We must return later to the inevitable conflict of loyalties which arises for the Christian in virtue of his membership both in a Christian communion and in a semi-Christian or non-Christian community. Suffice it for the moment to remark that Niebuhr's thesis is flatly irreconcilable with the Christian's faith in the Church and his own experience of *koinonia* in that Church. Indeed, Niebuhr in his whole argument, and specially at this point, seems practically to ignore the whole New Testament doctrine of the Church and the implication for the Christian of his membership of the Church—literally as a member or limb of the Body of Christ. Can it really be true that such a Body as a whole is so sunk in depravity, and so nerveless through the ravages of sin, that it cannot co-operate with God in the doing of His perfect will? Has the absolute ethic of Jesus really no more immediate relevance to such a Body than is recognised by the rival leaders of warring States? Again we remind ourselves that our problem is, "Why the *Christian Church* is not Pacifist."

#### The Holy Spirit and "Enabling Grace"

If Niebuhr's argument does injustice to the New Testament doctrine of the Church, he has apparently no doctrine at all of the Holy Spirit—at any rate in the

New Testament sense. We have already noted that he regards grace as pardon rather than as power: he appears to have little conception at all of "enabling grace." Yet to remove this doctrine from the New Testament is to tear out its very heart. It is an essential part of Paul's faith; otherwise how can he speak of "His power that worketh in me mightily" (Col. i. 29), or pray to be "strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man" (Eph. i. 16), or boast that "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13)? As proof of man's powerlessness, even if he would, to obey the commands of Jesus, Niebuhr lays much stress on Paul's own experience of inner conflict set up by the tension between the "law in my members" and the "law of my mind," each warring against the other (Rom. vii. 23). "The good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do" (Rom. vii. 19). No man ever had a keener sense of the reality and the power of sin. But surely he is describing here not, as Niebuhr seems to suggest, a permanent disability which would render all moral effort irrelevant, but rather his own desperate moral conflict *before* he met Christ on the Damascus road. "The Gospel in Pauline thought has a supreme regenerative value precisely because it frees a man from this conflict, integrates and sublimates his personality, and so releases in him the power, previously wasted over inward friction, to adjust himself to his environment and gain the mastery of circumstance. Henceforward he is no longer the 'slave of sin' . . . but is free to live as the child of God in the fellowship of his brethren" (Raven, *op. cit.* 135). For Paul every step towards the attainment of the Christian ideal is a "fruit of the Spirit," that is a product of a new life of which the Spirit is the author; and this new life is the first result of the Christian's status "in Christ." "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation:" consequently "the servant of Christ is capable of a perfect obedience because he has been transformed in the very constitution of his being" (E. F. Scott, "*The Spirit in the New Testament.*" 140). Henceforward the moral demands of the Christian ethic become "the law of the Spirit" and are spontaneously and joyfully obeyed. Moreover it is not in the individual but in the fellowship of the Church that the work of the Holy Spirit is most powerfully manifested. The supreme example of the communion of a Spirit-filled fellowship with God is seen in the Church at Pentecost; and the final purpose of the Holy Spirit's mission is the "perfecting of the saints . . . unto the building up of the Body of Christ . . . till we all attain unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 12f.). That such is Paul's teaching—however incredible it may seem to our poor faith or in the light of our own experience of failure both as individuals and as a Church—there can be no shadow of doubt; and no treatment of Christian ethics can be adequate which does not take account of it.

(To be Continued)

## METHODISM UPHOLDS LIBERTY

Some Methodist pacifists have found that the Loyal Resolution passed at the last Conference has been taken in some quarters to mean that Methodism as a whole was behind the war effort and that their position has been criticised as untenable and contradictory. The writer wrote with others to the President of the Methodist Conference asking for a definite pronouncement. This was his reply:—"The considered verdict of the Conference as recorded in the Minutes of 1937, page 384, is our stand-by with regard to the treatment of Conscientious Objectors. I enclose a copy of the relevant passage. You are free to state on my authority that *our Church has never gone back upon this statement, and that it still represents the official attitude of Methodism.*"

The enclosure to which the President refers is as follows:—

#### LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE IN TIME OF WAR

"Should war come we realise that a grave decision will be demanded of the Christian. There will be those, sincere, lovers of their country, whose inward conviction and loyalty to Christ compel them to oppose war in all circumstances. With equal sincerity and with a like inward constraint, others will feel the necessity of giving effect to obligations, commitments and loyalties of a national or international character which they deem binding on the body politic, and on themselves within it. The Methodist Church recognises that, in present circumstances, both decisions may express true loyalty to personal spiritual conviction, and an earnest endeavour to do the will of God and serve the highest interests of mankind. In view of this recognition, the Methodist Church will uphold liberty of conscience and offer unceasing ministries to all her sons and daughters, in whichever direction loyalty to inward conviction may carry them."

BEATRICE HAWKER.

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## THE FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

Almighty God, Who when Thou didst put on a robe of flesh and became visible didst choose the person of a little child in whom to manifest Thy presence, enable us to recognise Thee in the lowly places, to see Thy power in gentleness, and Thy glory in humility. Give us that vision which was theirs who saw the heavenly host and tune our ears to hear the angel's song, so that looking not to the things which are seen and temporal, we may behold the things which are unseen and eternal.

O Living God, Whose word was once made flesh and dwelt amongst men so that they saw Thy glory, let now Thy gospel be set forth not only in the words we utter but in the deeds we do. Let all our dealings with our neighbours, the ordering of our common life, the labour of our hands and the transaction of our business witness to Thee and to Thy righteousness. Clothe the evangel of Thy mercy in compassionate acts; declare the gospel of Thine own forgiveness in our forgiveness of one another; and let our love for men reveal Thy love Who art its Author, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

O everpresent God, our Maker, Who didst at Bethlehem take our humanity upon Thyself and so uplifted it in dignity and honour, enable us to see Thee in our neighbours, to despair of none that Thou hast made, and to respect our kinship with all men. Give us Thine own desire to serve and to redeem, and each esteeming other better than himself, make us effective agents of Thy purpose in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

O God, Who wert incarnate in a Man; Who came unto Thine own and Thine own received Thee not, come into our hearts now for there is room for Thee. Come and inhabit our fellowships, our families and our congregations. Take up Thine abode in these unworthy temples and make them sanctuaries of Thy presence. Let the living spirit of Thy Christ, to Whom all power is given, dwell in Thy Church on earth, so that as once men saw Him in the flesh, they may again behold His glory, full of grace and truth. Let the dayspring from on high visit us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; to guide our feet into the way of peace.

O God, Who hast put down the mighty from their seats and has exalted the humble and meek, we pray for all who are oppressed, that liberty advancing over all the earth may come to their relief; for prisoners and captives, for fugitives and refugees that Thy prevailing presence may assist them; for all who suffer for their faith or race; for those who flee from violence; for little children and their mothers who are victims of war; for all who are outcast and exiled; for many who are far from home and for all whom duty and necessity separate from those they love most dearly; reveal Thyself to them, O God, through Him Who was Himself cast out and was in exile, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## WHAT MOVES PUBLIC OPINION ?

TO THE EDITOR

SIR,—Mr. Gliddon in the November number of the "Christian Pacifist" emphasises an important truth when he reminds us that the words of a gospel need to be implemented by actions. Actions sometimes make an appeal to the heart which no mere argument can ever do. At the same time our failure to make a deeper impression on public opinion during the early months of the war cannot, I think, be attributed entirely to our failure to add deeds to words.

From my own personal observation I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that by far the most important single factor creating and maintaining the war spirit has been the propaganda of the Press and the B.B.C. and the speeches of war-minded politicians.

It is significant also that those who were responsible for this propaganda were not men who had endeared themselves to the nation by wise policies and acts of loving and heroic service. In the early days of the war it was not George Lansbury who was listened to, nor even Lloyd George who had guided the country to victory in an earlier struggle. It was rather men with an unbroken record of negligible achievement and neglected opportunities. The same is true of those who control the Press, most of whom have shown consistent opposition to reforms which would have ended the paradox of poverty in the midst of potential abundance.

To take a more personal example, I know of a man rather above the average in intelligence who, in his early days, received help and friendly service from a pacifist whom in consequence he regards with more respect and affection than almost anyone else of his acquaintance. In spite of this, however, it has been the argument of the newspapers and not those of his pacifist friend which have decided his attitude towards the war.

I have no hesitation, therefore, in saying that if the position had been reversed and pacifist control over the Press and wireless had been as great as militarist control is now, we should not have had the slightest difficulty in turning public opinion against the war, in spite of the limitations of our personal characters as Christians.

The success of the Dictators and their ability to induce great masses of ordinary people to do things normally distasteful to them, is an intensely interesting and, I believe, largely an unsolved problem, anyhow in this country. The Dictators are certainly courageous men influenced by something higher than mere personal ambition, and in their early days were prepared to suffer and did suffer for their ideas. One cannot, however, claim that they achieved greatness by, to quote Mr. Gliddon's words, "bathing the torn feet of a weary world." How was it that they managed to persuade so many of their fellow-countrymen that their advice was sound and that their orders were worthy of being obeyed? Was it by reason of a personal magnetism which few ordinary mortals seem to possess? Were they aided by hard circumstances which did not prevail to the same extent in our country? Did they use methods which, as

Christians, we cannot use? Or have their achievements been due to a combination of all these factors with perhaps other factors added as well?

Mr. Gliddon refers to the surprise expressed by certain people at seeing conscientious objectors cheerfully engaged in the useful service of others and he appears to suggest that the surprise was largely due to the melancholy and inactive outlook of the average conscientious objector. Some of us may be guilty in this direction, but is it not also possible that the continued bitter and unfair criticism levied in the newspapers against all who oppose the war, may also have a good deal to do with the critical popular attitude?

There remains one more problem of great interest and importance—that of perceiving the dividing line between unchristian refusal of service to those in need and well-intentioned but short-sighted action tending to prolong the war by taking the edge off its hardships for those whom suffering alone appears able to compel to use their wits.

If people are buried as a result of the collapse of their houses through a bomb explosion, it is obviously not only an act of Christian charity but also a thoroughly sound bit of work to rescue them as soon as possible. A person who is rescued after so painful an experience, if he does not belong to the class whom suffering merely renders spiteful and vindictive, is certainly likely to have his views on the "glory" of war profoundly modified! On the other hand if he is not rescued, his views will only be able to find expression in Paradise where, presumably, he will be preaching to the already converted!

A friend who has been living in London throughout the war, writing of the remarkable change in public opinion since the bombing began, says "The bomb is an able propagandist; people are beginning to ask what it is all about and the catchwords that satisfied them last autumn, no longer do so."

A working woman from the East End of London who had succeeded in escaping through having a small sum of money fortunately at her disposal complained bitterly to another friend that it was all very well for the newspapers to compliment people of her class on their courage but most of them were caught like rats in a trap, and could not escape if they wanted to.

Individuals who achieve prominence in the advocacy of peace are liable to be silenced quickly. We need, therefore, much wisdom in deciding what to do and what to leave undone. Even Christ, normally the first to bring help to those in need, for the occasion when the leaders of the Jewish nation plunged their people into a reckless and foolish war (with, by a strange irony of fate, one of Mussolini's forebears), gave His followers the rather unexpected advice to flee to the hills, when we might have supposed that He would have directed them to remain in Jerusalem to minister to the needs of their fellows in the doomed city.—Yours, very truly,

BEDFORD.

## PACIFIST SERVICE UNITS

PAUL GLIDDON

THE Rev. "Tubby" Clayton, Founder of T.O.C.H., has defined service as "The Rent I pay for my place on Earth," a definition which leaves some of us with an uneasy feeling that we are behind with the rent. Probably few of those who support this present war share that uneasiness, for they feel that they are doing all that they can to hasten victory and therefore giving the service of which there is the most urgent need. But the pacifist, pledged to support no wars whatever, may find himself the least serviceable of humans; even when he is asked at least to dig for victory he is tempted to reply "I cannot dig; I pray thee have me excused." But, when he is asked what he will do to help men and women who are suffering, being in conscience bound not voluntarily to assist the war, he is in danger of hardening his heart against a clamant need. It is from this difficulty that Pacifist Service Units afford an honourable way of escape.

### Full and Part-time Units

A full-time Unit consists of ten men, or of ten men and women, who are available for Unit service at any time of the day or night and in any place. Of such Units six were established in London before the beginning of November, though others are in process of formation both in London and in the provinces. The members live on the same economic basis and work from the same centre, receiving only very unpretentious board and lodging and pocket money amounting to half a crown a week. Thus a ten-pound note runs a unit for a week and makes it possible for ten men to follow the merciful calling of ministering to those in need: the war budget of the peace army.

In association with these Units or, more frequently, working as independent Units, there are others made up of people who can only give part of their time and who are responsible for their own maintenance. Obviously people engaged in earning their livings cannot give as much time as others but, by making deep inroads into the hours of sleep, it is amazing what an amount of time many of them do give, working throughout one or two nights every week, or perhaps for half a night two or three times weekly. As so much of the work goes on during the night, such workers can give far more assistance than would be normally the case, though for how long some of them will be able to keep up the pace they have set themselves is a matter of considerable doubt.

Many hundreds of thousands of people in London alone regularly spend their nights in public shelters—and it is for this reason that sometimes whole blocks of houses are damaged without the loss of a single life; homes which were fast becoming only sleeping boxes

are now precisely not that; our dormitory suburbs have given place to public dormitories. But places comparatively safe from air attack are usually below ground and, therefore, just those that normally receive least attention. To make vaults and cellars habitable is a tremendous task and to look after the very mixed crowd making use of shelters requires the utmost tact, firmness and ingenuity. A wise shelter marshal can make these unpromising places not only into something like home but into something much more like home than some of his sad visitors have ever experienced, but to rise to such an opportunity demands an enormous amount of common sense and unflinching good humour.

### In a Certain East End Mission

Where the shelter is controlled by a helpful authority, municipal or ecclesiastical, a variety of opportunities can be found. Thus one East End mission owning such a shelter sends in a report that is typical.

"The risk of infection in crowded shelters is very great, and the mopping of the floor, if possible with disinfectants, using disinfectant sprays and other usual means of fighting germs and dirt, are essential. Furthermore, a number of people who use the shelter will have little opportunity for ordinary personal cleanliness and, if a bathroom or washing accommodation is provided, it will be found to be appreciated. Attention to young children and babies is almost essential and, in our own shelter, one corner is put aside as "Babies' Corner," where the girls of the Guide and Ranger companies wash, bath and care for little children. A great deal of home nursing will be found necessary. Coughs, colds, sore throats, have to receive attention, and there are usually two or three invalids requiring special care. In our own shelter we have a trained nurse on duty and a doctor visiting, but in cases where this is not possible, men trained in first aid and home nursing would be most useful.

"During long evenings entertaining and useful programmes can be arranged. There are the usual impromptu concerts, local talent competitions, sing-songs, films (if available) and other ways of passing the time and drowning the noise of gun-fire. In addition, however, it is possible to arrange games which do not involve running about, and in various ways to make the shelter something of a social centre. Now that the system of passes is in operation and the population of one shelter is more or less fixed, quite a family atmosphere can be developed. In our shelter there are preparations going forward for Christmas and, before the end of October, collections were being taken to provide as festive a tea as rationing

would permit, while Carols were being practised and a pantomime for Christmas Day planned.

"A number of shelters have found that their clientele are not only ready but anxious to have evening prayers. In addition in our shelter, at general request, a Sunday night service has now been running for some weeks. The collection taken at this service for charitable objects would shame a good many churches, although the vast majority of the people are not connected with any religious profession at all."

#### A Unique Venture

But the Units are not only trying to be cheerfully useful to those who are living "sheltered" lives," they are assisting those who have actually fallen victims to aerial warfare. Thus they have adopted in Central London a method of rendering first aid and dealing with emergencies which, to quote another report, "is believed to be unique to P.S.U." The report goes on to explain that, when spotters report roughly where a bomb has fallen, cyclists fitted out with first aid kit immediately go off to offer assistance. Their cycles can be lifted round bomb craters and over debris, the very slenderness of their equipment making it possible for them sometimes to get through where others would experience especial difficulty. The authorities place no hindrance in the way of such free lance assistance and have even warmly expressed admiration of the way the work is handled. Unfortunately the bombing of the premises in which is situated the Unit that specialises in this work is necessitating finding a new centre and to undertaking the extra work the move involves.

Those rendered homeless through air raids are sent to neighbouring rest and evacuation centres. Such centres are the temporary homes of people who often arrive with no possessions in the world except such clothes as they have been wearing when the bomb fell. Very often having spent the night in a public shelter they do not know that their homes have gone until they go back in the morning and see the shapeless ruins. Such people are entitled not only to all that official efficiency can supply but also all that can come through a deep and understanding compassion. This the Unit members seek to supply and it is hardly necessary to say that, in such work, women can easily excel men. The sufferers have not only to be fed and clothed but every help has to be given them in seeing that any of their belongings that can be rescued are brought along and in making arrangements for their departure to more permanent billets. Thus there is a great demand at these centres for all clothes that can possibly be spared. though people sending such are asked to remember that these ought to be sufficiently clean and that it would be a kindly act before sending them to make any obviously necessary repairs. Perhaps they will also remember that bombing does not make people indifferent to the season of the year and that last season's summer frocks had better be kept until the finer weather returns.

#### Canteen Work

In shelters and at these rest centres and also at the scene of a bombing there is a real need for the right sort of canteen worker and for those who have conquered the mysteries of ministering to the inner man. Excellent work is being done by many local authorities who are often willing to foot the cost of such canteen work provided they feel they are dealing with dependable workers. Many pacifists have already gone far with such canteen work and groups who feel they would like to be associated either with a localised or a mobile canteen would be well advised to see the proper authority, offering picked voluntary workers and ascertaining from the official bodies the amount of material help that would be forthcoming.

Some of the Unit members have given a good deal of time to the various evacuation schemes, while they are in constant need of offers of paid or unpaid hospitality, especially for people who hardly fit into larger Government schemes. It is natural but a little sad that, when so much is being said about getting children into the country, the problem of the old folks remains largely forgotten. There is a billeting allowance for Old Age Pensioners of 5s. per week and other grants are sometimes obtainable, while the authorities will frank their travelling expenses. Still they remain in London, in some cases because they hate to leave home, in many cases because no alternative home is offered. Here is a gracious ministry pacifists might well perform, either bringing the old people into their own homes or providing for them a new sort of temporary alms house.

#### The Training of the Units

The mere listing of some of the interests of the Units will show that a Unit member will have largely to learn his trade through experience but that also he will be a much more efficient person if he has gone through a period of training. Thus in the Anglican Pacifist Unit arrangements are now being made for a preliminary six weeks' training before the names of men are even submitted to the Committee of the Pacifist Service Units; this training is taking place at Ewell Vicarage, and the men only afterwards being transferred to the original A.P.F. house at 121, Limpsfield Road, Sanderstead. But, however the training is given, the need for it must not be overlooked, as, while willingness may be very admirable, skill is much more serviceable. But it would be well for those who are at all attracted by what the Units are doing to write further to Pacifist Service Units, 6, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1, or, if they wish to work as a body of Christian Pacifists, then to get in touch with F.o.R., 17, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. The address of one F.o.R. Unit is 37, Glenhouse Road, Eltham, S.E.9. Clothes may well be sent also to the Rev. Alan Balding, Trinity Church, Augusta Street, E.14.

## THEY SAY

SEAWARD BEDDOW

#### Peace Prize

"If peace comes at long last, and he has survived the bombs, we think the next Nobel Peace Award should of right be given to Winston Churchill.—*Portland Oregonian*, October 15.

#### The Law and Conscience

"It is still the law of the land that a man may possess a conscience. . . . So I hope the inquiry into allegations about harsh treatment of C.O.s by some Army authorities will be ruthless. High Hats who cannot treat C.O.s as human beings are not fit to be trusted with the care of private soldiers and Non-C.O.s."—*Cameronian*, in "Reynolds."

#### A Plea for Toleration

A C.O. who has been refused exemption and sent into the Army is admittedly a problem for the authorities; but the nation as a whole will certainly set its face against any attempt to solve the problem by bullying and brutality.

While we are on the subject we must renew our protest against the dismissal or suspension from their employment of C.O.s who have been guaranteed exemption. . . . Intolerant employers ought to be told plainly that they are doing a disservice to the cause of freedom which our fighting men are so bravely serving.—*Christian World*.

#### C.O.s in East London

"Much useful welfare and relief work in the East End is done by members of the Friends Ambulance Unit—a reminder of the sensible use of the C.O. in the job he is willing to do."—*New Statesman and Nation*.

#### A Bishop Speaks. But he is Chinese

Lindel Tsen, a Chinese bishop who has seen his country ravished, Chinese women raped by the Japanese soldiery, and Chinese children cruelly killed, is reported to have used these words recently at a church service in China:—

"Brothers in Christ, I exhort you now that you have had communion with our Saviour, keep steadfast in that communion. And, brethren, I exhort you at this time to bethink yourselves of the weeping women of Japan, mothers weeping for sons who will never return, wives for husbands who have gone for ever. I exhort you to bethink yourselves of the desolation and the grief of the orphaned children of Japan, orphaned in a cause in which the people of Japan have no heart."

#### Grace Before Meat—New Style

"Recently at a public luncheon, Lord Woolton, Minister of Food, said the following Grace: "By the grace of God and the vigilance of the Royal Navy, the courage of the Mercantile Marine, the devotion of dock labourers and transport workers and of food traders, and the patient efforts of the farmers, these good things have been brought to our table, and for these benefits we thank our God."—*Church Times*.

## FOUR YEARS

WHEN, four years ago, a little group of people of several nationalities settled at a remote farmhouse in Wiltshire it was not immediately apparent that anything of consequence had happened. But, once the turn of the season has come, a very little sunshine will bring out the buds and deep in the consciousness of many people in this land, the turn of the season *had* come. It needed no more than the stimulus of a dedicated group life to liberate the first immature shoots of what may yet emerge as a new Christian order of society. Because of this, Ashton Keynes may presently find a significance in the history of our times no less than some other village names of which all the world has heard. And if the witness of the Bruderhof goes on to the fulfilment of its destiny in yet other remote places of the earth, is it not an indication that its work here is complete: the tree has begun already to put forth its leaves against the time of the singing of birds.

Whatever the future holds for our world, it seems certain that "the life based on love" with its commitment and its co-operation; its sharing and service, in one or other of its many appointed forms, will run through it like a stream of living water. The stream indeed widens rapidly within our view. In what various directions this is evident a new issue of the Broadsheet now in preparation can testify more completely than is possible here.\* But there are many groups adventuring into community in obscurity—and the purposeful conscious relationship of all such efforts is necessary; however small or feeble they may be. A direct way to wider contact lies through correspondence with the Community Service Committee. Will every group living or planning any pattern of community life or work get in touch please—not for its own sake alone but in the interests of the wider community of which it is an active part.

Amongst many indications of the march of community thought in these times of crisis . . . the upthrust of new life out of the midst of death . . . comes a new call for "the establishment of agricultural self-subsistence communities as a way to the restoration of a healthy national life and a truly peace-minded society." This is a thesis already developed by John Middleton Murry in his articles on "The New Community" and it was the subject of a week-end meeting convened at Langham during November by Middleton Murry and Max Plowman. Another community gathering is planned at the Friends' Meeting House, Breadweir, Bristol, on 14th December. (Particulars from Donald Weight, of Graycot, Roman Way, Glastonbury). Circumstances have so far been unfavourable to the realisation of the national delegate convention of working communities which was projected during the summer.

\* Copies of "The Broadsheet" for December and of "Community in Britain" (1940) may be ordered through the F.o.R. Bookroom or direct from the Hon. Secretary, Community Service Committee, Chancton, Dartnell Park, West Byfleet, Surrey.



## THE FRIENDLY BOOK

CHRISTIAN PACIFISM RE-EXAMINED. Dr. C. J. Cadoux.  
(Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 12/6).

To read this book as it deserves to be read is to receive a liberal education in the grounds and implicates of Christian pacifism. Dr. Cadoux has had the courage ruthlessly to re-examine the convictions of which he has been so faithful a servant. He unites a scrupulous honesty with a searching judgment and a rare gift for precision in stating his conclusions.

The author faces every major and many a minor issue. Some of the impressive platitudes of pacifist speech are shrewdly discredited—that coercion is always wrong, that war settles nothing, that the end never justifies the means, that no good has been achieved or evil averted by war. He can even find “a relative justification” for war, and for this he makes a very weighty claim: “It is unfortunately true that the great majority of even intelligent and completely honest pacifist statements, though excellent within their limits, fail to convince others, simply because they afford no help on certain very natural and perplexing questions to which the doctrine of relative justification is the needful and only possible pacifist answer.”

A short review can give only an imperfect idea of the range of subjects here discussed. The concept of Christian “Law” is examined, and the notion of an “interim ethic” exploded. The relative righteousness of the German and British cause, the pacifist’s payment of income tax, the various kinds of “pressure,” colonies, an international police force, the nature of the peace, the alternatives before the C.O., are among the questions on which Dr. Cadoux has something worth while to say.

On almost every page there are sentences which will give the reader pause. Two only may be quoted. “But (pacifists) will need to bear in mind with more than usual care that the pacifism they are called on to propagate is one of conviction, not of obstruction: their objective is to help others to see for themselves the truth of a certain interpretation of Christianity, not to prevail on them by hook or crook to stand out of the war, still less to try to prevent them, despite any convictions they may have, from fighting in it.” “Whenever, therefore, a man is converted to Christian pacifism, the country loses indeed a potential soldier, but it gains an actual and active reconciler: and, unless the claims just made for Christian love are illusory (in which case Christianity itself would be an illusion), the gain greatly outweighs the loss.”

THE BETRAYAL OF CHRIST BY THE CHURCHES. By J. Middleton Murry (London: Andrew Dakers Ltd. 5/- net).

The greatest of all the spiritual tragedies of these dark days has been the failure of the Christian Church in all its branches. A few years ago, no one could have foreseen the magnitude of the failure. During the Great War, the Church leaders were content to echo the

secular voices. As Dr. Orchard wittily remarked in 1916: “It is obvious that the Bishops have been reading the newspapers and nothing else is at all obvious.” It was believed, however, that opinion in the Churches had changed considerably since 1918, and many of us hoped that even though the official Church would not declare for Christian Pacifism, it would keep clear of subservience to the State. This hope has been disappointed.

Pacifists and non-pacifists alike will read with interest Mr. Middleton Murry’s analysis of the present deplorable state of affairs in his book “The Betrayal of Christ by the Churches.” Immersed in smaller aims, admirable and important no doubt, the Church leaders have quite forgotten that, as the world now is, peace is an essential condition of Christian progress, and that modern war, so far from conserving Christian values, is utterly destructive of them. So the Church goes on, pottering about among little things, turning a blind eye to the utter wickedness of war, and accepting with child-like simplicity the view of the politicians. As Mr. Middleton Murry says: The Church “knows its place—It knows its function: which is that of a good wife to the State. Like a good wife it never advises and never criticises and when there is a row it always stands up for its husband. And it insists on one thing, as far as it may, that the husband shall keep out of the kitchen.” The politicians in Great Britain are wiser than those across the North Sea inasmuch as they keep out of the kitchen, and do not provoke the Church as the Nazis have done.

Mr. Murry tells the story of the failure of the Church in the past two decades, and he denounces the ecclesiastical attitude to the Treaty of Versailles. His argument would have been stronger, and criticism would have been forestalled and disarmed, if he had emphasised the failure of the German Churches to restrain the evil passions which the Treaty generated. In both nations, the Churches have been guilty of abandoning their Christian duty and both nations are reaping the bitter harvest.

The author’s criticism of Lord Halifax should be read by those who believe that this nobleman is entitled in a peculiar degree to the confidence of Christian people.

HECTOR MACPHERSON.

“THE CASE AGAINST PACIFISM,” by Dr. John Lewis.  
Published by Allen & Unwin. 2/6.

This is a book that every pacifist ought to read and note the distinction between what Dr. Lewis calls “absolute” and “utilitarian” pacifism: absolute pacifism is based upon certain fundamental principles; utilitarian pacifism is based upon a judgment of consequences and results. The latter kind of pacifism is exemplified in the writings of Dr. C. E. M. Joad and Bertrand Russell, declaring that the consequences of war are always bad and that the events and miseries of war are always worse than any possible good that may come out of it.

This, Dr. Lewis says, “breaks down if it can be shown that under certain conditions war can succeed and that in spite of the tragic cost there may be in some cases net gain, that the nation which defends itself does not necessarily always become as bad as the aggressor.” This would seem to be a perfectly sound argument, and if it is, then utilitarian pacifism as a creed has failed to make good its claims.

The other kind of pacifism which Dr. Lewis calls “absolute” but which probably ought to be called “religious,” since, as he rightly says in another connection, there is really nothing absolute in this world, does not break down in the same fashion as utilitarian pacifism breaks down, simply because it does not depend upon consequences and results but does depend upon principles. It depends upon what some people would call “a stop in the mind” that forbids them to use the evil methods of war for any purpose, or what some other people would call “obedience to the will of God,” as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. Dr. Lewis allows that this kind of pacifism does not break down at the same point, but is inclined to say that it is not possible for anybody to make such judgments, that in fact our judgment is always a matter of weighing the good and the evil.

It is at this point that we venture to differ from Dr. Lewis, and in differing, would point out to him that principles upon which such pacifism is based are not just precepts or parts of a code. He says, for instance, “Christian pacifism as treating the Sermon on the Mount

as a rigid code of precepts . . . is both unspiritual and unhistorical,” the answer to which is that Christian Pacifism does nothing of the kind. Nor is Christian Pacifism so unhistorical as Dr. Lewis seems to think. He deems it unhistorical because every great teacher must be the child of his age and even if Jesus were a pacifist it does not bind the pacifism upon His followers. But the whole point of Christian faith is that it transcends the age in which it was born and indeed has transcended every age ever since, including our own, that it gives a revelation of God’s way of dealing with His children and with the evil that exists in the world, and that this way—with infinite variety, of course—is applicable to every age. There is a New Testament word which better than any other describes the way, and it is the word “reconciliation.” Would Dr. Lewis say that the principle embodied in such a word was only for one age? Surely he would agree it is of universal application, both in time and place. But if so then judgments made under the principle are certainly possible and (as we think) probably valid.

### Books Received

THE RECORDS OF SENELDER, by Rosa Waugh Hobhouse.  
C. W. Daniel. 64pp. 1s. Recommended as a Christmas gift.

THE PEACE OF GOD, by Eberhard Arnold.

THE HUTTERIAN BROTHERS, by the same author. Plough Publishing House. 2s. and 10d.

## CONCERNING THE FELLOWSHIP

LESLIE ARTINGSTALL

WE are now within two months of the end of the financial year, and therefore I make no apology for writing about the financial needs and obligations of the Fellowship.

I use the word “needs” to indicate the amount of money required to provide the headquarters organisation and all the general regional organisation in the country, and the word “obligations” to indicate other things for which the Fellowship is directly responsible or for which it has a great concern. These include the International F.o.R., the various pacifist units and teams in which the Fellowship has a share (and elsewhere referred to in this issue) and the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors.

To deal with the latter responsibilities first. The International Fellowship carries on even in war-time, but of course the travelling of its various Secretaries is somewhat restricted. The contribution of the British Fellowship to the International for this current year is £500, towards which at the end of October only some £200 had been definitely contributed. Sums intended for the international work should of course be sent to the British Treasurer, who pays over to the International

Fellowship every month one-twelfth of the £500 grant, namely £41 13s. 4d.

Other obligations are in relation to the war emergency. On the one hand, the decisions of the Tribunals giving men agricultural work—in which most have to receive training and during which training do not and cannot expect to receive wages, and on the other hand, victimisation through dismissal from employment (and it should be noted that this refers now both to men and women) have created a problem which in some measure is our problem. General Committee feels that we ought to be able to subsidise individuals who go into some already established land scheme or pacifist unit and have to pay a subsistence contribution.

Then in addition there is the whole work of the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors.

Turning now to what I have called “needs” of the Fellowship, that is support for the work undertaken by headquarters and by the Secretaries throughout the country. It is of course the regional plan that costs most of the money, and especially now that we have 12 Regional Secretaries. The plan that was made in faith a year or two ago and fully developed during the last year seems to be completely justified. Headquarters

now has a staff of 12, for all of whom there is more than enough work.

General Committee, at the beginning of the year carried on the policy which it had earlier agreed upon in spite of war conditions, and was encouraged thereto by the tremendous growth of the Fellowship over the last few years, by the considerable increase in the general income, and by the notable success of the Special Appeal that was launched in November, 1939. When the end of the financial year came, namely January 31st, 1940, it was found that only £950 of the Special Appeal money would be required to balance the accounts for the previous year, leaving some £1,200 of the Special Appeal Fund in reserve. The budget for the current year showed, on paper, a prospective deficiency of some £1,650, and if the worst comes to the worst, then the balance in the Special Appeal Fund can be used to meet the larger part of that deficiency. Only if that were done, the whole of the Special Appeal Fund would be used up and there would be no margin for next year and the year after. But the worst very rarely does come to the worst, and in fact the prospective deficiency at this point in the financial year is a good deal less than it was when the year started, owing to some increase in general contributions. It is a good deal less, but it has not disappeared, and so during these next two months, we are hoping that the greater part will be met out of current and new subscriptions, and so enable the Fellowship to retain the balance of the Special Appeal Fund untouched and in reserve for 1941.

In view of the splendid response which members and subscribers have made in years past, I felt that it would be right to place the exact position before you all in good time before the end of the financial year. To those who have already made their contribution for this year, may I say a very sincere "Thank you"; to those whose usual contributions are made during December and January may I say how very much we hope that you will be able to continue these; and to those who have never yet made a gift of money to the Fellowship (though I am sure they have made gifts of other kinds through their association with our branches or with other members), may I say how very grateful we shall be if this year you can see your way to making a gift and thus sharing with the many already subscribing in helping us to balance the accounts for this year, and planning for work and service during 1941 equal at least to what has been attempted in 1940.

Every Pacifist Should Read

### "PEACE NEWS"

Edited by JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

2d. Weekly

(Special terms for quantities)

Order from publishers (Dept. C.P.3), 3 Blackstock Road, London, N.4, or ask for name of your nearest supplier

## Shaping the World of To-morrow

The overseas work of Friends (Quakers) has not broken down with the breakdown of international life. Friends' Centres are open to-day in

FRANCE*	AFRICA
DENMARK*	CHINA
GERMANY*	INDIA
HOLLAND*	JAPAN
SWITZERLAND*	SYRIA

\* British personnel withdrawn, but work continued by Local Friends in collaboration with American Friends.

and are carrying on a work of reconciliation, of religious fellowship and relief.

### Christian Pacifism is best interpreted through Christian living

Friend workers have gone out, not as preachers or pastors, but as those helping to forge the links binding man to man.

The establishment of the New Society is accomplished "by a radiation of life, a spreading of a gospel. 'Christianity is not a doctrine but a communicated life.' This fortifying of the tender principle of God in all, this part of the Service work is the chiefest thing of all." (Carl Heath)

FRIENDS' WORK ABROAD SHOULD BE  
THE CONCERN OF EVERY CHRISTIAN  
PACIFIST TO-DAY.

Enquiries and contributions are warmly  
welcomed and should be sent to

The General Secretary (Room D)  
(Paul D. Sturge)

Friends Service Council  
Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

(Continued from page 272)

his appeal is disallowed, he will inform the authorities that he does not accept the judgment on his case, that he proposes to consider himself free to act as if he were not under any obligation to them, and that he will face any consequences which this may involve. This is the only course open to him, and I would not hesitate to support him in taking it.

The unconditionalist, however, may take another way. He may express his disapproval of the principle of conscription by declining to acknowledge the Act at all. In this case he will refuse to register, and make his protest in that way. Whether he is justified in doing this when the Act makes due allowance for his case is a question on which I have an open mind. All I can say is that, if a young fellow felt that this was the way in which his conscience prompted him to resist the principle of conscription, I for one would not be prepared to say that his action was incompatible with his Christianity. Men have opposed what they felt to be unjust laws by non-conformity with their enactments again and again in the past. In 1626 John Hampden suffered imprisonment for refusal to pay certain taxes which would have laid no burden upon him personally, but which he thought were unjustly imposed upon the community as a whole; and in our time men like George Lansbury and others have done the same. These men were actuated by Christian principles, and the sincere Christian may surely make a similar stand against conscription.

### ORDER 'The Christian Pacifist' NOW! and make certain of your copy

Orders should be placed now for the 1941 issue of the Magazine. Please complete the attached slip and return as soon as possible.

I { am a new subscriber  
am not

To the Editor,  
'The Christian Pacifist,'  
17, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

Please send me THE CHRISTIAN PACIFIST  
monthly during 1941, at the inclusive cost of 4/-  
which I enclose herewith.

\*Name.....

\*Address.....

\*KINDLY USE BLOCK LETTERS

### CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

An analysis of the local tribunals' decisions up to 2nd November shows the following results. Registered unconditionally, 2,167 or 7 per cent; conditionally, 11,722 or 37 per cent; non-combatant service 9,315, 30 per cent; full military service, 8,020, 26 per cent; total, 31,224.

There appears to be a general release of C.O.s who have been indefinitely detained. In the "London Evening News" of November 5th it was reported that a representative of the Ministry of Labour, while prosecuting on that date a C.O. who had refused to attend medical examination, had announced that the Act is to be amended to make this offence punishable by a maximum sentence of six months' imprisonment. The Central Board is in active negotiation with the Minister of Labour.

The official report of the War Office inquiry into the ill-treatment of C.O.s at Dingle Vale Schools, Liverpool, has not yet been received. The investigations began on October 24th and ended on the evening of October 28th. Nineteen C.O.s gave evidence on oath and all reporting to the Central Board have agreed on the courtesy and fairness with which they were treated by those conducting the inquiry.

### PAX

Chairman: Eric Gill.

Hon. Sec.: Stormont Murray,

276 Hughenden Road, High Wycombe, Bucks.

In the current issue of the "Pax" Bulletin (a limited number of copies of which are available for "C.P." readers who apply to above address—sending 4d.) it was thought fit to recall the words of Pope Benedict XV. on a similar occasion twenty-five years ago.

*Benedict XV. to the peoples now at war and to their rulers, 1915*  
To-day, on the anniversary of the outbreak of the tremendous conflict, more intense is the desire of our heart for the speedy conclusion of the war, still louder is our fatherly cry for peace.

In the holy name of God, in the name of our heavenly Father and Lord, by the Blessed Blood of Jesus, the price of man's redemption, we conjure you, whom Divine Providence has placed over the nations at war, to put an end at last to this horrible slaughter, which for a whole year has dishonoured Europe. It is the blood of brothers that is being poured out on land and sea. The most beautiful regions of Europe, this garden of the world, are sown with corpses and with ruin. You bear before God and man the tremendous responsibility of peace and war; give ear to our prayer, to the fatherly voice of the Vicar of the Eternal and Supreme Judge, to whom you must render an account, as well of your public undertakings, as of your own individual deeds. . . .

Nor let it be said that the immense conflict cannot be settled without the violence of war. Lay aside your mutual purpose of destruction; remember that nations do not die; humbled and oppressed, they chafe under the yoke imposed upon them, preparing a renewal of the combat, and passing down from generation to generation a mournful heritage of hatred and revenge. . . .

Blessed is he who will first raise the olive-branch, and hold out his right hand to the enemy with an offer of reasonable terms of peace.

We are also pleased to quote from a recent issue of "The Catholic Herald" the following extract from the "Kalendar of the Week," which included "Armistice Day":—

November 11th: St. Martin of Tours.

"St. Martin is the saint, not of militarists, although he was a soldier, but of pacifists. . . . He refused to fight against the Germans because he believed that Christians should not go to war. . . ."

### ARMISTICE MEETING

About a thousand people gathered at Kingsway Hall on Saturday afternoon, November 9, to maintain the tradition of armistice devotional meetings held by the Council of Christian Pacifist Groups, under the title, "Christ and Peace." The Rev. Henry Carter, in his opening address, emphasised the contrast between the abounding hopefulness with which the twentieth century began and the grim realities of the succeeding decades. The present situation was largely due to failure to face three questions: whether war can ever be reconciled with Christ's will and way; what the Christian attitude to the problem of the social condition of the people should be; and whether the scope of religion can rightly be limited to certain aspects of life while ignoring others. Dr. Alex Wood, of Cambridge, appealed for a translation of Christian principles into terms of economics and politics. He condemned the abdication of the Church in this sphere and the consequent divorce between personal religion and its practical application to economic and political life. Donald Soper spoke of the faith in the Gospel of Christ that Christian pacifists held and desired to reaffirm in coming year after year to these meetings of remembrance and dedication. He reminded his listeners of the promise of the Gospel and of the divine power for overcoming temporal difficulties that was made available to those who would take it. The meeting closed with an act of dedication.

## CHRISTMAS PRESENTS 1940

Let us express our Christian goodwill, and at the same time avoid the difficulties of shopping in the black-out, by giving a book or the magazine for a year.

### "THE CROSS AND THE CRISIS."

PROFESSOR C. E. RAVEN,  
Master of Christ's College,  
Cambridge.

Price 2/4 post paid.

### "THE BETRAYAL OF CHRIST BY THE CHURCHES."

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

Price 5/5 post paid.

### Xmas Card

printed on heavy vellum paper, bearing the words:

*"God was made humble  
that the pride of the  
human race might not  
d disdain to follow the  
footsteps of God"*

Price 2d. each, including envelope,  
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- 2 SEP. 1941

