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E. WALTER MAUNDER, F.R.A.S.

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1918.

THE CHURCH AND THE ARMY.

BY

THE REV. CANON JAMES O. HANNAY, M.A.

TWO ADDRESSES DELIVERED BEFORE THE VICTORIA INSTITUTE
IN THE SMALL HALL, THE CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W.,
AT 4.30 P.M.

I.—MONDAY, JANUARY 14TH, 1918.

The Rev. J. H. BATESON, *Secretary of the Wesleyan Army and
Navy Board, in the Chair.*

STATEMENT BY THE LECTURE SECRETARY.

It has fallen to my lot, as Lecture Secretary of the Victoria Institute, to carry through the arrangements for the two meetings to be held here to-day and this day week, and the Council desire me to explain how these meetings, which do not lie within its ordinary programme, have come about.

The objects of the Victoria Institute, which was founded in 1865, are twofold: First, to investigate in a reverent spirit important questions of Philosophy and Science, especially those bearing upon Holy Scripture; Second, to arrange for addresses from men who have themselves contributed to progress in Science and Research, and thus to bring the Institute into direct touch with the latest advances in both. And the principle upon which these objects are to be sought is that of humble faith in One Eternal God Who created all things good. Accordingly, the papers read before it and published by it are of two kinds: original contributions to knowledge and essays upon important questions of philosophy and science.

Last autumn Sir James Crichton-Browne, Treasurer of the Royal

Institution, wrote to us to know whether the Victoria Institute could give Canon Hannay the opportunity which he desired of addressing a London audience on the religion of our fighting-men and the lessons which it had for the members of the Christian Churches throughout the land. Our Council felt on the one hand that the subject lay outside our statutory programme, but on the other that it was of such importance as to render it our duty as a professedly Christian body to arrange, if it were possible, to give the opportunity desired. The Council therefore decided to reply, in effect, that they felt honoured by the application which Sir James Crichton-Browne had made to them on Canon Hannay's behalf. They have therefore gladly done their best to provide an audience before whom Canon Hannay may feel himself as free to speak as before a Society of which he is himself a member. We who are members of the Institute, on the other hand, meet on this occasion, not so much as an organised body but as a number of Christian men, gathered together for the privilege of listening to the thoughts that have impressed themselves so deeply on a man of Canon Hannay's judgment and distinction, and of learning from his experience.

The Council has arranged that there shall be no discussion of the subject to-day, as it would be unseemly to have one until the whole of Canon Hannay's message has been delivered. But at the meeting next Monday, January 21, there will be an opportunity for discussion after the conclusion of the second portion of the subject.

First Address.

THE title I have given to the two papers I am going to read to you is a bad one. It suggests a discussion of the religion of soldiers. This is a subject which might have been interesting before the war when soldiers were a distinct professional class, like doctors, and might fairly be supposed to have a special religious outlook of their own, a kind of reserved Pisgah from which they got a private view of the Church and the promised land. There is no longer a soldier class now. When we talk about the religion of the Army we really mean the religion of the men of the nation. The war has done this for us among other things: it has given us an opportunity, unique I suppose in history, of judging how far the nation has been christianized. Has the Church fulfilled her mission or has she failed? We ought to be able to give some sort of answer to that question now. Our men have been removed from the surroundings of familiar life. Conventions and habits, the garments of the soul, have been

stripped from them. They have been set naked, face to face with the stark realities of pain and death. We ought now to be able to see, as never was possible before, just how much and in what directions the Church's presentation of Christianity has affected them.

This is a big matter, enormously difficult to see honestly, sanely and whole. It is far too big for me. Yet I make no apology for approaching it. "The lion hath roared; who doth not fear? The Lord God hath spoken; who can but prophesy?"

There is a story which used to be told rather frequently a couple of years ago. It is about two young officers in billets after a particularly trying time in the trenches. They talked to each other, as young officers do not often talk, about religion. "Well," said one of them, "the war has convinced me of one thing: there is a God."

"That's odd," said the other. "The war has convinced me that there isn't a God."

I do not suppose that story is true, though it may be. But, true or not, it represents two lines of thought, or, perhaps it would be better to say, two kinds of hope. There were those who expected with some confidence that the war would produce a tremendous revival of religion, an awakening, both at home and abroad, of the religious spirit latent in the nation. "When I was in trouble," said the Psalmist, "I called upon the Lord and he heard me." It seems natural to suppose that the coming of great and terrible trouble—danger, pain, anxiety, bereavement—would have just this effect, that men everywhere would call upon the Lord. There were also those who expected, with equal confidence, that the war would finally chip away the veneer of religion which made the nation appear to be Christian. They argued, with some show of reason, that since Europe, nominally Christian for some 1500 years, is still capable of the barbarous crime of war, the failure of Christianity is proved. Its Founder promised peace and goodwill, love and gentleness. The promise has not been fulfilled.

It might have been interesting—before the war began—to discuss which of these results were the more likely to follow a catastrophe such as that which has come upon us. I can imagine that a good case could have been made out for either side. But such a discussion would be fatuous now. We have had more than three years' experience of the war, and we see that it has done neither the one thing nor the other.

It looked, just at first, as if there were going to be some kind of religious revival. We heard of churches at home filled, day after day, with people who came to pray. We were told stories about men in companies and battalions kneeling to receive the sacrament before going into action. But the emotion wore thin. The effort to revive it by means of a National Mission of Repentance and Hope was not an entire success. Either the thing was mismanaged or the nation was in no mood for response. He would be a bold man who claimed that there has been anything like a general religious revival either in the Army or at home. The war has not shown that the nation was in any complete sense christianized. Out of the deep men have cried. That is true, though the cry has been singularly inarticulate and it can scarcely be said that they have cried consciously and deliberately to the Lord.

On the other hand, there has been nothing like the wave of definite unbelief which would have followed a general acceptance of the rationalist argument. It is only one, here and there, who, like the second officer in the story, has been convinced by the war that there is no God. Men still pray, and still in a vague way expect that Someone hears their prayers. The Christianity of the nation has proved to be something more than a mere veneer. It has not peeled off when submitted to the scorching blast of sorrow and trouble. There remains a feeling that Christianity, in spite of the passing of so many centuries, has not had a fair trial, and may yet be able to fulfil its promise to the world.

What does seem to have happened is something which no one expected and very few people wanted. The original pre-war attitude of the average man towards religion seems to have been something like this:—

“Religion! That’s the parson’s job. He’s paid for it. He has his church. I expect it’s all right, and he’s seeing after it. Anyhow, I’m not religious, and there’s no need for me to bother myself.”

There was little or no active hostility there, though there was a suggestion of contempt. There was certainly no definite apprehension of intellectual difficulties, no approach to a reasoned scepticism. The ordinary man simply stood remote from the Church, neither blessing much nor cursing much; very patient, very tolerant, broadly indifferent. Now there is a change. Religion is still the parson’s job, or the padre’s, according to

circumstances. He is still paid for it. He still has his Church or his Church Army Hut, but no one any longer expects that it is all right. On the contrary, there is a general feeling that the parsons have somehow messed their job. They have not seen after it as they should.

The feeling is much the same as that which most men have about politicians and statesmen. Once we were all fairly well content to leave the management of the nation's affairs to those who made a business of such matters. That was their job. Occasionally, in a spirit of fair play, after one party had enjoyed an innings, we gave the other party a chance. We did not expect that anything very much, either good or bad, would come of a change of Government. So long as nobody interfered with our beer and tobacco we were not to be aroused to enthusiasm or resentment. There was a class of politicians, just as there was a class of parsons, and politics was their job. They were paid for it, and we supposed it was all right. Since the war began, it has come home to us that so far from being all right, this business of politics has been all wrong. The politicians have muddled their job badly, and we are beginning to be seriously angry with them.

The comparison breaks down, of course. All comparisons break down somewhere. Our discontent with politicians, who have managed our affairs for us, leads to efforts to get rid of particular men or particular parties and put others in their place. Hardly anyone thinks that we should get better religion or more of it by meting out to the present Archbishop of Canterbury the punishment inflicted on Laud. We grumble about the activities of this and that prelate or the way in which the Chaplain General manages his department, but we recognize that the trouble goes deeper. It is the Church which has failed, or seems to have failed, not those who are the leaders of the Church at the moment. Nor is there the smallest sign of any general desire to substitute one Church for another. There is not going to be a Roman Catholic Revival any more than an Anglican or a Protestant Revival. The failure of the Anglican episcopate to make plain the path of righteousness in war, and to justify the ways of God to men, is in no way more complete than the impotent silence of the Papacy. It is perhaps only patriotic prejudice which leads us to suppose that our own "war religion" is any more Christlike than that of the German Lutheran. If the English Church has failed to make Christians of Englishmen—I am not sure that it has—it can scarcely be claimed that the Roman Church has

educated the Bavarians and Austrians into the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.

What we have arrived at is not an indictment of this creed or that, or even of creeds in general, certainly not a conviction that one kind of organization or system of discipline is superior to another; but a feeling, vague and puzzled but real, that Christianity as presented to the world by the various, and somewhat quarrelsome, successors of the Apostles, has failed us. Religion ought, so we feel, to have given strength and comfort to a nation of mourners. But very many of the mourners are without clear hope to ease their heartache. It ought to have given calm to the anxious. Too often they get through the days with no better help than a stoic setting of the teeth, wondering if the passing of another month of it will leave them sane. Religion, so we feel, ought to have made Crusaders of our men. It seems to have done no such thing. Never was there a greater contrast than between "Tommy," blasphemous and cheerful, and the knights of Mallory's chivalry at prayers before battle in a forest hermit's chapel. Religion, above all, should have made plain to the general conscience the distinction between right and wrong, the rights and wrongs of the war, rights and wrongs in the conduct of it. Christendom is sharply divided on these ethical questions. No voice has spoken with the authority which compels and wins.

This is what has come home to the mind of the thinking man. The man who does not think reaches much the same position.

"The Padre! He's a good sport, and he don't preach too long. But what I say is, if there's one for me it'll hit me and I don't see that a man's religion makes much odds when there's high explosives knocking around. Not that I'm against religion, mind you, I'm not. Only I'm not what you'd call a religious man, not in a regular way."

Is the mind of his wife at home very different?

"Parson, he talks about the sacrament of the altar and that's all right. Only I never had much time for sacraments and such, what with having a man to do for and the children coming one after the other so quick. And now Bert's gone—on the Somme it was—and it won't be easy to manage for the children, let alone sacraments; though I do try to keep Maud and Alf regular at Sunday School and they was all baptized proper in church, even young Bert, what was born a week after I got the news about his father."

Most interesting of all is the way the confused puzzledness has laid hold on the minds of the recognized, so to speak official, representatives of religion, the clergy and the pious laity. Even before the war these were not wholly satisfied with the Church's position. There were demands on the one hand for a restatement of the Christian dogmas, some kind of fresh interpretation of ancient formularies which would render them intelligible to the mind of the world of to-day. There were complaints that the Church was not getting hold of the working man—a sufficiently obvious fact—and clamorous suggestions that she should fling herself into the battle for social reform, or devote more energy to definite church teaching, or appeal to the senses of the half-educated with more striking and elaborate ritual. But the earnest and hardworking clergyman was not much affected by the voices of prophets and reformers. His hands were very full, his time completely occupied, with work which had to be done, organizations to be founded or kept going. He worked and he had not time to think. It is just this man, the essential backbone of the Church, whom the war has affected the most. He served at home or he made his way out to France as a Chaplain to the Forces for a year or so. At once he found himself "up against it." He was plunged into strange, deep waters. He struggled, spluttered, splashed, grasped at one after another of the various life-saving devices on which he had always relied, which were still floating about round him, but seemed to have lost their power to support. With an effort he squeezed the water out of his eyes and looked up. The sun was there in the sky as it always had been. He blinked at it and wondered.

It was necessary for the parson, priest, padre, whatever he chose to call himself, to arrive at some understanding of his experience; far more necessary for him than for anyone else. His self-respect and his peace of mind, the future of the Church he belonged to, the very existence in him of the faith he was sworn to defend, depended on his reaching an explanation of the facts which pressed on him.

Out of this confused welter, this bewildering breaking up of what once seemed firm and strong, two things, as it seems to me, emerge clear and unmistakable. From these two, as foundations, we must start whatever building up or rebuilding there is to be done of the Church's life after the war. The first is this: the average Englishman, the man of the workshop of yesterday, of the trenches of to-day, wants religion. He has not said, with

the Greeks who came to Philip, "Sir, I would see Jesus." He has said, most plainly for those who have ears to hear the silent speech of acts: "Sir, I would trust God." Of this I am as sure as I can be of anything. It seems to follow certainly that he already does trust God, and thus has the beginning of religion in him.

But his religion is an imperfect thing. Christ and the Cross are not in it. That is the second of the two things which seem to me clear. The Church has failed to bring the average man into any kind of real touch with Him Whom we believe to be the Saviour of the world.

So far then the Church* has succeeded. The souls of men are not asleep. The spiritual faculty is awake in them. Men who do such things and are such men as these, declare plainly that they "seek a city." It is something.

So far also the Church has failed. Her children have not found what they seek. The Church has not given them sure and strong faith in the great simple truths which she exists to teach. Nor has she brought them to Jesus, the Master, who dwells in her.

I suppose that I should offer you some kind of proofs of these two assertions which I make so confidently. I do so with the uneasy feeling that the only proofs I can offer will strike you as unconvincing. They are the results of my own experience. Others have had wider experience than mine, have done more work and done it better. They have been led to different conclusions. Some, I know, will be inclined flatly to contradict what I have said. I have heard it asserted more than once that the average soldier, that is the average Englishman, has no religion at all, nor wishes for any. I can do no more than tell you the things which I have seen and heard. But, at least, I am not going to fall into the mistake of basing my judgment of the mass on what I have seen of exceptional men. There are men, thank God many of them, in our armies, just as there are at home, who

* I use the word "Church" because I can find no other. "Organized Christianity" is a stupid phrase. "The religious world" is a contradiction in terms. Besides, even if we take "the Church" to mean simply the Church of England we shall not go far astray. Three-fourths of the men in our Army, that is to say, three-fourths of the men of the Empire, are so far members of the Church of England that they prefer to enrol themselves under her name rather than any other. The Church of England is responsible for them. Hers is the praise and the blame for what they are.

are devout and instructed churchmen, whose souls are built up in the faith, who are in the fullest sense Christian men. I have met them under all sorts of circumstances and recognized them with joy. There are in the same way pious Nonconformists to whom the religion they have been taught is the main thing in their lives. But these are exceptional men. Every padre at the front knows them and gladly does his best for them. Just in the same way there are men, the padre meets them less often, who are definitely hostile to religion; but they are exceptions too. The average man is neither fully Christian, nor an enemy. It is of him that I wish to speak. It is on my experience of him that I rest my assertion that he is a seeker after God.

I was stationed at one time in a large base camp. Its function was to receive reinforcements which came out from England and to pass them on up the line to the fighting units as fresh men were required to make good the inevitable losses. Men were continually coming and continually going. Very few men stayed with us for more than a week or two. The drafts for the front were paraded before they started, and inspected. Certain formal orders, dealing with the discipline of the journey, were read out. The officer who despatched the draft generally spoke a few words to the men. It was the custom—I do not know who started it—that the Chaplain should be present at these parades and should hold a short service for the men before they started. The service was very short, occupying not more than five minutes. That camp was really a collection of camps, each under a different colonel. One or two of these commanding officers objected to these services, and would not give us permission to hold them. One or two others were doubtful, but gave permission. In most cases the commanding officer welcomed the service, and was anxious that nothing should be allowed to interfere with it. These little valedictory services were highly valued by the men. They wanted a prayer said for them. Some kind of peace came to them with the benediction they received. I have no doubt of this. It is true that the thing was compulsory. The men were on parade. They could not go away, nor could they behave otherwise than with decorum. The service might conceivably have been nothing more to them than a necessary part of certain formal proceedings. But it was not so. It was real. There is no possibility of mistaking the response, whether spoken or unspoken, which men make to prayer offered for them. Anyone who has ever prayed aloud with listeners round him knows it.

There is no chance of missing the presence of the Spirit which moves from him who blesses to those who are blessed and back from them to him. These things were present, not always present, not always in the same force, but much oftener than not they were there. Drafts were of various sizes. Sometimes three hundred men were paraded. Sometimes not more than a dozen. The start of the departing drafts was made at night, almost always. Officers moving among the men inspected their kits by the light of lanterns. The padre, standing before the men, was rarely able to see their faces. They were dark figures, silent, still as statues; no more. Sometimes, in the case of small drafts, a lantern held beside me enabled me to see the men. There were dull faces and apathetic, sometimes hostile faces, though not many. Most of them, when I could see them, were different. They were the faces of men who were hungering for something—for God. Once there came unexpectedly to us a whole battalion of men under their own colonel. They camped in a piece of waste ground beside our men. They stayed with us two days and one night. The next night they marched away. They were miners from the north of England. On the day of their departure their colonel came to me and asked me to hold a service for them as I did for our own men when they were going. He said that his men wanted it. I shall always remember that night. The battalion, at full strength, filled our parade ground. The night was stormy and a fine snow blew across us. There was almost no light. I stood at the bottom of the long slope of the parade ground and had little hope that my voice would reach the farther men. But I am as sure as I can be of anything that not my prayer alone, but many prayers, went up to God that night.

It is not, I think, right, to speak much about the letters which the men wrote home to their wives or parents. It was my duty to read, I suppose, many thousands of them. They were of different kinds, written by men of various degrees of education. But I think there can be no breach of confidence in saying this: a very large proportion of the letters contained some kind of prayer, if it were no more than a "God bless you, dear wife," at the end; that, or an expression of confidence that God would look after those left behind in England. Much rarer was a request for prayer. The men who wrote were thinking very little about themselves and their own danger, very much about their homes and those in them, and they believed that God would take care of those over whom they themselves could no longer

watch. They believed that it was some use asking God to do so. He would hear if they spoke to Him. They believed that.

The attendance of men at voluntary services is a certain test of the value they set on religion. There are generally voluntary services held both on Sundays and weekdays. Attendance at these is a test of a kind. Men, one may fairly assume, will not go where they need not go unless they want to go for some reason or other. I do not suppose that the motive which prompts the attendance is always a religious one. The service is held, we may suppose, in a recreation hut of some kind. The hut is very likely the only place open to the men which is warm, dry, and well lighted. It is pleasanter to sit there than to shiver in a draughty tent, even if you have to pay for your seat by listening to a sermon. Besides there is always a great deal of hymn-singing, and some hymns have tunes quite as agreeable as that of "Keep the Home Fires Burning." That a man should enjoy shouting "Onward, Christian Soldiers," is no kind of evidence that he is a Christian soldier. Yet, when we have made all possible allowance for the attractiveness of a voluntary service conducted in a spirited way, we cannot dismiss the attendance of the men as valueless in our attempt to get evidence about the existence of a religious spirit. Unfortunately, the evidence is singularly conflicting. Take the question of the short evening prayers commonly held in such recreation huts as are run by religious organizations, Y.M.C.A. huts and Church Army huts. There is generally a hymn, a prayer, perhaps a few verses of Scripture read. The whole thing does not last ten minutes. I have been in huts where the production of hymn-books from their hiding place, the first sign of approaching prayers, is the signal for a stampede of the men. By the time the pianist has reached the piano the place is empty, save for a few who have been caught as they fled by energetic lady workers. On the other hand, I have known huts in which not only those who were present stayed for prayers; but others, who had not been in the hut all the evening, came there at prayer time for the express purpose of taking part in the little service. What made the difference? Primarily, I have no doubt, the nature of the service itself. If the prayers are about things which seem to matter, if they are simple and straightforward, men will join them. Next, nothing is more fatal than to let the men get the idea that they are being trapped. I have been present at concerts in recreation huts which were followed so immediately by prayers that the audience had not a chance of

dispersing. Before the tumultuous applause of the last comic song had died away, the chairman gave out a hymn. He meant well. He had the men there and felt that if he could only keep them some good might be done. As a matter of fact the feeling aroused was one of resentment against unfair treatment. And the attendance at prayers depends very largely on the state of the war at the moment. My experience is of base camps, but the same thing is true at the front. If things are quiet and there is little fighting going on most men become indifferent to religious services. During a push, when great things are happening, men will pray with extreme earnestness for the things they want, for courage, for victory, for the safety of themselves and their friends, for help for the wounded, for comfort for those at home, for peace. I shall never forget the prayers every evening during the early days of the Somme push. I shall not attempt to describe to you—I could not do it if I did attempt it—the long hut crowded with anxious men, the tense silence, the amen which meant assent of heart and mind. That experience was proof enough for me that the bulk of our men are neither materialists nor indifferent to religion. The very fact that the religious spirit is most evident in times of stress seems another proof of its reality. It is in hours of extreme trial, of high hope and deadly fear, that it is most clearly seen where a man's trust is indeed placed.

There are other evidences which I might offer you of the existence of the religious spirit in our men, not in the confessedly religious men only, the regular communicant, the instructed churchman, but in the mass of ordinary men. But this would only be the same kind of evidence which I have already given you, personal, therefore of a subjective kind, unconvincing to anyone who wants figures or tangible facts.

There remains one question which I must touch before I sit down. How far is this purely natural religion? How far has the Church had a share in the making of it? It is an extraordinarily difficult question to answer. Indeed, to answer it at all some estimate would have to be made of the general tendency of the teaching of the Church for a long time back, a century or two, perhaps. We should have to find out, not what the formularies and creeds are, but where the emphasis of the teaching has fallen; what it is that the average parish priest has, by example, private exhortation, and preaching, actually taught his flock. We should then, looking at our men, see how

far this teaching has moulded their character. This I cannot attempt. There is no time to do it here. I have neither knowledge nor ability to do it elsewhere.

I wish to suggest only one consideration to you. The great majority of the men are, professedly, members of the Church of England. It is in the Church of England that they find their spiritual home. I suppose that there have been more experiments in worship tried in France during the last three years than in England for three centuries. The idea at one time possessed a number of our chaplains that the farther they could get away from the ordinary form of church service the better. Eccentricities of every kind were regarded as desirable in themselves. The aim was to be bright, unconventional, startling: to attract and awaken by novelty. My belief is that this theory is entirely wrong. The nearer you can get to the ritual of the English parish church the stronger is the appeal to the men and the greater their response. The soul of the Englishman finds the natural expression of its religious emotion in the psalms and collects of the Prayer Book, in the simple ritual of the national church. To follow the course of a normal service, to hear and say and sing familiar words, is for most men a returning home. We may feel sure that the Church has not been wholly without part in creating the religious life which is in her children when we find that it is in her words they speak and to her ways they turn when the spiritual faculty in them is stirred.

2.—MONDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 1918.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF HALSBURY, F.R.S., *President,*
in the Chair.

STATEMENT BY THE LECTURE SECRETARY.

The present meeting, like that of last week, is special to the programme of the Victoria Institute. At the close of to-day's proceedings the subject will be open for discussion. We should expect those who join in the discussion to be such as have expert knowledge of the subject. Those who are personally acquainted with our men at the Front, either as chaplains, or as officers, or men, are the persons to whom we should primarily look for remarks, in one form or another, on Canon Hannay's addresses; and as a considerable number may wish to take part, it is necessary for speakers to restrict themselves to five minutes each.

Second Address.

IN speaking last Monday I insisted on the existence of the religious spirit among the men of our empire. There is a sense of the Divine in the common man. He is not without God in the world. I hinted at my own belief that the Church may fairly claim that the nation owes its religion, such as it is, to her. So far the Church may congratulate herself that her teaching, her prayers, her life, have had their effect. But I take it that the Church at present is in no mood for self-congratulation. Indeed it is the characteristic of the Church of England to-day that there is in her very little pride and very much self-reproach. The best of her sons, clergy and laity alike, are saying, "See how *we* have failed." While others are acutely conscious, sometimes sadly, sometimes it seems joyfully conscious, of the Church of England's failure, she is chiefly conscious of her own. No doubt the Church's mood is both wholesome and hopeful. That man went down to his house justified who beat upon his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." No doubt also the self-reproach is just. The Church has largely failed. The religion of the common man is real, but desperately imperfect, very far indeed from being fully Christian.

Consider what St. Jude called "the faith once for all delivered to the saints," that short list of simple elementary truths about

which a Christian man ought to be sure, in the strength of which he ought to go his way through life and into death. Take the simplest and most elementary of them: "I believe in everlasting life after death." Is that, in fact, part of the working equipment of the common man? I doubt it. Will you pardon me if I tell you a story which I have told before, which perhaps some of you have read?

On a very unpleasant February afternoon last year I found shelter under the verandah roof of a small estaminet in northern France. I had as a companion a young officer, a boy, who had that morning received his orders to go up to the firing line. We sat together on a little iron table and swung our legs while the snow fell thick on the road outside and was blown in little powdery drifts into the corners of our shelter. We were waiting for a lorry, an ambulance, any passing vehicle which would carry us into the neighbouring town.

I did not know that boy at all well; though I wished to. It is not an easy thing to know these young officers. Twenty-five years or so—I have lived that much longer than he has—make a gulf which it is exceedingly difficult to step across. Besides, I was a parson. That made another gulf. Therefore I was particularly pleased when he began to talk to me about the things he was really thinking. He was going into the fighting. He told me that he did not expect to come out alive. He was the victim of one of those odd convictions which we call presentiments. I forget what I said. I daresay it was "what I ought to have said." It was probably inane enough to put that boy off talking to me altogether. But it did not. He went on.

"I wish you'd tell me what you think about it, padre," he said. "Is there really anything afterwards?"

I cannot give his exact words, for I do not remember them. He repeated himself a good deal, but he made his meaning quite clear to me, and I think I can make it clear again, though I put into his mouth phrases which he did not actually use.

"I'd like you to tell me," he said, "as man to man, what you actually think about it. Do we go on living afterwards in any sort of way or——"

He struck a match to light a cigarette. A gust of wind, which carried a flurry of snow round our legs, blew the match out again. I daresay it was that which suggested his next words.

"Or do we just go out?"

"I know the Creed," he went on, and he did not say "your

creed," or "the Church's creed," but just "the Creed." "But that's not what I want. I want to know what you really believe yourself, as a man, you know."

Then I suppose that he felt that he owed me some sort of apology for talking to me in such a way.

"You mustn't think I'm an atheist," he said, "or a sceptic, or anything like that. I'm not. I used to go to church pretty regularly. I used to go to communion sometimes, with my mother, you know. I never doubted about any of the things I was taught. I just took them as they came. I supposed they were all right. Anyhow I didn't bother. But now I want to know."

This boy's case is not unique. It is not even rare. I am inclined to regard it as to some extent typical. Just such is the attitude of ordinary Englishmen towards the doctrines of the Christian faith. They know, in broad outline at least, the fundamental truths which the Church teaches. They have so far accepted these truths that they have not denied nor attempted to deny them. But they have not connected them in any way whatever with ordinary life. Life is one thing—real, pressing, intensely important. The Creed is another thing—belonging to a different region, not bearing on practical affairs. This attitude is logically impossible and intellectually absurd. But that does not matter. Very few of us are troubled by logic, or inclined to give much weight to intellectual considerations. We have our faith on one side of a high wall and ourselves on the other, and we get on well enough until——. Well, the time came for that friend of mine, and he wanted to get the faith over the wall, to set it down on the path his feet trod, and to find out, "man to man," whether there was anything in it.

There is plainly something the matter with a Church whose sons, at the critical testing-time, turn round and say, "Is there anything in it?" It is quite plain, I think, that this is not a question of intellectual doubt, of faith blighted by the Higher Criticism, or scorched by scientific materialism or anything of that sort. Our apologetics, though quite useful things in their way, are no real good to a man like the one who talked to me. He had not read—very few men have read—Harnack or Haeckel. Most of us would never have heard of Nietzsche if our orators had not taken to telling us (towards the end of 1914) that Nietzsche caused the war. I do not think the Church of England can fairly be blamed for want of zeal in defending the faith. She has

defended it as ably as any church in Christendom, and her learned books are excellent things in their way. Only people do not read them, any more than they read the works of the enemies whom our scholars attack.

Nor does it seem to me much good saying that the want of definite Church teaching in schools and pulpits is responsible for the position of men like my friend. As a matter of fact that particular boy had been "Church taught" quite carefully. He knew his Creed and at one time had known his Catechism. He had been prepared for Confirmation. He carried about with him a little book of Eucharistic Meditations which actually glowed with Church teaching of the most definite kind. Yet after all he wanted to know whether there was any kind of life after death. The vast mass of people living in a Christian land like this are taught, as plainly and distinctly as possible, that there is a life after death. The want of definite Church teaching may account for men not believing things about sacraments and absolution because very often those things are not taught. But the fact that we live beyond the grave is taught. And if people do not believe it, it is not for want of hearing it asserted.

There is, indeed, this much behind the common demand for more definite teaching. There has always been a certain hesitancy in the manner in which the Church of England has taught anything. She has valued, and still values, freedom more highly than discipline, and has shrunk from the attempt to compel belief by presenting dogma at the point of the bayonet. She has never quite said: "It is my duty to tell you what is true and your duty simply to believe what I tell you."

Yet—whatever authority a teacher claims—it is impossible to think that men will believe, believe in such a way that their belief will be any real use to them, merely because they are told to, unless indeed they undergo a process of hypnotism which destroys their minds. They may submit and profess, to save trouble, but at the last resort they are liable to turn on their teacher and say, "Look here, I quite realize your position; but, as a matter of fact, is there really anything in it?"

It might, I think, be fairly urged against the Church of England—and I suppose against every other church—that along with the really important things, she has been teaching with equal emphasis a whole lot of other things which are not nearly so important, which do not strike the ordinary man as of any importance at all. There are, when all is said, very few things in the Christian faith

which are vital for the practical purposes of life for most men. There are a great many other things which may be of use to a few people but must always strike most men as—let us say—trimmings. By emphasizing the comparatively unimportant, and perpetually laying stress on what is sure to seem unreal, we have set the vital things in an atmosphere of unreality. It would not startle us much if a man were to say: “Tell me, as man to man, is there really anything in that theory of yours about Fasting Communion?” It does startle us horribly when he asks the same question about life everlasting. Yet it is very natural that he should. We have all taught, not perhaps Fasting Communion, but something of similar importance, as if it were as vital as the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. Common sense teaches the common man that for him it is not real at all. He has drifted into the belief that the other things, which we have never specially emphasized, are not real either.

But in the end it seems to come to this. Faith is not taught but given; and no one can give it who has not got it himself, strongly, abundantly. Put that way, what I say is, I suppose, highly disputable. Put another way, it is trite, a mere platitude. The ordinary man, the baptized outsider, whom the Church has not built up strongly in the faith, would have a much better chance of a sound working belief, if the inner circle of the Church, the clergy and the pious laity, realized more fully the greatness of the faith and held it much more strongly than they do.

I have spoken so far of the Church's failure to give her sons a sure and clear faith. But there is something which is yet more important than conviction, however clear and strong: a sense of personal relationship with Jesus Christ, or even, if that be too great a thing, a desire for His friendship. You will remember, no doubt, a great scene in *John Inglesant*, where Serenus de Cressy, the Benedictine monk, speaks thus:

“Nor do I speak to you as I might to others, of evidences that our faith is true, of proofs that hereafter we shall walk with Christ and the saints in glory. I am willing to grant you that we may be mistaken, that in the life to come we may find we have been deceived, may find that Jesus Himself is in a different station and position to what we think. That is nothing to your purpose. To those who know Him, better Jesus, beaten and defeated, than all the universe besides, triumphing and crowned.” These words suggest exactly what I mean; that there is a devotion to Jesus

Christ which is independent of all creeds, which a man might have though he sweated doubts at every pore, which a man might certainly have though he were totally untaught and could give no account at all of the matter of his faith. If the Church has succeeded in leading her sons to regard their Saviour thus, her failure in other matters is a small thing. If she has failed in this, no other success, though she might claim many, would be of any value at all.

Some time ago I was sent by a Committee, of which the Bishop of Winchester was one of the conveners, a paper of questions dealing with the religion of the Army. Among them was this one: "It has been said by an experienced observer, 'The soldier has got religion. I am not so sure that he has got Christianity.' How far does your observation bear this out?" This is almost exactly the question which I want to make some attempt to answer now.

At the very outset we are met by an amazing contradiction. Jesus Christ does not come into the religion of the soldier. The soldier admires and attempts to imitate just those virtues which are most distinctive in the character of Jesus. Donald Hankey, who was a direct observer at the closest quarters of the soldier's life, has put this contradiction more forcibly than I can hope to do in his *Student in Arms*. The Archbishop of Dublin, a careful critic of the testimony of direct observers, has expressed the same contradiction in another way, viewing it from a slightly different angle. But I do not know that witness is needed. Everybody who has known our soldiers, or cared to know about them, has reached the same conclusion. They possess in the highest degree, the virtues of patience, faithfulness, courage, cheerfulness, unselfishness. They are prepared for extreme self-sacrifice. It is men who possess these qualities in an eminent degree who win the soldier's admiration and loyalty. These make up the character which is the soldier's ideal, the kind of character which the average man admires most. "Who is the Happy Warrior? Who is he whom every man at arms would wish to be?" The answer is, a man very like Jesus Christ. The soldier does not give that answer with his lips; but he does give it, almost exactly, in his life and his aspirations. I say almost exactly, and in a few minutes I shall explain this qualification. In the meantime, take St. Paul's list of the Fruits of the Spirit, surely an authoritative description of the Christian character. Take it and translate it into the language of the camp. "Love."

St. Paul meant more than comradeship, which he elsewhere calls "brotherly love." But he did mean comradeship. Are not our soldiers inspired by this spirit? "Joy." Call it cheerfulness. Give it, if you like, an expression which sets your teeth on edge: "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile." But it is the same thing; a thing the soldier has, admires and wants. "Peace." Have not men got inward peace, passing all understanding, who can go forward without repining or fear into a future of which only this is known, that it is full of pain, hardship and horror? "Longsuffering." There is a jingle which Wolfe Tone scattered broadcast over that strange autobiography of his: "'Tis but in vain for soldiers to complain." I never heard one of our men use the words. I very seldom met one who did not face hardship and even injustice in exactly that spirit, without anger or resentment, or much impatience. I suppose that is longsuffering. "Gentleness, Goodness." The most wonderful thing I have ever seen—more wonderful even than the sympathy of the poor for the poor—is the tender care of the soldier for his sick or wounded comrade. And he shows the same tenderness to a wounded enemy. It is a thing that amazes the observer afresh each time he sees it, though he sees it every day. "Meekness." At the first glance it is the least soldier-like of virtues. Yet consider and you will find that it is the inward spirit of all discipline, to submit to another's will, to prefer another's judgment, to reckon obedience the first of duties. This is to be meek.

If that list of St. Paul's is indeed a catalogue of the qualities which go to make up Christ-likeness; if Christ Himself gives us the supreme example of them and is the hero of those who admire and strive for them, then the soldier, the average man in the Army, is up to this point Christ-like. If the soldier knew Jesus, he would be a worshipper of Jesus, a hero-worshipper of Him Who possessed and displayed all these qualities which the soldier admires.

You have noticed that I have left out two words in St. Paul's list: "Faith" and "Temperance." Of faith I have already said something at the beginning of this paper. Of temperance—by which, of course, St. Paul did not mean total abstinence from alcohol—there is this to be said. There is a kind of emasculated Puritan who mistakes life for vice. He (or she) has from time to time grossly exaggerated the amount of immorality among our soldiers. There have been scares got up about "War Babies,"

and Expeditionary Force Canteens have been spoken of as if they were schools for teaching drunkenness. Even if we granted the truth of much that has been said, and accepted at its face value every accusation that has been made, we might still demand of these Puritans an entire readjustment of their scheme of moral values in the light of the teaching of Christ. These sins of sense are precisely those which He regarded as least hopeless. It was He Who said of those in His day who mistook respectability for religion: "The publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you."

I do not want to represent our men as saints, or to claim that the Army presents humanity as Christ would have it. I know and deplore the coarse, sensual sins that are far too common. But the sensualist and the drunkard are not the heroes of our men. They sin often, boldly or carelessly, but—and this is the real point—they feel such sin to be failure. Their admiration is for those who live temperately and cleanly. The Church has not failed to give the average man a respect for temperance. He has learned that, and even when he fails most signally he owns that he ought to practise the thing which he respects.

The Church's failure, if she has failed, is something quite different. It is this: She has not recognized how near to Christ her children are. She has been inclined to reckon as aliens to the commonwealth of God those to whom she should have said joyfully, "The Kingdom of God is within you." Then, as a consequence of this, our men, believing what the Church says of them, have regarded themselves as irreligious. There is nothing more common than to hear a man say: "But of course I'm not religious. I don't think I've been to church except to be married, since I was a boy." And yet this man is constantly doing the things, and continually hoping and trying to do the things which Christ wants men to do. His life is visibly affected by a spirit, some spirit—what spirit, if it be not Christ's?

We proclaim Christ, and men stare at us uncomprehending, though the Christ we proclaim is in them all the time. We preach the Cross, and our words have little meaning to men who, even while they fail to understand, are nailed to the Cross along with Christ, offering themselves as sacrifices for the saving of the world.

This is the extraordinary contradiction in which we are involved. We have the men of a great empire so near to Christ that only a little space divides them from Him. Yet they do not see Him

or know Him or recognize Him as the Lord of all which they themselves count best. Can it be that the Church has somehow hitherto preached Christ imperfectly, her saints and doctors and faithful people having indeed seen Him imperfectly? They have seen a gracious and well-ordered Christ, one trimmed, clipped, defined, like a yew tree in a formal garden. No doubt men may see Him so and love Him well and save their souls. But Christ is greater. The Saviour of the world must be greater. For the world is more than an ordered garden. Humanity, vast, tumultuous, incoherent, needs and should find in Him a Saviour in all points like as it is, save for sin.

DISCUSSION.

In some measure the discussion dealt with forms of expression occurring in the Lectures, forms which do not appear in the text as now revised. In individual cases, also, speakers introduced topics of theological controversy which are properly left outside the purview of the Institute. Such elements in the discussion are not now reproduced.

Lieut.-Colonel MACKINLAY: There is much to admire in the graphic descriptions of the religious state of our soldiers, and also of the methods and teachings of many of the chaplains. Canon Hannay's reference to the natural religion which largely prevails, points to its unchristian character. Christ and His Cross are not in it, as he says on page 186. It is natural to pray to the Deity when in danger, and it is also natural to pray but little when the danger is past. According to 1 Corinthians ii, 14: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." Natural religion is therefore unchristian. It is true that the spiritual teaching of Christ has created a good atmosphere among our men who hold a natural religion, but the same thing is noticeable among Hindus in India, who have started hospitals and other good works in combination with Christians.

The ordinary soldier has a high ideal, and most of them know that to become a good Christian involves being born again by the Holy

Spirit. Many men will say it is impossible to be a Christian in the Army or Navy. I had an example, talking to a sailor on the top of a 'bus, and to a soldier a few minutes afterwards, whilst waiting for a tram. The sailor said: "It is impossible to be a Christian," and the wounded soldier said: "It is impossible to be a Christian over there." One sad feature in the Army is that many a man who has lived quite an upright life gets led away by the bad language and erroneous teaching, but this is not to be wondered at, if the heart has not been changed. A Christian worker was distributing Gospels in a camp. A soldier said to him: "We do not want anything like that: if we die at the Front, we shall be all right for heaven." Another man said: "We are not giving our lives for the country, we are fighting for our own. Why should our faith be undermined? I have often wished I could believe, but it seems to me all an awful muddle." Unscriptural teaching does indeed produce an awful muddle.

One young man writes from Edinburgh: "One Sunday a soldier was seen outside a tent, with unmistakable signs of sin and depravity on his face, while a service was being held, to which he was listening attentively. At the close I went up and wanted to shake hands. He said: "You would not shake hands if you knew who I was: I am the worst man in the camp, and only came out of prison yesterday." After a few minutes, he drew a dirty copy of St. John's Gospel out of his pocket, and said: "I would like to be a good lad." He soon believed in Christ, and before leaving for the East gave a splendid testimony for Him. We are all very grateful to Canon Hannay for his interesting paper, and even if we do not all agree with much that he says, our thanks are still warmly given to him for his very good paper.

Captain MACNAUGHTON: Canon Hannay has stated that the Church of England is at least conscious of failure in dealing with men in the Army. That is a tremendous step, but I think we should make a very clear distinction between the Church of England, the Church of Rome, and the Nonconformist bodies. For my part, in an experience of nearly three years in the Army, the Church of Rome has not failed. She makes tremendous claims, and says to the men: "You only trust in us, we will see you straight through earth and through Heaven." I confess I really believe that Nonconformist

bodies have the affection and love which the Church of England has not got. If you want to know why the Church of England has failed in the past to do much, and will fail to all eternity, the reason is not far to seek. The Church of England, rightly or wrongly (I speak in all love, for I know some of its curates and vicars are living the most saintly lives, and many of them are my friends), is in the eyes of the ordinary "Tommy," a worldly Church. If you want a cure for the worldliness of the Church of England (and I would dearly love to see her unworldly), if we want a cure for it, we must go and preach JESUS. Ladies and gentlemen, if you go to your parishes and teach Jesus, you will find that "Tommy" will no more think the Church of England is a worldly Church, but will hear you very gladly.

Dr. A. T. SCHOFIELD: In the dearth of first-hand speakers, I should like to make one criticism of the Canon's valuable paper. He speaks of "the Christ we proclaim being in them all the time." "If Christ be not in you, then is . . . your faith vain." Christ in man is clearly indicative of subjective grace. I would submit to the Canon that perhaps the reason why trust in God, which includes the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is not more known to the men in the trenches, is owing to the absence of organisations which follow up Scripture teaching at the Front.

Christ crucified, dying and rising again as the Saviour of the world, must be the basis of all Christian faith. I am sure that the Canon would agree with me, that the clause wherein he spoke of men being nailed to the Cross "along with Christ" is an unfortunate rendering. I would suggest that He to Whom we all owe such infinite reverence, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, Who, though He was rich yet for our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might become rich, must not be put—I am sure the Canon would not put His unique and glorious work on a par with a man dying for the sake of his country, and I think they should be carefully distinguished. From what I hear from second-hand intelligence from the Front, that is one of the great reasons for what the Canon deplures—the want of Christianity in the men. It is the substitution of the sacrifice of themselves for the sacrifice of Christ which has to be deplored. Once they know the objective Christ, there will not be far to seek to find the love for Him.

Mr. PHILIP JOHNSTON : I feel we want to lift the whole consideration of this question far above our party differences. Surely we want to come to Jesus Christ in the questions which have divided Christian men so unhappily for many centuries. We want a great unifying thought, and can we find a better thought than that contained in the word "Prayer" ? It is prayer alone that will bring Jesus Christ back to this troubled earth. It is prayer alone which will bring to an end this terrible war, which is a scourge upon Christendom, which has forgotten her absent Lord and Master.

A few months ago I had a letter from a Major in France, who had been put in charge of the responsible task of forming the roads—so necessary a work for the transmission of munitions of war. My correspondent said that, on a certain date in 1917, he had been ordered to take up a new position with the company of men working under him. In obedience to his senior Officer's command, he took the men to the billets assigned to them. They were hardly settled there—in fact had not had time to make themselves comfortable and get something to eat—before an urgent telegraphic message came through that the Germans were about to shell the little town out of existence. Humanly speaking, there was no chance for them. The enemy had the exact range of their billets, and so they must shift for themselves as best they could. He gathered his men and explained the terrible situation to them. Speaking as a Christian man, he said : " We have no hope but in God ; we each have our separate rooms—let us go there, and pray to God." He went and poured out his heart to God. He felt that many of the men were ignorant, and would not follow his example. But he felt that God had given him the charge of the men, their bodies and souls, for the time being.

As he was praying, the first shell came hurtling through the air, and seemed as though it must lay the place in ruins, and he was thrown down on the floor ; but nothing happened. He picked himself up, and went on with his prayer. This was at seven o'clock in the evening, and until five the next morning the shelling went on without intermission. But at five o'clock the shelling ceased. He went out, and looked round. The whole earth for a great area was entirely ploughed up by the shells, but although the tiles had been broken in the roof, and glass had been broken by concussion, not a splinter was knocked off the whole range of buildings. He met one of his sergeants as he was coming inside, and the man said to him,

with an awe-struck face: "Sir, this is a miracle!" As he told me this, with obvious sincerity, I felt that, if there was this one gallant man who felt that there was a power in prayer, you could assuredly multiply him by thousands in the English Army. Call them Church of England, call them Nonconformists, call them Jews, it is these men who are the salt of the earth. It is these men who are our hope for the future of the English-speaking race.

Mr. JOSEPH GRAHAM: I do not think I can be contradicted when I say that the great majority of the men know nothing of faith in a Supreme Being. An incident came to my notice the other day direct from the Front. There were some men in a trench, and a shell came over and narrowly missed them, landing just on the other side. One of the men said to his fellow: "How do you account for that? How do you account for the number of shells which have gone over us—some to the right and some to the left, and just missed us?" The other man said: "That was Providence." The other concealed his real notion for a moment, and then asked his fellow: "What is Providence?" and the man wriggled and twisted and tried to explain the point in various ways, but the one thing he would not do was to say it was GOD. It was Providence. So after this man had argued with him for a time, he said: "Oh I see, you mean it is God." The man agreed, and not only that, but he was grateful to the other for bringing the thing to a point; and once the ice was broken the two talked quite easily on the subject. That illustrates the point. Where the Church has failed has been that she has not brought her children up in familiarity with the idea of Christ and Christ's great redemptive work. They have not made Christ a personal friend.

Among other speakers were Rev. John Tuckwell, Colonel Alves, and Mr. Sidney Collett.

LECTURER'S REPLY.

In his reply, CANON HANNAY said: I thank you very much for the kind way in which you have received my paper, and in which many of you have criticised some of its shortcomings. I should like to say something to those who have discussed it, but my time is very short, as I have to catch a train to Ireland. I want to say to Dr. Schofield, that the point to which he drew special attention is

really cribbed from another heretic, the late George Tyrrell. I was not quite certain of the words. The precise words are in his much-abused letter.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

The Rev. Prebendary H. E. FOX, M.A. :—

Canon Hannay has ably described the condition of the religious life of the Army as it appeared to him; and much of his criticism of the influence of the Church, both at the Front and at home has, I fear, some foundation. But there are features both there and here which are overlooked by the ordinary observer. While what the Canon has said, with one or two exceptions, deals with the obvious, I will not say superficial, there is naturally very little about the deeper influences of religious life, about which those who look for them, and know how to do so, could give a more hopeful picture. This occasion is hardly a suitable one for the discussion of this part of the great problem. But many facts have come to my knowledge, which show that there are forces at work and agencies employing them, which do produce results on a considerable scale, and far more real and permanent than all the good things rightly attributed to the Y.M.C.A. or the Church Army, or even the average Chaplain. Inquiry from those intimate with the work of the Soldiers' Christian Association or the Open-Air Mission, would produce evidences of a spiritual power laying hold on human nature, and of the actuality of what is meant by the old-fashioned words "conversion" and "godliness," far more than are generally known. These are realities which the men can understand and welcome, and which they can distinguish from the platitudes of those good people with the best intentions, who hardly know how to reach the deepest needs of the human heart, or how to give the Divine answer to the cry, perhaps scarcely understood by him who makes it: "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

The Rev. Chancellor J. J. LIAS, M.A. :—

Many of us instinctively feel that inasmuch as the revelation of God in Christ is the last to be vouchsafed to man on earth, it is

presumptuous for any of us to think that we can add to our knowledge of it. Yet I believe this to be altogether a mistake. Scripture is, I must think, an unexhausted mine, from which many new aspects of well-known truths will hereafter be unearthed. The belief of every disciple of Christ, while here on earth, is imperfect. Nor is this true only of the individual. Large masses of professing Christians have held ideas of God which were not only imperfect but seriously mistaken. For centuries man's conceptions of God were coloured by Pagan ideas. And this state of things is by no means at an end even yet. The jangling of Christians has continued so long, and grown to such an extent of late, that every possible idea of God, from the Loving Creator of heaven and earth and the ever-blessed Saviour of mankind, to a Being Who, though He may have made the world and all that is in it, is altogether incapable of controlling it, is taught by somebody and accepted by those under his influence.

Is it wonderful that under these circumstances there are thousands in England who do not fully understand Him Whom they worship, or what He is doing for the salvation of the world? What can the guide of souls do in such a case? Well, at least He can do this. He sees that our belief after all these centuries is still imperfect, and He must do the best He can with what there is of it. It is most saddening, no doubt, to find that the Scripture picture of the Word of the Eternal Father, descending to earth, taking our nature and rescuing us from the bondage of sin, by the impartation of the redeemed and exalted humanity of the Saviour, through the agency of the Divine Spirit, does not at once win the heart and produce the joyful and grateful submission of the perishing soul to the influence of the living waters of pardon and the streams of Divine life contained in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of the Man, Christ Jesus. But what does He find instead? He finds in an unexpected number of hearts a desire to do God's will as far as they can see it. He finds the unexpected believers ready to offer their lives for the country's service. He finds them cheerful and contented to live a life of exposure, wretchedness, and privation so long as they can save their countrymen and women from the horrors which the inhabitants of other countries have had to endure. He finds them ready to risk their lives for their neighbours' welfare, or for some of their comrades, or it may be for their regiment. But

there is no distinct idea of the scheme of salvation, no clear conception of God, no thankfulness for God's mercy in Christ Jesus. Can we deny to such persons all hope of salvation in the world to come? Are they not ready to follow the example of Him Who says: "Greater love can no man show than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend"?

Surely such men as these have the root of the matter in them. They may not be able to formulate in proper theological language their view of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the various other doctrines of the Faith, concerning which theologians have written so many vast tomes, and have disputed so fiercely, and are disputing still. But at least such souls as we have in view recognize the duty of the imitation of Christ. Millions of them are ready to lay down their lives for their friends, and to recognize in fellow-creatures whom they have never seen, brethren whose title to be called friends they are ready practically to recognize. Is not this following the example of the Master? And does not the Beloved Disciple remind us that all our conceptions about God must begin by recognizing His image in His creatures? "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?" The love of God, then, is impossible until we first learn to love our neighbour. And the love of our neighbour is proved, not by words but by acts.

General Sir HENRY GEARY :—

I write with special reference to the second paragraph on page 186: "The Church has failed to bring the average man into any kind of real touch with Him Whom we believe to be the Saviour of the World." In my opinion the Church of England has failed, inasmuch as her religious teaching does not proceed regularly and systematically. Partly this is due to the somewhat casual teaching in the Government schools. I consider that the two sacraments are equally necessary. My idea is that from the day of the children's baptism they should be looked upon as adopted, as being the spiritual concern of the whole parish, who have themselves been baptized, and should not be left entirely to their parents or guardians, who are in many cases too occupied in earning their bread to give their children the

spiritual oversight which they require. The religious teaching of children should be as continuous and efficient as the secular.

Professor H. LANGHORNE ORCHARD, M.A., B.Sc. :—

The Author justly remarks that “ When we talk about the religion of the Army, we really mean the religion of the men of the nation ” ; and he shows us that these common men are (with a few unhappy exceptions) by no means irreligious. They have “ a sense of the Divine ” ; they believe that GOD hears and answers prayer ; they feel that sin is *failure* ; and their conduct manifests in some degree not a few of the Christian virtues. Yet, though their religion is real, it is “ desperately imperfect, very far indeed from being fully Christian.”

We shall agree with Canon Hannay that the Christian “ Church ” is in some measure responsible for this state of things,—a state of things caused largely by indifference brought about by (1) A notion that the Minister preaches merely, or mainly, because he is paid to do so—that it is his “ job ” as they have their “ jobs ” ; (2) Failure in the Preacher to lay greater emphasis on essential and fundamental truths than on what is comparatively unimportant. The plain man is perplexed, and turning wearily from theological and dialectical subtleties, is apt to turn from the truths vitally important and to give the whole thing up ; (3) Failure in the Preacher to convince his hearers that Christianity is in intimate practical connection with ordinary everyday life.

Too often, also, there is lack of earnestness and clearness in setting forth the Gospel, the enormity of sin and the fearful character of its consequences, the nature of righteousness as consisting in obedience to GOD, the atonement and resurrection of the Son of GOD—the *personal* Saviour Who saves “ to the uttermost ” everyone who puts heart-faith in His Blood shed upon the Cross, and trusts to that alone for the Divine forgiveness.

Do we ask what is the remedy for the Church’s failure ? The *remedy* is to be found in faithful, prayerful preaching, by the lips and lives of men constrained by the love of Christ, of the Gospel declared in 1 Cor. xv, 2–8. And this not as a system of abstract doctrines, not as a mere university thesis, but as a practical *experience* which they have *personally* verified.