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The CHRISTIAN CENTURY

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Toward a World Conference

An Editorial

Warm Hearts and Steady Faith

By Clarence Edward Macartney

I Went to a Nazi Rally

By Alson J. Smith

Christianity Confronts Fascism

By Hugh Stevenson Tigner

Liberty Bells in Hollywood

An Editorial

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• March 8, 1939 •

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In This Issue

HUGH STEVENSON TIGNER is minister of the Universalist Church at Canton, N. Y., the site of St. Lawrence University, the leading educational institution of that denomination. Mr. Tigner is a frequent contributor to The Christian Century.

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY

is minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., and a former moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. As a leader in the fundamentalist wing of Presbyterianism, Dr. Macartney was invited to contribute to our current "testimony meeting" on the changes which have taken place in the thinking of American Christian leaders during the past decade.

ALSON J. SMITH

is minister of Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, Waterbury, Conn., and is active in the affairs of the National Religion and Labor Foundation.

W. P. LEMON

is minister of the first Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Coming

Next in the series on "How My Mind Has Changed in This Decade" will be Georgia Harkness, professor of the history and literature of religion at Mount Holyoke College. Dr. Harkness was a delegate to the recent Madras Conference, and wrote her account of her spiritual pilgrimage while on the way home from that great gathering. . . . An article which is sure to arouse widespread discussion is "Where Madras Missed Its Way" by E. Stanley Jones, which will appear next week.

The CHRISTIAN CENTURY

March 8, 1939

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Calendar of Coming Events

- Mar. 6-10. Annual Seminary Conference, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.
- Mar. 6-12. Rural Emphasis Week, Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga.
- Mar. 7-9. Annual Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, Knoxville, Tenn.
- Mar. 8. Ford Hall Forum, Boston; Thomas Mann, speaker.
- Mar. 19, 20. Interdenominational Post-Madras Conference, Indianapolis, Ind.
- Mar. 12. Community Church, Boston; J. A. C. Auer, Edgar S. Brightman, speakers
- Mar. 12. Chicago Sunday Evening Club; G. Bromley Oxnam, speaker.
- Mar. 14, 15. Interdenominational Post-Madras Conference, Seattle, Wash.
- Mar. 19. Chicago Sunday Evening Club; Harold C. Phillips, speaker.
- Mar. 19. Community Church, Boston; J. Raymond Walsh, speaker.
- Mar. 19. Chicago Sunday Forum; Harold Foy, speaker.
- Mar. 19. Protestant-Catholic Men's Mass Meeting, Minneapolis, Minn.
- Mar. 20, 21. Centennial Symposium on Religion, Duke University, Durham, N. C.
- Mar. 21, 22. Interdenominational Post-Madras Conference, Cleveland, O.
- Mar. 24, 25. Anti-War Mobilization, Keep America Out of War Congress, Carnegie Hall, New York City.
- Mar. 26. Ford Hall Forum, Boston; Francis E. Townsend-Raleigh W. Stone debate.
- Mar. 26. Chicago Sunday Evening Club; Henry Sloane Coffin, speaker.
- Mar. 26, 27. Interdenominational Post-Madras Conference, Minneapolis, Minn.
- Apr. 2. Ford Hall Forum, Boston; John Haynes Holmes, speaker.
- April 11-13. Interdenominational Ministers' Retreat, Ohio Northern University, Ada, O.
- Apr. 11-14. Fifth Annual Conference on Conservation of Marriage and the Family, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Apr. 16. Ford Hall Forum, Boston; Bertrand Russell, speaker.
- Apr. 17, 18. Methodist Episcopal Post Graduate Association of Illinois, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington; Ferdinand M. Isserman, speaker.
- Apr. 24-28. American Seminar, Washington, D. C.; Sherwood Eddy, leader.
- Apr. 24-28. Lyman Beecher Lectures, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, speaker.
- Apr. 25. Annual Meeting, Federation of Churches, Cleveland, O.
- Apr. 26. Uniting Methodist Conference.
- Apr. 29-May 5. American Seminar, New York City; Sherwood Eddy, leader.
- Apr. 30. Church Federation Sunday, Minneapolis, Minn.
- May 1-3. Tenth Annual Missionary Education Institute, Third Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.
- May 15-17. Annual Congregational-Christian Conference, Claremont, N. H.
- May 20-June 2. Third Biennial Institute, A Movement for World Christianity, Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

(Announcements will be printed in this calendar as received, but must reach the editorial office at least three weeks in advance of the date mentioned.)

The CHRISTIAN CENTURY

U n d e n o m i n a t i o n a l

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EDITORIAL

ONE of the questions often asked these days is as to whether the Christian ministers who declared their rejection of the war system a few years ago stand by that declaration today. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick left no doubt as to his position when, in a recent sermon

Dr. Fosdick Says It Again

at the Riverside Church in New York, he applied the text, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" to the current issue between democracies and dictatorships. "One of the most dreadful aspects of our international situation today," Dr. Fosdick said, "is the way we ape the foes we hate. The dictators talk war, so we talk war. They say, vast armaments; so we say, vast armaments. Step by step we become their yes-men. They say, dictatorial control for war's sake; so we propose bills in Washington that provide on the day of war's declaration for the conscription of life, property, labor, conscience and freedom. What apes we are! Fighting evil with evil, we become the evil that we fight. That is the nemesis of thinking that Jesus is a visionary idealist. He is not. His ethic shows a more realistic insight into what is going on in the modern world than does our boasted hard-headedness. Somebody must stand up, stand up by millions among all the nations, where, despite the governments, the people in their homes and hearts want peace; must stand up and cry, 'We're through! We will not go on with war, forever causing more war and that causing more war still.' How can Satan cast out Satan?"

Guam Proposal Defeated In Lower House

WHEN the editorial, "What Guam Means," was sent to press last week, it seemed certain that the proposal to begin work on the building of a naval air and submarine base at Guam would pass the House of Representatives. What hope there was for the defeat of the mischief-breeding project seemed to lie in the Senate. But a sudden uprising of good sense and good patriotism brought about the defeat of the Guam proposal in the lower branch of Congress. On three successive votes a majority was registered against the Guam base every time, and

on each vote that majority grew larger. In the committee of the whole a standing vote knocked out the Guam section from the pending naval bill, 145 to 129. A teller vote was thereupon demanded and resulted in defeat of the Guam measure, 193 to 164. Then when the House came out of committee of the whole and a roll call was taken, the Guam scheme went into the discard, 205 to 168. The result is one of the most encouraging happenings at Washington in a long time. It shows that Congress is still able to think for itself, even when the defense ballyhoo is going full blast. And it shows that Congress has no desire to thrust the United States into new trouble zones, whatever may be the readiness of the navy and the executive to take in new defense territory. But while rejoicing over the defeat of the Guam base one must not overlook the fact that the rest of the unprecedented armament bills are rolling through Congress almost without a jar. Indeed, the Senate seems about to boost the number of airplanes to be built for the army above the House's appropriation and above the army's own asking! And all this is taking place without any clear definition of the foreign policy which would require it.

Bok Award Is Given to Quaker Leaders

PHILADELPHIA'S annual ten thousand dollar award, established by Edward W. Bok, in recognition of "service calculated to advance the best interests of the community," has been given to two representatives of the American Friends Service Committee, Dr. Clarence E. Pickett, executive secretary of that committee for the past ten years, and Dr. Rufus M. Jones. In a larger sense, it may be said to have been given to the American Friends in their capacity as ministers of mercy to the neediest without regard to geographical limitations or political opinions. The service committee has served as an agency for feeding Spanish children on both sides of the line that has divided Spain into two warring camps. More recently the committee sent representatives on a visit to Germany in the interest of the Jews and Christians whom nazi policies have deprived of normal means of subsistence. They

per cent citizen waving the national flag. Its seeds are in our midst. It is a genuine threat.

Finally, fascism is teaching us an old lesson about the significance of faith. Those who believe in salvation by science, or by the development and extension of the powers of reason, have been spiritually crushed; but Christians are being reminded that they too are supposed to have a faith, and are being stimulated to rediscover, reexamine and reconfess that faith.

Faith Is Strength

Once again we have seen faith come forth as the great mover. It is not a thing that tender-minded people take comfort in, but a source of meaning, purpose and courage. It is not a weakness but a strength. Our faith is our approach to reality; it is our conception of the truth about the what-is on its way toward becoming the what-will-be. It provides our hold upon life. By faith we stand firm and endure when endurance is called for; and by faith we move forward to claim the future for our own.

History has reminded us that Christianity is a faith. We had almost forgotten it. Christianity had become in our minds something like a venerable family tradition which children are urged to uphold but which they may, and often do, ignore with impunity. It had become the accepted and respectable way of ornamenting state occasions. But now we are rudely awakened. Christianity

is an approach to life. It is a statement of "the truth" concerning the nature, laws, meaning and values of creation. It is an interpretation of reality. It affirms that the Lord of creation is not life-denying Moloch, but life-furthering Love. It affirms that in the long run nothing fails like brutality, hate and the will-to-power. It reads history as being littered with pronouncements of doom upon these things. It affirms that the universe is constructed so as to support men when they practice mutual-ity, cooperation, community, and to destroy men when they practice the opposite. And it affirms the universal character of this community, excluding no man on account of his race.

I have called this a statement of "the truth." This is either eminently right, or eminently wrong. The Christian faith represents either the truest and most important truth in the world, or else its opposite is the truest and most important truth in the world. The rise of fascism has put the issue in just that relentless form. It has destroyed that pleasant avenue of saunter known as the "middle-of-the-road." It has numbered the days of the undecided and of the man who is nominally *this* or *that*. It has made the noncommittal life and the tentative mind with regard to fundamental questions past luxuries. The issues of the age are resolving themselves into Christ or anti-Christ. A faith is preparing to rule; it will be our faith, or somebody else's faith.

Warm Hearts and Steady Faith

Eighth Article in the Series "How My Mind Has Changed in This Decade"

By Clarence Edward Macartney

I HOPE that during the last decade I have grown in grace and knowledge and humility, but I am not afraid, and not ashamed, to confess that as to the great underlying truths—what Chalmers was wont to call "the grand particularities" of the Christian revelation—I have experienced no emotional or intellectual change in the last ten years. Of course, I have had widening experiences, and perhaps here and there the emphasis has been altered; but as regards what Coleridge called the "constituent" doctrines of our faith, I am conscious of no change. I am glad that this is so, for if at the end of every ten years I had a different point of view as to my Christian faith I would have to conclude that the Christ whom I follow is someone other than "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."

We are invited, and urged, to be personal and autobiographic in these articles. Therefore it will not be out of place to say a word about my religious background. My father was a minister, and professor of natural science in a small denominational college. He was a man of strong personality and extraordinarily wide general knowledge. My mother, according to the verdict of all who knew her, was a most unusual woman, and our home was one of plain living and high thinking. The remarkable thing about my mother was the combination of intellectuality

and deep spirituality. I have never yet met her like in this respect.

College Background

Partly by accident, my education was diversified. In quest of health, my father took his family to California, where I was graduated from the preparatory school of Pomona College. They had there then a splendid group of instructors, most of them Yale, Amherst, Dartmouth and Williams men. My first year in college was at the University of Denver, of which the then chancellor was the late Bishop William F. McDowell. In common with all the young men in the university I felt the charm and fascination of his personality. After a year at Denver I entered the University of Wisconsin, where I took my bachelor's degree. It was there I came in contact with the late great liberal and splendid orator, Robert M. LaFollette. What a spell he cast over the young men in the university at that time! I can remember how in the midst of one of his campaigns for the governorship he took me down to the courtroom of the Dale county courthouse at Madison and put me through a rehearsal of the oration which I was to deliver in an inter-university contest.

After graduation at the university I spent a year in news-

paper work and in travel abroad; both very profitable. I then entered the theological seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton. I followed my father and three older brothers into the ministry, but not without something of a struggle. Some of the doubts—looking back now I feel it more correct to say, conceits—which enter the minds of young men leaving the university affected me. I can remember getting the catalogue of a theological seminary which held a position remote from the evangelical faith. Providentially kept from that abyss, I then matriculated in the Yale Divinity School; but the atmosphere not proving congenial, after a few days at New Haven, I transferred to Princeton. I have always felt, and I say it now with all sincerity and humility, that the hand of God led me to Princeton during those critical days. I shall never be able to repay the debt of gratitude which I owe to Princeton Theological Seminary, and to the great scholars and Christians who were there in my day—Benjamin B. Warfield in theology, Robert Dick Wilson in the Old Testament, and Frederick Loetscher in church history. I came out of the seminary with a thrilling conception of what St. Paul calls “the exceeding greatness” of the Christian revelation.

Advantages of a State University

I have always been glad, too, that although a product of an orthodox Christian home and an orthodox Christian theological seminary, the critical years of college training were spent in a great state university where the religious atmosphere and influence were not marked. The courses in history and literature and science in no way shook my faith, but finally strengthened it. Indeed, if I had a boy to send to college today I think I would much prefer that he go to one of the great secular universities where the Bible is not taught or discussed at all, rather than to some of our quasi-denominational colleges where the Bible is taught, but almost exclusively from the modernistic and rationalistic point of view. It would be much better if many of these colleges let the Bible altogether alone.

In my senior year in the seminary I had two calls. One was to the church in the beautiful little village on the Wisconsin river where I had preached for two summers during the seminary vacation, the other to the First Presbyterian Church of Paterson, New Jersey. The congregation there had grown away from the church, and there was considerable talk about selling the splendid piece of property and the venerable buildings in the very heart of Paterson and moving out into the residential section of the city. The late Dr. David J. Burrell, then minister of the Marble Collegiate Church, New York, and our instructor in homiletics at Princeton, when I asked his advice about the two calls, said, “Go to Paterson!” I went.

It was a difficult field, but youth knows no obstacles and fears no difficulties, and with that perennial miracle of youth to help me, and with the guidance and blessing of God, I had eight useful and happy years in the First Church at Paterson. There, too, in the providence of God, I laid the foundation of my future work and my future methods in the ministry. It was there I learned to preach without notes. It was there I discovered the rich treasures of Old Testament preaching, and how, as Beecher once put it, the “Old Testament will never be worn out

until the heavens are worn out and men no more need to understand God.” There, too, I discovered that biographical preaching, the great lives of the Bible, has a timeless appeal. There, too, I commenced to strike out along the line of what once was called “apologetic” preaching.

Defending the Faith

I was familiar, of course, with the stock counsel and exhortation of seminary days that a preacher is to proclaim, and not defend, the truth. But I discovered very quickly that true believers like to hear their faith *defended* at the bar of reason. In a book stall in Paternoster Row, near St. Paul's, I picked up one summer a little two-penny pamphlet—I think it was by Ambrose Shepherd, once an eloquent Congregational preacher in Glasgow—entitled *Christianity and Common Sense*. It was this pamphlet which suggested to me the plan which I have often followed of taking one by one the great articles of the Christian creed and showing how they agree with and are confirmed by the ordinary reason and experience, or common sense, of mankind. For example, if one preaches on the doctrine of the fall of man, however it may be ridiculed by men who are preaching today only the ghost of Christianity, it is a doctrine that is mightily confirmed by human nature and human history. As Bernard Shaw puts it in one of his plays, “You ask me where is the evidence of the fall of man? You might as well take me down to the foot of Snowden and ask me, Where is the mountain?”

It was in the church at Paterson, too, that I commenced to preach what I have kept up ever since, and what I call “sermons from life.” These are sermons suggested directly by incidents of my pastoral work, and yet the incidents so disguised that no confidence is ever betrayed. Another line of work that I began to follow in my Paterson days was the study of the life and writings of St. Paul. It is thirty years since I commenced that work, and I am still at it. A very pleasant and enlarging part of this study has been my summer travels in the footsteps of St. Paul. I have now visited practically every place—all but two or three at least—mentioned in the New Testament in connection with St. Paul.

Death and Resurrection in Philadelphia

My second church was the Arch Street Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, its building one of the noblest specimens of Corinthian architecture to be found in the country. That section of Philadelphia had changed completely, and the handsome brown-stone houses on Arch Street were then inhabited mostly by boarders and lodgers. Men said that I was digging my grave. If so, it was a pleasant grave, and “blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.” The perennial miracle of youth was still with me, and with no thought of failure I gave myself night and day to the great task before me. One of the stirring features of the Philadelphia ministry was my contact with the great body of students, especially the medical students at the Hahneman, Jefferson University and Medico-Chirurgical colleges. Almost everywhere I go now I meet a doctor who attended my services in Philadelphia. It was the reaction and comment of one of those medical students which led me to preach every autumn my sermon on opportunity, “Come Before Winter.” Next year will

be the twenty-fifth anniversary of that sermon. Of course, the truth of the sermon is confirmed by new experiences and by new reactions on the part of those who hear it.

This Philadelphia period embraced the years of the World War. I used to read the predictions, made for the most part by modernistic ministers, as to how the war was going to stand Christianity on its head, and how when the soldiers came back from France they would demand a new kind of preaching, which would have amounted to a new Christ and a new gospel, or "another gospel, which is not another." At the time I thought that this idea as to how the war was going to change Christianity and the work of the church was all "bosh." The years which followed proved that this was so.

The Fundamentalist Controversy

This was the period, too, of the great doctrinal controversy which arose concerning the so-called "fundamentals" of the Christian faith. Into that battle I threw myself with ardor and enthusiasm. I have heard and read much about the paralyzing blight of religious controversy. I never found it to be so. For me it was a period of intellectual expansion and stimulation and enthusiastic preaching and writing. The part I took in that conflict left no "black" in my blood and no bitterness in my spirit. I must say, however, that during that period I collected what I call my "Liturgy of Execration," letters and denunciations from so-called liberals and modernists which, if they were published in the columns of *The Christian Century*, would certainly be humiliating and embarrassing to those modernists and liberals, falsely so called, who claim a monopoly on "sweetness and light." For myself, I saw very clearly at that time the great division in the church as to the Bible and Christian revelation. One had to choose between redemptive and biblical Christianity and that vague, inchoate mass of emotionalism and pseudo-intellectualism and barren secularism popularly called "modernism."

My next call was to the historic First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, where I have labored for the past twelve years. In my pulpit work I have followed the lines indicated above which I began to develop in my first church in Paterson. With the coming of new decades and new conditions in the world, one's accent and tone naturally will change. But my observation is that the same earnestness and the same style in methods which proved effective thirty years ago are still useful and effective. A sermon from life makes the same appeal today that it did then, and a sermon on predestination and providence will draw just as large a congregation in Pittsburgh in 1939 as a sermon on the same subject did in Paterson in 1905. Things still happen to men, and still they ask, Why? Predestination is the only answer. I have discovered, too, that sermons on the great characters of the Bible still interest men and still draw them to church.

One of the inspiring features of my Pittsburgh ministry has been the Tuesday noon meeting for business men, where a large company of business men assemble every Tuesday to hear an address that is definitely biblical and Christian. The human heart is just the same as it was a decade or three decades ago, and men like to listen to those who can warm their hearts. I have always remem-

bered what Dr. McCosh, logician and president of Princeton, said to those who expressed wonder that people went in such crowds to hear his brother-in-law, Thomas Guthrie, who was not deep and metaphysical, like many of the Scottish preachers: "They go to hear him because they like to have their hearts warmed." No one falls in love with a proposition. No one falls in love with a problem. Much of the preaching of our day has become a discussion of the problems of the world and the problems of Christianity. That will never warm any man's heart and will never draw any man to the church, or unite him to Christ.

Hope in the Local Church

During these years I have had the humiliations, the sorrows and discouragements of most of my brethren in the ministry; times, too, when I felt that I was accomplishing little or nothing. When I say that there have been no changes as to the cardinal beliefs of Christianity, I do not mean that there has been no change of accent and emphasis, and no growing convictions as to certain policies or certain beliefs. Events of the last ten years have somewhat shaken my old-time confidence in the effectiveness of a denominational witness. A creedal church is a great institution, but its only strength is in its witness to its creed. I feel that the strength of my own church, the Presbyterian, has been greatly reduced by its failure on certain occasions to witness strongly to its creed. Indeed, in some instances, such as the tragic expulsion of that great theologian, Dr. J. Gresham Machen, our church has seemed to witness against its creed rather than for it. More and more, I despair of getting a united witness from churches which embrace in their point of view and preaching almost any and every religious opinion. Therefore, I value less the whole ecclesiastical structure, and feel that more and more for the true witness to the gospel and the Kingdom of God we must depend upon the particular local church, the individual minister and the individual Christian. Between such believers and such Christians there is indeed a real church unity. Hands of fellowship reach over the separating walls of denominational barriers and voices of mutual encouragement echo in the hearts of those who fear the Lord.

Little Interest in Church Union

I have followed and observed, but taken little part in, the movement towards church unity, a movement sponsored and led for the most part by men who themselves are not in the forefront of the hottest battle, that is, the pastorate and the pulpit. I rejoice in every evidence of the breaking down of the barriers of seclusion and separation, and in every demonstration of the fact that the denominational lines which separate Christians need not alienate. For myself, however, I must frankly confess I see no great contribution to the work of the Kingdom of God in the external drawing together of Protestant denominations. As Phillips Brooks once aptly put it: "Exchange of courtesies between two regiments in an army does not win a battle against the enemy." I do not believe that Satan and his angels are in the least troubled by the fact that in some village or town a Presbyterian, a Methodist, a Baptist and a Christian Church unite as one congregation; nor do I believe that the angels in heaven find

any particular reason for rejoicing in it. The enmity of this lost and unbelieving world is just the same, and man's fallen nature is just the same, after you have merged two or three churches as before the churches were merged.

In particular do I have a distrust of those movements towards a church unity which is to be accomplished by the surrender of Christian truth, or by the subsidence of vital Christian conviction. I remember once hearing a sermon on that subject by that powerful and interesting London preacher, Dr. Orchard, since gone into the Roman Catholic Church, in which he told how the movements toward church unity amounted to giving up this and that distinguishing truth and doctrine, until finally the churches agreed to merge and unite on the general proposition of the truth of the multiplication table!

The Atonement Is Central

The atonement is still to me the grand central truth of our Christian faith. It is the fountain, too, of Christian morality and ethics. When a man really accepts the truth of the atonement, the cross of Christ, he will need little exhortation along the line of Christian ethics and conduct. One follows the other in natural sequence. I am asked by the editor of *The Christian Century* to state not only my own point of view, but what I think of the theological and preaching attitude of others in the ministry today. I will say that the thing that amazes me, and saddens me, is the wide neglect of this great truth that "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." I may be wrong, but many of my brethren impress me as trusting and "glorying" in something other than that in which St. Paul said he put his trust—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." As that great Calvinistic theologian, Turretin, said of the atonement: "It is the chief part of our salvation; the anchor of faith, the refuge of hope. So long as this doctrine is maintained in its integrity, Christianity itself, and the peace and blessedness of all who believe in Christ, are beyond the reach of danger. But if it is rejected, or in any way impaired, the whole structure of the Christian faith must sink into decay and ruin."

I feel that the emphasis which many of our preachers today have placed on what is called the "social gospel" has not borne the fruit which its proclaimers expected. The fact is, the church has exerted the greatest social influence when it spoke least about that influence but when its religious convictions and enthusiasms were at the flood tide. "The Kingdom of Heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." There is a danger that the church should be so immersed in the world and in its labor for the world that it will forget that it is not of the world. If in preaching to the times we forget to preach also to the eternities, we shall have little influence upon the times.

We all rejoice in the increasing sentiment against war, but the attempt to identify the Bible and Christianity with the out-and-out pacifist position is without the warrant of Scripture, and without the warrant of common sense. It has led, too, to much loose pulpit talk about the "destruction of civilization," as if the moral and spiritual elements in civilization could ever be destroyed by war or by violence. Only one thing could ever destroy civiliza-

tion and that is the disappearance of Christian hope and Christian conscience, the distinction between right and wrong. The moment you identify Christianity with any movement, with any particular social theory, you weaken its practical influence in human society.

Disloyalty in the Pulpit

In connection with this I have observed, too, in the pulpit and in Christian journalism an altogether unscriptural and, to my mind, disloyal conception of Christianity and its present and future triumphs. Do we not hear men say that if this or that is not done or adopted, or if this or that evil, such as war, does not disappear, the church, Christianity itself, will disappear? Are we not told every day that if the dictator and totalitarian states gain world mastery, Christianity will disappear? But how disloyal and pusillanimous a point of view that is, compared with that of those who first proclaimed the gospel and built the walls of the New Jerusalem in that wicked pagan Roman world! Because there were dictators and persecutors and idolators, and the worship of the Beast, these men did not say that the church would disappear, but rather that the gates of hell would not prevail against it, and that finally the Beast, the Dragon, the False Prophet and all their hosts would be cast into the lake of fire, and great voices would be heard in heaven saying: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and the kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

In that last ten years of my ministry I have given increasing attention to the subject of divorce and the destruction of our homes. The ravages of divorce must be apparent to every thoughtful minister. If the present increase in divorce is maintained, the day is not far distant when divorce will compete with death as a dissolver of marriages. In my present pastorate I have married just one divorced person, and that one exception was due to my own carelessness in not carefully reading the license which had been left with me the day before the ceremony. I believe that the present ease with which almost any divorced person can be married by Protestant ministers is a shame and a disgrace to the Protestant church.

Return to Evangelicalism

I am glad to note what seems to be a decided swing back from the extreme modernistic position toward what may be described as the conservative or evangelical position. Certainly the modernism of the pulpit today is not so loud, confident, aggressive and arrogant as it was ten or fifteen years ago. In the words of one who was regarded at that time as a chief spokesman and high priest of modernism: "Outgrow the forms if you will. Nevertheless, let it be said that old-fashioned Christianity was not emotionally sentimental and morally easygoing, like much of our superficial modernism. It did, at its best, put granite into the characters of men. . . . There was depth and power in the old-time Christianity that our thin modernism misses. . . . We modernists have often gotten at our faith by negative process. We do not believe this; we do not believe that; we have given up this incredible idea, or that obsolete doctrine. So we pare down and dim out our faith by negative abstractions, until we have left only

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the ghostly reminder of what was once a great religion."

I rejoice to hear an opinion like that. It confirms the opinion of all those who ten or fifteen years ago had enough courage and determination and vision to keep from being swept off their feet by the tide of modernism that was sweeping through the church. At the same time, one will have anxious thoughts when one reads such a book as that by Dr. Betts, of Northwestern University, on *The Beliefs of Seven Hundred Ministers*. The appalling thing in this analysis is to see how the percentage of unbelief leaps rapidly up when we pass from ministers already ordained to those who are still in the theological seminaries.

Doctrines That Trouble

Are there any doctrines of the Christian faith that have ever troubled me, or that trouble me now? Certainly. I would not be human if that were not so. One great cardinal truth of the Christian revelation, future punishment, perplexes me more today than it did in youth. I suppose that is generally so, because of a greater experience of the world's sorrow and woe and suffering and heartache. Yet more and more I see that this is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith. I have read the writings of those who speak about the "larger hope," and who make future retribution a figure of speech; but I must always go back to the fact that it was Jesus himself, the Saviour who took little children up in his arms and blessed them, and who so loved the world as to suffer and die for it, who spoke the most, and the most solemnly, on this.

I can never get away from hearing the deep undertone of the Bible that sounds through all life and history and experience, and tells us that it is a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God." Whatever other men may be able to do, I can never preach, as Beecher said in his Yale lectures he could never preach, "without a shadow." That shadow troubles me more than it once did; and yet it is all the more clearly discerned. I never could understand the infinite humiliation of the incarnation, and the infinite tragedy of Calvary, unless this sublime transaction was in behalf of a soul in desperate straits and under the penalty of sin.

Emphasis on Immortality

In the last ten years I have emphasized more and more the doctrine of immortality and the future life. I feel that all of us, of whatever school of theology, have neglected, sadly and without excuse, this great doctrine. Sometime before his death I read that interesting sketch of his boyhood days by the late Clarence Darrow, *Fairfield*. He tells of his early association with the little church in Ohio and how he visited in his last years the churchyard. This naturally led him to speak of death, and he wondered at the "general conspiracy to keep silent about that event which awaits us all." Certainly in the church today there seems to be a general conspiracy to keep silent about the future life, and about that "honor and glory and immortality" which St. Paul says is the end of our Christian faith. The failure to sound the note of the future life has made much of our preaching secular and commonplace. The less we think and speak about the life to come, the worse will this life become. This has been with me a growing con-

viction of the past years, and more and more I find myself, and with profit to myself and, I hope, with profit and comfort to those to whom I preach, striking the note of the life everlasting. That final article of the Apostles' Creed, is, I believe, the greatest article: "and in the life everlasting." For without belief in that article, the great affirmations of the creed which go before it are left without meaning.

In conclusion, let me first of all express my great gratitude to the three congregations who by their affection and loyalty have encouraged me to proclaim the everlasting gospel. And what shall I say of him who has "counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry," that I might preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God? What a joy and a privilege this has been! Would that I had been more worthy of it. And what a solemn trust the ministry of the gospel is! As Paul put it in his letter to Timothy, "The glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust." May God help us all to be faithful to that trust.

And now, may I be bold enough to ask all the other ministers and religious leaders who have joined in this expression of views, and this confession of thought and faith, in the pages of *The Christian Century*, and all other ministers who read these articles, to join with me in that beautiful prayer which the great preacher, George Whitefield, was wont to utter in his closing years, "O Lord, grant me a warm heart." God grant us hearts warmed by the love of Christ, that we may preach Christ and him crucified.

V E R S E

Christus Victor

"He hath changed sunset into sunrise."—Clement of Alexandria.

SUNSET to sunrise changes now,
For God doth make his world anew:
On the Redeemer's thorn-crowned brow
The wonders of that dawn we view.

E'en though the sun withholds its light,
Lo! a more heavenly lamp shines here,
And from the cross on Calvary's height
Glams of eternity appear.

Here in o'erwhelming, final strife
The Lord of life hath victory;
And sin is slain, and death brings life,
And sons of earth hold heaven in fee.

HOWARD CHANDLER ROBBINS.

Memorials

HE who slaughters his brother
With bravado and noise
Shall be pinned under a dusty stone
Whose legend grows dim with the years.
But he who bends over the broken-hearted,
Humbly sowing the seeds of compassion,
Shall carpet the centuries with flowers,
And color the hills with his name.

EDITH LOVEJOY PIERCE.