

The **WITNESS**

FEBRUARY 3, 1955

10¢



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THE CHURCH IN CHINA TODAY

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THE WITNESS is published weekly from
September 15th to June 15th inclusive,
with the exception of the first week in
January and semi-monthly from June 15th
to September 15th by the Episcopal Church
Publishing Co. on behalf of the Witness
Advisory Board.



The subscription price is \$4.00 a year; in
bundles for sale in parishes the magazine
sells for 10c a copy, we will bill quarterly
at 7c a copy. Entered as Second Class
Matter, August 5, 1948, at the Post Office
at Tunkhannock, Pa., under the act of
March 3, 1879.

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Editorial and Publication Office, Eaton Road, Tunkhannock, Pa.

Story of the Week

First Hand Account of State Of Church in China

FIND CHINESE CHRISTIANS ARE SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT

By Marcus James

★ In order to gain some insight into what is happening in the Church in China today, it is necessary to understand something of the nature of the revolution which is taking place in that country. Involving some 600,000,000 people in an area about the size of Europe, this revolution is on a scale unprecedented in human history. It is in such a setting and against a background of poverty, political corruption and disease—all of which until recently seemed inherent in the Chinese way of life—that events in the New China must be viewed.

The Church in China today, tiny though it is (comprising less than 5 per cent. of the population, compared with 48 million Moslems and 150 million Buddhists) cannot be separated from the sociological milieu in which it finds itself. It was in order to penetrate the curtain of rumor and misinformation that Christian Action decided to send a visitor to China, as well as because of its policy of maintaining relations with Christians in other lands, regardless of the political systems under which they happen to live.

During my stay in China I became convinced of three facts.

Firstly, there is freedom of religious belief and worship in China at present, as evidenced in the attendance at Christian

churches, Buddhists' temples and Moslem mosques.

Secondly, the Church in China is alive and a going concern.

Thirdly, Chinese Christians are bearing their witness in the New China and supporting the People's Government in its efforts for social and economic advancement.

My conversations with Chinese Christians, publicly and privately, in their homes, in discussion groups and in churches, were frank and in the spirit of Christian charity. I was able to raise with them many of the questions which cause anxiety to some Western Christians. It was admitted to me that before the People's Government was established, Christians had expected the worst as a result of some of the reports which had reached

them, and by the extent to which many foreign missionaries had openly pledged their support to the Chiang-Kai-Shek regime. It was admitted by both Christians and Communists that during the period immediately following the setting up of the new government there were excesses on both sides.

Christians in New Society

Some Christians felt that there would be no place for them, as Christians, in the new society. Due to its large holdings of property, the hierarchy's avowed allegiance to the old regime and the political efforts of some of its adherents, the Roman Catholic Church was under severe pressure. There were Communist officials who were inclined to judge all Christians by the pro-Chiang-Kai-Shek activities of some. Moreover, with the Korean War came undoubtedly a certain amount of hysteria.

Church - state relationships today, however, are more cordial. Churches and office buildings of churches are now exempt from taxes. Many of the rumors emanating from Formosa and Hong Kong about the status of Christians in China are without foundation in fact. I met at their work, had discussions and worshipped with no less than four prominent Chinese Christian leaders who had been widely reported in the West to have been either executed or to have committed suicide.

In a land with a history of religious toleration, Christians of all denominations point to Article 88 of the recently published draft constitution which guarantees "freedom of religious belief." They feel that they can and should bear their witness in this new society. This attitude has been encouraged by the energetic and successful way in which the People's Government has attacked such age-old problems as political corruption, starvation and disease, in sharp contrast with the demoralized and corrupt Chiang-Kai-Shek regime which was not averse to the use of terrorism.

This does not mean that Christians have become Communists. I did not meet any who had. Indeed, party membership is not open to religionists. There are, however, some Christians in the government. Concerning the taking over by the state of hospitals and other social services formerly administered by Churches, Chinese Christians express the view that not only are these institutions now administered more efficiently, but as a result of the financial resources of the government their facilities have been greatly extended. They see in this an extension of the welfare state in China—a development not altogether unknown in Western countries—and do not view it with alarm.

Blend of Two Forces

The Church in China today is, indeed, a Chinese Church. The fact that there are no longer foreign missionaries in China is one which distresses many Western Christians. Chinese Christians gave me their interpretation of the situation quite sincerely and frankly. The Chinese revolution is a blend of nationalism and Communism. Nationalism pervades all aspects of Chinese life today, and it would be true

to say that the Christians are no less nationally-conscious than their non-Christian fellow-citizens. Every attempt is being made to help the Chinese to appreciate things Chinese and to recover a healthy respect for, and faith in, the country and its people. It would be difficult to conceive of an institution in China today which did not share this outlook.

Many Westerners are surprised to note the extent to which Chinese Christians have gone in this direction, but a close study of the history of foreign missions in China would hardly justify such surprise. It is true that the advent of modern foreign missions there was not unrelated to military acts by foreign powers against a weak but proud people. "Unequal treaties" and "extraterritoriality"—terms often heard in China today, are reminders of an unpleasant past.

Commenting some years ago on the "humiliating position" of China's semi-colonial status, the late Bishop of London, Dr. Winnington-Ingram, asked: "What would we think ourselves if we found a foreign power occupying the Isle of Wight, or Liverpool largely managed by a collection of foreign nations?" Perhaps the most telling comment in this connection was made to me, in the privacy of his home, by an eminent Chinese bishop who is well known and respected in the West. He said: "It was not until I recently undertook some research on my own into the subject, that I discovered, to my surprise, the very close relationship between certain missionaries and the unequal treaties imposed upon our country." That some of these Westerners were well-intentioned is today regarded as beside the point.

Nor were some of the foreign

Christians free from the taint of racial prejudice and the "keep-the-natives-in-their-place" attitude. I recall another Bishop telling me of a certain parish, where in the "good old days" the white congregation had made it clear that Chinese were not welcome. "Today," he added "the Chinese congregation of that particular parish is one of the most active in our diocese." The glaring differences in salaries and standards of living which often prevailed between "native" clergy and foreign missionaries were apparent to Christian and non-Christian.

A Chinese Church

Many of these grievances rankled within the breasts of Chinese Christians, and when the opportunity presented itself they were ready to make the Church in China truly Chinese. They contend that since the avowed basic function of missions is to establish the indigenous Church (a process which in China had begun well before 1949), it is difficult to see why some foreign missionaries resented so deeply having to leave China, now that the indigenous Church was in existence. Not a few Chinese Christians feel, rightly or wrongly, that this resentment may be due in part to the white man's widely held assumption of his "indispensability."

On the other hand, there are many foreign missionaries who are remembered today in China with gratitude and affection by Christian and even by Communist Chinese, thanks to their self-sacrifice and the extent to which they had succeeded in not only ministering to, but in identifying themselves with the Chinese underprivileged. Chinese Christians sincerely believe that in emphasizing the self-supporting, self-propagating and self-administering aspects of the



MARCUS JAMES

The author of this report on China, received his doctorate in course from Oxford University, and is a member of Christian Action, a group in the Church of England responsible for his visit to China. He was formerly the rector of St. Simon's, Rochester, N. Y.

Chinese Church they are not only making it truly indigenous, but thereby will have a greater contribution to make to the Church Universal. It is interesting to note that many, especially of the intelligentsia, who had drifted away from the Church, are now returning to it as they see it today as a truly Chinese institution.

From my discussions with Christian leaders, and particularly those in the theological colleges, I gained the impression that they felt that the new situation in which they find themselves raises questions for which only Chinese Christians, as Chinese, must find the answers. They do not pretend to have found them all as yet. They ask for our prayers as they assure us of

theirs. Evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit are not lacking. There are definite signs of a Chinese theological movement to which widespread Bible study in church and home is related. Chinese Christians do not regard the regime uncritically. Nor do the Communists. Indeed, the visitor is aware of the emphasis laid on criticism and self-criticism which is practised by all.

Realistic Approach

Throughout my stay in China I endeavored to learn from Chinese believers what is their attitude towards foreign Christians visiting China as guests of the People's Government. They made their positions quite clear. They pointed out that their approach to this question is a realistic one. The

People's Government of China is the government of their country. Visitors can only come with its approval—which is true for all countries. They, therefore, welcome visitors who come under its auspices. For some time yet the Chinese Church may be financially unable to invite foreign Christian visitors to China; but its members will be able to visit other countries under the auspices of the People's Government. Indeed, some have already done so as delegates to international conferences.

They hope that the welcome which they extend to Christians visiting China as guests of their government will be reciprocated when they represent their nation abroad. Thus, as they put it, from both a practical and a spiritual standpoint, they welcome Christian visitors. Indeed, they voiced their reproof of religious bodies which, while complaining of a lack of information about the Church in China, refuse to accept opportunities, when given, of actually visiting it to see for themselves. They ask: "Could it be that their dislike of the government under which we live is greater than their desire for Christian fellowship with us?"

During my visit it became clear to me how ominously similar are the Chinese Christians' approach to nationalism and racialism and that of Christians in other parts of Asia, Africa and the West Indies. Being myself a non-white person from a colonial background I had no difficulty in understanding the experience from which the Chinese spoke. "Communism to the man in Europe," said an eminent ecclesiastic to me, "may mean taking away what he has,

while in the backward areas of the world it means offering him what he does not have." This, to many Western Christians, may be an over-simplification, but to the Chinese man-in-the-street, whose well-being is better today than ever before, it makes sense.

Bishop Bravid Harris of Liberia sounded a welcome note of warning at Minneapolis, when he declared that Christians in the under-developed areas of the world must not align themselves with the

forces of reaction. It is to be hoped that the lessons learned by the Church in China will not go unheeded elsewhere. Meanwhile, the Church Universal awaits the time when it will be practicable for Christians of the People's Republic of China to meet in conferences with others, and share with them their experiences in the cause of peace, justice and righteousness. When that time comes they must be assured the hand of Christian fellowship.

Kellett Plays Leading Role In Prison Revolt

★ A seven-man committee of religious and civic leaders quickly effected a settlement of a revolt by convicts in Massachusetts State Prison.

Five guards held as hostages for three days by four rebellious convicts were released unharmed.

Members of the committee were the Rev. Howard A. Kellett, Protestant chaplain at the prison; the Rev. Edward F. Hartigan, Roman Catholic chaplain; Dr. Samuel Merlin, prison physician; Sumner H. Babcock, president of the Boston Bar Association; the Rev. John J. Grant, associate editor of the Pilot, weekly newspaper of the Boston Catholic Archdiocese; Erwin D. Canham, editor of the Christian Science Monitor, and Patrick J. McDonough of the Governor's Council.

Mr. Kellett, an Episcopal clergyman, and Father Hartigan played a prominent role in negotiations with the convicts from the time the revolt broke out.

Both made frequent trips to the isolated cell block where

the four armed prisoners held the guards as hostages. The prisoners demanded a chance at a getaway as their price for releasing the guards.

The two chaplains and Dr. Merlin acted as intermediaries with the rebels and prison officials. It is believed that the four other committeemen were brought into the negotiations at the request of the convicts.

The committee was summoned to the prison in the early hours of the third day of the uprising. The group conferred with the rebels for two hours, leaving the cell block at daybreak. They returned later in the day and met with the convicts for another two-hour session. Release of the guards followed.

Father Hartigan and Dr. Merlin had reported on the first day of the revolt that one of the convicts' chief complaints was against the Massachusetts penal system under which very long sentences are handed out.

Father Hartigan said the convicts told him the prisoners could retain some hope for the

future under the system of indeterminate sentences used in some states. Under this system, the chaplain was told, inmates can hope for parole if they make progress in rehabilitation.

One of the rebellious prisoners, Joseph Flaherty, has been associate editor of the prison publication, The Monitor. He is known to be a self-taught authority on penology.

On previous occasions, Kellett has criticized prison conditions in Massachusetts, calling them "discouraging."

"I am discouraged," he once said, "by the seeming stupidity of what goes on in the name of correction and penology."

He has served at the Deer Island House of Correction and has called that institution and the state prison here "institutions of idleness."

The 149-year-old prison, long since condemned, has been a trouble spot for many years. The state is building a new prison to replace it.

HARRY LEE DOLL IS ELECTED

★ Harry Lee Dall, rector of St. Paul's, Baltimore, was elected suffragan bishop of Maryland on the third ballot at the special convention held on January 19th. He received 68 clergy votes, with 61 needed to elect, and 69 lay votes, with 59 needed to elect.

SAVANACK MANAGER OF CONVENTION

★ Paul R. Savanack, rector of St. Peter's Church, Honolulu, has been appointed manager of the General Convention, which will be held in Honolulu, September 4-16. The vestry of St. Peter's has released him from all parochial duties except religious services until Convention is over.

EDITORIALS

Articles for Lent

DO YOU know what "the means of grace" are? In most churches the General Thanksgiving is recited together when we thank God for "the means of Grace." However Dean John C. Leffler, dean of St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle, found that most people do not have the slightest idea what they are.

Commencing with our issue of February 24 and running through Lent we fill feature articles by him explaining the various Means of Grace.

We are also happy to announce a new column, Problems of Conscience, by the Rev. Joseph F. Fletcher, professor of Christian ethics at the Episcopal Theological School. This is not merely for Lent but will appear every other week for an extended period. The new columnist is the author of a new book, *Morals and Medicine*, highly praised by reviewers both in this country and England where it is also soon to be published.

Also in the works is a series on Social Action in the Church in recent years. Our managing editor was, for many years, the executive secretary of the Church League for Industrial Democracy. He has been urged by many to write a book on the activities of the organization. Innumerable starts have been made but the effort always bogs down because of the pressure of Witness work. Therefore those who think such a record of social action would serve a useful purpose have persuaded him to do it serially in *The Witness*. In a week or two we will present quotations from letters written by Church men and women who have asked that this be done; Mr. Spofford will tell of a recent experience which prompted him to respond, after which the story will get under way.

Elsewhere in this issue is an order form for those who care to order bundles for Lent. We

hope it will be used by many. We promise on our part to do our best to make the numbers worth the effort in time and money to get them into the hands of your people.

Systematic Violation

IN THE area of our American civil rights, which has been invaded at so many points by Congressional committees and by repressive legislation like the Smith Act and the two McCarran Acts, too little attention has been given to the part being played by the Post Office department. We venture to guess that very few citizens are aware that there is a systematic violation of the right of all people to receive their mail untampered with by either government representatives or private individuals. It is, however, a fact that various Post Offices have arrogated to themselves the privilege of confiscating whatever mail they choose, with the excuse that it may be dangerous subversive material not in accord with our government's present foreign policy.

This entirely illegal proceeding has been permitted to continue because no one, so far, has chosen to test the matter in the courts. The impact of this interference with the citizen's reception of his mail has been uneven. Some localities seem to have been comparatively free from this plague; others have suffered continually from it. We know of cases where individuals are unable to receive publications to which they have subscribed, but which other localities continue to receive without interference or difficulty. This is the present situation. Apparently the department is trying out its policy in selected spots to see if they can get away with it.

If there is not very soon a widespread challenge to this gross violation of our rights, the Post Office department will doubtless spread out their illegal doings to affect more and more of our cities and towns. Protests are conse-

quently in order from all citizens who are concerned with maintaining the American democratic tradition which is already shockingly eroded. Christian folk should be among the first to voice their demands that this

cowardly imitation of Fascist procedures must cease. Let the Postmaster-General hear from you, whether you have suffered yourself or not. Your brethren in many places are already victims.

Can We Believe in Miracles?

By Gardiner M. Day

Rector of Christ Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts

I FIND it difficult to believe that the miracles attributed to Jesus really happened, is a comment which I frequently hear. The speaker expresses a difficulty in which we all share to a greater or less degree. All of us probably on many occasions have found ourselves wondering both what we should believe and what we can believe concerning the miracles attributed to Jesus.

In the first place, let us define what we mean by miracle. I take my cue from the traditional definition attributed to St. Augustine in the fourth century which was that a miracle is "an occurrence contrary to what we know of nature." Note that St. Augustine does not say an occurrence contrary to nature, but contrary to what we know of nature. For centuries Jesus' miracles were simply accepted by Christians as evidence of his divinity and were never questioned. The dawn of our modern scientific era with its increasing knowledge of the workings of nature caused many Christians to question and doubt the credibility of many of the miracles of Jesus. This is of course not true of fundamentalist Christians, who believe in the verbal inspiration of every word of the Bible. Obviously if you believe that every word of the Bible was inspired by God and contains a truth that cannot be doubted, the question of belief in miracles is not a problem. In the intellectual climate of the present century, which has been dominated by modern science, many teachers came to believe that the weight of evidence was against the credibility of the miracles recorded in the New Testament. The usual approach of those holding this view was to explain away the miracle stories in various ways, but at the same time to insist that the greatness or divinity of Christ was primarily due to the superiority of his teaching and of his quality of character.

When I was in theological seminary, this was

a very popular approach. We were told that the first century was a superstitious age in which sorcerers, magicians and other wonder workers were on every hand. We were reminded that the evangelists, writers of the Gospels, had no scientific training. We were further reminded that even in those days they believed in good and bad spirits—in both angelology and demonology—and consequently were prone to attribute the unusual events to supernatural forces.

Three Groups

THE miracles were then divided into three groups. First there were the healing miracles, which were explained on the basis of psychosomatic relations. For example, a paralytic might be cured of his paralysis by first receiving assurance of the forgiveness of his sins and thereby being relieved of the inhibiting guilt complexes that caused the paralysis.

The second group were the nature miracles, such as Christ's stilling of the storm on the Sea of Galilee and his turning water into wine at the marriage at Cana. The first was written off as coincidence. It so happened that at the moment Jesus said, "Peace, be still," the storm abated and the disciples, putting two and two together, believed that Jesus had stilled the storm. The instance of his turning water into wine was believed to have arisen from a misunderstanding of some remark made by Jesus to one of the guests at the wedding which in the telling became exaggerated. Thus a professor in one of our Episcopal theological seminaries in a book written in 1902, after noting the tremendous scientific advances of recent years and citing such things as the invention of the X-ray and the discovery of radium, stated in a section of his book which dealt with the miracles of Jesus, "These discoveries suggest that in time, enough may be

learned so that other marvels will seem as credible as the healing miracles do now." 1

The third group of miracles were the resurrection miracles, including the raising from the dead of the son of the widow of Nain, Lazarus and Jesus himself. These were usually interpreted as being symbolic or explained on a psychological basis that often placed them very close to hallucinations or optical illusions.

In my judgment it is fair to say that one finds these explanations are never satisfactory, as a residue of questions always remain unanswered.

The Historians' Eyes

LET us now look at the miracles from the point of view of the historian aiming to determine whether they did or did not happen. Immediately, we face the fact that the accounts state that Jesus performed miracles. There is no record of anyone, not even his enemies, claiming that the miracles did not happen or that they were faked. Some of his enemies claimed that the source of his power to perform miracles was Beelzebub, the prince of the demons, but none questioned the fact that he did perform them.

Again while the first century was an age in which people believed that unusual events or miracles were due to supernatural causes and magicians and sorcerers were numerous, these facts do not militate so much against belief in the miracles of Jesus as in favor of belief, for of all the wonder workers in that age, Jesus alone stands out as preeminent. He is the only one who is remembered and about whom anything is known. It is also frequently pointed out that our standards differ from those of the people of the first century who were pre-scientific in their outlook. Does it make any difference, however, whether we say that a person who is mentally disturbed is a schizophrenic or a paranoiac, or in the terminology of the first century, possessed of the devil? Whatever name we use does not change the fact of mental disturbance or the fact of the cure or failure to cure. Thus any contention that the miracles did not happen cannot be based on historical data alone for the historical data at hand is evidence in favor of their having occurred.

"But," says the skeptic, "I challenge you to look at miracles from a scientific point of view

and face the question: Were they possible? Doesn't our knowledge of physical science make belief in them impossible?" I believe that this question leads us up a blind alley. The physical sciences formulate certain laws which describe the workings of the natural universe, but surely no scientist would claim that the power to perform miracles was one which physics can measure or describe. The world of physics is continually invaded by non-physical forces. For example, I now pick up this watch. No account based on physical science can explain my action without omitting the most important reason for it, namely, my mind and my will.

St. Augustine was thinking about this same problem when he said, "We say that all portents (miracles) are contrary to nature, but they are not so. For how is that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God, since the will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created thing?" 2 St. Augustine was simply saying that there are always occurrences which we do not understand, but that what seems to be a miracle to us is in reality the fulfillment and expression of deeper powers of God than we understand. From God's point of view, there are no miracles. From our point of view, there always will be miracles, until we have as much knowledge as God has. As this time will never come, there will always be miracles. Alan Richardson, an English theologian to whose careful thinking on this subject I am greatly indebted says concerning this problem, "The concept of miracle involves a healthy admission that our knowledge of the world and its processes is far from complete, just as the denial of the miracle involves a dogmatic claim that we already know all the processes of nature." 3

Our Own View

WITH these general considerations as a background, let us now turn to the question of how we ourselves regard the miracles.

The more you study the Gospels, the more you will find that the miracles are an integral part of the Gospels. They are not an accretion added on to the teaching, but they are a very part and parcel of it. For example, about one-third of the Gospel according to St. Mark is concerned with the miracles. A clear example

1. George A. Barton, *Jesus of Nazareth*, Macmillan, 1922.

2. *The City of God*.

3. *The Gospel and Christian Thought*, Alan Richardson, Oxford.

of how inextricably embedded in the Gospels the miracle stories are is seen in Mark 8:11-31. St. Mark has woven together a miracle story with other teachings to form a parable. You will remember the miracle of the feeding of the 5000 has just occurred. The Pharisees come to Jesus seeking a sign and arguing that he should give them a sign. He replies that no sign will be given to this generation by which he meant that no sign will be given to people in general.

Then he enters a boat and the disciples discover that they have only taken one loaf of bread with them which is not enough and they begin to discuss what they should do. Soon Jesus becomes aware of their discussion. He turns to them and says, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Are you completely blind to what is happening about you? Having eyes do you not see and having ears do you not hear? Don't you remember? Don't you recall how I fed 5000 people and at the end there were twelve baskets of food left over and another time 4000 with seven baskets over? Do you not yet understand?"

There would be no sign for people in general, but God would reveal who Jesus was to those with understanding and insight and faith. Then Jesus and his disciples go a little further and come to Bethsaida. There Jesus heals a blind man. They pass on to the village of Caesarea Philippi where Jesus, turning to his disciples, asks: "Who do men say that I am?" Some of the disciples say, "Why, some people say you are John the Baptist risen again. Other people say you are Elijah or one of the other prophets." He turns to them and asks, "But who do you say that I am?" And then, and it must have seemed almost like a miracle, in a burst of faith and insight, Peter's eyes opened and he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Perhaps this arrangement by St. Mark is accidental. No one can be positive about the intention of a Gospel writer as he wove his Gospel together, but it certainly appears that these incidents are purposely put together by St. Mark as a parable showing, while Jesus gave no sign to the world, he did reveal himself to his disciples and while the disciples were slow to understand, they gradually achieved the faith and insight sufficient to believe. In other words, just as Jesus was able to open

the eyes of the blind man so that he looked out and said, "I see men as trees walking," so he was able to open the eyes of Peter and the disciples so that they recognized that he was the Christ.

To the Gospel writers and the members of the early Church, Jesus' miracles were a natural result of the fact that he was the Son of God. Jesus did not perform miracles to win converts. He continually played down that aspect of his power, but he simply could not help performing miracles, and as a result, many people turned to him and believed. Jesus did not go about declaring that he was the Messiah, but he assumed that the people seeing the works which he did would believe. You will remember, for example, the time that John sent his disciples to Jesus with a message saying, "Are you the Messiah or should we look for another?" Jesus did not reply, "I am the Messiah," but he said to the disciples of John, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them." (Mt. 11:4f RSV)

The Power of God

TO THE first Christians, the miracles were the natural result of the fact that in Jesus Christ was the power of God. So we hear St. Peter in one of the first recorded sermons in the Acts of the Apostles saying, "You know . . . how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all that were possessed by the devil, for God was with him." (Acts 20:38f RSV) Or St. Paul can write to the Church at Rome, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." (Rom. 1:16)

Therefore, when we face the question, "Do I believe that Jesus performed miracles?", we are really facing the question: "Do I believe in Jesus as Lord, who revealed by his life and acts that in him was the power of God?" If the answer is "yes", that he was the Son of God, then the miracles are no longer a problem, or if a problem, they are certainly no more than a secondary problem. If on the other hand, the answer is "no", that Jesus was simply a good man, then it seems to me we face hopelessly baffling problems in an attempt

to try to explain and account for the things that were told about Jesus and what he did.

Now you say, can't we get a completely objective and impartial person to look at this and give us an opinion on these miracles? If you reflect upon this suggestion, you will discover that there is no such thing as an objective or impartial judgment relative to the miracles of Jesus. No one, neither historian nor scientist, approaches this question of miracles without preconceived ideas. Either he has faith, or he does not have faith. He believes or he does not believe. As some people in Jesus' life time came to him, saw him, but went away unbelieving, so others came to him in faith and believed. Similarly today, our answer to the question of miracles is a personal answer. It must be a personal answer dependent upon our faith or our lack of faith.

Mistakes

AT THE same time if we believe that in Jesus was the power of God, that does not mean that we accept at face value every account of the miracles that we find in the Gospel. Each story, each passage in the Scripture, whether it be in the New Testament or the Old Testament, must be judged on its own merits in the light of the best historical and critical knowledge that we have. The writers of the books of the Bible were human beings like ourselves. They made mistakes as we make mistakes. Undoubtedly there were mistakes in transmission. Undoubtedly, misunderstandings were passed down and repeated and sometimes exaggeration and the heightening of particular instances occurred. Such things must be taken into account.

Let me cite a fairly clear illustration of what I mean. You will remember the time when Jesus healed the man possessed of a demon and according to the New Testament story, Jesus sent the demon out of the man who was thus cured into some swine that were grazing nearby. The swine immediately, when possessed of the demon, rushed down the hillside and over a cliff into the sea and were drowned. I think it is a perfectly reasonable presumption that Jesus was dealing with a mentally disturbed individual, and in the process of curing him that something excited or frightened this herd of swine which were near the cliff, so that they rushed away and over the cliff into the sea and were drowned.

The Jewish people who hated swine thought, "Why Jesus has cast the devil into the swine

and so they have all been drowned." I think that we can reasonably and fairly say that this was a matter of coincidence, and the interpretation was a misunderstanding on the part of the writer. But that does not change the basic miracle that Jesus cured the man who was possessed of a devil. He cured the man who was mentally disturbed.

If, however, we do not believe that in Jesus was the power of God, it is next to impossible to explain why Jesus was crucified. Certainly he was not crucified because he went about doing good and preaching a gospel of love, but he was crucified rather because he confronted men with the fact that in him was the power of God—yes, the power to heal the sick, to cast out devils, and to raise the dead and more particularly the power to forgive sins.

He put himself above the law of Moses saying, "It has been said to you before in Judaism, but now I say unto you . . ." He could go into the holy temple in Jerusalem and give commands concerning men's conduct there.

The fundamental question which faces us when we deal with the miracles of Jesus is not the question of whether this particular miracle happened in some particular manner, but rather with the question which Jesus put to the scribes who were criticizing him when he stood before the man sick of the palsy. Jesus turned to his critics and said, "Which is easier to say to the sick of palsy, thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, arise and take up thy bed, and walk?" (Mark 2:9) And then Jesus turning to the sick man said, "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way." (Mark 2:10-11)

Too Much Religion

By Robert S. Trenbath

Rector of St. Alban's, Washington

DID you ever hear someone say: "I had too much religion when I was young and therefore I never go near the church now that I am grown up."? Most of us know what such a person means by this. Probably that he was forced as a child to church several hours a Sunday and the services that he observed were nothing that caught his fancy or touched him in any way whatsoever.

We know what a man means when he says this, but I cannot approve of his saying it for

by such a statement a man is saying two things that he probably hasn't thought too much about.

The first is that the religion he had as a youth was in all probability the wrong kind of religion, if it led him to say this some years later. It was poor Christian education. Exactly the same thing could be said about elementary school and high school if a man says at the age of 30 I had too much school when I was young and therefore I shall never do anything more in my life that smacks of school like reading, or having to think or figure out problems. The answer to such a man is that his early schooling wasn't very good. If it had been he would have been inspired to read widely, think deeply; to study, to explore new fields, to have an open mind.

In both these instances it is to be regretted that such a thing happened and it is terribly difficult to show such a person his own misconceptions about religion. But there are many going the rounds today. For example, most people have a very un-Christian kind of an idea of what God is like. An English writer of mystery stories, Dorothy Sayers, who also writes books on religion, has put this well in a provocative little book called *Creed or Chaos*, when she states the common idea of what God is like thus: "He is omnipotent and holy. He created the world and imposed on man conditions impossible of fulfillment. He is very angry if these are not carried out. He sometimes interferes by means of arbitrary judgments and miracles, distributed with a good deal of favoritism. He likes to be truckled to and is always ready to pounce on anybody who trips up over a difficulty in the law, or is having a bit of fun. He is rather like a dictator, only larger and more arbitrary." So says Dorothy Sayers.

If your idea of God is something like that there are many misconceptions indeed in it. God in his creation of the world did not impose on us conditions impossible of fulfillment. He is not an angry God. He is not arbitrary and he doesn't go around passing miracles just for the sake of doing them. He is faithful to all alike, rich or poor, strong or weak. He is not a policeman who sits in a prowl car just waiting for someone to disobey a law. He likes a good deal of fun. He is a wise ruler who lets us make our choices even though he knows them to be wrong in advance. He hopes

we learn by experience. It hurts him enormously when any of us suffer for our sins, or worse suffer innocently.

So many of us have a kindergarten conception of God in an adult world because we left off finding out anything about him as soon as we could. And unfortunately we have gone on judging him by what little we knew of him years ago, when everything we judge is by the latest standards. Yes, the wrong kind of religion when we were young was bad for it has probably prevented us from knowing much about the right kind. You may not be in this category but perhaps you can explain this to someone who is. If you are in this category, why not do something about it now by going to your church and asking him to help you get straight on what this thing called religion is all about.

What Religion Is

THE second difficulty with the man who claims that he had too much religion when he was young is that he is looking upon religion apparently from a quantitative aspect and not from a qualitative one. You can't have too much religion. Religion isn't a group of facts, a book of informative curriculum. We're trying to get that idea out of our minds. Religion is a relationship with God. That relationship is either good or bad. What a man is really saying when he objects to the quantity that he's had is that he never really had any relationship with God at all, or that the relationship is a very poor one.

Our friends are people whom we got to know years ago. Who would ever say about real friends that he had seen too much of them in his younger years and therefore had had enough of them to last him for his life. These wouldn't be friends at all! Real friends are people with whom we have established a relationship of mutual trust, admiration, respect. We want to be with them. We count on them. We share our joys and sorrows. We like to have supper with them. We enjoy each other's presence.

This is what the Christian feels about his God. Not someone whom he got tired of worshipping years ago. But one for whom he has great trust and confidence. One into whose presence he seeks to come often. One with whom all his happinesses and his setbacks are shared. One with whom he likes to

sit down at table. One with whom he feels an ever-deepening, ever-growing relationship.

Do you remember A. A. Milne's Christopher Robin's poem about Christopher's seeking to find some rabbits? He asks a man who sells saucepans. He has none. He asks a woman who sells sweet lavender. She has none. He asks the man who sells fresh mackerel. He has none. So he goes down to the common, the village green and there he sees his rabbits everywhere. And the poem ends up with Christopher saying:

So I am sorry for the people who sell fine saucepans,
I'm sorry for the people who se'l fresh mackerel,
I'm sorry for the people who sell sweet lavender,
'Cos they haven't got a rabbit, not anywhere there.

I'm sorry for people who haven't any relationship with a living Church for they haven't got a God not anywhere there.

CRISIS OF OUR TIMES

By John H. Hallowell

Professor at Duke University

MODERN man oscillates between extravagant optimism and hopeless despair. As his optimism is shattered more and more by the force of historical events, he sinks lower and lower into the slough of despond. In his despondency he is tempted to strike out against the enemy he cannot identify, whose name he does not know, in desperate action. In his anxiety to escape from a meaningless existence he is tempted to give up his most priceless heritage—his freedom—to any man or movement which promises deliverance from insecurity and futility.

Christianity provides us with a realistic understanding of man which neither overrates man's motives nor underestimates his potentialities. And as a consequence it saves us from oscillating between extravagant optimism and hopeless despair.

If our civilization hangs on the brink of the abyss it is not simply because of the external threats that confront it but because of the internal disintegration of the faith upon which that civilization was originally established. That faith has its roots in Greek philosophy, in Hebrew prophecy, in Roman law and, especially, the Christian religion. Yet we cannot

save our civilization by trying to use Christianity to bolster it.

False Gods

WE HAVE witnessed in recent years in this country a widespread revival of interest in the Christian religion. A large part of this interest no doubt reflects an authentic spiritual experience and as such is a healthy and encouraging sign of our times. But part of it seems to reflect an unhealthy anxiety about our own safety and security. The widespread tendency today to identify Christianity with the American way of life in opposition to atheistic Communism is bound to be self-defeating for in this context it is not God whom we are worshipping but the American way of life. To try to use God to bolster our civilization is not to worship God but to worship an idol. The authentic spiritual element in the twentieth century religious revival is in grave danger of being diminished by the rise of a patriotic pietism.

The central issue of our times is the sovereignty of man. What are in opposition, fundamentally, are different conceptions of the nature of man and his ultimate destiny. Is history, as Karl Marx proclaimed, "the activity of man pursuing his own aims" or is it, as Christians proclaim, a dialogue between man and God? Is it social conditions that determine man's destiny or man's moral and spiritual response to those conditions?

The opposition between secularism and Christianity manifests itself in this — that whereas the secularist wants to transform the world first and man through it, the Christian wants to transform man and through him the world. The point at issue is not whether the world should be transformed but whether it can be transformed without first converting the will of man from concern with self to service to God.

The Christian should understand that the task of achieving a just social order is an ever continuing one and he should be free from the illusion, commonly found among secular minded reformers, that it is possible to establish a social system in this world which is perfect or to reform which is final. He will understand that the political problem is concerned with men as they are, not with men as they ought to be. The Christian will understand that the task of remaking human nature—he would

prefer to say, restoring human nature—is a task for the Church and not for the state.

The Christian understands that no political, social or economic system is an end in itself. All are but means to a more ultimate end and they are good only to the extent that they assist individuals to realize their potentialities as human beings who belong ultimately to God. Some social systems are better than others but none is perfect and none is final. For this reason the Christian will find himself in any and every political system in the position both of a critic and a leaven.

SUNDAY RELIGION

By Darby W. Betts

Canon of New York Cathedral

ONE of the perennial complaints made against Christians is that they tend to worship God on Sunday and do as they please the rest of the week. There is a great deal wrong with Sunday religion when it is thought of in terms of the hypocrite, the opportunist and the exhibitionist. It is impossible to be a follower and devotee of God and mammon, for God is unkind enough for our sakes to demand all or nothing. He accepts no part-time allegiance, he acknowledges no tips out of our abundance, but rather receives only the whole man and a true token of his wealth. God gives all and expects to receive all, and any worship that has as its end any lesser purpose is unacceptable. There is thus a great deal wrong with our common idea of Sunday religion.

But there is a Sunday religion that is entirely right, and the name of this religion is Christianity. Christianity is the religion whose basis is the belief that on the first day of the week—Sunday—the greatest event in history occurred, which we know as the Gospel, the good news, the raising of Christ from the dead. Up until that time our religion had been a seventh-day faith that commemorated the first creation of the world by observing the day that God rested; a day somewhat clouded by the fact that this creation had gone sour, had rebelled against its Creator, had turned its back on its destiny, a sombre attitude that the Puritans wrongly transferred to Sunday.

But after that first Easter Sunday, when a new order of creation had been established by

the Incarnate God's triumph over death, the emphasis shifted from damnation to salvation, from frustration to achievement, from failure to success. And all by the operation of the love of God.

It is this mighty working of God's love for us that permeates and makes vital the Christian religion — the right kind of Sunday religion. Its power and joy won't have worn off even by Friday, the Christian's fast day when we remember the Crucifixion, for another Sunday is soon to follow, when Christ's winning the mighty prize of eternal life is again commemorated.

Under these conditions, it is quite all right to worship God on Sunday and do as you please the rest of the week. If Sunday means all this to you, can you on Wednesday really want to deceive, cheat, insult or dishonor your brother for whom Christ rose from the dead on Sunday? If Sunday means all this to you, can you on Thursday really desire to deny or short-change yourself for whom Christ won so great a victory on Sunday? If Sunday means all this to you, can you ever be content with your family, your friends, your business, or your nation standing for the expedient wrong instead of the costly right on any day of the week, when Christ on Sunday made certain the new kingdom of peace to men of good will?

The lives of countless Christians in every age of our faith stand as shining witnesses to the fact that if you regularly worship God on Sunday, you will want to worship him every day, and his light will shine in your lives the rest of the week. If you aren't doing it, try to make your Sunday worship mean this to you and watch what happens.

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TRINITY SERVICES TAPE RECORDED

★ Noon-hour prayer services at Trinity Church, New York, which are offered daily to busy Wall Streeters and to thousands of other New Yorkers each Friday afternoon by radio, are now available on tape for wider use. The radio and television division of the National Council, in cooperation with the New York station carrying the service, will prepare a series of fifty-two recordings to answer the needs of clergymen and local radio program directors.

The half-hour programs of prayer, music and a short message are conducted in the church by clergy of Trinity Parish, oldest on Manhattan Island. George Mead, organist and choir director, leads

the Trinity Church radio choir during the broadcasts.

The first thirteen programs in the series are now available at a cost of \$5.00 per tape.

TAFT URGES STAND ON MORAL ISSUES

★ The Wisconsin Council of Churches is working on constitutional changes which it hopes will lead to wider membership of denominations.

This was disclosed at the Council's annual meeting. The changes are aimed especially at Episcopalians and some Lutherans. Neither is among the 10 denominations which are members of the council now.

Council members will be asked to adopt a statement of principle and faith to which these groups could subscribe.

Charles P. Taft of Cincinnati told the delegates that

the "walls of the Church must be expanded to take in the entire community."

Mr. Taft, Episcopal layman, also said the Church had a right to speak out on controversial matters involving substantial moral and ethical issues.

He warned, however, that such statements must come as the result of long discussion in which conflicting viewpoints have had a thorough airing from competent sources.

Taft said there was nothing wrong with the view that the Church should concentrate on the salvation of souls.

"But you don't stop with salvation," he added. "You try to do something with it. That means you try to apply it to the daily facts of life where you work."

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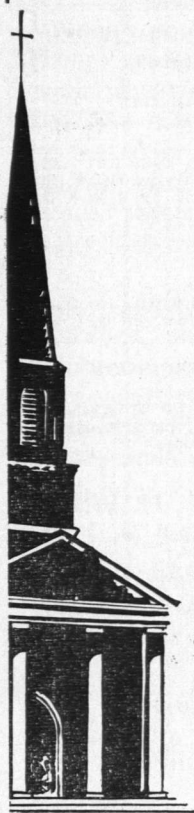
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CONFERENCE CENTER FOR OREGON

★ Bishop Dagwell has announced that the diocese of Oregon has received a house with 57 acres located on the Rogue River. It is the gift of Mrs. Alan J. Lowrey of San Francisco. He said that it will be used as a conference center for the southern part of the diocese as well as a place for clergy to use for vacations.

CARPENTER URGES WISE THINKING

★ Alabama Episcopalians were asked by their bishop to bring "level heads and wise thinking" into their study of the problems resulting from the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in public schools.

The admonition was voiced by Bishop C. C. J. Carpenter at the annual convention of the diocese.

Bishop Carpenter said serious tensions already existing from the court decisions made

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"logical, sympathetic understanding" of the problems involved incumbent upon Episcopal as well as all other Church people.

"Time - weathered social mores are not changed overnight by law," he said. "This is a time for neither frenzied action nor lethargic thinking. No one has the complete answers, which must be found."

PEGGY WOOD HONORED BY THE CHURCH

★ Peggy Wood, state, screen and television star, was presented with a cross by the

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women of the fourth province when the new radio center was dedicated at Atlanta, Ga., January 21. The presentation was made by Bishop Carruthers of South Carolina, who spoke of the work of the actress for the Church.

Miss Wood is vice-president of the Episcopal Actors Guild which, she said, has about 500 actor-members.

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SEES WOMEN'S ROLE INCREASING

★ Women impatient with the role of their sex in the Churches should look back into history, a Protestant Episcopal rector told an audience of American Association of University Women.

The Rev. Vernon E. Johnson of St. Paul's, who is president of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, said that esteem for woman's contributions has grown with Christianity.

"For the past 2,000 years an evolution has been taking place because of Christianity," he said. "Please remember that when you smart because you cannot take part in your church activities to the limit of your capabilities."

Praising the present job being done by women in the churches, he said: "Our churches simply couldn't exist without the women. Almost every new program that is instituted in every church is begun by women's groups."

"A great bulk of the work women do—unfortunately—is money raising. Most of us wish this were not so, for we feel the church budget should be met from voluntary contributions. But in many cases, funds raised by the women carry the weight of the budget."

Mr. Johnson said that the churches which place most emphasis on the sacraments and on religious tradition probably will not accept women as ordained ministers.

UNUSUAL FORUMS IN NEW YORK

★ The Rev. J. L. O'Hear led twenty-five laymen of his parish, St. Paul's, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, to New York on January 22 for a weekend of forums and discussions on the theology of a parish. They

were housed at the cathedral house and besides attending services they sat in on four sessions lead principally by Dean Pike and Canon Johnson.

DEAN PAUL ROBERTS VISITS HAWAII

★ The convention of Honolulu will be held February 11-16, with Dean Paul Roberts of Denver the guest speaker. Another guest speaker will be



PAUL ROBERTS

Mrs. Sumner Walters, wife of the Bishop of San Joaquin, who is a member of the executive committee of the national Woman's Auxiliary.



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DESEGREGATION IS SUPPORTED

★ Members of the bi-racial committee of the National Council, chief advisory agent for the Church's work among Negroes, urged concentrated effort on the part of Episcopalians to implement desegregation in their churches and communities.

The committee, composed of twenty-four churchmen representing Negroes and whites, North and South, clergy and laymen, met in annual session at Seabury House. They gave informal endorsement to a resolution of the National Council issued last December which called the Supreme Court's ruling against segregation in the public schools "just, right and necessary." Members of the committee further urged a "grass roots" program of visual aids, leadership teams and exchange of ideas and methods to bring the Christian principles involved in desegregation to each parishoner.

WE LIVE BY FAITH

By Ruby Lornell

A look at the Christian faith for lay people. Explains religious beliefs in terms of the basic questions men and women ask themselves, such as: Who am I? What Is the Word of God? How does God Work? Politics and the Will of God? Does God Speak Today? \$2.00

HINGES of DESTINY

By Dr. Ralph W. Loew

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PEOPLE

CLERGY CHANGES:

JAMES S. COX, formerly rector of Emmanuel, Baltimore, Md., is now dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral, Honolulu.

ROBERT O. REDDISH, formerly ass't at Christ Church, Shaker Heights, O., is now rector of St. Paul's, Medina, O.

W. HOLT SOUDER, formerly associate rector of St. Paul's, Richmond, Va., is now rector of Christ Church, Winchester, Va.

PAUL M. WHEELER, formerly rector of St. James, Newport-Balboa, Cal., is now rector of St. Clement's, Honolulu.

WARREN LANE, formerly curate at St. Matthias, Whittier, Cal., is now vicar of St. Stephen's, La Habre, Cal., a mission started a year ago.

PETER WALLACE, former Roman Catholic priest, has been received into the Episcopal Church and is now curate at Christ Church, Coronado, Cal.

ROLLO M. BOAS, Canadian, has been placed in charge of St. Timothy's, Compton, Cal., during a six months leave of the rector.

G. H. PRENDERGAST of the diocese of Olympia is now curate at St. Paul's, San Diego, Cal.

R. M. WOLTERSTORFF, formerly rector of the Messiah, St. Paul, Minn., is now associate rector of St. James, La Jolla, Cal.

R. N. PARKHILL, formerly vicar of St. John the Baptist, Milton, Del., is now ass't rector of Holy Trinity, Philadelphia.

E. C. REARDON, formerly associate rector of St. Andrew's, Wilmington, Del., is now rector of Christ Church, Pulaski, Va.

A. ROYSTON COCHRAN, formerly rector of Trinity, Pawtucket, R. I., is now rector of St. Paul's, Natick, Mass.

F. K. JELLISON, formerly rector of St. Paul's, Saginaw, Mich., is now rector of St. James, Woonsocket, R. I.

GEORGE E. CONDIT, formerly rector of St. Matthias, Philadelphia, is now rector of St. George's, Central Falls, R. I.

ROBERT B. PEGRAM, formerly at Grace Church, Jersey City, N. J., is now rector of Holy Trinity, Essex, Md.

MacALLISTER ELLIE, formerly of Montreal, is now at Mt. Calvary, Baltimore.

JAMES S. JOHNSTON, formerly ass't at St. Paul's, Akron, O., is now rector of Grace Church, Willoughby, O.

ROBERT H. WILKINSON, formerly ass't at St. Mark's, Toledo, O., is now rector of St. Paul's, Bellevue, O.

CURT KLEEMAN, formerly ass't at St. David's, Baltimore, Md., is now rector of the Church of the Saviour, Rio Grande, Brazil.

B. WHITMAN DENNISON, formerly ass't at Christ Church, Oberlin, O., is now in charge of St. Paul's, Norwalk, O.

ORDINATIONS:

JOHN A. GREELY was ordained priest by Bishop Burroughs, acting for Bishop Hobson, Jan. 16, at Grace Church, Toledo, O., where he is in charge. He is also chaplain of Toledo State Hospital.

RICHARD C. SMARDON was ordained perpetual deacon by Bishop Powell at All Saints, Baltimore, Jan. 15. He is in charge of All Saints Chapel, Annapolis Jct., Md.

LAY WORKERS:

CHARLES S. SEWALL retired Jan. 6 as senior warden of St. Philip's, Wiscasset, Me., after fifty years of continuous service on the vestry.

ELEANOR M. CASE resigned as a teacher in the Church School of St. Stephen's, Ferguson, Mo., after having served the school in various capacities continuously for over fifty years.

MRS. CHARLES S. ROGERS has resigned, for personal reasons, as director of religious education for the diocese of S. W. Va., effective in June.

JAMES N. GILCHRIST has resigned as comptroller of the National Council. His duties will now be handled by Matthew Costigan with the title of chief accountant.

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BACKFIRE

By BISHOP LOUTTIT
Chairman, Armed Forces Division

The appeal of the armed forces division of the National Church for additional Episcopal chaplains to serve our men in the armed services raises a question, "Why is the Episcopal Church unable to fill its quota of chaplains?" Undoubtedly there are many contributing causes. Chief among them, however, is the fact that this is the responsibility of the entire Church, and that responsibility the entire Church has not accepted.

Of the 88 dioceses and missionary districts in continental United States 43 of them have none of their clergy on active duty as chaplains. As a matter of fact, there are no Episcopal clergy from the state of Virginia serving as chaplains and that state has three dioceses with a total number of 270 clergy canonically resident. The state of Illinois only has one Episcopal chaplain on active duty with the three dioceses reporting 231 canonically resident clergy. The list could be endless. The diocese of Connecticut with 221 clergy only has one man on active duty, and the diocese of Massachusetts with 266 canonically resident clergy, one.

There is of course a brighter side of the picture. The dioceses of Washington and South Florida each have five clergy on active duty as chaplains, the former having 130 clergy and the latter 116. Los Angeles with 231 clergy has four men on active duty, as does New York with 393, Pennsylvania with 269, and Long Island with 216. Upper South Carolina with only 42 clergy also supplies 4 chaplains.

There are 7,000 clergy in the Episcopal Church and we need at all times 150 chaplains on active duty which means one of our every 45 clergy should be in service. The only answer is for each diocese to try to supply chaplains in proportion to the number of clergy they use at

home. Ultimately, of course, every priest under 32 years of age must face the fact that God may well want him to serve the Church in the vitally important missionary activity of the chaplaincy.

WILLIAM J. SPICER
Rector of Trinity, Oshkosh, Wisc.

We would like 100 copies of the Dec. 30 issue containing the article by Bishop Horstick. If none are available may we have permission to reproduce the article.

Ed. Note:—This order has been filled but there was such a heavy call for the issue because of this article that the supply is now exhausted.

MRS. JOHN ROBERTSON
Laywoman of New York

I am grateful to you for the tribute to Bishop Parsons. I know of no greater person in the Episcopal Church. Everything that Bishop Shires said about him is true—and he could have added other tributes to his greatness, I am sure, if space had allowed.



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GEORGE M. CHANDLER
Major, United States Army

It seems impossible but I was one of the original subscribers to the Witness. Back in the Chicago area Frank Wilson and I were boys together when his father was the rector of St. Mark's. Years later I sat as a lay deputy from the Philippines and congratulated the new bishop of Eau Claire.

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BROCHURES

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No. 39. William White's "The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered." Edited by Richard G. Salomon. The Copy, 50c

[A classic document by one who became the second American Bishop and the first Bishop of Pennsylvania. Indispensable to the proper understanding and teaching of American Church History.]

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