

The



LINK

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE SERVICE MEN'S CHRISTIAN LEAGUE



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BRAVE HEARTS
AWAY . . .

CHRISTMAS LETTER HOME

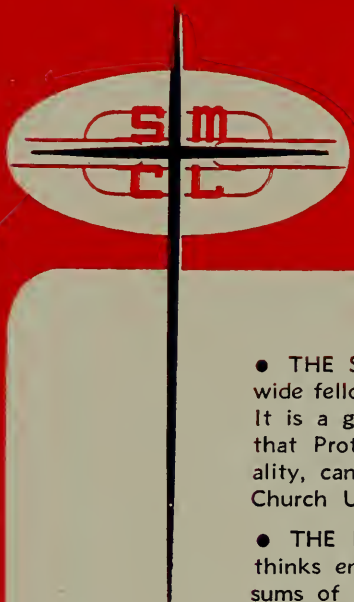
December 1943

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SGT. McQUIRE'S
CHRISTMAS CHILD

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SPONSORING AGENCIES: General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, International Council of Religious Education, World's Christian Endeavor Union. LEAGUE OFFICERS: Dr. William Barrow Pugh, Chairman; Dr. Daniel A. Poling, Vice-chairman; Dr. Luther Wesley Smith, Chairman of Administrative Committee; Rev. Ivan M. Gould, General Secretary; Carroll M. Wright, Executive Secretary and Asst. Treasurer; Dr. F. L. Gibbs, Asst. to the General Secretary; Dr. Clarence W. Hall, Editor.

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CLARENCE W. HALL, Editor



TO *Brave*

THIS afternoon your feet should come pounding up the stairs and doors should slam behind you, and your eager voices should ring through the rooms, warm and

gay because this is Christmas Eve.

But your feet are marching across Italy. Or they are creeping through the jungle. Or walking the pitching deck of a ship. Or tramping out the rhythm of the training camps.

Your voices are too far away to hear.

But if there is quiet where you would have raised a happy clamor, and slow emptiness where your presence would have made the rich hours speed, you still seem close to us this Christmas Eve.

Memories of all the Christmases shared in years gone by rise in our hearts, and we know they are rising in yours.

The ancient, gentle, glorious story of the Saviour's birth floods our souls again, as it always has and always will, with solace for the injuries of living, with reassurance

that understanding and kindness live on forever, with hope for all things fine and joyous.

And we know that the Christ Child's shining story floods your souls, too, with that same glowing peace. And we share that with you, in all the distant places where you are.

It is as if the Star the Wise Men followed on that blue-black night so many centuries ago traced, on *this* Christmas Eve's journey through the heavens, a sort of special wave-band all around the world on which our Christmas memories and hopes can go singing out to you, and yours come back to us.

* * *

The memories we send you are untarnished by selfish repining, miss you though we do.

And the *hopes* we send you—ah, those are as tall as the heavens, as wide as the world! But they are simple hopes and all men understand them—all but those who have set their perverted minds and brutal hands to the hideous purpose of destroying everything that came into the world when the first thin cry rose from that manger into the star-lit night at Bethlehem.

AN EDITORIAL BY RAYMOND KNOTTS IN THE

Hearts FAR AWAY



They are hopes for a world where honesty between nations shall prevail;

Where tyrants shall not climb upon the shoulders of deluded peoples and goad them to the march of slaughter and rapine;

Where treachery shall not loose fire and murder even while false words of friendship fill its mouth;

Where brooding greed shall not whet its secret sword to plunder that which has been honestly earned;

Where men shall be free to shape their destinies in their own lands as well and wisely as they are able, and where in *this* wonderful land the right to go on governing ourselves and improving ourselves and advancing our ideals and realizing our dreams shall stand secure and unchallenged by anyone on earth;

And where, therefore, men can devote themselves to the tasks of peace, and women can be happy in the fullness of their lives, and children can live through their childhood untroubled by the shadows of separation and anxiety that come with war.

* * *

And those are the selfsame hopes that you have gone over the distant horizons to fight for.

You will *win* the fight, and justify the

hopes and bring them all to glorious realization.

And we at home will do our part, gladly and eagerly, to make your victory certain and your dreadful labor short, so that when Christmas Eve comes again your feet shall be on the stair, your voices in the rooms, our lives made rich and whole with your presence.

To all of you, out there on the echoing seas, on the disputed islands and the sandy wastes, on the frozen rim of the Arctic or nearer home in the busy training camps—to all a greeting from us who stay at home:

A bravely Merry Christmas, gentlemen, wherever you may be! A Christmas warmed, as ours is, with memories, and lighted with the sure vision of happy Christmases to come in a world made safe for all the fine and gentle sentiments that Christmas symbolizes.



PLAN YOUR

By

**CORPORAL
LOWELL B. HITCHCOCK**

The Christmas ideal of "Peace on earth" won't just happen. League members should talk about it now

EDITOR'S NOTE: One of the liveliest projects currently being promoted by Service Men's Christian League units all over the world is the discussion of World Order. Meeting in groups large and small—in camps and naval stations, on shipboard and at the battlefronts, these men who are investing their very lives in America's future are gathering seriously to talk about post-war problems. They are insisting that, right in the midst of war, this is the time and they are the men to thrash out the shape of things to come.

The following article is a good sample of the kind of thinking being done by our fighting men. It is the substance of a talk recently given by the author before the Service Men's Christian League at Camp Murphy, Fla.

We hope that other S.M.C.L. units will consider the advisability of sponsoring bull sessions on World Order. It will readily be seen that the League is the ideal medium through which such discussional programs can be presented. **THE LINK** will welcome comments and suggestions on the subject by any and all service men whose vision looks to tomorrow's horizons.

QUITE obviously, this desperate war we find ourselves in must be won before every other consideration. Victory will give us the only chance for the kind of future we desire. But we must realize that winning the war is not the end of the job; it's only the first step. Victory will give us no absolute guarantee that we shall have the world of peace, security and liberty we hope for. We must think and plan and agitate and work *now* for the kind of world we want after victory has been won.

If we do not accept—and accept *now*, even as we fight—a definite personal responsibility for the future, we can have no guarantee that it will be the future we expect it to be. If each of us does not do his utmost to eliminate this detestable instrument of war as the last word in settling international affairs, we shall have no right to shed tears twenty years hence over the needless deaths by war of our own sons and daughters.

We must realize that the reason war is possible is that the world, as set up today, legalizes it. The world is comprised of many nations, each with the sovereign right to wage war. If, however, every nation gives up that sovereign right, we eliminate the potential friction that makes war possible. We must make a united world the sovereign power. This calls for the establishment of a World Federation of Nations, a world government charged with the responsibility of regulating international affairs, and given the authority and power necessary.

What must be the essential qualities of such a proposed system of world organization? For success in the aims we seek, it must have the same fundamental qualities as our own United States. It must represent in equal proportion all peoples of all nations. It must be set up with a system of checks and balances to

POST-WAR WORLD



insure fair play and to preclude the possibility of any one people attaining dominance over another. Then it must have both the power to raise troops to enforce the due settlements of law and the power of tax to finance its own existence.

What rights, as a nation, would the people of the United States have to surrender in dedicating this country to a Federation of Nations? Only two basic rights would have to be given up: (1) the right to wage war; and (2) the right to make foreign treaties. It is questionable that we would be losing even in giving up these things. We have no desire to take the initiative in waging war. And further, the business of handling for-

ign affairs is one of the most difficult to manage in independent fashion. It would more likely be

to our advantage to have international affairs handled in a co-ordinated manner by such a World Federation.

In the meantime, we would retain sovereignty in our national problems; our internal status would remain the same. This concept must be emphasized to overcome misguided prejudice against a system of world organization.

At the same time, we would have gained the greatest thing we seek—the maximum possible security from war and the maximum possible security of life and liberty.

Is it so fantastic to consider such a plan of world organization? True, it will



be a tremendous job to get nations to fall into line behind such a program. It will take a great deal of "selling" to make it a reality. The first step is for the United States to consolidate its own opinion, and then officially proclaim, through the legal channels of government, that we as a nation do advocate and will co-operate in a world organization.

Our Congress could effectively begin working toward the realization of a World Federation of Nations by giving official proclamation to some such set of resolutions as the following:

1. *To express the determination to bring forth world security from this war.*
2. *To recognize a World Federation of Nations as the final goal which offers to the world the maximum security of national life and liberty.*
3. *To invite the other Allied Nations to give official voice to a similar body of resolutions, and to send representatives to a World Constitutional Congress which would draft and propose a Constitution for a World Federation of Nations for the consideration of the Allied Nations.*
4. *To agree to establish the World Federation of Nations at the immediate conclusion of war.*

At no time will the opportunity to bring forth such a world organization be greater than it is at the present moment, while the Allied Nations stand united in battle. Once the imminent danger of a common enemy has been removed, nations will once again tend to withdraw into their respective national shells.

Sir Stafford Cripps of England says: "The progressive forces failed to strike while the iron was hot. During the time of war, when the feeling of co-operation is still strong, is the moment to concert



Cpl. Hitchcock

common action for the period after the war. To wait until hostilities have ceased, till the binding force of the common danger is no longer present, is to miss the chance of common agreement."

If, then, we as service men have something definitely worth while to say on post-war issues—not for selfish purpose, but

for the common good of the nation—we should say it, and say it now. But, asks someone, have we a chance to express our views? That, it would seem, depends more on us than on anyone else. Certainly we, above all others, have the *right* to express significant opinion as to what shall come out of a struggle in which we are not only ready to risk but to give up our lives. Unquestionably it is society's moral obligation to give us the chance to speak out and then to seriously consider those views in setting up the post-war world.

However, if we in the service take no initiative in pressing our claim to the right to be heard, it is doubtful that our voices shall be heard or even our opinion sought. There is little chance that Congress, for example, will consult us on what we think of the matter. But is there anything hindering us from taking our views to Congress? *We must ask for the right to speak, and insist that the mechanics be set up by which we may be heard, relative to our own post-war aims.*

Let us then set down a suggested set of resolutions which service men might well adopt as individuals or as groups:

We, as service men of The Armed Forces of The United States, do hereby resolve:

1. **To express the determination to do our utmost towards eliminating war from the world of the future.**
2. **To recognize a World Federation of Nations, backed by a world police force for the power**

of enforcement, to offer the greatest hope for future world security.

3. To recognize that, while winning this war must be our primary aim, it is no less imperative that the international political course for the future be set now while the Allied Nations are united in common cause; and in this recognition to endorse the suggested plan of immediate Congressional action.
4. To prevail upon our country and our Congress to set up *the mechanics whereby service men may speak, and then seriously to consider the service men's views.*

If we are to have maximum security and liberty for our future, we must seek to have established, as a result of this tremendous war effort we make, a form of world organization along the general lines proposed. But such a result will not just happen. We service men must accept personal responsibility to make it happen—just as we have accepted a personal responsibility for the victory that will make our new world possible.

In meeting that responsibility we must find the means of publicly and unitedly expressing our views as service men. The Service Men's Christian League provides a channel for the free discussion and formulation of our views within the service. Those views, by some means, must be got to the "outside." The means could be most readily and forcibly provided, perhaps, by the War Department, which could set up the necessary mechanics as a part of the orientation program now in existence. But, however it is done, we must insist that the necessary channels be provided through which we can speak unitedly.

For it is our future, as much as that of our prolific speakers in civilian life—even though we have less chance of being here to live in that future—that is at stake. Further, we are the ones who make that future possible. Let us vow renewed determination to make it the best future of which we are capable!



CAPSULE RATIONS FOR YOUR MENTAL KIT-BAG

•

Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid not dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.—II Chron. 20:15

•

He who is careful with the spark will not have to battle with the flame.

•

Study the Bible to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be righteous.—*Earl Riney*

•

He that keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep.—Psalm 121:4

•

Brightening up the life of someone else puts a fresh shine on your own.

•

Dare to do your duty always; this is the height of true valor.—*Simmons*

•

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.—Rev. 2:10

•

While you are away, we will be with you; in all your wanderings we will be thinking of you; in your time of loneliness and danger, we will be praying for you; when you march we will march with you; when you come back, we will welcome you home and the reunion will bring peace to our hearts.—*From a church calendar*

SERGEANT McQUIRE'S

Christmas Child

By
WILLIAM
L.
STIDGER

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following story is an account of an actual happening. It took place in the first World War among our troops stationed in Siberia. Lieutenant Longist, who told Dr. Stidger this story in Manila, where they met, is now a banker in Texas and has two boys of his own in the service. Alex, the little Russian boy in the story, was later taken to Manila by this company of American soldiers and finally adopted by a Major, who brought him to the United States where Alex eventually took out his citizenship papers. Alex would be in his early thirties now. He may be also in the armed forces. If he is, Dr. Stidger would like to hear from him.

We like the story, not only because it is a good Christmas yarn, but also because it literally throbs with the spirit and attitude of the typical American soldier in Africa, Sicily and Italy in his kindly attitude toward the children of occupied nations.

The American press is full of pictures and stories of how the American soldiers love the little children of these nations; and how those children love them. We see them sitting in jeeps, being fed chocolate and rations, held on the brawny shoulders of American boys, gathered around them in village streets, learning to play American baseball. This typical, spontaneous spirit of the American soldier will do more to build friendship for us than anything else that happens in the American occupation organization.

SERGEANT McQUIRE picked up little Alex one morning when the temperature in Khabarovsk was sixty below. He found the little Russian boy, whose parents had been killed the day before, huddled in an American box car, trying to keep from freezing.

"Come on, ye little tyke! What do ye happen to be doin' in this old U. S. A. box car? Ye'll freeze, begorra! Come out o' there, I tell ye!"



And Alex, being a lost, lonely, hungry little boy in any language, wept as he crawled out from under a pile of straw. He didn't understand much of the tough Sergeant's words. But he did understand his tone and the smile on his face.

"That cryin' got me goat fer fair!" the Sergeant told members of his company later. "I didn't know what to do, so I give him a cigar—that bein' me only luxury at hand, and me fergettin' that he was only a little tyke and it's not bein' an appropriate gift fer a seven-year-old."

Alex appeared as a godsend, for it was lonely up on the "railroad patrol" for

Company "G" at Khabarovsk in Siberia.

"His presence bucked the whole company up," said Lieutenant Longist who told me this story in Manila. "That gang of ours hadn't any more morale left than a cat has hair after it has jumped through a fire. But the Russian kid acted just like a woman on the gang's morale. They got to keeping the place clean. They shaved regularly. I heard the Old Top giving them their orders: 'We've gotta look decent if we raise Alex up right, and youse guys are responsible fer 'im. He's gotta learn to be clean, and how can he learn to be clean if we live around this camp like a lotta bums? It's wimmin that usually makes a lot o' bums like you guys dress up—but we ain't got no wimmin here, so you gotta clean up and shave fer Alex's sake. Get me?'"

They "got" the Old Top, all right, for he was known as "a hard bird." And the gang did clean up—so much so that one evening one of the fellows came to mess with a white collar on. When the rest of them started to kid him, one look at the Old Top stopped that.

"I'll clean up on the first guy in this outfit that slings any cold water on any reforms that get started from now on! The more reforms there is in this outfit, the better it will suit, on account o' the kid there!"

"**AND** another thing!" added the Sarge. "All o' this damned cussin' around here has got to stop. If we're gonna teach Alex any English, it's gotta be *good* English. Swearin's a helluva way fer a company of good American soldiers to go about raisin' a Roosian boy. Only them that don't know good English cusses! It ain't good fer Alex, and there ain't to be no more of it. Get me?"

Again they "got" the Top Sarge, and from that day on swearing in the presence

of Alex ceased—or almost so. Now and then somebody broke over. But then Alex didn't understand English yet, so that gave them time to discipline themselves gradually.

First they taught Alex to count—"one, two, three, four!"—and each evening they gave him an examination in front of the whole company. Then they would tuck the kid into bed under a roll of Army blankets.

BUT one night a big raw-boned boy from the West suddenly remembered something and said: "Hell, this ain't no way to raise a kid. He ain't said his prayers a damned night since we got 'im. If he had a mother, even a Russian mother, she'd be teachin' 'im his prayers."

"Well, what'll we teach 'im?" asked the Top Sergeant. "I'm a Catholic, and I don't know nothin' but Latin prayers, and God knows its hard enough to teach a Roosian English without introducin' no new language now."

"All right, let's teach 'im that now-I-lay-me-down-to-sleep stuff. How does it go?"

There was a long silence. The wind whirled a little snow under the barracks floor. Then Ben Phillips spoke up: "Maybe Johnson here can help us out. He used to have a kid of his own."

Johnson scowled, then walked over to Alex's cot, and there in the stillness Alex was taught to kneel and say: "Now I lay me down to sleep." Later on he tacked on some specific requests, mentioning names as he learned them: "And God bless Mister Johnson, and Mister Phillips—and Mister Top."

"It was the sweetest music I ever heard!" one of the company said to my friend, Lieutenant Longist, who told me this story. "God, it sounded good to hear that Roosian kid askin' God to bless me. I always waited, tremblin'-like, till the little rascal

got to my name, fer fear he would forget it! He did forgit it one night and it made me feel bad all the next day!"

"Then came Christmas," said the Lieutenant, "and such a Christmas you never saw on land or sea. A sack of mail came, along about December first, and there were American school books in it. They would have been ridiculous if we had not had Alex. But now we knew just what to do with them. They were full of pictures. There was some candy, chocolates, bonbons, nuts—all mixed together. We made Alex hang up his stockings, and then when he got to sleep we all turned ourselves into Santa Clauses. The men fought to have a part in the decorating of the tree.

WHEN Alex got up the next morning he was about the happiest boy you ever saw. He laughed and he cried over the presents and candy. The event probably awakened Christmas days in his own home. And not only Alex laughed and cried, but some of the rest of us did too. It was about the happiest Christmas I ever spent."

Then the Lieutenant told me the denouement of that Christmas story. It happened on Christmas night. Alex had had a glorious day, laughing, weeping, playing. When it was time for bed that whole American company gathered in the barrack's room where Alex slept. Then the kid popped a surprise request. Turning to McQuire, he said in his broken English: "Mister Top, will you tell me de story about de star and de shepard, and de song and de stable and de cows and sheep and mother and de leetle boy in de manger? Huh?"

The Old Top blushed, stammered, looked around at his men, then scowled: "If any guy laughs, I'll bust 'im!"

Phillips said with a grin: "Christmas isn't the time to be busting anybody, Sarge! Not the Christmas spirit, you know."

"I know, and still nobody's goin' to laugh. Get me?"

They "got" him again, and the Old Top got the Bible and, sitting down on the edge of the youngster's cot, laboriously read the story of the first Christmas. During the reading only the drone of the Sarge's voice was heard. Each man was thinking of home. It was their second Christmas away from home. And home, thousands of miles from Siberia, came very close.

When the story was finished, Alex crawled over the Sarge, got out of bed and knelt down to say his, "Now I lay me." And when he came to the end he didn't neglect to add words they all were listening for: "And God bless Mister Top, and Mister Phillips, and Mister Johnson" and all down the line, not forgetting a single one of the foster-fathers.

Then he jumped up from his bed and, with a new burst of interest, said: "Now tell me a story, Mister Top!"

The Old Top, who felt he'd had about all he could take for one day, tried to argue Alex out of a story, insisting that it was time for him to go to sleep, for the bugle would be blowing pretty early.

"Ah, tell the kid a story, Sarge," spoke up a soldier, and the others joined in.

THE Old Top saw that he was licked and said: "I don't know none. But, wait! There's a book that come in the Christmas mail sack with all that candy. It's got stories. I've been readin' some of 'em myself." He disappeared in the direction of his cot and came back with a book in hand. "A guy named Bret Harte wrote this," he said, flipping the pages. "Here's one called 'The Luck o' Roarin' Camp.' It's about California, and a gold minin' camp. And in that camp a chippy had a baby and then died and there was nothin' fer them miners to do but adopt that baby." He paused and looked up. "Hey, that's

some-thing like us and Alex, ain't it?" he exclaimed.

So the Old Top read that crowd "The Luck of Roarin' Camp," and when he came to this line, "And the damned little rascal wrestled with my thumb," Johnson got up and walked out into the night. Later Ben Phillips saw Johnson standing on a little hill silhouetted against the half light of a Siberian night, looking far off

toward America and up into the stars of Christmas. He never forgot that sentinel-like figure silhouetted against the night.

By the time the Sarge had finished reading the story, Alex was asleep. And for several minutes afterward the men sat very silent. When a voice finally spoke, it was the Lieutenant's. He said, softly: "I guess the Sarge is right. Alex is our 'Luck O' Roarin' Camp.' Eh, fellows?"

"How Do You Square This with Religion?"

By Chaplain G. O. Lightbourn

(Chief Chaplain Overseas with Canadian Forces)

COMING from a briefing not long ago—a briefing at which some city in the Ruhr had been indicated as the target for the night—the Group Captain of the station turned to me and said:

"Padre, how do you square this with your religion?"

I think the answer to that question is clear.

When you drop your bombs on some target in Germany, there are people down below. We know that. But you are not aiming your bombs at them, not at this or that person. You are aiming your bombs at a system, a machine.

You are seeking to paralyze that machine by striking it in some vital spot. You are crippling an armament factory; you are destroying some base; you are shattering an important railway junction; you are blasting some concentration.

You are doing all this with careful aim, with glorious heroism, and, according to all reports, with great effectiveness.

All because you are determined to destroy this devil's machine, the purpose of which is to perpetuate and propagate a lie.

The ancient Greeks used to say the worst calamity that could fall upon men was

what they called "the horror of great darkness."

Hitler would plunge the world, as he has plunged his own country, into this "horror of great darkness." Deceit, lust, hatred, cruelty—these things that decent people have always looked upon with abhorrence, Germany has called good, and taught them to her children.

The machine that has been erected to force such a creed upon the world must be destroyed.

There are human cogs in that machine, human slaves operating it. The bombs that shatter the machine will kill some of them. But it is better that they should die than the peoples of conquered Europe should continue to writhe under the heel of the oppressor. There are worse things than death.

It were better for German children that they should perish than that they should live to be corrupted, and to believe and practice a lie—the living tools of Nazi depravity and vileness.

It is part of our heritage as men that we are called upon to do that which is both terrible and glorious.

—Reprinted from "Canadian Churchman."



A Service FOR THE JAPS

*It happened last Easter, but the
idea's good for Christmas as well!*



By PVT. CLARENCE DOBRETT
U. S. Marine Corps

THIS is about an Easter observance that was probably unique in history. I had been acting as spare-time assistant to our chaplain, a Methodist parson named Best, and for Easter Day we had as our guest the Pacific Fleet chaplain, Captain Truitt. Over the week-end we also had the valuable help of a Marine band under the baton of Master Sergeant Joseph Sharglass.

With all this talent, we planned a very ambitious program of Easter exercises, with a choir of hymn-singing sailors and a procession of first-class vocal soloists.

After everything was scheduled, it occurred to Chaplain Best that we ought to provide an Easter service also for our enemy guests, a stockade full of Japanese prisoners.

"Let's give them a concert," suggested Chaplain Truitt.

The idea wasn't received very enthusiastically by the men at the post. We had just heard via radio the news of what the Japanese government had done to some of the fliers of Jimmy Doolittle's Tokyo raid.

Eventually, however, we persuaded Sergeant Sharglass and the choir singers

to do their part of the program. Sharglass was a bit fidgety about it. "I can't quite analyze my own feelings," he said. "It's a weird experience—being asked to entertain enemies. On the whole, I'd rather shoot Japs than entertain them."

I suppose everybody has the same difficulty when it comes to actually applying the principles of Christianity.

When the time came, there were no absentees. We lined up under the niauli trees, just outside the barbed wire of the prison stockade, with the two chaplains in front and our band and choir standing in formation behind them. Bringing up the rear was a big crowd of spectators, most of whom didn't quite approve the performance but were determined not to miss any of it.

An interpreter explained to the prisoners that we proposed to offer them a concert of American music, appropriate to Easter Day, an important religious holiday in America. The one Christian among the Japanese prisoners stood apart from the others. He had previously received Communion according to the Methodist rite from Chaplain Best.

The prisoners mostly acted with indif-

ference to the announcement of our concert. They didn't crowd around the barbed wire. Some of them acted as if they hadn't heard the announcement, going on with whatever they were doing at the time.

The chaplains felt that the program should not be exclusively religious, but merely a general one which would express the joy of Americans in an important religious holiday. So the band opened the program with some familiar folk songs, such as "Old Black Joe," "My Old Kentucky Home," and "The Little Brown Church in the Vale." The American spectators naturally warmed up to this music, beating time with hands and feet. A few of the Japs caught the spirit and began to do likewise, a bit hesitatingly. But most of the prisoners continued to stare into the distance and act as if nothing that was going on concerned them in the slightest.

After the band had done its overture, the sailors' choir followed with a fine assortment of Easter hymns. These were easier for the prisoners to listen to, apparently, although they made no response except some quiet applause after each one.

"We're certainly getting them warmed up," I whispered to the chaplain.

Hogan Gets a Big Hand

Our next offering was a solo by Chief Pharmacist's mate John Hogan of Philadelphia, a lantern-jawed veteran of many years on the seas, and a bass singer well known in the Navy. Hogan's specialty is the yodel, which he does better than any Swiss mountaineer I ever met. He sang "Sleep, Baby, Sleep," and then went into his yodel. The prisoners had evidently never heard anything like this. They snapped right to attention. When he finished, they shouted their appreciation and asked for more. One of the prisoners, a sailor who had been so badly injured

that both his hands were in splints, clapped the wooden splints together, oblivious to the pain that this action cost him.

I don't remember what Hogan's encore was, but it was even better than the first number, and the yodeling part of it was longer and more intricate.

"What are they saying about him?" I asked the interpreter.

"They are saying that he is as good as the birds of the forest," he replied.

Wanted More Yodeling

There was a brief pause in our program while I passed out chocolate bars to all the prisoners. They crowded up to the wire now and munched chocolate eagerly, while between bites they asked for more yodeling.

Hogan stood between the two chaplains with an odd look on his face. He didn't quite know whether to be pleased or offended at the plaudits of his enemies.

"This is the first time I ever condescended to yodel for a bunch of Japs," he told me, when I came back with one leftover cake of chocolate that I had saved for him. "I've done it for Chinese and Filipinos many a time, and it always lays them in the aisles, but the way these Japs act you'd think they'd just discovered a new continent!"

The band broke in on our conversation with a couple of numbers. The prisoners were all attention now. Every one of them had abandoned his pose of indifference.

Then a sailor with a nice tenor voice sang "White Christmas," and the band followed with "Japanese Sand Man." Our prisoners had evidently heard this one before, and some of them began to sing it.

Our choir rendered a couple of Scottish songs—old Harry Lauder favorites—and the prisoners joined in on these, in unmusical, high-pitched voices that had very little to do with the tune our boys were singing. They sang Japanese words, of

course—probably the Oriental equivalent of tum-de-da.

One of the prisoners, who spoke a little English, came up to the wire and asked for "Anchors Aweigh." Then the Christian prisoner wanted "Ave Maria."

The program ended with "The Star-Spangled Banner." All our men, of course, stood at attention. And the surprising thing was that every Japanese prisoner did too. There were two or three of them who even mimicked our salute to the extent of gluing their eyes in the formal military manner on the American flag which waved proudly from a bamboo

flagpole in a little clearing on our right.

We all left that service with strangely mixed emotions. I'm not quite capable, myself, of pointing out exactly what those emotions meant. Most of the boys felt the same way, but we haven't yet got to the point of talking much about it.

I only know that I'm glad we put on that program of music for those prisoners, and I think they have had a more kindly feeling toward us since we did. It would be wonderful to be able to win these people over to our way of life, to our way of thinking, to our way of worshiping. It's not an impossible ideal!

Victory Without Hate

By WILLIAM H. LEACH in "Church Management"

THE Christian believes in justice but he deprecates hate. He will have no part in the propaganda that Americans must learn to hate their enemies more before they can secure decisive victory. He refuses to hate the enemy soldier in uniform, the soldier's wife and the soldier's children. He wants to win the victory, and as soon as peace is declared will carry food and clothing to aid the sufferers in the enemy countries.

It is at this point that our Christian philosophy takes issue with paganism. The Christian fights because he believes in justice, not because he hates.

The Christian wants the best possible world for all people. When into the world there comes a threat to the security and freedom of the peoples, he believes that the threat is a menace of society. It should be curbed. When it goes to such a length that the only possible way to destroy it is through war, he accepts war. He accepts not because he hates, but because only through war can a menace to society be destroyed.

We question the assumption that the best soldiers are those who hate. *The best soldiers are those who believe that they have a divine commission to destroy a menace to society.* They are not sadists; they take no delight in killing; they accept the disagreeable task as the only way to secure freedom in the world. They disagree with the pacifists because the latter do not feel that the will of God will ever command them to a service as distasteful as this. The Christian soldier does not so limit the will of God.

We like to think that the Christian soldiers of the past—and they have had a part in most wars—were moved by a sense of mission rather than hatred. We are sure that in every moral conflict there have been those moved by this motive. Woodrow Wilson coined a war cry unequalled by any of the present conflict when he said: "The world must be made safe for Democracy." Had the same strength and zeal gone into post-war planning that went into the conflict, we might truly have such a world today.

Notes

TO SERVICE MEN

NOW, if I say "Merry Christmas" to you, men, for Pete's sake don't throw anything! For I'm talking now to the thousands of you who won't get home for Christmas, thousands of others lying prone and wet in foxholes, standing watch on pitching decks, crawling, miserably raw and home-sick, into hard military cots thousands of miles away from loved ones.

But listen a minute, you gals and guys in the service of your country and a mighty cause: It isn't the merry Christmas TODAY that counts, it's the merry Christmases you are making possible for yourselves tomorrow, and for the children's children of the entire civilized world. Worthy stakes, eh? Worth a bleak Noel or two—right?

What's more, here you are, sticking your gallant young necks out in a cause so big, so moral, so redolent with future dividends, that you're bound to be proud, all your lives, that you can stand the rather bitter gaff of this particularly barren December 25th.

So I give you today another type of Christmas tree: the tall, resplendent Cause you're serving, looped with the white of Sacrifice and the blood-red of Courage. Beads of deep and inarticulate Patriotism shine like flashing gems against the evergreen of Idealism and implacable Duty. Memories of other Christmases glow like tapers against the brilliant backdrop of happy Christmases to come.

Topping this mighty tree, blazes a silver star—the star of Hope. And if you—in your foxhole, or walking some bitter outpost half a world away, or dipping your wing-tips in the black and dangerous night—will but listen hard enough, you will hear, I feel sure, the mighty movement of an old, familiar song. It weaves in from every side and mounts in beauty to the skies. Great cathedral organs, on this side of the water, blend with the voices of little groups throughout the world, who stand prayerfully breathing the words of "Silent Night, Holy Night." That carol clears with a clarion bound all concentration walls, leaps the obstacles of aching miles and promises you, in very truth, a "Merry Christmas" waiting for you right around the very next corner.

May God bless you all!

—Mayo Cornell

RELIGION IS



Exciting!

I HAVE just returned from two years of war on all battlefronts. Three times I have faced death. I have seen the hell that is war—but I have also seen how much good has come to thousands of men in service. They didn't go into this war for gain. Some came in because they had to, some because they preferred to die on their feet than live on their knees, others because they couldn't endure remaining behind the lines, and yet others because they felt an obligation toward their tortured allies.

I don't know the special reasons that brought you, who are reading this issue of *THE LINK*, into the service. I do know that most of you will leave the service taller than when you came in. Your war service can make or break you.

This is a crisis in your personal life, even as it is one of the grimmest crises in history. The Chinese combine two characters to make the word "crisis": *danger* and *opportunity*. To you the war spells "danger," if you are not big enough to meet the situation; but it can spell "opportunity" if you can channel and use the wonderful experiences which will be yours.

You have come from crowded city streets, from the wide open spaces, from remote mountain homes, from office and factory. You were ordinary, everyday men—ciphers of society. But in the service you stand for something! You are a member of a great team—your division team, your ship's team, your company team, the fleet team. You will learn the spirit of

By Chaplain
**MAURICE M.
WITHERSPOON**

*District Chaplain,
3rd Naval District*



true team play—loyalty. You will learn to draw on all the hidden resources of your being. For you are an integral part of a great company of your countrymen who are aiming everything they have and are toward a common goal.

As you look into the face of death, you will learn the true meaning of real life. You will feel in every fibre of your being that there is a God who watches over you and who is interested in bringing you back safely. When the bombs burst around you, your thoughts will turn to God.

I have only recently returned from Attu, where the Japanese screamed as they attacked, "*We die, you die!*" On that island, the most westerly in the Aleutian chain, I saw men cast off all dross and pretense when they got down to the actual terrific fighting. On that island I saw

more real comradeship, brotherly love and profound concern for others than many men witness in a lifetime.

There, almost without exception, men's thoughts turned to God when the going got tough. Men said their prayers for hours when pinned down by machine-gun fire. An old-time sergeant claimed to have prayed continuously for 18 hours, huddled in a foxhole, while a Japanese machine-gunner shot the top off the hole's protection.

Soldiers who didn't know how to pray asked the men next to them to teach them the Lord's Prayer. They went into the charge repeating over and over again, "Our Father, Who art in Heaven . . . Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done." One man could remember only one phrase from the Bible, and all through the battle kept on saying, "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

But, what is more important, much of this religious feeling stayed with the men after Attu was captured, and some of it, I feel, will stick for good. These men found that "Religion is exciting." They will come back taller spiritually than when they went away.

Although you may not think in such terms about religion now, you'll be interested and excited about religion before you return. You will have a higher regard for the spiritual values of life. You will have come closer to God. Adelaide Hawley, in a recent broadcast, told of a bowling and supper party she had given for some Allied soldiers. The conversation drifted to religion and post-war dreams. The talk cre-

ated real excitement. A New Zealander took off his ring and showed Mrs. Hawley the inscription, "*Kept by the power of God. Mom and Dad.*"

No, you are not alone. "God is my copilot," wrote one of our flyers. Nor are your families alone when you go away. They are in God's care, and that will give them confidence and comfort. If I were you, I wouldn't worry too much about leaving them behind. They will learn to accept responsibility and will become more self-reliant.

Yes, we have faith and belief in ourselves and our cause. We can fight because we feel we are not alone. Eve Curie, in "Journey Among Warriors," inspiringly writes of nation after nation taking up arms for freedom, until the upsurge will smother the enemies of democracy. We have that inner strength that comes from working with God to establish a world where men will be free.

"Churchill's and Roosevelt's tastes are simple," observed a wit, "they like the best." After all, that is just what religion is—the best. Can you catch the excitement of the struggle in which we are engaged? We want to give men everywhere the right to be free, in a world that will guarantee freedom of speech and religion, freedom from fear and want.

That aim, fellows, is fundamentally religious. At the base of it is the will of God. In having given yourselves to this high task, you are co-operating with the Divine. If that isn't exciting, then there is no excitement, no thrill, to life!

What's Good Enough for MacArthur . . .

GENERAL MacARTHUR, laying a hand on the Bible, told a Queensland official of the Commonwealth Council of the British and Foreign Bible Society: "However tired I may be, I never go to bed without reading a portion of this Book."



PRAYER OF THE

Wac



By Private Margaret E. Tinsley ✓

Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia

LORD, WE PRAY for courage and endurance to complete with honor whatever tasks shall be our privilege to perform to speed the end of war and to assure the permanence of peace.

Consecrate this opportunity to give to our country our knowledge, our skill, and our special training. We pray that when each duty comes to us we shall be prepared to meet it with success.

O Lord, a world grown mad with hatred is so great a human tragedy that to understand is difficult. Help us to maintain our staunch faith in a final triumph of the high desire of Thy people everywhere—a world of peace with honor because of justice to all.

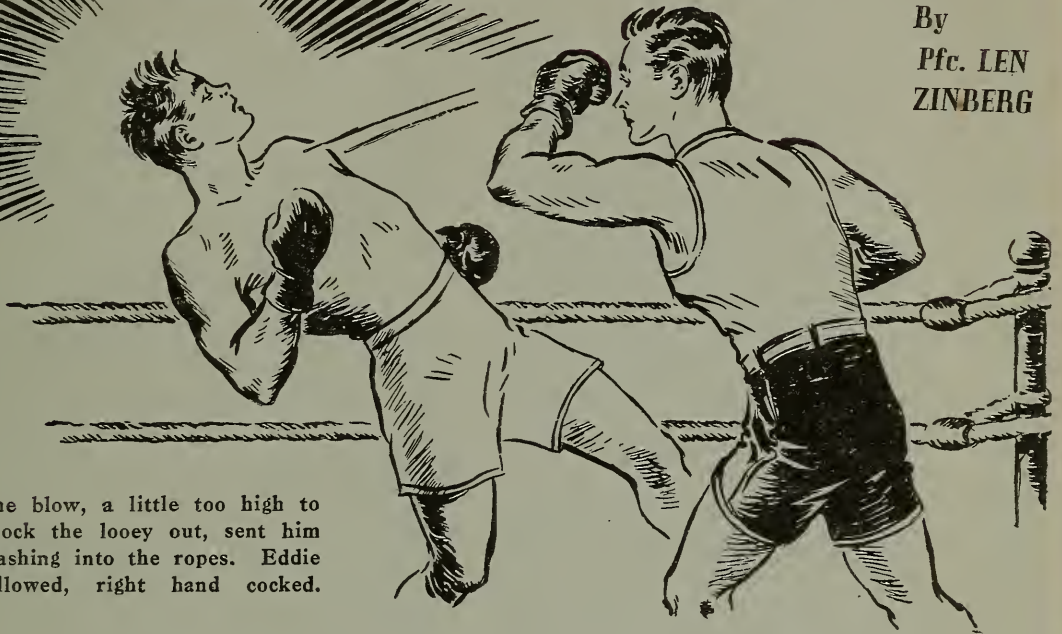
Our hopes are high, our spirit fine. We count no sacrifice as great because our goal is greater.

Father, keep close to us. This is the prayer of the WAC.



"That's FOR THE BIRDS"

By
Pfc. LEN
ZINBERG



The blow, a little too high to knock the looney out, sent him crashing into the ropes. Eddie followed, right hand cocked.

I JUST heard about Eddie Hanna. In Guadalcanal he was up for two nights and three days without any sleep and then took guard duty on the third night. He had a simple way of keeping himself awake: he pulled the pin on a grenade and kept it in his clinched fist . . . if he relaxed and went to sleep the boys at least would be warned!

I don't know if they gave Eddie any medals for that, or even mentioned his name in the papers, and I know Eddie doesn't care either. But what he did was the work of a good soldier—and Eddie started out as the worst yardbird invented.

We were in the same basic camp, but I was an old-timer—I'd been in a month. Eddie was a tough kid, short and stocky, with black hair and bright dark eyes—a hard-boiled guy from a slum section. The first day he was in camp a sergeant bawled him out for not putting hospital corners

on his bed, tore the bed apart, and Eddie dropped the sarge with a wicked right to the jaw. The sarge was a good Joe and he just got up and felt of his chin and said, "Okay, you're new, you don't know what hitting a non-com can mean. Come outside, we'll settle this our own way."

"You'll get hurt," Eddie said.

"Backing out?" the sarge asked, angry.

Eddie shrugged his thick shoulders. "Come on, but don't say I didn't warn you."

They went at it in back of the barracks and Eddie gave the sarge a going over. Eddie was a former amateur fighter and handy with his fists; the sarge bounced like a rubber ball. That was Eddie's introduction to Army life.

DURING his basic Eddie didn't escape a gig: he was on K.P. more times than the cook was in the kitchen. He couldn't see any reason for worrying about the shine

on his shoes, the order of his clothes, the little things. "I came here to fight," he'd say. "What am I doing winning the war with shoe polish? Instead of a gun they give me a shoe rag!"

He had a special bitterness toward officers, refusing point-blank to sweep out the officers' quarters and only escaping a court-martial because the sarge (the same one) understood Eddie and felt sorry for the kid. Eddie said, "A guy gets fancy pants and bars—that makes him better than me? We're fighting the same war. Where do they get off walking with their nose in the air? That's for the birds. Listen, when you're out there facing a bullet, gold bars ain't going to make the lead do any detouring."

THE more company detail Eddie got the more sour he became on the whole Army. One day I said to him, "Eddie, you keep on like this and you'll end up doing a long stretch in the guardhouse. Get yourself straightened out. Why not talk to the chaplain?"

Eddie laughed. "Lay off those sky pilots. What would he know—just another punk with bars that went to his head."

"He's a pretty regular guy and . . ."

Eddie shook his head. "Tell it to the chaplain—that's for the birds. Lay off me, I don't need any advice on how to get along. Yeah, I know, you mean well. But forget it."

I said okay, it really wasn't my business, and, if he wanted it that way, it was all right. It was embarrassing to play Boy Scout.

Eddie was on his usual week-end K.P. when his girl came up to see him. I was surprised, he'd often talked about her but I'd expected a flashy gal, and this kid was shy and tender, a soft-eyed dainty sort, cute looking and sweet.

As he would be massaging dishes all

afternoon, Eddie asked me to look after her, and right off the bat I knew she was crazy about him—knew it in the way she asked, "Eddie's not doing so good in the Army, is he?"

"Oh, he's . . . well, no. He's too tough for his own good. Tough and bullheaded."

She smiled. "Always been that way. I hoped the Army would change him—not too much, just a little. I want him to be a soldier. My folks are Poles; we know what fascism means. But Eddie's a fighter, he'll be a good soldier."

"Sure he will," I told her, wishing I had a girl like this worrying about me.

After supper, Eddie washed up, thanked me for taking care of his girl, and that was that. But I kept thinking about them all night—tough Eddie and this swell kid that loved him.

The next day I went to see the chaplain. I told him all about Eddie, what a nice guy he really was under all his hardness, about Eddie's girl and how she loved him.

The chaplain said: "He ought to be sent over—soon as possible. The G.I. isn't so strict there, and you say he likes to fight. He'd be happy in action; here he'll only end up in a mess. Have him come over and talk with me. Maybe I can help him—by sending him over." The chaplain laughed. "Sounds like a funny way to help a guy out!"

IN the afternoon I found Eddie on a coal detail. He pointed to the pile of coal. "Five minutes late for bed-check and I get this! Who lost five minutes sleep, *me* or the Army?"

I asked him to see the chaplain, and he promptly said nothing doing, he wasn't running to any officer. "But this is a big camp, you don't even know him!" I argued.

"And I don't want to. Come on, I've piled enough coal, let's ankle down to the gym and play some ball. Don't tell me—

I know what I'll get if they catch me AWOL from this coal. Come on."

At the gym some soldiers were boxing and Eddie asked, "Who's the fast guy with the good jab?"

"A looey—some boxer," a soldier said before I could answer.

Eddie grinned. "An officer? I'm glad I came down here."

When the looey finished sparring, Eddie asked if he cared to go a few rounds. The looey looked him over, said all right, and Eddie stripped to his G.I. shorts.

At the bell Eddie came out fast, and his first punch, a sharp right cross to the jaw, shook the looey and let him know he was in a real fight. The officer grabbed Eddie and held till his head cleared, then he pushed Eddie away and stabbed him with three quick jabs, blocked Eddie's left, and came in with a right to the belly that made Eddie gasp. Eddie came back with a wild right that hit the looey on the face—a little too high to knock him out. The blow sent him crashing into the ropes, and Eddie

followed him, right hand cocked. He let another right go, but the officer ducked under the blow and came up with a right uppercut that snapped Eddie's head back. Then the looey started slugging, walloping Eddie around the stomach and head, forcing Eddie to back up. Just as the bell rang, the looey flashed over a left hook that dropped Eddie.

Eddie sat on the canvas, shaking his groggy head. The looey bent down and pulled him to his feet. "Better stop, soldier. It was a good fight. May interest you to know I was intercollegiate middleweight champ. We'll put the gloves on again some time—and *box*."

"Sure—sir," Eddie said. Eddie watched the looey jump out of the ring and for the first time he looked at an officer with respect. "Some guy!" Eddie said. "What a left—like Joe Louis!"

I laughed. "What's so funny?" Eddie demanded.

"He's a guy you ought to talk to," I said, still laughing, "he's the chaplain!"

A Bond Across the Miles

A letter to his mother from a service man in the Southwest Pacific

OUT here I have had time to think about the deeper things of the spiritual life. . . . Back home we went to church once in a while; but the fact is that the church and the Bible meant very little to us as a real power in our lives. . . . But I have been reading my New Testament which the chaplain gave me, and it has caused me to think very seriously about my soul and the future.

"I am writing you, Mom, to ask that you read with me a chapter from the New Testament each day. I have read through the Book of Matthew and will soon begin to read Mark.

"This is my plan. Beginning about the middle of the month, you and Pop will read the first chapter of Mark, and I will read the first chapter way across the other side of the world. Each day we'll read the next chapter, and I will feel that somehow we are united, sort of joining invisible hands; and I know that, if I come back, the church and the Bible will mean more to us than ever in our lives."

YOU Asked FOR IT!

Has he got what it takes?

I am 19, and have been in the Army since March. I want to be a minister; I am engaged to a girl who wants to be a minister's wife. Although I believe in Christ with all my heart, and want more than anything else to serve Him, according to His Plan, I often wonder if I have the stuff that modern ministers are made of. I'd like to see an article in *The LINK* telling what the chaplains and fellow service men think a young fellow should have to make a successful minister of Jesus Christ.—W. J. K.

Come on, "chaplains and fellow service men," let's give Bill his answer. I am sure *THE LINK* would open its columns to summarize the requirements which your representative replies would set up. *The International Journal of Religious Education* is attempting to discover what kind of church we want when we return home. The kind of minister is important, too!

Meanwhile, Bill, my advice to you is to keep your sights high, keep constantly alert now for opportunities to share your positive faith with the fellows around you. If you can keep your present enthusiasm for the Gospel, believe me, you have the stuff of which ministers, ancient and modern, are made.

When dirty thoughts come

How does a guy keep dirty thoughts from coming to his mind? And what should he do about them when they do come?—J. N. P.

Here is a double-barrel question with a single-shot answer: the best way to keep

dirty thoughts where they belong (outside) is to keep good thoughts where they belong (inside)! This is the teaching of Jesus in the short parable about the man who, though cleansed of one devilish spirit, failed to fill himself with good (Read Luke 11:24-26). His last state was worse than his first.

For example: when an evil thought about women is present, drive it out with a fresh, clean thought about your mother or your wife or the finest girl you know. When conversation or actions about you force you to face ugly evil, turn your mind forcibly to good. Some dirty thoughts have sinister fascination; you can only displace them by habitually desiring and preferring the better.

Dr. Frank Laubach has what he calls "the game with minutes" in which he endeavors to think of God at least once each minute of the day. However difficult this may seem to most of us, it is a sure way to develop a mind and soul impregnable to dirty thoughts. Keep them out when possible, and, when impossible, replace them by the sheer power of good thoughts.

Bucking the profanity tide

I think there is more swearing in the service than in civilian life; at least, I notice it more. It is more violent than the use of "hell" and "damn." Most offensive to me is the use of our Lord's name and the constant repetition of well-worn obscenities. What can be done about stemming the tide?—H. B. O.

Profanity and obscenity, evil as they are in themselves, are symptoms of deeper disturbances. They grow out of (1) a poverty of speech, the result of ignorance; (2) an inferiority complex—watch the sergeant who isn't on the ball and knows it; he is the one who curses the men; (3) lack of control growing out of the battle between lack of character and a

disturbed conscience, and (4) downright evil character.

The thoughtful Christian will not swear. The ignorant Christian will substitute good words for bad. The Christian who is inferior in leadership will improve himself and not blow off in profanity. But some men will go on cursing and using their sub-gutter vocabulary wherever they are.

Against this tide you must guard yourself by never lowering your standards, for bad language drives out good language just as bad counterfeit money drives out good money. Learn to speak forcibly without using either slang or evil language. And don't be afraid to let those who are careless, especially with God's names, know that you resent that slur even more than though they had insulted your best friend. And you may help the man who honestly wants to quit profanity by helping him search for and remove the causes.

Again, get good literature from your chaplain; nearly every denomination distributes tracts on this subject. The Catholic Church's Anti-Profanity League should have a strong counterpart among Protestant men.

NOTE. Every service man knows that sexual immorality, excessive drinking, gambling and profanity are more widespread than we wish they were. Of course, the Christian is traditionally opposed to each of these. Many questions come up about these areas of human conduct. Fire away; we shall be glad to pool the best thinking of the staff in seeking to answer your particular angle.

A "happy though Christian" leave

I am due for a 10-day liberty around Christmas time. I shall not be able to get home; how would you suggest spending eight or nine days in a big city? I am not sure yet which coast of the U. S. it will be. Some of my buddies are already laying

A column of counsel for service men and women with perplexing problems. When submitting questions, please include full name and address. You will receive an answer either herein or by private mail. In all cases, only initials of writers will be used here. Complete anonymity will be preserved for those who request it.

plans for painting the town anything except battleship gray, but I have always told them that I can be "happy though Christian." Ten days ashore after all these months will test that.—L. S.

That's a large order, sailor! I gather that you are looking for rest, companionship, entertainment, and a refreshing change of scene. You can get it. All of the large cities and most of the smaller towns along our coasts are ready for you, although you may want to go inland for the change of scene. The U.S.O. is obviously one place where you will find people trained to make suggestions for your spare time.

There are many churches organized to minister to your needs. Look up the pastor of your own or some kindred denomination and tell him the story. He will be able to make some valuable suggestions and introduce you to some young people who will be companionable during your brief visit. Maybe your chaplain has a close friend where you're going; ask him to fix you up.

Find a good quiet place to stay where you can soak up plenty of rest; go to the places where you will meet your kind of people. Above all, avoid those areas and people where you might get into trouble. You are right: you can have a good time *because*, not *although*, you are a Christian.

By the way, let's have a letter from some of the rest of you, telling about how you met a situation like this. It would make good reading!

✓
IS IT REALLY

 *Your Own,*
BUDDY?



THE word "own" is one of the ten-ton words in every man's life. Here, in this land of plenty, we may possess many things that have never become really our own; and we can own some things that are not our legal possession. Ownership is primarily a spiritual matter.

Now, there lie on my library table some new, brightly jacketed books I have recently acquired. I own them legally. I paid money for them; or someone gave them to me suitably inscribed as a gift. But I haven't read a page of them yet. Until I do, they have really not become mine.

As soldiers and sailors, you fellows have been deprived for the time being of many things you used to call your own. Most of the things you use now are the Government's, lent to you for the duration. As for books, well, as soon as your training is over and you go out on maneuvers or take ship, or are sent to one of the fronts, books, as personal possessions, are out for the duration.

All, that is, except one Book. Almost every man in uniform now has a Bible or a New Testament. It is his. It was given to him by his folks or by his church. Or, if he left home without one, his chaplain has probably given him one. It's his own book. When the war is over, and he turns in his gun and his parachute and his blankets and his bombsight and all the rest of the things that the Government

By FRANCIS CARR STIFLER



has lent him, he'll keep this little Book. Years from now he'll show it to his children as one of his most precious keepsakes.

✓ But, buddy, do you *really* own that Book? Do you really own anything unless you can make it serve you somehow? You might put down the price of a car and get the bill of sale. It's yours. But suppose you don't know how to drive the contraption? Legally you own it, but, since it's no good to you, you don't really own it at all.

Have You Done More Than "Dip"?

Have you ever tried to put your New Testament to use? You've dipped into it, yes. Maybe you started on the first page but got no farther. That's understandable, because the Book opens with a long list of funny names.

Your Testament is a tool. Some tools need an instruction sheet to get you started. The Service Testament I have contains two pages on colored paper in the very back that tell you how to take hold of this tool. If you are facing a crisis of

some sort, it tells you where to look in the Book, as it does also if you are discouraged, or lonely, or sick, or in trouble with your buddies. If your Testament isn't one that has these instructions in the back, ask your chaplain for one that does.

Making It a Part of You

Here's another way to make this Book really your own. There is nothing new about the suggestion. It's the old one of doing a thing over and over again until you begin to click. Read certain passages twice every day—you can do it when you are resting a moment. They may not mean much at first, just like the first time you took orders on the drill field. But there is something about God's Word that the oftener you read it the more it comes to mean to you.

"Well, okay, pal," you say. "What passages do I begin with?" Read the 27th chapter of Acts. Or read the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew. Those three chapters together are called the Sermon on the Mount. Yes, there are some mighty poor sermons preached, but not that one. You don't have to read it all at once. Follow the paragraph marks; the first one comes at the beginning of the 13th verse. Read those twelve verses several times. Read the word "blessed" as "happy." Let those sentiments soak in.

If you want to read a whole Gospel so as to make Jesus a real friend of yours, read Mark first. It's short and full of action. What a man He was! Read that book over and over again. Some week-end try reading it all at one sitting. It will take you about two-and-one-half hours. While you are reading it, just remember you are reading about the greatest Man who ever lived, the Man who started the world thinking about the things you are fighting for now.

If your Book contains the Psalms—or

even if it has a few selected Psalms in it—read the Twenty-third. The Twenty-third is always included in any group of selected Psalms. It is the greatest poem ever written. Maybe you never read any poetry because you think it is too hard. Well, the Twenty-third Psalm is as simple as ABC. After you have read it a few times you'll be different from most people if you don't find it just speaking your own thoughts. David wrote it 2,500 years ago, but it's just as true for you now as it was for him then. I don't know any chapter in the Bible that becomes a fellow's own as quickly and as permanently as the Twenty-third Psalm. Read it a few times and it will give itself to you as your very own—for always.

Putting a Psalm to Work

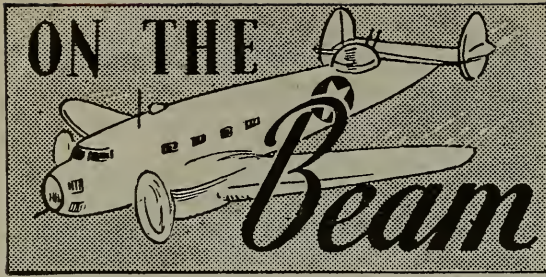
Here's what it did for one man. I got the story first-hand. A friend of mine was sitting at a table in the mess hall of the Navy Pier in Chicago one day last spring. His companion pointed out to him across the table an officer who, he had learned, had been shot down some weeks before somewhere in the South Pacific. Later my friend overheard this conversation between the rescued officer and the man next to him:

"Well, Lieutenant, what went through your mind as you catapulted toward the ocean?"

"Oh, just what always has come to me in times of helplessness and crisis," said the young officer. "I simply repeated the Twenty-third Psalm!"

It may be that the Twenty-third Psalm was all this man knew of the Bible, but that much was his own—and he used it.

Buddy, if you'll just try a little, you can make a lot of the Bible your own. It will come to your help all along the way, not only for the duration, but as long as you live.



THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS

ALL right, all right! We'll permit ourselves as merry a Christmas as circumstances will allow—but it's smart to remember that almost immediately thereafter "comes the resolution"!

Now, we've always contended that *one* New Year's Day (or Inventory Day, as some rightly call it) is not sufficient. It's not sufficient for this writer, at least. Perhaps the rest of you fellows all lead meticulous, unerring, orderly lives—emotions always under control, never permitting impulses to bat you about, nor do you offend nor are you confused. But not I! I'm forever sticking my scarred neck out and getting my wayward feet and tongue into trouble. Consequently, January First is only another inventory day for *me*.

But because I demand so many of the bloomin' things, to keep my little life even relatively on the beam, I have stumbled on certain short-cuts and time-savers. To begin with, I clearly tabulate on one side of that Clean Slate, which I'm always so optimistic about, the remediable omissions and commissions, and, on the opposite side, the ones which are water over the rushing dam, the ones I can't do one earthly thing about even if I bawl my silly eyes out or bang my hard head against the barracks wall till it cracks—the head, not the wall.

For instance: there was that time I permitted silence to give assent, and thereby

gave aid and comfort to the "enemy." And that time I failed to show my colors when the crowd craw-fished. Or perhaps more to be condemned than any other item was the manner in which I failed to make my gratitude articulate, when I missed my cue for the Magnanimous Moment.

But I find now that many of these *faux pas* can even at this late date be remedied. A little earnest introspection, a postage stamp or two, a manufactured meeting with one wronged—and, lo, life begins to move forward again. The rhythm of things picks up.

As for the past errors and blunders which I am powerless to retract, I decide, deliberately and adamantly, to right-about-face and forget 'em. Arnold Bennett once said: "All around me I see men carefully tying themselves with an unbreakable rope to an immovable Past, at the bottom of a hill, and then struggling to climb that hill. If there is one resolution more important than another, it is to break with the Past" (meaning, obviously, that part of one's past which is irrevocable).

You see, no one lives to be old enough to fight for his country without having some sort of a Past. There are treasured experiences, there are laurels of a sort, there are certain secret misgivings, and there are wounds and scars. As surely as valor is the "ability toward self-recovery," it is also the ability to slough off spiritual and psychological handicaps.

So despite the fact that this admonition is a bit premature, it is given, believe me, in the best of faith: *Get hep to yourself; toss the spinach out the window, and draw that clean slate closer.* If you do so, you'll be 'way ahead of the other C.P.A.'s (at least where your own intimate inventory is concerned) when the bells start ringing and the New Year prances in.

—Mark Crane.

THREE wounded servicemen, convalescents from near-by hospitals, "stole the show" one day last August in New York's old Murray Hill Hotel. Except for the soldier, the sailor and the Marine, the big table was surrounded with dignified church officials. They had come together on the eve of the flight of Dr. William B. Pugh for the war theaters. One by one these churchmen bade the chairman of the Serv-



Chaplain Jim U.S.A.

ice Men's Christian League godspeed. Because Dr. Pugh's mission was to overseas chaplains, some inspired person had arranged for these three guests, back from the fighting fronts, to make a kind of appraisal of the chaplaincy.

With simple, halting words these representatives from the armed services gave their personal testimonies to what chaplains had meant in their lives. Every man present thought he knew all there was to know on the subject of the chaplaincy. Several of them were members of the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains. Others had even been chaplains themselves. But never had any of them so fully *felt* the chaplaincy before nor sensed such inner exultation as when one of these boys, with a catch in his voice, summed it all up so simply, "Why—the chaplain—he's just like your father!"

For many months "Chaplain Jim, U. S. A."—a regular Sunday afternoon broadcast (2:00-2:30 EWT) over the Blue Network—has been realistically in-

*Popular radio program helps
the home-folks to understand*

By RALPH STOODY



terpreting the chaplaincy for a nationwide public just as these first-hand, personal experiences did that day for a small group. The program is part of the war work of two well-known radio authors and producers, Frank and Anne Hummert. Voluntarily they have been giving their time and talent to the Government much as "dollar-a-year" men. They work in closest co-operation with the War Department. The Blue Network, in turn, puts Chaplain Jim on the air as a public, patriotic service.

When on Sunday afternoon the organ sounds off with the theme song, "There's a long, long trail a-winding," millions of mothers, wives and sweethearts of "the men who wear the khaki of the United States Army," to whom the program is dedicated, gather quietly around their

radios. While it would probably be hard to find many parents and friends of servicemen who have not made the acquaintance of Chaplain Jim, U. S. A., soldiers who are not sure that the folks at home are listeners would do well to mention this program. One good reason is that, week by week, Chaplain Jim helps civilians to understand Army life. The program dramatizes the problems of the men in service and is deliberately slanted to educate the folks back home to aid, rather than to complicate, the solution of these programs.

For example, Chaplain Jim has been telling sweethearts of men overseas of the greater safety and speed of V-mail. He explains that none has been lost, that the slower, regular mail which may take weeks to arrive and still more weeks to catch up, is actually no more private than V-mail. And you can thank Chaplain Jim for urging your own very special correspondent to drop a V-mail letter for you in the box every day.

Probably the most valued service of this broadcast, however, is the way Chaplain Jim enlarges the understanding of the home folks of the function fulfilled by the chaplain. The thousands of letters from parents and wives and sweethearts ending almost invariably with the benediction "God bless you, Chaplain Jim," are indications of the immeasurable gratitude felt for the institution of the chaplaincy. To mothers and fathers Chaplain Jim personifies their own son's chaplain. To him come not only their thankful expressions but their special requests as well.

A Son Who'd Gone AWOL

So realistic is the presentation of these episodes that, despite the avowal of the script that all characters are fictional, the listeners find it hard not to believe that the attractive radio personality in the title role

is not that of an ordained clergyman, commissioned as an Army chaplain. Requests by letter and telephone come regularly to him seeking aid that only a chaplain could render. One phone call from hundreds of miles away was an appeal from a frantic father whose son had gone AWOL just before embarkation. Now that the son had recovered his poise and was ready for duty his outfit was on the sea, and he was in danger of being regarded as a deserter.

Cases like this are referred, when possible, to the office of the Chief of Chaplains.

All Things to All Faiths

To the credit both of actor and script writer, the religious affiliation of Chaplain Jim is so universalized that Jews, in writing, address him as "Dear Rabbi," Roman Catholics as "Dear Father," and Protestants in accordance with their own denominational usages. "I don't care to what religious denomination you belong, you are certainly doing a splendid work for humanity," one mother wrote Chaplain Jim.

The methods of Chaplain Jim in handling the perplexing emotional and spiritual problems of the soldiers he has served in camp, on transport, and in the front-line areas have proved not only interesting to listeners but useful as well. One Southerner, who was gassed in the last war, and his wife have become friends with 176 boys to whom they regularly send V-mail. Their "boys," with whom they become acquainted while their guests in the hotel they manage, are constantly referring their problems to "Pop" for advice. "Listening to Chaplain Jim," he writes, "has supplied many answers."

Other listeners are blessed by having their anxieties calmed. One wrote: "When no word comes from our boys, we quickly imagine all sorts of dire happenings. In times like this, when our feelings register

zero and everything seems futile, we hear in your words a subtle chiding, 'Oh, ye of little faith!'

The incarnation of the chaplaincy in this role has evoked some mail that indicates that Chaplain Jim's work is not exceptional, nor is the affection in which he is held by the men in his unit unusual. One bomb group sent a copy of a poetical tribute one of its members had sent to the home of its chaplain. It's too long to quote, but here's a sample verse:

*Our chaplain is the swellest guy
That's fighting in this war,
He's more or less a symbol
Of what we're fighting for.*

Later there is a quatrain that indicates that their chaplain is no respecter of persons:

*If you had to find him,
No telling where you'd look;
He might be in a colonel's car
Or talking to a cook.*

While the names, places and specific incidents are fictional, the content of these broadcasts is as real as life itself. Chief of Chaplains (Brigadier General) William R. Arnold presided at the opening of the series. Reports of thousands of chaplains, with their thrilling stories of moral as well as physical courage and spiritual as well as military victories, are all available to the producers of this program. Names are changed, scenes are relocated, but most of the subject matter is gleaned from actual experiences.

There was, however, one story which the writers thought was mostly imaginary. It had been written obviously to give courage to the relatives and friends of boys who had been maimed and to plant deeply in

the mind of any soldier in training who might hear the program that life could be full and rich in spite of serious injuries. The script told the story of Steve Reynolds, who had lost a leg. His depression had been overcome by assurances of the way similarly handicapped people had overcome their difficulties through artificial aids. Finally, renewed in spirit, the lad won the love of the nurse who looked after him on the way back.

An early mail brought the following letter to Chaplain Jim:

"I have just heard your dramatic story of Steve Reynolds, and the whole thing is practically my story. . . . I was doing war work in World War I when I met my husband in a government hospital. He had left his right leg in the Argonne. Before the war . . . he had been very athletic, interested in amateur musicals and everything else. He had to have several operations after he was back in the States, but all he could think of was getting an artificial leg—getting back to life as before. Within a year we were married. He resumed playing golf and dancing. Today he is 52 and just as active as in his twenties. In fact, right now he is walking on air as our 22-year-old daughter has been a WAC for eight months now. She joined—not having a brother—to carry on for Dad."

And so the "fictional" story, dramatized by Chaplain Jim and his colleagues to help someone face a hypothetical problem, turned out to be, not fiction, but the actual history of very real people.

Just as true to life are the trying experiences through which Chaplain Jim, with brotherly understanding and faith in God, week by week, helps his soldier parishioners to pass in spiritual triumph. "He's just like your father!" said the wounded soldier of his chaplain in particular and all chaplains in general. No doubt you too by now have discovered the truth of this. If not, it's time to look up this "regular fellow" and find out for yourself!



Service Men IN POETIC MOOD

Destiny's Victory

By CAPT. F. H. WOOLFALL
Transportation Corps, North Africa

*Men of destiny, men of fate,
Whose wills now strafe the life of man,
The enemy that you so hate
Is dearly loved in God's own plan.*

*How can you see these men of strife
Shed blood and suffer mortal pain,
While soldiers die or fight for life,
Their birthright freedom to regain?*

*Your victory the men they kill,
The lands and homes they devastate,
But this their duty to fulfill,
Lest war's carnage is their own fate.*

*O God above, help all to see,
Men of fate, men of destiny,
That when the world is won to Thee,
At last will come true victory.*

My Prayer

By PVT. GERARD J. TOORENOAR
Navy Pier, Chicago, Ill.

*Please, God, repair my scaly eyes
That fail to see Thy love,
Their vision dimmed by faith that fails;
Please, God, remove the blinding scales
That I may see, with vision bright,
Thy love, Thy mercy, and Thy night.*

*Please, God, repair my stamm'ring tongue
That speaks no humble prayer.
Too proud and haughty to repent,
My tongue must to Thy will be bent,
Taught purer words, with sweeter strain,
To sing Thy praise, to pray again.*

*Please, God, repair my deafened ears
That will not hear Thy voice,
Nor heed the preaching of Thy Word*

*That leaves my hungry heart unstirred.
I need to hear Thy voice again
To win a victory o'er my sin.*

*Please, God, repair my darkened soul
So dimly lit within;
Rekindle there the flickering flame
That struggles there alone—in vain,
And let me show my fellow men,
Thy love and grace, dear Lord. Amen.*

The Great Amen

By SGT. B. FRANK LUTTRELL
Salem, Ore.

*Haste the day, O God, when man shall see
Thine image in his brother;
And every people on the earth
Will work with one another.
To mankind in its quest of life
A world-wide vision lend;
Prolong in us the fight for right—
Let other battles end.
Let swords lie beaten into plows;
Give quiet to land and sea.
Let song and music thrill the throats
Of fettered men made free.
May warlords meet their rightful dues
When guns their clamor cease;
May we, victorious, kneel and chant
The great amen of peace.*

Second Glory

By SGT. B. FRANK LUTTRELL
Salem, Ore.

*To soar through the blue, cloud-studded
sky
Like a conqueror of spaces unknown,
Or a terrible god from on high look down
On a world that's all his own;
To chase a star—
Play tag with the moon,
Or flee from the wind in a storm;
To ascend a rainbow—*

*Or watch the night go,
As the Creator paints the morn—
Is a glory kept for those who fly,
On man-made wings though borne.*

*To fight in the blue, cloud-studded sky
For the right of life as you see it;
To pit your plane and combat skill
'Gainst the might of the Evil Spirit;
To win, then die
In a crash from the sky,
And burn in a fury of flame—
Is a second glory,
The end of a story
For those who defend Freedom's name.
A second glory for those who die
But accomplish their aim all the same.*

O Golden Rhetoric

By CHAPLAIN HERMAN C. JOHNSON
Camp Chaffee, Ark.

*Years I have felt that people should be
brave,
Should love and serve, whatever were
their lot;
I longed to teach men why they should
behave,
And what it is to be a patriot.*

*Years I have fumbled for the fitting words,
Choked at the fog of human unconcern;
I read great books and studied stars and
birds,
Hunting for parables they could discern.*

*These truths, long mumbled, studied, mem-
orized,
At last I tell you in an afternoon;
The brief is drawn, the strategy devised,
And I will speak it eloquent and soon.*

*There where the soil will spout into the sky,
Where tanks will crunch and bombers
will careen,
I will go forth and shoot and sweat and
die—
And that, my friends, will show you
what I mean.*

Letter by Candle Light

By PVT. HAROLD THOMAS
Shreveport, La.

*There's candle light a-flickerin'
In many tent doorways tonight,
For "the situation is non-tactical"
And we may have a light.*

*A lonely, homesick soldier
Pens the note that, homeward bound,
Takes the message to his parents
Of his being safe and sound.*

*There's no mention of discomforts,
Nor of trials he must bear,
Just a missive saying, "Hello, Mom.
Gee, I wish that I were there!"*

*He doesn't gripe about the weather,
Though it rains 'most every day;
Instead, he tells of thoughts of home
While on the march today.*

*Yes, there's candle light a-flickerin'
In many tent doorways tonight,
And a soldier boy is writing home
To tell them he's all right.*

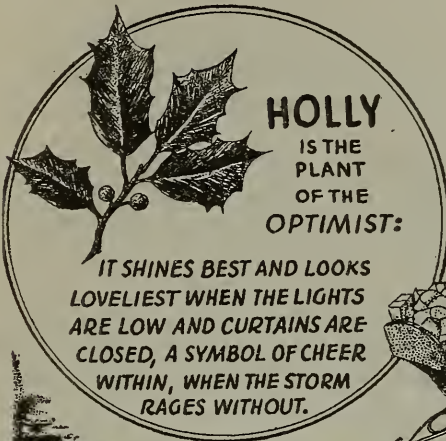
No More Goodbyes

By CPL. I. R. NORRIS
Chanute Field, Ill.

*Do kids still play by the side of the house?
And do flowers still bloom on the brow
Of the pine-dotted hills and the cool cheery
rills?
Or is there time to notice things now?*

*I must forget those things of a wonderful
past,
While hate, fear and greed ride high
Over a world that cries, "Kill!"
And 'tis kill that we will!
Till the blood fills those rills running by!*

*But it shall eventually come to an end
And songs shall soar to the skies,
Then I shall thank God, as homeward I plod
To you—and no more goodbyes.*

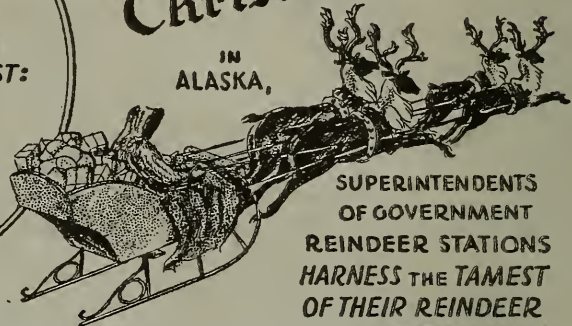


HOLLY
IS THE
PLANT
OF THE
OPTIMIST:

IT SHINES BEST AND LOOKS
LOVELIEST WHEN THE LIGHTS
ARE LOW AND CURTAINS ARE
CLOSED, A SYMBOL OF CHEER
WITHIN, WHEN THE STORM
RAGES WITHOUT.

ON
Christmas Day

IN
ALASKA,



SUPERINTENDENTS
OF GOVERNMENT
REINDEER STATIONS
HARNESS THE TAMEST
OF THEIR REINDEER
AND HITCH THEM TO A SLEIGH FILLED WITH
BAGS OF PROVISIONS AND GIFTS.

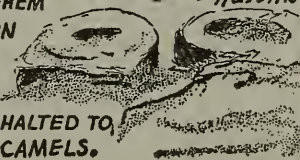
THEY DRIVE THROUGH THE
ESKIMO VILLAGES AND
LEAVE ONE SACK AT EACH HUT,
AS A REMINDER OF THE
CHRIST CHILD.

Religious News Service



THE
WELL
OF THE
MAGI

BESIDE A BETHLEHEM
ROAD IS A CISTERN
WHERE, LEGEND
SAYS, THE
WISE MEN HALTED TO
WATER THEIR CAMELS.



IN IRELAND IT IS BELIEVED
THAT EVERY CHRISTMAS EVE
THE CHRIST CHILD
WALKS ONCE MORE THROUGH
THE LAND, SO LIGHTED
CANDLES ARE PLACED
IN THE WINDOWS OF EVERY
HOME TO GUIDE THE
HOLY CHILD
LEST HE LOSE HIS WAY
IN THE DARK.



American LITANY

by



DREW BROWN
S/1c, U. S. Coast Guard

I HEAR America praying
A litany of people at war.
I hear America praying
From shore to distant shore—

The prayer of a brave staunch people
With the faith of its Fathers strong.
I hear it loud and valiant,
It rings like a battle song

Deep sprung from the heart of a nation
That sings as it faces the fight
To rid the earth of the tyrant,
And prays to its God for the might

To stay the hand of the Vandal,
To bring peace on earth to all men.
Yes, this is the prayer of the people,
I hear it again and again.

I hear America praying
In a teeming tenement high.
A man . . . and his wife . . . and his child
Lift their voices and speak to the sky:

"We thank thee, O God, for this great gift
Of a land where all men are one;
Please show us the way our hands may
speed
Swift victory early won."

I hear America praying—
A Negro . . . a hoe . . . and a field,
Soil on his hands and sweat on his brow,
A smile his inviolate shield:

"This task, O Lord, is my job, too;
And staked out well is my share
To draw from the flowing breast of the
earth
Strength for the men Out There."

I hear America praying
In a foxhole pounded with rain,
The smoke of war in his nostrils,
His eye on a hovering plane:

"I don't ask much for me, O Lord.
I'll come through this all somehow—
But the ones at home . . . Watch over them!
Dear Lord, they're Your job now."

I hear America praying—
A mother writing at night
Heart'ning word to a son on a nameless sea
With fear in her heart locked tight:

"Please help him be brave, dear God,
And in faith treat fear with disdain;
And if be Thy will he returns not to me
Let his offering have been not in vain."

I hear America praying
The rhythm of rivets its score—
The prayer of a man in his shirt-sleeves,
Never raising his eyes from his chore:

"O banish all quarrel and selfish harangue,
Today has no leisure. Time runs.
God grant us one aim and one holy creed:
More ships, more planes and more guns."

This, then, O Lord, is the prayer I hear
Surging on to a great Amen.
This is the prayer America prays,
I hear it again and again.

(Note: This poem was written by Seaman Brown, a native of Philadelphia, Pa., and was read publicly for the first time by Miss Sylvia Sidney, stage and screen actress, in connection with a Fourth of July program over Radio Station KYW, July 3, 1943. Copyrighted.)



KILLING IN BATTLE



Some months ago we threw out this challenging query, made by a thoughtful soldier, and invited one and all to go to work on it. Here are two of the first replies to come in. What's YOUR angle, fellow? Let's have it!

By CHAPLAIN LAWRENCE D. GRAVES
Camp Rucker, Alabama

IS the soldier solely responsible for the slain his bullets have reached? If he is, then there is some point to the question; if not, it has no relevance whatever.

We can no more escape our social matrix, with all that implies, than we can escape our hands and feet. Each time we accept a pay check, satisfy the bootblack for his services, vote or not vote at the polls, we add one small impulse to the already vast and lumbering machinery which we call social life. We are no more conscious of our share in the implications of these acts than we are aware of the individual molecules that make up our eyebrows. But the guilt for all the pain and evil incident to this enormous function of society rests equally upon us all.

Yes, all the consequence of human greed, ignorance and hate spring, in part, from what we want and what we do. That child whose legs are deformed by rickets, can point an accusing finger—we were to blame. Also those dull students whom pellagra has seized and enfeebled are our handiwork. The prostitute and the procuror, the bootlegger and the gangster, the ward heeler and the corrupt politician, the city slum dwellers and the vast army of itinerant starvelings—all grow from the vine we water and tend.

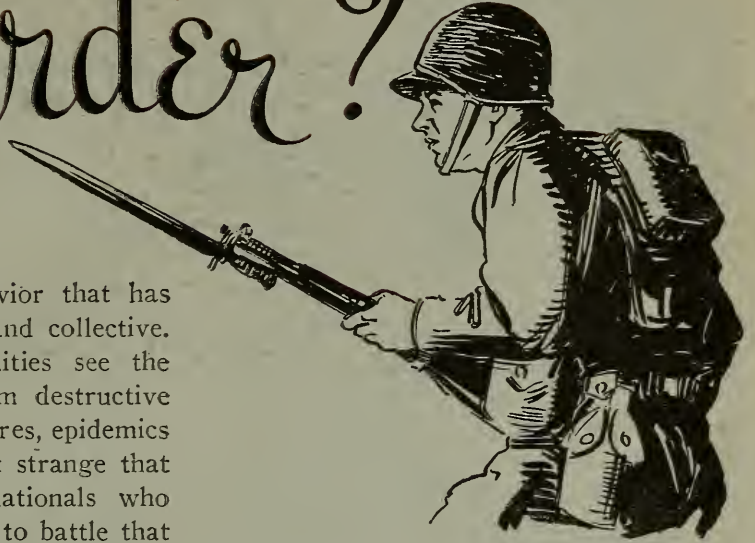
Not many bother to consider these run-

ning sores in our social life which are, all are willing to admit, disgusting and wrong in the light of our private roles as accomplices. Did I help to make that brothel? Did I rear that brood of demented children? Did I clothe those children with rags and shut out the sunlight from their play? What share do I have in the hoodlums and their crimes? These are also our responsibility.

What is the matter with the conscience of the soldier who shudders at the thought of battle but is willing to live, with no qualms whatever, amid offenses against other equally important commandments?

One further matter I would like to discuss in answer to this question, and that is the social motivation for our acts. Much that we do individually, or don't do, really conforms to the pressure of our group. Take, for example, a plane flying transversely to a strong head wind; it moves toward the landing field as determined by the mind of the pilot and the rudder of the ship, but it also moves in a direction determined by the force of the air current against the plane. This second motion is almost imperceptible to the pilot, but he knows that because of it he must constantly correct his course. In like manner each of us, by choice, makes for certain selected goals—and similarly is carried by the social drift to other ends than those consciously sought.

it murder?"



Patriotism results in behavior that has implications both individual and collective. Those who live in communities see the logic in protecting them from destructive forces. We work to put out fires, epidemics and unemployment. It is not strange that we also devise death for nationals who threaten us, and therefore go to battle that our way of life can proceed unmolested. We volunteer, but we are also drafted. The draft expresses the collective mind, and there is no escape because we live by it from bassinet to coffin.

When some of us find ourselves firing guns or releasing bombs and torpedoes which are bound to kill, are we acting on our own initiative? Of course not. Our acts under those conditions are the results of certain cumulative forces that have played upon us. If we are normal, we can no more shake off our fate than we can ask to be excused from rescuing a drowning child.

The Christian cannot, if he would, be one in a social vacuum. Goodness and badness are meaningless apart from our association with others on whom, by necessity, we must depend. The price which our social communities exact is a certain complicity and responsibility, if we are to remain in them.

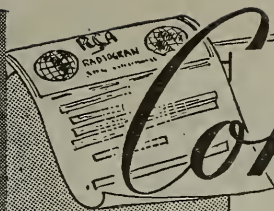
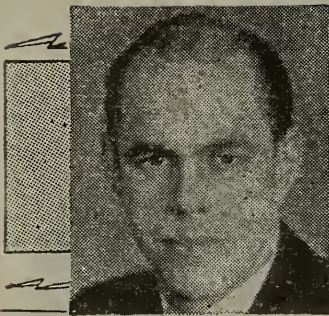
Were the Christian acting solely on his own initiative, there could be no appeal from the moral law, "Thou shalt not kill." But, since he does not, the guilt is distributed and his conscience free.

By CHAPLAIN RAYMOND R. MILLER
Camp Myles Standish, Mass.

CAN a Christian go to war? Is a soldier a murderer? Does a chaplain have to support war? How can a Christian minister be a chaplain?

These and a dozen like questions may be answered by a thoughtful analysis of these facts. In the Decalogue we read, "Thou shalt not kill." This is recorded in Exodus 20:13. In the very next chapter, Exodus 21:12, we find a statement of the penalty for murder, "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death." It is manifest that it is necessary for some agent of the law to be the one who is to carry out the death sentence. We do not regard such a person as a murderer.

When a lawless nation sets out to commit murder on a wholesale scale, it is just as necessary for a constituted power, dedicated to the preservation of law and order to arrest, to try and sentence the offender nation as it is in the case of individuals. This is the justification for war, and the justification for the individual who has a part in it.



Communique

NEWS OF THE LEAGUE OVER THE WORLD

By Ivan M. Gould

GENERAL SECRETARY,
SERVICE MEN'S CHRISTIAN LEAGUE

THIS is *almost* the most dramatic story we have received thus far about **THE LINK**. It came to us from Corporal K. C. Day in the Cannon Company, 307th Infantry. One of the members of the staff of the S.M.C.L. saw his letter and decided to tell the story to a Men's Bible Class.

"Shells were falling all around. The darkness was pierced by the sudden bursts of gunfire. The ground had become sticky, and the mud was thick from the tropical storms. Corporal Day fought bravely on. He heard the shrill sharp whistle of a falling shell. Instinctively, he dropped into a foxhole.

"With a flash the shell exploded nearby, and then for a moment all was quiet. Corporal Day began to stir. Under his foot he felt an object that seemed foreign to foxholes as he knew them. He reached down. It was a magazine. Picking it up, he wiped it off on his already muddied uniform. In the light of the next bomb flash he could read the title, **THE LINK**.

"Corporal Day took this copy with him, and, after the engagement, started to read it. When he had finished, he wrote, 'While I have roamed far from the church since my boyhood, I find **THE LINK** of great help. It may lead me back.'"

The staff member concluded his story. It was dramatic, to the point, and it showed that **THE LINK** reached the soldiers with an important message. What the staff person failed to read on Cor-

poral Day's letter was, "I found a copy in a foxhole in Louisiana during maneuvers."

"Sic gloria transit," or, in other words, a foxhole in Louisiana is an awful let-down when you are thinking of Guadalcanal or New Guinea. *Now*—will some friend of the League kindly find a copy of **THE LINK** in a foxhole in the South Pacific or in Italy? What a story that will make!

But seriously, we are anxious to receive stories about the League and **THE LINK** from the battlefronts of the world. Just as you want to receive news from home, we want to receive news from you. The churches that are backing the League (see list on page 2 of the cover) want to know that the League follows their men into the danger zones and that **THE LINK** brings strength and courage to those who read it.

Why not call it the S.M.C.L.?

Two letters reached my desk this week which raise a question in my mind. One letter states: "On this ship a small group of us meet regularly for Bible study, singing and prayer. I can see possibilities, through the use of **THE LINK**, of increasing the interest of the group. In addition, I believe copies of this publication should be placed where all might see them."

The other letter says: "We have at the present time a mid-week Bible study and hymn sing. I feel the S.M.C.L. is the sort of thing which will help us a great deal."

These two groups, far removed geo-

graphically, have much in common. They should recognize that unity by using a common name. The Service Men's Christian League is the name chosen by the leading Protestant denominations for such groups. Why not use it?

Iran and Iceland—Linked!

A few weeks ago we received a letter from Chaplain Louis S. Luisa of the 113th Station Hospital. He wrote that the name of his League Unit was "The Service Men's Christian League of Iran."

Then a few days later Chaplain Clyde E. Kemball wrote about "just forming Iceland's first S.M.C.L."

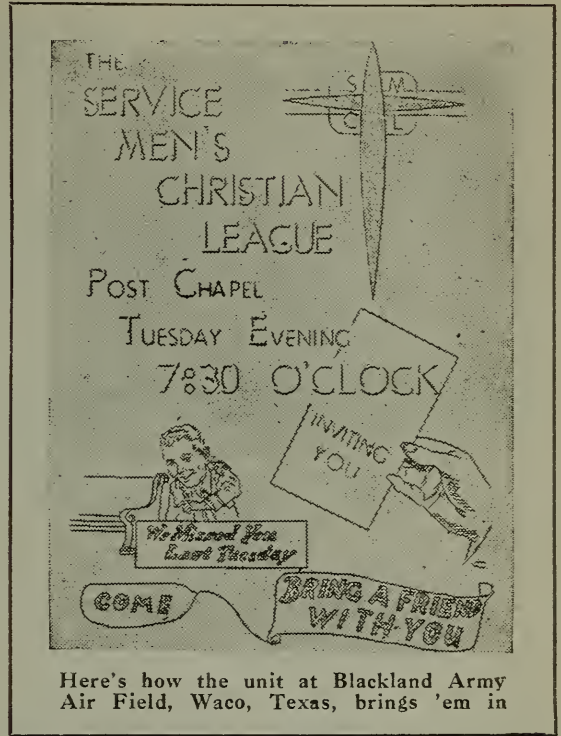
Iran and Iceland linked together by the League! A chain of Christian fellowship is being forged around the world. Wherever you may be when you read this, remember that you are a link in this chain. Strengthen the "link" that is "you," and the whole chain will be strengthened.

We salute . . .

Our hats-off department first salutes **Chaplain Paul W. Ludden** and the men of the Combat Team Camp, Atlantic Beach, Florida. The president of this unit is **Corporal Michael L. Stefani**, and the secretary **Pfc. Clyde T. Clodfelter**. They write as follows:

"For some time, there has been felt a need for an organization of Christian fellowship at the Combat Team Camp, Atlantic Beach, Florida. That need has been met by the S.M.C.L.

"On Sunday morning following the regular camp worship service, the men were invited to remain after the service to participate in the organization of a unit of the S.M.C.L. Ten men stayed for the initial organizational meeting. Chaplain Ludden explained the purposes of the League. Keen interest was manifest in the formation of the unit, and clearly indicated that a League would have a chance. A committee was appointed to draft a constitution. It was agreed to hold



Here's how the unit at Blackland Army Air Field, Waco, Texas, brings 'em in

regular weekly meetings. It is our aim to fit into the spiritual purpose of the S.M.C.L. as we understand it, and minister to other needs of our men as well.

"The second meeting was held the following Wednesday at which plans were formulated for subsequent meetings. The first attempt at a program will take place at the next meeting when the discussional topic, 'The Post-War Employment Problem—How It Will Affect You,' will be discussed. Other plans for the League include a night of bowling, a visit to a young people's Christian group at a neighboring church, and other events."

A unique name has been adopted for the League unit at the Forty-first General Hospital. We will let **Chaplain Rodney Thaine Taylor** tell about it in his own words—and incidentally give a good suggestion to other Leagues.

"Some weeks ago, in a letter to the S.M.C.L., we passed on the fact that our Christian League was called 'The LINK Trainers,' which is very much in line with the spiritual training and the strong link

with our God and our home church—not to speak of the boost it gives to your magazine, which I believe is actually the answer to many a chaplain's and enlisted man's prayers.

"Eighteen months in the field with combat troops, and a good while as hospital chaplain, has shown me that men will often attend services if they are reminded and notified in an attractive way. As you can imagine, it is difficult to find attractive poster material outside of the States, so again your famous little magazine comes through. Often, from our members, we beg the back or front cover page, cut out the picture, paste it on what otherwise would be a very plain sheet of paper, and presto! we have an attractive poster on which to present our religious schedule of the week. Perhaps if this idea is passed on it will help boost some other services as it has helped ours."

We place a feather in the hat of **Chaplain B. Shearer** of the 32nd Station Hospital. He has the right idea about using the League program: namely, keep it simple and effective. Says he:

"Our organization is of the simplest form—the chaplain's assistant is chairman, and he appoints a program committee to work with him every week. This seemed the best way to begin our League unit. We have hopes, however, of making use of the Handbook to bring about a more democratic set-up. We have on hand some samples of the covenant cards and mem-

bership insignia which are supplied at the request of the men. You have put many helps at our disposal, and we want to make the best possible use of them."

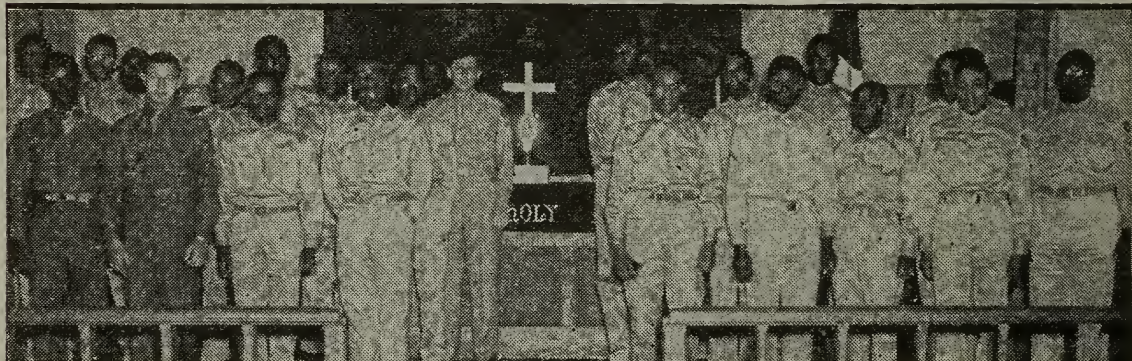
The league is going places

No better word of recommendation about the League has come to us than that contained in a letter from **Chaplain Thomas A. Jenkins**, now serving with an overseas unit. Here is proof that the League is succeeding:

"We have just ended our first three months of the Service Men's Christian League, and are happy to report that not one weekly meeting has had to be postponed. We have agreed on a plan of operation that is original with us. There are no officers, as we have found a steering committee very satisfactory. Each month a new steering committee is elected to comprise four men, each having the responsibility to preside and act as chairman for the period of one week. The chairman and the committee is responsible for the program and the attendance.

"Many good things could be said of the advantages of the League. It has definitely been an inspiration of Christian soldiers. It seems to be the combination of B.Y.P.U., Christian Endeavor, and other youth organizations mutually uniting to do a spiritual task.

"As proof of what the League is accomplishing among us, we point to three



KEESLER FIELD, Miss.—Members of the S.M.C.L. at this unit of the Army Air Forces Training Command. Organized last September, the S.M.C.L. here is sponsored by Chaplain J. D. Barringer



EGLIN FIELD, Fla.—Some of the men and women members of the S.M.C.L. at this Proving Ground Command. The unit is sponsored by Chaplain Don G. Pinkston and Chaplain Edwin C. Calhoun

confessions of faith made by members of the League who accepted Christ for the first time in our League meetings.

"The League gave to me the exact thing for a mid-week service, and you may count on our unit as a real link in the chain that is the S.M.C.L.

"And, in closing, let me say THE LINK is the best booklet of its kind I've seen for service men."

It can be done—and how

Concluding "Communique" this month is an article prepared by Prtr3c Blanton Dye, editor of *The Bluejacket*, station newspaper of the Naval Air Technical Training Center, Memphis, Tenn. We think that this article will be helpful to chaplains and leaders of League units especially. Take it away, Blanton Dye!

AN ANCHOR FOR CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

By PRTR3C BLANTON DYE

"The newly organized Service Christian League of the Naval Air Technical Training Center, Memphis, Tenn., has shown remarkable growth.

"With the national organization of the Service Men's Christian League behind the deep desire of the enlisted personnel to carry on in the service, the work has progressed smoothly and rapidly, and has been expanded locally to include both WAVES and women Marines.

"At this particular station, because of the large number of service women, decision was made to use the name 'Service Christian League.'

"Dynamo behind the League has been Comdr. G. L. Markle, USN, senior chap-

lain at NATTC. Soon after taking charge of the chaplain's department at this great Naval air center, he saw the need for a Service Christian League. A junior chaplain, Lt. (jg) John W. Melton, was selected to serve as the initial counselor, with others rotating for a period of service.

"There are two important reasons for the outstanding success of the NATTC League, which grew from a membership of 52 bluejackets, Marines, WAVES and women Marines, to 225 in the short span of six weeks.

"First, and possibly the most important single factor in the success of the League is the simple—though not always easy—expedient of presenting interesting weekly

programs. This is not achieved by any magic formula, but it must be admitted that the formula is sure-fire.

"In mid-week, before each Sunday session, the Navy chaplain in charge meets with every man or woman scheduled on the program, and goes over all the program material—which, incidentally, comes from suggested topics in *THE LINK*.

"Every participant is thoroughly acquainted with his or her part on the program by the chaplain and members of the program committee before the mid-week program meeting is concluded. More preparation is made during the next few days, and when those on the program finally stand before their audience they know what they are going to say (which is not to be confused with memory work) and their audience knows they have something worth hearing.

"There's nothing like a well-thought-out and effectively executed program to make a man glad he came to a meeting of the Service Christian League, and to bring him back again and again, this time his friend with him. The 'grape-vine system' widely advertises the League here.

"The personnel at this technical training center is composed of students attending either the ordnancemen's, radiomen's, or machinist mates' school, the longest period of training being 21 weeks for the 'mecks' and considerably less for the others. This presented the serious problem of constantly changing leaders, and the solution of this problem was recognized as the second most important reason for the ever-increasing popularity of this League.

"Due to the rapid turnover, officers of the League are elected the middle of each month, and serve under the regular leaders for two weeks before being installed the first Sunday of each month. During the two-week training period, they attend all the mid-week program meetings and are consequently prepared to take over when their time comes.

"No stress is placed on denominations, the following being represented: Episcopalian, Lutheran, Church of Christ, Chris-

tian Science, Latter Day Saints, Church of God, Nazarene, Northern and Southern Baptist, Methodist, Northern and Southern Presbyterian.

"At the beginning of each Sunday meeting, those attending are handed a printed program which in itself adds dignity and purpose to the discussions. Always the program contains a printed prayer which helps the group to create a 'prayer vocabulary.' Later in the meeting there are voluntary sentence prayers, and time has always necessitated the leader closing the prayers before everyone who desired to join in had had opportunity to do so.

"After the various topics are presented by the enlisted personnel, the entire group takes part in an open forum, at close of which the chaplain in charge sums up the discussions and helps the members reach their own personal conclusions from opinions and facts offered by the group.

"The Service Christian League has been in successful operation at this base long enough to conclusively demonstrate that it affords an excellent opportunity for men and women to express themselves, and for the Christian fellowship so needed in the service today.

"Most of the members took part in similar Christian groups in civilian life before entering the service, and the League at NATTC naturally makes their transition to the military life less abrupt and incongruous with previous experiences.

"The five-fold membership increase in six weeks by the local League is indicative of the effectiveness of the program. But speaking far louder than numbers is the fact that members, when transferred to Naval duty elsewhere have often assured the chaplains that if at their new assignment they do not have a League, they will work toward that end in order that they might continue their Christian fellowship and discussions. It is their intention that an ever-widening circle of young men and women, forced by world circumstances to forsake their accustomed mode of life, may find an anchor upon which to secure their Christian beliefs."

"Through Them to You"

» WE ARE OFTEN ASKED by civilians (among them being officials of denominations which have not yet joined with the other major church bodies in giving financial support to the S.M.C.L.): "Who distributes THE LINK in the service?" And when reply is made that the chaplains act as our efficient agents in this regard, there invariably comes the question: "Do chaplains of MY denomination receive the magazine?"

The answer, of course, is a resounding "YES." No distinction whatever is made between chaplains whose churches pay their share of the League's budget and those which do not. The magazine, like all the League's services, is made available to all who request it. In the list below, which shows the number and denominations of chaplains receiving THE LINK regularly, the churches contributing financially to the Service Men's Christian League are indicated by an asterisk.

Church Affiliation of "Link" Chaplains

*Methodist	659	Cumberland Presbyterian	8
Southern Baptist	330	Latter Day Saints	7
*Presbyterian (U.S.A.)	190	*Colored M.E.	5
*Lutheran	179	Christian Science	4
<i>Includes Missouri Synod, United,</i>		*Church of God	4
<i>American, Augustana, Danish,</i>		Evang. Mission Covenant	4
<i>Norwegian, and Evangelical</i>		*Free Methodist	3
*Northern Baptist	167	*Asso. Ref. Presbyterian	3
*Congregational Christian	143	United Baptist	3
*Disciples of Christ	137	Assembly of God	3
Protestant Episcopal	98	Universalist	3
*Presbyterian (U.S.)	71	Christian Reformed	2
Roman Catholic	59	*A.M.E. Zion	1
*Evangelical & Reformed	37	Evangelical Free	1
*United Presbyterian	29	Friends	1
*National Baptist	26	Reformed Episcopal	1
*Evangelical	24	Swedish Baptist	1
*United Brethren	24	*Seventh Day Adventist	1
*Reformed in America	17	Primitive Baptist	1
*African M.E.	15	Bible Presbyterian	1
*Salvation Army	14	Independent Baptist	1
*Church of the Nazarene	10	Affiliation not indicated on	
Unitarian	10	S.M.C.L. records	69
Jewish	8		

“BATTLING THE BREEZE”



“Religion is real in the Pacific war zone!”

✓ Almost everyone by now has heard the axiom, “There are no atheists in foxholes.” My experience in Guadalcanal is a living testimony to this truth. The man who doesn’t recognize God doesn’t exist in an area where shells are bursting and the next moment may be his last. The interesting thing is that, while he may quickly recognize the existence of God, he is also slow to forget what he’s learned.

When I return home, I mean to do all in my power to revive an interest in religion among people who have taken it matter-of-factly. Believe me, religion is real with us in the Pacific war zone! I have seen men on their knees praying, reading their Testaments, or helping a dying buddy pray. Dying men like for their last words to be a prayer.

There is no discrimination of rank shown during religious services. Officers and enlisted men mingle freely, for they realize God is not cognizant of bars and gold braid alone.

Ours is an everyday religion, and Wednesday is as much our Sabbath as Sunday. We often hold services for the wounded, and the thought and mention of

This being a department for the exercise of free speech, the opinions here expressed aren't always those of LINK

God cheers them and helps them recover. I have had the experience that comes from knowing loved ones back home were praying for me. Maybe I was psychic, but the feeling of their presence lifted me up. And now that I am away from the war zones, I still have the habit of uttering thanks each day for being spared.

Religion is growing stronger among the peoples of the world. They have found, through bitter experience, that we cannot rely upon ourselves

alone. We must have a God, and we can recognize Him only through religion.

—PVT. JAMES T. BASWELL.

“As important as food rations”

✓ Although I have always regarded religion as a means of lifting a man to a higher level in life, I had never known its full value until the present war brought me face to face with the raw edges of realism. Now, I can truthfully say, religion is a tangible thing.

Many people have asked me what part religion is playing in the lives of men in the far-away South Pacific regions. It would be impossible for me, or any other man, to give a precise description of re-

ligion down there, for it is in the hearts and minds of my buddies. It is their daily sustenance and is just as important to them as their daily rations of food.

Friends ask, how can you worship under the strain and stress of battle? One does not have to be tranquilly situated to feel the presence of God, nor does he have to put aside certain hours of the day for worship. A religious man, we quickly find, takes his religion with him, and he can use it under all circumstances every moment of the day and night.

This is true of a special place to worship. Down under, we don't always have a consecrated house in which to worship, so we gather beneath the palms and they serve as our house of God. We don't always have a chaplain of our faith, but we worship with any other chaplain present. If there are no chaplains, we hold meetings with anyone who cares to lead us. On my ship we had no chaplain, but there was a machinist's mate who had been active in church circles at home; he made a splendid leader.

Men on the battlefield are sincere with their religion because they have found it to be the only thing that will serve as a panacea for all their troubles. It is not through fear of death that they serve God; rather through a deep respect for God they hadn't realized before. A man thinks deeply when danger lies all around him.

Religion and war? Yes, they are compatible. They can go hand in hand when the war is being fought, as this one is, for freedom of religion and other freedoms we hold dear. It is my honest opinion that after the war religion will enjoy a widespread revival, for men have come at last to know its real value.

—HARRY F. JONES,

Chief Boatswain's Mate, U.S.N.R.

A cheer for the chaplains

✓ My outfit in the North African Campaign was an anti-aircraft battery. We were operating where things were pretty hot at times. I came out of it with a fractured skull, a broken foot, and a deaf

ear. But I am still able to get around and enjoy myself.

There were seventy-three men in our battery, and I got to know them all very well. Some of them were real friends—friends you could count on. But when I was in real trouble—when things were going wrong or when I had some tough problem on my mind—I didn't go to my friends. I went to our chaplain. He was something more than a friend. He was like the folks back home. You could tell him everything and he would help you work it out just as your father or your mother would do.

I can't begin to tell you how much our chaplains mean to the boys and have meant to me. When I was wounded, it was a Protestant chaplain who came for me and carried me to the hospital. And, when you move into a new area and pass along the rows of tents, you get a feeling of comfort and inner satisfaction when you see the blue flag of the chaplain waving above one of those tents. You know that inside that particular tent there's a man of God on whom you can count.

—CPL. RUSSELL G. BAGLEY.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The authors of the three foregoing letters descriptive of life and religion in the South Pacific and North Africa are, at this writing, back in the United States. They were featured at the luncheon given by the Presbyterian War-Time Service Commission to Dr. William Barrow Pugh, chairman of the Service Men's Christian League, shortly before he left on his current tour of the fighting fronts.

Where non-profanity pays off

✓ Here is an idea that others may want to adopt. In my tank crew we organized a non-profanity club. When a fellow used a curse word, he owed the pot a nickel, and the one who had the fewest profane words checked up against him at the end of the month got the pot.

I saw men who usually had an oath in each sentence go for days without saying a profane word.

I wonder if a lot of the fellows wouldn't like to organize such clubs? Ours works miracles!

—SGT. RIP ROCKIE HODSON,
Camp Campbell, Ky.

Testimony from the northern front

The following witness to the satisfactions found in living the Christian life while in the service comes to us from "Somewhere in Alaska." The writer was converted while in the States and baptized by Chaplain A. J. Turner, who tells us that Pvt. Breazile now feels a call to the ministry. We would like to have other such testimonies. Send 'em in, men; your experience may be of vast encouragement to some other fellow!

✓ Before coming into the Army, I knew very little about Christ and His way of life. It took that crisis to make me stop and think seriously about how I was living my life, and what death might mean to me and to those I love.

When I left home, my sister, a sincere Christian, gave me a New Testament, asking me as a favor to her to carry it with me and read it each day. I promised that I would, and there have been very few days that I haven't lived up to my promise. But I had not done much reading in the little Book before I found I was a lost sinner, and that I needed God and His strength to go with me. I asked a Chaplain one Sunday morning to pray for me, and he said he would. I had already been praying for myself, and I left the tent that Sunday morning with a deep-down happiness I had not known before. Three months later I was baptized, and I have been trying to live my life for Christ ever since, and I have certainly been blessed in doing so.

I am in a General Service Engineer Regiment, and some time ago our battalion was selected for a very dangerous mission. Knowing the trials and dangers ahead, I began praying for God's protection upon this entire movement, and that He would be with us each one individually, spare our lives, and bring us back safely—if that was according to His will.

On this mission I held close to my heart the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He was surely with us on that mission, as we met no opposition at all and every man of our battalion returned safely.

I have found that life is enjoyable and pleasant when you are serving the Lord, even out here at this isolated outpost. I

find a great deal of comfort in reading and studying God's word, and trying to serve Him every day. My prayer is that I might live a better life for God tomorrow than I did today, and every day thereafter.

—PVT. DONALD F. BREAZILE,
APO 980, Seattle, Wash.

A soldier's wife speaks

✓ I'm not a service man, but I am a soldier's wife. When he has finished with his LINK, he sends it to me to be kept until he has returned.

I find in LINK a lot that is of interest. In May, for example, there was the article, "The Girls You Left Behind," and the replies in the July issue.

I'm one of the girls left behind. In our home there are three, myself and our two daughters. We are keeping our home fire burning—in a round oak stove. We have planted a lawn and shrubs, and tried to raise some flowers. We've planted grape vines and painted the trellis we hope the vines will cover.

We keep busy and fairly happy. We'd be much happier if Daddy were here—but, since he can't be, we try to be happy any way.

In the evening I write long letters to my husband. Patricia, age 23 months, doesn't know him very well; but, if I can help it, he will know her—at least, as well as possible through letters and pictures.

There will have to be a good many readjustments when Ross "comes marching home." Years of being on our own has caused many changes. But I think we can make the adjustments.

Those of us left behind can't be static. We must read and learn to keep up with our men. They are becoming adaptable by their frequent changes. We have to keep pace, even though we do stay home.

Some soldiers fear the girls will be so used to being the "man of the family" they won't go back to their status of women. Well, I'm the man here now and I'm ready to quit any time!

There is the possibility I'll have to keep on—and on. Ross and I have faced that

eventuality and have discussed possible plans if— But we refuse to let it take form.

Thank you for letting me ramble. The publishing of LINK has met a very definite need of service men.

—HELEN SELDERS, *Bloomington, Ill.*

Brotherly love

✓ I have read Mrs. Engrin's "An Army Wife Speaks" in the July issue on THE LINK. The subject of "brotherly love" often enters my thoughts. I too have heard hateful remarks, not only against the Jews but against most all of the foreign and religious groups—in fact, all groups. I have heard such remarks against our President. It is the privilege of the American citizen to express himself.

America is a paradox. We have all but exterminated the native race to create a land for the free. We criticize Hitler for his persecution and segregation of the Jews, when we are guilty of the same crime, though to a lesser degree, with the Negro. I am a Hoosier sojourning in Texas for my military training. I have heard blood-curdling tales of the treatment of the Negro in the South, where he is segregated publicly. In the North we have no such outward barriers, but the barriers are there just the same.

Our Protestant and Catholic children in generations past were raised in hatred toward each other. Here we have made our greatest progress. Today I, a Protestant, can associate with Catholic young people without jeopardizing my reputation. We are showing slow signs of improvement, but oh, how slow!

We cannot be truly happy until we learn to respect the ideas of those about us. There is a considerable amount of give-and-take to successful living. If this is true of individuals, it is also true of families, communities and nations. The world is large enough for us all if we are but willing to share it.

—CPL. CHAS. P. ISLEY,
Camp Howze, Texas.

The evil of drinking

✓ To me, the chief evil in drinking is the attempt of the drinker to raise himself through his own power to that pinnacle of earthly happiness that man may obtain only as the gift of God to those who live the Christian life.

Drinking changes us to an entirely new personality. It exalts the body, gives the drinker "body-ecstasy" in preference to "soul-ecstasy." This raising of the body above the soul strangles the soul through which one may reach true happiness by faith and the grace of God.

The drinker is, in all reality, seeking to create a new person in whom he may dwell in happiness and freedom; thus, he is a blasphemous challenge to God, to His supreme power and divinity.

Another reason why drinking is sinful is that given by Paul, who says that no man has the right to indulge an appetite if by indulging he makes it more difficult for his brother to keep faith with his conscience.

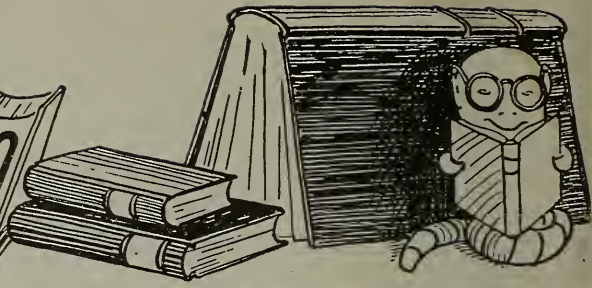
—PVT. JOHN D. COLLINS,
Camp Claiborne, La.

Saying it in rhyme

I was feeling blue and restless,
But couldn't just quite tell
What seemed to be the matter,
When I strolled in the S.M.C.L.
My feelings then soon left me;
Of myself I did not think,
For I was handed my first copy
Of a splendid book, THE LINK.
I lost myself in the pages;
I read from cover to cover.
And then when I was through with it,
I sent it home to mother.
It's a wonderful help to service men,
These leagues they organize;
It gives them Christian fellowship
That will help them all their lives.
L—is for the League that we love,
I—for the insignia to belong,
N—for our beloved Navy
K—keeps most of us from going wrong.

—WILLIAM VERNON BURNS, MUS. 2/c,
Fleet Post Office, New York, N. Y.

Browsing with the



A BASIS FOR THE PEACE TO COME.
(The Merrick-McDowell Lectures for 1942.) Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$1.00.

CHRISTIAN BASES OF WORLD ORDER.
(The Merrick Lectures for 1943.) Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$2.00.

» THE LINK, a few months ago, sponsored a contest on the subject "What I Am Fighting For." As most of you are aware, there were some excellent articles written on this theme. But it is not unlikely that some who read those articles asked themselves whether or not the postwar world would be like the one pictured by these service men.

It is well for us to wonder. A Christian world will not come automatically when victory is achieved. Thinking men need to dwell on such questions as: What must be the economic order of a Christian world? What must be the relationship between races in a Christian world? Every man in the service should be thinking of answers to these questions; you will find they are not as easy and simple as they sound.

The two books being reviewed are an introduction to the subject of the postwar world. The first, "*A Basis for the Peace to Come*," approaches the problem from the standpoint of a church. The chapter by C. J. Hambro, president of the Assembly of the League of Nations and chairman of its Supervisory Committee, has an enlightening article on "Some Problems of World Organization." Other authors are Francis J. McConnell, John Foster Dulles, William Paton, Leo Pasvolsky and Hu Shih.

Christian Bases of World Order is a

larger and more recent volume. The introductory chapter is a stimulating discussion of "Practical Religion in the World of Tomorrow" by Vice-President Henry A. Wallace. Contributors of other enlightening chapters are Francis J. McConnell, Willis J. King, Umphrey Lee, John B. Condliffe, Very Michele Dean, Edgar S. Brightman, Gonzalo Baez-Camargo, Bjarne Braatoy, Charles-Edward A. Winslow, Carter Goodrich and Reinhold Schairer.

This book is valuable, not because it gives all the answers—no one volume could—but because it does give a good, over-all view of the many problems which need to be solved if we are to have a Christian world order.

Service Men's Christian League units would do well to take these chapter headings and devote an evening's discussion to them.—I.M.G.

RELIGION AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW. By Walter W. Van Kirk. Willett, Clark & Co. \$1.50.

» Of one thing there seems to be no shortage these days—books on the postwar world. No other war period in all history has produced so much interest in the business of assuring a just and durable peace. This is unique. Even you men in service are doing a lot of talking and thinking and reading on the subject. Especially is this so among men of the Service Men's Christian League units. And we heartily applaud the trend!

But readers seeking guidance in their thinking on this all-important subject

should pick and choose their reading with care. If not, they will be confused by the multitude of plans and schemes being advanced—all of them good in intention, but many of them irritatingly vague as to plan.

Among the recent works that deserve to be tabbed "required reading" for those interested in Tomorrow is Dr. Van Kirk's most recent book. In the Bookworm's lowly opinion, there's no other one volume on the subject so rich in clarity of thought. The author not only exhorts but lays out a definite plan for action. And that plan centers around his introductory statement: "*In this great adventure of world reconstruction Christians must lead the way—not in any sense of self-righteousness, not because they are guiltless, but because the Christ whom they seek to serve is Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life.*"

There are few men today who can speak with the knowledge and authority of Dr. Van Kirk on the matter of peace planning. As secretary of the Department of International Justice and Goodwill of the Federal Council of Churches, he has long been in a position to observe—and, in many instances, vigorously lead—the various efforts the Church has made to ensure peace. That these peace efforts yielded meager and in some cases disillusioning results, he freely admits. "Christianity never got to the heart of the problem," he says—and shows how and why.

THE STORY OF DR. WASSELL. By James Hilton. Little, Brown & Co. \$1.50.

»Here is "Mr. Chips" in a Navy doctor's uniform. Only this is not fiction but fact—the stark but intensely dramatic story of Dr. Corydon Wassell (Lieut. Commander, USNR) and his adventures in getting his wounded men out of Java through the turmoil of the Japanese invasion.

Though Dr. Wassell—as presented by Mr. Hilton—is perhaps the most unmilitary officer you ever read about, he was heroic enough to merit the Navy Cross and his amazing feat was dramatic enough to attract the attention of President Roosevelt, who told the story in a "broadcast to

the nation," referring to the hero as "like a Christ-like shepherd devoted to his flock."

This book will take you right up against a background of crashing events that, if you do not already know it first-hand, will picture for you the underside of war in a way you'll remember and show you a gallant medico whom you won't soon forget.

THROUGH JAPANESE BARBED WIRE. By Gwen Priestwood. D. Appleton-Century Co. \$2.00.

»This is the adventure-packed story of the first woman in this war to escape from a Japanese concentration camp. For Mrs. Priestwood's courage in attempting the escape we have high admiration. For her service in bringing to the outside world the first news of conditions in the infamous Camp Stanley near Hongkong we give her due credit.

Yet the whole thing left the Bookworm cold. The chill set in after the first few pages when the author—after having lived in China almost all her life, mind you—makes it plain that, in being forcibly driven to seek haven and help from the humble Chinese villagers, she is learning for the first time what kind of people these are. That might be overlooked, excused as typical of the snobbishness of the so-called colonial "ruling class," if it developed that she and her companion-fugitive experienced, even for a moment, some measure of contrition and repentance for their lifelong dalliance with the frivolities of colonial overlordship while neglecting the rarer jewels of humankind right at their feet. But, despite the fact that the friendly and gracious Chinese saved their lives again and again, at dire risk of their own, the best the author does for them is toss them an occasional and condescending compliment that resembles true appreciation only as the mist resembles the rain.

Maybe you won't react in the same way. If you have no sensitivity on the question of our splendid Chinese allies getting further doses of the sniffish treatment so long accorded them by us "superior whites," you probably can enjoy this.

Topic TALKS



Subject for group discussion:

WHEN IS COVETING WRONG?

(Exodus 20:17; Luke 12:13-34)

• Questions and Scripture references:

1. What is wrong with wanting things we don't have? (Luke 12:13-15)
2. Is the Christian to regard money and other possessions as of no importance whatever? (Luke 12:22-25)
3. Does the good man always prosper? (St. Matthew 6:33)
4. To what extent is the present war due to national covetousness? (Isaiah 3:13-15)

• Resource Material

Fitzgerald, the novelist, has one of his characters say, "If I wanted anything, I'd take it. . . . I can't be bothered resisting things I want." That is an all too characteristic viewpoint of our day, and it is the sin of covetousness stated briefly and clearly.

For nations, as for individuals, the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence. The Italians want what the French have. The Germans want what the English have. The Japanese want what the English and the Americans have. The English and the Americans want the airplanes that the others might have at the end of the war. For some reason, nations are seldom satisfied with what they have.

Dissatisfaction with our lot in life seems to be a natural urge. To a certain extent, it is a good thing. Someone has called this a "divine dissatisfaction." It is the urge within people to improve themselves and the conditions of people around them that drives people onward. Abraham

Lincoln had within him this "divine dissatisfaction." As a youth, he felt the urge to improve himself. Later, as a man, this same urge expressed itself in improving the lot of a humble and downtrodden people.

There is a place where this urge to improve one's self goes beyond "divine dissatisfaction." That is where it becomes "greed." That is where Abraham Lincoln and Napoleon Bonaparte differed. As a youth, Napoleon too had the urge within to improve himself. Through his efforts he too became the leader of his people. However, there came a time in his life when he did not control the urge for more and better things. That was when "greed" became the dominant force in his life.

A Sin Old as Eden

When greed becomes the dominant force in our lives, we begin to "covet" what other people have. Evidently ever since man has been conscious of possessing prop-

erty, coveting what other folks have has been a danger. One of the Ten Commandments spoke out against it: "Thou shalt not covet." Jesus too saw the danger and spoke out against it. Here again Jesus went beyond the law of the Old Testament. The law of the Old Testament said that we should not covet anything that belongs to our neighbor. Jesus felt that not only was it wrong to want what our neighbors had, but that the desire within us to want more and more, even if it did not belong to anyone else, was wrong. Jesus once told a story to show this. It was the story of the greedy farmer.

The Greedy Farmer

There was a farmer who, looking out upon his vast farms, discovered that he would have a "bumper" crop. He realized that never before had he had so much to harvest. As he looked at the crop and looked at his barns, he knew that they would not be large enough to store all of the harvest.

"What shall I do?" he said to himself. "I have no room to store the fruit of my farm."

The longer he thought about it, the more he felt there was only one thing to do. "I shall tear down my present barns," he said, "and build still greater barns. There will I keep all my harvest and all my goods."

This he did for many years until at last he said to himself: "Soul, you have stored away enough to last for many years. Now rest, and eat, drink and be merry."

But that night the man died; he never did get any enjoyment out of the things he had stored away for himself.

Covetousness is a particularly deadly sin, for it starts life out on a false premise. It makes people think that *things* are important. We can understand why Jesus considered this such an insidious sin. He knew that the man who thought of the ma-

TOPIC TALKS are designed primarily to furnish groups such as Service Men's Christian League units with lively materials for discussion. A Topic Talk is provided for each week of the month. It is suggested that you adapt the Topic suggested in any manner most useful to the needs of your group. In addition to the questions provided at the beginning of each Topic Talk, any number of interesting queries will suggest themselves to you.

This month's TOPIC TALKS, based on the Uniform Lessons for December, 1943, were adapted for THE LINK from material written by Gerson S. Englemann and Anna Mary Gable and originally appearing in the "Senior-Young People Uniform Lesson Guide" and the "Intermediate Uniform Lesson Guide," published by the Board of Christian Education and Publication of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The lessons were developed from outlines prepared by the Committee on Improved Uniform Lessons of the International Council of Religious Education. The outlines are copyrighted by the International Council of Religious Education and are used by permission.

terial as the basis for life was going to miss everything important and valuable that life really has to offer us. As he expressed it, "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth."

A Covetous "Saint"

One of Robert Browning's best poems is "Gold Hair—A Legend of Pornic." In it he tells a story concerning an unusual character among the Breton people. A beautiful girl lived among this simple people and ministered to their need. She cared for them in their sickness, and all the people of the community thought of her in the terms of sainthood.

They felt that no one could find anything wrong with her. She was a beautiful girl with marvelous golden hair. She died at a very early age. The verdict of

the people was that she was too good to live. But before she died, she asked that she be permitted to fix her own hair and that it should not be disturbed while she was lying in her coffin. They readily granted her this one desire, thinking that it only expressed a small sin of vanity in regard to her hair.

Years later, workmen digging beneath the church floor where she had been buried discovered a gold coin. They dug deeper and around her skull they found a large sum of gold coins. It revealed that this girl, thought to be a saint, had had one sin, a terrible one, the sin of avarice. Gold was her god, despite the profession of her religion and the beauty of her life. Her avarice was such an all-controlling passion that she had sought to take it with her in her death.

A Self-Defeating Sin

One of the best-known of Aesop's fables gives us this lesson about coveting. The situation is that of a dog with a piece of meat in his mouth. While he crosses a stream he notices his own reflection in the water. Thinking it is another dog with a piece of meat, he makes a grab to obtain that as well as his own. Naturally, when he opens his mouth, his own meat falls out and his greed simply leads to personal loss.

This often happens in actual life, for the sin of coveting is of such a nature that it eventually defeats itself. One of the favorite stories of the days when civilian travel by ship was common is the one about the parsimonious individual who decided that the owners of the line were not going to make any money off him. Consequently, because he felt that food would be expensive, he carried a lot of things with him, consisting largely of cheese and crackers and similar foods that would keep. He did not have a very desirable diet while

crossing the ocean, but at least he felt he was saving money. He was very much chagrined to learn at the completion of the trip that when he had paid for his passage all his meals were naturally included. His parsimoniousness had only cheated and harmed himself.

Those who always desire to have what others possess are never happy. They keep themselves in a state of perpetual unhappiness because it is simply impossible to fulfill all their desires. Furthermore, no sooner is one desire satisfied than they want something in addition.

In the first book of Kings (chapter 21) we have a graphic illustration of the tragedy that so often comes in the wake of covetousness. King Ahab was particularly desirous to have a vineyard that was owned by Naboth. He tried to purchase it, but the owner would not sell. He made himself exceptionally unhappy because he was not able to get what he wanted. Later, when his unscrupulous wife, Queen Jezebel, noticed how much he wanted this piece of property, she connived a wicked plot whereby he was able to get it. But his sin of covetousness only led him to further sin.

Beyond Coveting

Covetousness lies hidden behind the religion of some. This is true of those who wrongfully interpret the text, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." There are many who interpret this as meaning that if you are good and virtuous, you will be bound to prosper. The book of Job was written almost three thousand years ago in an effort to explode this erroneous bit of thinking.

Should man have control over that which he cannot properly use? Jesus' picture of a fool was that of a man who

stored up for himself more than he could ever properly use for himself. All life is a stewardship—your ability and your wealth—and you only show that it belongs to you when you can properly show God and mankind that you know how these gifts should be handled.

For years Fritz Kreisler wanted to buy a certain famous violin. But the particular instrument he craved had come into the hands of a collector of curios. This man did not need the money so he refused to sell. He just wanted to own the violin as a possession of great value. It was one of the finest examples of great violin-making. One day in desperation Kreis-

ler, after repeated requests had been refused, begged that he might be allowed to play the violin. His request was grudgingly allowed. The great violinist played as he had never played before. As he expressed it afterwards, he played to ransom a slave. When at last the trembling tones died away, the owner with tears in his eyes exclaimed: "It belongs to you, sir. I have no right to keep it here. Take it, play it. Go to the world with it and let it be heard."

That is the purpose of ability and wealth. They should be used—not coveted. God will hold us accountable for what we have by how we use it.

Bible Rations

The following Scripture passages are from the portions selected for the International Sunday School Lessons. Printed in bold type is the Memory Text. Memorize it!

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

And He said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

And he said, This will I do: I will pull

down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

And He said unto His disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

Subject for group discussion:

✓ THE SUPREME TEST OF DISCIPLESHIP

(Mark 12:28-34; John 13:34; 15:10-14)

• Questions and Scripture references:

1. What is the supreme test of a man's Christianity, his creed or his life? (John 13:34-35)
2. Can white people have real love and at the same time treat colored people as inferiors? (Galatians 5:2-3)
3. Is it possible to love our enemies? (The Acts 7:54-60)
4. Can we hope for a lasting peace unless we build our international relationships on love? (I John 5:2-4)

• Resource Material

In 1927 there appeared a book by Thornton Wilder entitled "The Bridge of San Luis Rey." It has been acclaimed by many as one of the best books of our generation. The story is woven about the fall of a century-old Inca bridge that carried five people to death when it fell in 1714. Brother Juniper, a Franciscan monk, was a witness to the accident. The thought came to him: "Why did it happen to those five? . . . Either we live by accident and die by accident, or we live by plan and we die by plan." He resolved to place theology among the exact sciences by tracing the lives of these five people to prove that at this moment it was best that they die. He failed, miserably, of course, for no man can keep books for God. The author does try to give the implication that there was some merciful divine motive back of it all. But he sums up his lack of knowledge with one beautiful sentence of faith, "There is a land of the living and a land of the dead, and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning."

The sentence is worth pondering. It sums up that which makes Christianity supreme over all other religions. It is the faith that carried Christ to Calvary: namely, that intelligent, sacrificing, whole-hearted love was the greatest thing in the world. Jesus believed that love was a power that could overcome the world. He died for that belief; the world has yet to prove whether or not He was correct. Let us make no mistake, Jesus clearly taught and indicated that love was the final and supreme test of the Christian disciple.

Damon and Pythias

Damon and Pythias were two Greek friends. They were inseparable. Pythias was condemned to death by Dionysius, but he asked permission to go home before he was executed. Damon immediately stepped forward and offered to take the place of Pythias, in case he should fail to return. Under those conditions, Pythias was permitted to go.

When the time for the execution arrived,

Pythias had not returned. He had been delayed. Damon was being led forth to be executed in his place when Pythias finally arrived. Dionysius was so impressed by their love and devotion to each other that he not only released both of them but begged to be included in their friendship.

A Jewish Boy

During the African campaign of the present war, a German soldier was brought into a British hospital. He was dying and wanted the services of a chaplain. The chaplain was called, but he was unable to be of much service because he could not speak German, and the soldier could not speak English.

A dark-haired young orderly stepped up and offered his services as an interpreter. The chaplain asked the German lad a few questions. Then he knelt beside the cot in prayer. All this was done while the orderly was interpreting the words of the chaplain into words the dying man could understand. As the chaplain prayed, he prayed for the home folks in Germany, for a happier and better world, for courage to endure. Then he closed with the Lord's Prayer, which begins with the words, "Our Father." When it was over, the chaplain thanked the orderly.

"I was glad to do it, sir," the orderly answered. "I'm afraid I wasn't very good. My German is not real German; it's Yiddish."

Lip Services, but Not Obedience

There is one very serious indictment that can be leveled at the Christian community. The new commandment that was given by Jesus Himself has not been obeyed by any great number of professing Christians. And yet we have paid more lip service to this specific command than we have to any other. We talk a great deal about Christian love, but we do not

practice it. We say that it is our ideal, but then we ignore it.

The situation is very much like an incident described by John Ruskin, the great English art critic of the last century, who interested himself in Christian social betterment. He tells of the struggle that they had to get gas lighting into the college halls of Oxford. This famous university that has existed for so many years in England was quite slow to adopt new and necessary changes. Its leaders long fought gas lighting as a too modern innovation. But eventually those in authority gave in and agreed to the new method of illumination.

However, then they discovered that they had said nothing in their motion about pipes to carry the gas. This needed a subsidiary motion. The motion was overwhelmingly lost. They would agree to the end, but not the means. So we believe that love is the supreme test of the Christian, we agree to the principle as an ideal, but we are unwilling to put it into actual practice in our every-day living.

Can This Commandment Be Kept?

Maxwell Anderson's play, "The Wingless Victory," is a tragedy that has profound implications for our Christian faith. The setting is in New England in 1800 and the specific location is Salem, Mass. Though the witch-burning episodes are a thing of the past here, the author seeks to show that the persecution complex still holds in another form. Nathaniel McQuestion and his wife Oparre are the principal characters. McQuestion is a sea captain who left New England in poverty and returned with great wealth. His wife had been a heathen Malay princess who had been won over to Christianity because Christ, loving and kind, had appealed to her as superior to her tribal gods of revenge and blood.

With their two half-breed children they return to proud New England, only to receive a strong social rebuff. There are two reasons back of it: the relatives are jealous of their wealth, and they have a prejudice against one of another race. Oparre tries her best to win her husband's relatives through love and kindness, but she is entirely unsuccessful. They plot to ruin her, her husband and the children. They have a technical charge of piracy that they can level against Nathaniel McQuestion and get his wealth thereby for themselves. Using this as a threat, in a moment of weakness, her husband falters. Broken by the overwhelming pressure of his relatives and the community, Nathaniel McQuestion agrees to give up Oparre. With her children, she secures passage for a boat to return to her native habitat.

"He Came Too Soon, This Christ"

Her husband comes to go with her, but it is too late. She has already given a deadly poison to her children and has taken it herself. Dying, she repudiates the Christ of these cruel people and resolves to return to the gods of blood and revenge. In her dying speech, she says: "He came too soon, this Christ of love. Men are not ready yet. Another thousand years, perhaps."

There is an indictment here for us. We know that Christ, in a sense at least, came too soon for his world. They repudiated his way of love and nailed him to a cross. Are we ready yet for his commandment of love, or must the world wait "another thousand years, perhaps"? Let us suppose that Jesus were to come to our world now. Would we accept Him any more than the people of His day did? Is His ethic of love still too far advanced for our day?

Jesus would have little sympathy with those who think that Christianity consists merely of a profession of faith. He clear-

ly stated that the only way men would be able to recognize His disciples was by their capacity to love each other.

This way of life did play an important role in the early Church. It was a byword of the pagan world to say, "Behold, how these Christians love one another!" The world marvelled at the fact that they were willing to give up everything for another's sake. They would suffer and even die for each other. Theirs was a love that was expressed in deeds—the only way that true love is exhibited.

The Core of Religion

This is brought out in Lessing's play, "Nathan the Wise." The author is trying to show that neighborly love occupies the highest place in divine favor, and that it is the core or truth of religion. The moral of the drama is focused on the beautiful story that Nathan tells concerning "The Father and His Ring." The Saladin has asked Nathan which is the true religion, Mohammedanism, Judaism or Christianity, and his reply is this fable:

✓ A father had a very precious ring which, on dying, he bequeathed to his favorite son, with the instructions that he should do likewise, the ring always to be owned in each generation by the most beloved son. The ring was supposed to have the quality of making its possessor beloved by both God and man. At length it came into the possession of a man who had three sons whom he loved equally well. Not knowing whom to leave it to, he called in a jeweler and had two imitations made.

Wise Judge Settles It

These were so like the original that none could tell the difference. After the father died and each son had a ring, a dispute arose among them as to who was the owner of the original ring. A wise judge was called in to settle the contro-

versy. He suggested that since the rings appeared to breed only hatred instead of love, the father must have destroyed the original and given each one but an imitation. If this was not so, he suggested that one of them vindicate the father's honor by showing that the ring he owned was the true one because he was able to attract the love instead of the hatred of the others.

It is our hope that, before too much

time is past, nations will be surrounding a peace table. Problems of economic justice and moral righteousness will have to be faced. But nations will have to go beyond this if we are ever to have permanent peace. We will have to be able to see all races and nationalities as brothers. At the present we see men too far distant; we fail to see them as neighbors and brothers. Will peace bring us clearer vision and larger brotherliness?

Bible Rations

The following Scripture passages are from the portions selected for the International Sunday School Lessons. Printed in bold type is the Memory Text. Memorize it!

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all?

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord:

✓And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

And the scribe answered him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He:

And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask Him any question.

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.

If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

✓ *Subject for group discussion:*

GOD'S MESSAGE IN HIS SON

(Hebrews 1:1-9; Romans 10:4-10)

• *Questions and Scripture references:*

1. "God is the same yesterday, today and forever." How then can we explain the way in which our ideas of God have changed through the centuries? (Romans 10:1-3)
2. Is this war rightly interpreted as the punishment that God inflicts for our wrong-doing? (I John 3:14-15)
3. Did Jesus love only his own countrymen? (John 4:5-10)
4. Does the Kingdom of God exclude any race or nation? (Revelation 5:13)

• *Resource Material*

A little girl and her mother had finished their study of the Old Testament and had begun on the New. One day the little girl remarked to her mother, "It seems as if God grew better as He grew older, doesn't it?"

When we remember that the God of the early Old Testament was a God of wrath and war, that later he was a God of justice, and still later a God of love, and, under Jesus, a kind and loving Father, we might feel the little girl was right. Indeed, she would be right if the Bible were the story of the development of God. However, the Bible is rather the story of the development of man's understanding of God. Throughout the centuries, man had been growing in his understanding of God. It remained for Jesus to give us the true picture of God.

In the early centuries of the Hebrew race the people thought that God was to be feared. They thought of Him as just the God of the Hebrew race—a God who would be on their side of the wars they

fought because He was their God. Centuries later they came to realize that God was a just God and they need only fear him when they had done wrong. Still later, the people understood that He was not only a God of the Hebrew people; he was a God of all people. About the same time they began to realize that God was not only a just God, but that he was a God of love. No matter how much wrong they had done, God still loved them.

During all this time, of course, God had not changed one bit. It was that man's understanding of His nature had grown.

Shows Us What God Is

Jesus came to show men the truest nature of God. Through Jesus, men came to understand all that is highest and best in the nature of God.

Donald Hankey once said, "I don't know what God is like, but if He is like Jesus, then I would be satisfied." His statement conveys the great truth of the incarnation in very simple language. For, according

to our Christian belief, that is just what God wanted. He wanted men to know Him, but there is really only one way that men could understand God. That would be in terms of themselves. God, therefore, had to reveal Himself through the medium of a human personality. He did that in the person of His Son.

God's Progressive Revelation

Those who have studied their Old Testament carefully have found in it a progressive revelation of God. As the years went by, God revealed Himself in two ways. One way was through the history of the Israelite nation, and the other was through the messages of the prophets. The two methods were related, of course, for often the prophets read God's message in what happened to His people during their various experiences.

Abraham, whom the Hebrew people regarded as the father of their race, was in reality a great religious pioneer. He came out of the land of polytheism and idolatry, but he himself believed in the one true God.

Moses, in the commandments that he gave the Israelites and in the judgments that he rendered, revealed God as the giver of law and as righteous judge.

Elijah, the father of the prophets, in his struggle against the tide of idolatry, revealed a God who would be worshiped in purity and truth.

Amos pictured a God who was more interested in righteous acts than he was in ceremonial gifts.

Hosea, through his own unfortunate experiences, discovered and revealed a God who was always loving.

Isaiah, who, like his immediate predecessors, was a prophet of social reform, clearly saw the holiness of God and that his people should reflect that moral sanctity.

Jeremiah, in both his life and teaching,

revealed that both God and His people had to suffer.

Ezekiel taught concerning a God who demanded individual accountability of each member of the race. Thus, the prophets continuously unveiled God to His people.

In Jesus, we have the culmination of all that revelation that preceded Him. He incorporates in His own personality the fullest description that man can have of God.

Christian theology has rightly insisted that one of the purposes of the coming of Jesus into the world was to bring God and man together. As we read the Old Testament we cannot fail to note the frequency with which the prophets call the people back to God. When they worshiped strange gods or the substance of their own creation, they were urged again to seek the living God with a repentant heart. When they made a ritualistic show of their religion, but continued to follow their evil ways, they were commanded by the prophets to rend their hearts and not their garments. John the Baptist, the immediate forerunner of the Christ, urged men to repent so that they might get right with God.

Rickenbacker's Experience

In the story of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker and his companions who were lost for twenty-one days on the Pacific Ocean, there is one very striking note. It is the fact that these men, isolated on the mighty ocean on three small rafts, felt the need to hold prayer meetings each evening. None of them was religious in the ordinary sense. They had all had some religious training in their backgrounds, but most of it was in the distant and almost forgotten past of their childhood. Yet each evening they would read out of the New Testament, taking turns in doing so.

Now what is the central point that Cap-

tain Eddie Rickenbacker reveals in his story? Whether he intends to or not, he is consciously or unconsciously revealing that these men felt a need of reconciling themselves with God. Somehow they felt that it was necessary for them to "make up with" God. By their indifference and carelessness they had neglected him for a long time, but now that they were in such dire straits, they realized that He was the only one to whom they could turn.

Jesus Revealed a Forgiving God

Jesus was often criticized for associating with publicans and sinners. He did not limit his friends to the good church people of His day, but went out of his way sometimes to join Himself with some of the most disreputable individuals of that day. But to the storm of criticism that was leveled against Him on this account, He merely replied that He had come "to seek and save the lost." Many of His parables, like "The Lost Sheep" and "The Prodigal Son," illustrate that God is interested in saving those who have gone against the highest standards of society. And in His own willingness to forgive even His enemies, He demonstrated that God is ever eager and willing to forgive.

"Winterset" an Illustration

• That remarkable play of almost a decade ago, "Winterset," is built upon this great conception of forgiveness. Mio, the hero of the play, is seeking revenge for his father's death. His father was a very outstanding soul whose chief crime was that he had too much social vision for the day in which he lived. Had he been born at a later period he would have gotten along with society without too much conflict. Mio finally discovers how he can avenge his father's death, but he is held back by the fact that this revenge will

only cause suffering to Miriamme, the one he loves best. And he remarks, "I've lost my taste for revenge, if it falls on you." How can he solve this dilemma? Miriamme shows him the way out, "He would have forgiven." And Mio asks, "Who?" The answer is "Your father." There is a long pause before Mio is able to say "Yes, you will think it strange, but I never remembered that."

Jesus in his teaching and his life, continually reminds men of the forgiveness of God. Though it is often hard, we learn how to forgive those who sin against us, for we know that that is the only way God is enabled to forgive us.

There is an old story entitled, "Vesty of the Basins." Vesty was the wife of a Newfoundland fisherman. Her husband was a splendid, rugged character who was always willing to lend help to someone else. He was one of the most courageous and stout-hearted of the fishermen who plied their trade off the Atlantic coast.

In Christ, God Gives Himself

One day a pleasure launch was out in the bay on the shores of which Vesty lived. A storm arose, and to those on the shore it looked as though the people in the launch were doomed. Vesty's husband leaped into his fisherman's boat and rowed out to the helpless craft. He threw them a rope, and then, with superhuman effort, he towed the launch to the beach. But the effort was too much for him, for as he stepped out on the beach he fell dead from exhaustion. Vesty stood beside the body of her dead husband and paid him this tribute: "Whenever anyone needed anything that he had, he simply gave it to them. Finally they needed his life, so he gave them that too."

That is the way we feel about Jesus Christ and the God who sent Him into the world. He met and is still meeting

the world's needs, no matter what they may be. He gave men healing for their bodies, forgiveness for their sins, truth to make them free. A gift from God at His birth, he continued to give Himself unstintingly through His entire life. And finally, when His life was required, He gave that too.

Harry Webb Farrington has expressed it well:

*I know not how the Bethlehem's Babe
Could in the God-head be;*

*I only know the Manger Child
Has brought God's life to me.*

*I know not how that Calvary's cross
A world from sin could free;
I only know its matchless love
Has brought God's love to me.*

*I know not how that Joseph's tomb
Could solve death's mystery;
I only know a living Christ,
Our immortality.*

Bible Rations

The following Scripture passages are from the portions selected for the International Sunday School Lessons. Printed in bold type is the Memory Text. Memorize it!

God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a Son?

And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.

But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.

Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated

iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend unto heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up again from the dead.)

But what saith it? The word is nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Subject for group discussion:

✓ OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S GIFT

(Matthew 2:1-12; John 3:16; Isaiah 9:1-7)

• Questions and Scripture references:

1. "I am come that ye might have life." What does this saying of Jesus mean to us today? (John 5:24)
2. Why are men so often indifferent to Jesus until they get into difficulty? (Romans 1:28-32)
3. Can an enduring peace be built on anything except good-will? (Luke 2:10-14)

• Resource Material

Christmas by now has come and gone. Already the stores have taken down much of their decorations. Commercially, Christmas has been forgotten for another year. But what of the hearts of people? Has Christmas also been put aside for another year? Christmas brought to our hearts the urge anew to love our neighbors and to be kind one to another. Will that too be put aside with the Christmas tree, the lights, the lovely carols, and whatever other observances you men and women in the service enjoyed? What is the response of the world to God's gift? What is our response?

When King Herod heard of the birth of the baby Jesus, he wanted to kill Him. Herod was told that this infant, Jesus, was the long-expected King of the Jews. Since he had no desire to see anyone usurping his powers, Herod ordered the young baby sought and killed. When the shepherds heard the angel song announcing the birth of Jesus, they hurried away to see this thing which had come to pass. Drawn through curiosity, they stayed at the man-

ger to worship. Three wise men traveled a great distance from the East, seeking the baby that they might worship Him and bring Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Thus we see that in the days of the birth of Jesus, different persons responded differently to the announcement of God's great gift to the world. Some wanted to kill; some wanted to see; some wanted to worship. The great majority of people, however, knew nothing about the great event or were indifferent to it.

The World's Response to Jesus' Coming

As we look about us today, we see that people now respond to Jesus in various ways. The response is not much different from the response given on that first Christmas Day.

Shortly before one Christmas in recent years, a mother and son were pushing their way through a host of shoppers in a five-and-ten-cent store. The mother had her ten-year-old son by the hand, and she was attempting to negotiate the crowds of

last minute shoppers as quickly as possible. But, naturally, the eye of a ten-year-old would be attracted by many things at a time like that. In passing one counter, his eye and subsequently his hand fell upon a little ten-cent Christ-child in a manger that was part of a creche. "Come on, come on," said his much harassed mother, "You don't want that!" And she dragged him grimly away, for she had her mind set on many purchases that should still be made.

From her point of view, the mother was probably right in more ways than one. But many people do not want the Christ-child brought into the Christmas scene. He is frequently a disturbing element. When you bring Jesus in, you are reminded that He was the Gift of God, and that we are expected to make a response to that gift. Too often we would just prefer to be let alone.

A Gift for All Men

The Christmas story never grows old because it has a universal appeal. It was not written for any particular group or race; it applies equally to all. We have that in the setting of the story itself. Poor shepherds in the fields first heard the message of the angels. But wise and wealthy men also came to visit the Christ-child.

One of the many legends that cluster about the story of the three wise men teaches an important lesson right from the start. According to one of these traditions, these three represented widely separate countries. The one was the king of Tarsus, the second the ruler of Araby, and the third the king of Ethiopia. Because it was at night when they met, the king of Tarsus and the ruler of Araby did not notice that their traveling companion was of a darker hue. But in the morning, when they discovered this, they forced him to travel alone.

When he arrived at Jerusalem, this king of Ethiopia found the inns closed to him, even as the hotels today are often closed to his descendants. The other two had gone ahead, but all the time they were troubled in conscience by what they had done. They were going to pay homage to Him who was to be King of all men, and yet they had refused to travel with one whose skin was darker than their own. They permitted themselves to be infected with the virus of race prejudice.

Overcoming Race Prejudice

Then they thought of the gifts they wanted to present. They had gold and frankincense, but the former companion had myrrh. How could they ever approach Deity without this symbol of man's mortality? So they turned around, found their companion, and together found the Christ-child.

It is just a legend, of course, but is it not a reminder to us that our Christ was given to all men? It is a reminder that we should keep before us in these chaotic days when we are so easily subject to narrowing influences.

We need a sharp lesson like the one George Bernard Shaw points out in his "Saint Joan." At the trial of Joan of Arc the English bishop is testifying against her. He is sure that the girl is lying, since the voices, which she heard and claimed were from God, spoke in French. With finality he exclaims, "God speaks English!" Christmas should serve as a corrective to this great mistake.

God's Only Begotten Son

There have been those in every age who have posed the question that John the Baptist's disciples put to Jesus. You'll remember that it came when doubts crept into the mind of John while he was languishing in prison: "Art thou He that

should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus is such a complete personality that most Christians have been willing to accept Him as the finality for their religious thinking and living.

In Paris one can see the home of Auguste Comte, who is considered the father of modern sociology. It is interesting to know that there is a small religious group who follow him as a religious leader. He was a great educator and made an important contribution to positivist thinking, but he has had little effect upon religion. According to a story, he was talking to the great Scotch thinker and writer, Thomas Carlyle.

Comte told him that he proposed to start a new religion that would entirely supplant the religion of Jesus Christ. There would be no mysteries to it; it would be as plain and understandable as the multiplication table.

Carlyle gave a forceful and sarcastic answer, "Very good," he said. "All you will need to do is to speak as never man spake, to live as Jesus did, so that even your enemies will acknowledge that you are absolutely sinless, be crucified, and rise again on the third day and get the world to believe that you are still alive. Then you will have a chance for your new religion to get along!"

God's Gift Is to Us

Every Christian should be able to personalize Jesus for his own life. We think and we talk about how much He can do for others, but do we fully realize what He has done for us? Here is where church people often fall short in their thinking.

An old poem bears this curious title, "Strife in Heaven." A man happens upon a group of saints arguing the question as to whom Jesus had done the most for. By vote they narrowed the matter down to two individuals. The one said, "I was

a drunkard, a murderer, a thief, and a blackguard of the worst type, but Jesus saved me from all that." The second had no long story to tell. He said something like this, "I was brought to Christ when I was a boy, and because I had His guidance all through life, I was able to avoid most temptation." The saints voted that the love of God had done more for the second. It is more difficult to live a quiet, uneventful Christian life, than it is a life of sinful, harrowing experiences. It takes a great deal to draw a life out of the dregs of sin, but still more to keep a life holy.

Living Our Response

Quite a few years ago, Jerome K. Jerome wrote a play called "The Passing of the Third Floor Back." The thesis of the play is that it is the faith of Jesus in men that causes them to live as God would have them live.

In the story Jesus appears in modern life, in Bloomsbury in West Central London. The scene is a middle-class boarding house that contains an odd assortment of characters.

A stranger comes into the house and he takes the undesirable room in the third floor back. He is an unusual type of man who trusts everyone explicitly. He is always able to see the finest in men and willing to take them at their word. These selfish, grasping creatures who come into contact with him are transformed, even as Peter and Mary and Zacchaeus were changed when they met the Master.

This stranger gives them no new belief or philosophy, but he gets them to believe in the best that is within their own lives. The cheap vulgar Larcom becomes a worth-while vaudeville entertainer who takes as his motto, "Fun without Vulgarity." The young artist Christopher, of great promise, who was going cheaply to commercialize his talent, regains his former

idealism. One after another these people are changed to be true to the best that is in them.

The outstanding change comes in the character of the Jew named Samuels. He had been a cheat; he even tries to sell the stranger worthless gold mines in Ireland. This stranger disarms him by taking him at his word, the word of a Jew. But Samuels sees that he dare not sell out a whole race to such a trust. He

brings the play to its climax of thought when he says to the stranger, "You have taken it for granted, in all our conversations, that I was a fine fellow, in sympathy with fine ideals. But that is not what surprises me. It is to find that you are right!"

God gave his best to us in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. We must give our best to God by the lives we live in His name.

Bible Rations

The following Scripture passages are from the portions selected for the International Sunday School Lessons. Printed in bold type is the Memory Text. Memorize it!

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said,

Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in

the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.



» Visitor: "Are you the officer of the day? I'm Mrs. Smith. I have a grandson serving here in your Navy."

Officer of the Day: "Yes, Madam. He's away on leave just now—attending your funeral."

» The above one reminds us of the soldier who said he joined the Army for three reasons. "First, I wanted to fight to defend my country. Second, I knew it would build me up physically. Third, they came and got me."

» The prayer of a young bluejacket, overheard on the eve of a big sea battle, went something like this: "O Lord, please distribute the enemy's shots like the pay—mostly among the officers."

» The private was telling his chaplain that he felt a bit nervous about his first practice as a paratrooper. "I am afraid," said the soldier, "that my 'chute will never open."

"Calm your nerves, my boy," said the chaplain. "I am afraid you are jumping to a hasty conclusion!"

» George M. Cohan, famous Broadway theatrical producer, who is said to have had "undiluted Irish blood in his veins," wired for a reservation at a certain hotel in Miami Beach, Florida.

The hotel mistook "Cohan" for a Jewish name and politely informed him that reservations were accepted for "an exclusive restricted clientele only."

So Cohan wired back to the hotel man-

agement: "Both of us have been mistaken. You thought I was Jewish, and I thought you were gentlemen."—*Adult Student.*

» Girl: "I maintain that love-making is just the same as it always was."

Boy: "How do you know?"

Girl: "I just read about a Greek maiden who sat and listened to a lyre all the evening."—*Watchman-Examiner.*

» The Army recently received a raw recruit with education and culture. On his first day at camp he was utterly exhausted after several hours of drilling.

"At ease," finally ordered the officer.

"How wonderful is death," muttered the recruit.

The officer turned like a flash. "Who said that?" he demanded.

The culprit smiled wanly and replied, "Shelley, I believe sir."—*Watchman-Examiner.*

» The chaplain overheard two soldiers talking. One asked the other what made him volunteer.

"I had no wife, and I love a good scrap," was the reply. "Why did you enter the service?"

"I have a wife, and am looking for peace!"—*Protestant Voice.*



"Find Corporal Jones, that ex-real estate salesman. There's some explaining to do!"



A WIFE'S Blessing

By W. S. SMITH

It were not hard, too hard, to let you go,
If I were sure that some glad day
Would bring you back to me,
The ache within my heart I still would know,
But not so deep if, through the clouds, tear-drenched and gray,
A light gleamed, faint perhaps, but still a God-sent surety.

Yet what of strength and courage does it take
To "give" that which we know will be returned,
And blessed a hundredfold?
What holy sacrifice is ours to make
If naught is offered for which hearts have yearned,
And wistfully we long to hold?

So, dear, I let you, bid you, take the road
That leads away from peace and home, the joy of years—
For there your duty lies,
And mine? It is to bear the load
Of waiting, watching, praying though through tears
That God will sanctify our sacrifice.





REFLECTIONS ON THE



23rd Psalm



By MAYO CORNELL

The "paths of righteousness" are red—
Those paths on land and sea,
And underneath, and overhead,
That lead to victory.

The spear-head forged of righteous brawn,
The dashing spray, the acrid dust,
The wing-tips dipping in the dawn,
Proclaim the God we trust.

Restored our souls, re-born our will,
Through sweat and tears and flame,
To pastures green and waters still,
We battle—in His name.

