

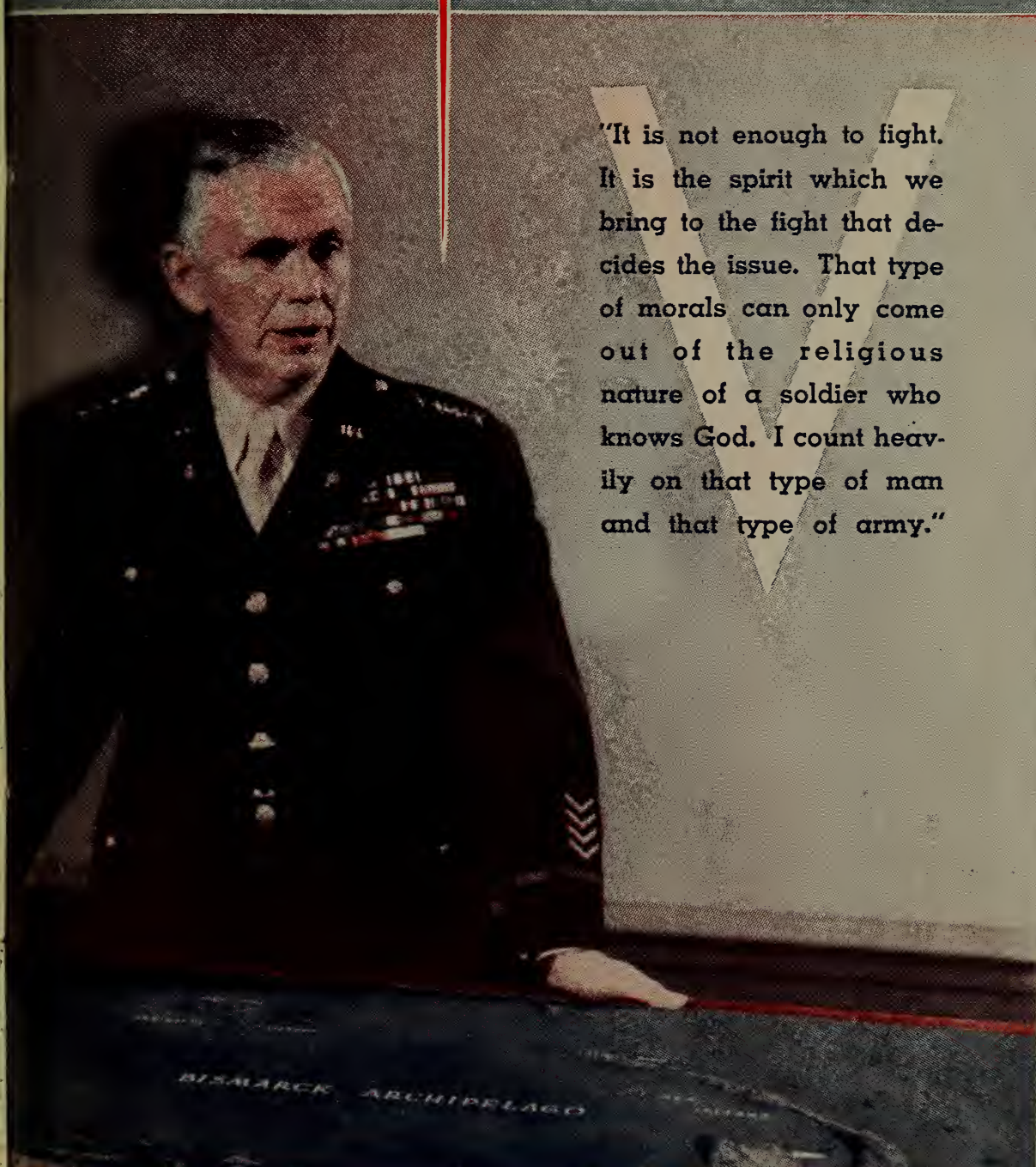
The

S M
C L

LINK

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE

SERVICE MEN'S CHRISTIAN LEAGUE




"It is not enough to fight. It is the spirit which we bring to the fight that decides the issue. That type of morals can only come out of the religious nature of a soldier who knows God. I count heavily on that type of man and that type of army."

VOLUME 2
NUMBER 8


Out Where the Bands Stop Playing

By CHAPLAIN FREDERICK W. CROPP, JR.




A Prayer FOR My Son

By ETHEL SHARP ZIMMERMAN



WHEN he was little, Father dear,
I held him close, I kept him near.
Now he is grown. I cannot be
With him on the storm-tossed sea.
So, wilt Thou, blessed Son of God,
Walk with him, as of old You trod
Upon the wind-whipped Galilee?

When he was little, Father dear,
I soothed his hurt, I calmed his fear.
Now he is grown. I cannot know
The dangers he must undergo.
So, wilt Thou, precious Elder Brother,
Help him, keep him in the cover
Of Thine arms, stay every blow?



When he was little, Father dear,
I taught him not to yield to fear.
Now he is grown. 'Tis only Thee
Cans't help him face the angry sea.
So, wilt Thou guide him, help him, bless
Him, as he nears the battle's stress?
Then, please God, peace! and home to me!

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CLARENCE W. HALL, Editor



Link LINES

• COMMENT ON
THIS AND THAT
BY THE EDITOR

MOST OF US are collectors of something or other. With some it's stamps or antiques; others clutter up the place with

The State of Religion

the faces and frames of movie stars and similar bric-a-brac. Doubtless you in the service are assembling some rare collections of souvenirs from the litter that's left in the wake of war.

We collect too. Our hobby right now is collecting reports—reports on the State of Religion in the service. And, believe you us, there's plenty of variety here! That's what makes the hobby so engaging.

Our reports, let us hasten to say, are gathered strictly from you guys and gals in the service. We've found we can't bank too strictly upon civilian newsmen who make quick sorties into camps and stations, or conduct a hurried poll of a few dozen soldiers and sailors, and then hustle into print with an "authoritative" story on just what you are thinking about things. We get the impression that most of these well-meaning Gallups are seeing and hearing just what they want to see and hear, and make their report accordingly.

Since we have a readership conservatively estimated at well above a million-and-a-half men and women in the service, and since we are persistently needling you to write us, our correspondence, as you can imagine, is something pretty tremendous. It's from your letters that we form our opinions.

But as we were saying, the job of getting a correct slant on the State of Religion is complicated by your differing estimates of the matter. Some of you are ecstatic about the whole thing, and see among your com-

rades—even the most callous—a distinct turning to God. Others of you are down in the dumps, and tell us that the great mob of men in service are no more intrigued by religion than a hog is bemused by theories of soul transmigration.

Such a wide range of opinion gives us much to think about while shaving. We make notes on your letters, then file them away. And when we need the stimulation of an argument with ourselves, we take 'em out, sort 'em into two neat piles to see who is winning now—the ecstatic or the static.

That practice keeps us in balance. On the one hand, we are not catapulted into despair by reports that men are not racing in droves for chapel services with the same speed with which they propel themselves to baseball games or camp-show shindigs. And on the other, we are restrained from yelling "hallelujahs" all over the place because a few men discover it's handy to have God around on a raft, and from jumping forthwith to the conclusion that a world revival is in the immediate offing.

THERE'S ONE REPORT, however, that most of you make in unison. You're fully agreed that men in service, no matter

They Ain't Talking!

how deeply they've experienced religion, don't do much talking about it. Service men, you tell us, talk freely about almost everything else under heaven, but when it comes to spiritual matters they—and you—close up like a clam.

Now, it's against this stifling of religious talk that we would campaign. Don't get

us wrong. We're not putting talking above *living*. The latter must always come first. And we know perfectly well there is a great host of genuinely Christian men and women in the service—fellows and girls who are keeping their standards high, and who refuse to trail their spiritual banners in the muck just because they are away from home and they might do a bit of hell-raising without anybody being the wiser.

Yet comes the plaint—and often from some fellow wistfully hoping to get some assistance in soul adjustment from one he knows to be Christian—that Christian men keep their religion too much to themselves. And, they say further, though you can whip up a bull session on anything else, from the art of dating a girl to the importance of geopolitics in Afghanistan, you have one dickens of at time promoting a sane and natural discussion of God and his dealings with the human soul.

That is a stinging indictment of us who call ourselves Christian! If it's true, we have a notion that it is just this hush-hush

attitude toward religion, on the part of those who have experienced it, that has done more to rob Christianity of converts than all the atheists put together.

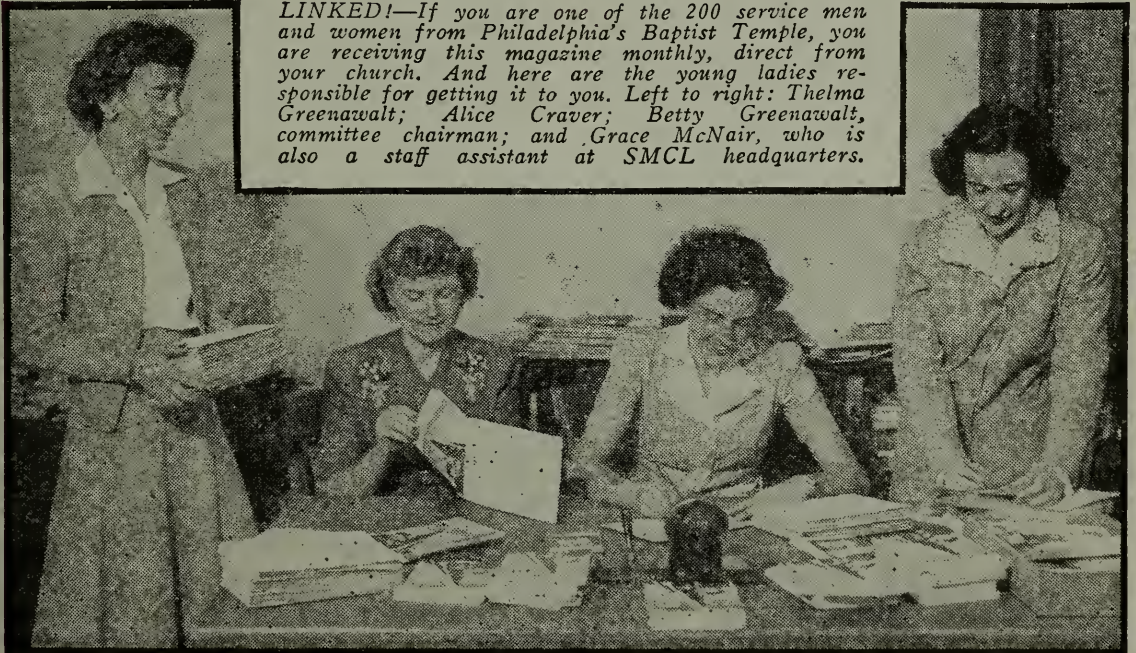
OF COURSE we know there are a few who maintain that one's religious experience is too sacred a matter to talk about as one talks about the war, the weather or the wonders of love. These hold that a fellow should keep his religion to himself, locked in the innermost recesses of his soul, lest it become besmirched and cheapened by contact with common topics.

To which we reply, "Baloney!" Unless we have completely misunderstood both the Gospel and human nature, religion was never meant to be some hidden icon, shelved in some secret crypt of the heart, visitable only by the owner. Fact is, it's just when men attempt to shut it up that religion smothers and perishes.

True religion, remember, is *life*—abundant life. And Christianity was described

*Religion
on the Shelf*

LINKED!—If you are one of the 200 service men and women from Philadelphia's Baptist Temple, you are receiving this magazine monthly, direct from your church. And here are the young ladies responsible for getting it to you. Left to right: Thelma Greenawalt; Alice Craver; Betty Greenawalt, committee chairman; and Grace McNair, who is also a staff assistant at SMCL headquarters.



by its Founder as "bread" to be eaten and shared, not stuck off in a corner and worshipped; as "water" to be drunk from a bubbling well, not dammed up for its owner's private use. Bread shut away accumulates no sanctity, only mould. Water that does not flow stagnates and breeds polliwogs. So also with religion.

Christians are supposed to *talk* about it. By this we don't mean you must be a gabby bore on the subject. But you should at least be communicative. Said Christ: "Ye are My witnesses." Another enjoined, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." And this advice, remember, was given as much for the benefit of the talker as of the hearer.

THERE'S NO PLACE on earth where just plain *naturalness* is more direly needed than in religion. That goes both for worship in the sanctuary (whether it's a chapel or a palm grove or the prancing rear-deck of a ship) and for that brand of casual conversation you call "batting the breeze."

*"At Ease
Fellow!"*

Why do people who will talk with perfect ease and animation about everything else freeze up entirely, or strike a sort of pious pose, or adopt a different tone of voice when expressing themselves on religious matters? Makes you want to yell, "At ease, fellow!"

It's just this tendency to make religion a haughty and ghostly matter that scares the daylight out of the uninitiated.

Unnaturalness in religion often manifests itself in two peculiar ways—it drives the normally reserved fellow into a frenzy of effort to convert everybody in sight, and the normally effervescent fellow into a frozen reserve. Both cases are unfortunate, and both are signally unsuccessful in winning others to the Christ they sincerely love and seek to follow.

We make no claim to being expert in the matter, but we offer as our number one rule in the technique of soul-saving just this: *Be natural!* If you aren't, then no matter how sincere you may be, you'll ring like a phoney in the ears of the fellow who is on the verge of seeking to establish a right relationship with your God.

RESPONDING to the suggestion made by several chaplains and service men in the recent past, we give you (on pages 58-63) a one-act play that can be put on by any group of men with histrionic talent. We would appreciate your reaction to the matter of our publishing an occasional item of this kind.

*"The Link
Presents . . ."*

To do the job, we enlisted the fine artistry of Dorothy Clarke Wilson, the well-known playwright and author of the current best-selling biblical novel, "The Brother."

As you will note, the characters are kept to a few, and the necessary scenery and props are purposely arranged so as to make the play useful to almost any group, however lacking in the usual essentials of costuming and stage-casting.

If you are in a position to do so, try it out through your SMCL unit or other group—then let us know whether you'd like more of the same kind of thing.

P O T S H O T S

» *The best of all sermons is the one that walks around in shoes. How are you preaching today, fellow?*

» *The man who has but one interest is always a bore.*

» *Speaking of bores, we like this definition: "A bore is a guy who is always talking about himself just when you want to talk about yourself!"*

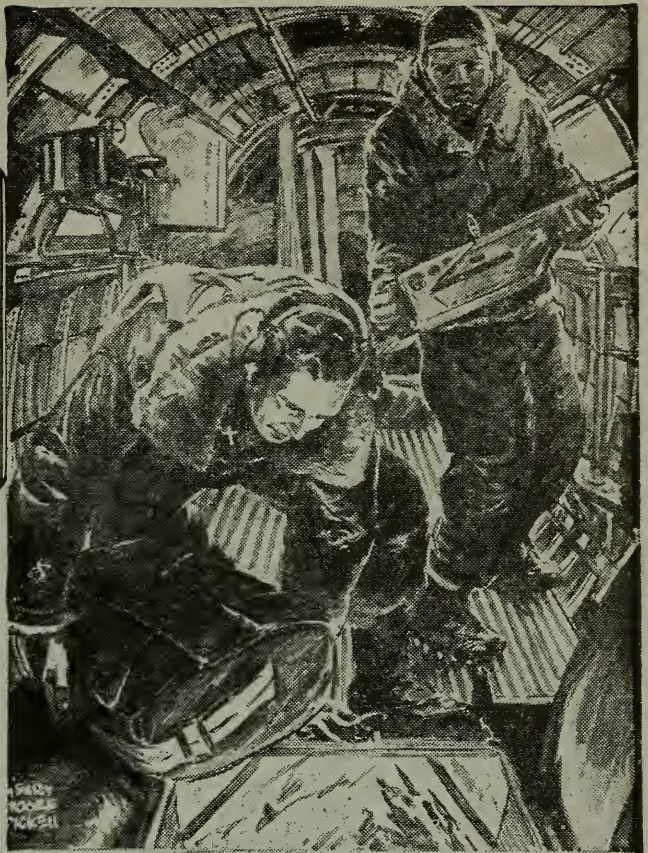
» *Consideration for others is a good brand of charity.*

The unforgettable story of Chaplain Bob and how he proved he could take it with the best of 'em

Sermon IN THE Sky

By KENNETH L. WILSON

When the sudden order came, "Throw over everything you can get rid of," Chaplain Bob helped Larry toss out everything that was not nailed down.



IT WAS one of those old one-two raids, and the enemy never seemed to catch on until it was too late. From up over the horizon, maybe two or three hundred bombers would sweep across from England. Then from the south, from the toe of Italy, would come more bombers.

Chaplain Bob was in the Masie Q, climbing over the Alps toward another important factory center in the Rhineland. Funny how he happened to be there at all! If it hadn't been for Joe Phelps, the padre would have been back around Naples, visiting the men in the hospitals, or listening to somebody worry out loud about a girl friend in Missouri, or giving some lad a few quiet words of counsel that might take some of the frightened look out of his eyes—if any kid asked him for counsel.

The trouble was that Chaplain Bob *wasn't*

"the padre" as far as Joe was concerned. To Sergeant Joe Phelps, he was just Lieutenant Graham. Joe could be very polite, but it was more than politeness that made him bear down tauntingly on *lieutenant* when he had occasion to address the chaplain. And it wasn't doing the chaplain any good at the base.

Joe was a leader there—more of a leader than the chaplain. Most of the others would do what Joe did—and Joe never had come to a service, never had stopped in at the chaplain's office for a friendly visit, never had dropped that "*Lieutenant*" to call him "Padre."

"Major Herbert," the chaplain had asked his C.O. a few days ago, "there's something I want to do—something I feel I *have* to do."

While the major listened attentively,

Graham explained. "I want to go out with the Masie Q on the next mission."

The major thought of a dozen arguments why the chaplain shouldn't go. He would add weight, and getting over the Alps was no fun as it was. He wouldn't dare put his finger on a gun trigger—why else go?

"Here's why," Chaplain Bob argued, "it's just like it was at home: I'm not getting close enough to the men. They have the dangerous job; I just sit around here in perfect safety, talking to them before they go out, telling them—" he smiled bitterly—"not to let the enemy get them down. Then when they come back, I pat some fellow on the head whose leg has been shot off or who has been torn open by flak and advise him to trust in God! No wonder the men don't listen to me." The chaplain swung a leg over the back of a chair. "I wouldn't either, if I were in their places, sir."

The major nodded, thrusting out his hand. "Next trip, you go," he promised.

THE chaplain sensed the antagonism of the crew from the time he rode out to the waiting bombers in the gray of dawn.

"Hey, look," he heard Joe telling one of the gunners, "we got company. The *lieutenant* is extending his service—he's comin' out to see us off!"

"More than that, Phelps," Chaplain Bob told him genially. "I'm going along."

"But, Lieutenant," Joe argued, "you might get *hurt*! And that would be too bad—sir."

"I'll take a chance on that," the chaplain said, swinging up through the hatch.

The pilot grinned sourly a few minutes later, shrugged his shoulders, and pushed past him toward the controls. One of the waist gunners located an intercom set for the visitor, and supplied him with an oxygen mask, showing him how to adjust both.

The field was alive with giant craft, and the air was filled with their thunder. The

crew aboard, the plane lumbered over the field into position. There was a lurch as it turned, a momentary pause. Then the four purring motors broke into a powerful growl. The ship vibrated with the tautness of a kite and began to move with increasing speed. When the bumping stopped, the chaplain knew they were in the air.

THE gunners were sitting with him there, silent. The chaplain looked them over carefully. There was Ted Wilkins, tail gunner. Hardly more than a boy. The chaplain was fairly sure he went to church at home. But out here, out where God could mean so terribly much, he was letting one man influence him.

The two waist gunners—they were earnest-looking chaps. Charley Alders and Larry Eldred sat opposite the chaplain, looking at him coldly, faintly amused. Dick Jenkins was climbing up into his place in the topside turret, then adjusted his seat strap and half hung, half sat there. His feet dangled down near the back of Ray Dickson, who sat hunched over his dials and switches. Stan Grant was already scrooched into the ball-turret underneath.

They were a team—these men here and the men up front. But the chaplain was not one of them. He was an intruder; an outsider; a talker when talking didn't count.

"We go on oxygen now, men—and Lieutenant," Chaplain Bob heard in his ear-phones. That was the pilot—Flight Lieutenant Gordon Jones. Jones was a good pilot, anyhow—and so was Ribuchi, the copilot. But they were all so far away. Chaplain Bob just didn't exist as far as they were concerned, beyond the fact that he was an official passenger and they'd have to look out for him—when they might better be looking out for themselves. Even Jones respected Joe Phelps. Jones wanted to be popular with the men as well as with the officers. Yes, he'd go the way Joe went. The

same with navigator Derk Jensen; Joe was his pal.

Chaplain Bob thought of Joe now. He would be down in the glass nose, purring over his instruments, getting ready to fix his crosshairs on the objective and let loose their load of destruction. Joe was the key man. Get him, the padre knew, and he would have them all.

This was his problem, a problem something like the jams that used to develop in Michigan where Bob worked one spring for his uncle, just before he entered the seminary. In that logging country you waited for the spring thaws the way a farmer waits for the summer sun and rain. The big logs were nudged gently by the rising waters and then lifted and floated free. Down the river they went. Down toward the mill—until one of them struck a sunken tree or a hidden rock, piling the rest behind it in a tightening jam. Until one of the loggers had edged carefully out toward the jam, sinking cleats deep into logs when a slip might mean death, probed dangerously into the pile and located the key log—until then, the jam stayed and grew worse. But when the key log was pried loose, or blasted out, the pack went on its way as if nothing had happened.

AND Joe Phelps was the key up here in this plane of silent, resentful men, the same as he was back at the base near Naples. Chaplain Bob had considered applying for a transfer. But he was convinced that the next man to come would have it no easier than he had had. He was sure this wasn't a matter of personality. It was just that Joe had it in for any man who talked about God, that's all.

"I'm a practical lug, see?" Joe had told one of the men and the report had come back to the chaplain. "I don't hit anything unless I get it in my crosshairs. That's what counts. Not how much I pray about it!"

"He had a good sermon last Sunday," the man had told Joe, "even though there were only about six of us there. Talked about sacrifice—how Christ died for us, and all that."

"Baloney," Joe sneered. "That's proof of the kind of guy he is! War makes you tough, brother—and practical! Which is what your lieutenant isn't!"

THE AIR was getting rougher now. "Ack-ack!" the pilot said briefly on the phone. "Maybe the trick isn't working so well this time." The gunners had swung into their harnesses, now, and the tail man had long before crawled back to his solitary cell at the rear.

The chaplain kept his position on the floor. He couldn't do anything. Not yet. Maybe if someone was wounded later on, he could help. He had figured that the mere fact of his being along, willing to undergo the dangers the rest had to face, would help.

Ribuchi's voice jeered suddenly. "Bunch of ME's at twelve o'clock."

Chaplain Bob tried not to act concerned. Not that the gunners were watching him; they were swinging their guns into position.

Joe had charge now; they were over the target. The chaplain felt the plane leap even before Joe yelled, "Bombs away!" They were swinging in a wide circle, and as the wing dipped Stan called out, "Right on the nose! Nice going, Joe!"

The Messies were closing in, furious at the trick that had taken them to the north. Charley's gun was blazing in a quick arc as he swung it to lead an enemy plane. Larry took it up on the other side then yelled, "Take it from here, Ted!" There was no answer from the tail.

The chaplain saw Charley first. He let go his gun with an amazed look and slipped out of his gun harness, slumping to the floor. "Alders is hit!" the chaplain reported on the intercom, then moved over to the

man. Larry looked around, but stayed at his post. A spot of red showed in the side of Charley's neck. Breaking out his first-aid kit, the chaplain sprinkled sulfa powder into the wound, then readjusted Charley's oxygen mask. Then he saw the crimson patch on Charley's wool collar. He ripped away the leather coat and looked. That one was bad.

"Two motors gone," Ribuchi sang out after a heavy shock. He seemed to be enjoying getting shot up, the chaplain thought. Probably figured it would be a joke if they'd go down with the lieutenant on board!

The chaplain did all he could for Charley. Larry slipped away from his gun; the fighters had left them. A few minutes later Joe came back. "Too bad they had to get Charley," he muttered, with the emphasis on "Charley." He began crawling toward the tail to see about Ted.

"Pilot to crew," came the sudden order. "Looks bad. We have a chance if you throw over everything you can get rid of. Including parachutes, radio and guns. If you want to make it home over these hills," he added. "And Phelps—stay out there for a while."

"Yeh," Joe cut in, his set plugged in at the tail-gunner's post. "Ted's mask fell off. He's coming around now."

Chaplain Bob helped Larry toss out everything that wasn't nailed down. They saw the mountain peaks close below—too close.

"How bad is he?" Larry asked quietly as they stood near the open doors, watching with a curious feeling their parachute packs falling end over end. Chaplain Bob knew what he was thinking. If Charley couldn't live, why should he take the rest of them with him?

"It's an even chance for Charley," replied Chaplain Bob.

"Jettison the belly turret, Grant!" the pilot bawled desperately into the phones. Minutes later the plane lifted slightly, and the chaplain saw something that looked like a big fish bowl falling away.

"Everything out?" Gordon Jones asked anxiously on the intercom. "Another hundred and fifty pounds and I think we can make it!"

"Yes," Chaplain Bob told Larry again, "Charley might come out of it all right. Better take a look at him, will you?"

Larry moved off cautiously. The chaplain looked around once more. There was nothing else to throw overboard. They had cleaned out the ship. He looked through the bomb bay doors again.

"Looks like we won't make it," Ribuchi phoned grimly. "Better do your preaching, Lieutenant."

Suddenly the ship shot upwards.

"We're over, boys!" Ribuchi yelled. "Congratulations to the guy who tossed out that last hundred pounds! We're on our way home!"

Larry Eldred turned suddenly when he felt the plane lift. Quickly he moved toward the bomb bay.

Joe Phelps was scrambling in from the tail. "Some excursion! Bet the Lieutenant won't be coming along again!"

Larry stared at him. "No," he said.

Something in his tone told Joe.

"Ribuchi told him to do his preaching," Ray said. "He did."

Sergeant Joe Phelps had tears in his eyes, unashamed tears. "So long—Padre," he whispered as the bomb bay doors swung shut over Italy.

End of a Quest

I sought my soul . . . but my soul I could not see;

I sought my God . . . but my God eluded me;

I sought my brother . . . and I found all three.

GOING HOME

Gracefully



—Signal Corps Photo

Could be that going home will call for more courage, more Christian guts and sense than storming the hottest beach!

IT'LL be a great day when Johnny comes marching home. But some of you will beat these Johnnies back home, for you will be discharged before war's end—from camp by white discharge or from theatres of operation because of war fatigue, illness or wounds.

No matter *why* you are discharged, going home will be an emotional problem of considerable magnitude. Can you go home gracefully?

Now, the dullard who is discharged for inaptitude, the alcoholic who is given a Section VIII, the weakling who rides the sick book to a CDD, the coward who makes a wailing wall of the reclassification board will suffer no qualms while homeward bound. There is no need for an emotional change, since each is just like he was when he came in. He's a sad sack.

But you GI Joes who did your best, and were getting on as well as could be expected of you until you stopped a bullet or two, or contracted jungle fever, or had a

nervous breakdown—you'll find the trip home tough going, emotionally.

WAR FATIGUE

Leading magazines, in trying to dodge the World War I term "shell shock" have taught the country a new and fancy term, "neuro-psychiatric." Instead of helping they have worsened the situation. Businesses were refusing to take returning GI's so labeled back in their old jobs; worse than that, the term was developing a stigma. The Medical Department, however, is working to correct the false impression of partial insanity, to explain that men suffer nervous breakdown under undue strain even in peacetime. Not all men have tough-fibered nerves, and battle strain brings to some a temporary breakdown. Don't feel sorry for yourself if you're sent home because of war fatigue!

WOUNDS

The Purple Heart is given for a body wound, for, next to your life itself, it's

your best contribution in line of duty. It means you were "right up there." You'll be evacuated to heal and recuperate; if you are maimed or mutilated, you'll be taught to use the mechanical member, then discharged with a pension.

The rest is up to you. You can crawl off in a corner, break your own fine spirit with self-pity, and crawl out only on patriotic holidays to sell poppies and pencils. You can. But you don't need to. And if you're a real man you won't. With the same guts with which you stormed the enemy at Cassino or Truk, you can face the home front with its sighs and shudders. When you do, don't give an inch on this beachhead, just as you never gave an inch on that other hot spot.

That hand that was blown off removing Kraut mines to clear the Appian Way to Rome saved the lives of scores of your comrades. Hold your head up! Think of that while you are learning to use a mechanical hand. Train your mind to think about what's *left*, not what has been *lost*. You should be thankful, not bitter.

THE TEST

The test will be your mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts. Men don't mind physical disability so much, but don't expect all your women to have the emotional control that our nurses, service women, and Red Cross ladies have shown. Be a realist, buddy. Let them stare, voice sorrow, dramatize the wound. Just smile at them. Think how some of them act in emotional reverse when Frank Sinatra sings!

You can't change your women; you can only love them. Behave normally; help yourself as you can; let the family or wife move you downstairs, or build a ramp to the porch, or write your letters for you.

Above all, don't let disability get you down. Follow the gallant example of your commander in chief, President Roosevelt.

Courage

By CPL. FRED W. ANDERSON

"Sir, am I being brave enough?"
The wounded sailor lay
Upon the deck. An admiral gruff
Bent over him that day.

The wounded man was but a lad;
His youthful eyes had seen
So very little that was bad,
So much of what was clean.

And now the admiral knelt down,
His aging head did bow,
And softly answered, "Yes, my son,
Just take it easy now."

...

"Sir, am I being brave enough,
Good Master in the sky?
The world is hard, the going tough,
There's many a tear and sigh.

I have been wounded for Thy sake,
The cup that Thou didst drink
Has overflowed my thirst to slake,
Yet now I sink—I sink.

Oh, tell me truly—is there One
Will soothe my fevered brow?"
The Master answers, "Yes, my son,
Just take it easy now."

The Guards

By CHAPLAIN AMOS L. BOREN

When shadows slip across the sky,
With darkness in their wake,
When only night-birds, nesting high,
The mystic silence break,
The sentries find their stations where
The frontier overflows.
With vigilant and constant care
They watch the troops' repose.

The trusting men in bivouac
Rest calmly, for they know
No enemy will dare attack
While guards are down below.
Have Christian soldiers all the faith
Of troops who, battle-scarred,
Can see that God is not a wraith—
Instead, the Master Guard?

VOTES *to service men and women*

YES, I really think the railroad terminal at Kansas City was the worst, the most pathetic! There they sat, twenty-one young bobby-socked mothers caring for twenty-one helpless wee infants. Stoic, reliant, curiously and paradoxically efficient, they deposited their precious bundles on wooden benches, or in the arms of compassionate strangers, while they heated nursing-bottles under hot water taps or themselves ran for a snack to keep hunger in abeyance.

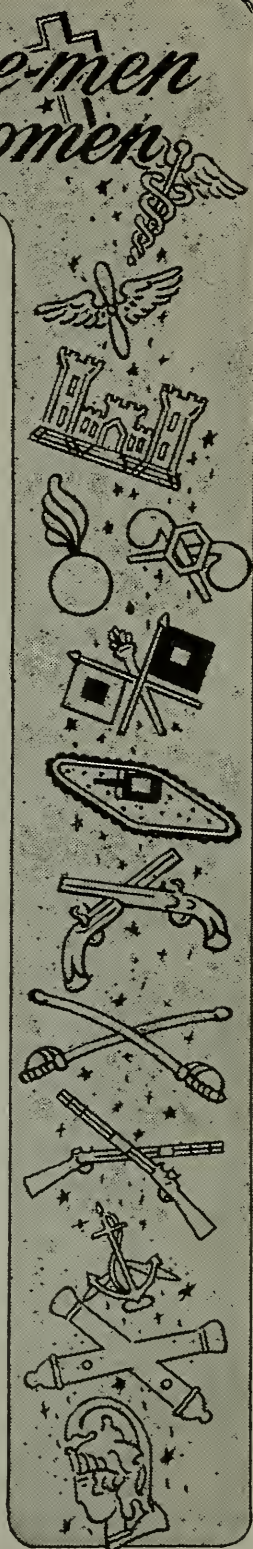
The hours dragged, interminably. Occasionally the babies wailed, but were quickly comforted against immature but loving breasts. One young mother I watched was a madonna incarnate as, in a sweet, reed-like soprano, she sang softly to her tiny son. "Baby's Boat's the Silver Moon" was the song, and in less time than it takes to write it, he sank drowsily into the arms of the Sand Man. Infrequently one of the great wooden rockers would be vacated, and automatically the little girls would rise and scramble for possession.

Now *why*, I thought to myself, 'why don't these young mothers stay in their own home lot? Why don't they accept sanctuary with their parents, where they can lean back upon experienced judgment, have less responsibility, more rest, more rocking chairs?

And then I looked again. And in their clear young eyes I saw courage, and stubborn, insubordinate loyalty, and adventure and love. They ached to be with their men, just as women have ached to be with their men since time began. Many of the fathers of these infants are going forth to die; that cruel, dormant conviction shadows the eyes of the little girls, banishes the gruelling fatigue, buoys them over incredible hardships. Wearily, but for the most part with touching solicitude, they guard and feed their little ones, and when they are as dry and comfortable as circumstance permits, their personal pride rushes to the fore. Expertly they wash away the stain of travel, adjust their lipstick, run deft combs through their bright and tumbled hair. . . .

Oh, unquestionably the problem has a graver side, involving the anguish of the parents and grandparents, the sound judgment of medics. Yet I'm beginning to believe theirs is the lesser side. Perhaps when the pain and terror of war has faded into a memory, and the old world again swings sanely on its axis, we'll not say that the Kansas City Terminal was the "worst," but the *best*. Perhaps, because of the premature adulthood and the loyalty of the little girl-mothers of the world, Life will bloom more radiantly than ever before. This writer prefers to string along with that bet!

—MAYO CORNELL





BATTLING THE BREEZE

What Shall It Profit Us, America?

▲ The forces of paganism struck us without warning and plunged us into the greatest conflict of history. None of us knows how long we shall be engaged in this great test to decide whether peace and brotherhood or rampant hatred shall inherit the earth.

World federation has been the one thing uppermost in the minds of all our great statesmen, but somehow their efforts have failed to accomplish this great and noble purpose. We have heard the Four Freedoms reiterated over and over again. Those aims and ideals mean everything to a red-blooded American. Many of us failed to realize how important they were until the world received its baptism of fire, destruction and hate.

Do you hear, America? Do you see, America? The world is waiting for your freedoms. Do you hear the cry of your brothers in bondage? Tomorrow will come the great peace conference. You will be the star, America. The world is watching you. The bright rays of freedom are so close to reality; don't let the cry of human suffering go unheeded. Forget your selfishness, your greed, your racial hatred, America. When the peace comes, be united, America. God has blessed you again and again, and is now knocking at your door, America. Don't you hear Him saying, "Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not"?

What greater thing could you do, America, than answer the cry of all peoples in this war-weary world? They, too, love freedom. They are your brothers, America. You are justified in hating the evils of the world, but you are a debtor to all human beings, whether they be Japanese, German or Italian. Maybe if they possessed your freedom they, too, would understand the meaning of brotherly love.

When the battle flags have been furled and our great statesmen gather around the peace table, may they let God guide us to that great federation for which we have paid so great a sacrifice. What shall it profit us, America, to win the war and fail to give the world our great freedom?—
S/Sgt. PAUL JONES MILLER, *Carlsbad, N. M.*

A Permanent "Service Record"

✓ Sitting here tonight, browsing through some old copies of *THE LINK*, drifting here and there with the articles, from front to front, from one service to another, and from camp on back to home, the thought came to me that these little bits of writings would live forever! They show the side of this battle that will never die out, for here is what you and I are really fighting for. I suddenly decided that I did not want to lose these books of mine.

Looking about the office, I soon found two red cardboard backs that the army uses to bind the carbon copies of letters. A few cuts with the scissors, a shoe string,

and a nail for a punch was all that was needed—and there I had the 1943 copies bound in the nicest book one could want!

An actual thrill came to me as I thumbed through this book of mine. Poetry, articles, humor, serious discussions, pictures, letters, and questions—my part in this war—written as I wanted it and understood it, were there before me. Here was something that I would cherish all my life. We are all collectors and trophy seekers of one sort or another. This I could share with someone many years from now.

Why don't you try it? Don't throw away that little red, white and blue booklet after everyone has read it! Put it in the barracks bag or the foot locker, and when you have a half-dozen, and a few minutes to spare, bind them together and send them home. A few minutes and a few cents will buy you a priceless record of a vital part of your life—SGT. FRANCIS R. LA POINT, *Army Air Field, Santa Maria, Calif.*

All Men Are Equal

✓ I would like to comment on the fine battle THE LINK is waging against racial hatred. It has always been one of my greatest desires to see man get along with man.

Since I have been in the army I have come in contact with both white men and Negroes, Jews and Christians. Men in the armed forces are less prejudiced than civilians, in my opinion. Perhaps they are realizing that we are all of one blood, created in the image of God, and that to Him we are all the same. Men not only pray in the foxholes but in army barracks all over the country, because they realize as never before that only God can lead us through.

A number of months ago, I went with two friends to a movie here in camp. On the way to the show we were greatly amused and pleased to notice the difference in our religious beliefs. One of the fellows was a Jew, one believed in the Greek Orthodox faith, and I am Protestant. Yes, when a Jew, a Greek and an Irishman get together you know that a great part of America is represented! If we would stop

to think that Christ put man equal to man when He died on the cross then we would have no war.—CPL. WILLIAM D. WHITE, *Camp Lee, Va.*

Soldier, Commune!

✓ The sacrament of communion is one of the greatest means of the grace of God. Through this channel the forgiving, life-creating grace of God comes to all who partake of it freely, regularly and wholeheartedly. This sacrament can rightly be called the "last will" of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a command. Keep right on doing this in remembrance of Him, not just once in a while or when it is convenient. Make it an essential part of your Christian life.

It is an invitation for you to accept the comforting and heartening grace of God through the body and blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is a promise fulfilled. What He suffered on the cross was for our everlasting good, for our souls' salvation. Go and receive Him in the sacrament. Your needs will be fully met, your poverty becomes riches, your weakness becomes strength in Him!—SGT. L. N. GENSLER, *Miami, Fla.*

Praise from a British Soldier

✓ I thought it might interest you to know that THE LINK is not only helping the doughboys, but is also helping some of us British "Tommies." In our particular sector, somewhere in Italy, we are really getting together—to our mutual advantage.

The first SMCL service I went to, under American auspices, brought me, in addition to many more things, a copy of THE LINK. The first article was an editorial entitled "Here Is a Man," and I am sure that no man could read an article like that without being impressed. To me it was a moral and spiritual banquet, and I am keeping it for further readings, as I feel I shall always be able to feed on such excellent fare.

If we are really in earnest about winning a lasting peace, with social and economic

security for *all*, we shall need at least the same co-operation essential to victory in the war, maybe even more. It is a colossal task, but with God "all things are possible." Therefore, I pray that God will abundantly bless every effort which aims at uniting Christians all the world over, because nothing less than this can possibly accomplish that huge job. May the day soon dawn when the world will say, "Here Is a Man," and follow Him!—Pvt. C. CARLILE, "*Some-where in Italy.*"

Training in Moral Leadership

✓ Last week, in a regular meeting at an English church I've been attending, two fellows of the RAF gave a report of their experience at the Moral Leadership Course they had attended. This course is conducted by chaplains of the RAF, and provides training for the men and women of the air force in character-building. It is held at a college where the students live for that week. The British government heartily endorses the program and provides the delegates leave, with pay, that does not count against their regular furloughs.

The program of the week consisted of study courses and lectures on subjects ranging from Bible study to such topics as marriage and the spiritual and emotional problems of military life. A morning watch

service begins the day, and ample time is given for meditation and discussion. Some recreation is provided but it is not stressed. The week closes with a reconsecration service and communion.

I wish that I could weave into this letter something of the inspiration and enthusiasm of the two young people who told us about it.

What has been done here in England with such success could be done at home. I know there is a tremendous need for such training. Though our forces are provided with the best of battle equipment, their spiritual and moral welfare is sadly neglected.

After being in the army for fifteen months, I can see the need of the young people of America for religious and moral guidance. Why could not our forces have something similar to this course the RAF has begun? I pray that the idea will fall into the hands of those who are capable of promoting it.—Pvt. HERBERT G. NABB.

The Way of the Wise

✓ "It matters not," some fool may say, "what road of life I take today." To us of the armed forces this temptation comes often. You are hundreds of miles from home. You may never see home again. No one knows you here. Why not make hay while the moon shines?

Suppose we fall for this line, and accordingly go out and carouse and drink and end up with a case of venereal disease. Some day there is going to be an Armistice. Some day you and I and our buddies will be going home. Our wives and loved ones will be at the depot long before our train arrives.

Think for a minute, buddy, what a terrific shock will be theirs if you come in half-cracked. Or, let us say, some disease got the best of you and you came in on a stretcher. Your dear ones will know the answer. They will not need to inquire.

You have given them the worst jar of their lives. They have dreamed of a strong, cherishable young man to step from the train ready to take his sweetheart or mother into his embrace. But you have thought too much of your own pleasure. You have "sold



So I ups and says to the Admiral, "I'm in the army—you can't boss me around!"

out" those you love, and now both you and they must suffer. You once had a host of Christian friends eager to see you advance, but all this and much more has been lost merely because you fell—because you wanted to "become a man." How desperately you failed that goal! How terrible a shock you have given your loved ones who trusted in your manhood!

And in the eyes of your former employer you are a complete failure. He has no further need of your services because in such a state you have no service to offer. Is that "good time" you had that unforgettable night worth all that? Surely, every decent, straight-thinking man will say, "That is the way of the fool!"

Would it not be better to come back to your loved ones ready and fit to serve—whole in mind and body? For is it not on us as young men and women of today that our democracy depends? In the confused World of Tomorrow it is going to take a man to do a man's job.

That being so, is it not your duty and your debt to your good parents—as well as to yourself—to lead a life that will lead toward a better tomorrow? Is it not your obligation to abstain from all that causes corruption?

"It matters lots," the wise men say, "what road of life we take today!"—PVT. HOWARD ANDERSON, "Somewhere in New Guinea."

Contributes His Tithe

✓ I have both observed and experienced the effectiveness of THE LINK over here in Italy. It is read and studied by a number of the fellows. The compactness in size and the freshness of terminology used is practical and enjoyable. The editorial "Here Is a Man" was especially impressionable, in my opinion.

Because of the value of THE LINK, and realizing that magazines don't materialize out of thin air, I am sending this month's tithe to you to help in a small way to continue the distribution of this means of Christian service to men in uniform.—WILLIAM C. KIESSEL, JR.

Qualifications for the Ministry

✓ Under the heading "You Asked For It," you recently printed an opinion by Johnson E. Turner on the qualifications needed by men thinking of going into the ministry.

Let me suggest what I believe must be basic in any such consideration. To enter the ministry, and be successful in it, a young man should have (1) a personal and vital experience of the Christian faith, and (2) a conviction that he is called into the ministry. In my mind all other qualifications are secondary.

My church (Methodist) has laid it on our hearts to be on the lookout for young men who may be directed into the ministry, and I am trying to keep on the alert in dealing with soldiers. I hope that any man I may influence in any degree concerning the Christian ministry may feel that it is more than just "a useful occupation."—CHAPLAIN GEORGE W. GOODLEY, JR., "Somewhere in Africa."

"Peace Begins in the Heart"

✓ One Sunday at chapel services several months ago I selected a copy of LINK from among the literature on the table of the vestibule, and I have been an ardent reader of this lofty little magazine ever since. It has been instrumental in helping me to re-dedicate and re-consecrate my life to the



Somehow I got a feelin' I joined the wrong branch of the service!

great cause for which our Saviour gave His last full measure of devotion.

In our realization that the salvation of mankind unto Eternal Life, through belief in Christ, is the noblest work on earth, let us study His Word; let us patiently practice the meaning of the inscription on our coins, "In God We Trust"; let us look up to Almighty God, "from whence our strength cometh," instead of grovelling in the dust for the almighty dollar. Let us remember and teach that the strategy of peace begins in the heart of individual man; let us pray unceasingly for strength to overcome evil so that we may glorify our Father in Heaven.

Then, when our strength has been renewed by the practice of the principles of Christ, let us become evangelistic, carrying the Gospel by word of mouth and by precept and example to those who know not the tender mercies of our Risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—S/SGT. PHIL BAKER, *Pecos Army Air Field, Pecos, Texas.*

"He-Man, Down-to-Earth"

✓ Let me add my sincerest applause to the great job you're doing with THE LINK. It's really a soldier's book, and every issue adds up to some dern good reading. It takes away from religion that worn and pious attitude that soldiers especially don't like, and gives it a real he-man, down-to-earth approach.

Here at Hale the chapel services are



Ski-Trooper Trautwein, standing on one of Hale's snow-flecked streets

pretty well attended. Religion is a vital factor in the lives of most soldiers, even though they don't admit it. Up here, where most of the men are of German, Danish, Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian descent, the majority are Protestant, and we have some lively religious discussions.

Since this is a volunteer group, many of the men are college-trained, and, as is usual in college, many of them pose as cynics so far as religion is concerned. But all the fellows I've met like the way THE LINK oversteps denominational boundaries and presents its vital message to *all* Protestants. Service men want a *united* Church!—PFC. LEWIS TRAUTWEIN, *Camp Hale, Colo.*

Going to Join the SMCL

✓ This is a letter to express how much THE LINK means to me as a soldier and a Christian. It provides wholesome Christian reading, of which there is a real lack here at camp. You are fulfilling a great need of the Christian service men in publishing this wonderful magazine. I look forward to each month's issue with the keenest of anticipation.

This week I intend going to the SMCL meeting at the chapel and joining the League.—PFC. RICHARD W. HOLLIS, *Camp Murphy, Fla.*

From a Catholic Reader

✓ In reading THE LINK while on guard, I found a great book which I had never heard of before. I am a Catholic and read all my Catholic literature. I do accomplish much more by reading books on the Christian life than by going to the movies or just reading novels.

I have been in the army for four years and spent three years overseas. The author of "Bucking the Profanity Tide" says there is more swearing in the service than in civilian life. I agree. It seems the younger fellows especially cannot speak two words without using profanity. The older men seem to have a much more civilized tongue. We have so many boys in the service who apparently were always treated too much like five-year-olds at home. If mothers and

fathers would only have more trust in their children, when they get to be sixteen and seventeen they would be much better off. At seventeen I was not allowed out after twelve A.M., but I was allowed to choose my own friends, and I am very glad my family let me do so. That gave me a very good start in the army, as I was not too ignorant to judge the good from the bad and the wicked from the wise.—SGT. FRANCIS M. MULLIGAN, *Camp Davis, N. C.*

"Only These Men Can Know . . ."

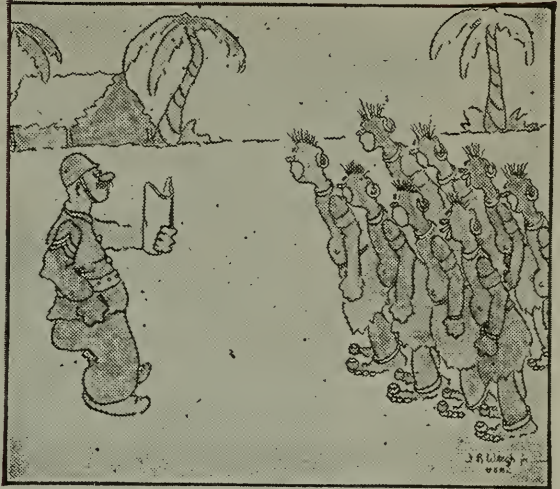
✓ I must write a letter! I want to enter my vote for Volume 2, Number 1 as the best LINK issue published. I've been reading them from the start and distributing about 100 each month. During my 14 months in Africa and Italy nothing has been more enthusiastically received than this wonderful little book.

Men of all faiths eagerly look for it. The few which are not picked up at my services are carried to the hospitals where bed-weary men find them delightful pastime and spiritual nourishment.

But to get back to Vol. 2, No. 1. I'm left-handed, and read from the back—if a story (or a magazine) hasn't a good climax it's hardly worth starting. The lonesome pup on the back inside cover moved me strongly as I thought of my own Irish setter I regretfully left behind. The jokes across the page relieved the tension. Numbers 5 and 15 across stumped me in the crossword puzzle. Lieut. McDowell's "We Pray" made me stop and think and pray. Margaret Sangster's story is excellent. I pray she is right, and that underneath the sophistication of today's adolescent youth are deep emotions moved by spiritual understanding as serious as their sophistication is flippant.

Most stirring was Corporal Halberg's real story "My Eyes Have Seen." I've visited often with a number of men whose eyes will not see again, yet who also have caught vision and face the world with smiling, confident faces. Only those who've been in this holocaust about Cassino and have seen brave men endure it can know.—CHAPLAIN HAROLD C. KOCH.

Roll-Call in the South Pacific



"... McCloskey! Dugan! Levy! O'Toole!
Smith! Meyer! Klackovitch! DiMaggio!"

✓ Just to give you a rough idea of how eagerly the natives here respond to names given them by the men, I'm sending along a cartoon I dashed off in what may laughingly be called my "spare time." Incidentally, THE LINK is well received by the marines out here and we want you to know we appreciate its publication.—MAJOR J. R. WAUGH, JR.

"Cry Is Always for More"

✓ The copies of THE LINK that have come to my desk are unquestionably the best periodical I have found for the service man or woman. My assignment with the WAC has proven that we have in America a noble and patriotic womanhood who are capable and willing to take it on the chin in a manner which is really inspiring. The copies of THE LINK that come to us for distribution are quickly exhausted, and the cry is always for more. Material of this character is sure to produce results that will make a large contribution to our future American manhood and womanhood.—MAJOR WILLIAM A. MCKEE.

"No Punches Are Pulled!"

✓ I have never read any Christian literature quite as good as THE LINK, and since

I have been in the Army I have been especially thankful for it. What I like best is that no punches are pulled; everything is straight from the shoulder. I am glad that the awful formalism which predominates in most church papers is left out!—RICHARD MADSEN, *A.S.T.U., Baton Rouge, La.*

Tired of "No Atheists, etc."

✓ I have read *THE LINK* with the greatest interest since I was first introduced to it in Camp Callan, Calif., over a year ago, and I think it is a wonderful voice of militant religion. But I wish to complain about the overworking of the well-known phrase, "There are no atheists in fox-holes." There are none in hell either.

Finding God is man's most important work, but there is a dead-line on it, and we shouldn't be encouraged to wait until then to hunt Him up.

True, God will help us when we call on Him in a tight spot, but how many of us would not be hurt if we were asked to send presents, but weren't invited to the party?—T/5 W. J. MILLER, *Camp Maxey, Texas.*

Thanks, Gentlemen!

✓ I am enclosing \$8.00 in currency for my contribution to *LINK*. I have read this magazine since last August and have found it to be a very interesting and inspirational publication. From the way the boys already overseas ask for copies, I think all that we on this side can possibly do toward supplying them with *LINK* should be done.

When I get my new copy I read only one article each day so that it will last all month. Even at that I am always anxious for the new issue each time.

I wish a copy of *LINK* could be placed in the hands of every service man in our armed forces each month!—PVT. JOSEPH J. MUNSHAW, *Camp White, Ore.*

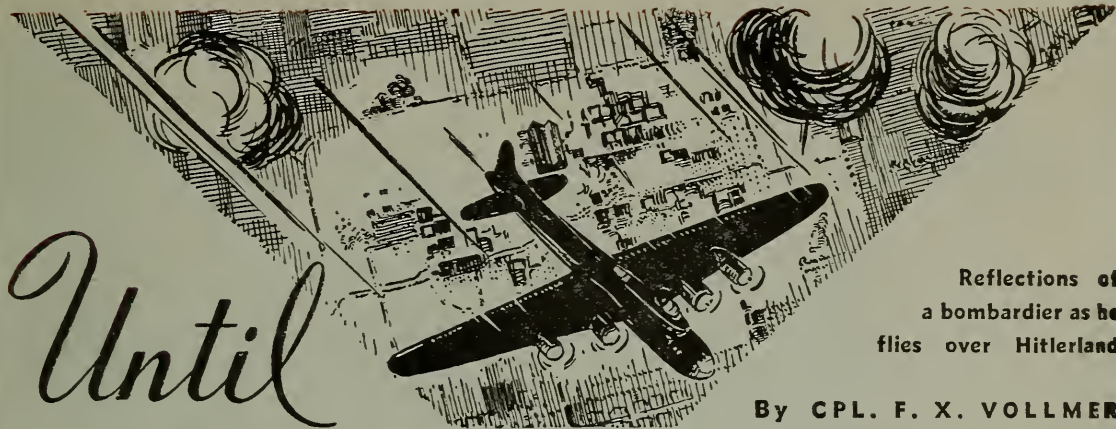
✓ Your League is doing a grand job among the soldiers, and especially among my own Negro troops at this field for basic training. Thanks for the copies of *THE LINK* which were received today to replace the ones destroyed in a recent fire. I hope you can keep *THE LINK* active after the war and during the postwar period. You will be able to count on the veterans to back you upon their return, but let's keep *THE LINK* for our peace period. It is tops!—MAJOR JOHN F. NOLTE, *Lincoln Air Field, Lincoln, Nebr.*

✓ The supply of *LINKS* in our outfit is never large enough for the demand, so please use the enclosed money order to help defray expenses. Your magazine is great, and your editorial staff should receive orchids for the fine job.

Every soldier that gets his hands on *THE LINK* guards it as he does his equipment. It serves a twofold purpose very well—it helps to link our Protestant church bodies together and it gives us service men and women a very definite tie between military and civilian life as a Christian sees them. The stories are timely and the wholesome jokes really pack a wallop; but the serious devotional articles, written in the vernacular, really deserve the superlatives. May God bless your energetic efforts in sponsoring this magazine!—SGT. CARL L. KRONBERG.



"More than 100 missions over Germany without a scratch—then I came home and slipped on a banana peel!"



Until

Reflections of
a bombardier as he
flies over Hitlerland

By CPL. F. X. VOLLMER

I COME HOME AGAIN

THE altitude is about 30,000 feet now, and there's Stuttgart below. It won't be long until we'll be over Berlin again.

Funny how a fellow gets to thinking about—things. The stars and moon look just the same as they did two years ago when Mary and I were sitting under the cherry tree, in the backyard. We were young and gay then. Life was leisurely and carefree then. War was something you read about in history books. Now I'm flying 350 miles an hour in a bomber with about sixteen thousand pounds of bombs—bombs that soon will drop with death-dealing accuracy upon people miles below.

Somehow it's different from what I thought it would be. Don't misunderstand me. I was plenty sore at Japs and Nazis then, as now. But I guess I figured on a little more glory. There's no glory in being here. Sure, you might get a couple of medals or ribbons. But, after seeing death, they don't mean anything.

Yet I know now why we're getting ready to drop our "calling cards" on Shickelgruber. It wasn't until I got away from the good old U. S. A. that I realized what we were really fighting about and for.

I learned about that from the Polish lad in London. He reminded me of one of the

fellows at school, only that his arm was missing. I should have known better than to ask how it happened. "They caught me putting up a sign about the Nazis," he said quietly.

And I learned it too from that French pilot who was killed when his guns jammed and he dove his ship into the 109. Later on I learned why he did it. When the Germans moved into Paris they made his sister stay to entertain the German officers.

Yep! I've met plenty of them over here. Guys whose minds are warped with hate . . . some who have had everything beaten out of them . . . and fellows who laugh at you when you tell them how we live in America. They can't imagine liberty.

I know the score now. You catch on fast over here. I've been brought up to know that might isn't right. My folks taught me that. They lived that way, and that's the way I want to live too.

They tell me America will change after the war. I doubt it—hopefully. When you find one thing works O.K., leave it that way. Don't try to change it. Just like my home town. Maybe it didn't seem so good when I was there, but I hope that it's still the same as when I left.

I want Mary back just as she was, and

that little brick cottage we both liked so much. I want to see that old workbench of mine, cluttered up. I want to see that old red-brick school, the lovely little church with its spire reaching upward, just as they were. Why? Because I want my kids to

have the fun there that I had, learn the things there that I learned, value the things that I valued—and more.

That's "home." Keep it that way for me . . . like I remember it . . . the same way I see it now . . . until I come home again.

Vignettes of Life Back Home

SOME weeks ago, upon a return trip from the Southwest, these little "vignettes for victory," like a fleeting kaleidoscopic parade, were tossed willy-nilly into my lap—all broken bits of that colorful puzzle-picture which, when complete, spells the beloved land we are fighting for:

First, that aged farm couple in Oklahoma. A dash of kerosene thrown on the wood in the stove by a lonely old woman making breakfast for her man. Five stars shine on that service flag which you see in the window, and as the bent figure of the old farmer comes in from the barn, it is those stars that he sees. With relief he sets down the pails which, for his failing strength, are far too heavy. It is five o'clock on a bitterly chill September morning.

. . . Wistful, wet-behind-the-ears recruits from Jersey, greatly elated because they are now headed back to "civilization"! They hate and revile Texas, and marvel that any one on earth should crave a bit of *that* stuff in his blood! They're quite unaware that Texas (like Boston or New York or a picnic) is primarily a state-of-mind. (A very grand and invincible and *unique* state-of-mind, I might add!)

. . . Across the stout limb of a huge elm sheltering a village lane in Missouri, I saw a middle-aged woman, saw in hand, performing amateur but necessary tree-surgery. "Gotta keep the old town intact till the boys come home!" she sang down at me with gaiety in her voice.

. . . And it was some place in Illinois

that an elderly milkman confided to me this story about Bess, an ancient bay mare. It seems old Bess had been ailing for some time, and on this particular morning the milkman took one look at her, felt her fevered nose, and persuaded a neighbor's horse into service. Completing the route, he returned to check up on the old and faithful friend who had accompanied him every morning for a dozen years. To his amazement he found the barn door kicked out and the mare gone! An hour later old Bess was found lying dead in front of the banker's house. Townsmen reported that she had made the rounds! Bess had stopped in front of each customer's house, then dragged herself forward to the next, till the chill of death had struck her down.

. . . Turning out of the driveway before a pleasant, rambling white house in Waxahatchie, I heard the ecstatic sob and smothered laughter of a mother, as she threw hungry arms about her handsome, furloughed boy. The memory, bitter-sweet and beautiful, lingers on.

. . . And in Pennsylvania, the pale, stoic children of coal miners, trudging to school along the lovely, rolling highway. They carry books, and babble with foreign accents, laughing and jostling each other in the free, good-humored, glorious American way.

Ah, home will still be *home* when you return, for there are so many who are giving their all to keep it so. And its *heart*, believe me, is indestructible.—*Mark Crane*

WHO'S MARRYING Whom?



★

A keen observation on wartime marriage as seen by the wife of a chaplain whose weddings are legion

By GEORGIANA S. GLEN

THIRTY-FIVE weddings in one afternoon! This may seem a little like "doing it wholesale," but my husband goes through that many ceremonies once every six weeks or so as chaplain of a midshipmen's school. On the day of graduation, it seems that many young ensigns feel strong enough to take on a new stripe and a new wife the same day! "Foolishness," some say. "Tragic," say others. "War hysteria, immaturity, snatching at life!" exclaim still others.

We have made an effort to have the young couples involved up to our house before the wedding, so I have met hundreds of these girls and young officers. I like most of them, and have many hopes and prayers for them in my heart. Often I have tried to answer my doubtful friends more or less in this way:

First of all, they are normal people. There is no soldier or sailor or officer *type* who gets married. They are dumb and bright, sensitive and insensitive, selfish and

unselfish, religious and not. The same is true of their wives. Some are fine, sincere, balanced young women; some are crazy kids; some are tough gals on the make. So when I am asked what I think of war marriages I reply, "Who's marrying whom?"

War doesn't force marriage. The motives are the same they've always been: for some, desire or thrill; for others, money or a feeling of accomplishment; for most, by far the most, love and delight in each other.

The majority of the men I talk with go to sea a week or ten days after they are married, and from that day on they, their wives and the community worry about their future. But this same uncertainty is shared by those who have been married longer and by those who are engaged.

Aside from our worry over our man's physical safety, we fear that he may become tough or cynical, tense, nervous, impatient, restless, as a result of this new type of life and of the strain under which he lives. We fear lest he come back with a physical disability, bringing with it depression and uncertainty. We fear for the future if he cannot, because of wounds, get his old job back. We wonder whether he will—or can—accept a new pattern of life. We are

● GEORGIANA S. GLEN is the wife of the chaplain of the U.S.N.R. Midshipmen's School, New York. She is the mother of three children, a national vice-president of the Girl Scouts of America, and is now working for the Red Cross, hiring overseas personnel.

chiefly fearful that he may return a different person.

And yet we would not keep him the same. It is possible that he may come back a better person. He may have learned to see another's point of view, to feel at home in strange parts of the world. He may have lived close to heroism, or discovered in himself that man's spirit is stronger than his animal impulses. He may have learned the value as well as the boredom of discipline and discovered the importance of giving up one's personal freedom for the greater cause of collective freedom.

With these deepened perceptions and widened horizons, this young man in the armed forces may have fears too—about his wife and others at home. Is "she" still chiefly interested in her own concerns, her conveniences and way of life? Has she become so enthralled with a job that she will be unwilling to become a homemaker and mother?

Perhaps, he thinks, she is still limited in her thinking to our street and town, and has no idea how close the Sicilians or Fuzzy Wuzzies or Indians seem to him, and how important their welfare is to our welfare. Perhaps she is indifferent to the spiritual

values he has found in humans—courage, unselfishness, dependence on Something or Someone bigger than self.

All this, I discover when they come to tea, is dimly or clearly felt by the young people my chaplain-husband is about to marry. They are plain, ordinary young people who are being given the opportunity to be extraordinary people, to be shaken out of our normal selfish ways into bigger and nobler ways. As they sit close together on my sofa I recognize that they face these difficulties happily and bravely *because they believe in each other.*

And so, if they are truly in love, they *should*, for "love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Through love they can learn to share their thinking in letters, to become intimate with each other in imagination and in understanding.

They may not be the same people when they meet again, but many, I believe, will find that they are closer and more in love than ever. For they will have learned new values and will share new faith in God's purpose for this world and new conceptions of what their life together may mean in His plan.



Tantalizing Twisters (Say 'em fast)

- ✔ The rain raineth, the rain ceaseth; the sea ceaseth not and that sufficeth us.
- ✔ A stupid skunk sat on a stump. The skunk thunk the stump stunk and the stump thunk the skunk stunk.
- ✔ The bleak, blustery breeze blighted the bright blooming bluish blossoms.
- ✔ Sister Susie's silly sister says Sally Shaffer's suitor Sam Shuster sips soup silently.
- ✔ Esau saw Saul sawing a sapling, but Saul saw not Esau while he sawed, for Esau saw Saul from where Saul saw not.
- ✔ Petite Patsy Perkins paints pretty peasant pictures perfectly.
- ✔ How many sniffs of sifted snuff would a snuff sniffer sniff if a sifted snuff sniffer sifted snuff?
- ✔ Sara Sheldon sewed several soft silk sleeve summer shirts for stalwart soldiers.
- ✔ Sam Saunders said he saw six short saplings sold Saturday for sixteen shillings.

From GOD TO YOU



Here are a few tips on how to get that little book out of your pocket and into your heart. If you're man enough to give it a chance, it will do things to your life which you never before suspected!

By PAUL S. MINEAR

THE New Testament is addressed to you. It is not the special possession of preachers and scholars, monks and missionaries. It was written by the people and for the people—and not for all people in general, but for individual men and women like yourself. It is not a riddle for you to solve, not a tragic charm for you to use, but a message for you to hear.

The New Testament is a library. Its shelves are lined with the earliest writings of men called Christian, writings which reflect every aspect of their dramatic existence. These writings tell the strange story of God acting in the life of a Man called Jesus.

The story centers in the awful death of this Man on a cross. It tells of God's choice of that crucified Man to reveal His purpose and His power. It points to the revolution which that cross produced in human hearts and in human history. It arrests the reader with a tribute to the freedom and faith, the courage and hope which that cross released.

Christians preserve these books because, once knowing them, they cannot forget them. Once confronted by the strange Man on the cross, they cannot escape Him.

Yet the store-house of New Testament

treasures does not open with just any key. Many readers find baffling puzzles, an uncharted jungle of strange ideas and attitudes. They do not know where to start, how to find what they need, what to listen for, how to translate ancient stories into modern meanings.

If you belong to this group of readers, the following suggestions may serve to direct you in your use of this library:

Read when you are alone, when you have time to think seriously about yourself, when you want to understand your own life and death, when you reflect about the source and goal of that inner center which you call yourself.

Read quietly and slowly, not as you race through the daily newspaper. Don't always read at the same pace; get in step with the material you are reading. At times each verse will require pondering; at times a paragraph or a chapter is the natural unit of thought. "Not snap-shots but time-exposures" should be the rules.

Read with *all* your senses alert and active. Don't be content with seeing the words; speak them aloud so that you can *hear* them. Taste them for saltiness of wit or irony. Picture the setting for each separate scene. Get the feel of the at-

mosphere. Ask constantly the question: "Why was this written? How did early Christians use it? What did it mean to them?"

Reading is a two-way conversation in which you participate. Visualize yourself as a character in the stories. Talk back, raise questions, disagree. These writings, when understood, always cause conflict.

Express your reactions by underlining, making notes in the margin, putting in question marks, exclamation points. Cut out pages for your diary if you wish; few books are more easily replaced and none more important to have where and when you want it.

When you find a statement that strikes fire, copy it and repeat it aloud several times. Jot down the chain of thought it starts. Let it lie near the surface of your mind for a whole day as a magnet to your thoughts.

The only reason for conversation is to discover a word *not your own*, to hear another voice. Forcing your prejudices upon another's lips kills the friendship. If you do what many people do—tell the New Testament what it must say—you lose a friend.

What should you do when you strike a snag? (Don't be surprised when this happens; every library has such riddles.) Move on to a section more clear and interesting. Remember that you are not studying a text-book but reading personal letters from Christian friends of other lands and generations.

First and last, the New Testament halts you with this claim: "God has here a word for you." You will not hear it if you read only for information or enjoyment—as, for example, when you scan a popular magazine. But if you see yourself as the object of God's action, then you will hear Him speaking. He has a purpose for you; read to grasp that purpose.

When He speaks, your immediate inner response is all-important. When He condemns, bow in penitence. When He offers help, rivet your hope on that assurance. When He commands, obey. Tomorrow's promise is reached by the path of today's faithfulness.

Reading the New Testament is an invitation to participate in God's activity in history. The epic told in these pages is an unfinished story which your life helps to complete.



The Gunner Read His Bible

IT is an inspiring story of faith and courage that is revealed by the posthumous award of the Distinguished Service Cross to an Army Air Force Sergeant, Howard G. Collett.

He was a gunner in a bomber that was knocked out during an attack on Celebes last October. Machine guns of Jap fighters had either killed or wounded every member of the doomed ship's crew as it fell to the sea. Collett was gravely hurt, but he read aloud from his pocket Bible over the plane's intercommunication system until he sank beneath the waves.

There were no heroics in that simple act of faith. The gunner wasn't thinking of medals, but only of helping his comrades in their plunge into eternity.

Death was leaping at them. . . . The gunner read from his Bible. There, in the silent waters off Celebes, a ghostly Cross must surely bless his grave.

—Philadelphia Inquirer



OUT WHERE THE BANDS

Stop Playing

When the chips are down it's not what a fellow's got with him, but what he's got within him, that counts!

By CHAPLAIN FREDERICK W. CROPP, JR.

WHEN one nervous soldier whispered to his foxhole buddy, "What was *that* noise?" you may be certain that the answer will *not* be, "That's a military band; let's listen to the music."

Soldiers everywhere know that bands are great morale-builders. But they know also that there will come a time when the band music will fade out; even the familiar thrilling notes of "To the Colors" and the National Anthem will be only memories. There are some places where bands do not go. There comes a day when the band music is over for most of us. As we leave for the port of embarkation, a band may play a farewell concert for us. There will be band music on the dock. We may hear some bands after we have landed to complete our training in some foreign country. But as we move up there will be fewer and fewer bands until we reach our battle positions—out where the bands stop playing.

There is precious little that we can carry with us out there. Some of us have memories; others take an adequate faith; all go with hope. The equipment is reduced to a minimum. What we take is usually just ourselves as we have been trained for these days that lie ahead. The question is, what do we take *within* us?

I notice that many men carry with them, and use until it becomes their own, a Bible

or a Testament or a portion of the Scriptures. May I commend careful Bible reading as a way to find the something permanent which all of us need "out where the bands stop playing"?

Have you ever read your Bible or Testament with a view to the critical times which may be before you? For example, if I were a sailor or the member of an amphibious unit I would know by heart all the "water-borne" stories in the Bible, the account of Peter's faith on the water, the story of Jesus stilling the storm, the account of Paul's rescue from shipwreck. I would remember these stories of faith against the day when *I* might also be in the midst of a storm at sea, when *I* might also need faith in watery places. Because I am a soldier, the stories of soldiering and of individual soldiers in the New Testament have special meaning.

I think of at least three places where the band music is dim and almost forgotten, and where we need to rely on more permanent music. Let us look at them.

I

In battle, the crash of artillery detonations and the whine and crackle of rifle fire are not adequate substitutes for band music. As we prepare to go against a beachhead, or push back enemy lines on

strange soil, we need something permanent to rely upon and to sustain us as we go forward.

Now there are two attitudes of mind with which we may boldly go into battle. The one is a hard-boiled fatalism; the other is Christian faith. The first results in the pagan fanaticism which some of our enemies, and at times some of our own men, are given to displaying. Christian faith will also send a man boldly and calmly into battle, knowing that the issue of his own destiny is in God's hands. We have a name for the first attitude: "devil-may-care." There is a name for the second also: "God-will-care."

If you would strengthen yourself against the day of battle, when the band no longer plays, take your Scriptures and read them in order to store away in your mind strength for future use.

Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

A man who has a verse like that in his heart does not need band music. He has learned to "fight the good fight of faith," laying hold on eternal life so securely that the incidents and accidents of battle do not shake his faith.

But I do not want to spoil your fun in finding your own help in the Scriptures. Begin now to make your own those texts which in the day of battle will be for you better than band music in your souls.

II

Again, some of us will certainly be in the hospital, wounded or sick. This is a fact

to be faced calmly. Already many thousands of America's men have been wounded and several times that many hospitalized abroad and at home. I need not tell some of you who may be reading these lines in a hospital that there are no bands at clearing stations, no band music at evacuation hospitals. It may even be prohibited in a hospital where men's bodies and minds are being carefully knit together after the harrowing shock of war.

Here we need something beyond the band. Most Christians know the healing ministry of prayer. They also know that a search of the Bible will repay them in convalescence. It is no accident that men read their Scriptures more in the hospital than anywhere else. They are searching for verses like these to aid them in their recovery:

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.

They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.



Once more, I shall not break in upon your own pleasure in finding your own verses. I merely affirm that there is help for the sick and the wounded in the stories of the life of Jesus (who was called the Great Physician) and who was Himself wounded unto death, and went to His death quoting Scripture.

III

If we are realistic, we shall face the fact that some of us shall become prisoners in this war. I hope none of us have

already been committed to a guard-house, stockade, or military prison. And I hope also that none of us ever sees the inside of a prisoner-of-war camp. At the present writing, however, we know that thousands of our comrades are actually prisoners of war, and of the vast numbers of those who are reported missing some are quite 'likely in prison.

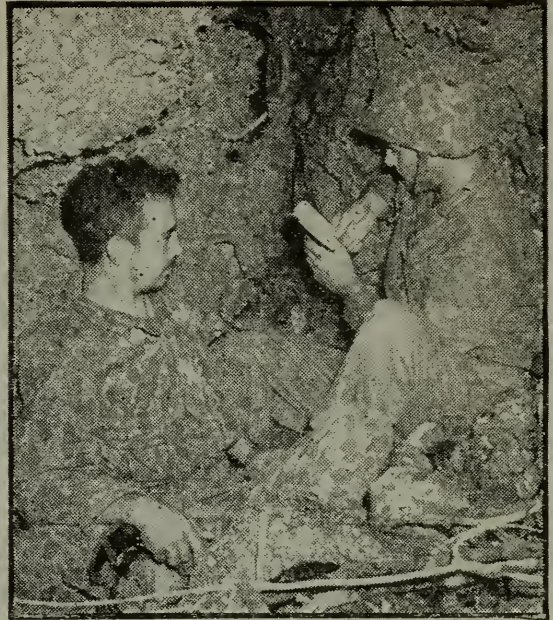
There are several things to do in prison to help give us sane attitudes in prison. We must not delude ourselves: prisons are real; they are not places of adventure or amusement. We must beware always of false methods of "escape"; and we must not keep before us any artificial hope of speedy deliverance. We must find ways to develop ourselves until the prison does not confine the soul.

There is a lesson for all prisoners in the story of Paul and Silas in jail. As they lay in their chains and sang ((Scripture again, from the Psalms) there came an earthquake which broke their chains. But they did not escape, much to the surprise of their jailor. For they had learned that souls are free though bodies be imprisoned, and their work could go on even though they were bound. They had fortified themselves with enough Scripture to last through many a long lonely night!

John Bunyan literally wrote his way out of the Bedford jail when he spent his time with his imagination and his Bible composing "Pilgrim's Progress."

So when you read your Bible, lay aside some help for this loneliest of all lonely experiences.

You can remember, for example, that God is with you even in prison. "*Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy God.*" Remember that one of Jesus' missions was to "preach deliverance to the captives." At least one of the Psalms was written by David when he was a prisoner of war (Psalm 56). Prison is never a



This spot, a foxhole in a South Pacific island, will qualify as being "out where the bands stop playing." Reading from his New Testament is Capt. Ralph N. Priest, while Pfc. Ramero Sababia listens intently. Both are marine raiders.

pleasant place; but it can be made endurable by preparing for it.

Do you begin to catch the possibilities in your daily Bible reading and study? Some of you will be able to memorize long passages which will take on new meaning if you are reading them for a purpose and toward a critical day. Others will want to keep a notebook to list passages which can be brought to mind under certain conditions. But all of us will want to do something about making available the rich wisdom of the Bible when we need it most.

In the Testament I carry there are two pages at the back called "Where to Look." These pages contain suggestions for reading in certain situations. I am asking you to make for yourself your own "Where to Look" for the day when the music stops and faith takes over; when God speaks in thunderous overtones and in the still small voice—out where the bands stop playing.

YOUR CHURCH PREPARES
TO WELCOME YOU BACK

UNDER *Home-Town Spires*

By T. OTTO NALL



WHEN the war is over, you will be ready to come home—if the reports that filter back to the home front are to be trusted. And, if the feverish activity on the part of churchmen is any indication, the churches in your home communities are going to be prepared to welcome you with more than handshakes and hamburgers!

In the city of Baltimore, where so many good things have started, a "National Conference on the Ministry of the Church to Returning Service Men and Women" was held a short time ago, and you should have heard the discussion. This was what is called a "working conference" in contrast to a "talking conference." For two well-filled days churchmen from a dozen denominations, doctors and social workers, government officials of both the military and civilian varieties, and others interested in you came to grips with the problems and needs of demobilized members of the armed forces.

For instance, Dr. William Barrow Pugh, chairman of the Service Men's Christian League and a fellow whose face you may have seen when he visited the battlefronts, was there. He spoke on "The Problem Confronting the Church" and "Attitudes and Needs of Returning Service Men and Women." He is the preacher who has been

telling the folk back home that "if war is hell, you can't expect a fellow to come through it without some of the brimstone clinging to his clothes," and so attitudes will be somewhat changed.

Postwar Schooling Plans

Brigadier General Frank T. Hines, who is director of the Veterans' Administration, came over from Washington to speak on "Government Plans for Returning Service Men and Women." The so-called Osborn Report, made by the Armed Forces Committee on Post-War Educational Opportunities for Service Personnel, was much in the public eye at the time. The proposal was for a year of education or training at government expense for every man or woman who had served six months or more in the armed forces since September 16, 1940. For those who showed exceptional ability there was to be the possibility of further schooling for one, two or even three years, with loans and grants-in-aid made by the government. You will have to consult your newspapers for the story of the plan's fate at the hand of Congress, but General Hines discussed the whole matter at Baltimore.

Present also was a Congressman who is himself a young man and a stalwart

friend of the younger generation. Representative Jerry Voorhis, of California, came to outline "How the Churches Can Supplement the Plans of the Government." He had some down-to-earth suggestions.

A Church College Has Its Say

The attitude of Emory University, a Methodist school on the outskirts of Atlanta, Ga., is probably typical of the position that most church-related colleges are taking. Last winter the registrar's tally showed 1,297 students enrolled, with sixty-six per cent of them in uniform. They were taking courses in the business and medical schools. Several of the buildings had been taken over by the Army and Navy. Concerning postwar plans, R. F. Whitaker, assistant to the president, says:

We will encourage our former students who went to war before completing their education to return to college. We will urge any veteran who needs educational equipment to go to college and get it, and we will offer Emory's facilities to those who need what we have to offer. We will make some adjustments in certain mechanical requirements to facilitate the use of them by returning veterans.

But in all this we will make a positive effort to sell the ex-service man on the value and opportunity afforded by good sound education. We do not intend to organize any "rehabilitation program" that is anything less than good education, and we do not intend to go outside our normal and established field of educational activities.

Furthermore, we do not intend to offer "blanket credits" for military service, as was done by so many schools after the last war. In cases where a student's military service has apparently included experience and training directly related to the course of study he wants in college, we will give him an opportunity to establish the extent of such training and then give "credit" for the established value. For instance, correspondence courses taken through the Armed Forces Institute, or other educational programs of the armed forces, can be validated by examination, but such credits should fit reasonably well into the course requirements for the student's college objective.

The Church will be waiting to help in many ways when Johnny and Jenny come

marching home, and no help will be more important than that offered by the church schools that, refusing to offer short-course shortcuts to quick diplomas, insist that education involves good, honest, real intellectual work. They know that you will want to waste no time in completing your education, and they understand that your wartime experiences and responsibilities will have matured you so that you will be able to work faster and better. They are convinced that you will want the standards kept high.

At the Baltimore meeting Francis J. Brown, consultant with the American Council of Education, described the education that you are getting in the armed forces. He mentioned three characteristics: it is functional, being applied immediately to dropping bombs or firing howitzers or what have you; it is flexible, being able to take leave of all that is traditional and face new problems and needs; and it is individual, being suited to the man or woman who is undergoing training. The church college is prepared to build on your service experience, using educational methods that have those traits, and many others.

Streamlining Religious Education

You may or may not agree with Dr. Brown when he turned to religious education, as seen in our Sunday schools. "Measured against the three tests of functional, flexible, and individual," said he, "religious education falls far short." And he predicted that the churches will need to revamp much of their program of religious education, if they are to interest service men and women coming back to the home communities. If you are inclined to side with Dr. Brown, you will be glad to know that the process of revamping is already going on. What you might call "heroic efforts" are being made to bring the courses closer to the people who study them. And if you have a briefing-room or foxhole suggestion about

how this might be done, your home pastor would appreciate receiving it.

Some of you will be going back to small communities. Many a fellow has said, "If I could only have a few acres when this is over, I'd be happy to stay there." The farm-lands may be overpopulated for a while, as industry is converted from wartime to peacetime production. But, however that may be, the Sunday schools in the villages and countryside are going to have lesson helps suited to them. New materials are being tested; results will be announced soon.

Welcomes for Service Brides

Military weddings have become so common—with both the bride and groom in uniform in many cases—that some churches are making special plans to help the brides of service men feel at home in newly adopted communities. The Toronto Baptist Brotherhood and War Service Committee has even designed welcomes for wives from overseas. The plan calls for more than merely meeting and welcoming the newcomer; it includes a prolonged program intended to assist her in the adjustment.

H-day, or whatever you choose to call homecoming day, will bring many reunions with brides who couldn't accompany their husbands, even as far as the camps. There will be weddings for those who couldn't arrange things before. And all this will mean an extensive re-building of American home life after the men and women return from service in the armed forces—and the war plants, too. Speaking on this subject, Leland Foster Wood, secretary of the Commission on Marriage and the Home, Federal Council of Churches, recently said this:

In the re-building of American home life, for which so much sacrifice has already been made, men and women returning from their separation in war service can have a splendid part. It is to be hoped that churches and other organizations will set up many more counselling centers and offer more courses in marriage relationships.

Planning in this direction is less than well started, but Church leaders and the rank-and-file of church people are seeing the need. There will be far more "Mr. and Mrs.," "Cum Dubl" and "Co-Wed" classes in the Sunday schools than there were when you left—and, even more important, these groups will have study courses all their own. Still more important, the ministers will have more training in counselling. Your experiences with the chaplains have led you to expect real counselling on the battlefronts; you may expect to find it on the home front at war's end.

Fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with boys from all parts of the country, with Protestants and Catholics and Jews, you have come to see what it would mean if Americans could face their peacetime problems in the same spirit of team-play. If the American family could get along without bickering between groups, if racial and religious and nationality differences could be forgotten in enthusiasm for a common cause, almost anything could be accomplished. And about that must be done, if our democracy is to endure.

Cementing the American Family

Therefore, you will be interested in such experiments as the "Springfield Plan," whereby the people of the Massachusetts city have made an adventure in citizenship. Through schools, homes, churches, civic clubs and other agencies, prejudice against Jews and Negroes and other minorities has been subjected to a "pincers movement." Convinced that prejudice is "being down on what you're not up on," the people of Springfield have tried to inform themselves about the characteristics and contributions of misunderstood groups. They have been at it now for five years, with general satisfaction on all sides.

There are likely to be many "Springfields," each working in its own way, when you come home.

Prayer OF A Soldier

By CHAPLAIN WILLARD S. SMITH

Yesterday, O God

. . . I walked through the woods and over the fields, and everywhere I saw the imprint of Thy hand, for everywhere was life and order and beauty;

. . . I walked by the sea and the rhythmic cadence of the billows awed me with the sense of Thy majesty and the might of Thy eternal power;

. . . A friend clasped my hand when I needed the uplift of one who could understand and be content with silence when words failed me;

. . . Loved ones, in a hundred ways, told me of their affection and said, "We'll pray for you";

. . . My mother smiled with a courage I can never match, and kissed me, I think as she used to at bedtime and said good-bye with her head held high—

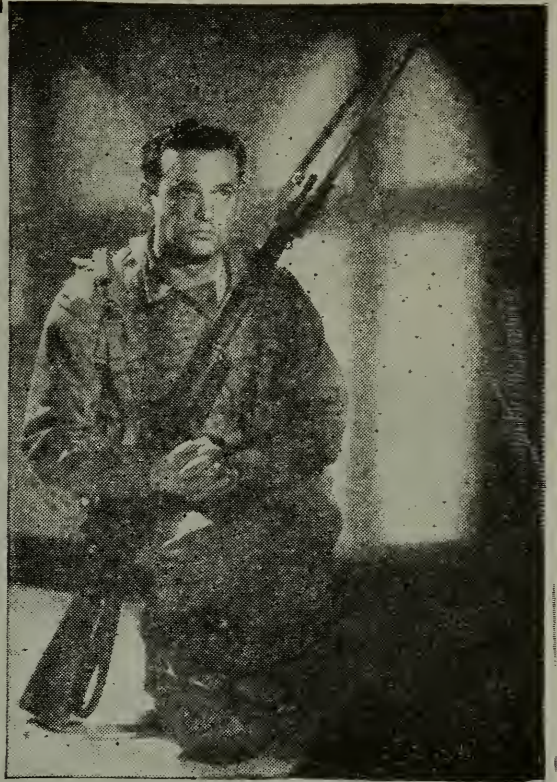
I thank Thee, O God, for yesterday.

Today, O God

. . . A stranger of another race shared his canteen with me as we marched the weary miles together;

. . . I take my place beside my father at Chateau Thierry and his grandfather at Gettysburg. In their presence I stand erect and a pride stirs deep within me at the responsibility and opportunity they have bequeathed to me;

. . . I have learned the meaning of sacrifice in what others have given and in what I may be called upon to give;



. . . I feel within me the measure of a man pledged to a noble cause, and it is good for my soul;

. . . And my soul cries out to Thee for continued strength, and is satisfied—

I thank Thee, O God, for today.

Tomorrow, O God

. . . There shall come peace;

. . . The girl who is mine will be waiting and the dreams that are ours will come true;

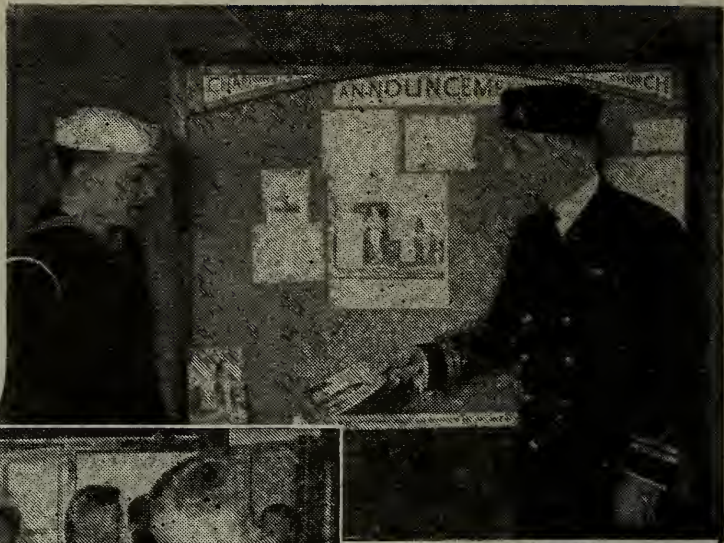
. . . Liberty again will be the criterion of just government, and once again men will stand erect in the sun, and I shall say to my children, "I helped to make it so";

. . . Men of vision will plan and men of action will build, and all will need Thy guidance;

. . . And the pain of today will be forgotten in the victory that shall be ours, and thine—

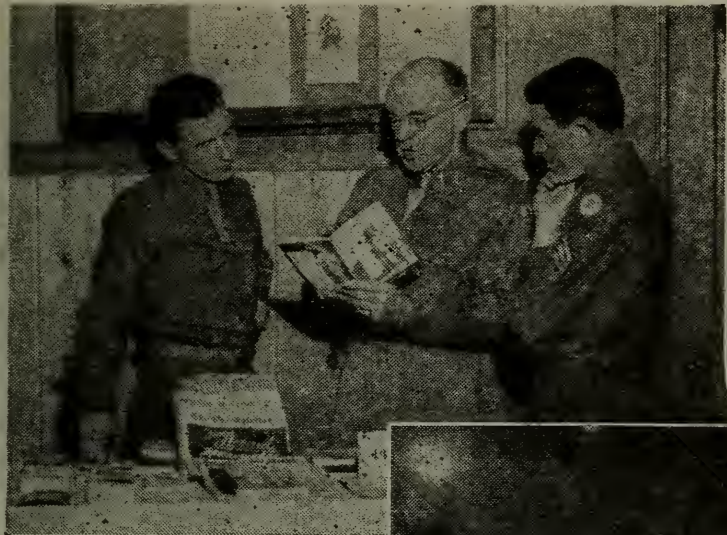
I thank Thee, O God, for tomorrow.

RIGHT: Chaplain Wm. L. Manny, of the Naval Training School at Toledo, Ohio, is a man after our own heart when it comes to distributing copies of this magazine. Not one to hide THE LINK's light under a bushel of other material, he makes a point of displaying our wares so prominently that only a blind sailor could miss. In the photo, he proffers a copy to S/2c Elbert C. Johnson, president of the local SMCL unit. A specially constructed box at the lower left of the bulletin board holds current copies.



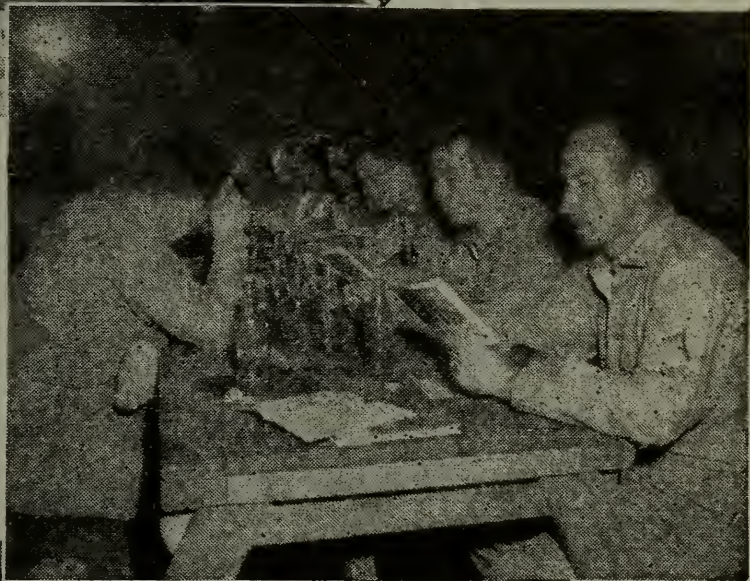
LEFT and BELOW: One of the liveliest League units we know of is that operating in the Central Pacific under the guidance of Chaplain Tom R. Gabrielsen. Here are a pair of photos showing a few of the SMCLers tackling a "smorgas-board" party for Leaguers at the Salvation Army Boys Home, Hawaii. This League unit has 150 members, a choir of 36, and conducts the biggest service in the division on Sunday evenings.



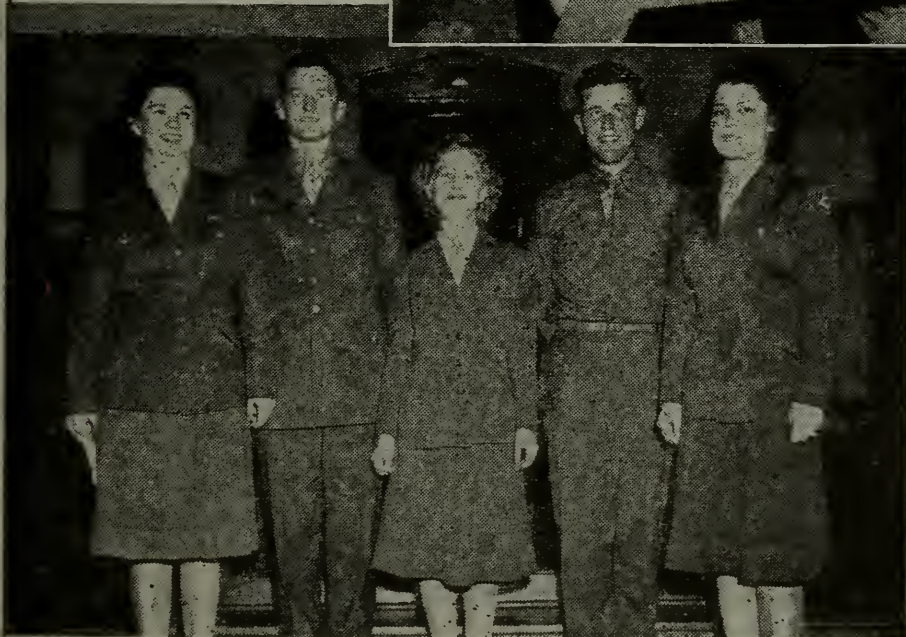


LEFT: Chaplain John D. Leach, senior chaplain of the Western Personnel Reassignment Center at Camp White, Oregon, introduces Sgt. Ralph VanSyckle and Pfc. Ray Hartline to a spate of good reading in *THE LINK*. This camp has boasted League units from the beginning, but only recently a brand-new group has been organized at Chapel 10, kicking off with a charter membership of 30. Another ardent supporter of the League program at Camp White is Chaplain Vaughn.

RIGHT: Members of a Marine Corps unit of the SMCL buckle down to some concentrated study of this magazine in a Nissen hut "somewhere in the South Pacific."



BELOW: SMCL leaders at Camp Van Dorn, Miss.: Pvt. Mary McDonald, Cpl. John Hodge, Pvt. Mary Neff, Pvt. Melvin Neely and Pvt. Ruth Hill. (See box on page 38.)





THIS IS YOUR *League*



A COMMUNIQUE FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF THE SMCL

By IVAN M. GOULD

COMMUNIQUE opens this month with an item about Pfc. Melvin Cobb. He was the chaplain's assistant in the North Chapel at Fort Riley, Kansas, when I visited there a few weeks ago.

Under the inspiration of Chaplain Sargent Bash and Senior Chaplain Robert F. Haskins, Pfc. Cobb has developed an unusual Sunday afternoon program. Posted on the bulletin boards at the Fort, there was a full page announcement of "The Record Hour," beginning at 2 p.m.

The selections include a little bit of everything from Fritz Kreisler and the Philadelphia Orchestra to musical bits from "Boys from Syracuse" and "On your Toes." Men are encouraged to come to the chapel for this program, and are given free stationery and writing boards for that important letter home. The records are heard not only inside the chapel but are broadcast by means of a loudspeaker in the chapel tower. Pfc. Cobb is not only at the controls but arranges the program weekly.

PHOTO AT TOP—Wherever two or three, or a dozen or a hundred, service men are gathered together, there's the nucleus of a Service Men's Christian League unit—as, for example, this baker's dozen of marines and sailors who assemble every Saturday evening "Somewhere in the Pacific" to sing and pray and study the Bible.

This sounds like a good idea, and we wonder if many chaplains have this kind of a Sunday afternoon letter-writing hour.

What the SMCL Means

Chaplain Frank L. Titus has been mentioned in this column before because of his interest in the SMCL. Some months ago he sent us a copy of a letter which he had mailed to all those at his post who were interested in the League. The letter described the purposes of the SMCL so clearly and concisely that we are quoting from it:

WORSHIP. Our League objective is to see to it that every member attends a worship service on Sunday and to invite one other to go with him. This objective will be attained if each does his part. Watch the bulletin board for the interesting features at the Church Worship Services.

SERVICE. One of the best expressions of this is the choir. Here a group of members have worked unselfishly, through several months, to provide a musical background for our services. They have done this without thought of personal glory but in the spirit of service for the Lord. If you would like to help, just appear in the choir loft net Sunday at church time.

DISCUSSION of vital topics. Our Sunday evening services will have a discussion period. Come prepared to ask questions or "speak your piece."

PRAYER. On Friday evenings a prayer meeting is held which has become very popular.

Install Your Officers.

When a unit of the SMCL is organized among a group of men or women who may remain together for three or four months, it is advisable to elect officers. They will take some responsibility, in co-operation with the chaplain, in developing the religious program of the camp. Of course, there are situations where the schedule will not allow such organization, and probably a few instances where leadership is lacking.

Electing a man to a place of leadership in the religious program of a camp is an important step. It should be recognized and brought to the attention of as many men as possible. **Chaplain Russell J. May**, sponsor of the Christian League of the 143rd Station Hospital, Camp Bowie, Texas, has developed a ritual for the installation of League officers. We print it in full with the hope that it will receive wide usage. The officers of the Christian League at this hospital are: president, **S/Sgt. Roland D. Smith**; vice-president, **T/5 Douglas R. Stephenson**; secretary, **T/5 William D. Nelsen**; treasurer, **T/5 Thomas L. Larder**.

RITUAL FOR INSTALLATION

"The Service Men's Christian League is an interdenominational organization of Christian men and women in the armed forces, banded together for Christian fellowship and service. This organization is found all over the world, wherever service men are stationed. A chapter of the Service Men's Christian League has been organized in the 143d Station Hospital. Because of their confidence in your leadership and Christian character, you have been elected to office in this chapter of the League. It will be your duty to lead, to the best of your ability, in the work of Christ among the men of this unit.

"Do you hereby accept the Covenant for Active Membership as the standard of your Christian life and service?"

ANSWER: "*We do, God being our Helper.*"

"Will you carry out the duties of your office, depending upon your Master for guidance and wisdom?"

ANSWER—"We will."

TO THE PRESIDENT: "As president, it will be

your duty to preside at all meetings and to assist in planning a program of Christian service and fellowship among the men of the 143d Station Hospital. Will you faithfully carry out the duties of your office to the best of your ability?"

ANSWER: "*Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, I will endeavor to follow His guidance in this work to which I have been called.*"

TO THE VICE-PRESIDENT: "You have heard the duties assigned to the president of the Service Men's Christian League. It will be your duty as vice-president to assume these duties in the absence of the president, to assist the other officers by council and advice, and to assist in every way possible in the work of the League. Will you faithfully carry out the duties of your office to the best of your ability?"

ANSWER "*Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, I will endeavor to follow His guidance in the work to which I have been called.*"

TO THE SECRETARY: "It will be your duty as Secretary to keep a careful record of the meetings of the council, to keep a membership list and to assist as a member of the Cabinet in the plans and program of this organization. Will you faithfully carry out the duties of your office to the best of your ability?"

ANSWER: "*Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, I will endeavor to follow His guidance in this work to which I have been called.*"

TO THE TREASURER: "It will be your duty as treasurer to administer whatever funds that may be entrusted to you faithfully as directed by vote of the Council and assist as a member of the Cabinet in the plans and program of this organization. Will you faithfully carry out the duties of your office to the best of your ability?"

ANSWER: "*Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, I will endeavor to follow His guidance in this work to which I have been called.*"

"As a pledge of co-operation, we extend to you the hand of fellowship and assure you of our constant interest in the Christian service which you have promised to render."

Links Around the World

Each unit of the SMCL is a "link" in a chain of Christian fellowship binding service men and women together. That chain is being forged wherever our forces go. No spot is too isolated nor too congested to be part of this series of links.

The world-wide character of the League was brought forcibly home to us recently by several letters. **Chaplain Samuel Over-**

street of the USAFSA reported The Service Men's Christian League of Natal, Brazil. **Chaplain Clyde F. Straub** from the district chaplain's office in Skagway, Alaska, reported a unit there which distributes two hundred copies of *THE LINK* monthly. **Chaplain William S. Binckley** of an Engineer Avn. Battalion reported a unit in New Guinea and said this about it:

For several months previous to my knowledge of the Service Men's Christian League, I conducted an open forum once an evening during the week for my men. There was no definite plan or central theme for discussion. We met chiefly to get to know each other better, and to exchange ideas and opinions about many current topics. This same group of men forms the nucleus upon which our SMCL unit is organized. *THE LINK* not only serves as an excellent basis for our discussion, but also helps us to crystalize our thinking.

The men are rapidly becoming to sense that solidarity and fellowship of belonging to an organization that has a Christian world outlook. As I suggested in a previous letter, we have no Chaplain's Fund in our battalion. Upon the arrival of the *LINKS*, I immediately distributed them among the men. When we met a week later in one of our regular weekly meetings, I told the group assembled that we owed \$20 for the *LINKS*. In less than ten minutes each fellow had made a contribution and we had the total amount. From that point we proceeded with the meeting.

The response of the men is indeed gratifying. As soon as possible I shall be glad to furnish you with a picture of one of our group meetings as we sit out in the open surrounded by the beautiful green velvet-covered mountains of New Guinea.

Here Come the British

We have been especially gratified that chaplains and men in the British forces are interested in the League and *THE LINK*. It would be a boost to world-wide Christianity if the League, or something like the League, could be started with the men and women in the forces of all the United Nations. This outreach of the League could make a significant contribution to the Church in the post-war period.

Chaplain William Barton, with the

British forces in North Africa, writes that he came in touch with the League while ministering to some American soldiers in the Protestant church of a North African town. "Our motto is," he writes, "'B.N.A.F. —Brotherhood Now And Forever,' and the church text, 'All one in Christ Jesus.'"

Chaplain Stephen Sandwell writes from Dover, England, that in March of this year he formed the "Christian League of the Frontline Fellowship of The Way." We should hear more from this group.

A Hospital League

Some chaplains get discouraged because attendances at League meetings are frequently very small. All of us would like to see hundreds of men flock to the SMCL. But that is not in the record of those who build for the Kingdom. Rather, the Christian story is that of a small nucleus of men who hold fast in adversity.

We were reminded of this fact when we received the following note from **Pfc. Anthony H. Jaracz**:

The Service Men's Christian League of the 55th Station Hospital was officially organized last summer when that unit was stationed in North Africa. At the suggestion of **Chaplain L. R. Nease, Jr.**, a meeting was called of all interested in Christian activities. At this initial meeting of the group, the chaplain appointed a nominating committee with his assistant, T/5 Claus T. Rye, as chairman. At the following session nominations were made by the committee and from the floor. The following officers were elected: president, T/Sgt. Robert Williams, Jr.; vice-president, Sgt. Vernon Aitson; program chairman, S/Sgt. John L. Brimberry; secretary, **Pfc. Anthony A. Jaracz**.

The League meets each Sunday night, using one of the Topic Talks found in *THE LINK* as the basis for study and discussion. League members take turns at leading the meetings. Chaplain Nease is always present with his valuable comments and suggestions.

It was not long after the League was organized that a need was expressed by a league member for further Bible study and so, as a direct result of the League, a mid-week Bible class was organized.

Unfortunately, a move elsewhere put a stop to these activities for a time; but at the present we

have been able to resume our Sunday and Wednesday evening meetings with an attendance that is not large but in sufficient numbers to make the League and Bible class worth while. Without a doubt, these meetings have done much good among us, and we look forward to the future with a growing interest in a continued program of Christian work and fellowship.

When There's No Chaplain

It is gratifying to us at home that many men feel the need for a religious service even when a chaplain is not present. Three letters have come to us during the past few weeks which point this fact out to us. The letter from **Jamison Glenn Koyle** is one of the most interesting we have received. He says in part:

We need such an organization (as the SMCL) here aboard the *U. S. S. Memphis*. We have no chaplain aboard, and thus no service of any kind, except when we happen to be in port on Sunday. Even then many cannot attend. All you have to do is live among men, away from all connection with the church, its religion, its principles and standards, to realize the importance of the Church and how desperately we need Christ in our daily lives.

I hope that through the SMCL we may develop

a Christian fellowship that will awaken the men and give them purpose and direction, so they may be strong mentally, physically, socially and religiously, and capable to meet life's problems.

Cpl. R. H. Gardner, writing from Italy, says that they see their chaplain so seldom that the boys have started their own battery church services. Cpl. Gardner wrote after they had held fourteen services. He says:

We have a choir and the attendance has jumped from 12 to 50. Our membership is made up of Catholics, Protestants and Jews. We hold services each week, in and out of combat. I don't know whether our activities are unique or not, but it is at least one attempt to bring divine help when it is most needed. I find that more and more boys are turning to God for help and comfort. If we have a particularly tough time with Jerry shelling, the church attendance jumps—and a certain percentage of new ones always stick.

Hal Helms, ART2/c, says that in his outfit there is no chaplain but the men are interested in organizing a League. He wanted some particulars about organizing a League unit. Since many LINK readers may be in the same situation, here are a few pointers on forming a unit:



SIGNING UP—Caught by the camera in the act of signing their membership cards, these new members of a recently formed SMCL unit at Camp Polk, La., are now "going to town" in a big way. They have started a sizable Sunday school and at this writing are herding 'em in with a zeal that delights the heart of Chaplain John T. Neal, who stands at the rear with his wife and daughter. Pfc. Clements, shown at the pulpit, is the "superintendent" of the SMCL Sunday school.

1. Where there is no chaplain consult a superior officer about starting a League. It is best if three or four men make their wishes known at once so that a nucleus for a League can be found immediately.

2. When approval is given, secure one or two copies of *The Handbook of the League* and a few copies of *THE LINK*.

3. Write to the headquarters of the League, 1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia 3, Pa., notifying us of your plans, and ask for a "Working Kit." This includes *The Handbook*.

4. After full announcement about the League has been given in the camp or on the ship, follow the suggestions on pages 19 and 20 of *The Handbook*.

Along the Link Line

The Communique closes this month with a short note about the men with **Chaplain Stanley E. Smith** of the 730 Railway Operating Battalion. Where he is located is a

100 MEMBERS

"It was my privilege recently," writes Camp Chaplain Percy Freeman of Camp Van Dorn, Miss., "to see the League in action for the first time. The program was directed and carried out by enlisted men and WACs, and the whole procedure was devotional and spiritually helpful. Chaplain Carrin has succeeded in getting nearly 100 service men and women interested in the organization!" (See photo on page 33.)

secret, at least to us at the office. But we can picture his men in small groups along a railroad. He visits them periodically and distributes copies of *THE LINK*. He writes that his men are in lonely camps and presumably there is very little contact with other groups. So *THE LINK* goes along the line to bring inspiration and cheer and to give the men a sense of belonging to a Christian fellowship wherever *THE LINK* is read. We are calling this railway, dotted by groups of praying men, "The *LINK LINE*."

LETTER OF THE MONTH

DEAR SIR: In each of the issues of *THE LINK* that the men in our group have been receiving for the past several months, we have seen pictures of different SMCL units that have been formed there at home. Also, we have read accounts of how these leagues were formed, and the conditions in which they have to work. Since we have been very much interested in these, we thought that you might be interested in how our SMCL unit, called "The Link Club," was organized, and some of the problems that we have to face.

Our Fighter Group left the United States with nothing but wild guesses as to where we were going. Like all soldiers who had never been outside the continental limits of the U. S., we were anxious to know where we were being sent. Soon, that deep secret was unfolded. We were bound for India, the gateway to the Asiatics.

Under the sweltering sun of an Indian summer, we regained some of the conditioning that we lost on the trip over. When everything was in readiness, we were sent to advanced bases to begin our offensive movement against the enemy. Soon our pilots saw their first Zeros, and from that time on both pilots and ground crew men have been working twenty-four hours a day piling up a record of which we are all proud. It was here at one of these bases that "The Link Club" was organized.

Because of the terrain weather conditions, and transportation difficulties, it is not always possible for the Group Chaplain to reach each one of the units in our group as regularly as desired. With this realization in mind, some of the men in one of the Squadrons asked permission to start a branch of the SMCL so that they could have regular Christian fellowship during the week and at times when it would be impossible for me to hold a service for them.

I was happy to sponsor such an organization and to offer assistance in every way possible, for not only is "The Link Club" an asset to the men of the squadron, but it is also an important aid to me, maintaining and developing Christian leadership and fellowship with the men at this jungle base.

—CHAPLAIN HOWARD W. BACON

Humorously, though nonetheless effectively, this British prisoner of war in Germany tells how he goes about licking that old enemy . . .

Boredom

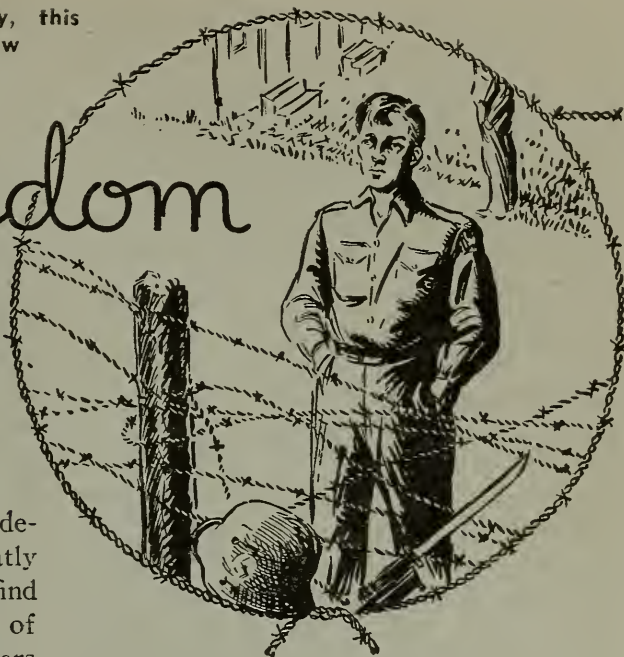
by

PVT. D. W. HAWLEY

“WAR,” once remarked Lord Gort, “consists of short periods of intense fright and long periods of intense boredom.” Thus a distinguished soldier, his sword bared for battle, delays as it were for a moment to neatly pin upon its point an epigram. I find myself nowadays one among the tens of thousands of quite undistinguished soldiers incarcerated in the prison-camps of the warring countries, who can testify most feelingly to the truth of the Field Marshall’s dry comment upon his trade.

His Lordship remarks two states of mind: One natural, and in some respects good; the other unnatural, and in every respect bad. For whilst it is sometimes beneficial for a man to be *scared* stiff, it is at no time beneficial for him to be *bored* stiff. Therefore I was dismayed to find myself in captivity assailed by both at once: For I came to know the misery of boredom with the fear of its mental consequences.

The misery was all the more acute because, previous to my captivity, I had been an individual not easily bored by anything



save bookkeeping, political speeches and horse-racing. I had observed that some *appeared* to have been born bored, and that some could even *acquire* boredom; but it had never occurred to me that some could have boredom thrust upon them. Apparently, though, some could, and I was unlucky enough to be among their number.

Feared the Mental Consequences

The fear of the mental consequences of boredom was all concerned with my job. If I asserted that I earned my living by using my brain, I have no doubt that certain members of the British public would be utterly astounded, and certain editors of the British Press frankly derisive. Nevertheless, since the latter have paid me good money to write things, and the former (judging by their indignant letters) have paid good money to read them, it would appear that my assertion was correct. Therefore, when I saw an indefinite period of captivity before me, I was afraid, for it seemed that the result upon the mind of the long empty days ahead would be serious.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Maybe you'll never have a chance to experience it (we earnestly hope you won't!) but you should know that one of the grandest services being performed in this war is that carried on without fanfare by the War Prisoners' Aid section of the Y.M.C.A. In our July 1943 issue we presented a picture of this work in an article entitled "We Prisoners of War" by Tracy Strong. Now Mr. Strong further helps us to keep you informed by sending in this article. It was entered in an essay competition sponsored by the "Y" in a certain war-prisoners' camp in Germany.

Then there was this unnatural confinement. A friend of mine here was, before the war, a monk in a monastery, and I have heard him remark with a sort of rueful cheerfulness that his life differed little, essentially, from the one he had known. Well, for my part, my previous life was not bounded by the cloister, or, for that matter, the hearth.

From Gregariousness to Loneliness

I had been a habitant and lover of big cities. I had loved their cafes and cinemas and shops. I had found my delight in the crowds in the streets, in acetylene flares and cheapjack stalls. I had found peace in the dim sanctity of their great churches, and rejoiced of a Saturday night in the cheer and chatter of their multitudinous clubs. I know the magic of the big ships and sometimes, in the rain and dark, I would meet up with Romance, lingering about the wharves and piers of Dockland. I dodged traffic and editors' rejection slips with equal enjoyment. That was my life—my England. I saw people, I went places, I did things. In a modest way, I got around.

The fortunes of war snatched away all these, and gave me in their place barbed wire and boredom. It behooved me, without delay, to set about working out my mental salvation. And in the fulness of time I—

I'm sorry, but this won't do. I was about to relate, in my nicest prose, how I challenged, wrestled with, and finally overcame and annihilated boredom; how I achieved, in captivity, a smooth and successful *modus vivendi*. The story would have been a literary and windy orgy of neat sentences, polished paragraphs, and rolling periods. The result would likely have been highly agreeable to everybody. Unfortunately, it would not have been the truth.

Regarding the matter honestly and objectively, and resolved to delude nobody, least of all myself, I'm bound to state that

the gaunt spectre of Boredom stalks beside me for at least some part of every day, and ever awaits me around the next corner. But there are some reliefs.

The surest and sweetest I have found so far is SLEEP. Better pens than mine have expounded its blessedness. Truly it "knits up the ravelled sleeve of care." Chesterton says we make an act of faith every time we go to sleep, and "Blessings," says Sancho Panza, "on the man who invented it—it wraps a man round like a cloak!" (I wonder, did old Cervantes think of that one when he was a prisoner of war?) In this life when all else fails, I use sleep gratefully as a drug—and there is no better drug in creation.

Then there is CONVERSATION. In the old far-off days of 1940, when the bitterness of capture was heavy upon us, we talked incessantly—mostly of Home, but sometimes even of Beauty. A trouble shared, so they say, is a trouble halved, and we certainly shared our present trouble more freely than we shared anything in our lives before. Came better days, and we talked less of the poignant pre-war past and more of the promise of the postwar future. I talked and listened and learned things. I learned from quiet-speaking New Zealanders of Maoris and mutton, and from humorous and laconic Australians of surfing and sunshine and something of the temper of the "wide, brown land." I talked with preachers and pastrycooks, tailors and travelers, with fishmongers and lawyers' clerks. I talked with newspapermen, who are perhaps the best talkers of all. I was getting educated.

Found Welcome Release in Books

And the third and finest relief from boredom I found in Books. When, after six months of captivity, books came from England, it was a preview of release. I met old friends once more, strolling with one down Fleet Street, and with another attaining a

peak in Darien, and wandering again with others over land and sea and to the far places of the earth.

For the first few months of this renaissance of reading I fed volumes to my book-hungry brain by the score. When these pangs had been appeased I learned some more French and knew fresh pleasures—"Cyrano de Bergerac," Alexandre Dumas' "Impressions de Voyage" (those gems of French journalism), and I read with delight of Alfred de Musset's old farmer, who only counted three things in the world as worthy of admiration—"the belfry at Chartres, a beautiful girl, and a field of wheat." I was picking up a little culture.

I have called the foregoing some reliefs from boredom, for they are not antidotes to it. I know the antidote to it well enough, as does everybody else here, but I haven't mentioned it, just as I haven't mentioned

self-discipline, for they both are a man's own affair and not to be paraded.

And so to sum up, it would seem that some good can come out of boredom as good came out of Nazareth; it would seem that in some obscure way boredom can teach wisdom.

And so much for the truth—for you will have found me out by now—and the truth is that I have not overcome boredom in captivity, and I don't suppose I ever shall. It is as formidable as sin, and as dreary as a desert; a principality and a power—invincible. Yet a man must fight it or be destroyed. It is the abomination of desolation, yet in it a man may find himself.

And at least a man can always revolve and heat the subject in his mind, and mould it with words, and hammer it out a little on his mental anvil. And who knows what might result? Possibly even an Essay!

—❧ { CRACKING WISE } ❧—

- Always listen to the opinion of others; it probably won't do you any good, but it will them.
- The more arguments you win, the less friends you'll have.
- Carlyle said it: "Make yourself an honest man and then there will be one less rascal in the world."
- Some speeches are like the horns of a steer—a point here, a point there, and a lot of bull in the middle.
- It takes a strong will power to overcome a weak conscience.
- Diplomacy is letting someone else have your own way.
- Character is what you are in the dark.
- You never heard of a man marrying a woman to reform her.
- The new army rifle is said to weigh 8.69 pounds, not a too-heavy bit of armament. The dickens is, after it has been carried about three hours the decimal falls out!
- George Bernard Shaw said it: "There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire; the other is to get it."
- Hell is sin with only the sting left.
- You'd think Ben Franklin must have been in the army once. Otherwise would he have said, "Let thy discontents be thy secrets"?
- "It is always little people who create big problems."
- Epictetus said it: "Men are disturbed not by things, but by the views which they take of things."



The SMCL

Post Chaplain Fred C. Reynolds conducting a meeting of the Post Council, which plans the mass meetings for League units at Ft. Meade.

THINGS are happening on the SMCL front! There is no doubt about it. And they are happening fast. From all parts of the world units are being reported daily to the Service Men's Christian League headquarters.

What magic brings these units into being? What makes the SMCL "tick"? To find an answer to these and other questions was the cause of my "mission to Meade." This lively place of Army troops concentration is a good place to study the program's success.

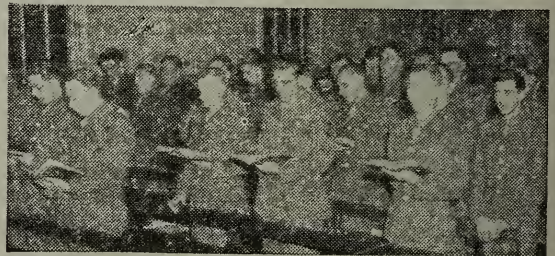
Here at Fort George G. Meade, Md., no fewer than nineteen SMCL units have been started. Fourteen of these have moved to distant points—intact, so far as we know, and still functioning as units. Five remained, with others now being organized.

These units just didn't happen. The constant changing of service personnel made it necessary for much effort and time to be given by someone in order to accomplish so much. After interviewing the Post Chaplain, Lt. Col. Fred C. Reynolds, and seeing

the five units in action in a mass meeting, I could understand very well the essential elements which made the movement a success. Here are some of them:

(1) *The Post Chaplain was vitally interested* in the SMCL program from its earliest inception. Chaplain Reynolds was one of the first to recognize that the movement was just what each chaplain needed in his work. As early as January 18, 1943, a mass meeting was held at the Post Chapel for the purpose of exploring the League's possibilities. Evidently the exploration revealed a satisfactory outlook, for then and there steps were taken to organize fourteen units!

(2) *Plans were carefully made.* The interest and co-operation of each group, with its chaplain, were secured. The Bible classes



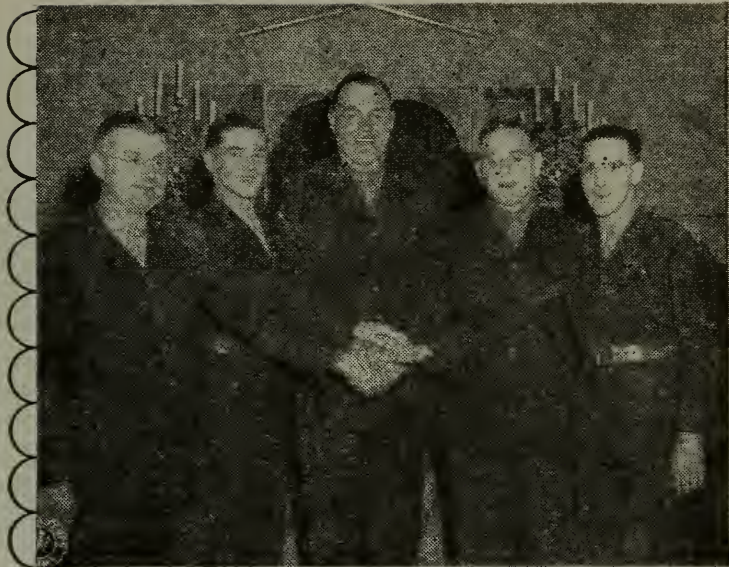
Some of those taking part in the mass meeting of SMCL units at Ft. Meade.

Ticks

by

F. L. GIBBS

Chaplains at Ft. Geo. C. Meade demonstrate the art of making the Service Men's Christian League a live and going affair.



Presidents of SMCL units at Meade (left to right): Sgt. Alton T. Milam, Cpl. Joseph Bertalan, Cpl. John H. Krumrein, Pvt. LaGrange Cralle, Cpl. Chas. A. Fitzhugh.

and other types of extra-chapel activities already going on formed the nucleus of about one-half of the SMCL units. Others grew out of a ready response to this program wherein all Protestants might have fellowship together in one organization. A Post Council was formed, and in it each unit had three representatives.

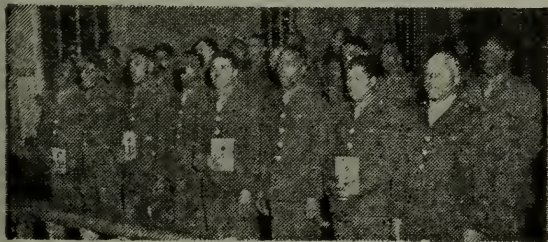
(3) *Inter-unit Mass Meetings.* These were planned and conducted by the Post Council. The pictures illustrating this article show the Post Council planning group in action, and some of those who took part in a mass meeting of League members conducted April 18, 1944.

(4) *Changing Conditions Were Met.* As at many another Army center, the rapid shifting of men at Meade has handicapped the practice of units meeting with clock-like

regularity. But, in spite of all difficulties, the work goes on.

Among that part of the personnel "staying put" for some time, the more stable units carry on as units do elsewhere. Among outfits on the move the "Membership-at-large" plan is being used, especially by the Reception Center Unit, whereby men are encouraged to sign the Covenant Card, making them members of the worldwide SMCL, even though they do not stay long enough to participate in a group meeting. The membership card is then taken with them to all parts of the world, where they secure their copy of *THE LINK* from the chaplain, participate in the program wherever they find a unit, and often take the initiative in starting new units.

These are only a few of the elements which have made membership in the League a vital factor in the lives of those who have been at Meade. Chaplain Reynolds and others who share in the work have high praise for *THE LINK* magazine and the value of the SMCL organization.



A colored SMCL unit which provided music for the mass meeting held on April 18.

Listen, Soldier!

By PFC. T. W. ENGSTROM

The author of this brief article (photo at right) is, in civilian life, the managing editor of "The Christian Digest."



YES, buddy, I'm a soldier too—a *Christian* soldier at that. Perhaps you ask, as some service men have asked me, "Is it possible to live a Christian life in the army?" My answer, unequivocally, is: "Yes, sir, it most certainly is possible!"

But—not if you try to live it by yourself, and in your own strength. Buddy, you need Christ, now more than ever.

Listen! In the 17th chapter of the Gospel of John (read it!) you'll find that the Lord Jesus, in His High Priestly prayer, prays not that we be taken out of this world of sin, but that we be *kept* from sin in the midst of our surroundings. God doesn't want sissies, who have to be kept away from evil people and places in order to be kept righteous.

First of all though, soldier, you must be "born again" that is, receive a new life, have a *beginning* to your Christian experience. That can happen to you right *now*. Do you want to know how? All right, get this, straight from the shoulder and right from God's Word:

Each of us knows that we are sons of our parents by *physical* birth; likewise we become sons of God by spiritual birth. Our

sins—your sin, my sin—separate us from God. God has said, "There is no difference, for *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22, 23). Because "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and because we therefore, being sinners, are under the condemnation placed on all sinners, God sent His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to give us life—eternal life.

How does He do that? you ask. Let the Bible answer: "Christ died for our sins" (I Corinthians 15:3). God placed Christ in the place of every one of us. He died that we need not die. He, Christ, gave His life for you and for me. That, soldier, is the greatest gift we can ever receive.

God, through His Word, the Bible, tells us how we can be born into the heavenly family, how we may become the sons of God through spiritual birth. It's clear and simple. There are but three things you have to do. All the rest has been done!

(1) *Come*. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

(2) *Receive*. "As many as receive Him to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12).

(3) *Believe*. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

There it is, soldier. Will you accept it?

» On the barracks' wall at Delhi, India, this inscription is to be found: "When war is on and strife is nigh, God and the soldier is all the cry; when war is o'er and peace is cited, God and the soldier are quickly slighted."

Topic TALKS



- *Subject for group discussion (first week):*

ACHIEVING NOBILITY

By Robert Caspar Lintner

- *Questions and Scripture references:*

1. *What are some marks of true nobility of character that even the most lowly may possess?* (Psalm 45:4; Proverbs 4:18; 17:7)
2. *How essential is honesty of speech and of conduct?* (Psalm 101:7; II Corinthians 4:2; Ephesians 4:25; I Timothy 2:1-2)
3. *Why has humility always been a badge of greatness?* (Luke 14:7-11; Titus 3:2; Psalm 37:11; I Peter 5:5)
4. *What blistering word did Jesus utter concerning righteousness that is merely formal and Pharisaic?* (Matthew 5:20)
5. *How do you think a good man sinks to the state of depravity that Jeremiah pictures?* (Jeremiah 2:13, 17, 19, 21, 22)

- *Resource material:*

IS there a place for nobility in a democracy? Of course! Nobility is in place anywhere. In a democracy every man has the right to be a nobleman—if he can make himself noble.

For the nobility we are talking about is nobility of character, and every man has the opportunity to shape his life with such noble qualities that he will not need to apologize for himself as far as his own personal qualities of character are concerned. You can be noble, no matter how poor you may be, or how lowly your rank or rating.

For rank and rating do not guarantee character. A general may be clean of speech and large of heart, or he may be only a ranting, swearing blusterer whose protection is in his stars. A captain might be the worst gambler or libertine in his outfit. Or an admiral or a lieutenant commander might prove by his actions that in character

he is far short of what his rating would lead you to expect. On the other hand, a lowly buck private or an apprentice seaman may be the man you would pick out to pray for you if you were facing death this minute.

Nobility is a thing of the spirit. A man is noble or he isn't. Insignia and gold braid have nothing to do with it. It cannot be conferred, like a Distinguished Service Cross or a Purple Heart or a Congressional Medal. It cannot be inherited, like a dukedom or a kingdom or a million dollars. It cannot be stripped away from a man, like insignia torn from a uniform. Nor can it be given to another. A man must achieve it for himself, building slowly and carefully and tirelessly and with a great purpose. There is no other way to get it.

That goes for *you*, buddy. If you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth, you lost it the first time you stood in line

for chow. You are on your own now. And that may not be much. For this is a democracy. And you are being required to fight for it. But do not lose sight of this fact: you can be as noble as any nobleman who lives—if you want to be, and if you try hard enough.

Truly Great Are Truly Humble

What are some marks of nobility? *Humility* is one of them. That may seem very strange at first. But have you never been impressed with the fact that a really great man does not need to hang a placard upon himself to advertise his greatness?

Recently I had an unforgettable experience when I attended a performance of *Othello* in which Paul Robeson is starring in New York. From the moment when he strode onto that stage as the dusky Moor, he was magnificent.

Iago was the consummate image of devilishness set in a human frame, subtle, fiendishly clever in his abominable plans, with hands that talked in subtle gestures and nuances of feeling as he spun his deadly spider's web of intrigue.

But he and all the others were like a symphony of movement, against which the deep and commanding resonance of the rich voice of Paul Robeson was like a giant bass viol playing against a tapestry of sound. It was a magnetic and magnificent performance befitting a king. It was not marred by self-consciousness nor by servility, even when he had been brought to utter ruin.

Then came the curtain call. Two minor players parted the curtains and walked to their separate stations at opposite ends of the stage. Other couples followed, dividing as before until space was left in the middle of the stage for but two. Then the pale and fragile wife Desdemona stepped lightly out with Paul Robeson at her side, and she placed her snowy hand in the great hand

that had so recently and so thoroughly strangled her.

As they all bowed together to the applauding audience I was tremendously moved by the marked humility that was written upon the features of Paul Robeson. He towered above them like a king, in form and in performance, and yet he was as modest as if he had been only a very minor player. Or was his modesty only a natural evidence of his nobility? What do you think?

As the crowd was filing thoughtfully from that theater I had a sudden impulse to try to meet him. When we found him in his dressing room and introduced ourselves, he talked quietly and modestly, his face alight with kindness and a sort of unpretentious goodness. There was not the faintest trace of egotism or of condescension. He talked easily and with genial interest, as if speaking with a friend whom he had not seen for years.

He asked where we lived, and when the question was answered he said: "Oh, we used to play football with Bernardsville. They were our rivals." It was not until I was half-way home that I read that he had been an All-American end from Rutgers in the heyday of Walter Camp! Yet this modest giant had not said *he* had played our high school. "*We* used to play . . ." He was just one of the team.

Humility Not for Slaves

And that was the *Othello* he had been on that stage. He was just one of the cast—but so nearly half of the performance that one cannot think of it now without hearing a deep, rich voice speaking distinctly and with utter assurance as a great sworded form strode in and out and as a great heart was decoyed into mad jealousy and despair and death.

Humility, lest we forget it, is not for slaves but for kings! Only they can walk

that narrow bridge without falling either into condescension and smugness or into servility and envy.

There is a vast difference between servility and humility. Servility ripens from a cringing sense of inferiority, with meek submission to the will of a better or a stronger. Humility comes in spite of a conscious possession of power and privilege, when one determines to use these to give help and not hurt to others less fortunate. Perhaps it is this sense of the dignity and the importance of others that helps a man to be humble in his superior talents or possessions or power. At any rate, humility is one of the best indications of nobility of character.

But we need to remember that humility needs to be joined with *goodness* if we are to possess nobility of character. The worst traitor or the most cunning saboteur may strive to conceal his true self in servility or even in seeming humility. But a really righteous character cannot be counterfeited.

A Sturdy Tree, Not a Mushroom

One reason for this sterling quality of a good character is that it is something that has been developed gradually over a period of time. It is not a mushroom, a thing quickly grown and easily destroyed. It is a sturdy tree, bearing within itself the concentric layers of growth that mark its struggle for life and permanence.

The great apostle Paul knew this. He en-

joined us to abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor could not be in vain (I Corinthians 15:58). It was he who bade us to "watch," or be on our guard, and to stand fast in our faith, and to show ourselves to be men—*strong* men (I Corinthians 16:13).

There is no quick and easy way to character. Diamonds are longer in the making than mush or sawdust. The finest of alloy steels are more costly to make than pig-iron. But they sell for more, and they stand up under stresses that pig-iron could never withstand.

One of the other great apostles recognized this necessity for patience and for zeal in achieving nobility of life. He entreated us to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour (II Peter 3:18). We can never be strong Christians until we recognize this principle of Christian growth, and until we learn of the Christ and know Him finally as our Lord and our Saviour.

In the 84th Psalm we are given an ancient picture of such nobility. Here the Psalmist speaks of the blessedness of those who dwell in the house of the Lord, and the blessedness of the man whose strength is in Him. Such people, even when they pass through sorrow, are able to make the valley of their sorrow a well. And they go, he says, *from strength to strength*.

Nobility of character grows with tests, however sore they are, and it grows with its own victories!



AFTER the last war, an optimistic view of human nature caused a vast amount of wishful thinking, and Utopias sprang up like mushrooms in the night. There are signs of more Utopias springing up after this war is over. Once more we will hear of some mysterious law of goodwill residing somewhere in the souls of men, ready to unite all men in a new society, a new brotherhood if only we find the right formula for setting that law in motion. But all these lofty optimisms are bound to fail because it is not possible to have men live together in good will toward one another as long as they have ill-will toward God. The only possible way to a better society, a better world, is through the forgiveness of sins.

—Dr. Thomas C. Pollock

- *Subject for group discussion:*

HOW CAN YOU MEET HARDSHIPS?

- *Questions and Scripture references:*

1. *What are some of the blessings that can come to us in adversity?* (Psalms 46:1; 119:71; Proverbs 17:17)

2. *What hope have we in God's unfailing help in our hardships and in our distresses?* (II Samuel 22:18, 33; Psalms 18:32, 34:22; Isaiah 54:17, 6:20; Matthew 5:4; John 16:20)

3. *What use can we make of prayer in our hardest and in our darkest hours?* (Luke 22:41, 42; James 5:13)

4. *How sure can we be of the unfailing love of Christ?* (Romans 8:34-35, 37-39; I Corinthians 15:57, 58)

5. *Should we meet adversity and hardships passively or try to master and surmount them with Christian faith and fortitude?* (I Corinthians 15:57, 58; Philippians 4:13)

- *Resource material:*

ARE you discouraged? Do you feel sorry for yourself? Do you resent all this hard training and the separation from your dear ones? What can you do when the going gets tough?

Many men can't take it when they face the daily grind on the drill field or in a stuffy classroom or on a ship plunging through tropical seas. They go to pieces. They let down their guard and go out on a drunken spree or give themselves up to some form of debauchery with the delusion that it will help to break an unbearable monotony. But how silly and how unsoldierly that is!

Recently a husky soldier came into a city railroad station so drunk he had to be treated like a child. The ticket agent sold him a ticket and then had a redcap pilot him to the proper train with the same care that would have been necessary for an invalid or for an eight-year-old girl.

For the time being, that fellow had sabotaged every dollar of the money that our

country had poured into his training and equipment.

If the sober and thrifty people of our land ever decide, before this war is over, to stop the waste that takes vast quantities of grain from the mouths of the starving and turns it into beverages with which such fellows make themselves unfit for duty, he and his ilk will have only themselves to blame for bringing that upon them. A drunken nation is no match for the Nazis. France found that out, to her shame and her bitter sorrow!

The Surest Test of Character

How do you meet your hardships? It is one of the surest tests of the sort of stuff you are made of. Perhaps the drill sergeant has it in for you; he bawls you out unmercifully. Or the flight instructor has been bearing down on you like nobody's business. The daily grind is altered by a bivouac where you puff along under full steam with a pack on your back that Napoleon never

sweated under. You toil up a steep hill as if the only chance of winning this war is to get there, with that terrible pack gouging into your back, before the Nazis or the Nips could slide down the other side. And when you reach the top of that steep hill you are allowed the heavenly reprieve of lying there with the cool night wind fanning your face as you look up at those calm stars and think long thoughts of home and *the girl you left behind you.*

The Way Soldiers Are Made

Then, almost before your heart and lungs have recovered their normal functions, the whistle blows and you grumble and heave away at that awful pack and you are up and away again, with the feeling that your poor feet are lumps of lead that are enlivened with callouses and new blisters for soles!

What a war! Can't they give you just a little peace before the bigwigs sign the treaty?

I know exactly how you feel, for I had a taste of it once for more than a year. If you want to stand up to it, you can do it. But it's hard. For that's the way they make soldiers and sailors. Toughness and agility and ability come the hard way. If you can figure out a quicker way that is also better, you will have outgrown your usefulness as a buck private or a deck scrubber.

There are several ways for you to meet this hard routine. One way is to crack up under it. It is a very poor way, for it gets you nowhere except into a hospital bed. A slightly better method is to plod along in the easiest possible way, doing no more than you can avoid, doing that little as easily as you can, and letting George worry about the rest of it, busy though he already is with his own load.

But the best way is to buck up and do your part in the best way you know. It is what you are paid for, and fed and clothed for. And it is also what your family and

your friends proudly believe you are doing.

But don't lose sight also of the fact that all this drudgery is what will harden and toughen you so thoroughly and train you so effectively that you will have the greatest likelihood of coming back alive.

War is a grim thing, stark and relentless. It isn't fought with lilies and kindness. If you want to come through it you will need muscle and skill and discipline. These are things that are acquired slowly and with great effort. They do not come overnight, nor merely by wishing for them or even by praying for them in some stark moment when you may face danger or even death.

Don't ask the drill sergeant or the "chief" to be too easy on you. When he seems to be the toughest, he may only be building something into you that may some day help to save you from a terrible hospital experience or even from death. He cares a lot more for you than a grim Jap or German would.

When the going is hardest, try to remember that word which the wise apostle Paul wrote to his young lieutenant Timothy a great many years ago, in a longer though a different war that had no armistice: "Thou, therefore, *endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*"

Without Benefit of Uniform

Of course Timothy was not facing bayonets and grenades and machine guns, but he was fighting, without benefit of uniform, in a deadly warfare. He faced no shouting sergeants but he had to face and outwit those who persecuted him and would gladly see him dead. He was to endure *hardness*—a cold steely sort of word that covers a lot of ugly things.

You can do it too, if you try to be a good soldier in that mighty army that bears allegiance to the Conquering Christ, in whose name you are hoping to bring peace and orderly living and freedom to a ravaged world.

But not all of your hardships have to do with the lash of the drill sergeant's tongue. Some of your hardest problems may be in the realm of the spirit. You may be worrying about your family at home, or your best girl. Perhaps you wonder if you will ever get back home to marry her. Or should you marry her before you go overseas? If you do marry her, how can you be sure of a future that will be reasonably certain to hold adequate opportunities for her and for yourself?

Things You Worry About

Or perhaps you have already married her and you are now overseas. Is she well and is she as happy and as courageous as you count on her to be? Perhaps you have a fine little son or daughter whom you have not seen yet. What a world for young people in love!

Or you may be fretting because you had to drop out of school, and you wonder if you will ever get back to college. Will you ever be able to take up the career that you so earnestly hope for? What *will* the future hold for you?

Perhaps you are terribly disappointed that you have not received a rating or the promotion you feel you deserve. Or you may be fretting away in enforced idleness on a hospital bed. Perhaps you are facing the prospect of having to return to civilian life under some great physical handicap that the war has brought upon you. How will things go, anyhow, when you get back home to start life all over again?

Watch yourself, soldier! Go easy, sailor! Don't turn coward now, however dark the future may look to you. This is no time to lose the battle. And remember that to lose this battle may mean to lose the war, as far as you are concerned.

Or perhaps you are disillusioned. You have heard of strikes at home where men are receiving wages that sound like a for-

tune to you, and under working conditions that sound Utopian when compared to the jungle heat and the vermin and the Jap-infested wilds that you may be sent against tomorrow.

But not all of those at home are coining money, and some who are have found themselves groaning at the slices that are pared off for taxes, and at the greatly increased prices on food and clothing and other necessary commodities.

And perhaps you have been resentful, as some of us at home have been, because of the numerous strikes and slowdowns in the production of items that were needed desperately in order to back you up. We hope these things can be stopped, and they are being stopped as men and women here at home realize the higher patriotism that binds us all together.

Whatever your physical hardships are, and however great may be your problems of mind or spirit, try to remember that you can face them all and overcome them, or at least find a measure of real success in spite of them, if you are really determined to do so. Don't resign yourself to a supine acceptance of things as they are if you can command enough determination and strength to change them for the better. And you will never know how much you may be able to change things until you really try, with determination and with courage.

Can Do "All Things" Through Him

But if things are really tough, you will be likely to discover that you need more than your own strength. *Then* you will find out what Paul meant, long ago, when he wrote, "I can do *all things* through Christ who strengtheneth me."

This is the time and the place to try your Christian faith, with the greatest sincerity and determination!

You will find it works!

- *Subject for group discussion:*

ARE YOU STEADFAST IN YOUR FAITH?

- *Questions and Scripture references:*

1. *Why is it so extremely important that we be faithful in our Christian faith and conduct?* (John 8:31; 15:9, 10; Romans 2:5-7; Hebrews 3:6; 10:23, 24; Revelation 3:11)

2. *Why do we need to be on our guard to remain steadfast?* (Galations 5:1; 6:9; II Thessalonians 2:15-17; II Peter 3:17)

3. *What are some aids to steadfastness?* (Psalm 16:8; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 6: 10, 11, 13-18; Hebrews 11:27)

4. *Why should our steadfastness show itself in helpful deeds?* (I Corinthians 15:58; Hebrews 10:24; James 1:25)

5. *Name some rewards of being steadfast in faith and conduct?* (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Revelation 2:7, 10, 17, 25-28; 3:5, 12, 21)

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- *Resource material:*

DO you find it hard to be a Christian in the service? Do you chafe under the constant flow of profanity and vulgar talk? Have you found it hard to be forced to work on Sunday? Have you faced ridicule because men know you pray? Are you conscious of someone's cynical grin when you are found reading your Testament?

Don't let down your guard against the influences that would make it easy for you to compromise your Christian faith. Remember that temptations are of varying degrees of seriousness. Some things are more sinful than others. Some things do not seem large at first, but once you yield to them you are likely to find that you have let yourself in for bigger and more serious consequences.

Some of you have found that loneliness helps to defeat your best intentions to lead a circumspect life. Because your comrade was lonesome, he dropped into a tavern and had his first drink. Because he was lonely he let himself be coaxed into an evening of

sexual sin. Because he was lonely he learned to gamble.

Watch yourself when such a temptation strikes at you in your loneliness. Read something good. Write a letter. Hunt up some other fellow who is lonely and cheer him up a bit. See a good movie. Run over the day's events in your mind, and pick out the mistakes. Try to see where you failed and then figure out how you will do better next time. Stop being sorry for yourself. Make a list of the things you ought to be thankful for. See that this list includes self-criticism and determination to do better and be better.

Getting the Christian Slant

One of the most steadying influences you can have is a Christian philosophy of life. God is your Father. This is His world. He created men to be brothers. Sin is here, and you too have sinned. But God sent His Son into the world that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. So you can receive forgiveness of your

sins through believing that He will forgive you and help you to be worthy of eternal life. That means that you will never really die. And *that* means that you will try hard, every day, to live better, in order to be worthier of such forgiveness and such eternal opportunities.

Set your troubles against that background and they will seem much smaller! Loneliness cannot be so serious when you see yourself as *that*!

Armor Recommended by Paul

But it will be well to remember that the maintaining of your Christian faith and activities will be a kind of warfare in itself. Paul wrote of an armor that was to be used. Yes, it sounds very mediaeval as you read it today: a coat of mail, a shield, a helmet, and—a *sword*!

Notice that sword. This is not to be merely a defensive war. Operational procedures will call for a decisive battle, as modern as any your general or your admiral or the Allied strategists and tacticians would plan today.

But notice that the sword is in reality an arsenal. It is the Word of God. In this arsenal some of the world's greatest warriors stand ready to give you aid and comfort—warriors as doughty as David, as mighty as Joshua, as clever as Gideon. Your remembrance of their valor will give you courage to wield that sword effectively in the face of any foe. And if you remember your Bible well enough, you will have words of counsel and of courage for every attack by any foe.

Some of your shipmates, who wonder why you take precious time to read that little Book when you are dead tired, would know why if they could sense the courage it brings to you—a quiet kind of courage that makes you confident of having ground on which to stand, and unseen weapons with which to fight and win.

Never be ashamed to be seen reading the greatest Book the world has ever known! It will help you to keep the flag of your courage flying when the battle is hard, and it will supply you with a keen and flashing defense when you come to grips with sin. This is a sword indeed!

But your defensive measures are so important a part of your armor that you should not forget them either. *Integrity* will be your armor, and it can be as effective as the steel that girds your tank or as mighty as those huge plates that are the panoply of your ship. For a shield, what better protection could you have than your *faith*? And for a helmet, you can have *salvation* itself, fresh from the nail-scarred hands of your Lord.

Perhaps you saw a comrade yesterday whose helmet did not avail to save him because it was only of steel. You have a better one if you have accepted His offered "helmet of salvation," for it is impervious to shrapnel and grenades and ack-ack!

If you don't have this helmet of salvation, ask Him for it now! It is yours for the asking. Ask for it in earnest prayer, with sorrow for your sins and with the sincere resolution that you will try to be worthy of it!

Maintain Faith at All Costs

For nothing else is so important to you as this. Maintain your religious faith at all costs, wherever you may be in the service. It is worth any ridicule and any sacrifice.

You and I ought to be very humble and very grateful when we remember how steadfast others have been in maintaining their Christian faith. For we are indebted to the indomitable men and women who endured martyrdom for their faith in other days. Those were times when it was tremendously costly to be a Christian. We should not shirk from ridicule now if someone makes fun of our faith and of our religious life.

That is far easier than to be burned at the stake for our loyalty to our Lord.

Remember that standing by your faith is not enough. You must *witness* to the vitality of your faith by doing good deeds for others. A faith that keeps itself shut up in mere goodness within yourself is not good enough for these needy times. A light within you, be it ever so bright, attains to a double measure of glory if it shines through you to someone else who is in darkness and loneliness. Surely Jesus must have meant for us to act on this principle when He said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Faith Must Be Shared—or Die

But we must realize also that this shining light that we can share with others is also a means of bringing warmth and healing and hope to those about us. Like the sun, it stimulates to growth and beauty. It brings strength of spirit to the listless and the anaemic. The blessings that we can bring to others around us are too numerous for us to try to enumerate them or illustrate them here.

You can remember times when the shining faith of someone else helped **to** inspire you and bring you greater courage **and** renewed strength. You can repay that person now, in some measure, if you will continue steadfast in the face of ridicule or opposition or hindrances.

Perhaps there is a young fellow in your company or aboard your ship who is trying hard to develop his religious faith. He knows you are a Christian. He may be timid about talking much with you about his faith and his problems. He may be watching you very quietly. When you go to a religious service he goes with you. If you forget yourself and swear, or do something else that cheapens your religious influence, that fellow notices it. You drop in his esti-

mation, and you may give his faith a setback without ever realizing that you have offended him.

For the Sake of Those Watching

But you must know that you offended your Lord by those times when you consciously fell short of what you knew was right. How small a thing it is for us to live at our best, when we consider how infinitely Jesus suffered upon Calvary! Yet how great a thing it may be for someone who may be watching us, if we stand true to our best convictions and resolve to be a "good soldier of Jesus Christ" as well as of Uncle Sam!

You will not need anyone to remind you that a man may be a tremendously good soldier up to the very last hour of the battle—and then fail desperately. In his final hour he can smear the record he made in many a hard struggle, botch the fine score he has won the hard way.

Surely you, who count yourself a Christian soldier, will not fail your Christ *now*, when so much depends upon your faith and your Christian conduct and example!

No Place for Quitters

Remember that old word that sounds like a bugle summoning to other battles: "He **that** endureth *to the end* shall be saved." Today is not enough. To the end—only *that* can be worthy of one who follows the dauntless Christ!

The Book of the Revelation has many stirring word pictures, but here is one that we ought to look at just now: "He that *overcometh* shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he"—*what can climax that?* Read it for yourself:

"He that *overcometh* shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and *he shall be My son*" (Revelation 21:7).

Though it take you to another Golgotha, dare you turn back from *that*?

- *Subject for group discussion:*

YOU AND YOUR CHURCH

- *Questions and Scripture references:*

1. *What does the Church mean to you?* (Psalms 5:7; 42:4; 65:4; Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:19-22)
 2. *Why do we say that the Church was divinely instituted?* (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:19-22; I Thessalonians 1:1; I Timothy 3:15)
 3. *What is the mission of the Church?* (Psalm 22:27, 28, 31; Matthew 28:18-20; John 3:16)
 4. *Why should you be loyal to the Church?* (Isaiah 2:3, 4; James 1:22-27)
 5. *In what ways can your loyalty to the Church be shown?* (Psalms 24:3, 4; 27:4; 96:8, 9; I Corinthians 16:2; I Timothy 3:15)
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- *Resource material:*

JUST what does the Church mean to you? Is it a sanctimonious institution that harbors hypocrites, or is it a sacred place where you have found a Saviour to whom you have dedicated all you have and are? What is the Church? What does it mean to you?

Is it a place that is trying bravely to keep a little island of safety and light in some small community that you still call your home? Or is it a great going institution in which you have had a proud part? Do you think of it as a *denomination*, which still inspires you because of its great service and its lofty ideals for helping to remake the torn world? Or, as you think of it now, is it the great ecumenical ideal of a worldwide fellowship of all true Christians, that rises above denominational limitations and barriers and joins hands and hearts together in such a noble effort, for instance, as the interdenominational Service Men's Christian League which publishes THE LINK?

There are several things that the Church probably means to you. It is a house of worship. In it we meet to worship the God who

gives us strength and guidance. There our soul cries out for the living God. And within its walls we meet others whose hunger for God is as genuine and as deep as ours. They and we can go away from this house of God with a feeling that He has been there with us. It is then that we can feel, as it was nobly expressed long ago, that "God is in His holy temple."

But we should remember that God will teach us there concerning His ways. The Church should mean divine leading and instruction for all of us who need to learn about God.

God's House for All Peoples

We should never think of the Church as a clique by itself. This is no time for narrowness and selfishness in our religious beliefs and practices. There is a fine word in the 56th chapter of the Book of Isaiah which proudly refers to the house of God as a house of prayer for *all peoples*.

A recent number of a splendid publication of one of our great denominations surprised at least one reader with the numer-

ous times in which the name of that great religious body was used. Perhaps it was unconsciously a part of the thinking and the expression of an evidently noble character who feels forever indebted to that denomination for religious truth and nurture. Or it may have been an intentional effort to inspire the reader to feel a deep loyalty to the denomination. If it were the latter, I should prefer that the cultivation of loyalty should have been in behalf of the great Christian Church that includes all true Christians of whatever denominational leanings. "A house of prayer for all peoples."

What "Links" Do You Send?

What does the Church mean to *you*? Is it a kindly group of people who are sending you letters and Testaments and LINKS? (A splendid suburban church with which I was once associated is planning to send 280 copies of THE LINK each month to its service men and women; other churches are doing likewise. Surely this is a beautiful way to strengthen the links it has already built between itself and those who have gone from it into the service.)

Let me ask you: What are *you* sending to *your church*? Some of you owe a large measure of your Christian character to the home church. What do *you* mean to *it*? Are you sending anything back to it, to encourage those who are bearing its financial burdens in your absence?

One live pastor of a great city church told me yesterday that his church has a budget of \$3,000 to spend for its men and women in the service. I find myself wondering what the 580 men and women of that church are sending back to it, to help it in its work near one of the main arteries of a great Eastern city. And I wonder if some of the money that is being sent back to it by those on its Roll of Honor is designated for use in the far places of the earth,

to help to train more Kagawas and Chiang Kai-sheks, to make His house "a house of prayer for all peoples."

It will be hard going for our America, and for those who will look to her for light as well as for bread, if you men and women come back, having received Testaments and LINKS, and are only nominal Christians who scarcely ever darken the doors of the house of God, and who spend more for baubles than you will for a well-rounded ministry on the part of the Christian Church!

It will hardly save the world if a few thousands of brave men find religion in foxholes but allow it to degenerate into only a tarnished memento of hard and bitter days by the time they come back up a gang-plank at San Francisco or New York.

Why has the Church a right to your loyalty? For one reason, this God-created institution will have a lot to do with the making of world peace when it comes. Long before Woodrow Wilson tried to establish a working League of Nations, two great Old Testament prophets majestically prophesied of a time when the nations should, according to God's will, live together in peace and prosperity. But if you will read those prophecies carefully you will discover that this peace will be preceded by an earnest search after the will of God, and eager, wistful worship, and faithful walking in His paths (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:2-4).

Hypocrites Out of Place

But there is another reason why the Church has a right to your loyalty: it stands for sincere and helpful Christian living. Even the hypocrite outside the church sets up a howl when he sees one *within* it. And the howl is justified, because the hypocrite inside the Church is out of place. He should stay with his own crowd.

There is a fine New Testament picture of a good citizen and a good church member.

Turn to James 2:19-27 and read it. And wish for more church members like that!

Whenever you see a hypocrite, remember that he is a half-way imitator of some splendid Christian who is worth imitating. But the imitator hasn't the moral courage to go the whole way. He has too much hollow ironwork to defend, and not enough muscle for the job! He is only an actor, a cheap ham who didn't have enough intestinal fortitude to learn the part. Never let him keep *you* out of the Church! He isn't that important.

World's Greatest Institution

Don't allow him to turn you into a sniper and send you into the sullen ranks of the guerrillas who delight in taking potshots at the loyal church members who are trying to leaven the world with decency and true religion!

Can you doubt that the Church was divinely instituted? How else could it ever have grown so astonishingly and triumphed so wonderfully in the face of such staggering odds? We proudly call it the greatest institution in the world today. In spite of the human imperfections of its members, it is growing and it is helping millions of us to feel that God is nearer and dearer to us and our loved ones.

It will still be standing there like a beacon when you get back. What will you do about it then, matey?

And don't forget this: if you don't get back, there is no other institution in your community that can bring so much of comfort and inner strength to your loved ones. Think that over!

How can you show your loyalty to your church? You will first *pray* for your church. It needs your prayers. And yet your prayers will probably help you even more than they will help your church. Prayer does something to the one who earnestly and sincerely prays. As you pray for your church you

will be reminded of the many things she has done for you. And you will wish to do something to help to square your debt.

But you should uphold the church also with your *presence*. Let's be straight-from-the-shoulder. How many times do you usually go to church when you are home? If everyone went to church in your community exactly as you do and when you do, would the churches there be better off than they now are, or not? Would they be open only on Christmas and Easter? Or would they be full every Sunday and humming with interest and activities? How do you vote? Would you like to see the churches of America closed or kept open? Are you willing to vote *by your presence* when you get back home?

And you are supposed to uphold the church by your *gifts* if you are a member. Do you do that? How do your gifts match your expenditures for the small luxuries that deplete your pay at present? Do they mean more to you than the Christian Church? How do you vote about *this*? Or did you realize that you are voting on this as you handle your money? Your use of money helps to reveal your interests and your character. Why not send something back to your church, to help it in its work and to carry the Christian message to others in distant lands?

Prepare to Do Your Part

But do not forget that you have another obligation to your church—to *serve* in its work when you return. Perhaps you can sing in the choir, or usher. Perhaps you can teach a class or help with recreational activities for the young people.

Help your church where you can, and feel it is an honor and a privilege to serve the great Christian enterprise that is trying to bring the whole world closer by bringing it nearer to the feet of our Christ.

Do your part!

Prayers designed for private
and public devotions of men
and women in the armed forces

LET *Us* PRAY

By G. A. CLEVELAND SHRIGLEY

Compiler and author of "Prayers
for Men in Service," "Wartime
Prayers for Those at Home,"
"Prayers for Women Who Serve."

FOR MY WIFE

HEAVENLY FATHER, I thank Thee for my wife and for our love which by its strength and beauty makes us one. Draw us close to Thee and to each other in all our prayers and thoughts and hopes. Bless her abundantly and prosper her in all good things. Make me at all times worthy of her faith and trust in me. And, if it be Thy will, grant that we soon may be reunited in our home within a peaceful world, made better by our sacrifice, our living and our love. Through Him who hallows our relationship, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

FOR MY COMRADES

FATHER IN HEAVEN, I thank Thee for my friends in the service who bring Thy love and care to me. I thank Thee for their patience with my faults, their tolerance of my failures, their encouragement of all my good efforts, their sympathy in my hardships, their joy in my successes. Help me to be worthy of the trust and cheer of my friends by my own willingness to serve and share with them the best I have, the best I am, and the best I can become. Through Him who is our Perfect Friend, Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR RIGHT SPEAKING

DEAR LORD, I thank Thee for the gift of speech and pray that I may use it worthily. Help me to guard my words and keep them truthful, reverent, clean and kind. Teach me always to speak the best that is within my mind and heart for the strengthening of my comrades and to the glory of Thy holy name. Amen.

FOR SELF-MASTERY

HELP ME, dear God, to discipline my senses. Teach me neither to try to escape them nor to surrender to them. Train me to exert self-control and to avoid self-indulgence. Let me grow strong by withstanding temptation. Keep me moderate in the use of wholesome pleasures and possessions. Show me my duty to share all good things

with others. Help me to guard and refine my thoughts and to correct any habit which coarsens my perception of goodness and truth. Train me in Thy love and in a manliness like Christ's, that I may not be deceived by selfish standards or cheap sensations. May I practice self-giving and creative righteousness. Help me to make my senses the servants and helpers of my immortal soul, that I may be a worthy son of Thee, my Heavenly Father. Amen.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH

ALMIGHTY GOD, lift me up with the joyful faith that the world, which Thou created and into which Thy Son came as Saviour, can surely be redeemed and transformed into Thy Kingdom. Let me never neglect my share towards that glorious fulfillment. Let me live in the light of Thy gospel; loving Thee with all my mind and heart and soul, and my neighbor as myself; seeking first the things eternal; forgiving and loving my enemies; serving the poorest and the lowliest; anxious about nothing; fearing no evil. Let me ask and receive, seek and find. Let me keep good cheer in my heart, as I fight on under the banner of the Cross and glorify Thee, who by Thy resurrected and reigning Son hast overcome the world. Amen.

IN FOREIGN LANDS

O LORD, be with us and guide us as, in the progress of war, we enter into strange lands and come among new people and unfamiliar ways. Make us messengers of Thy truth and bearers of Thy blessings. May we work as Thy helpers, bringing kindness and sympathy, courage and love to those who know loneliness, loss and defeat. May our service restore and rebuild and give new hope and strength to those whose lives are shattered and whose hearts are sick and afraid. May our words and our deeds be valiant examples of good will and brotherliness. May we do our full share to make a clean world and a good world, where fathers and mothers may smile and work in love, and children laugh and grow strong, and Thy peace reign in all hearts and lives. Amen.

SERGEANT SMITH *Returns*

A One-Act Play

by

DOROTHY
CLARKE
WILSON



CHARACTERS: SGT. PETER SMITH; CAPT. RICHARD WAYNE, a chaplain;
LT. MATHEWSON, medical corps; SGT. NED SMITH, Peter's father.

SCENE: *A room in a makeshift hospital behind the lines. Downstage, right, an army cot, side to audience and head to right wall. Beside the cot, away from audience, a chair or folding stool. Hospital accessories as desired. Entrance, left or rear.*

As the play opens PETER SMITH is lying on the cot. He is a young American soldier somewhere between twenty and thirty years of age. He has been severely wounded in action. Except for his slow, irregular breathing, he is completely motionless. MATHEWSON, the medical officer in charge, enters, followed by RICHARD WAYNE, a chaplain, about forty-five years of age.

* * *

MATHEWSON: (*Briskly*) This way, Chaplain Wayne. Sergeant Smith is in here.

(*He goes at once to the side of the cot and, bending over the still figure, reaches for PETER'S pulse.*)

WAYNE: (*Following him to the side of the cot*) Peter! (*With a startled look at the lieutenant.*) Is he . . . Am I too late?

MATHEWSON: (*Shaking his head*) He's

still alive, though his pulse is getting pretty weak.

WAYNE: I didn't expect to find him unconscious.

MATHEWSON: I'll give him a shot of adrenalin. Maybe that will bring him to long enough to talk to you, Chaplain. He seemed anxious to get something off his mind.

WAYNE: You say he's been asking for me, Lieutenant?

MATHEWSON: Whenever he's been free from delirium.

WAYNE: That's isn't surprising. I've known Peter Smith a long time. I knew his father, too.

MATHEWSON: (*Curiously*) That so? Pretty intimate they must have been, I take it.

WAYNE: Why do you say that?

MATHEWSON: The kid talks about him constantly in his delirium. Calls him Dad. Seems to think he's here with him, or they're off together somewhere.

WAYNE: (*Slowly*) That's queer.

MATHEWSON: Oh, no. It's the most natural thing in the world for the mind to travel back in delirium, revisit familiar places, imagine the presence of people with whom one's been most intimate.

WAYNE: But—Peter Smith was *not* intimate with his father. He—he never even saw him!

MATHEWSON: (*Dumbfounded*) He didn't?

WAYNE: Ned Smith was killed in the last war. Before his son Peter was born.

MATHEWSON: Well, what do you know about that! Then how do you account—

WAYNE: You ought to be more of a psychologist than I am. How do you account for it?

MATHEWSON: (*Studying the still figure thoughtfully*) Was this Sergeant Smith inclined to be a morbid person?

WAYNE: Which one? Father or son?

MATHEWSON: You mean the father was a sergeant, too? (*As WAYNE nods*) I mean this one. Peter, you call him.

WAYNE: Peter morbid? Not in the least. He was—is—one of the most thoroughly joyous and vital persons I've ever known. Even the war hasn't been able to take it out of him. He's the kind that even after these months of hell he's been through can still believe he's fighting to bring in the millennium.

MATHEWSON: Well—at least he won't have to know if he's mistaken. (*He stoops over and administers the adrenalin.*)

WAYNE: You—you mean he hasn't a chance?

MATHEWSON: About one in—five hundred.

WAYNE: (*After a moment of silence, his voice gruff with emotion*) So—history repeats itself. Life again resolves itself into a small boy looking at a gold-framed picture on a mantel piece.

MATHEWSON: What do you mean?

WAYNE: (*Briefly*) Just that—Peter

Smith also happens to have a baby son that he's never seen.

MATHEWSON: Poor little devil! But I'm sure, Chaplain, his son will be very proud—

WAYNE: (*Almost curtly*) Yes. I know. He'll be proud his father died a hero. He'll be suckled on it, reared on it, just as Peter was. And after he's grown to manhood, then what's going to happen? The same thing all over again?

MATHEWSON: Heaven forbid!

WAYNE: Unfortunately it's men, not heaven, that have got to do the forbidding.

MATHEWSON: (*Grimly*) It can't happen again. By heavens, if I thought it could—I've got two sons coming along myself.

WAYNE: What's going to prevent it?

MATHEWSON: Why—we are. That's what we're here for. That's why men like Sergeant Smith are willing to go through hell like this, to give everything. We're going to settle the thing this time.

WAYNE: That's what Ned Smith said twenty-five years ago.

MATHEWSON: Come now, Chaplain. Who's being morbid now?

WAYNE: Ned was one of the kindest, gentlest men I ever knew. Wouldn't kill a rabbit. But he wiped out a pill box of a half dozen Germans singlehanded. And why? So that Peter wouldn't be lying here on this cot today.

MATHEWSON: (*Grimming*) At least Peter went him one better. He made it a full dozen.

(*PETER moves slightly on the cot. An unintelligible sound escapes his lips.*)

WAYNE: (*Excitedly*) The stuff's working, Lieutenant, He's coming out of it!

MATHEWSON: (*Watching Peter intently, his hand still on his pulse*) Yes. But don't get your hopes up, Chaplain. It's only temporary, you know.

WAYNE: You're sure? Peter's always been a husky chap.

MATHEWSON: I'll say! If he weren't, he

wouldn't have held out this long. As a matter of fact, I think it's sheer will power that's been keeping him alive these last six hours. He's got something he wants to tell you, and he's bound to do it.

WAYNE: But if he can keep himself alive for six hours by sheer will power, then why not—

MATHEWSON: Indefinitely? (*He shakes his head with a tolerant smile*) My dear Chaplain, you're asking for a miracle!

PETER: (*Stirring on the cot*) Dick—Dick Wayne—I want to see—Chaplain Dick Wayne—

WAYNE: (*Stepping forward instantly*) I'm here, Peter.

MATHEWSON: Good. For the moment there's no delirium. I'm going into the next room, Chaplain. I'll be there if anything happens.

PETER: Dick—

WAYNE: I'm here, Peter. (*To Mathewson*) Is there any danger of my tiring him? Letting him talk too much?

MATHEWSON: No danger. Nothing you do can hurt him. (*He goes out.*)

PETER: Dick—it's really—you—

WAYNE: It's really I, old man. I came as soon as I heard.

PETER: Lift my—head, please. So I can—talk better—(*He struggles to raise himself.*)

WAYNE: (*Slipping his arm beneath Peter's shoulders*) I'm not sure you should be doing this. You're a pretty sick man, you know.

PETER: Yeah. I know.

WAYNE: Sure I'm not hurting you?

PETER: (*With a slow smile*) Didn't you hear—what the—doctor said? Nothing you do can—hurt me.

WAYNE: (*Cheerfully*) He must think you're a pretty tough guy. And I guess he has reason to. Any man who could do the job you've just done and come out of it alive and husky—

PETER: No—kidding, Dick. You know I'm—washed up.

WAYNE: (*Gruffly*) Nonsense! It would take more than a hand grenade to wash you up. Maybe you won't be wiping out any more pill boxes right away, but you've done your share for a while. I've a notion they'll be flying you home on furlough in a few weeks.

PETER: (*With the same slow smile*) Yeah?

WAYNE: (*More lightly*) Come now, that wouldn't be so bad, would it? Another six weeks, and you may be walking down the elm-shaded street of old Centerville with the little fellow skipping along beside you.

PETER: Walking?

WAYNE: (*Who is getting in beyond his depth*) Well—even if you had to use a crutch or two—just at first, of course—that wouldn't be so bad, would it?

PETER: (*Whose head is now propped up against a pile of pillows and who can now talk more easily*) You never were a—good liar, Dick.

WAYNE: (*Lamely, taken aback*) I—don't know what you mean.

PETER: (*Suddenly intensely serious*) You've been straight with me always. Even the time when I was a kid—and mother died. I asked you what became of people—afterward. And you—didn't try to kid me along with golden streets and pearly gates and all that. You told me you—didn't know. Remember?

WAYNE: I remember.

PETER: Be straight with me now, Dick. O. K.?

WAYNE: (*Very serious*) O. K., Peter.

PETER: I've—written my last page, haven't I?

WAYNE: It looks that way, old man.

PETER: (*After a silence*) I'm not—really sorry, I guess. Though I would like to have seen the—little fellow. (*He tries to lift his hand.*) I can't seem to—reach—

WAYNE: What is it, Peter?

PETER: In my pocket, I think. His picture. (WAYNE takes a small snapshot from PETER'S pocket and looks at it) Some boy, isn't he?

WAYNE: (Managing to keep his voice steady and casual) I'll say! Looks like you, doesn't he? Seems to me you used to have the same saucy pug nose. What's his name?

PETER: Peter. Martha insisted. She sort of—had the advantage.

WAYNE: It's a good name. You can be sure he won't be ashamed of it. I suppose you know you're a hero, Peter.

PETER: Am I?

WAYNE: You've been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, I understand.

PETER: Dad had one of those, didn't he? Mother used to take it out sometimes and let me look at it. I suppose—Martha will be showing mine to—little Peter. I wonder if he'll feel—the same way I did about dad.

WAYNE: (Quietly) How was that?

PETER: (Becoming suddenly more excited) As if—as if I were living in his place, somehow. As if it were up to me to do all the things he'd have done if he hadn't been killed.

WAYNE: What things, Peter?

PETER: Dad had—ideas about things. About life. And people. He thought the world could be a wonderful place—if people would only make it so. Mother used to tell me.

WAYNE: Your father was a very unusual man, Peter.

PETER: He believed there wasn't any need of all this—people killing each other—children going hungry—all the beauty of the centuries turned into smoke and ashes.

WAYNE: I know.

PETER: That's why he did what he did. He hated war. He loathed killing people. But he did it because he believed it was something that had to be done. It was part of the job—of making his dreams come true.

WAYNE: That's right, Peter. He did believe that.

PETER: I've tried to make it my job, too. He wasn't here to do things, so I had to. I tried to do everything I could just the way he would have done. That's why I majored in Economics in college and took up teaching. I thought it was one way to help get the big idea across.

WAYNE: You've done a good job, Peter. Your father would be proud of you.

PETER: (With desperate earnestness) But—I'm through now, Dick. I'm—washed up. And—the world's in such a terrible mess, worse even than when dad left it.

WAYNE: (Gently) It's not your fault, Peter. You've done what you could.

PETER: If I could—only be sure—(His strength is leaving him now. His speech is becoming more labored.)

WAYNE: Sure of what?

PETER: Sure it—isn't all for nothing—what little I've done. Have I been helping to make dad's dream come true? Is—something good—going to come out of all this? Have I—really helped make a—better world—where there won't be any more of—this blind stupidity?

WAYNE: I hope so, Peter. God knows I hope so!

PETER: (Weakly) Hope's a—poor thing to—be dying for.

WAYNE: I promised to be honest with you.

PETER: If I could—only know it's been—worth it! That—little Peter won't—have to—do the same thing—all over again—(He suddenly sinks back, his strength seemingly gone, his breath coming in short gasps.)

WAYNE: You've been using too much energy. I shouldn't have let you talk so much.

PETER: I—wanted to—had to—

(The door opens, and a man enters very quietly, so quietly that his coming makes

scarcely a sound. It is NED SMITH. He is young, barely older than PETER, and he wears the uniform of the first World War. He comes quietly to the foot of PETER's cot and stands looking down at him.)

NED: (Softly) Peter—

PETER: (His eyes opening wide) You—you—(He struggles wildly to raise himself on the cot. The effort is too much for him, and he sinks back, gasping for breath.)

NED: (Very quietly) Steady, son.

PETER: (Staring at him) You're—my father, aren't you? I—know you. You're—just like—your picture—

WAYNE: (Instantly at his side, his arm under PETER's head) Peter! (He removes the pillow beneath his head and lowers him gently to his original position.) Don't you know me, Peter? It's Dick. Dick Wayne.

PETER: Dick—

WAYNE: That's right. Hold steady now. Keep perfectly quiet. You almost went off there for a minute, old man.

(WAYNE apparently does not see NED, who is a product of PETER's delirium. NED starts to move away.)

PETER: (Struggling to lift himself) Dad! No, dad! Don't go! Come back! Come—back—(As NED returns, he sinks back again, weak with relief.)

NED: (Quietly) All right, son. I'll stay as long as you need me.

WAYNE: Hold steady, Peter. Don't let yourself go.

PETER: Put my—head up again, Dick—please—

WAYNE: It's better for you to lie quietly now.

PETER: (Struggling) It's—dark when I—lie like this. I—can't see. Lift my head, Dick, so—I can see—my father—(To humor him, WAYNE lifts his head, holding it beneath his arm.) That's—better—

NED: Can you see me now, son?

PETER: I—see you. (His eyes are clear and wide) You—look just the way I

thought you would. I—used to pretend about you—make believe you were with me—when I went on hikes and—fishing trips. And you—always looked just the way you do now—

NED: Maybe I was with you, son. Who can tell?

PETER: Then why haven't I seen you before, dad? I've wanted you so—needed you so—

NED: Not so much as you need me now Peter.

PETER: Have you—come to get me, dad? Take me away? If you have, I'm ready. I've—finished with everything—

NED: Have you, son? Are you sure of that?

PETER: I've—tried, dad. I've done the best I could. I've wanted to help make your dreams come true.

(NED is silent. WAYNE smooths PETER's forehead gently with his free hand in an attempt to quiet him.)

WAYNE: Steady, Peter. Lie quiet. Don't try to talk.

PETER: I believe in them, too, dad—those dreams of yours. They're really coming true this time. There's going to be a better world after this is over. People are going to have a chance to live—free and happy. That's what we're fighting for—dying for—

NED: That's what the men of my generation fought and died for, too, Peter.

PETER: But this time it's really coming. It's got to come. The world can't go through another hell like this.

NED: That's what we thought, too. Those are the very words we spoke.

PETER: But—they made mistakes last time, dad. Terrible mistakes.

NED: What kind of mistakes, Peter?

PETER: They weren't willing to get together—to co-operate. They went back to the same old ways of doing things—every nation for itself, trying to get and keep all it could at the expense of every other—

hating, distrusting, competing, grabbing—
Oh, things were all wrong, dad.

NED: And what makes you think it will be any different this time?

PETER: It's got to be. There's no other way out. At least we've learned that much out of this mess. We know now that half the world can't be free while the other half are slaves, that a hundred million well-fed people in America can't be safe and secure as long as there's another hundred million in India and China going hungry.

NED: (*quietly*) You know it, yes. But you're merely tearing down the old world. What about those who will sit around a table to draw up the blueprints for the new? Do they know it, too?

PETER: (*in desperation*) They must know. I tell you they must. Where—where are you, dad? I can't—see you. It's—getting dark—

NED: Listen to me, Peter. Listen. Can you hear me?

PETER: I—hear you—

NED: Listen to me, son. Carefully. For this is what I came to tell you.

PETER: (*faintly*) Yes—dad—

NED: Don't make the same mistake that we did. Don't think that you can build a new world simply by destroying the old. It can't be done, Peter. Do you hear me?

PETER: I—hear—

NED: It can't even be built on the old foundations, love upon hatred, co-operation on fear and suspicion, world neighborliness on narrow, selfish nationalism. If it wants to save its soul, the world has got to strip out all the old, rotten underpinnings and start clean. And you've got to help do it, Peter.

PETER: It's—too late. I'm—finished—

NED: Your job isn't finished. It isn't enough to tear down. You've got to build. Only the young are brave enough to tear out old foundations. Only those wise with the world's bitter suffering can be trusted

to fashion new ones. It's got to be built on love this time, son, not hate.

PETER: (*in a whisper*) Love—

NED: Friendship, mutual helpfulness, even to those who were your enemies. Not retaliation.

PETER: Friend—help—

NED: Brotherhood among all men. Not race superiority and imperialism.

PETER: Brother—

NED: It's the only way, son. Do you hear me? (*As he speaks, he backs slowly toward the door*) The only way—(*His voice seems to become faint and far away*) the only way. (*He goes out quietly.*)

WAYNE: (*in a startled voice, bending over PETER*) Peter! Peter! (*PETER lies motionless. WAYNE goes quickly to the door. In an urgent voice*) Dr. Mathewson!

MATHEWSON: (*Entering quickly*) What is it?

WAYNE: He's—gone, I'm afraid. (*As MATHEWSON approaches the cot*) He became quite delirious toward the last. Thought his father was here.

MATHEWSON: That's what I told you. He's been like that most of the time. You're lucky to have found him rational. (*He bends over, reaches for PETER's pulse.*)

WAYNE: (*thoughtfully*) It's queer. I could almost imagine Ned was here myself.

MATHEWSON: (*his body suddenly stiffening as he looks up, startled*) Sergeant Smith isn't dead.

WAYNE: He— isn't?

MATHEWSON: (*lowering his voice*) He's breathing quite naturally. His pulse is almost normal. He—he's going to live!

WAYNE: (*softly, almost reverently*) Nice going, Peter. I thought you could do it.

MATHEWSON: (*awe in his voice*) If I were a religionist like you, I'd say it was a miracle. Since I'm not, I'll have to say I underestimated a man's will power.

WAYNE: Suppose we just say, Lieutenant, that we both underestimated—*man.*



A PAGE OF LAUGHS

» Private (male variety): "As I contemplate the wonders of nature, I realize how insignificant is 'man.'"

WAC: "Any woman knows that without contemplating."

» Riding as a passenger in the back seat of a jeep that was moving along at breath-taking speed, an air corps officer was finally moved to protest:

"Better get some altitude, Corporal. There's regulations against hedge-hopping behind our own lines!"

» "I can't tell you where we're being sent," a marine in the Far East wrote to his mother recently, "but I'm going to ask the first native I meet if he ain't ashamed of ancestors who were silly enough to invent gunpowder!"

» Two 12-year-old boys paddled their canvas canoe up to a troopship anchored near an Australian city and asked the gold-braided officer leaning over the rail for permission to come aboard.

"No," the officer said, "get out of here."
"Are you the captain of this ship?" asked the small fry in the stern of the canoe.

"No," said the braid. "But I'm the fourth officer."

"Then," the kid replied, "you'd better learn to be more respectful to your superiors. I'm the captain of this one."

» At a certain area headquarters, it is reported, there were 100 soldiers and two WACs.

"When you make your report," said the commanding officer, "don't use a lot of language. Just put down in figures what has happened during the month."

When the report came it read: "Last month 1% of the soldiers married 50% of the WACs.

» The Quaker had heard a strange noise in the night and, waking, found a burglar ransacking the kitchen. He took his fowling piece and called from the landing of the kitchen stairs, in plain sight of the intruder: "Friend, I would do thee no harm for the world and all that is in it—but thou standest where I am about to shoot."

The burglar fled.

» A doleful-looking marine in the Chicago Union Station waiting-room was overheard explaining the pitfalls of life to a friend: "So I married my pin-up girl and became a pinned-down boy!"

» The gentleman stopped to talk to the wee girl who was making mud pies on the sidewalk.

"My word," he exclaimed, "you're pretty dirty, aren't you?"

"Yes," she replied, "but I'm prettier clean."

» Special Services Lecturer: "Every time I breathe someone passes into eternity."

Soldier: "Why don't you try cloves?"



"Gentlemen, I have an announcement to make!"

Well Talk of

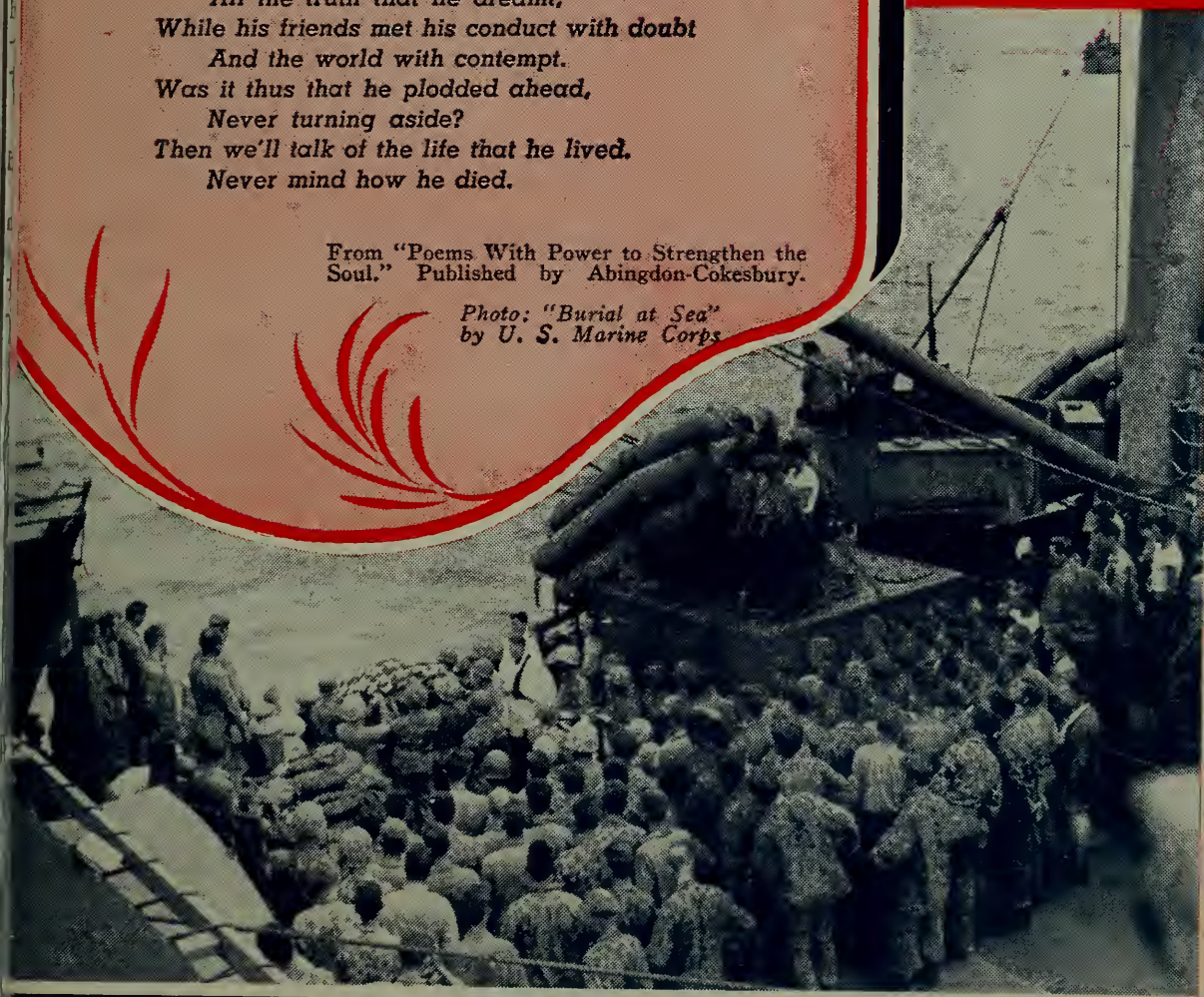
THE LIFE HE LIVED

By ERNEST CROSBY

SO he died for his faith! That is fine—
More than most of us do.
But say, can you add to that line
That he lived for it too?
In his death he bore witness at last
As a martyr to truth.
Did his life do the same in the past
From the days of his youth?
It is easy to die. Men have died
For a wish or a whim—
From bravado or passion or pride.
Was it harder for him?
But to live—every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt
And the world with contempt.
Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then we'll talk of the life that he lived.
Never mind how he died.

From "Poems With Power to Strengthen the Soul." Published by Abingdon-Cokesbury.

Photo: "Burial at Sea"
by U. S. Marine Corps

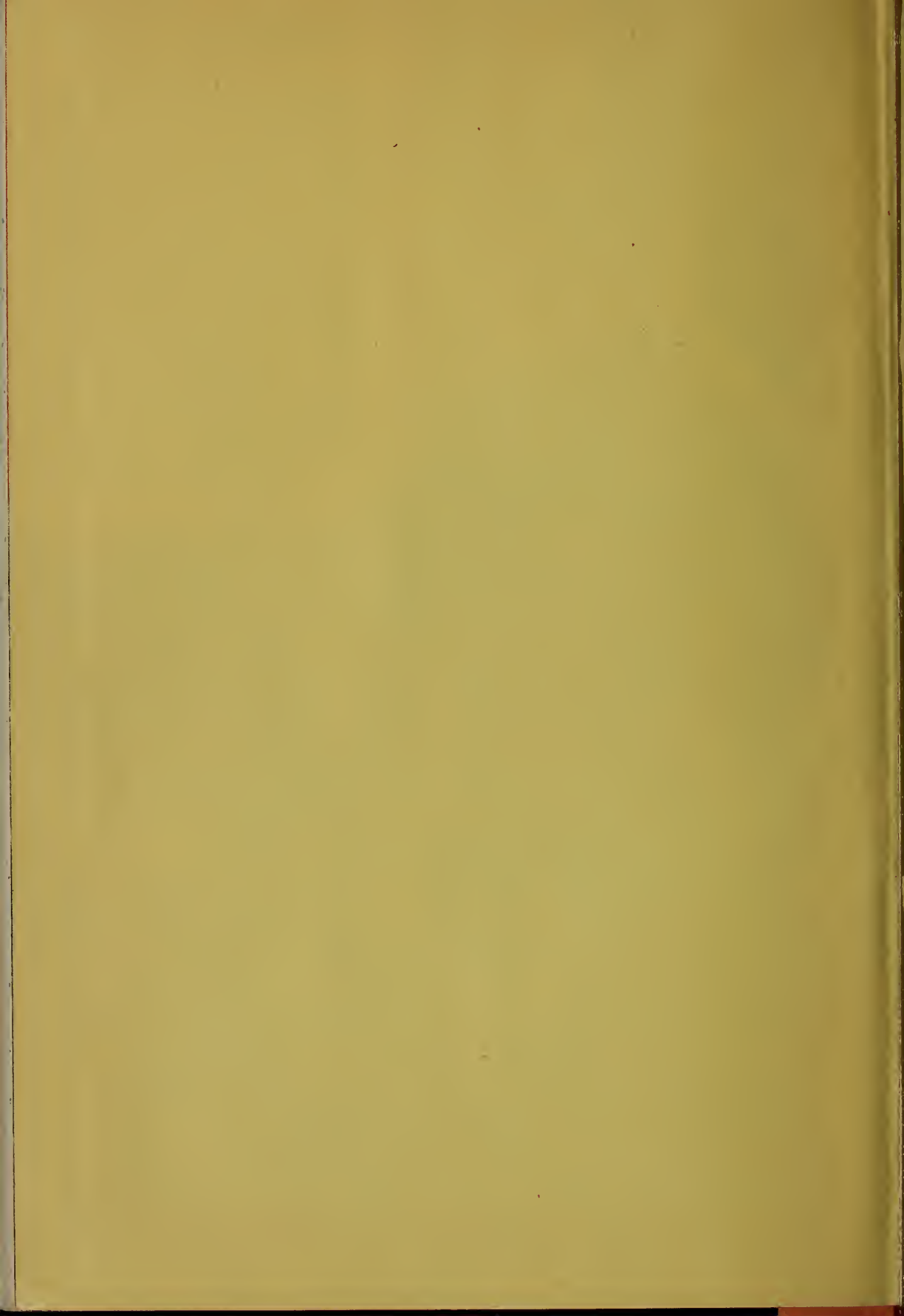




PILOT'S PSALM

The below paraphrase of the Twenty-Third Psalm was written by CHAPLAIN EDWARD H. JONES of the Air Transport Command. In the photo above, the author bids Godspeed to Lieut. L. G. Dingwell, who has completed 25 bombing missions over Europe and has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross as well as the Air Medal with three oak-leaf clusters.

THE Lord is my Pilot; I shall not crash. He maketh me to fly in clear skies; He leadeth me down to smooth landings; He keepeth my chart. He guideth me through the pathless ways of the skies for His name's sake. . . . Yea, though I fly through the storms and tempests of life, I shall dread no danger; for Thou art near me; Thy love and Thy care, they protect me. . . . Thou preparest an airport before me in the homeland of eternity: Thou emblazoneth the skies with Thy beauty; my plane flies gracefully. Surely sunlight and starlight shall favor me on the flight I take, and I will abide in the presence of my God forever.



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