

Shall the Pulpit Speak Out?

By CHARLES HERBERT HUESTIS

A SHORT time ago I had a conversation with a young preacher. He told me he was on the point of resigning from the ministry. The reason for his proposed action was that he no longer held the beliefs, especially with regard to the Bible, that he was supposed to preach, and he did not think it honourable for a man to receive the support of a church from whose faith he had drifted.

This young preacher is a representative of a growing class in this country at present. They have come up out of the theological seminaries where they have spent years in the study of the Bible from the standpoint of modern historical criticism, and have therefore acquired an attitude toward the Scriptures differing widely from the orthodox position. But the mass of the people to whom they are to preach have not had these advantages; in the Sunday School the lessons are prescribed and treated in the "quarterlies" as though no work had been done upon the Bible for the past half century; and the leaders in the Young People's movements organise Bible studies from the old conception of the Bible as a treasure house of proof texts rather than a progressive revelation of God to a single people in the past.

Under these circumstances what is the young preacher to do? There are three courses before him. He may remain in the church and avoid preaching upon dangerous topics. He may resign from the ministry and find some other occupation. He may stay in the ministry and speak out. If he accepts the first of these courses he must inevitably lose self respect and independence of thought. If he accepts the second like Jonah he runs away from his calling. Then let him speak out!

This is the duty of the educated ministry of to-day, a duty it owes both to itself and to the people to whom it ministers. It is the duty of the educated minister of to-day to be a leader in Bible study, and to conduct his people, and especially the children and young people of his charge, wisely and constructively into the assured results of the modern study of the Bible. Not only must he lead them to the new point of view with relation to the Old Testament Scriptures, but he must prepare them for that new adjustment of thought that must follow, for instance, the results of the critical study of the Nativity and Resurrection narratives of the New Testament. Only in this way shall the young people of the church be saved from the destructive force of the sceptical appeal which will surely come when criticism is used as the artillery of men who are hostile to religion.

The bubble of Science-and-the-Bible scepticism was pricked by the very simple fact that it is not the function of the Bible to teach science. In like manner may that of the Theology-and-the-Bible be made unattractive and innocuous by an appreciation of the fact that religion does not come out of the Bible but the Bible has come out of religion.

Red Deer, Alberta.

The Peace Conference

From the London "Outlook"

WHETHER the regulation of warfare does or does not make for the promotion of peace, it is at all events a subject of vast and varied importance. It has engrossed the Conference at The Hague; it threatens to swamp it; yet the discussion of its principles and details has aroused next to no popular interest. We may regret that this should be so, but we cannot wonder at it. The world's interest in the Conference of 1907 vanished before the Conference had assembled. With attention prematurely and injudiciously concentrated on the question of the limitation of armaments, and on the attitude of the Powers towards Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's proposals, the actual meeting of the Conference came with the disenchanting effect of an anti-climax directly it was made clear that the chances of any practical step towards disarmament were non-existent. The Prime Minister can no longer disguise the fact that his incursion into foreign affairs, unfortunate in itself, has been doubly so in its reflex action upon the prestige of the Conference. The world has followed its debates with the apathetic consciousness that it was really over before it met. We believe this point of view to be not only mistaken but dangerous, and dangerous above all for a maritime Power like ourselves. But its entire naturalness should be an impressive warning against the self-destructive folly of submitting an ideal

to international discussion without due preparation and without reference to the hard facts of politics. The Conference has never truly recovered, in the average opinion of the world, from the blundering diplomacy that first raised the issue of disarmament to the place of honour on its programme and then disposed of it before a single delegate had reached The Hague. Moreover, it has been very apparent that the Conference, like our own Imperial Conferences, suffers from the absence of all the usual aids to deliberation. It needs an organisation like our recently evolved Secretariat, some permanent machinery for collecting data and collating views. In the absence of such machinery its programme is hopelessly overloaded, its debates are diffuse, it touches a dozen momentous questions for every one it settles, and ends by wearying with its technicalities and its cumbrousness the attention of mankind.

The Canadian Climate

AN English newspaper, "The Bystander," in commenting editorially on the alleged Weather Bill in the Canadian Commons, says: "It seems that Canada has suffered so much from slanders concerning her climate and other conditions that a Bill making such libels punishable is to be introduced into the Dominion Parliament. It will be a fine patriotic Bill, but we are glad we haven't passed a similar one in this country. Otherwise, we should, most of us, be spending this winter—we mean this summer—in gaol."

"The Canadian Meteorological Department will have to be uncommonly wary in its language. Instead of hurricanes, they will have to talk of 'the balmy zephyrs that caused the apple crop to be premature.' Lightning will become unknown. 'The exquisite sky-rocket that electrocuted a Toronto citizen the other day was much admired by residents in the neighbourhood. Those who possessed waterproofs were also greatly struck by the copious showers that followed this bright display.' Chills will be known as heat-spots, and a cold in the head might be called a 'pepper-pip.' The Dominion could adopt as its motto:

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this Act of Parliament.
And all animals presuming to be Arctic could be exterminated."

Oliver's Visit to Vancouver

From "B. C. Saturday Sunset"

HON. FRANK OLIVER, Minister of the Interior, has been in Vancouver and vicinity the last few days looking into the Oriental immigration question. On the principle of a white British Columbia the Minister expresses himself without reserve. It appears to be simply a question with him of what is the best method to exclude Oriental labour. From his published utterances and in conversation with him, I gather that he believes the matter should be dealt with in the general immigration policy of the Dominion, which has been to keep out all undesirables. What Hon. Mr. Oliver is informing himself upon is how far the people of this province would go in applying the word "undesirable."

What is an undesirable immigrant? The immigration law defines him as one who is liable to become a public charge, one who is a criminal, or one afflicted with contagious or infectious diseases. The Immigration Act also provides that an immigrant convicted of any offense against the law within twelve months after his arrival may be deported.

The alien labour contract law provides that labourers may not be brought into the country under a contract. This regulation, there is good reason to believe, is being systematically violated in this port by Japanese employment bureaus.

Outside of this regulation there is none which can meet the case of the Japs except the understanding which exists between the Japanese Government and that of the Dominion of Canada that no more than 400 shall be allowed to leave Japan for Canada during a year. This understanding, we all know, the Japanese Government is evading by issuing passports to its subjects to Honolulu, where they remain a short time and re-embark for Canada. Many of the passports of the recent arrivals show that the Japs had left their country only four or five months before landing here.

British Columbia will await with interest and some anxiety for the action of the Dominion Government as the outcome of Hon. Mr. Oliver's visit.