



ing." The question has emerged from many devout minds as to whether God is not delaying victory and the peace we so much long for until as a people we return to Him in clear and definite contrition and amendment of life? He may be waiting to be gracious—waiting on us. At the risk, therefore, of making this Pastoral unduly long, I desire to deliver the whole counsel of God in this matter. To that end, I would plead that during the solemn weeks of Advent between now and the Day of Intercession, our people in every Parish and Mission will prepare beforehand by meetings for prayer and otherwise, for a grand spiritual climax of united prayer on January 6th. There will be no real success without due preparation. Mark how the Victory Loan Campaign was anticipated, and led up to by the most careful preparation and the enlisting of interest over the whole country. These achieved its phenomenal success. I say it with all reverence, a campaign of national prayer for victory for our cause, and also a campaign for rendering us worthy of victory, for bringing us closer to God in humiliation for our sins, for confirming the faithful, for rousing the careless, for recovering the fallen, for restoring the penitent, is being appointed to culminate on January 6th. Let me plead with the Clergy and Laity to spend the intervening time in devoutly preparing for this in the Church, in the Sunday School and in the homes of our people. Let our Churches be filled to overflowing on that day. For every thousand of our noble men who are gallantly fighting at the Front, let there be ten thousand faithful people at home trustfully praying to the Lord of Hosts and the God of battles.

I am,
Your affectionate friend and Bishop,
S. P. Rupert's Land.

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AN "OPEN LETTER" TO THE CLERGY AT HOME.

(Continued from page 5.)

instances of men who have refused to allow their officers to go into danger without them, and they count their lives as nothing in following a loved leader. Yet we do seem to have failed to enlist this spirit in our presentation of Christianity. Before beginning this letter I wrote to a priest, who has perhaps had as much experience in dealing with souls as any man living, a very definite "High-Churchman" and one who has conducted more than sixty Missions in England, and he writes in reply: "I feel myself that the war and the men at the Front have shown us that, not only for those at the war, but for the majority of those at home also, religion is in the Church of England a formal thing—it does not touch the heart."

We do seem to have allowed the appeal of the Personality of our Lord to sink into the background. Is it not true that we so often speak and act as if our Sacraments were "ends" and not "means," as if sin were an offence against a code or a system, rather than a wounding of Personal Love? And now the war has shown us that the devotion of personality to personality is superior in its results on the individual to any "mechanical" attachment to a system.

How the men listen when we speak to them of our Lord Who left His Father and His home because love impelled Him to "do His bit" in stopping the brute who was imperilling the happiness and peace of the world! They know what He meant when He cried before the consummation of the "supreme sacrifice," "It is finished!" And now He is alive, and offers His leadership and His love to all who will accept Him. This is their own ideal,

and "whom ye ignorantly worship Him declare I unto you." And is it not true that it is love, and love only, poured out "whilst we were yet unrepentant," which leads us to the ideal repentance.

Patriotism.—Patriotism—the pursuit of an almost indefinable ideal—how strongly that instinct (if instinct it be) is entrenched in their hearts! British-like, our men will always impute the worst possible motives for their "doing their bit," especially our Colonial brothers from overseas. But when you "get down to it" it is there all right, and is the mainspring of the wonderful offerings which are daily being made.

Cannot we make the ideal of the "Kingdom on earth as in Heaven" glow more than we do? Then we could truly say, "Those things which England has been willing to die for we mean to make England live for." Then we could make men see that the Person Who did what they admire most, longs to accept their service, and that His cause is advanced by their loyalty.

There are certain very familiar words which truly represent Christianity, and which bring home to us the narrowness of the barrier which separates the devotion of patriotism from true Christian life. Substitute but one capital letter in one place, and see if there are any words so full of promise in the way of response from such as our national soldiers have proved themselves to be, as the prayer:—

"Send Him victorious, happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us.

And compare these words with others almost as familiar:—

"The kingdoms of this world are become
The kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ:

And He shall reign for ever and ever."

VI. The Work of To-Day.

I must not close my letter (which otherwise might seem to be merely visionary and idealistic) without reference to a further revelation of the war. I was sitting in a "dug-out" the other day with five men of our Army, who, before the war, were a painter and decorator, a mail-cart driver, a shop assistant, a railway employe, and a gardener, and we were talking of *apres la guerre*. One of them said, "Well, sir, I know one thing, and that is when we get back again, if we do, we shall think a lot more of some of the things we used to take for granted." What did he mean? I was not left in doubt as to what was in his mind, for from all sides came instances quickly and readily, "Yes, our homes," "Our wives and kiddies," and one added, "Yes, and our Church."

I believe it to be very true that not only separation from their women-folk and homes, but the immensity of the sacrifices made for them, has enormously enhanced their value in the eyes of our men. They have realized the priceless value of their possessions, they have cast a halo around them, and have consecrated them in their minds.

The home clergy's work must lie in striving to make the homes and women-folk worthy of the high and noble place they hold to-day in the minds and values of our men. As the "Student in Arms" so beautifully and truly writes: "Perhaps . . . the lessons [of the war] will be forgotten and men will slip back into the old grooves. Much depends on the women of England. If they carefully guard the ancient ruins against our return, and if their gentle fingers press us back into them, we shall acquiesce; but if at this hour of crisis they, too, have seen a wider vision of national unity, and learnt a more catholic charity, the future is indeed radiant with hope."

Boys and Girls

Dear Cousins,—And when you read this, the New Year will be two or three days old, but all the same, I hope it will be very happy for you all. I suppose you have all been wondering why I said nothing about that Christmas Tree competition? Well, last week for various reasons, I was busy, and I waited for a few more to come in before judging; but anyway, I have only received two, and so I can't possibly make any award. I must say I was very sorry that more people didn't try it, as the two I did have from Kathleen Bond and Roy Blow were simply splendid, and only show what can really be done. However, I suppose everybody must have been very busy finishing up things for Christmas, and didn't find time. I will try to have a text competition ready for next week—I can't do it this.

What did you all do for Xmas? I had more fun than I've had for a long time—and that's saying a good deal. I was staying in a house where I had three small cousins, and we dressed up a Christmas tree for them, with lighted candles and sparkly fireworks, and we all enjoyed ourselves very much. We had to go to bed early on Xmas Eve, though, else Santa Claus would never have come. As it was, the children declared they heard his sleigh-bells, but they managed not to open their eyes. What a good thing! He'd simply have flown away up the chimney like a streak of lightning, and wouldn't have brought them anything at all. However, he did bring a tricycle for my boy cousin, who asked me if I didn't wish I was a little boy, so I could ride it! I wish I had been, but still, when we went out next day down to the pond, I had a ride on his sled, and even went coasting down a bank and away out over the ice on it. My! It was fun. I'm going again this week. I enjoy holidays every bit as much as you people do.

Well, I hope I shall have more answers for my next competition than I did for the last. Till next week, then, Goodbye.

Your affectionate Cousin,
Mike.

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