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Holland. Fr. James Adderley, or Mr. Burroughs, who, like myself, have been recent guests of the Y.M.C.A., and I am confident that they will concur with me in saying that such a charge is utterly false.

#### What is the Y.M. Religion?

By the way, what is the Y.M. religion? I doubt if it can be defined, for this reason, that it is simply the religion of the particular man who, having volunteered his services, has become leader of some or other hut. Interdenominational, do you say? Precisely so. It has its limitations, I quite agree. The sacramental side of religion is in obvious danger of being ignored. I know. I know. Believe me, I'm not claiming for the Association, neither would it claim for itself, perfection. But what I am out to insist on is this: that its workers, all of them, are godly, Christian men and women. They are not behind those counters serving cakes, tea and cigarettes for pleasure, but for the love of God and their fellow-men. And the British soldier, though a man of few words, is quick to recognize the Christ-spirit of service. Say what you will, the religion of the Empire in the future is being very largely moulded—unconsciously, if may be—in the huts of the Y.M.C.A. to-day. This is a very solemn thought. And if you object that, as Churchmen, we are not adequately represented in these huts—as undoubtedly we are not—whose fault is it? Certainly not the Y.M.C.A.'s. A Churchman, priest or layman is made every bit as welcome as a Nonconformist. The present policy on the part of the Church of boycotting the Y.M.C.A. is, in my opinion, one of the disasters of the war, and may prove our undoing. Moreover, if we value the Catholic faith, it is grossly unfair of us, knowing that for the great majority of our lads the Y.M.C.A. hut is their only church, to keep these members of our Church, I will not say spiritually starved, but (in our judgment) spiritually underfed, the reason being—may I write plainly?—our insular spirit, our narrow vision. However, it is still not too late.

#### Appealing for More Workers.

Mr. Yapp, I see, is now appealing for more workers. In our parishes there must be literally hundreds of keen, capable and godly laymen, an ample supply for both C.A. and Y.M.C.A. Oh! if only they would hear the cry of our Catholic boys overseas, "Come over and help us!" My experience convinces me that the man who responds will get infinitely more than he gives. Yes, as a convinced Catholic myself, I have come home to say, "God bless and prosper the Y.M.C.A." It is doing the real thing. It is relating faith to life. It is showing the Gospel in action. And the very warmest tribute that I, or anyone, can pay the Association is to take its world-famous initials and write, "You Make Christianity Attractive." To do this is to do the greatest thing in the world.

By the way, I must not forget to mention quite one of the most admirable pieces of Y.M. work; that is, the meeting the relatives of the dangerously wounded and conveying them by car to the various base hospitals. Under the able and kindly guidance of Mr. Willis, this act of service is proving a very godsend to thousands who come to France on so sad an errand.

"Never a word is said  
But it trembles in the air,  
And the truant voice has sped  
To vibrate everywhere;  
And perhaps far off in eternal years  
The echo may ring upon our ears."

## Downeaster

Thoughts of an Eastern Churchman

I HOPE I am not unreasonably prudish and straitlaced, but I must record my unspeakable disgust with a great deal of the vaudeville stuff now presented to our Canadian audiences. I am reminded in connection with this, of what someone a good many years ago said of the poems of a certain individual, who, at one time, had a great vogue: "They are as dull as ditch water and nearly as dirty." Canadians are said, and I think with justice, to be an exceptionally intelligent people, but the vaudeville shows they tolerate, and not only tolerate, but patronize, and often loudly, not to say enthusiastically, applaud, certainly does not argue a very high standard of mentality, to put it politely if somewhat circuitously. The way in which people, otherwise of good average intelligence, and not devoid of a certain degree of culture, respond to the silly, drivelling, vulgar and often worse than vulgar "jokes," and exhibitions, that with dreary monotony characterize these shows, is as amazing as it is depressing. Of late years there has been, I am informed by veteran playgoers, a marked deterioration in the character of these entertainments, as there has been, to my own personal knowledge, in the "movies." Eight or ten years ago our vaudeville shows were fairly clean and decent, which certainly cannot be said of them to-day, at least of any of those to which at wide geographical intervals, I have allowed myself to be dragged. They were all of a kind, stupid, vulgar, and more often than not, all but frankly indecent.

I have made the personal discovery of two authors recently, who have been a source of pure, unalloyed inspiration, enlightenment and pleasure—Stephen Graham and G. A. Birmingham. The former is to-day undoubtedly the leading authority on Russia, and all things Russian. No living Englishman has so thoroughly and intimately identified himself with the people and country. Mr. Graham has spent years in Russia living the life of a tramp, wandering for hundreds of miles along the country roads, sleeping out in the open, in the huts of the peasants, under bridges, in the forests. He has travelled with the pilgrims to Jerusalem, living with them between decks on the coasting steamers of the Black Sea. He has visited all sorts of remote and outlandish villages in all parts of southern and eastern Russia and parts of Asia Minor. All his multifarious experiences and impressions he relates, not only graphically, strikingly, picturesquely, but with a sort of mystic insight, which creates that atmosphere peculiar to the work of a true genius. He has the mastery over words possessed only by the few supreme creators of literature, and his books, if I am not greatly mistaken, will achieve a permanent place of their

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own among those of the immortals. At all events, whatever time may reveal in this respect, he is to-day, undoubtedly one of the most forceful and arresting of English authors, and as an interpreter of the soul of Russia, unrivalled, and indeed, unapproached, by any other writer. His books, in the strictest and strongest sense, are a revelation, and it is safe to say mark an epoch in our relations with the Russians.

The King and the Royal Household for some time past had two meatless days weekly, thus anticipating the impending enforcement of meatless days in Great Britain.

Bishop McInnes, the Bishop in Jerusalem, has shown himself to be not only an earnest worker in the cause of Christianity, but also a keen man of business. When he addressed the meeting of the Jerusalem and the East Mission recently, he amused his hearers by relating an incident which showed that he has an eye to the main chance. In connection with the Relief Fund which has been opened to relieve the prevailing distress in Palestine, the Bishop said that he had heard that the price of lentils was likely to increase at an alarming rate. He therefore availed himself of an opportunity of buying a considerable stock of this useful commodity on favourable terms. "I thought," he added, naively, "that if the price did advance and we found we had more lentils than we required for the immediate needs of our own people, we should then be able to sell the remainder at a rate advantageous to ourselves."

WARD 3

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