

There is nothing to choose between the churches of the belligerents, according to Mr. Phillpotts, who says that while to the English Established Church a larger liberty belongs than the German Lutherans can boast, the difference is only of degree. Neither tells the truth of its faith before this war or scourges its nation for such complete unfaithfulness to Christian precept or dares to criticize its nation's conduct of war. Mr. Phillpotts goes on to say that "not a Church on earth can afford to speak the truth that it professes," and of his nation's Church observes:

"If the war disestablishes the Church of England and thus shows its real strength or weakness, one measure of valuable ethical progress at least may be recorded; for until such divorce we are unable to judge the validity of its claims or the vitality of its organism. We only recognize that through the war it has spoken with contradictory voices, uttered a bewildering flood of fatuity—futile on any scale of values, but doubly impotent contrasted with the speech of mankind at the front. The war has rent the veil of the Temple in twain and revealed nothing of the least consequence behind it. That could not be otherwise while the Temple remained a side-chapel to Parliament and its ministers lay under the dominion of those who neither respected their achievements nor acknowledged their supernatural authority. Let the Church of England free herself if she would endure; and so win liberty of conscience to pursue her own spiritual ideals unfettered and utter her true inspirations without fear. Then, at least, she will preach and teach as honestly, if not as worthily, as the man in the trenches, and perhaps recover a measure of that respect and attention reserved to-day for him."

"THE PSALM OF THE ALLIES"—Just after the change in the German Government the Kaiser and his family, the new Chancellor, Hindenburg, and Ludendorff were all present at Divine worship and were comforted by an edifying discourse by the court chaplain. The service was said to have been "one of the most impressive held in the cathedral during the war," and, according to the dispatches, the text of the sermon was this verse from the ninety-third Psalm: "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Several of our editors have commented ironically upon the appropriateness of this text, and the *New York Times* observes that "not the ninety-third, but the ninety-fourth, Psalm furnishes the right text for a sermon on Germany, the sweet German humanities in this war." And these verses are quoted:

"O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself.

"Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

"Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

"How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

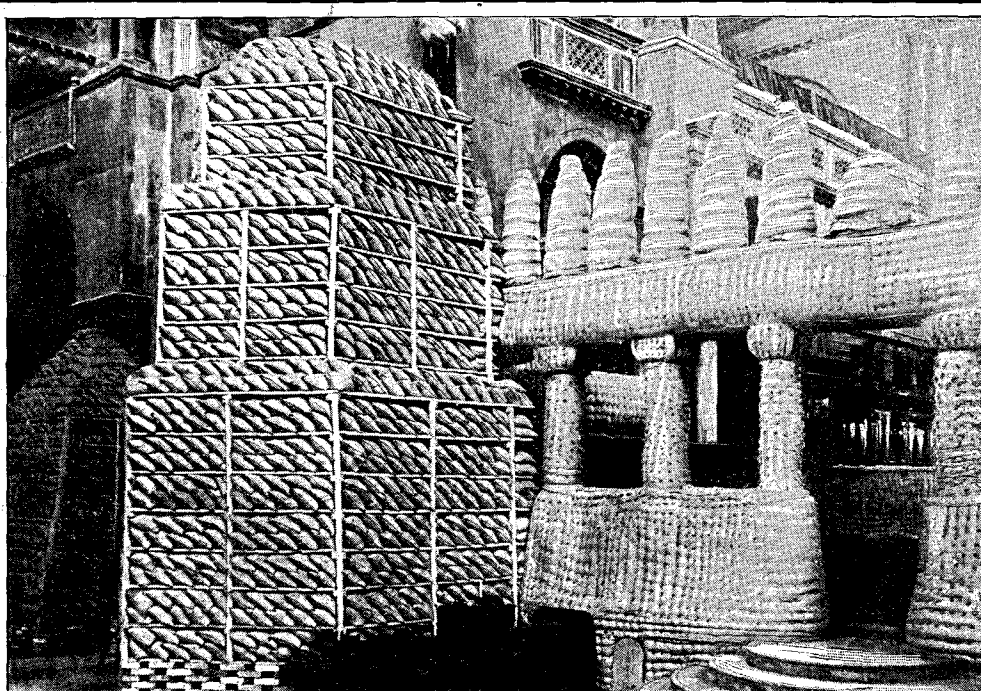
"They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage.

"They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

"Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it."

That, according to the writer in *The Times*, "is the Psalm of the Allies." He might also have quoted the cheering hope held out by the last three verses of this Psalm:

"They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.



THE ROOD SCREEN AT ST. MARK'S, VENICE.

Encased in padded covering to protect its priceless carvings.

"But the Lord is my defense; and my God is the rock of my refuge.

"And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off."

BOOKS FOR THE SOLDIERS

MANY WILL BE GLAD to send reading-matter to the soldiers in France—our boys especially—if it were known what to select. The query is answered in the *New York Times* by the National War-Work Council of the Y. M. C. A. Cablegrams have already been received from officers of General Pershing's army asking that books and late issues of the leading magazines be sent without delay. The appeal is first made to New York, but the whole country will later be asked to contribute. Later it would not be unreasonable to expect that a series of cheap reprints of the classics, such as the *London Times* issued for use of the English troops, will be brought out by some American publishing house. Already the various public libraries of New York have offered to receive books intended for overseas troops at their various branches and to forward them to the receiving-room of the New York Public Library at the Fortieth-street entrance. For more explicit direction we read:

"Good books of all kinds, so long as they are in fair condition and of good type, are acceptable. They should be put up in packages and marked 'American Overseas Forces.' It will be appreciated if the donors write their names in the books so as to add a personal element to the gift. Young Men's Christian Association workers have been unable to obtain in France reading material for the troops. All suitable books received in this way will be turned over to the National War-Work Council of the Young Men's Christian Association to be forwarded to France."

In a statement issued by J. I. Wyer, Jr., librarian of the State of New York and General Chairman of the War-Service

Committee of the American Library Association, information is given based on the experiences along the border, and the results of preferences expressed by the British soldiers in France. Thus:

"Books of fiction and drama will be wanted most, books of adventure, sea-stories, detective stories, historical novels, and collections of short stories, especially humorous ones. Such authors as Kipling, Doyle, McCutcheon, O. Henry, Stockton, Bindloss, Tarkington, Hopkinson Smith, Oppenheim, have been found popular authors with men.

"Foreign language study-books, especially French grammars and dictionaries, are much needed—possibly more than any other non-fiction books; also books of travel, biography, and history, especially lives of heroes and travels in the countries at war; technical books on aviation, wireless telegraphy, submarines, automobiles, signaling, first-aid and hygiene, drawing and lettering, and ethical books on patriotism, courage, good citizenship, with simple non-sectarian devotional books.

"Books for the uneducated are needed. Some of the men have not reading habits. All grades of men must be helped by these libraries. Some books must be included which are not over their heads. Don't be too fastidious, but help the humblest reader by sending some titles which would not find a place in your libra y.

"Fresh, attractive magazines are greatly desired, especially magazines of the character of *Century*, *Harper's*, *Everybody's*, *Outlook*, *THE LITERARY DIGEST*, *Popular Mechanics Monthly*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *Scientific American*, *Saturday Evening Post*. Probably no magazines more than two years old should be included."

The address of the War-Council of the Y. M. C. A. is 124 East Twenty-eighth Street. Further information may be had by inquiry at that office.

CAN YOU LOVE YOUR ENEMIES?

TRYING DAYS ARE THESE for the divines of all nations, and especially for those who hold to the Christian doctrine of loving your enemies. The New York *Tribune*, which mildly insinuates its sympathies with such while pointing their feeble efforts, sees that the Germans are in a somewhat better state as their difficulties are made "inconsiderable" for them. From the beginning it has been seen that their leaders have "made it plain that Germany was not on the same footing with ordinary nations and could not therefore be governed by the common standards of conduct." If they hated it was with a "German hate," and "if they committed murder it was in a divine cause." Even in their excursions against helpless civilians the airmen were blest, for were not the *Zeppelins* formally promoted to the celestial hierarchy, a little below the seraphim? But in other countries, so it is observed, the compromise is not so easily worked, and—

"The inability of the clergy to adapt their doctrine to the demand for reprisals has of late been a cause of offense to many hot-headed and revengeful people in England. The Archbishop of Canterbury himself expressed open disapproval of the project, and since he set the example some minor prelates and many priests of the Church of England have been signing petitions against it. The effect on those who hold the opposite view has been most unfortunate. 'Let the bishops stick to their belfries!' cries the Duke of Argyll in a towering rage, and, indeed, he finds not a few who agree with him in wishing for the old Tudor days when bishops 'were but dumb dogs.'

"But not all laymen agree with the duke. Some are seriously alarmed at the growing dislike displayed on all sides against the Germans, whom they ought as good Christians to love, even tho they be obliged to kill them. Thus Lord Hugh Cecil at a recent meeting of the House of Laymen of the Province of Canterbury warned his fellow churchmen that, whatever any one might say, they 'were not entitled to hate Germans,' but, on the contrary, 'were bound to love them and to defeat them in this war for the good of the whole of Christendom.' It was a hard doctrine, and it is greatly to be feared that some of his hearers found it beyond their powers.

"But what has enraged the revengeful above all else of late is the attempt of the Lower House of Canterbury Convocation to abolish Psalm 58 from the Prayer-Book. It is singular that imprecations which have been tolerated cheerfully for hundreds of years should suddenly prove distasteful to-day, but so it seems to be, for in answer to one who defends the psalm the Archdeacon of Gloucester asks plaintively: 'Does he really wish to see the teeth of the ungodly broken in their mouths?' There is no doubt that many will answer cheerfully that they do, and that when they pray in church on Sundays for victory the breaking of teeth and the smiting of jaw-bones are among the very least of the evils implied. They will even go so far with the Psalmist as to rejoice at the sight of vengeance, and the Duke of Argyll for one would doubtless be willing even to wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly. The bishops and archdeacons do not seem as yet to have made many notable converts."

DECLINE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

DEAD AS A DODO is discipline in the average Baptist Church, so it seems to the editor of *The Standard* (Chicago), and his remark that "except for major crimes that cause public scandal, few churches resort to the painful process of exclusion," is doubtless applicable to other Protestant denominations besides his own. Yet once, we are reminded, it was otherwise. During the time when Elder Aaron Leland was pastor of the church at Chester, Vt., between 1786 and 1832, "the Church exercised a watch-care which contrasts strongly with the laxity so conspicuous to-day." And the Baptist editor quotes a few significant instances of discipline taken from the church-records and by the author of a history of the Leland pastorate:

"1. Brother — has neglected to attend upon the worship of God with the Church without giving sufficient reason.

"2. Brother —, for neglect of public worship on the Lord's day: (a) for letting his children roam from house to house and from field to field on the Lord's day in secular pursuits and vain amusements, (b) for selling two sheep, delivering and taking the money for the same on the Lord's day, all of which is thought to be hurtful to the Christian name.

"3. Sister —, for going with young people in dancing and other carnal amusements; wishing to be discharged from the Church that she might go on in carnal mirth with less remorse, her treating other solemn obligations with great indifference and contempt.

"4. Brother C. complains of Brother P., member of the church in Westmoreland, a church within our knowledge, on account of his making two attempts to cast out devils, in which he thinks he was successful, justifying himself in the same.

"5. Brother — has encouraged persons to bring instrumental music into our Church-worship since he knew the mind of the Church thereon.

"6. Brother T. concerning a calf which he sold for veal, which was supposed to have been choked. Settled on condition that the persons who bought the veal give a statement that they were satisfied.

"7. Whereas, Sister — has appeared to embrace the Universal sentiment, and in her conversation countenanced the same, also brings so unreasonable charges against the Baptist Church. After due course of discipline, voted to give her a letter of exclusion, but not till after our next conference, that she may have still further opportunity of considering the solemnity of being cut off from communion with the Church."

It may be thought that our great-grandfathers overdid this matter of discipline, but the editor of *The Standard* is willing to say frankly that—

"it is far less dangerous when discipline is overdone than when it is underdone. But in the year of grace 1917, it is not done at all, and this is the serious part of it. We have fallen upon times when the ethical requirements of church-membership need sharper definition, and the way to define them is not by nominal adherence to a set of paper rules, but by actually putting them into practise in daily living. It is a sad day for our churches when it does not mean something in the realm of social ethics to be a member of the Christian Church."