

a name to require exaggerated praise, and this kind of attempt to belittle the "Roman" mission and exalt the Celtic does us no good in our necessary controversy with modern Papal claims.

C. G. HALL.

1, Vicars' Court, Lincoln.

AN OBSTACLE TO PROGRESS?

Sir,—The Rev. H. E. Worledge has opened an old question once again, and it is perhaps a blessing that some of us have settled convictions about it, even although we may differ. I used to think that to carry the dead body of a non-churchgoer into church was one of the most ludicrous and undignified processions one could imagine. It always looks undignified to be carried unwillingly anywhere. But were not the Pharisees the predecessors of those who hold that religion is only to be valued when it is exclusive? The tendency to exclusiveness is strong in human nature.

Yes, it does seem preposterous that regular worshippers and their clergy often have to have dealings with those who are very far from being regular Churchpeople, and all that involves; but surely, in the light of our Lord's example, we let it make no difference. In the providence of God, we are out to win anybody who shows the slightest inclination to follow as we do. "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." The spirit of our Lord is Catholic, and He would embrace all men who fulfil His conditions, which are simple—recognition and confidence in the mercy of God. Who are we to judge upon this matter? Our Lord teaches the duty of following sinners, and, as His servants, seeking till we find them.

I do not think our Lord ever lost His dignity in doing so, nor can I imagine Him indulging in any unhealthy slapping-on-the-back Christianity. Quite simply He received them and ate with them. There is no condescension in stooping to save. It means doing many things we would rather not. Let us at least keep silence in our parish magazines about some of the departed ones who seldom or never worshipped. It is in the parish magazine that some clergy stultify their appeals with panegyrics on non-church-going patrons. The best we can say of some people is they served God in their own way, and leave it at that.

WILFRID H. JACKSON.
Lesbury Vicarage, Northumberland.

YES, WHY, MR. IREMONGER?

Sir,—Why is it that Anglo-Catholic churches appear to be entirely unrepresented in the religious programmes of the B.B.C.?

Why are thousands of Anglo-Catholics deprived of the privilege of ever hearing a service from a church of the type of All Saints', Margaret Street, or a sermon from Catholic priests like Dom Bernard Clements, Fr. Wilson, of Haggerston, etc.?

It is time that fairness was exercised by the B.B.C. in this matter.

G. C. WARDEN.

Fair Oaks, Buxted, Sussex.

STAINED GLASS.

Sir,—I have noticed the correspondence which has been going on recently in the Press with regard to the objections to stained glass in churches, but up to the present have not contributed to it. It was initiated, I think, by the Bishop of Bristol, and most of the letters which have appeared in the Press have been in support of the Bishop's objection. Possibly we who are interested in stained glass have so much confidence in it that we thought it was beneath us to enter the fray. There are always two sides to every question, however, and there is very rarely smoke without fire.

The nineteenth-century stained-glass people have very largely brought about the objection which exists to stained glass and the odium in which some of it is held, not only because of the poor work done in the Early Victorian days, but also because so many churches have been made gloomy by the horrible, meaningless stuff which has often been erected, and which cannot now be taken down. In the early days, the cathedrals and churches were not congregational at all, and were never intended to be light enough for people to be able to read in them; but now, of course, the congregation, instead of knowing their chants by heart, have to read their hymns and Prayer Books, and the churches cannot now be the dim, religious places which once they were.

What is to be the solution? I hardly know, unless architects build churches simply to accommodate stained-glass windows, like Ste. Chapelle in Paris, which was simply built to house the glorious windows. Another solution is to leave the artist alone, with less clerical interference.

The modern trend of stained glass is, I think, absolutely right, in that the honest stained glass artist nowadays does not lose sight of the fact that what he is doing is, and must be, a window, and not a transparent picture. The deplorable Victorian efforts were merely transparent pictures, but now it is the aim of the honest stained glass man never to lose sight of the fact that they are putting up something which has to let in light, and that they are decorating what must always remain a window. The modern

stained glass man will try to make his work conform to the architect's ideas, and fit in with the general scheme and scale of the building. Very largely the clergy are to blame for what has happened in the past, by insisting on having such-and-such a subject, whether suitable to the shape and position of the window or not, and even by wanting faithful portraits of the donors in mediæval robes.

Apart from the merits of the early stained glass, there was undoubtedly tremendous interest for the "man in the church" in regard to the way in which the subjects were treated. The mediæval craftsman never lost his sense of humour, or did not subjugate it as we have to do nowadays. Mediæval glass is full of interest because it tells a story with a "punch." When an expression of horror is depicted on the face of someone, there is no doubt at all about it. When a man points an accusing finger, there is no doubt what he is doing. When Jonah is spewed up from the belly of the whale, there can be no doubt at all as to what is happening. Nowadays, we seem to assume that God has no sense of humour, although I think that, if we take an intelligent view of all that God is supposed to have made, we cannot help being convinced that He has a sense of humour. The old craftsmen were not ashamed of that, and humour is very evident in their work. Nowadays you seldom see any evidence of it at all, and I think modern stained glass work suffers by reason of that fact; it lacks "punch."

The craftsman should be allowed more freedom and be less subject to censorship. The various advisory committees and the different authorities who have to be consulted are gradually strangling the profession—indeed, to such an extent, that recently one very good firm has decided to close down entirely because of the difficulties which are put in the way of intending donors before a window can be approved. The profession is suffering very greatly from that sort of thing, and if the artist were given a free hand, he would not be inclined to overload windows with heavy colours. He would realize, and does realize, that windows are meant to admit light.

WILLIAM MORRIS.
Fellow, British Society of Master
Glasspainters.
Constitutional Club, W.C. 2.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH AT COLOGNE.

Sir,—The statement in your issue of July 26 that the Old Catholic priest had offered to celebrate in the English church at Cologne and had been refused is absolutely untrue.

STAUNTON FULHAM.
Holcroft, Reigate.

[We are, of course, glad to print the Bishop of Fulham's correction. The report came to us from a generally well-informed source.—Ed.]

Sir,—Referring to your article, July 26, I reply that we have not made a request to be allowed to give to the members of the English church in Cologne the Holy Sacrament, nor has any correspondence emanated from us on this subject that could have met with a refusal. Moreover, the Old Catholic church in Cologne—now, as always—remains in the closest connexion and friendship with the English church; and in the absence of their priests, their communicants now, as hitherto, receive the Holy Sacrament in the Old Catholic church.

(sd.) J. KEURSGEN,
Pfarrer (Vicar).
The Old Catholic Parsonage, Cologne.

THE CHURCH IN CAMBERWELL.

Housing and a Crusade.

As the outcome of a proposal made by the rural dean of Camberwell, Canon H. G. Veazey, vicar of St. Mark's, Camberwell, to his Ruri-decanal Conference a year ago, twelve self-contained flats and five lock-up shops in the borough have been built. Five parishes responded to Canon Veazey's appeal, a local branch of Church Army Housing, Ltd., was formed, and £3,000 has been raised. A site was acquired in Pitman Street, Camberwell, and tenants of the old houses were accommodated while their new homes were being made ready.

The flats are to be let at an average weekly rent of twelve shillings and ninepence, including rates, and, in accordance with the Church Army's policy, the tenants whose claims will receive first consideration will be those with large families, bad accommodation, and small incomes. The Union of Girls' Schools has supported the scheme, and their President, Lady May Abel Smith, who laid the foundation-stone, will declare the flats open in October.

Plans are now being made by the Camberwell Social Service Committee for a fortnight's outdoor crusade in the borough in September, 1936. About eighty missionaries connected with the Industrial Christian Fellowship will help. The general subject of the crusade will be "The Nature and Presence of God," and the organizer, the Rev. T. Dyfan Thomas, vicar of St. Mary's, Erlam Road, is already at work.

CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN FICTION.

Curious and Widespread Misunderstanding.

IN one of his admirable addresses to gatherings of Anglo-Catholics, Lord Justice Slesser suggested that an indication of the alarming extent to which the New Paganism is saturating Western civilization is to be seen in the assumption of many modern novelists that, not only the practice of Christianity, but the Christian standard of morals has no place in ordinary life. The inference is that the only people who go to church or pay anything more than lip-service to Christian principles are the hopelessly dull, or hide-bound, or eccentric, or those morbid souls (generally women) who have failed to find any more satisfactory outlet for their surplus emotions.

The following quotation from a recent novel by an American woman writer is a flagrant example of this attitude of mind—

In a world which seems to be largely filled with surplus women, the churches reap a rare harvest, and the pseudo-Gothic erection on Washington Avenue, Parnassus, was no exception. It was supported almost entirely by praying spinsters. If it had been humanly possible to marry off this pathetic flotsam, the large, incense-stuffy, relic-filled building would have been empty of everything save its ornaments and its priest.

In past times, Christianity found severe critics among the novelists; but it loomed too large in life to be discounted as an idiosyncrasy or as a shelf for disappointed spinsters. Jane Austen could ignore the activities of her contemporary, Napoleon, and the turmoil of the revolutionary wars; but she could not ignore the parish church and its ministers, even if her gently malicious eye was apt to concentrate its gaze on the Mr. Collinses of her world. And no serious chronicler of the social life of his times could fail to reckon with the fact that, in the vast majority of Victorian middle-class households, family prayers, daily Bible-reading and Sunday churchgoing were part of the normal routine. Religion might sometimes be little more than conventional respectability, or even, as Dickens was perhaps over-fond of suggesting, a cloak for a peculiarly odious form of hypocrisy; but it was a force to be reckoned with, and, as has been pointed out, a serious flaw in Galsworthy's presentation of Victorian middle-class life was his failure to make allowance for the religious factor in it. The explanation probably is that, though writing about Victorians, Galsworthy was, in this respect, influenced by a more modern outlook.

Lawrence on Christian Marriage.

D. H. Lawrence, whose books have exerted an immense influence on post-war novelists, does not ignore religion. Norman Douglas has, with some reason, described him as "an inspired provincial, with marked Puritan leanings"; and coming as he did from an English mining district, where Nonconformity was strong, it is not surprising that Lawrence frequently exhibits in his novels a violent reaction against Puritanism and the rebel Puritan's tendency to take it for granted that all adherents of an institutional form of Christianity must of necessity be fools, rogues, or sanctimonious prigs. But those who hail Lawrence as the prophet of free love are apt to forget his own admission that "Christian marriage, guided by the Church, was a great institution for true freedom, true possibility of fulfilment."

It is not to be wondered at that Christianity has little or no place in the specialized world of the novels of those whom Mr. Frank Swinerton has rather unkindly dubbed "the Bloomsbury dilettanti." Their terrain is a psychological hinterland. Their concern is the capture of the haphazard thoughts that flit through the minds of their characters. The worst of their productions are sickly imitations of Marcel Proust or James Joyce, and the best of them exhibit "the tendency of serious literature to grow ever more delicate, more cloistered, more eccentric." In their hands, art becomes the pearl of a sick oyster, and Christianity cannot be expected to share such restricted crustacean quarters.

More significant is the attitude to religion in the very large number of recent novels concerned with post-war working-class England, in particular the England of the unemployed. Many of them are serious books, written by men with actual experience of the conditions they describe, patently

animated by the desire to tell the truth as they see it. Novelists of this order are at one in their testimony to the dogged virtue of the people in the face of adversity; but they do not suggest that it is due in any degree to the sustaining force of religion. On the contrary, they depict their characters shrinking from showing their faces in church or chapel when they can no longer afford to put a penny in the plate, or change into fresh clothes on Sunday. Unless the facts are seriously misrepresented in fiction, it looks as though the Church has ceased to be, to use Newman's beautiful phrase, "a home for the lonely," to which her children turn instinctively in time of trouble, and that, although the Christian virtues still shine among the poor in their adversity, the practice of the Faith has ceased to be part of the stuff of their daily lives.

Perhaps this is the bitter aftermath of the building up of the industrial system on what Bishop Gore called "a basis of profound revolt against the central law of Christian morality, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'" Perhaps, too, it is the inevitable result of a generation reared largely on a colourless "undenominational" religion, a possibility that derives force from the fact that religion plays a large part in two recent novels concerned with the modern life of the Irish working-class, the authors of which do not appear to be practising Catholics themselves.

Religion in Antiquarian Setting.

When modern novelists want to exhibit the effect of religion on character, they either return to a past age or lift their characters out of the context of daily life. Here, modern historical research and the passing of crude prejudice against Catholicism stand them in good stead. For example, in her beautiful novel, *Peter Abelard*, Miss Helen Waddell, who, besides being a novelist of imagination, is an authority on the history and literature of the Middle Ages, not only relates once again one of the world's most famous love stories, but shows an appreciation of the essential spirit of mediæval Catholicism which completely eluded George Moore when he wrote his more portentous version of the same story. And in her recent novel, *Time's Door*, Esther Meynell shows as delicate a sympathy with Catholicism as with the music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Again, in his distinguished novel, *The Fountain*, Charles Morgan reveals a deep interest in the writings of the seventeenth-century English mystics; but in order to give his modern hero leisure to meditate on them, he removes him from the hurly-burly of life, and shuts him up in a Dutch fortress. Deep reading in the Anglican divines of the seventeenth century is apparent in Miss Rose Macaulay's absorbing historical novel, *They Were Defeated*. Knowledge of another kind went to the making of *Gone Abroad*, that delightful novel in which she traced the effects of Buchmanism on certain Bright Young Things with a humour and wit quite devoid of malice.

The novelists are scarcely happy in their references to Christianity when they come across it overseas. True, the non-Christian negro author of *Wild Deer*, a thoughtful novel concerned with the hard lot of the native in modern South Africa, paid in it an enthusiastic tribute to the work of the Roman Catholic communities in training the Africans under their care to a pastoral life. But the very intelligent English author of a more recent novel, *Zulu Paraclete*, suggests that the missionaries in Africa are well-meaning but ineffective. It would be interesting to know if she had an actual building in her mind's eye, when, in her witty posthumous novel on life in a modern English Crown colony, the late Stella Benson wrote: "To think of a colonial cathedral, it seems to me, is to think of something furtively Gothic in a dank shrubbery."

M. K.

A CHURCH IN THE WOODS.

Charing and Westwell, Kent

ON Friday last the foundation-stone was laid of a little mission church in the woodlands on the borders of Charing and Westwell in Kent. Though adjoining an important junction of main roads, the site is completely surrounded by a wood of oaks and beeches. Charing was for long a seat of the Archbishops of Canterbury, and the dedication of the little church in honour of St. John the Baptist recalls an ancient association with the Forerunner of our Lord. King Richard Cœur de Lion sent home from Palestine a stone, reputed to be the block on which St. John the Baptist suffered martyrdom. The block was consigned to Archbishop Hubert Walter, who placed it in Charing Church. At the Reformation it disappeared, but is believed to lie hidden beneath the floor of the church.