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The Bells Ring

WHAT most of us are thinking about this week is not what happened last week, but what is going to happen in the weeks lying just ahead. We are afraid to bask too hopefully in the sun that is now so warmly shining in case the clouds gather and we find ourselves shivering again. Well, the clouds will gather; that is certain. It is certain that the winds will again blow. But it is just as foolish to fear too much as to rejoice and relax too soon. Let us accept the facts for what they are worth: worth now. They are great facts: not the end, we have been warned, or the beginning of the end, but events that have brought the end appreciably nearer. The enemy is still enormously strong. We are ourselves in many ways still dangerously weak: in ships, for example, in the Atlantic, and in bases and bombers and tanks in the Pacific. But if we were Martians looking on at the struggle with indifferent eyes, and gambling on it, we would be as ready now to put our money on the United Nations as we were twelve months ago to put it on the Axis. Nor would it seem strange to us as we watched that the United Nations had started ringing bells. We would know, if we felt about such things as humans do, that hopes deferred make the heart sick—so sick, if they are deferred long enough, that there is a loss of power to relax and rejoice. So the bruised and baffled people of Britain are rejoicing in order to release their inhibitions. There is not much risk any longer that they will rejoice too much or too foolishly.

That is the first point. We have something to feel happy about, and we must not be afraid to rejoice when the very stones are crying out our successes. But we have something to remember on the other side too. We must not forget that when our enemies are thrown out of Africa they are freed from a heavy obligation and a steady drain on their resources by land, sea and air.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

CHRISTIAN ORDER

Sir,—We, the undersigned, having listened-in to the Campaign for Christian Order session from 22B on a recent Sunday night, would like to agree with and endorse the replies made to the question regarding Christianity and broken homes. We also hope it may be possible for us, through your Correspondence Columns to inform the questioner that any of us would supply from personal experience the required proof that uncompromising and continuing application of Christian principles can and does hold the solution of this vitally important problem.

FRANCIS DODSON, MOLLY DODSON, G. H. WHEELER, F. D. WHEELER (Palmerston North).

Sir,—In reply to D. I. Maclean, the aspiration of reforming our educational system in a religious direction is not one that has suddenly sprung up at a time when much of the opposition may be stilled by the necessities of military service, but has existed in the minds of many people since the present system was inaugurated. Nor has the present time been chosen by the Churches to push their aims any more than secular movements for the political and social betterment of New Zealand. They are averse to using a time of crisis when people are stimulated to some concern on such issues.

Secondly, your correspondent says that the creeds and doctrines (of the churches, that is), are rejected as false by many of the world's leading scientists and thinkers. This is, of course, quite true. But neither must it be forgotten that no inconsiderable proportion of the leading scientists and thinkers accepts these creeds and doctrines as true. One need but mention, among thinkers, Arnold J. Toynbee (doyen of modern British historians), R. H. Tawney, A. D. Lindsay, John Macmurray, Jacques Maritain and Paul Tillich. This does not exhaust the list, neither does it mention formal theologians: and there is a formidable enough list of creative theologians. I have heard, too, that Aldous Huxley is now a member of the Roman Catholic Church; Middleton Murry is a priest in the Anglican Church. And in the realm of science there are A. S. Eddington and Robert A. Millikan. I might add that A. N. Whitehead, perhaps the most considerable of modern philosophers, and C. G. Jung, the greatest living psychologist, are far from antagonistic to religion. And Lewis Mumford has written about sin without mentioning God.

I.W.R. (Wellington).

Sir,—Your correspondent, D. I. Maclean, suggests that those of us who desire a more Christian ordering of the whole of life are traitorous in our attack upon what he calls our "priceless heritage"—secular education. We should be traitorous indeed if we failed to go on, war or no war, battling for the full development of our young people, in body, mind and spirit. As we are learning afresh through this war, spirit in man counts for far more than does either body or mind. This war is going to be

won by people who have the spirit which makes man prefer to die rather than to live enslaved. Details of a truly free regime they may lack mind enough to think out. Physically, they may be too weak to achieve their political and economic freedom. But they can be strong enough in spirit to throw away their lives in the cause of Freedom, and to die in the hope that others after them will do likewise, until present tyrannies are overthrown. Mere body and mind training is not education. Our secular system ignores that constituent of human nature which counts for most in man, the spirit of man.

C.C.C. (Cambridge).

Sir,—May I have a little space in which to attempt a few comments prompted by your correspondent, D. I. Maclean? This writer overlooks the fact that Man is a religious being who, if he doesn't have one religion, will have another. If Christianity is not established in our land, then it is possible that eventually something just as evil in its fruits as Shintoism will come. Encouraging Christianity may of course weaken our war effort, as some Christians have very little faith in armed force as a means of establishing right relationships between men or nations.

J.B. (Nelson).

"THE TOY CART"

Sir,—Permit me to express my extreme pleasure in the recent studio performance from IYA of "The Toy Cart"—an excellent play, splendidly acted! If the "Powers that Be" only realised how much it meant to country listeners, denied by petrol restrictions all former relaxations of this sort, we would have more of these treats. At the end of a long day's toil on the farm, without the diversion of even a visit from a salesman or passing neighbour sometimes for weeks on end, it is indeed a refreshment to be entertained by something other than ballad singers, good, bad and indifferent, and eternal orchestras. Serials are all very well, but are somewhat unsatisfactory, and the war newreel is only a summary of what one has already heard several times, so that studio presentations of worthwhile plays are the most desirable substitute for the occasional outing to the pictures from which country folk are now cut off. My thanks to the Auckland Repertory Society for a most enjoyable evening. May there be many more to come—and soon.

I.M.S. (Waikato)

THE MISSING RING

Sir,—As one of the modern generation, may I protest at the slur cast by your Christchurch correspondent on our moral code. Our code is at least as clean as the Victorian code to which your correspondent perhaps adheres. A baby almost invariably is washed before being put to bed each night, and a mother's wedding ring is very often removed for the safety of both the child and the ring. The absence of the ring in this case seems to be proof of a careful mother.—A MODERN MOTHER (Hamilton).

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