

class instruction. In schools founded by religious bodies, if there are any religious exercises, students shall not be compelled or induced to participate. No religious exercises shall be allowed in primary schools, or schools of similar grade."²

As is well known, this regulation has not been found to bear hardly on Christian schools. They still have ample latitude for all the voluntary religious work they can do. Government officials, too, have generally tended to enforce the law with understanding and sympathy.

3. *Registration.* The law provides that religious bodies shall be registered under the regulations governing "cultural associations." Some of the more important of these regulations have been summarized and are given on page 567 of this issue of the *Chinese Recorder*.

These regulations are obviously not drafted with reference to the church. Some of them are even alien to its spirit and methods of work. And yet the Church of Christ in China, while raising frankly this very point with the authorities, was readily granted registration by them, thus showing clearly that the authorities are not concerned to apply these general regulations, which were drawn up to cover all classes of associations, in any such way as to hinder or embarrass the church in its work. This is a manifestation of friendliness for which we may indeed be grateful.

4. *Taxation.* Under the new *Land Law* property is to be taxed at a rate approximating, in most cases, one per cent of the value of the property.³ Certain classes of property are, however, exempt in whole or in part, among them school and hospital property. What about church property? Is it also exempt? The answer here is that this is not yet clear. However Article 12 of the *Rules Governing Reduction and Exemption of Land Tax* seems to open the way for churches to apply for exemption on their properties. This article reads:

"Public welfare enterprises undertaken by the people or associations, if they are not for profit-making purposes, may apply for reduction in or exemption from the tax on the land used."

Certain petitions have already been submitted to the authorities asking for exemption under this provision. So far no reply has been received. The answer to be given, whatever it may prove to be, will be of great importance to the Christian movement throughout the whole country.

Summing up one may say that religious freedom is a basic policy in China. This freedom is subject to some limitation, as is shown by the educational restrictions, but these restrictions are not unreasonable or arbitrary. In practice the regulations governing the registration of church bodies have been liberally interpreted. As to taxation of church property a definite policy has not yet been fixed. Much of moment depends on the Government's final decision. On

the whole the relation between church and state in China is friendly and based upon sound foundations.

1. Dr. C. L. Hsia. *Background and Features of the Draft Constitution of China*. P.207. Council of International Affairs, Nanking.

2. *Revised Regulations for Private Schools*. Ministry of Education October 21, 1933. Translated by Dr. C. S. Miao. *Educational Review*, January, 1934. P. 9. China Christian Educational Association, Shanghai.

3. This is a very general statement. For more detailed information as to the taxes to be levied, see the *Land Law*, Articles 291-297. W. P. Mills.

Society and the Church

RONALD HONGKONG

THERE are many ideas and much writing about society and the church. In a moment I shall refer to some of them. But they are unimportant. He that "does" builds upon rock. Ideas and words are as the sand. Because they are sand the floods bear them away. What men *do* remains.

Orthodox Russia in exile has her great prophet, and also her men and women of action. Men and women throughout the world are reading what Berdzaev writes. I do not know what Berdzaev is doing. I do not know how many men and women throughout the world are doing different and better things because they have read his writing. My guess would be that there is a ferment of thought in his trail. Will that thought lead to action?

There is much that is significant in his thought. Above all perhaps the spiritualization of technics, the soul of machines. "The spirit can be an organizer: it can direct technics for its own purposes; but it will always resist becoming an instrument of the organized technical process."

Thank God for this idea. Christ is to be incarnate not only in the physical human body of the Man of Galilee, but in the machinery God has given man for the enrichment of personality.

But Orthodox Russia has also "Action Orthodox", led (surprisingly?) by a woman. In France there are many Russians now unwanted; men for whom society has no use, women for whom society has only one use, a use that passes as the woman loses her physical value for men. "Action Orthodox" is providing these unwanted with friendship, with work, with means of livelihood, and, above all, with the opportunity not to be flotsam and jetsam, but men and women interested in one another and in life, alive in a world that is alive. "Action Orthodox" is infectious. It does not breed more words, but more deeds, more love, more friendship.

Roman Catholicism is followed as jackals follow wolves, by Anglo-Catholicism—less logically, in a sense less courageously, and therefore less dangerously. The real menace of Rome is an intellectualism married to a philosophy which is not Christian. It is this intellectualism that causes authoritarianism. Intellectualism (even Reinhold Niebuhr in the early chapters of "An Interpretation of Christian Ethics") loves to unite and unify concepts. God, if we are to believe our eyes, considers variety more significant.

And as a jackal to the wolves comes W. G. Peck—a leading Anglo-Catholic exponent of the church in society. "It is religious faith and theological doctrine which must provide the initial direction of economic thinking."¹ It is not surprising that Mr. Peck spent a lecture tour in America trying to prove that F. D. Maurice (because he was an Evangelical) was *not* the father of Christian social action in modern England. For if you once accept the paternity of F. D. Maurice then the correct thinking about the faith and the church is *not* the necessary source of Christian action in society. If Mr. Peck is wrong, as I am convinced he is, the parables of Jesus are vindicated against the Stoic, and other secular philosophic elements in organized Catholicism. The unorthodox Samaritan who believed all the wrong things is "the Church in Society," is the instrument of God in action. Here is rock because there is action, which is more than activity. The significance of the centurion's comment on Jesus' actions is not his "authority," but that what he said was *done*. Jesus *did* what others talked of doing.

Modern Protestantism, judged by its books, is in no better way. All the world is reading how modern Protestant America interprets the Christian ethic, and rejoices as it reads that sentimentalism is gone. Having read it is left with the unnourishing satisfaction that the Christian ethic demands a clear analysis of the realities of a situation, and notes the suggestion that violence on the side of the underdog is a just violence. For the rest we are advised to let Jeremiah lead us back to the sacred heights of pre-Christian Jewish prophecy.

My friends who know Protestant America from the inside tell me that this is not the whole story, that this dry and barren intellectual acumen goes hand in hand with a reckless and spendthrift love for those in need, and an energy of action in obedience to God which puts Dr. Niebuhr and others of his group well within the circle of those to whom Jesus pointed when He said, "Those who *do* the will of God are my mother and my brethren."

The fact is, surely, that there is a disproportion between words and deeds in modern Christianity. Incarnation is a way of action. Theology is an attempt to describe what we have seen of God's actions. But God is a living God and our relation to him in Christ is a living relationship. *It is in our obedience that the incarnation is continued, and by our communing with Christ that our obedience is directed.*

1. "Christendom" Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 281, "A Christian Doctrine of Society."

What men are doing in the world is more important than what they are writing.

It will not be by the definition of a true theory of the relationship between the church and society that society will be redeemed, but by the infection of significant experiments. Significant experiment is a long way of saying love in action. Love in action is less likely to be mistaken than thought, for love becomes self-love more easily in thought than in action.

The important question, then, is what throughout the world is the church doing? And what throughout the world is it not doing that plainly cries out for doing?

The group of books which are not theories but descriptions of experiments are important, therefore; e.g. Kagawa's "Brotherhood Economics" and Horace Kallen's "Decline and Rise of the Consumer," because they draw conclusions from what has been done. Their basis is not the validity of a philosophy, but significant experiments in new ways in economics. To define whether the thought came before the experiment or the experiment before the thought is of the same kind in this case as the old argument of the hen and the egg. But what is significant is that here is action and thought together, and the thing commended is not a true idea as true—but one that has proved of Christian value to society. These books are part of an infective process. May their peculiar diseases spread throughout the Church of God.

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The Engineer Spirit*

U. USANG LY

THIS meeting is full of joy of fellowship and association which I can see everybody is sharing; and there is a spirit permeating through every personality present, that spirit of engineers which brightens and enriches life. I am glad I have come to present you greetings. Ordinarily to suggest that the engineers are spiritual human beings may incite suspicion, if not invite objection; but can any one deny that that is empirically quite true? We can now not only feel the spirit of engineers permeating, but also see it radiating, and even radiate it ourselves. What one may only question is: how does it work? Why does it often subside? What is its significance?

There is no intention on my part to satisfy any one who is in doubt as to engineers being not merely mechanical-minded, but also highly spiritual-minded persons who can serve and be served like religious men. Nevertheless I propose to observe how engineers can be spiritualized and become spiritualizing when they are conscious of not only what they are doing, but also why they are doing it. Every human being is possessed of the spirit of God and no engineer is an exception. The spirit of humanity is born within every human

*An address delivered at a meeting of the China Society of Engineers, March 11, 1937.