

# JUSTICE

TWO PENCE  
Vol. 1

March, 1937  
No. 12



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# JUSTICE

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March, 1937.

Vol. 1. No. 12.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

"Justice" has now been running for twelve months. It has supplied a real need, for it has catered for those who are thinking about religion in terms of reality. There are those who have become regular subscribers and there are others who have taken a dozen or more per month and so helped the circulation enormously. There are those who felt the price to be too high, and we agree with them that it was so in comparison with papers of a large circulation. There are those who write to say that the size ought to be increased.

Well, we are now able to satisfy everybody. The next issue will contain twice the amount of reading matter, that is, sixteen pages, but the price will only be 2d. This has been made possible because we have been able to link up with another paper on similar lines. You will thus be able to read fresh writers as well as the old contributors. The Editor will be Rev. Leon Atkin, of Swansea, who at present edits the "Christian Agitator." The new paper will appear under the name of "Social Justice."

We know quite well that you take this paper because you are keen on the point of view expressed, therefore we make no apology for asking you to continue your support. Annual subscriptions are due and remain the same, viz., 2/6 a year post free. Will you send them in on the form at the back? For those who prefer it, a form of order to a newsagent is also printed at the back. Use which you like, but please do it at once. Probably it will be best for those who order quantities to use the newsagents' form, but will they please let the present editor know? It will be a great convenience and save much time.

Once again, may we ask for the co-operation of all our readers in pushing the sales? Elsewhere you will find an account of a Left Unity Conference held in Manchester last month. The absolute necessity for working together on agreed points was clearly shewn in the discussions. And the same applies with regard to this paper which will be the link between Left Christians. The urgency of the matter was stressed, but we still await a letter from many who receive this paper, to say whether or no they are willing to give their support. If you have not already done so will you let us hear from you as soon as possible?

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Enthusiasm for the unity of Socialist Christians must be aroused. At present we are in all sorts of different groups, hardly knowing one another or of one another. There is no united voice which can be blazoned throughout the country. We must remedy this and the new paper will be a power in this direction. But it can only do its proper work if every reader will catch the enthusiasm already felt by so many of us.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who have helped us in various ways during the past year. We appreciate it. Without it we could not have continued. As it is there remains a small debt on the year's running. This will fall on the few who have made themselves responsible, but there may be some who value a paper of this kind enough to send a donation towards the liquidation of the amount owing. Will you send what you can to the Editor? Thank you.

#### CHRISTIAN LEFT-WING CONFERENCE.

There are many priests, ministers and layman who sometimes feel that they are fighting lone battles against the present world order. Occasionally the system eventually breaks them; the apathy of their congregations; the persecution by isolation sponsored by the Church leaders; the disunity of the Church in Christian practice and her failure to give anything like a clear lead on the vital issues of the day.

Unfortunately to-day the Church is judged by the utterances of Archbishops, Bishops and leading Free Church Clergy. Judged from those utterances it cannot be denied that the official Church is completely out of touch with the day to day struggles of the masses. A Recall to Religion is all to the good—but it must be a recall to real religion and not pietist dōpe.

With the Archbishop's "Recall" ringing in our ears a Conference was held in All Saints Parish Hall, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester. About fifty people attended representative of societies and individuals. Among the societies represented were: Socialist Christian League; Fellowship of Reconciliation; Fellowship of Creative Service; Christian Peace Front; Left Book Club; Student Christian Movement; Christian Left. The various denominations of the Churches were also represented—Methodist, Unitarian, Anglican, Baptist and Congregationalist.

A draft Resolution was read to the Conference and it was thoroughly discussed at the morning, afternoon and evening sessions. In speaking to the Resolution the Rev. Etienne Watts said that they had contacts in Swansea, Liverpool, Newcastle, Thaxted, Norfolk, London, Bristol and the Potteries. All these contacts were patiently awaiting the result of the deliberations of that Conference. He believed that could get co-ordination between the pacifists and the non-pacifists. "We are seeking to form a United Front of all Left Christians, whatever their

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denomination, on the basis of the Resolution." An interesting discussion followed the Resolution was thoroughly examined paragraph by paragraph and finally passed at the evening Session. It was RESOLVED—

"That this Conference, composed of individuals and delegates of various Christian groups, is convinced of the general ineffectiveness of the Church in giving a clear lead on the vital issues in the world at the present time.

"We believe that this is due to the lack of unity among Christians; the failure to apply the principles of Christianity to modern problems and the failure to recognise the fundamental antagonism between God and Mammon, typified in Scripture as the antagonism between 'the rich' and 'the poor,' who shall possess the Kingdom of God.

"In practice the recognition of this struggle means unqualified antagonism to Capitalist-Imperialism, and its necessary development—Fascism: active participation in the struggle against war and the preparation for war by capitalist society: active participation in the struggle against the Means Test, lowering of wages and worsening of conditions among the workers—for such things inevitably mean the denial of human personality and the ultimate degradation of the people to the status of slaves—whereas we stand for freedom and democracy: support of better old age pensions at an earlier age: the 40 hour week: work for the unemployed at trade union rates: Better and longer facilities for juvenile education and the democratisation of the educational system: participation in the demand for sweeping away all slums and the provision of proper housing for the workers at economic rents, with the ultimate return of the land to the people and the possession of the means of production by the Community.

"We are convinced that only by a unity in Christian practice can a unity be achieved in doctrinal and theological issues.

"We believe that this is not only a supreme opportunity but in all probability THE LAST CHANCE before the consequences of disunity and lack of co-ordination among us lead to their final deadly outcome and compel either the ultimate forging of unity under far more difficult conditions, or the complete disruption of Christianity.

"The rise of the Christian Social Movement within the Churches affords evidence of the reawakening among the rank and file of the Christian obligation not only to pronounce the principles which ought to be put into practice but also to declare what concrete political, economic, etc., activities, policies and systems are or are not, in accordance with those principles.

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"We believe that the next necessary step is the co-ordination of those who support this movement, whether individuals or societies, and call on all such to close the ranks against the common enemy.

"There can be no standing still. The alternative is surrender to the reactionary element within the Churches, with their continued pusillanimity, and finally the complete destruction of all that we hold dear. The urgency of the present issue needs no emphasis. It is essential to mobilise the growing social movement within the Churches, to proclaim the whole Truth of Christianity, and ultimately to take control of the ecclesiastical machine, to be used for its original purpose as an instrument in the hand of God for the bringing about of His Kingdom of Justice and Comradeship here on earth. The hour of decision is here."

A copy of this Resolution has been sent to the two Archbishops, the Bishop of Manchester and the Bishop of Chester. Although it is a fortnight since a copy was sent to the Bishop of Chester, he has not yet acknowledged receipt.

Immediately the Conference had agreed to adopt the Resolution a Committee of seven was elected to work out a scheme for bringing into being a United Front in the Church. The programme to be based upon the Resolution. The members of the Committee are—Rev. C. W. Townsend, Rev. John Bromley, Rev. W. E. D. Watts, Miss I. Burnett, Mr. A. Ball, Mr. W. Warren and Mr. H. A. Phillips.

The last act of the Conference was to pass unanimously another Resolution in the undermentioned terms which was to be sent to the Spanish Ambassador:—

"This Conference of Christians representing a unity of progressive "Left" societies, peace societies and individuals, sends its greetings and sympathies to their Spanish comrades in their heroic struggle against the forces of national and international Fascism and pledges every possible support."

No description of the Conference is necessary. The Resolution describes it quite adequately. But I feel an appeal must be made for comrades to join up with us. Never before in the history of our country was there a more vital need for a United Front. Capitalism has everything in its favour masquerading as it does under the cloak of democracy. We must take our lesson from events in Spain. Capitalism is the same the world over; for behind the ballot boxes are the batons of the police and the bayonets of the soldiers.

There are possibly some people who may have doubts about the resolution as a whole. But please do not let that stop you coming in with us. The Resolution must be discussed in whole or in part at another Conference or a Summer School and from

it a definite manifesto hammered out. BUT THE IMPORTANT THING AT THE MOMENT IS FOR YOU TO COME IN ON THE BASIS OF THE RESOLUTION—EVEN IF YOU CANNOT ACCEPT THE WHOLE. Your constructive criticism and advice is needed.

The next important step is to get arrangements in hand for such a Summer School or Conference. We shall be glad to hear from any comrades who would be willing to support such a project. Send your names and addresses to the Hon. Secretary, Christian Left Wing Co-ordinating Committee, C/o All Saints Rectory, Ladybarn Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, 14. Will all comrades who also wish to be kept in touch with the immediate future work of the Committee please communicate with the Hon. Secretary at the above address.

Br. H., *Conference Secretary.*

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## THE PASSION DRAMA.

Passion Week and Easter bring us to the most solemn season of the year. The Church portrays the events of the last week of Christ's life with the most startling drama. Beginning on Palm Sunday with the procession of palms, the common people once more make a march to the Capital to make a bid for Truth, Freedom and Equity. This year we should be reminded of the processions of unemployed workers which have been on a somewhat similar errand to London. As was to be expected they met with a like fate—they were rejected by the authorities.

Maundy Thursday was the occasion of the institution of the Holy Common Meal by Jesus, a meal produced in common and shared in common, a simple natural act, which was to be continued and offered as a memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus—the breaking of his Body and the shedding of His Blood—and to be a foretaste of the New World of Justice and Comradeship, which would inevitably come as a result of the extension of this moral and economic principle. According to the Fourth Gospel this was preceded by another action of primary importance, namely, the washing of the feet of the disciples. Such an action as this constituted a complete break with bourgeois morality. Comrades in a great cause must be ready to perform the most menial tasks for their neighbours. No man can fittingly join in the joy and comradeship of the Holy Meal if he is in any way a snob—either intellectual, national or class. Here is the direct condemnation of that feeling of superiority, which is so prevalent in so many ways. A little self-criticism on these lines would do no harm. All great revolutionaries like Thomas More, John Ball, Francis of Assisi and Lenin have been characterised by their humility.

Good Friday is the day on which the Rulers in Church and State succeeded in putting Jesus to death. It is only to be expected that in a Capitalist Society this particular day should have become a public holiday! It is always necessary to draw man's attention away from those who are suffering for Justice sake. The Public soon forgets. A constant reminder is necessary that men like Thaelmann in Germany, Prestes in Brazil, are in prison in their thousands, because they dared to stand firm in

the midst of Fascist aggression; because they dared to affirm the Truth, in spite of the danger. The two just mentioned have been in prison for years, while their captors await a time when men shall have forgotten them. Then they can bring them to "trial" secretly, just as they could not take Jesus "for fear of the people," but could only arrest him and put him to death when the people were absent. As to the "charges" brought against Jesus, we shall have to talk about them on Good Friday and apply their lessons to the present day. It is sufficient to say now that history, under the class system, has been one long record of persecution either of individuals or of peoples. Only by the abolition of this system shall we make the crucifixion a future impossibility.

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## CALENDAR.

March.

14—Passion Sunday.

17—Joint Meeting with Cross St. Chapel.

21—Palm Sunday. 11 a.m., Procession of Palms and Communion of the People. 6-30, Evensong. 7-15, People's Service.

25—Maundy Thursday. Mass, 7 a.m.

26—Good Friday. The Three Hours, 10—1. 10, Morning Prayer and Litany. 10-30, The Liturgy. 11-30—1, The Preaching of the Passion.

28—Easter Day. 11 a.m., Procession, High Mass and Communion of the People. 6-30, Solemn Evensong and Procession. Sermon on "The Rising of the People."

### SUNDAYS.

The first Sunday in the month: Communion of the People at 9-30 a.m.; Evensong 6-30 p.m.

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