

suppose that from the position of outsiders they are the best qualified to be critics, and with lofty superiority they condemn as a failure something whose objects they misunderstand, whose power they have never experienced and whose teaching they are unable to grasp. They say Christianity has failed because it has not become popular—because it does not adapt itself to the ideas and to the morals of the majority. But did the Founder of Christianity aim at making Christianity "popular"; was its doctrine intended to be a reflection of public opinion?

Is Christianity a failure?

Bishop Carey quotes General Smuts as having remarked to him: "The greatest things are always failures." That is to say they appeal only to a small proportion of mankind. From this point of view the greatest musicians are failures. What proportion of men appreciate the best music, the best art, the best poetry? Take a popular vote between a masterpiece of Beethoven and the latest ragtime ditty, what will be the result?

The right question to ask is not does Christianity appeal to the multitude, but does it achieve that which it sets out to do?

Now the commission given by Our Lord to his apostles was "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to (make disciples of) all nations." The Master warned them that they would be despised and rejected of men as He was Himself; That their message would be listened to only by the few. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to eternal life and few there be that find it." Even we ourselves are continually testing our work by its results, and are cast down because in spite of faithful labor so few are found who make Christ the centre of their lives.

Christians, certainly, have failed to fulfil the great commandment—the Gospel has not been preached to all nations, but Christianity has not failed where it has been preached and tried. Multitudes have refused it but no one who ever tried it has found it to fail him. So long as God does not compel man's free-will, or his intellect or his moral character, multitudes will reject the message and refuse to model their lives on Christ's teaching. The Christian Church fails only insofar as she neglects to teach and proclaim Christ, she does not fail because men reject Christ when he has been proclaimed. She fails if she presents a distorted Gospel, a mutilated Gospel,

if she does not provide the life-giving sacraments of which her Lord made her the steward. She fails when she waters down the truth to gain popularity, when she ceases to preach Christ Crucified and makes herself a mere social club. The measure of success is not popularity but faithfulness; not numbers but intensity. The general acceptance of true Christianity would certainly abolish war, greed, lust, crimes, poverty and all other things that make the realisation of man's brotherhood impossible, but as Chesterton reminds us, Christianity has not been generally accepted; it has not failed, because it has never been tried.

But if Christianity is to reform the world, it must be a complete Christianity. The moral teaching of Christ must be accepted whole, not modified to suit the depraved tastes and ideas of the multitude, and Christian morals must not be divorced from Christian faith and worship. The power of Christianity is the power of Christ. All the elaborate organisation of the Church, all her moral teaching is absolutely futile unless the living Christ is the centre of our love and worship. Only a church filled with the ever abiding and energising presence of the Holy Spirit can ever hope to reform the world, but even a church full of saints and full of the Holy Ghost would not succeed in converting the whole world to faith, or in abolishing the moral depravity that is the necessary result of man's free will. Let no one talk about the failure of Christianity till he knows what Christianity is, what are its aims. After all our Lord did not establish the Church which is His own Body in order to provide an object of criticism for the superior, but in order to provide an ark of refuge for the simple. There are far too many people both within and without the Church very willing to criticise but very loth to help. If the Church's methods can be improved, if she is lacking in zeal, if poor results of her work seem to be the fruit of her lethargy or lifelessness let our critics join up and remedy these things rather than sit on the fence and throw stones.

News and Notes.

The publication of the "Gazette" is somewhat delayed this month in order to include the report of important business done by the Standing Committee and Chapter. The Editor thinks that subscribers will willingly wait a few days for their "Gazette"

rather than miss the reports of meetings of great interest and importance.

The Bishop had some very perilous journeys on his recent four in the Bay of Plenty. He visited Motiti Island in a launch, but on his return to the mainland the bar at Maketu was found to be dangerous, and the launch had to return to Motiti Island. By this time the breakers at the Motiti landing place were too heavy to bring in the launch and the Bishop and the owner of the launch had to jump out of the dinghy into the breakers, and at considerable risk had to drag the dinghy ashore. The Bishop was forced to remain five days on Motiti Island and missed his appointments at Whakatane.

During his trip in the Bay of Plenty district the Bishop fell over a cliff thirty feet high. Fortunately he fell into soft mud at the foot of the cliff and was not injured.

The Rev. V. Bianchi, who has been appointed temporarily to assist at Matawai, is in deacon's orders and was recently a student at Burgh College, England.

The Dean of Christchurch, representing the clergy of that Diocese, has written to the Bishop inviting this diocese, in common with the other dioceses of the province, to contribute to the cost of a Primatial Cross, to be presented to the Primate, Archbishop Julius. The Cross will be an official gift to be used by the Primate and his successors. The Standing Committee agreed that a subscription list be opened in this diocese. The quality of the Cross will depend upon the amount of subscriptions received, and, as a permanent symbol to be used perhaps for many generations, it should be as good as we can make it. A minimum of forty pounds will be required as our share, but it is hoped to raise considerably more in order that the Cross may be worthy of the purpose for which it is to be used and of the Church of New Zealand. The materials, as far as possible, will be of New Zealand origin, and we hope the Cross will be designed and manufactured in New Zealand. The Very Rev. the Dean was appointed by Standing Committee to act as secretary and treasurer of the fund. He will gratefully acknowledge all contributions sent to him and will be glad of an early response.

WANTED.—For St. Peter's Parish, Wellington, an unmarried Assistant Curate. Apply to Vicar, St. Peter's Vicarage, Wellington.