

freedom, innocence, happiness, by union with Himself.

(c) Then the Gospel must be preached to all mankind. It must be told as a message of salvation for the individual, but it catches the saved individual into the Family of Christ and so into Christ Himself—to whom we now belong body and soul—and sets us off on the task of making man like God.

It means doing the work of Christ, freeing men from sin and the results of sin, i.e., selfishness, and fighting a real battle against the devil and all his works, i.e., degrading poverty, gross inequalities, fear, injustice, which include to me unfair rents, bad houses, penurious old age, insecure tenure, and all those incidents of a poor and unenlightened civilisation which are not inevitable incidents but the fruits of our apathy and selfishness, i.e., they are the works of the devil.

Such is our Gospel. A God of love and righteousness, a Saviour for sinners, a Gospel for the poor and unprivileged. Let us go ahead with it like men.

(2) So far anyone can preach this Gospel, but we priests are commissioned to act as the mouthpiece of the family, the Church.

So we have our own special jobs.

(a) To teach officially in the name of God and the family. The priest teaches with authority, though he is wise if he does it with humility and love.

(b) To feed our children at the altar with the bread of life.

The most beautiful and touching thing to anybody with love and imagination.

(c) To absolve sinners from their sins.

I am astounded at the vagueness on this subject. "He hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins." This general statement is, as we all know, particularised in the Exhortation in the Communion Service and in the Visitation of the Sick. Who denies it, who knows the Prayer Book?

Where do we look for definiteness as to "getting rid of complexes" and "confession of sin"? To the Roman Catholics, to Anglican Catholics, to

the Oxford Group and to the Salvation Army. This whole subject needs to be taken clean out of "parties." All sorts and conditions hear confessions—doctors, priests, Oxford groupers, evangelical clergy (and we could do with many more of these splendid old surgeons of the soul), Methodists, Salvationists; but priests are commissioned not only to hear the troubles and sins but to give from Christ and the Church the pronouncement of forgiveness to anybody penitent. Who on earth can deny it? Are we ashamed of our commission? I'm not. But the fault lies in the hush-hush of it all. Why should anybody be ashamed to confess his sins, or anybody ashamed of his commission to forgive? I would wish anybody whose life was clouded with sin and needed help to come to me as easily as he sends his clothes to the washer-woman. Why make all this mystery and hush-hush? My job is to do it. I am sent to preach a Gospel, to feed souls, and to pronounce forgiveness in Christ's Name.

I'm not a workman if I don't know my job. Of course I don't force anybody to go. It's as impertinent to say that a person must go as to say he mustn't go. It's free. But we must be always ready.

I have just heard of a case in a land far away, where five or six people wanted to go to confession at Easter. The only priest on the spot said, "I can't refuse, but it is painful to me to hear a confession," to which the answer was "And it's equally painful to us to have to make it." It's bad workmanship not to know one's job. So if I had to advise any young priest I would say, "Do know your job: you aren't an ornament or a moralising fuss-bag. You are commissioned to preach a gospel of salvation and rescue: to feed souls: to absolve sinners: get on with your job."

P.S.—Of late I have been much struck with the work of the evangelicals. They do preach "Decision": one thing or the other; for Christ or not for Christ. They do win souls for a definite acceptance of Christ. If they could add a greater sense of the Body the Church, and were not afraid to add the pronouncement of Christ's forgiveness to the hearing of Confessions which they do already, I

believe they could sweep England, especially if they included the Social Gospel.

Walter Carey.

## PARISH NOTES.

### Wairoa.

On the evening of the Feast of the Annunciation, 6th April, our Mothers' Union held a special service, at which Archdeacon Butterfield dedicated their banner. It is a very fine piece of work, and fit to adorn any sanctuary of God's House. It is a print of the Madonna and Child, with the boy John Baptist standing by. This is mounted on black velvet with a gold fringe, and under the print is written "M.U., Wairoa." The banner is mounted on a blue pole and cross-bar. Our Mother' Union is progressing, and meets regularly once a month.

We held a men's service on the fifth Sunday in January. I think everyone was surprised, including the Vicar, at the fine muster of over 100 men. After the service, the men adjourned to the hall for light refreshment and a discussion. The outcome of the service was the forming of a Men's Club, which meets once a fortnight in the parish hall. The evening takes the form of ping-pong, tenni-quoit, cards and short talks. The membership is about 48.

The young women of the parish, not to be outdone by the men, also decided to have a Club. This is running very satisfactorily, and has a membership of 47.

A band of young Church people undertook to run a Parish Ball on Coronation night, which was a tremendous success, and part of the proceeds are to go towards renovating the interior of the Church.

The Ladies' Guild, which has done great work in the past, still meets regularly, and has a full programme of activities for the Winter.

There are certainly signs of great activity from the social side of our Church life. But that is only a means to an end.

We have started Confirmation classes, and some 28 people are attending the instruction.

We are thankful to see a good congregation each Sunday at our services, and look forward to a real