

PRO

VERITATE

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THE CHURCH AND INDUSTRY

THE REV. JOHN ROGAN

During the last twenty years a certain form of Christian ministry has developed in the United Kingdom. It is often known as Industrial Mission: in this and the following articles we shall be describing this work and examining some of the ideas involved in it.

WAR-TIME OPPORTUNITIES

During the 1939-45 war a number of opportunities were afforded for ministering to people in industry, during a time of great stress: either of bombing or of living in hostels in strange places. From this ministry it was but a short step to setting up a chaplaincy to an industrial centre. The first two places where this happened were Sheffield and South London: the former being a highly integrated social and industrial unit based on steel manufacture with a population of 500,000, the latter a far more diverse area associated with the port of London and riverside industries and part of a vast metropolitan zone with a population of over 8 million.

NOT THE FIRST ATTEMPT

These efforts were not, however, the churches' first attempt to deal with industry. As the British Isles were the first place to be industrialized, Christians were unable to avoid the problems raised by the Industrial Revolution, even though the political effects of the French Revolution initially obscured them. There was an immense programme of church and school extension; brotherhoods, sisterhoods, "labour churches" were formed, revival campaigns and parish missions were conducted and residential settlements were set up. Writers like the Rev. Charles Kingsley and the Rev. F. D. Maurice stirred the conscience of both the Church and Nation. Church commissions were set up to study all manner of social and industrial questions. Perhaps more significantly, Christians took in hand a vast range of social and welfare work: canteen and rest room facilities for various workers were

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DIE KERK EN DIE NYWERHEID

F. J. VAN WYK

In Februarie vanjaar is daar in Johannesburg 'n kursus deur die Christenraad van Suid-Afrika aangebied oor die „nywerheidsending“. Vir sover bekend, is dit die eerste kursus van dié aard wat nog in ons land gehou is.

KURSUS GOED BYGEWOON

Die Christenraad het al die Suid-Afrikaanse kerke uitgenooi om deelnemers na die kursus te stuur en ofskoon al die kerke nie die uitnodiging aangeneem het nie, was die kursus nogtans verblydend verteenwoordigend. Tydens die kursus is ook 'n spesiale vergadering van kerklike verteenwoordigers belê en dit is goed bygewoon. 'n Informele Komitee is by dié geleentheid aangestel om onder andere 'n memorandum vir die Christenraad voor te berei met aanbevelings oor hoe die werk van die Kerk in die nywerheid die beste aangevoer en voortgesit kan word. Die Christenraad het ook die stigting van 'n afdeling vir die

nywerheidsending goedgekeur en sal al die kerke — ook dié wat nie lede van die Raad is nie — uitnoui om aan die werk van hierdie nuwe afdeling deel te neem.

WAT IS NYWERHEIDSENDING

Wat is „nywerheidsending“? (In Engels heet dit „industrial mission“ of ook „industrial evangelism“ en 'n gepaste Afrikaanse benaming vir hierdie aspek van die Kerk se taak sal nog gevind moet word). Intussen word die term „nywerheidsending“ gebruik om die evangelisasiewerk van die Kerk in die nywerhede te beskrywe. Die nywerheid self het aanleiding gegee tot 'n nuwe soort

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opened, cheap food and clothing were provided, welfare services for those in public services developed, and an extensive programme of education for adults was initiated. After the 1914-18 war the Industrial Christian Fellowship was particularly active through the work of the Rev. G. Studdart Kennedy and Prebendary P. T. R. Kirk. It was the union of the 'activist' Navy Mission and the more 'intellectual' Christian Social Union.

The initiative of the churches in setting up industrial missions is the latest stage of development. It is significant both because it is the Church itself doing this work, rather than any group of interested Christians, and because it has shown certain distinct characteristics. Of these, perhaps the most important is the involvement with the structure of industry itself rather than merely the Church being a spectator. This involvement of course, presupposes an understanding of industrial life in large urban regions. However, while to some people this concern might seem strange it is vital to an understanding of our sort of society.

INDUSTRIALIZATION

Industrialization has been a most influential factor in stimulating urban development. Industry has, in large measure, been the source of the material dynamic of our society. It determines, to a large extent, our standard of living, its style and calibre. Beyond this our work-place assumes an importance in our lives which is, at least, comparable with that of the family. From the day we leave school to the day we retire we spend many hours of each day, except for holidays, at work. The work group can often have the character of a real community in which there is both fellowship and the development of social and individual attitudes. Industry does not merely mean 'going out to work': it is a new

form of social organization. The importance of this aspect of our society should not, indeed cannot, be underestimated by the churches. The factory and the office are significant social units. This can still be true even in a society where most people live in villages or on farms, because the social pace is being set by industry, and the effects of change are most obvious in the towns. It is, for instance, in the new social groupings that the problems of change are felt most acutely.

NEED IN URBAN AREAS

The work of the churches has been hitherto in predominantly agricultural communities. During the course of time it has managed to touch rural village life and the national societies built upon it. Today the task must be attempted afresh in a society which lives increasingly in towns, works in industry and transforms itself by a developing technology. Serious organizational changes are called for in all walks of life as a result of these developments and the Church itself is no exception. In many industrial countries there are more clergy in rural than in urban areas. 42% of the clergy of the Church of England minister to 11% of the population. Both Paris and Vienna have had parishes of 100,000 or more staffed by only a small number of parish priests. However, contact between minister and people is only one aspect of the question. Another vital issue is the proper recognition of man as worker — manager, foreman, craftsman, technical and production worker and not only as parent, husband and citizen. The churches need to learn and reflect upon the issues, problems, and structures which face people in industrial life and help correlate the Christian faith with them. These aspects of life should be germane to Christian ethical thinking and moral theology.

DOCTRINE OF WORK

A thoughtful understanding of industry is not, however, called for simply on social grounds. Christian theology demands the same acknowledgement. No doubt, some people regard work

as a form of punishment and perhaps there are some Christians who regard it as punishment for the sin of Adam; but it is doubtful whether we should interpret the early chapters of Genesis in this way. It is true that man is told that he will earn his bread in the sweat of his brow and that the elements with which he works will be difficult to handle. It is also true that the story of Cain and Abel almost partakes of the nature of an industrial dispute. But we must also remember and understand what is implied in the command to man that he should have dominion over the earth to use it and to replenish it. As men obey this divine decree they further the creative purpose of God by becoming his agents; and perhaps it is not improper for them to see themselves as fellow workers with God as described by St. Paul. (2 Cor. 6:1) It is through the grace of God that men understand the significance of what they do and appreciate through his word the goodness of all that God has created.

In other words, despite the effort called for and the difficulties encountered, men are not reluctant to work and as a modern industrial consultant has said "the expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest. The average human being does not inherently dislike work . . . Man will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which he is committed".

Amongst other things this Christian view of work means that work is important in itself and not merely as the means by which people achieve other goals. The hours spent in a factory are as important to men as the money they earn from being there, and the proper use of time and wealth are matters which neither the Christian Churches nor men in general can ignore. It is to make a contribution here as in other parts of industrial life that the Churches in the United Kingdom have set up industrial missions.

CHRIST AND THE WORLD

It can be pointed out quite rightly, that the Church is already present in industrial life through

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its lay people. They are dispersed at every level of industry doing their work, taking decisions, formulating policy and attitudes as an inevitable part of their daily routine. No Church planning in missionary strategy or service to the community can ignore this powerful force of Christians in industrial life. But the very specialization of labour in industry makes it difficult for such people to come together to consider the bearing that their faith has upon the industrial problems which they have in common. The Church needs to provide an appropriate form of organization to enable these people to come together to promote a better informed Christian conscience and to talk with others about good objectives in industry and the criteria by which they are to be assessed. This same form of organization will also serve to bring together people, who though not necessarily persuaded of the truth of the Christian faith, think that industrial questions are important enough to be thought about and assessed by Christianity. Therefore, we may say that the case for the Church working in industrial life stands even when nearly all the members of a society attend a place of worship. The question to be faced is not one of bringing people to Church attendance but of the relationship of the work of Christ to the world which he has redeemed, a world which we now experience as increasingly urban and industrialised. Yet it surely lies within God's providence and the redemption achieved once and for all by our great high priest and apostle.

The Rev. John Rogan, Secretary to the Church of England Industrial Commission in London, conducted a course on Industrial Mission from 2-17 February, 1966, at the Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, under the auspices of the Christian Council of South Africa and with the financial aid of the Theological Education Fund.

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van gemeenskap, 'n gemeenskap wat 'n toenemende getal mense absorbeer vir die doel om te werk, en hierdie besondere vorm van werk beïnvloed die lewens van diegene wat daarby betrokke is op 'n heel besondere wyse.

VERSTEDELIKING

Soos almal weet, is die proses van verstedeliking en die daarmee gepaard gaande industrialisering in Suid-Afrika in volle swang. Die landelike gebiede loop leeg en meer en meer mense van al ons bevolkingsgroepe vind nou 'n heenkome in die stad. Die rustige landelike lewe bly in die slag en die nuwe lewens- en werksomstandighede het 'n ingrypende uitwerking op almal wat daarby betrokke is. Trouens, die tegnologiese tydperk waarin ons nou lewe, is besig om 'n „nuwe soort mens” te skep, iets wat 'n drastiese uitwerking op die aard en patrone van ons maatskaplike lewe het en ook natuurlik op al ons maatskaplike instellings, onder andere ook op die kerk of die gemeentelike lewe.

Hierdie proses is al veel verder gevorder in die nywerheidslande van Europa en in dele van Amerika as in Suid-Afrika waar dit eers later begin het. **Nogtans het dit ook hier gekom en daarom sal dit goed wees as ons ons na die ouer nywerheidslande sal wend om van hulle te leer hoe om sommige van die vraagstukke wat deur die proses geskep is en word, te verhoed of die hoof te bied.** Mettertyd sal ons miskien ook, soos op so baie ander gebiede, ons bydrae kan lewer, in die vorm van nuwe kennis, tot die doeltreffende hantering en oplossing van die probleme en uitdagings van die veranderde lewenspatrone.

In 'n hele paar oorsese lande is daar in die afgelope jare al heelwat op die gebied van die nywerheidsending gedoen. In daardie lande het hierdie „nuwe” vorm van sendingwerk sy ontstaan te danke gehad aan die groeiende besef in die Kerk dat die veranderde gemeenskapspatrone 'n drastiese en ingrypende uitwerking op die geestelike lewe van

die mens het en dat dié feit 'n nuwe verantwoordelikheid op die Kerk plaas. In Engeland, Duitsland, Holland, Frankryk en elders is gevind dat die kerke begin het om leeg te loop en dat gemeentes 'n worstelende bestaan moes voer. Al meer en meer mense het onverskillig begin staan teenoor die eredienste, leraars en die gemeentelike werk in die algemeen. Toe die Kerk begin het om op die redes vir hierdie „onverskilligheid” in te gaan, is gevind dat baie Christene die beskuldiging teen die Kerk ingebring het dat „die Kerk ons en ons probleme nie verstaan nie en daarom nie vir ons 'n betekenisvolle antwoord op ons alledaagse probleme het nie”.

'n Begin is toe gemaak — byvoorbeeld in Frankryk — met die aanstelling van nywerheidspredikante of -kapelane. Reeds gou is egter besef dat so 'n predikant op heel besondere wyse vir die moeilike taak voorberei moet word, want sonder die nodige opleiding sou hy die belangrike werk onder die nywerheidsmense met hul besondere kenmerke en hul besondere vraagstukke nie met sukses kan aanpak en deurvoer nie. Verskillende metodes word nou gevolg vir die opleiding van leraars wat geroepe voel om op dié terrein te werk.

EVANGELIESE AKADEMIES

In Europa en elders is ook „Evangeliese Akademies” gestig waar Christene, en veral diegene wat vanweë die veranderde lewens- en werkpatrone, van die Kerk en die gemeentelike lewe losgeraak het, in die geleentheid gestel word om kursusse by te woon oor die Christelike geloof en ook oor die Christelike beskouing van werk. Daar is nou reeds meer as vyftig van hierdie akademies in agt Europese lande en feitlik almal getuig van besondere verblydende en bemoedigende vrug op die werk.

Nog 'n ander metode wat aangewend word, is dat leraars wat in gemeentes naby fabriek staan, 'n gedeelte van hul tyd afstaan vir gereelde besoeke aan die fabriek en op dié wyse die be-arbeiding onder die werkers probeer doen. Ofskoon daar goeie vrug op dié stelsel is, is daar egter bevind dat dit mank gaan aan verskeie swakhede. Leraars van gemeentes is dikwels al klaar oorlaai met hul gemeentelike werk.

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sodat die gereedheid wat 'n belangrike vereiste is vir die werk in die nywerheid, nie gehandhaaf kan word nie. Waar daar egter nie voltydse werkkragte gevind of bekostig kan word nie, kan daar gerus ernstige oorweging aan dié stelsel geskenk word.

Met die uitbreiding van hierdie werk is daar in Europa en die V.S.A. gou besef dat daar aan teologiese seminaries aandag aan die opleiding van leraars vir hierdie belangrike taak gegee moet word en aan baie van dié inrigtings word nou kursusse in die nywerheidsending aangebied. Daar is ook reeds 'n hele paar uitstekende boeke oor die onderwerp geskryf en vir diegene wat belangstel, word 'n kort lys aan die einde van hierdie artikel gegee

REAKSIE VAN NYWERHEID

Ten slotte net iets oor die reaksie van die nywerheid self op die nywerheidsending. En Europa en die V.S.A. is daar 'n verbasende belangstelling aan die kant van die nywerhede gevind en oral het deure wyd oopgegaan vir die Kerk. Met die voorbereiding vir die kursus wat in Februarie in Johannesburg gehou is en waarna hierbo verwys is, is daar met groot blydskap ontdek dat die nywerhede in ons land ook intens belangstel. Toe 'n paar van die groot nywerhede uitgenooi is om sprekers vir die kursus oor besondere aspekte van die nywerheidslewe te verskaf, het hulle dadelik ingewillig om dit te doen en uitstekende lesings is deur nyweraars gelewer. 'n Aanvang gaan in Johannesburg gemaak word om kort eendaagse kursusse te reël vir predikante en ander belangstellende Christene wat deur bevoegde manne uit die nywerhede toegelig sal word oor die nywerheid, sy taak, sy probleme en veral sy hantering van die mense wat vir hom werk. Op sulke kursusse sal bevoegde leraars ook gevra word om lesings te gee oor die Kerk en sy siening van sy taak ten opsigte van die nywerheid.

'n Aanvang sal ook gemaak word met die opleiding van leraars vir die

nywerheidsending, aanvanklik mis-
kien in die buiteland, maar dit word
gehoop dat fasiliteite vir dié oplei-
ding ook binnekort in ons eie land
geskep sal word.

BEROEP OP PREDIKANTE

'n Beroep sal ook gedoen word op predikante en ander belangstel-
lendes in verskeie dele van ons
land, veral in ons groot stede soos
Kaapstad, Durban, Port Elizabeth,
Oos-Londen, Pretoria, ens. om klein
komitees te stig wat met die plaas-
like nywerhede kan onderhandel met
die oog op samewerking tussen Kerk
en nywerheid.

**Dit is ons bede dat die Kerk in
Suid-Afrika die geleentheid op hier-
die „nuwe” gebied sal raaksien en
dat God die stappe wat dan sal volg,
ryklik sal sien.**

Boeke oor die Nywerheidsending:

1. **The Secular City***, deur Harvey E. Cox, S.C.M.-pers, Londen. (R2.50).
2. **The Biblical Doctrine of Work***, deur A. Richardson, S.C.M.-pers, Londen. (85 sentes).
3. **The Task of the Church in Relation to Industry***, Church Information Office, Church House, Westminster, London, S.W.2., England. (25 cents).
4. **De Dienste van de Kerk aan de Industrie-arbeider**, deur Egbert de Vries.
5. **New Creation as Metropolis**, deur Gibson Winter, U.S.A. MacMillan, 1964.
6. **Mens en Werk**, deur Van Riesen, Amsterdam.
7. **God's Frozen People***, deur Mark Gibbs en T. Ralph Morton, Fontant Books (55 sentes). (Boeke gemerk * verkrygbaar van die skrywer van hierdie artikel).

SUMMARY

THE CHURCH AND INDUSTRY

F. J. VAN WYK

In this article the writer refers to the course which was recently held in Johannesburg on "industrial mission" under the auspices of the Christian Council of South Africa. During the course a small *ad hoc*

committee was appointed and one of its tasks will be to prepare a memorandum for the Christian Council on ways and means of undertaking industrial mission in South Africa. The Christian Council has decided to set up a division of industrial mission and it is hoped that this division will begin to function during the latter half of this year.

The writer then gives a brief description of industrial mission or "industrial evangelism" and the work which is being done in this field in the older industrial countries of Europe and the U.S.A. Reference is made to full-time industrial chaplains, part-time ministers from neighbouring parishes or congregations, the Christian Academies in Europe and the special training needed to equip ministers and laity for industrial mission. Reference is made to seven useful books and a list of these is given.

In conclusion the writer refers to the encouraging co-operation between Church and Industry in Europe and the U.S.A. and he observes that the recent Johannesburg course on industrial mission revealed that a large measure of co-operation could also be expected from Industry in South Africa. The hope is expressed that the Church in South Africa will recognise and identify her responsibility, and the opportunities which exist, in this field.

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