

tion which will recognize the will of God as something higher than the will of the people.

My immediate issue is about voting in November. May I, as a loyal Christian, accept the Constitution by voting under it, when a loyal Christian can not be admitted to citizenship under it? May I vote for a candidate, who as my representative, must swear to this Constitution before he enters on the duties of his office? Is not the most loyal citizen the man who is loyal to his God, or do these loyalties conflict? The early Christians were required to accept the will of the Roman Emperor as supreme. They refused and died for the faith, therefore Christianity lived. Now the judgment of the highest court in the land is that the authority of Congress is supreme over the individual conscience. How much do the cases differ? How far are they alike?

One hesitates to speak against the law of the land. There is already too much of that. But there is a Higher Law and a higher citizenship. I must be loyal to that. I want the man of Nazareth to be a citizen of my country—the First Citizen. With a clear conscience I can vote for Him.

J. M. Coleman, Quinter, Kans.

DOES THE CONSTITUTION

OF THE

UNITED STATES

DISFRANCHISE CHRISTIANS?

"The time has come," The Christian Century says editorially, "when a loyal Christian cannot become a citizen of the United States." I am a citizen. I am trying to be a loyal Christian. Would I be a loyal Christian, if, by voting in November, I accept the Constitution of the United States which forbids a Christian to become a citizen of the United States?

This question is forced on every Christian by the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Macintosh case. Macintosh is a Canadian citizen and served as a chaplain in the Canadian ranks during the World War. Later he came to this country to hold a Professorship in Yale Divinity School and applied for citizenship in the court of Judge Burrows. In answering the questions of Judge Burrows in regard to military service, Professor Macintosh

declared that he could not promise in advance to bear arms, unless his conscience held the cause was just. The record of Judge Burrows in the case reads, in part, as follows: "It appearing that the said petitioner, considers his allegiance to be first to the will of God, would not promise in advance to bear arms in defence of the United States under all circumstances, but only if he believed the war to be morally justified, it is decided that the petitioner is not attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and further that his petition for citizenship is denied." What is the principle of the Constitution, to which in the judgment of the court, Macintosh is not "attached"? Evidently it is that an act of Congress—any act—is for the citizen the will of God. Can a loyal Christian accept that conclusion?

The case finally reached the Supreme Court, where the decision of Judge Burrows, denying citizenship to Professor Macintosh, was affirmed.

Petitions to the court that the case might be re-opened have been refused, therefore this decision of the court must be taken as the final meaning of the Constitution by every citizen and by every applicant for citizenship. Under this

decision, every alien applying for citizenship, as well as every citizen voting or holding office, must agree that an act of Congress rules his conscience. The decision to bar Professor Macintosh from citizenship was not the unanimous judgment of the court, five holding for the refusal of citizenship and four that it should be granted, but the division of opinion was not in regard to the final authority of the Constitution and laws of Congress under it over the conscience of the citizen. Every one of the nine judges of the court concurred in the view that the will of the people as expressed in acts of Congress must be accepted by the citizen as the will of God. But they differed in their judgment about whether an act of Congress conscripting citizens in time of war was also in force in time of peace.

We need not call in question the unanimous opinion of the Supreme Court in their interpretation of the Constitution, nor expect its reversal.

So it stands written in our law that an atheist might be admitted to citizenship, but Professor Macintosh may not. Judas might qualify, Jesus might not. The only relief for this discrimination against Christians under our Constitution is an amendment to the Constitu-