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DOMINANT IDEAS  
AND CORRECTIVE PRINCIPLES



# DOMINANT IDEAS AND CORRECTIVE PRINCIPLES

BY

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BISHOP OF OXFORD

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## PREFACE

This little book opens with three addresses delivered during a visitation of the diocese of Oxford in the early summer of this year. The first two addresses are devoted to maintaining that the dominant ideas of present-day democracy are fundamentally Christian ideas, but that Christianity is needed to supply the correctives of these ideas as popularly current. The weakness of the democratic movement is that it is much more occupied with claims than with responsibilities, and shows itself as a whole too little conscious of the moral difficulties involved in realizing its ideals. It exhibits but little sense of how profound a claim real democracy must make upon the average citizen—not only upon his intelligence, but also upon his character. It demands not only deepened and prolonged education, but also profound and widespread moral reformation. Jealousy, dishonesty, slackness, and lust appear to be as prevalent in the circles of “labour” as in any others; and their prevalence does, I fear, threaten democracy with



failure, unless the message "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" receives a quite new welcome on a very wide scale. In other words, there is no real hope of the establishment of a true human fellowship without a greatly deepened and widened sense of the moral claim of God upon the individual.

The third part of the charge puts forward proposals for reconstruction in religious education; which, if they are to be judged aright, must be taken as a whole.

The addresses which form chapters iv-vi justify, I think, their inclusion in the volume by the kinship of v to i and ii, and of iv and vi to iii. Chapter vii is included only because there appears to be need for it.

C. OXON:

CUDDSDON

*August, 1918.*

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# DOMINANT IDEAS AND CORRECTIVE PRINCIPLES

## I

### DOMINANT IDEAS<sup>1</sup>

*My Brethren of the Clergy and of the Laity,*

Since my last Visitation in the autumn of 1914, this country has been involved in the most awful war which the record of history presents. It has taxed, as nothing in our experience or in the experience of our forefathers has ever taxed, the vital energies of the nation. It has so occupied our attention that it has been difficult to think of anything else. And it is still being waged with no end in sight and its issues uncertain. We were bound to enter upon the war, and we are bound to fight it through, in the sacred cause of human liberty. But in the process the very foundations of our long and slowly-built-up civilization seem to be

<sup>1</sup> A charge delivered at the Bishop's Visitation of the Diocese of Oxford in May and June, 1918. It consisted of this and the two following addresses.

threatened. "Men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth."

What effect is this vast catastrophe producing in the ideas and habits of men—especially in their religious and moral ideas and habits? In this diocese our social conditions have not been as violently changed as in some other parts of the country. But the changes are still great. Oxford is a quite different city from of old. Many of our rural districts have been transformed in their interests and occupations by the planting in the midst of them of military camps or factories or stores; we come upon gangs of German prisoners or Chinese labourers in our quiet country places: refugees from London have crowded up our towns and villages; everywhere the absence of the younger men makes our villages sad places to live in; we are almost all working harder, and often at unfamiliar tasks; we are "eating our bread by weight and with carefulness";<sup>1</sup> the world is full of anxious and bereaved hearts.

What religious and moral changes, then, is the war bringing about among us? Almost nowhere do I hear of what could be called a wide and deep religious revival such as might

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel iv. 16.

have been hoped for under this tremendous visitation of God. There is no widespread turning to Him. No crowding of our churches with multitudes possessed with the passion of penitence and prayer and of hunger for the word of God. There is, on the other hand, some turning away from Him—some increase of positive disbelief, because (as is said) “God has not stopped the war.” If there has been no alarming moral decline, there has been no notable moral reformation among us and no obvious deepening of the sense of sin or need of the Redeemer. In one or two places church-going has notably improved. But this is not commonly the case. In more places it has declined, partly because people are busier. But there is a general testimony that “the war has made the good people better.” There is a steady rise in the appreciation of Holy Communion as the chief act of Christian worship. The religious people believe more in prayer, and are more interested in learning how to pray. Almost universally the use of freer intercessory prayer, especially in the Sunday evening service, has been heartily welcomed.

(May I say both to clergy and churchwardens, in a parenthesis, that I earnestly exhort you to do your very best, in spite of lighting difficulties,

to maintain the Sunday evening service through the winter?)

But there are two kinds of change on the largest scale to which I want specially to draw your attention.

First, the war has evoked such a wealth of self-sacrifice and self-forgetting service, and such capacity for resolute endurance, not only in our gallant soldiers and sailors and airmen, though we think chiefly of them, but in non-combatants also, and in women as well as men, as to banish from our minds the idea that we are a frivolous or decadent race. This is pure gain. The idea that membership in a nation and empire involves sacrifice and service has deepened and widened immensely. Everywhere in our villages and towns there is an enlarged sense of brotherhood, and we are everywhere more ready to help one another. Even if, owing to the absence of fathers and big brothers, or the exciting neighbourhood of the soldiers, our boys and girls are more difficult to manage, I fancy their minds are also opening to higher ideals of service for others.

Secondly, there are going on amongst us big and deep changes of ideas. We are apt to set down the current expression of ideas in newspapers and conversation as "mere talk." But

when a new or revived idea really gets hold of our common mind and becomes current intellectual coin, it is the harbinger of great changes. The immense changes of the industrial period—the last century—were rooted and centred in certain current ideas, more or less new in the history of men—the idea of free, relentless competition between individuals, classes, and nations as the secret of progress, and the idea of “the struggle for existence,” with the consequent victory of the well-equipped and the strong over the unorganized and the weak, as the most important law of nature; these ideas fashioned the minds of several generations. They were dominant, if not unquestioned, maxims. They were the dogmas of the period. They produced or accompanied great social changes. Now they have been largely discredited. We are weary of this unrestricted competition. We feel that instead of promoting the real welfare of men in general, it proved to be the tyranny of the few strong over the many weak; it thought in terms of money rather than of persons; it enslaved men to machines; it produced unwholesome extremes of wealth and poverty. Thus we have reacted indignantly against it. And while the reaction has been largely the reaction of human feeling



against the inhumanity of the old political economy, it has been accompanied by a corresponding reaction within the area of economic science itself. The economists have become convinced that the old political economy was so abstract as to be misleading. Even its stronghold in the scientific doctrine of "the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest" is giving way, for the competitive struggle is found not to be the only or perhaps the chief factor in the making of nature, especially in its higher ranges. What then are the ideas now dominant? <sup>1</sup>

1. There is the idea of the equal worth of every individual person: that every human person counts for one, and no one counts for more than one; that nothing can justify the misusing of any person in the interest of another man's profit or pleasure; that every one born into the world has a divine right to the opportunity of making the best of himself or herself and doing the best service of which he is capable.

<sup>1</sup> "If the British Expeditionary Force were to make a confession of faith . . . it would all centre round the ideas of democracy and freedom. Everywhere I find among the men of the Army that this is the one great thing that touches them and rouses real enthusiasm. They do believe in democracy. . . . If they have any religion, it is centred in the idea of democratic freedom."—G. A. Studdert Kennedy's *The Hardest Part* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1918), pp. 77 f.

To realize the greatness of the change, you need to look back eighty years and read of the treatment that women and children, not to speak of men, were receiving in factories and mines, and of the callousness of even good men, obsessed by the industrialist dogmas, in contemplating what we should now regard as intolerable and brutal cruelty. Or look back forty years and think of the agitation about labourers' wages aroused by Joseph Arch, and the beginning of the campaign against slums in towns; think, I say, of the facts revealed and the apathy of the well-to-do classes, and the heartless insistence on the rights of property, and you will realize how profoundly we have changed. This change has been going on at a greatly enhanced pace during the war. To-day you get unquestioning acceptance in the most conservative circles for ideas which would have been listened to with horror a short time ago. And this deepened sense of the equal worth of every human life has been at the root of the immense change which has come about—again with increased speed during the war—in the position of women and in the whole ideal of education.

2. How rapidly during the years of the war has the idea again become dominant that the welfare of the community should be supreme

over the profit of the individual. The old individualism which was the spirit of the industrial development laid all stress upon competition—each for himself, the intervention of the state being reduced to a minimum. But this spirit, which was so proud of itself fifty years ago, hardly ventures to assert itself to-day. The welfare of the community—the sharing of all the citizens in the best available life—is to-day taken as the test of the good state. And, as one accompaniment of the change of thought, we fix our attention less exclusively on the industrial towns—the great sources of wealth—and we think again of the country. The statesman and the reformer tell us again that the fabric of national prosperity must be built upon the revival of country life and the welfare and happiness of the villages. Moreover, in our social philosophy the dominant idea is no longer that of a society in which nothing intervenes between the individual citizen and the supreme state. That sort of State Socialism is out of date. The idea revives of men as living and co-operating in smaller groups—village communities, town communities, industrial groups, educational or religious corporations—each group invested with authority to manage

its own concerns under the supreme control and regulation of the state so far as the common welfare is concerned.

Well, all this development of the social idea has its own perils. At this moment I am only pointing to the extraordinary strength of the development among us during the war of this idea or group of ideas ; this way of thinking of men as members of a community in which the interest of the whole must be allowed to be supreme over the profit of the individual ; in which the individual cannot be allowed to "do what he will with his own," if he is thereby damaging the common life. Even on the economic ground we believe that the stimulus given to production by every person feeling that he has a free opportunity to render the best service he is capable of and a fair share in the proceeds of his industry, will more than compensate for what may be lost by the restraint upon the ambition of a few men to make immense fortunes.

3. Again, we have seen during the war the revival of the passion of patriotism. We entered reluctantly upon this awful struggle for the sacred cause of freedom and justice among nations, and specially for the rights of the weaker nations. And we are striving to

keep our ideal prominent before our own minds and before the world. I need not say how much the President of the United States has done to help us in this. But while the war has intensified patriotism, it has also made us feel afresh what an intensely dangerous virtue patriotism is. It becomes so easily corporate selfishness and lust of domination. Germany is before our eyes as an example of the false exclusive patriotism which threatens the welfare and liberty of every other nation. This is why we feel that we are fighting against Germany for what is vital, and must fight on till the militarist ambition of Germany is discredited and defeated.

But it is not only Germany that is liable to the disease of patriotism. Recently the unexpected publication by the Russian Bolsheviks of the Secret Treaties between the Allies has disclosed to us that there are other nations besides Germany which have been harbouring excessive and unjustifiable ambitions for the acquisition of territory over which they have no rights. Thus, besides the kindling of patriotism during the war, we have been developing a widespread feeling among thinking men that if the rivalry of nations is to go on unchecked after the war, if the nations are

to begin again to build up threatening armaments one against another, there is no hope for our civilization. Accordingly, as we have demanded that the interest of the community shall be dominant over the individual and family, so we are learning to demand that the interest of the whole group of nations should be made effectively supreme over the ambition of any one. So only can we be saved. Thus we get to the idea of the League of Nations, armed with effective powers to suppress the insolent ambition of any one.<sup>1</sup> It is a very difficult doctrine. It is very difficult for any proud nation to submit its interests to the arbitrament of the world. But it is in the air. Practical statesmen embrace it, and give it expression. President Wilson and Lord Grey of Falldon have become its prophets.

4. Well, here we have three ideas:—the idea of the equal right of every person to the opportunities of the best life; the idea of the welfare of the community as supreme over the selfish self-aggrandisement of the individual: the idea of the fellowship of nations as supreme over the ambition of each by itself—these ideas are daily taking stronger hold of the imaginations

<sup>1</sup> I would refer especially to Lord Grey's tract *The League of Nations*. Oxford University Press. 3d.

of men. They work like leaven. We cannot but anticipate that, after the war, if the war ends before we are all bled to death, they will be productive of deep changes in our social organization. And, whereas the dominant ideas of the industrial epoch were not Christian at all, these are Christian ideas. "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." "It were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." "Those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary." "Honour all men." <sup>1</sup> The equal spiritual worth of each individual soul—the sin of using any other person as the instrument of another's profit or pleasure—these are foundation principles of Christ. Again, Christianity is a brotherhood—a body of many members in which the interest of all is the care of each; in which the law of social action is "from each according to his capacity, to each according to his need." And, once more, Christianity is catholic: it is based on the principle that God has no favourite nation; that in Christ there

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 14; S. Luke xvii. 2; 1 Cor. xii. 22  
1 S. Pet. ii. 17.

can be neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian nor Scythian ; but a universal supernational fellowship in which, only in proportion as it becomes actually a universal fellowship of service, can Christ be "all in all fulfilled." True it is that Christianity knows how inveterate in human nature sin and selfishness are ; and that sin and selfishness are incompatible with liberty and brotherhood. This is a great part of the message of Christianity to the world. But the Church, because it has experience of the divine redemption, and knows how human life can be rid of sin and selfishness, exists to present to men the life of liberty, service, and fellowship actually realized in a catholic supernational society, which is the body of Christ, His organ of self-expression in the world.

Thus men are not, on the whole, turning away from Christ, but turning to Christ as the prophet of the true humanity. Their apprehension of Him and His teaching is sometimes surprisingly defective. About that I would speak more at length on another occasion. Now I am content to insist that these dominant ideas are in themselves Christian ideas, and lead men to look on Christ as the true emancipator of men. But then they turn upon us professed Churchmen with indig-



nation. "Why," they say, "have you left us to find all this out from more or less alien sources, as if it were no part of the Christian religion? Why have you left it to men who do not belong to the Church to re-discover these truths? Why have you professed followers of Jesus Christ been so stupidly acquiescent in just those very evils which, in the name of your Master, you ought to have been denouncing? Why have you not stood up for justice—stood up for the oppressed and underpaid and underfed and ill-housed? Why have you not been scandalized by the extremes of wealth and poverty? Why did you acquiesce in a false philosophy, manifestly anti-Christian? Why have you been satisfied with a national Christianity, and forgotten your supernatural society"?

And it is not only our adversaries who press these charges upon us; we have pressed them upon ourselves. This has been the fruit of the National Mission. Very commonly this National Mission is said to have accomplished little or nothing. It is true, I fear, that in many parishes there is little visible fruit to be discerned. But those who talk about it as a failure forget its main purpose. It was to generate in the Church corporate consideration and corporate repent-

ance. Churchmen were to be made to think of the mission of the Church as a body, and to cross-question themselves as to how it was fulfilling its task. The Church is the body of Christ existing in the world, and inspired by His Spirit, to express His mind. And our corporate self-examination, assisted by the evidence supplied by the Army, led to a humiliating confession of failure in certain very important respects. We were forced to acknowledge that just in respect of those ideas of which I have been speaking, which are fermenting like leaven in the hearts of men to-day, our witness has been lamentably feeble. We have not stood valiantly for justice in the interests of the weak. We have been too content with ministering to the wounded in the social strife without valiantly attacking the enemy—that is, the sources and strongholds of the evil. Our Church has not presented the picture of a sympathetic brotherhood in which the spiritual equality of all men was the principle dominating all our arrangements. Again, we have been so content to be a National Church that we have forgotten our vocation to proclaim a supernatural, universal, catholic fellowship. So we have confessed ourselves. And the archbishops have appointed committees to con-

sider how these freshly-recognized duties are to be fulfilled. The reports of these committees are being issued. I think the value of the National Mission, and much more the seriousness of our corporate self-examination and confession, will be judged by the study given to these reports and the response they meet with.

I can conceive a new era dawning in our Church under the guidance and urgency of the Holy Spirit. I can conceive the Church, and especially the clergy who are charged with the ministry of the word, saying something of this kind:—"We have suffered men outside the Church—a poet like Shelley, who called himself an atheist, or men far from being orthodox like the authors of *Ecce Homo*, or *The Jesus of History*—to teach us how the true principles of humanity were proclaimed by Jesus Christ. In spite of some prophets of our own, we had as a body forgotten these things. As teachers we had left them out of our syllabuses of instruction. But now they have again arrested the attention of men and of ourselves. We know how central they are to the message of Jesus. We see now with fresh eyes how humanitarian (in the modern sense) is the message which the doctrine of the Creed about God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Spirit, is intended to support, and the Church, with its sacraments, to embody and preserve. We see at the same time how full the Church's message is of just those preservatives against corruption and abuse which the democratic doctrines so obviously need. We must think out again our whole Creed, reading our Gospels and Epistles and our prophets of the Old Testament afresh with painful care, till we see the whole scheme of redemption and the whole idea of the Church again with fresh eyes, as presenting to men, grounded and safeguarded in Christ, exactly the counterpart of the ideas which are the watchwords, and cries of the moment. Then we shall become preachers again. We shall preach about just those things which interest people ; we shall not teach less about personal salvation because we teach more about service and brotherhood ; we shall not teach less about God because we teach more about man ; we shall not insist less upon the eternal issues of life because we insist more upon the manifestation of the kingdom of God here and now ; we shall not insist less on sacraments because we understand that sacraments are the bonds of a social religion. We shall accept with the old enthusiasm the old religion of the Creed, the Bible, and the sacraments ;

but we shall be able to interpret it in terms of what is interesting every one to-day who has a heart to feel and a brain to think.”

If I dream a dream and see a vision, it is that of a clergy again applying themselves before all else to study, thought, and prayer, that they may again become teachers and guides—teachers and guides not least of the enterprising, the hopeful, and the young.

## II

### THE CORRECTIVES OF DOMINANT IDEAS

*My Brethren of the Clergy and Laity,*

In my last address I was speaking of some ideas which recently, and with increasing force and rapidity during the war, have been possessing the minds of men, especially the idea of liberty for all and of the equal spiritual worth of all persons, the idea of brotherhood and mutual service as the basis of society, and the idea of the fellowship of the nations in a world-wide human community. I pointed out that these are fundamental Christian ideas; and that we have recently been led to feel ashamed because we have so largely left it to those who are outside the Church to vindicate and proclaim them. But it is not too late. We can even now set ourselves to make men feel afresh that Jesus Christ is the true prophet of liberty, brotherhood, and catholicism.

Now, to-day I would give your thoughts a different turn. We all know how disappoint-

ing democratic and humanitarian movements, based on ideas such as I have mentioned, are apt to be. History is full of disappointing examples. Its records are full of disillusionment.

I suppose there is not a really thoughtful leader of men to-day who does not feel a profound anxiety as he contemplates the future.<sup>1</sup> Why? Because, while these ideas are easy enough to enunciate in the abstract and attractive enough as ideas to be embraced enthusiastically by almost any one, yet, when it comes to realizing them, they are found to require not only a much higher level of education than has been hitherto attained by the average citizen, but also personal virtues—self-control, self-sacrifice, humility, unselfishness, truthfulness—which are very difficult to flesh and blood. Christianity has from the first recognized the difficulty. Thus it has said that all men are meant for liberty, but that they will never really be free save through the redeeming power of Christ and of His Spirit. “If the Son maketh you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

<sup>1</sup> “Any form of democracy is bound to throw such an enormous weight of responsibility upon the ordinary average man, and he, splendid fellow as he is, seems to be much more alive to his rights than to his responsibilities in the free democracy that is to be.”—Studdert Kennedy’s *The Hardest Part*, p. 78.

“Where the Spirit is Lord, there is liberty.”<sup>1</sup> Or again, it has said that all men are meant for brotherhood, but that it is only in Christ that real brotherhood can be established. Thus you know that the term “brotherhood” in the New Testament is practically confined to the Christian Church, the principle of this limitation being that only those who in Christ have been really born again—grafted, that is, upon the new stock—only those who have felt the power of redemption from sin and selfishness, are capable of brotherhood. Once more Christianity declares that the purpose of God can only be realized in a fellowship of all mankind; but it also recognizes how deep in fallen human nature is the narrowness and exclusiveness of a false patriotism, and how thorough a change of heart is needed if men are to recognize real fellowship with those of other races. Thus it is claimed that only the Church of Jesus Christ, the Church of those who acknowledge His Lordship and have received His Spirit, can show the world the way to a real catholicism.

History has proved abundantly that our Lord was a profoundly true prophet when He told men that they needed personal redemption as

<sup>1</sup> S. John viii. 32-36; 2 Cor. iii. 17 (reading *κύριον*).



the means to social salvation, that "except a man be born again, he cannot see, or enter, the kingdom of God."<sup>1</sup> And Christianity in its earliest history did really vindicate its claim to show the way to a true humanity. The Church did appear as a real brotherhood, which showed its capacity to be world-wide, and really enabled men to feel themselves free and spiritually equal, bound together in a fellowship of mutual service. It did this, not because it was primarily humanitarian, but because it put God first and believed in Jesus Christ as Lord and Son of God, and set itself to live by His teaching, and kept its standard of membership high and searching. So it was all the time, broadly speaking, that Christianity was unpopular and liable to persecution. Its moral witness remained fairly constant. The salt had not lost its savour. This was because it was worth no man's while to run the risk of professing Christ, unless he meant something by it. Then occurred what is most misleadingly called the victory of Christianity, or the conversion first of the Roman Empire, and then of the races which invaded and overwhelmed the empire. I say misleadingly so called, because the world was not really converted.

<sup>1</sup> S. John iii. 3, 5.

What happened, in fact, was that men in masses accepted Christianity, with a genuine sense perhaps of the superiority of Christ to all the gods of the nations, and, as far as words and rites went, with a genuine allegiance, but for the most part without any real conversion of heart. The profession of Christianity ceased to involve any risk, or to cost men any personal sacrifice. Thus they brought their really unconverted selves and natures within the Church, and the moral level of Christianity went down accordingly, and the moral witness of Christianity was, if not extinguished, yet lamentably dimmed.

It has remained so dimmed through ages of barbarism and ages of civilization, to our own day. Even though the moral fruits of Christianity in the social order have been real and great, we are still bound to acknowledge this. You can see what I mean if you think of the situation to-day. Christianity ought to-day to be able to say to men, "You seek liberty, brotherhood, and the fellowship of all nations. These things you will never really win and retain without the redemption from sin which Jesus Christ came into the world to bring. 'There is none other name given under heaven whereby men must be saved.' Look

to the evidence of this amongst ourselves. We are not perfect : far from it. But no one can become a Christian without pledging himself to live a life of self-control, and to behave towards all his fellow-members as really brothers of equal value with himself, and to recognize that God has no favourite nation, but that the tie of universal brotherhood in Christ is closer and more binding than home and race and colour. And these principles are kept so prominent amongst us that any one who does not seek practically to live by them—any one who treats his brother men as instruments of his own profit or pleasure and repudiates in fact the obligations of brotherhood—falls out of our membership ; while those who remain, imperfect as they are, draw from Christ and His Spirit such grace and help that you can see for yourselves, all the world over, that in the Christian community freedom and brotherhood and catholicism are practical realities.” Such a challenge to the world was given by the Christian apologists of the early age and men felt it to be real. But such a challenge put into the mouth of the Church to-day rings with a tone of bitter irony. The world will not recognize the Church of to-day in the suggested portrait.

How are we to get back to a condition of things in which the Church, whether popular or unpopular, established or dispossessed, shall at least stand, as the Early Church stood, as "a city set on a hill," exhibiting to all who chose to look with open eyes the features of the humanity of Jesus Christ? I cannot, of course, take upon me to answer the question, or to anticipate the future. For my own part I believe that a period of chastisement awaits the Church as a just judgement of God upon our inveterate worldliness—our sinful self-accommodation to the spirit and temper of the world. Only through some searching judgement can I dare to hope for the restoration of our power of moral witness.

1. Perhaps you will disagree with me in this anticipation. But, in any case, I think you will agree with me that, in the long run, the power of the Church to maintain its moral witness in the world will depend upon its steadfast adherence to the catholic faith. It is the moral witness of the Church that will always be, as it was in the beginning, the chief instrument of conversion. It is by our good works which they behold that men are to be brought to glorify God and to confess that God is with us of a truth. It is by our love one towards another

that men are to be won to discipleship, as in the early days men were won to the faith by the exhibition in the Church of the true spirit of brotherhood. But the moral witness in the long run depends upon the maintenance of the true faith in God as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, the faith which finds expression in the catholic creeds. That is what S. John means when he warns us that "who-soever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God."<sup>1</sup> All so-called progress which takes us away from the firm standing-ground of the apostolic faith, is not progress but loss. Here I touch upon the fundamental duty of steadfast adherence to the faith, which is for us in our generation specially difficult. The current of contemporary intellectual life runs so strongly in the direction of destructive and sceptical criticism that it is very difficult to avoid the sceptical temper without falling into the opposite error of unintelligent fanaticism, or the refusal of frank and open-eyed inquiry. We must, however, avoid both types of excess. And we have still, thank God, among us great scholars who know how to maintain the faith steadfastly—with all the strength of personal

conviction—without the least breath of fanaticism, and in the most open-minded spirit of historical inquiry. And there are others of a like temper of reasonable faith who have only just been taken from us. I would name two—Henry Barclay Swete and Henry Scott Holland—“whose faith follow, considering the issue of their life.” But I am not to-day proposing to dwell on this supreme duty of maintaining the faith.

2. Secondly, we have to maintain a definite moral standard, formulated in no moral creed,<sup>1</sup> but expressed intelligibly in the life and teaching of our Lord, and displayed to the world in the New Testament and in the current teaching of the Church. One characteristic of this moral standard is that it condemns as severely what we may call the sins which are consistent with respectability—such as avarice, pride, selfishness, uncharitableness and exclusiveness—as the disreputable sins of lust, drunkenness and the like. No one can study the Gospels and then say that in the sight of our Lord drunkenness is worse than pride or fornication worse than the love of money or selfishness. We have not been true to this

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that the Church made no attempt for more than a thousand years to formulate its moral teaching in a popular form : see p. 118 ff.

impartial standard. We have condoned the respectable sins. We have not made men feel that the love of money or uncharitableness or exclusiveness are as incompatible with Holy Communion as blasphemy or fornication. We have to rectify the standard. Nevertheless we must rectify it on the one side without relaxing it on the other. And I cannot doubt that in the immediate future we shall have to contend very earnestly for the maintenance of sexual morality. I believe that times of war and the times following on wars are usually times of sexual licence. The reasons are sufficiently obvious. Certainly to-day there is a spirit abroad which resents and repudiates the divine restraint on sexual appetite. It will, I am sure, need to be met with much more frank and courageous teaching of our girls and boys about their bodily functions than we have given in the past. Also we have to anticipate a strengthening antagonism to the law of marriage. As citizens it is our duty to maintain the national law as near to the Christian law as we can. But let us never forget, or allow others to forget, that whatever the State law may be or become, the Church must maintain Christ's law of indissoluble marriage.

3. We have to restore to Church member-

ship its reality of moral obligation. There is no question that in the Prayer Book Church membership is held to involve a certain reality of discipline. I spoke about this at length in my last Charge, and I am not going to repeat it now. But as one element of this duty of maintaining a certain standard of discipline, I hope that you will support me in holding it as essential that, in all our plans for Church reform, the initial franchise for Churchmen and Churchwomen shall not be given to those who have declined to be confirmed, and, as a prelude to receiving Confirmation, to give their personal adherence to the principles of Christ.

4. It is quite impossible for the Church to stand before the world as the embodiment of true social principles unless it makes a vigorous effort to purge itself from flagrant abuses such as those to which our attention is drawn in the recently-issued Report of the Archbishops' Committee on "Administrative Reform." Now the necessary prelude to all such reform is the restoration to the Church of a reasonable autonomy. And I do not believe that any scheme of Church autonomy has any chance of general acceptance by Churchmen or by the state save the scheme outlined by "the Church and State Committee," though of course it



admits of amendment in details. Thus I ask your zealous co-operation in bringing that scheme into effect.

On all these matters I have spoken to the diocese at length on other recent occasions. But there are three matters challenging our immediate attention on which I have not hitherto had the opportunity of speaking in public.

5. The Church has to make up its mind what functions it is prepared to include in the ministry of women. It seems to me that this is in part a matter of vital principle, and in part a matter of variable expediency, such as can be legislated upon afresh from age to age. There are, I think, in the New Testament two principles bearing on the subject. First the principle of spiritual equality—that “in Christ Jesus there can be no male and female,” any more than there can be “Jew or Gentile,” “slave or free.” Women have precisely the same spiritual worth, as persons, as men, and the same claim to realize their faculties for service as experience shall show that they possess them. We must recognize how fully this principle is involved in our Lord’s dealings with women, and how much is implied in the position and service of women like Priscilla

and Phoebe in the Early Church. But also, I think Christianity accepts the principle of an essential and permanent headship of man over woman, a headship which depends in part on physical facts, but which is also a principle of social organization. "The head of the woman is the man," as "the head of Christ is God." This subordination of woman to man (which is no mark of inferiority of nature, any more than the subordination of Christ to the Father, but a principle of order) S. Paul enunciates as a principle, and the Church has embodied it in the limitation of the priesthood to men. But this is the only limitation upon the ministry of women which I think we need regard as a question of principle. It does not seem to me that whether a woman may give addresses in church is any more a question of principle than whether she may deliver a lecture or make a speech in a hall. S. Paul's directions on this point seem to me to be no more necessarily permanent than his direction that women should be veiled in church—a direction (I may say) which is not really fulfilled by a woman's modern head-dress—or than his direction that no man who had been twice married could be a presbyter, and no woman twice married admitted upon the roll of widows. These are

not questions of principle, but questions which have to be decided from age to age in accordance with spiritual expediency, with due regard to the duty of not causing scandal to contemporary society. To-day women are admitted to a much wider comradeship with men than ever before: and I do not think that there is any principle which need restrain the Church from admitting properly qualified women to all the various kinds of ministry to which we admit laymen—such as giving addresses in mission chapels or occasionally in churches,<sup>1</sup> or reading the lessons, or being members of our Church assemblies—as well as to the ministry of deaconesses in the old sense. I do not say that these things ought to be done, or ought to be done at once. But I say that there is no Church principle which need prevent our going as far in this direction as contemporary feeling warrants.

But it seems to me most undesirable that there should be any wide difference in this respect between one diocese and another, and I think each diocese must wait till the Dean of Westminster's Committee has reported and the Church has had time to discuss the report.

<sup>1</sup> The constant regular office of preaching belongs to the ordained ministry, and would not, therefore, belong to women.

Certainly I shall do nothing on my own initiative, or till both the Convocation and the Diocesan Conference have discussed the matter and expressed their mind.

Meanwhile I want to commend to you a ministry of women which can be used without any change in our existing regulations. I mean the Women Messengers. Their mission-visits to country parishes seem to me to be calculated to do a great deal of good, and experience such as we have had bears out this expectation. There appears to have been in some villages which they have visited something like a hunger for the simple homely teaching which they gave and for the fellowship in prayer which they introduced. I earnestly recommend the incumbents of country parishes to consider giving an invitation to the Women Messengers, and I am ready to give all the information and assistance in my power.<sup>1</sup>

6. The divine purpose of reunion among Christians is making itself felt among us with quite new force. We are ashamed of our divisions, with a quite new shame. There is in all this, I am sure, a real movement of the Spirit of God. One great evil we can go

<sup>1</sup> The Secretaries of the Women Messengers are Mrs. Brabant and Mrs. Illingworth, 62 Botley Road, Oxford.

forward in overcoming at once, that is the evil of isolation. For all the purposes of moral and social witness, to fight the battles of social reform, of purity and temperance, I do not see why we should not at once behave, all of us—Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Free Churchmen—as if we were one Church. I should like to see all the Christian forces, without discrimination, organized on a footing of perfect equality, to maintain the moral witness in every town and country district. I should wish to see a great deal more time and attention given to this than has been given in the past, and I should regard it as an incidental result of the greatest importance that Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Nonconformists would in this way certainly be getting to know one another, as can only be done when men are acting together.

Further, whenever there is any matter of national urgency pressing upon our hearts and consciences, I should wish to see a common meeting for prayer organized in some neutral public building, preferably under the chairmanship of a layman, and without any regard to the distinction of clerical and lay. I can see no Christian principle which should be an obstacle to such meetings for prayer, though I would

have them held on neutral ground, that is either out of doors or in some building other than a church or chapel.

But of course we cannot be satisfied without real corporate union in one body. Though I do not expect any speedy measure of corporate reunion, I see great hopes for the future both in the direction of the Holy Orthodox Church and in the direction of the Nonconformists. Of course, we must hold staunchly to our fundamentals of doctrine and order. You will not accuse me of forgetting this. But it seems to me also that we must recognize much more frankly than we have done in the past how freely the Holy Spirit has worked for the redemption of men outside the channels and methods of Catholic Christendom in general or the Church of England in particular. We cannot doubt that a really Catholic Church would not only embody those principles of doctrine and order which we commonly call catholic, but also a very large part of the spirit and many of the methods of organization and work which we identify with the Nonconformists. I believe we all really admit in our hearts that a great part of the best practical Christianity of our country is to be found among the Nonconformists, and that there is no word which

requires more careful and charitable application than the word "schism." I am quite against any attempt to ignore difficulties or abandon principles, but I heartily commend to your attentive consideration two manifestoes, "Towards Christian Unity," which have been signed by Christian leaders of many denominations in preparation for the World Conference on Faith and Order.<sup>1</sup> It is (I am quite sure) a matter for profound thankfulness that agreement has extended so far. And in the other direction named above, in the direction of the Orthodox Church, I am sure that you will all rejoice with me that by receiving into the diocese a large group of the Serbian theological students, now, alas! exiled from their home, we have done something really considerable towards bringing about a better mutual understanding between the Anglican Church and one important national branch of the Orthodox Communion.

7. Finally, and very briefly, I hope you will support me in my reluctance to encourage the clergy, especially the younger clergy, to abandon their proper spiritual work, even in this great crisis of the national life, for properly military or secular occupations. We must

<sup>1</sup> Printed below, p. 38.

make, and we have made, the proper supply of chaplains a first charge upon our numbers. Let there be no doubt about this. We must give, and we have given, any clergy who can be spared, over and above this, liberty to volunteer for work with the Y.M.C.A. or the Church Army. We have thought it right to let some offer themselves for non-combatant service. Besides this we are most of us doing extra work, of more kinds than can be enumerated, of assistance to the country in its need. But I trust we shall steadily refuse to treat the spiritual ministry to which we clergy are pledged to devote ourselves as if it were something of secondary importance, which at such a time as this could be reduced to a minimum like the train-service. I should hope that I have you with me in feeling that there never was a time when the spiritual ministry of Jesus Christ was more needed among us than it is to-day.



## APPENDIX A

### TOWARDS CHRISTIAN UNITY

*First Interim Report of a Sub-Committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York's Committee and by Representatives of the English Free Churches' Commissions, in connection with the proposed World Conference on Faith and Order.*

A movement has been initiated in America by the Protestant Episcopal Church, which has been widely taken up by the Christian Churches in the United States, to prepare for a world-wide conference on Faith and Order with the view of promoting the visible unity of the Body of Christ on earth. And in response to an appeal from those who are co-operating in America a committee was appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and commissions by the Free Churches to promote the same movement in England.

The originators of the whole proposal recommended in their outline of methods to be followed that "informal conference and other interchanges of views between members of different Christian Communion be encouraged and promoted in order to prepare the way for the achievement of the purpose of the proposed conference." Accordingly a conference of the Archbishops' Committee and of certain mem-

bers of the Commissions of the Free Churches chosen for this purpose has met on different occasions for mutual counsel. This conference appointed a sub-committee to draw up propositions alike of agreement and of difference; those so appointed have prepared the threefold statement which follows. At a subsequent meeting the conference gave a general approval to this statement and agreed to its publication on the following understanding:—

1. That for the exact wording the sub-committee should alone be responsible.

2. That the statement is offered not as a creed for subscription, or as committing in any way the churches thus represented, but as indicating a large measure of substantial agreement and also as affording material for further investigation and consideration.

#### PART I. A STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT ON MATTERS OF FAITH

We, who belong to different Christian Communion and are engaged in the discussion of questions of Faith and Order, desire to affirm our agreement upon certain foundation truths as the basis of a spiritual and rational creed and life for all mankind. We express them as follows:—

1. As Christians we believe that, while there is some knowledge of God to be found among all races of men and some measure of divine grace and help is present to all, a unique, progressive, and redemptive revelation of Himself was given by God to the

Hebrew people through the agency of inspired prophets, "in many parts and in many manners," and that this revelation reaches its culmination and completeness in One Who is more than a prophet, Who is the Incarnate Son of God, our Saviour and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

2. This distinctive revelation, accepted as the word of God, is the basis of the life of the Christian Church, and is intended to be the formative influence upon the mind and character of the individual believer.

3. This word of God is contained in the Old and New Testaments, and constitutes the permanent spiritual value of the Bible.

4. The root and centre of this revelation, as intellectually interpreted, consists in a positive and highly distinctive doctrine of God—His nature, character, and will. From this doctrine of God follows a certain sequence of doctrines concerning creation, human nature and destiny, sin, individual and racial, redemption through the incarnation of the Son of God and His atoning death and resurrection, the mission and operation of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity, the Church, the last things, and Christian life and duty, individual and social; all these cohere with and follow from this doctrine of God.

5. Since Christianity offers an historical revelation of God, the coherence and sequence of Christian doctrine involve a necessary synthesis of idea and fact such as is presented to us in the New Testament and in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds: and these Creeds, both in their statements of historical fact and in

their statements of doctrine, affirm essential elements of the Christian Faith as contained in Scripture, which the Church could never abandon without abandoning its basis in the word of God.

6. We hold that there is no contradiction between the acceptance of the miracles recited in the Creeds and the acceptance of the principle of order in nature as assumed in scientific inquiry, and we hold equally that the acceptance of miracles is not forbidden by the historical evidence candidly and impartially investigated by critical methods.

## PART II. A STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT ON MATTERS RELATING TO ORDER

With thankfulness to the Head of the Church for the spirit of unity He has shed abroad in our hearts, we go on to express our common conviction on the following matters:—

1. That it is the purpose of our Lord that believers in Him should be, as in the beginning they were, one visible society—His body with many members—which in every age and place should maintain the communion of saints in the unity of the Spirit, and should be capable of a common witness and a common activity.

2. That our Lord ordained, in addition to the preaching of His Gospel, the Sacraments of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper, as not only declaratory symbols, but also effective channels of His grace and gifts for the salvation and sanctification of men, and that these sacraments, being essentially social ordi-

nances, were intended to affirm the obligation of corporate fellowship as well as individual confession of Him.

3. That our Lord, in addition to the bestowal of the Holy Spirit in a variety of gifts and graces upon the whole Church, also conferred upon it by the selfsame Spirit a ministry of manifold gifts and functions, to maintain the unity and continuity of its witness and work.

### PART III. A STATEMENT OF DIFFERENCES IN RELATION TO MATTERS OF ORDER WHICH REQUIRE FURTHER STUDY AND DISCUSSION

Fidelity to our convictions and sincerity in their expression compel us to recognize that there still remain differences in respect of these matters :—

1. As regards the nature of this visible society, how far it involves uniformity or allows variety in polity, creed, and worship.

2. As regards the sacraments—the conditions, objective and subjective, in their ministration and reception on which their validity depends.

3. As regards the ministry—whether it derives its authority through an episcopal or a presbyterial succession, or through the community of believers, or by a combination of these.

We desire to report accordingly, and we submit :—

1. That this report be made known to the public.

2. That further inquiry should be directed to examining the implications in the matter agreed, and to the possibility of lessening or removing the differences by explanation.

(Signed) G. W. BATH : & WELL : (*Chairman*).  
E. WINTON :  
C. OXON :  
W. T. DAVISON.  
A. E. GARVIE.  
J. SCOTT LIDGETT.  
J. H. SHAKESPEARE.  
C. ANDERSON SCOTT.  
EUGENE STOCK.  
TISSINGTON TATLOW (*Hon. Sec.*).

*February, 1916.*

## APPENDIX B

### TOWARDS CHRISTIAN UNITY

*Second Interim Report of a Sub-Committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York's Committee and by Representatives of the English Free Churches' Commissions, in connection with the proposed World Conference on Faith and Order.*

A movement has been initiated in America by the Protestant Episcopal Church, which has been widely taken up by the Christian Churches in the United States, to prepare for a world-wide conference on faith and order with a view of promoting the visible unity of the Body of Christ on earth. In response to an appeal from those who are co-operating in America a committee was appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and commissions by the Free Churches to promote the same movement in England.

This joint conference has already issued a first interim report prepared by a joint sub-committee, consisting of:—(1) A statement of agreement on matters of faith; (2) A statement of agreement on matters relating to order; (3) A statement of differences in relation to matters of order which require further study and discussion.

In further pursuit of the main purpose the sub-committee was re-appointed and enlarged. After mature and prolonged consideration it is hereby issuing its Second Interim Report under the direction of the conference as a whole, but on the understanding that the members of the sub-committee alone are to be held responsible for the substance of the document.

In issuing our Second Interim Report we desire to prevent possible misconceptions regarding our intentions. We are engaged, not in formulating any basis of reunion for Christendom, but in preparing for the consideration of such a basis at the projected conference on faith and order. We are exploring the ground in order to discover the ways of approach to the questions to be considered that seem most promising and hopeful. In our first report we were not attempting to draw up a creed for subscription, but desired to affirm our agreement upon certain foundation truths as the basis of a spiritual and rational creed and life for all mankind in Christ Jesus the Lord. It was a matter of profound gratitude to God that we found ourselves so far in agreement. No less grateful were we that, even as regards matters relating to order, we were able to hold certain common convictions, though in regard to these we were forced to recognize differences of interpretation. We felt deeply, however, that we could not let the matter rest there; but that we must in conference seek to understand one another better, in order to discover if, even on the questions on which we seemed to



differ most, we might not come nearer to one another.

1. In all our discussions we were guided by two convictions from which we could not escape, and would not, even if we could.

It is the purpose of our Lord that believers in Him should be one visible society, and this unity is essential to the purpose of Christ for His Church and for its effective witness and work in the world. The conflict among Christian nations has brought home to us with a greater poignancy the disastrous results of the divisions which prevail among Christians, inasmuch as they have hindered that growth of mutual understanding which it should be the function of the Church to foster, and because a Church which is itself divided cannot speak effectively to a divided world.

The visible unity of believers which answers to our Lord's purpose must have its source and sanction, not in any human arrangements, but in the will of the One Father, manifested in the Son, and effected through the operation of the Spirit; and it must express and maintain the fellowship of His people with one another in Him. Thus the visible unity of the Body of Christ is not adequately expressed in the co-operation of the Christian Churches for moral influence and social service, though such co-operation might with great advantage be carried much further than it is at present; it could only be fully realized through com-

munity of worship, faith, and order, including common participation in the Lord's Supper. This would be quite compatible with a rich diversity in life and worship.

2. In suggesting the conditions under which this visible unity might be realized we desire to set aside for the present the abstract discussion of the origin of the Episcopate historically, or its authority doctrinally; and to secure for that discussion when it comes, as it must come, at the conference, an atmosphere congenial not to controversy, but to agreement. This can be done only by facing the actual situation in order to discover if any practical proposals could be made that would bring the Episcopal and Non-Episcopal Communion nearer to one another. Further, the proposals are offered not as a basis for immediate action, but for the sympathetic and generous consideration of all the Churches.

The first fact which we agree to acknowledge is that the position of Episcopacy in the greater part of Christendom as the recognized organ of the unity and continuity of the Church is such that the members of the Episcopal Churches ought not to be expected to abandon it in assenting to any basis of reunion.

The second fact which we agree to acknowledge is that there are a number of Christian Churches not accepting the Episcopal order which have been used by the Holy Spirit in His work of enlightening the world, converting sinners, and perfecting saints. They

came into being through reaction from grave abuses in the Church at the time of their origin, and were led in response to fresh apprehensions of divine truth to give expression to certain types of Christian experience, aspiration, and fellowship, and to secure rights of the Christian people which had been neglected or denied.

In view of these two facts, if the visible unity so much desired within the Church, and so necessary for the testimony and influence of the Church in the world, is ever to be realized, it is imperative that the Episcopal and Non-Episcopal Communion shall approach one another, not by the method of human compromise, but in correspondence with God's own way of reconciling differences in Christ Jesus. What we desire to see is not grudging concession, but a willing acceptance for the common enrichment of the united Church of the wealth distinctive of each.

Looking as frankly and as widely as possible at the whole situation, we desire, with a due sense of responsibility, to submit for the serious consideration of all the parts of a divided Christendom what seem to us the necessary conditions of any possibility of reunion.

1. That continuity with the historic Episcopate should be effectively preserved.

2. That in order that the rights and responsibilities of the whole Christian community in the government of the Church may be adequately recognized, the Episcopate should

re-assume a constitutional form, both as regards the method of the election of the bishop as by clergy and people, and the method of government after election. It is perhaps necessary that we should call to mind that such was the primitive ideal and practice of Episcopacy, and it so remains in many Episcopal Communion to-day.

3. That acceptance of the fact of Episcopacy and not any theory as to its character should be all that is asked for. We think that this may be the more easily taken for granted as the acceptance of any such theory is not now required of ministers of the Church of England. It would no doubt be necessary before any arrangement for corporate reunion could be made to discuss the exact functions which it may be agreed to recognize as belonging to the Episcopate ; but we think this can be left to the future.

The acceptance of Episcopacy on these terms should not involve any Christian community in the necessity of disowning its past, but should enable all to maintain the continuity of their witness and influence as heirs and trustees of types of Christian thought, life, and order, not only of value to themselves but of value to the Church as a whole. Accordingly we hope and desire that each of these Communion would bring its own distinctive contribution, not only to the common life of the Church, but also to its methods of organization, and that all that is true in the experience and testimony of the uniting Communion would be conserved to the Church. Within such a recovered unity

we should agree in claiming that the legitimate freedom of prophetic ministry should be carefully preserved; and in anticipating that many customs and institutions which have been developed in separate communities may be preserved within the larger unity of which they have come to form a part.

We have carefully avoided any discussion of the merits of any polity, or any advocacy of one form in preference to another. All we have attempted is to show how reunion might be brought about, the conditions of the existing Churches, and the convictions held regarding these questions by their members being what they are. As we are persuaded that it is on these lines, and these alone, that the subject can be approached with any prospect of any measure of agreement, we do earnestly ask the members of the Churches to which we belong to examine carefully our conclusions and the facts on which they are based, and to give them all the weight that they deserve.

In putting forward these proposals we do so because it must be felt by all good-hearted Christians as an intolerable burden to find themselves permanently separated in respect of religious worship and communion from those in whose characters and lives they recognize the surest evidences of the indwelling Spirit; and because, as becomes increasingly evident, it is only as a body, praying, taking counsel, and acting together, that the Church can hope to appeal to men as the Body of Christ, that is Christ's visible organ and instrument in the world, in which the spirit

of brotherhood and of love as wide as humanity finds effective expression.

(Signed) G. W. BATH: and WELL: (*Chairman*).  
E. WINTON:  
C. OXON:  
W. T. DAVISON.  
A. E. GARVIE.  
H. L. GOUDGE.  
J. SCOTT LIDGETT.  
W. B. SELBIE.  
J. H. SHAKESPEARE.  
EUGENE STOCK.  
WILLIAM TEMPLE.  
TISSINGTON TATLOW (*Hon. Sec.*).  
H. G. WOOD.

*March, 1918.*

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### III

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION—PROPOSALS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

*My Brethren of the Clergy and the Laity,*

Without any preface, without any tarrying over matters which essentially belong to a Bishop's visitation, I propose to speak to you to-day about the maintenance of religious education in schools both elementary and secondary and in training colleges for teachers.

I am doing this because a forward movement in education is being inaugurated of which the Education Bill now before Parliament is only the first instalment, which directly or indirectly will affect religious education (though the present Bill does not affect the existing settlement directly), and the Government are understood to be anxious for an agreement if possible between the different religious bodies as to the lines of re-settlement, so far as religious education goes; and it is obvious that this agreement must, if it is to be worth much, include the organized body of teachers.

Education is the process of training the faculties, especially of the young, to enable them intelligently to live their life and correspond with their opportunities. And, plainly, if we believe in God, the most important function of education is to train the young to correspond with the purpose of God, so far as we can know that. And further, if we believe in Christ as the revealer of God and the redeemer of men, the most important function is to train them to understand how Christ would have them think and live. This is religious education. It should colour and give character to the whole of education, but it also requires, as an important part of the whole, specific instruction in the principles of the Christian religion. Now it is the Christian Church which alone has the commission to give this instruction. But as unhappily the Church is divided, and there are among our citizens many different bodies of Christians and others who are not Christians at all, towards all of whom the modern State must behave impartially, Churchmen have formulated the principle that in the schools of the State children should be brought up impartially in the form of religion preferred by their parents. This principle, however,



though we have reiterated it for many years, has never been in fact accepted or applied—mainly because it must be confessed that the mass of English parents are strangely indifferent to the amount or character of the religious teaching given to their children. What has happened is this. The religious bodies that were jealous to maintain schools in which the Christian faith as they believe it could be freely taught have been allowed to uphold the schools built by their own money, and within certain limits to add to them, within the State system of education. Thus we have Church schools and Roman Catholic schools called “non-provided schools,” because the State has not built them, in which full religious instruction of definite types has been freely given; while the “provided” schools (except in the case of the Jewish schools which are anomalous) have been restricted to giving what is called “undenominational” religious instruction (under the Cowper-Temple clause) which on the whole was supposed to satisfy the requirements of Nonconformists, and not of Nonconformists only but of the population generally which shows no very definite religious preferences. Churchmen in the past have felt the injustice and unsatisfactoriness of this system.

Its injustice, because they have been rated like other citizens for the provided schools, and at the same time have been called upon to provide their own schools; and its unsatisfactoriness because they have felt that the "undenominational" religious teaching provided by the State rests on no intelligent principle and provides no sound basis for training in religion. But they have not been content with complaining of what they cannot remedy. They have directed their main efforts towards maintaining the Church schools in being and in efficiency, and their efforts and struggles, political and financial, have been very largely successful. But we are now entering upon a new era of educational development, and I feel it my duty to ask you to consider how we are likely to stand in this new era.

1. I cannot doubt that, when the war is over, very large demands for structural enlargement and alteration will be made upon non-provided schools, if they are in any way to keep pace with the provided schools; and those demands it will be found very difficult to meet, though in this particular diocese the Vere Bayne Benefaction gives us a great advantage. But, what is much more important, I feel no doubt that the Education Bill now before

the country, though it does not directly affect the religious situation, will affect it indirectly. The clause 28 about central schools is very important. We foresee the assignment of certain existing schools, and the building of others, as central schools in country districts, as well as in towns, not only as continuation schools for young people between 14 and 18, but also for the elder children under 14. I foresee the likelihood (owing to the dearth especially of male teachers) of our village schools becoming schools for the younger children under a mistress, while the elder children go to the central schools, which I suppose will be, in the vast majority of cases, provided schools. It seems to me that *districts* will tend to take the place of *parishes* as the area of education for the elder children; that, as I say, the district or central schools will be mostly provided schools; and that this almost inevitable change will "knock the bottom" out of the present system. It will be comparatively little use, for instance, having Church schools for children up to twelve, if when their faculties are awakening they are to go off to provided schools.

This does not mean that I would have the Church oppose the present Bill; nor do I

think the Bill has any intention of injuring Church schools. On the contrary, the development which it promotes is, I think, wholly right, and the injury which it is likely to inflict upon Church schools inevitable. Nothing would be more disastrous than that we should oppose a right development, because, though our motives were right, the effect of our opposition would be to cause the Church to be and to appear as an opponent of real educational progress. Nevertheless the present situation is seriously threatened in our villages.

2. We are in a weak position because, while we have stood for the principle of parents' rights, the number of parents who are prepared to demand any particular kind of religious instruction for their children is lamentably small. There would, I fear, be such opposition to any scheme of educational reconstruction based upon a "creed register" (or the expression of a preference for this or that religious teaching by the parents when the child was sent to school) as makes it highly unlikely that such a basis will be accepted. We must confess that the claim for parents' rights has not been made good among the population generally.

3. As the number of provided (undenominational) schools relatively to non-provided (denominational) schools is constantly increasing and likely to increase, so also the number of teachers who have been trained in undenominational training colleges, relatively to those who have been trained in Church training colleges, is constantly increasing. And nothing could well be worse than the present position of religious teaching in secondary schools generally, and in "undenominational" training colleges. Thus, the number of teachers who have received little or no training to equip them as religious teachers is lamentably large, and without some radical alteration is likely to increase. And yet the religious character and equipment of the teacher is the key to the whole situation.

I think we are forced to recognize that the mere teaching of formulas to children, even though the formulas are the right formulas, has extraordinarily little permanent religious effect. The atmosphere of the school is all important. But the atmosphere depends upon the teacher, and no teaching or learning of formulas is of value without the atmosphere, and the goodwill in teacher and learner, behind the formula.

Indeed, our younger teachers and educational experts go further than this, even when they are strong Churchmen themselves. They deprecate the use of formulas at all for the younger children, and demand a very limited use of them even for the elder. Whether they are right about this or not, I am sure they are right in maintaining that the teacher is of more importance than the formula or the syllabus or the system of inspection.

4. We have not as a Church taken sufficient counsel with the teachers. They have become a very powerful interest in the State and they look to the State to protect them. And though the Church acknowledges the immense debt which it owes to them, and though many of them are themselves keen Churchmen and Churchwomen, yet we cannot look to them, as a profession, to be favourable to the existing system of denominational schools. I will not pause to inquire into the causes of this. But I fear it is true as regards the organized profession of school teachers.

5. It cannot be denied that while a great advance has been made in educational methods and in the study of the child, we clergy, as a class, have fallen behind in educational standing. The teachers do not look to us

generally as masters in the art of teaching. Far from it. I trust and pray that we may reform ourselves in this respect. But undoubtedly at the present moment we enter the new era of educational progress ill equipped and little considered as educationalists.

These five considerations force us to recognize that the position of those who in the past have fought the battle of Church schools is at present seriously weakened. Now we are led to expect that the present Education Bill is to be followed by further educational reconstruction in the course of which the Government will seek to find a fresh settlement of what is called "the religious difficulty," and it is specially urged upon us that we should find an "agreed scheme" as between Churchmen and Nonconformists to present to the Government. Indeed the relations between Churchmen and Nonconformists have greatly improved, and it is well worth reconsidering the matter with open minds, remembering, however, that the teachers are at least as important a force in the matter as either Churchmen or Nonconformists.

1. First, then, I am inclined to believe that, as regards the religious teaching in provided schools, we could arrive at an understanding

which would greatly improve it. The new principle would be to base the religious teaching in provided schools, not upon such a statutory provision as the Cowper-Temple clause (which should be repealed), but upon agreement between the different religious bodies. Suppose we had established by statute Interdenominational Councils (say one Council for a district covering the area of three counties), with a Central Council representative of them all, the majority in each Council being elected by the religious bodies, the minority consisting of representatives of the teachers, the local educational authorities, and perhaps the universities—suppose these Councils to be authorized by statute to direct and supervise as freely as possible the religious teaching in provided schools, at first only permissively, that is wherever a local educational authority was willing to entrust the work to them—I think you would get in such interdenominational control a basis for religious teaching which, though it would not give Churchmen all that they desire, would give us something immensely better, on the whole, and more tolerable in principle than our present undenominationalism. And I am led to believe that Nonconformists might welcome the proposal; for a greatly increasing number



of them feel, as much as we do, how profoundly unsatisfactory is the "undenominational" teaching in most of our provided schools. Moreover, I think, it is likely that one local education authority after another would be glad to use the services of these Councils, if they were established.

2. I hope that the object of these Councils would be to give the utmost freedom to the teachers. But the matter of chief importance is to provide training for the teachers. Let it, then, be provided by statute that reasonable time should be allotted in every State-provided training college for religious teaching, and let this teaching be under the control of an Interdenominational Council. It would not be obligatory on any student to receive it. But those who received it and profited by it sufficiently might be given a certificate of competence to give religious teaching.

3. I should wish to see it made obligatory on every school, elementary or secondary, which is in receipt of a Government grant, that it should assign a reasonable time every week to religious instruction, and, in order to enable the same teacher of certified competence to give religious instruction to a number of classes, I would abolish the present statutable require-

ment that the religious instruction in elementary schools should be given only in the first or the last hour. The greater freedom you give in this respect, the less need would there be to require all the staff to be ready to give the religious lesson. There could be specialists in religious instruction, as in other subjects, who would teach several classes by turns.<sup>1</sup>

All this only concerns schools which are now "undenominational." But the increasing majority of the children of the country will be educated in such schools; and it would in my judgement be a very great gain if they could become interdenominational, and be controlled not by a merely negative statute, but by the free judgement of an interdenominational council, by which, so far as common consent could be arrived at, the real religious

<sup>1</sup> It is a reasonable demand which we must make upon the teachers to recognize that in the present condition of religious unsettlement it cannot be taken for granted that every teacher can teach religion. The existing unsettlement concerns the most fundamental articles of faith—belief in God and in Christ—at least as much as matters of difference between different bodies of Christians. Great numbers of our young men and women are so uncertain about their own beliefs that they cannot rightly be teachers of religion. They recognize this themselves. What is essential is that we should devise some method of distinguishing those who can rightly teach religion from those who at present cannot, without the latter losing in professional status or prospects. I see no other way for doing this than by recognizing religious teaching as a special subject, requiring special qualifications.

feeling of the district could be given the direction of the religious teaching. On this basis I think we could hope to get in the provided schools a kind of religious instruction which, while it would inevitably fall short of what instructed Churchmen want, would give us a basis on which further teaching in church and Sunday school could be built. It would be on the whole a most substantial gain, while the treating of secondary schools and training colleges on the same basis as the elementary schools would also represent an enormous advantage; and the mere fact that Churchmen and Nonconformists had reached agreement, and their agreement had been ratified by Government, would remove what is at present a very real cause of scandal to religion. I acknowledge that the public judgement which condemns religious bodies for "squabbling over education" is often ignorant and undiscriminating; but we must be all of us anxious to remove what causes widespread offence. I think it is well worth trying along these lines to obtain agreement and to improve the religious teaching in provided schools. Of course the conscience clause would still be maintained.

4. Now we come to Church schools and

Church training colleges. We should throw all our weight into maintaining the Church training colleges and the Church schools in areas where there is more than one kind of school. In this matter we should fight side by side with the Roman Catholics, and with good hope of success. I think the principle of a variety of types of school within the educational system on the whole tends to commend itself to educationalists, and, where there can be more than one type of school, it is not likely to be attacked with any success. And the federation of Church training colleges under Government sanction, which (I believe) will be secured, will give us a great advantage in maintaining them in efficiency.

5. Now we come to what we call the "single school areas." And first the areas where there is now only a provided school, at present giving the "undenominational" teaching. There we should claim liberty for any group of parents to secure for their children, inside or outside the building, the teaching proper to their own denomination to be given by a properly certificated teacher, and, if within the building, then (if possible) by one of the school staff. We shall recognize that the indifference of most parents in the

matter of religious instruction makes "parents' rights" a weak foundation on which to build a whole system. But there exist groups of parents who care, and we must be zealous to maintain their rights.

6. In single school areas where there is no school at present but a Church school, this school during the school hours must (it is claimed) become a provided school, though with the statutable requirement that the religious teaching required by the trust deed, i.e. denominational religious teaching, shall be regularly given as well as the interdenominational teaching. When the school has become during the school hours a provided school, the appointment of head teacher must of course be made by the local education authority. Under the special circumstances I hope that this provision need not apply to the assistant teacher. He, or she, might still be appointed by the managers.

I am very well aware that this last proposal is one which many of those who listen to me are likely to resent profoundly; but I am satisfied that it is the price that must be paid for the advantages which are embodied in the previous proposals, the advantages which lie (1) in the improvement of the religious teaching

in provided schools, (2) in the obtaining facilities for denominational teaching in districts where there are only provided schools or insufficient accommodation in other schools, and (3) last but not least in the avoidance of another period of bitter religious strife, with all its attendant scandal.

I have been led to hope that such a scheme as I have outlined (which is of course by no means original and in no sense my own) if it were taken all together might commend itself to our Nonconformist friends and to the teachers, but only if it is taken all together. And I believe that on the whole, taking the interests of religious instruction as a whole, it will promote the cause of religion in the schools better than any other scheme for which we have the chance of securing acceptance. I hope that no one of you who is disposed to dislike the proposals as a whole will fail to face the consideration which I have put first, viz. that I think the future development of education in rural districts, if the present Education Bill is put upon the Statute Book, is likely to deprive the elder children of the greater part of the advantages of the present system.

On the whole I am prepared to commend

these proposals to you and even to press them upon your favourable consideration. I do this specially because I think it is of the highest importance to make the best use of our present very friendly relations with the Non-conformists, and of what is a quite changed attitude on the part of many of them towards the existing system of undenominational schools. I do it also because it appears to be self-evident that to persist in our policy of sixteen years ago is to fight a losing battle—a battle in which the substantial victory throughout the country as a whole, both in towns and villages, will lie with “undenominationalism” in the old sense and with its defects unmodified.

## IV

# RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“For this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”—1 *Thess.* ii. 13.

The subject about which I am to speak is that of Religion in Public Schools,<sup>1</sup> and I suppose that if we begin to think about this subject we feel rising in our minds a sense of satisfaction and of thankfulness mingled with dissatisfaction and anxiety; and we probably find it hard to correlate the two. On the one hand satisfaction. Our inmost hearts glow with a sense of pride and thankfulness as we contemplate the contribution which, during the tremendous strain of this war, our public schools have made, and that in a spirit which we could not for a moment doubt to be a

<sup>1</sup> A sermon preached in S. Martin-in-the-Fields, on November 24, 1917. It was one of a series on Religion in our Public Schools. It was unwritten, and is produced from a short-hand report, as will be apparent to the reader.



religious spirit, the spirit of self-devotion, of duty, of unselfishness, of goodheartedness, with a total freedom from anything like self-advertisement. As I say, our hearts glow with gratitude, thankfulness, and admiration.

And that is so, so long as we are content with what might be called natural religion, the religion of patriotism, the religion of the "gentleman," the "religion of the sensible man."

Then, on the other hand, we ask ourselves, Supposing that it had been amongst young men of this kind that our Lord had come and preached, saying the same things, or the same in spirit, as He did, in fact, say in Judaea and Galilee, making the same tremendous supernatural, supernatural claim—"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"—if we imagine, I say, the coming of our Lord among these young men in word and power, with the same claim as of old, can we feel that He would have found many disciples? I cannot answer the question in the affirmative.

Or again, if I go a little lower down and think of the claim which S. Paul would make for Church membership; if I think of what he understood by being a Christian, in the way both of faith and of duty towards God

and towards man ; and if I ask myself, Would he profess any kind of satisfaction with the standards of our young men ? I cannot give an affirmative answer. They have undoubtedly a deep sense of their duty towards their country, of what membership in home and country and class and school and college means. But have they any such sense of what it is to be a member of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, whether in the way of hold on the corporate faith, or loyalty to the fellowship, or apprehension of grace and of the sacraments ? Again, of course, I cannot give a satisfactory answer, or anything like a satisfactory answer, to these questions.

I suppose that is the reason why these lectures are being given. That is the reason why I have been asked to come here to speak to you about religion in the public schools.

Now I want to begin by asking you to recall that an evil which is radical and profound is not one which admits or can admit of any easy solution. That is the first point that I want to make. We are living in an age in which the critical faculty far outweighs the constructive, when we can see the faults of what exists and expose them, and see and appreciate all kinds and sides of truth very much more

effectively than we can build systems which can commend themselves constructively. A critical age is not more intellectual, nor does it exhibit more intellectual power than a constructive age; but it is different. The great power of a S. Thomas Aquinas or of a Richard Hooker to construct a great intellectual system which takes account of all the known facts, and which commends itself to a great circle of people, and becomes their adequate intellectual expression — that sort of constructive power we do not appear to possess, at any rate, in any large measure.

It is a critical age, an age which is profoundly respectful to truth in one sense and not in another; but, any way, profoundly respectful to the claim of the critical intellect in every kind of department. It is very easy to recall to your minds instances, the truth of which you would recognize at once, to explain what I mean by a critical age. Think when a man turns to-day from criticism to construction, how poor a figure he often cuts. Mr. Wells was attractive so long as he was occupied in ridiculing the current religion of the Church and the bishops. We appreciated it thoroughly. But the moment arrives when he is bold enough to construct his own

religion; and then at once we see a great comparative failure of power: the criticism is so very much better than the construction. We see it to be so constantly to-day. I found myself recently in the presence of three or four people who were full of the usual criticisms of the Church arising out of the experience of the Army, and I happened to ask one of them, after I had been subjected to this fusilade for some time, what he would wish done in a certain case, what he would wish substituted for that to which he objected. He was bold enough to begin at once to explain what he would wish substituted; and then two or three of his fellow critics fell upon him unmercifully, and I was able to sit at ease for nearly an hour while they devoured one another.

These are instances which will bring to your mind the characteristic of our age, that undoubtedly the critical faculty is over-developed by comparison with the constructive. The result is that you get a vast number of people who never really make up their minds about religion. They are interested in religion; they read this, that, and the other; they are more or less conscious of what is said against this, that, or the other point of current reli-

gion; they are interested in new points of view; but they do not make up their minds—they remain uncommitted.

Of course, every now and then you see instances of a reaction, and people run off, on what, possibly, seem to us very inadequate grounds, to Rome, Spiritualism, or Christian Science, or to the Friends; but over a great area the temper of the time results in people not committing themselves. They are interested in religion, but they are uncommitted.

As this affects the whole atmosphere, so it affects the public schools. Ever since I have given any real thought to the subject—for the last forty years and more—I have seen this temper prevailing, and especially among our abler men. They have been unwilling to commit themselves—not merely to commit themselves in such a way as a man does who takes Holy Orders—but to commit themselves really in their own inner minds. They do not know exactly what they believe. They are almost contemptuous of Atheism or any positive negation of Christianity; but what they exactly believe they do not know.

It is from amongst our ablest men that the band of public schoolmasters is recruited, and so that temper prevails amongst *them*. It is

idle to speak as though it were possible to recruit our public schoolmasters altogether, or even mainly, from among those who possess a definite faith. This is to ignore the conditions of the problem ; it is to ignore the conditions of our time.

Or again, it is idle to suppose that the sceptical frame of mind does not affect the boys as it affects those who teach them, at any rate as they grow up to become senior boys and become conscious of the responsibility and delight of free life and free thinking. Especially is this true of the abler ones amongst them. You might have the most admirable teaching of the traditional faith at public schools, and it might be received in respectful silence ; but it would not get home, simply because the pupils would be full of what I will not call the spirit of revolt, but the spirit which refuses to commit itself.

You cannot even approach the consideration of the problem and its difficulties till you have got this quality of our age full in view.

Secondly, you have to keep in view the fact that this is an age which is mentally preoccupied in many directions. There have been many ages when there was very little for people to think about, over and above the requirements

of daily life, except either war or religion or art, when, moreover, art was the handmaid of religion. But of course those ages have long gone by, and the really constructive power of the generations immediately behind and surrounding us has gone in the direction of science and of the various forms of mechanical inventiveness. And it seems to me that if you ask boys to-day what they are really interested in and want to do, the enthusiasm is, in four cases out of five, for some kind of mechanical construction; they want to be engineers; they want to be in the stream, that fascinating stream, of mechanical power which has flowed out from the scientific discoveries of the generations immediately behind us.

You get, then, great mental preoccupation, partly, as I say, with science and the products of science, partly with art, partly with social developments, and now with war. If you approach any ordinary human being of an intelligent kind you are likely to find him or her more or less interested in religion; but if you begin to ask for that concentration of mind upon religion which normally is necessary in order to attain conviction or receive it, you find that that would be reckoned among the things that are impracticable and impossible. "Seek

first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," said our Lord: but that sort of concentration of mind, that "loving the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind" is extraordinarily difficult to our pre-occupied generation.

Thirdly, we have reached a time when the divisions in the Church, the divisions between Churches and the division of opinion inside the Church, have become nothing less than a positive scandal to the healthy and righteous conscience of mankind. No doubt it is partly our fault that these differences have been allowed to expose themselves so much to the disadvantage of the underlying unities; but the fact is so—they have become a positive offence to the conscience of men; and the authoritative message of religion, the tradition of reverence for the Word of God, is for the conscience of our generation largely rendered impossible by the sense they have of the discordant voices which are proclaiming different doctrines.

These, then, are three features in the situation so important that it is necessary to have them clearly in view. Very often I receive letters from people discussing this question of religion at the public schools, who seem to me to speak as if it were a matter which could be



dealt with by more or less definite remedies more or less easily procurable, or by particular reforms in method and practice. That is not the case. Our age is an age which renders anything like a corporate faith in divine things extraordinarily difficult to maintain, and where it is largely lost it is still more difficult to recover. There will be no quick remedy.

Our own judgement may lead us to desire, as indeed we ought to desire, the restoration in our part of the Church of corporate authority, the restoration to the Church of that power of self-government which ought never to have become alienated from it. And such a restoration would be accompanied by a fuller sense of the corporate life of the Church and of the authority of the Church over all its members. We may hope from the bottom of our hearts that, in the course of time, such a recovery of corporate authority would counter-balance the evils which belong to the sort of individualism which I have been describing; but that is a long process.

It is true also that there is a wonderful and deep movement towards reunion. In almost all parts of the Church there is a far deeper feeling of the guilt of division, and a quite new striving and yearning for a recovered unity in

the Spirit. But, again, the process of recovering visible unity is not easy ; it cannot be rapid in its action.

Thus I cannot give what is at first sight a hopeful message. I cannot myself resist the impression that the Church must enter upon a period of even profound humiliation. I think our old-established Church is going to be judged for its sins, and deserves it, and must not murmur. Therefore I cannot and do not expect rapid recovery from the evils which we deplore. Only "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth." Before now in the history of the world there have been destructive periods such as that in which we are now living. For example, the literature of the period immediately before the Reformation was almost as critical of the Church as our own generation. There was hardly anything noteworthy in its literature except one continual deploring of the scandals and abuses of the Church, one great call for the reform of the Church in its head and in its members. There followed a great catastrophe, a great revolt, and then a period of reconstruction. I ask myself whether something of that kind is not likely to occur again. Criticism cannot go any further. It must issue in revolt, failure, humiliation, judgement.

But, out of that, through that, on the other side of a social revolution perhaps, I ask myself whether there is not in the unexhausted purpose of God another period of reconstruction to be expected, religious as well as social. If so, do I not see clearly our duty to-day? We cannot alter the temper of our age; but we who feel the meaning and the nature of the traditional religion, we who feel the importance of handing on the word of God, can easily see what function we are to fulfil. We can concentrate and strengthen the believing body. Because the stronger, the more real, the more insistent the body which, through all times of judgement, looks forward into the future and maintains the bridge between the past and that which is to be, "turning the heart of the fathers towards the children, and the heart of the children towards their fathers," the less the perils of revolution, the greater the hope of the future which is to dawn.

That is my point, then. I have not tried to minimize the dangers of the moment. I have not been able to spread out before you the hopes of a rapid reconstruction, whether in our religious life in general, or in that particular department of it, which is only one department, the religious education in our public schools.

But I believe that there is actually nothing which is more worth doing than to concentrate or bring together all those who believe that only in Christ is the world's salvation: that there is none other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ: that God has expressed Himself in His word or message, and that it is catholic, for all nations, for all generations. Nothing is more worth doing than to bring together those who do believe thus about our most holy faith; and diligently to free the tradition of faith from accretions and corruptions and unreasonablenesses; so that, unimpeded and unimpaired, it may speak itself out through the times of confusion, and afterwards may be able to ring with a clear voice, and to maintain its clear grip on human hearts and minds in the age of reconstruction which is beyond.

Well, then, make up your minds first of all individually—as it must be individually—whether you do really believe that of which S. Paul speaks in the passage I have read to you as a sort of text for this address—that there has been a real utterance to men of a message of God which must be received in faith as a message of God—which was given in many parts and in many manners in times of old

through the prophets, but which, in the end of the ages, received its consummation and fulfilment in one who was more than a prophet, the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because that ye received from us the word of the message as—what indeed it is, no product of human brains, but—the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

I want you to think a good deal about that. Because, of course, you meet a great number of people who are always interested in religion, and are arriving at this or that religious notion as the conclusion of their own argument, the result of their own feeling, the expression of their own emotion, but who really have never yielded themselves up to something conceived of as a divine message, coherent, indissoluble, authoritative. And yet, beyond all manner of question, that is the whole conception of religion in the Bible. It comes from above—in response to human needs, in satisfaction of human inquiries, to liberate, not to suppress; but it is a message from above, and nothing can exceed the authoritativeness of our Lord's teaching; not by way of precise dogmas, but in that He came claiming to disclose and to reveal: "No man knoweth the Father save

the Son and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal him.”

Thus when the Apostles, after their experience of Christ, His death and resurrection, and the coming of His Spirit, came out into the world, when the young Church is seen starting on its career, there can be no possibility of question about one point. They believed the Church and its common life to be founded upon a message of God which must be received as a message of God. And the Church goes out on its great function, conceiving this to be its business, to carry down through the ages this message of God.

You see it there in the writings of the New Testament. You may question whether this or that is in the New Testament; and there are a great number of minor or subordinate questions about which you may argue for ever as to what is exactly the teaching of the New Testament; but there is a great body of coherent truth about God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, about atonement, about redemption, about the mission of the Spirit, about the Church and the sacraments, about the end and destiny of man, about his sin and about his recovery—a coherent, indiscerptible body of truth which

found expression in the Baptismal Creed, or in what men speak of as "the articles of the faith"; an "article" meaning a tiny limb, an indiscerptible part of an organic whole.

That is the traditional message of the Church. It was, as we know, both corrupted and unduly enlarged. It admitted of all sorts of partly disintegrating, partly unduly expansive influences. It became a one-sided development, excessive in its claims, in the hands of the great Church of Rome; and this in turn led to a great revolution and to various reconstructions of which, in our own land, there was one by means of which the Church of England as we now know it developed out of its mediaeval conditions. This Church of England makes a particular kind of claim to maintain the ancient tradition in creed and orders and sacraments, but also to maintain it with a great restriction on excessive sacerdotalism, leaving the individual to do very much for himself, and glorying in an open Bible and the appeal to history; but none the less claiming to maintain that faith once for all delivered, that mould of teaching from which the minds of men are to receive their divine impress. So we stand.

Now I challenge you. I know not exactly what kind of people I am talking to, but I speak to you as representing the British public as I have known it. I ask you: How many of you have ever really applied your best intellectual abilities—I do not say to study this or that interesting view of religion, or to arguing about religion, especially in its more disputable and controversial points—but to the study of the coherent doctrine of the New Testament—to make yourself see that the New Testament is not a number of disconnected documents, but contains one living principle which intellectually expresses itself in a series of propositions about God and about man, but remains none the less one real and living principle, the mind of Christ about God and about man?

Every now and then, though very much less often than I could wish, I have succeeded in persuading some one really to take the pains to study this Word of God. There are books which can be easily named,<sup>1</sup> written from

<sup>1</sup> I was referring to such books as *The Faith of the Gospel*, by Dr. Mason (Longmans); *The Creed of a Churchman*, by the Bishop of Peterborough (Dr. Woods) and others (Longmans); *The Religion of the Church*, by the Bishop of Oxford (Mowbrays); *The Creed of the Christian*, by the Bishop of Oxford (Wells Gardner & Co). The point in each case is that the book should be read *through*, so that a sense of the coherence of ideas is secured.



more or less different points of view, but in substantial agreement, books of manageable compass, which can give you a connected account of the faith. And now and again, when I have persuaded people to turn away from particular points of controversy and to study afresh this coherent truth, it has had an amazing effect upon their minds.

Well, I say, make up your minds whether you do really believe that Word of God, whether you can from your heart associate yourself with that freedom of mind for which S. Paul gives thanks in the case of the Thessalonian Christians, who received that Divine Message, that Word of God, received it as it is in truth, not as the word of man more or less eloquently expounded or approved by this or that person, but as the Word of God; because this decision will make a fundamental difference to your view of life.

Granted this, it is of the greatest possible importance that you should also pay attention to truth received from all points of view. There has been a gigantic, wholly revolutionary, contribution from science which has made us familiar with a wholly new view of nature and of the methods of development of life, and which has antiquated a whole body

of the traditional language about nature of which the Bible, like all other ancient literature, is full: for the Bible was not given to teach us science. I say there has been a wholly fresh development, both of historical study and of physical science, which has made it—I speak quite frankly—certain that a great deal in the Old Testament, written in the forms of history, is not strictly history at all, but presents us with deep spiritual truths in the form of mythical story and legend, gradually passing into the form of strict or literal history.

I cannot stop to prove all this, or to make it probable to your minds; but I must affirm that one immense evil in the field of religion has been the confusion between divine faith on the one hand, and on the other the sort of credulity which makes it almost a virtue not to inquire, and has put a sort of ban on the free life of the intellect, a ban which I believe to be wholly alien from the Christian religion, which, in its true nature, is totally without obscurantism, and loves light for its own sake from whatever quarter it comes.

You can hardly exaggerate the disaster it has been in the education of boys and girls that they have been taught to associate with

religion ideas about the Creation, about the Flood, about the beginnings of our race, which it is practically certain that, when they grow up to read the literature of their time, they will find to be false, and will reject without a shadow of a doubt as alien to the whole trend of philosophy, science, and history as now understood.

I would say, then, make up your minds now. It is difficult to reverse traditional judgements in religion, but you have got to do it. You have got to get rid of everything that makes the sound of religion irrational and which associates it with bygone habits of thought in regard to science and history.

So, again, with regard to human aspirations. It is one of the most bewildering of the phenomena of our time that there is arising an estimate of human life which is so nearly Christian as that which underlies the aspirations of the Labour Movement, or, generally, of Social Reform; an estimate of the infinite value of the individual soul; an estimate of social obligation, of social duty; a criticism of the idea of competition as the basis of human life and the sole motive of human progress—all this, Christian as it is in spirit, arising very largely from non-Christian, and

almost wholly from non-ecclesiastical, sources. If you examine it in its central meaning you find that it seems to come out of the very heart of Christianity. And we ask ourselves why the Church ever failed to teach it. How can we ever have been so blind as to admit the spirit of the world into the whole of our social teaching, and eject, or put altogether under a bushel, what ought to have been recognized as the "sincere milk of the word"?

You see what I mean; we want to maintain the great tradition of the Word of God. If so, we must purge it of everything that is intellectually false, of everything that gives the germinating intellect of the young an excuse for saying "This is a ridiculous, old-wives' fable." Also we must look out upon all the glowing aspirations of men and recognize the movement of the Spirit of God in the general heart of man, and thus seek to commend our doctrine to the conscience of every one in the sight of God.

In closing I would apply this to the particular problem of the schools. I have ranged over a wider field than that of this particular problem because I think it is futile to deal with the problem of religious education in public schools

as if it were isolated from the whole religious problem in the intellectual life of the nation. But speaking to you as representatives of parents, and particularly because you are parents, I would say that you have got to make up your minds; you have got to know what you believe, and, in a measure, why you believe it. And you must make up your minds whether you believe in that sense in which S. Paul says "No man can say Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." It is no conclusion of an interesting argument; no outcome of reading an interesting article; it is a deep conviction rooted in the mind that here you are in the presence of something divine which controls you, commands you, absorbs you.

If that be so, then, estimate highly your duty as parents; because, believe me, the tendency in the matter of religion to turn the school-master into the professional parent is disastrous. There is nothing so deep in human nature as the influence of the home.

We have had a miserable experience. We made a great deal in the Church of England of the teaching of religion in the National schools. We did quite right, only we made one vast omission. We did not notice, as we might have noticed even beforehand, that no

teaching, however good, in the school would ever really penetrate to the core of the child's life if it were dissociated from the influences of the home. You know how much can be learned by heart by children, and even be appropriated on the surface of their mind, and yet vanish with extraordinary rapidity when they go out into life ; but it is not so with the influences of the home. They are far profounder. That is most surely retained by the child which promotes most reaction of his own faculties : and the reaction of the child's life is intensest and most cordial and personal there, in the heart of the home.

The religion he learns from his father and mother and associates with the life that he loves best he may rebel against in the exuberance of youth : he may resent it when it lays restraint upon him ; but it will be deep in him, and the chances are that he will come back to it. Never imagine that the parent can lay upon any other person the primary obligation for religious teaching. Never imagine that there can be in the schools any substitute for the religious teaching of the home.

But if that be the parents' duty, then parents also have rights. You know on how many platforms we clergymen and the political

patrons of the Church of England have talked about parents' rights in connection with education; and you know, on the whole, what a vacuous cry it has been because it represents so extraordinarily small an actual claim. But it ought to represent a great reality. For instance, there is no more legitimate claim in the world than that of parents who are Churchmen and desire that their children should be brought up in the knowledge and fellowship of the Church—that the preparation of their children for Confirmation should be in the hands of those who really believe the Church's faith. In a world such as ours you would not wish boys to be exempted from any kind of good influence, coming from people of any sort of creed or variety of belief. You will make the best of the world: you will expect your boys to be influenced by people of all sorts. But when it comes to their preparation for Confirmation, and for their first Communion, you ought surely to insist that that particular preparation shall be in the hands of one who believes the Church's faith, and who, if he is not himself an officer of the Church, at any rate understands the function and message of the Church.

I must end. I hope you see my point. It is

that you cannot isolate this problem of the religious teaching in the public schools from the general intellectual conditions of the country ; that you cannot expect it to be easy to build up the life of corporate faith in a sceptical or critical atmosphere such as is undoubtedly the intellectual atmosphere of our country now ; and that you cannot alter the atmosphere easily or rapidly. But you can minister to the great hope of the future by maintaining the Christian tradition ; and parents have a pre-eminent responsibility for being themselves intelligent in their apprehension of the faith, intelligent in their capacity for teaching their children in the ways of love, and reasonable and persistent in their demands upon the schoolmaster to whom is entrusted the care of their children, that at least the preparation for Confirmation — the central training of the young mind in the knowledge of its faith—shall be in the hands of those who believe that faith.

We have a great tradition entrusted to us. Whatever happens in the future, whatever humiliation or catastrophe the Church of England may be required to pass through, I cannot bring myself to doubt that the principles for which the Church of England in the providence



of God has been brought to stand are principles that are vital and everlasting.

This liberal Catholicism, this maintenance of the ancient tradition and the ancient system, which insists at the same time on expecting the individual member to do much for himself, which curbs the excesses of sacerdotalism and authority, which is scriptural and historical and a religion for free men—that I believe the world will ever need ; and I can conceive no higher, more sacred, vocation than that of ministering to the maintenance of that tradition for the generations that are yet to come.

## V

# THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS AND THE MISSION OF THE SPIRIT

“No one can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit.”—  
1 *Cor.* xii. 3.<sup>1</sup>

The action of God for the redemption of mankind recorded in the Bible is made up of many parts or moments, and each moment of the divine action is meant to produce its special impression on our minds and to elicit a certain reaction of will and feeling on our part. But in fact the impression alike of the whole and of its parts becomes blurred by familiarity; or, if not this, the impression of the whole becomes distorted by undue emphasis upon some one of its elements. The order of the Church's seasons is meant to counteract these tendencies. The whole order is meant to counteract the tendency to partiality. And each particular day of observance is meant to challenge us to feel and will, in view of the particular phase

<sup>1</sup> A sermon preached in Great S. Mary's before the University of Cambridge on Sunday, May 12, 1918.

of the divine action commemorated, as if now for the first time we were being made acquainted with the wisdom and goodness of God. Thus the promise of the divine kingdom, the birth of the Christ, His manifestation, His teaching, His redemptive acts, His passion, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, the coming of the Spirit, the resulting revelation of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are each made to pass before us year by year, represented to us in the cycle of seasons, to stimulate anew the reaction of will and feeling proper to it. Thus this particular Sunday—the Sunday which intervenes between Ascension Day and Pentecost—has its own special function in recalling to us a particular moment of the divine education of the Apostles.

It was the end of a great experience through which they had passed, “beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that Jesus was received up,” and the summary of this experience was that “God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.” In this conviction they “worshipped him” whom they had lost and “were continually in the Temple blessing God.” But all the time they were conscious that this completed experience would have been wholly in vain had it not

been the prelude to an experience still to come. The Lordship of Jesus was to express itself in power. It was to be a Gospel to all the world, and they were its appointed messengers. But for their mission they were at present quite unequipped. They were as empty vessels waiting to be filled—engines at present without motive power. Therefore they looked up in adoration to Christ who had gone from them into His glory expecting to be filled with power from Him by the coming of the Spirit of God whom He had promised to send upon them. Thus they were like mountain walkers who have made acquaintance with the features of one valley, and, leaving it by some lofty pass, look back as they reach the top to recall all their well-remembered experiences. But it is but a few steps onwards and they are gazing down into a new district of which at present they know nothing—a new valley broadening out into a rich plain, presenting against the remote skyline the domes and towers of the distant city which is their goal.

Their retrospect expressed itself in the summary conviction that "Jesus is Lord." It is quite unhistorical to suggest that this rudimentary creed of the first Christian Church was really akin to the faith of the "mystery

cults," whose votaries worshipped the "Lord Hermes" or the "Lord Serapis." For in fact it antedates in the persons of the first disciples in Jerusalem all contact with those cults, and the Gospels give us unmistakably the true account of its origin. Long before the Church began to develop the theological implication of calling Jesus "Lord," the name expressed in the briefest form the whole experience of Him through which the twelve had passed. They had become the disciples of the new prophet, drawn powerfully by His teaching, His character, His wonderful powers, His mysterious wisdom and love. They had begun to call him "Lord, Lord," and to entertain the belief that He must be the Christ. But, even after they had been led to believe Him to be the Christ, they had been made to stagger by what no doubt a worldly man like Judas—one of the twelve—would have called His reckless defiance of the considerations of worldly prudence and common sense. He had come up against all the great interests—ecclesiastical, political, financial—and they were leagued to suppress Him. On the other hand, He would not accommodate Himself to the common nationalist aspirations of the mass of the people. He utterly refused to lead the sort of movement

they wanted. On the contrary, He proclaimed the doom upon Jerusalem—both city and temple—as certain and imminent, and bade His disciples, when they saw it coming, “look up and lift up their heads” in the conviction that the ruin of their nation and temple was the prelude of the coming of the kingdom of God. What must Simon the Zealot—another of the twelve—have thought of such a challenge? For the Zealots were the fanatical leaders of the nationalist movement. But Jesus refused to take any account of the power arrayed against Him. He thought nothing of majorities and numbers. He refused to be deterred by the certainty of failure and death. Thus, though the heart and reason of the disciples were convinced by Him, their courage failed them, and they failed Him. “They all forsook him and fled.” And He died upon the Cross apparently in desperate failure, having asked that strange question, to which there was no answer, “My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me?”

Then they took down His dead body from the Cross and laid it in the tomb. Truly “the kings of the earth had stood up and the rulers had taken counsel together against the Lord and his anointed,” and apparently only too

successfully. The disciples had "hoped that it should have been he who should have redeemed Israel," and now all their hopes were over and gone. But then the wonder had happened. On the third day "God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible he should be holden of it." The spirit of life from God entered into the dead body and quickened it to a new and glorious mode of life, of which there had hitherto been no experience among men: and out of that glorious life He manifested Himself to the disciples over the space of some forty days, till their stubborn and hopeless hearts had been convinced and enlightened to see that through all seeming failure the power of God was on the side of Jesus: that truly He was Christ, to be seated on the throne of God and to come to judge the world. And when He mounted before their eyes to the visible heavens, that symbolical action represented to them what had become the settled conviction of their minds that Jesus was Lord, exalted in supreme sovereignty to the throne of God Himself, and that one day—the day of the Lord—when God should come into His own in His own universe, all the world would know it. That, without any theological analysis, was what

they meant by the Lordship of Jesus: and the effect of this conviction on their minds was to give them a courage as dauntless as that of their Master: an indifference to majorities and numbers like His; also a superiority to the narrowness and pride of Jewish patriotism like His; and a confidence that nothing can be worth fearing or loving, except the one Master and the cause and claim of Him whose name is above every name.

“Jesus is Lord.” This, then, was the summary conviction which filled the disciples’ minds with thankful exultation on the morrow of the Ascension. But in proportion to the strength of this conviction was their sense of weakness in themselves. They had lost all their old self-confidence. They had been shamed out of it by the experience of their desperate failure in face of the Cross. They had learned to know themselves and distrust themselves. They were utterly inadequate to the work which lay before them. But they had been promised the power which should come with the bestowal of the Spirit. It was this which was to do more than make good to them the loss of the visible presence of their Master. Thus they exhibited the highest conditions of receptivity possible to man. And



when the great bestowal came at Pentecost they were ready to welcome the Divine Spirit and to show the fruit of His coming in all the indomitable moral strength in face of a hostile world, and all the spiritual wisdom to deal with manifold difficulties, which in the days of their outward companionship with Jesus they had so lamentably lacked.

There is not, I think, in literature anything more thrilling and more convincing than the narrative of the early chapters of the Acts. The retrospect of the disciples upon their past experience has generated a faith in the Lordship of Jesus, and the prospect of the future so daunting in its undiscovered possibilities has been accompanied with an assurance of divine guidance and support in the gift of the Spirit, which nothing in human history has ever equalled. It was a great mistake to suppose, as some older theologians did suppose, that the forty days during which Jesus was speaking "of the things concerning the kingdom of God" were occupied by Jesus giving His disciples detailed directions—for instance, about the organization of the Church and the sacraments—such as would have prepared them to meet the difficulties of the future from a storehouse of particular legislation. It is quite plain

that they were left quite without such guidance. But they were left with what suited far better the religion of free men. They were left with a Spirit of Wisdom to guide them to whom they never forgot to apply, and with the authority proper to the corporate life of a society which they never forgot to use, so that the true account of their method of government lies in the phrases "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" and "the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not."

Now, after all the nineteen centuries of the Church's life, it is very good for us to go back and recall both the retrospect and the prospect of the moment which intervened between the Ascension and Pentecost. And first the retrospect. We must not complain that the simple phrase "Jesus is Lord" has been developed intellectually into the confession of the Creeds, and as time went on has been protected by theological dogmas, which met with an emphatic and final negative intellectual proposals concerning the person of Christ which would have undermined the original faith. This sort of intellectual analysis and safeguarding of a moral conviction was inevitable and, I think, legitimate and final. I at least believe that in the Catholic Creed and the

great ecumenical decisions you have truly the results of the guidance of the Divine Spirit faithfully embodied in human words. But there has been, I cannot but think, one serious shortcoming in the witness of the Church since the day when it began to make itself felt as a world power, and that is a moral failure. I quite recognize that there is a certain fundamental infallibility and indefectibility which must be attributed to the Church, if the witness of the truth is never to cease. But certainly our Lord led us to anticipate grave unfaithfulness in those who were to be His witnesses, so that he even asked that momentous question, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith in the earth?" And history interprets the question only too abundantly. It has not been excess of dogmatic definition which has interfered with the witness of the Church nearly so much as the astonishing withdrawal of the moral claim which it was the Church's function to maintain—in order that it might win and retain a nominal victory in a world that was supposed to be converted to Christianity, when it had really only accepted names and rites without any genuine conversion to the moral Lordship of Jesus. The impression is equally over

whelming whether you read records of barbarism in the amazing narratives of Gregory of Tours or records of civilization at almost all periods and in almost all countries where the established position of the Church has been unquestioned. Whenever it has been allowed to be a matter of course that men should almost all be Christians, such a result has been inevitably purchased only by evacuating Christianity of its proper moral claim. This has been done by an almost unabashed pretension that if men will submit to be orthodox and to fulfil the required routine of conformity to Church ordinances, the Church will make it easy for them and guarantee them their salvation without any considerable moral effort, a pretension which is at times accompanied, but only in part redeemed, by the maintenance of an unworldly standard in the monastic communities of "Religious." It has been done also, when, without any high ecclesiastical pretension or any counterbalancing witness of religious communities, the established Church has conformed itself to the world and become (what our Lord denounced as hypocritical, none the less because it is an unconscious hypocrisy), a community calling itself Christian and using the consolations of Christianity to solace itself,

without any apparent regard to the real moral claim of its nominal master.

We are all familiar with the situation. We look back to our settled and comfortable society before the war, and we ask ourselves whether if the real claim of Christ upon wealth, His real demand for spiritual equality, His searching insistence that the ecclesiastical leaders should recognize their fundamental misunderstanding of the religion they professed, had been pressed home effectively and powerfully upon our society, it would not have found itself, as Christ found Himself 1900 years ago, brought up against all the organized interests, political, financial, and, alas! ecclesiastical, and met with the same refusal and the same hostility. We ask ourselves again whether if the total repudiation of a narrow exclusive patriotism which separated our Lord from His nationalist fellow countrymen had been renewed in our day with a force like His it would not have been greeted as treasonable betrayal of the rights of our own country. We ask ourselves once more whether our "common people," while they would have been glad enough to welcome a teaching like our Lord's of the spiritual equality of all persons, would have been

ready, in any larger numbers than was the case 1900 years ago in Palestine, to become real disciples of one who made so searching a moral claim on their personal lives. If we ask ourselves these questions and honestly seek the answer, we are driven to recognize that the probable answer is not the one we should have wished to give. Truly the city where our Lord was crucified, as the seer of the Apocalypse tells us, is not only Jerusalem of many centuries ago, but is "the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt," that is the city of the worldly world everywhere, in whose streets we have been jostling and by whose maxims we have been content as a society to live. And so we press the question home to ourselves. Do I really believe that Jesus, the Jesus of whom I read in the Gospels, the Teacher and Master so inevitably rejected by a world in essentials so like our own—do I really believe that Jesus is the Lord? Should I have become His disciple if I had lived in those days? And if I had been "offended" by His unworldliness—if I had been amongst those who forsook Him and fled—should I have been also among those who had faith enough to recover themselves and become the unfaltering

disciples of the risen Christ? This is a tremendous question to put to oneself. There is none of us who can venture to answer it without deep searchings of heart. And if finally we can assure ourselves in all humility that we do faithfully believe that "Jesus is Lord," and that there is no other ultimate sovereignty in the universe of things save the sovereignty of His word and person, then there is the other question—Do I truly believe in the mission of His Spirit: that the Church—the vessel of His Spirit—is His organ and instrument for action in the world: that I have received that Spirit, as a member of His body: and that if, with a humble receptiveness, like that of the first disciples, we submit ourselves whole-heartedly and joyfully to His powerful influence the Church will receive, and I myself shall receive, a strength and wisdom like theirs to act and speak "in the name of the Lord Jesus?"

These are the two points of capital importance. For if an earnest inquirer about A.D. 60 had asked one of the members of the Christian Church what it was to be a Christian, I suppose he would have been likely to receive one of two answers—either that a Christian was one who believed that

“Jesus is Lord,” or that he was one who had “received the Spirit.” And the two are inseparable elements in the same creed. For the gift of the Spirit was no vague gift of inspiration, leading no one could tell whither, involving no one could tell what. It was the Spirit of God that was received, and also the Spirit of Jesus, that is of God as He had manifested Himself once and for all, in His true character and purpose, in the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth. And all that this Holy Spirit came to do was to reveal in all the world what had been already manifested in the historical Christ. It was only His mind, His teaching, His manhood, His sacrificial death, His resurrection, His glory, that was to be proclaimed. There was to be no “advance” outside or independent of His person—only a taking up into Him, a reconstitution in Him, of all the elements of humanity and the world, till He, the Christ, should be “all in all fulfilled.” The self-disclosure of God in Christ is final and complete. And, on the other hand, all that had been done and taught and suffered by Christ would have been of no avail if He had merely passed into the heavenly places and become a gradually evanescent memory among men. It is the Spirit constituting the Church



the body of Christ, His organ of perpetual self-expression in the world, which is to make His power perpetual and His witness permanent. These are the two most fundamental elements of the Christian Creed. And I cannot but think that this moment in history is calling out, almost clamorously, for their fresh realization and expression. This awful war has brought with it widespread disillusionment. It has made men of good will ready, as they never were ready within living memory, for a fresh religious departure. They are prepared to think again. Let me illustrate this in three ways.

1. We have seen with startling clearness that the old industrial organization, which was so proud of itself fifty years ago, was built upon a rotten foundation—a foundation of selfishness, individual selfishness, class selfishness, and the corporate selfishness of nations. We are crying out for a better world to be built frankly upon the principle of brotherhood—the spiritual worth of every person and the dependence of each on all in one sympathetic body. It is startling to see how widely beyond the limits of Christian orthodoxy this fundamental Christian principle is gaining acceptance in the honest hearts of men and women every-

where; how widely the Church is being reproached for faithlessness to its own teaching and called upon to disclose itself in its true colours. Truly the cry of good men is for the Lordship of Jesus and the fellowship of His Spirit.

2. At the same time, I think, it is true to say that the best spirits of our time in all classes are conscious of the weakness and rottenness of mere democracy. The *vox populi* can so easily lend itself to the purposes of the evil one. The popular cry for social regeneration is accompanied in such very slender measure with the sense of the need for personal regeneration. The cry for liberty is so little conscious of the self-control which is necessary to make men really free. It is the best men and women who are feeling this, and who are disposed for this very reason to acclaim Christ the true liberator, the true emancipator of man, because He laid the foundation of human liberty so deep in the redemption of the individual from personal sin and selfishness. The Church, they feel, is wanted, not as identical with the State—which it never really has been without denying itself, and is never likely to be—but as a distinctive body in the State standing once more for the great ideal—

as a city set on a hill—as the salt of the earth. “Why,” they ask, “has the Church been so utterly false to the method of Christ, shamelessly preferring numbers to reality, and evacuating the moral force of Christ’s claim for purity and sacrifice, that is for discipleship to Himself”? Let the real claim be once more heard and felt in all its searching thoroughness: and if it is not popular, at least it will gather the best and soundest-hearted to its call. What is all this except a cry for a real expression in the Church of the Lordship of Jesus and a real manifestation of the power of His Spirit—so that the Church should become again a society as hostile to the worldly world as He was who is proclaimed its Master?

3. We are sickened of the narrow, vulgar, exclusive patriotism. We are up against its terrible embodiment in the German militarism, and we have denounced its manifestations there freely enough. But we are conscious that it is not only Germany that has to repent. Many of us have read the terms of the secret treaties among the Allies recently published by the Bolsheviks in Russia with a deep feeling of humiliation. Apparently Italy and Roumania could only be persuaded to come

into the war on the side of the Allies by promises of territory to be annexed to them which cannot with any show of reason be claimed as legitimately theirs. I would say nothing here of other arrangements between Russia and France and between ourselves and Russia. We realize with humiliation that we were led to assent to proposed annexations which quite traverse the principles for which we not only profess to be fighting, but which truly did bring us reluctantly into the awful struggle. And if we ask politicians why these things were agreed to, we are told that the necessity of getting Italy and Roumania to come in on our side was so urgent that we had no alternative—which cannot but recall to our minds a similar plea of necessity which we have heartily denounced. I fear that it is true that in Europe generally we are a long way off the full recognition of the meaning and limits of legitimate patriotism. But also there is a widespread consciousness that there is no hope for our civilization unless we can build again our international life upon a new basis, the basis of the brotherhood of nations, that basis of which Joseph Mazzini, the great patriot, is also the great prophet. And we recognize in the crying out for a fellowship of nations,

sternly restraining the ambitions of an exclusive patriotism, a real acknowledgement of the Lordship of Jesus; for He both rejected and refused to associate Himself with the current patriotism of His nation, and positively laid the basis of universalism in His dealings with mankind. And if we recognize how profound a resistance unregenerate human nature in all nations offers to any proposed restriction upon an ambitious patriotism, or any idea of a supernatural authority, we shall recognize once again the true function of a Catholic Church which shall force all who would belong to Jesus to recognize their fellowship one with another in Him as a bond closer and more exacting even than the ties of kindred and blood, and so pave the way for a universal human fellowship.

The religious situation, then, is something of this kind. The "shaking" of established institutions and established ideas which the world-wide convulsion of the war has brought about has generated and produced into the light not only a great deal of criticism, shallow and profound, of existing religious institutions and creeds, but also a widespread positive aspiration, which is vocal and intelligible, towards the restoration into prominent em-

phasis of the two most fundamental and original elements of the Christian Creed—the Lordship of Jesus and the Mission of the Spirit to constitute the visible Christian Church His Spirit-bearing body—His organ and instrument for self-expression and action in the world. Doubtless in our present intellectual atmosphere the critical faculty vastly overshadows the reconstructive. But I think there is ground for hoping that the urgent demand for practical reconstruction, if the world is to be saved from moral ruin, will serve to redress the balance in the region of religious thought no less than of practice.

It is of the constructive side of the work that I am mainly thinking. I see a vast body of sincere Christian feeling and thinking, passionately contending for the two great principles of the Lordship of Jesus and the Mission of the Spirit in the Church. This movement of thought and feeling is wholly independent of denominational differences. Men and women of quite different religious traditions are found to be experiencing the same feelings and uttering the same demand. They make the same complaint of the Church as it has been. They want to know why the Church has so largely and so long forgotten a great

part of its true message—why it was left to a reputed atheist like Shelley, and to men rather far off orthodoxy like the authors of *Ecce Homo* and *The Jesus of History* to present to us those undoubtedly historical aspects of the teaching of Jesus which appeal most to what is best in the modern world. They claim for the Church that it should recover its true moral utterance. If that be gained, the movement of mind of which I am speaking is not in the main prejudiced against the ancient faith and order. Indeed Churchmen and Nonconformists are able to put forth documents about faith and order in which they show a wonderful measure of agreement as to the lines on which the Church of the future could find a basis for reconciling its separated elements; and the recovered interest in the Roman and Orthodox Churches is quite free of the old bitter prejudice against things Catholic. Again, labour, in England at least, is still pathetically determined not to be driven or led into hostility to Jesus Christ. In a word, there is an opportunity so great as to make one's heart beat with almost inexpressible hope for a reconstitution of Christianity and of the Church, so as to render them intelligible again to the best conscience of our time; because, while the ancient

faith and order are not abandoned, the true moral meaning of the original faith in the Lordship of Jesus and the catholic fellowship as the organ of His Spirit are again given their proper and appealing prominence. Who is to use this great opportunity? An old man can only pray that among the younger God may find His powerful and faithful prophets.  
*Exoriare aliquis!*



## VI

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

In the Prayer Book the Decalogue holds a position of singular importance. It is to be learnt by heart by every baptized person; it is interpreted in the Catechism; it is propounded as the constant standard for self-examination; and, above all, it is recited at every celebration of Holy Communion. Some such position for the Ten Commandments, side by side with the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, is commonly supposed to be primitive and necessary. Thus (in an excellent book) the Bishop of Manchester writes: "This (the co-ordination of Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments) is the tradition which has come down to us from the early Church. On these lines Cyril of Jerusalem based his Catechetical Lectures";<sup>1</sup> and (it is implied) on these lines S. Augustine founded his *Manual*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Knox, *Pastors and Teachers*, p. 82. (Longmans, 1902.)

or *Enchiridion*. But this is quite a mistake. S. Cyril's Catechetical Lectures<sup>1</sup> and S. Augustine's Manual<sup>2</sup> and Teaching for Catechumens are based solely on the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. There is no allusion to the Decalogue at all in the former, and in the latter only the briefest.<sup>3</sup> The Creed and the Lord's Prayer were also the only formulas used in the preparation of candidates for baptism.<sup>4</sup> The fact is that till the thirteenth century the Decalogue was not co-ordinated with the Lord's Prayer and the Creed as the summary of moral instruction to be known by all men; nor was it ever used in the Liturgy, nor in the preparation for baptism. The Creed and the Lord's Prayer stood alone in the patristic period. At various dates in the mediaeval periods there were added to them, as to be known of all men, the seven deadly sins, the seven principal virtues, the seven sacraments, the angelic salutation. But not till the thirteenth century can I find an

<sup>1</sup> *Catecheses* vi-xviii are on the Creed. Then the sacraments (mysteries) are explained, and the Lord's Prayer is interpreted in *Cat. Myst.* v. 11-18.

<sup>2</sup> *Enchiridion*, c. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. 32—that the Decalogue is summed up in the twofold law of love, cp. *de Catech. Rudibus*, c. 41.

<sup>4</sup> The "instruments of the holy law," which at Rome were solemnly made known to the candidate (as well as the Creed and Lord's Prayer) were the four Gospels, not the Decalogue.

instance of the collocation with these of the Ten Commandments.

Of course, from the first it was recognized, as indeed S. Paul and our Lord Himself require it to be recognized, that the Christian moral law is built upon the "Ten Words," and that they have divine authority. This is excellently expressed by Irenaeus: "It was to prepare men for the life (of friendship with Himself and concord with their fellows) that the Lord Himself, without any intermediary, spoke the words of the Decalogue to all alike; and therefore likewise they remain in force amongst us, receiving extension and addition, but not dissolution, through His coming in the flesh."<sup>1</sup>

But, in spite of this universal recognition of the divine authority of the Ten Commandments, very little was said about them. It is true that, amidst the jumble of moral precepts which occupy the first six chapters of *The Didache*, which were intended for the instruction of catechumens, six of the Ten Commandments are found; and they occur sporadically in the Patristic writers as was inevitable, often with the remark that they have received their fulfilment in the twofold law of love. But there was not the same need experienced for

<sup>1</sup> *C. haer.* iv. 16, 3, 4.

a formula of morality as for a formula of faith. There was, in fact, no attempt to provide such a formula; and when Origen and Ambrose first attempted a systematic treatment of Christian morals they found a basis for it not in the Ten Commandments, but in the four cardinal virtues recognized in the heathen world—prudence (or wisdom), temperance (or self-control), justice and fortitude (or courage).<sup>1</sup> There is thus curiously little about the Ten Commandments in the fathers. Origen and Augustine both indeed discuss the proper method of dividing and distributing the Ten Words. Origen further gives an interesting interpretation of the first two Commandments,<sup>2</sup> and S. Augustine a “spiritual” interpretation of the fourth: “It is not with thee (a Christian) as with the Jews. . . . To thee it is said that thou shouldest observe the Sabbath spiritually by learning the true rest (in God) in hope of the future eternal rest. Rest that thou mayest labour, and labour that thou mayest rest.”<sup>3</sup> Later (in the eighth century) in connection with the Iconoclastic con-

<sup>1</sup> For Origen, see the account given by Gregory Thaumaturgus, his pupil, of his method in ethics, *Or. Pan.*, c. ix. For Ambrose, see his famous *de Officiis*, and see also S. Augustine *de Moribus Eccl. Cath.* xv. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Origen, in *Exod. Hom.* viii.

<sup>3</sup> *Quaestt. in Heptateuch*, ii. 71.

trovcrsy, the Second Commandment comes prominently into controversy, and John of Damascus enunciates the principle that the Incarnation — by which God has manifested Himself visibly, to be seen and touched—has made all the difference in its interpretation. "We make images not of the invisible Godhead, but of the visible flesh." For those who cannot read these images are their reminders—their books.<sup>1</sup> Something, then, there is in the fathers about the Decalogue; but, on the whole, in the patristic period we hear noticeably little of it.

But, at least, from the time of S. Augustine in the West the idea prevailed that the Decalogue was the republication of the natural law written in men's hearts, which the prevalence of sin had obliterated, and which, therefore, needed reassertion with divine authority as a foundation on which the work of divine redemption might be based.<sup>2</sup> This idea falls

<sup>1</sup> S. John Damasc., *de Imag.* Or. i. 4-17.

<sup>2</sup> See S. Aug., *Enarr. in Ps. lvii.* 1 and *in Ps. cxviii. Serm. xxv.* 4. See also Pseud. Aug. *Quaest. in Vel. Test.* 4 (Migne, *P.L.* xxxv, 2219): "Lex formata in litteris dari non debuit quia in natura ipsa quodam modo inserta est . . . at ubi naturalis lex evanuit, oppressa consuetudine delinquendi, tunc oportuit legem manifestari, ut in Judaeis omnes homines audirent." Cf. Eucherius of Lyons (fifth cent.), *P.L.* 1. 780; Alcuin, *P.L.*, c. 518; Hildebert, *P.L.* clxxi. 1148: "Lex data ut repararet legem naturalem." Hugo of S. Victor, *P.L.* clxxvi. 420, etc.

in with S. Paul's conception of the function of the Law ; and gives it its signal importance as a moral foundation, its prohibitory aspect being explained and justified as a clearing of the ground of the human heart preparatory to its proper moral cultivation.<sup>1</sup>

On this principle the mediaeval scholastics gave greater prominence to the Ten Commandments ;<sup>2</sup> and, though they interpreted them very freely in a Christian sense, they insisted on them as a foundation to be known of all men. So it is that they became associated with the Creed and the Lord's Prayer as the formula of moral duty which all must know. So it is that for the first time (as far as I can discern) in the constitution of Bishop de Kirkham of Durham (1255) and the Synodal Statutes of Norwich (1257) the following injunction appears.<sup>3</sup> "Therefore, because without the observance of the Decalogue there can be no salvation of souls, we exhort and enjoin in the Lord that every pastor of souls and every parish priest should know the

<sup>1</sup> See Rupert of Deutz, *P.L.* clxvii. 680 : "Hic in initio non iam charitas imperatur, sed quae contraria sunt charitati prohibentur, ut in illis extirpatis tum demum ipsa charitas radix omnium bonorum substituatur."

<sup>2</sup> S. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theol.* 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>ae</sup>, qu. c.

<sup>3</sup> See Wilkins's *Concilia* i. 704, 731. There are only minor differences.

Decalogue, that is the ten precepts of the Mosaic law, and should frequently preach and explain the same to the people who are under his control. Let him know also the seven heads of wrong-doing (*septem criminalia*), and preach to the people the avoidance of the same. Let him know in like manner the seven sacraments of the Church, and let those who are priests know particularly the things necessary for the sacrament of true confession and penance, and let them frequently teach the laity in the common tongue the form of baptizing. Let each of them have also a simple knowledge of the Faith as it is contained in the Creeds, both the greater (Nicene) and the lesser (Apostles') and in the tract which is called *Quicumque Vult*, which is sung daily at Prime." Kirkham adds to the requirements of elementary religious instruction the Lord's Prayer and the angelic salutation of Mary and the knowledge of how to make the sign of the cross. More explicitly and fully Archbishop Peckham in 1281, in his constitution, "Ignorantia Sacerdotum,"<sup>1</sup> ordains "that every parish priest four times a year, that is once

<sup>1</sup> Wilkins, ii. 54. This constitution was repeated in the Province of York, finally by Cardinal Wolsey, in 1518. Wilkins iii, 662, 664 f.

every quarter, on one or more days of solemn observance, shall expound to the people in the vulgar tongue, without the fantastic concealment of any kind of subtlety, the fourteen<sup>1</sup> Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments of the Decalogue, the two precepts of the Gospel, that is the double law of love, the seven works of mercy, the seven capital sins with their offspring, the seven principal virtues, and the seven sacraments of grace." And to take away all excuse of ignorance from the clergy, he enumerates all those necessary rudiments of spiritual knowledge and gives a Christian explanation of the Ten Commandments, to help the clergy in explaining them. I think it is worth while to translate it without any criticism.

"Of the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament three refer to God, which are called the commandments of the first table, and seven to our neighbours, which are called the commandments of the second table. In the first (i.e. our i and ii) is prohibited all idolatry, where it is said *Thou shalt have no other gods in My presence*. Therein implicitly are prohibited all divinations and charms with the superstitious observance of marks and such figments. In the second, where it is said *Thou shalt not take the Name*

<sup>1</sup> The Articles of the Creeds were so reckoned.



*of the Lord thy God in vain*, is prohibited principally heresy of all kinds, and secondarily all blasphemy and irreverent use of the Name of God, especially in false swearing. In the third commandment, where it is said *Remember to keep the Sabbath holy*, there is enjoined worship according to the Christian religion ('*cultus religionis Christianae*'), to which clergy and laity alike are bound. Wherefore it should be known that the obligation to observe the legal Sabbath, according to the form of the Old Testament, ceased altogether with the other ceremonies of the law, and there succeeded to it under the New Testament the mode of abstaining from work for the purpose of divine worship ('*vacandi cultui divino*') on the Lord's Day and other solemn days appointed for this purpose by the authority of the Church: on such days the manner of abstaining from work is not to be taken from the Jewish superstitions but from the canonical injunctions.

"The first commandment of the second table is *Honour thy father and thy mother*, in which it is explicitly commanded to honour parents temporally and spiritually; but implicitly and secondarily every man, according to what his position requires, is to be honoured in accordance with the same commandment. And in the commandment father and mother are to be understood not only according to the flesh but also spiritually, so that the 'father' is any officer of the Church, mediate or immediate; and the 'mother' is the Church whose sons all Catholics are. The second is *Thou shalt not kill*, in which is

explicitly forbidden any unpermitted destruction of a person by consent or act or word or favour; and implicitly is here forbidden every unjust harming of any person. So they murder in the spiritual sense who do not sustain the needy; they murder in the civil sense who destroy the character of others ('qui detrahunt'), or who oppress and confound<sup>1</sup> the innocent. The third commandment is *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, in which explicitly adultery is forbidden, but implicitly fornication, which is explicitly forbidden in Deuteronomy xxiii. In the same commandment is forbidden all sexual connection not covered by marriage, and all kinds of voluntary pollution. The fourth commandment is *Thou shalt not steal*, in which is explicitly forbidden all secret dealing with another's goods against his will; implicitly all injurious treatment of another's goods, whether by fraud or usury or violence or terrorism. The fifth commandment is *Thou shalt not bear false witness*, wherein is expressly forbidden false witness intended to hurt another: implicitly false witness intended to promote an unworthy person contrary to his deserts. In this commandment all lying, especially to another's hurt, is forbidden. The sixth commandment is *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house*: supply 'to his injury': in which is explicitly forbidden the coveting of all immovable property, especially what belongs to any Catholic. The seventh commandment is *Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife* or manservant or maid-

<sup>1</sup> Or "cause to stumble" ("offendant").

servant or ox or ass or anything that is his, in all of which the coveting of any movable property is forbidden."

It then goes on to expound the twofold law of love which the Gospel has "added" to the Ten Commandments—bidding men, amongst other things, to love each and every man more than all temporal wealth ('*affluentiam*')—and the seven works of mercy and the seven principal virtues—faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude—and the seven sacraments. Let this suffice as a specimen of rudimentary moral instruction from the heart of the middle age.

Thus in the thirteenth century the Decalogue came to be conjoined with the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the seven sacraments as constituting the necessary rudiments for every Christian man. Thus, in 1566, the Catechism of the Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> is able to say that "our ancestors most wisely distributed the whole sum and substance of Christian doctrine under those four heads—the Apostles' Creed, the Sacraments, the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer." And when the Reformation came, though the teaching about the sacraments was modified and their number was reduced to two,

<sup>1</sup> Proem. xii. The statement would be true of the three previous centuries, not of the earlier period.

still the Reformers retained the Decalogue with the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments as the constituent elements in the Catechisms which contained the necessary doctrine for all Christians. So it was in Luther's two Catechisms of 1530 and 1539, and in Calvin's Catechism of 1535, and in the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, and substantially (though the Creed is not mentioned) in the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly (1647).<sup>1</sup> So it was in our English *Institution of a Christian Man* (1537) and *A necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man* (1543), with some subsidiary topics added. So of course it is in our Prayer Book Catechism.<sup>2</sup> As for the recitation of the Commandments in the service of Holy Communion, precedent for this was found in the practice which followed upon the injunctions of Archbishop Peckham, and the like practice in other countries. There are also closer precedents of the Reformation period which have been suggested. But this is hardly the place to discuss the question further.<sup>3</sup> It is

<sup>1</sup> Many of these Catechisms are to be found in the Appendix to the Bishop of Manchester's *Pastors and Teachers*.

<sup>2</sup> In its first form the Catechism was perhaps unique among the manuals of the period in containing no treatment of the sacraments. Brightman, *English Rite* (Rivingtons), p. cxxii.

<sup>3</sup> It is discussed by Brightman, *The English Rite*, pp. clvii f., 1038 f. ; also by Scudamore, *Notitia Eucharistica*, pp. 224 f.

obvious that when once the Ten Commandments have been accepted as a summary statement of our moral obligations, just as the Creed is for our Credenda, the recital of the one is as natural as the recital of the other in the service of the altar, and the Commandments form a natural basis for a penitential preparation.

At the same time I cannot feel that we can acquiesce in our present use of the Decalogue in the preparatory portion of our liturgy as satisfactory.

The fact that the Decalogue represents an early stage of the divine law, and that before it can reach the level of Christ's teaching it needs to be profoundly spiritualized and interpreted, seems to make it questionable whether it should be so constantly and nakedly propounded as the summary of the moral law to Christian people. If we are to have the divine prohibitions constantly thundered over us, it would seem as if we should have them in the form in which they apply to ourselves rather than in the form in which they were given to the people of Israel at a very early stage of its education.

No doubt the reiterated "Thou shalt not" has been very impressive. But what are the things which in the Decalogue are explicitly

prohibited? The Second Commandment prohibits the making of any image or representation of God, and as it stands it ignores the difference which has been made by the Incarnation. The Fourth Commandment in its literal sense, so far as concerns the observance of the Sabbath, has been abrogated, and is valid only in a "mystical" sense<sup>1</sup> The Third Commandment requires very fundamental deepening before (as our Lord seems to teach us) we get down through it to the universal duty of truthfulness. The Sixth and Seventh Commandments prohibit only murder and adultery, and require an interpretation which is not always present to the mind before they can be taken to prohibit all unkindness and lawless sensual indulgence of all kinds.

Thus the constant recitation of the Commandments without note or comment has, I cannot but feel, created in part a false conscience amongst our people, and in part condoned much too slack a conscience. No doubt these Ten Commandments have been interpreted in the statements of our duty to God and our duty to our neighbour in the Catechism, but the interpretation is not much

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Office, 1637: "According to the mystical meaning of the said commandment."

in the mind of the people, and it is not by them connected with the particular Commandments. Moreover, it can hardly be denied that the insistence in the "Duty towards my neighbour," upon obedience to superiors and humility and reverence to "betters" (which word certainly means those above us in social station) is not sufficiently balanced by an equal insistence upon the duties of the stronger towards the weaker and the true principles of Christian equality and brotherliness. I cannot but think that the kind of criticism which is commonly heard of the "Duty towards my neighbour," as tending "to keep the people down," and as being "in favour of the upper classes," though it is often accompanied with a misquotation ("that state of life unto which it *has pleased* God to call me," instead of "that state of life unto which it *shall please* God to call me") has yet a good deal of justification.

Thus (1) I would have the Church cease from the *constant* recitation of the Commandments at the beginning of the service of Holy Communion. (2) I would have them occasionally recited, as Archbishop Peckham enjoined, with an interpretation like his, in the full Christian spirit. (3) I would have the inter-

pretation in the Catechism so modified as to be more impartial and to express more adequately the true principle of the equal worth of every soul in God's sight. It is obvious that any Christian interpretation of the Commandments drawn up by authority would, because it was Christian, be more positive and less negative than the Decalogue as it stands.



## VII

### ATTEMPTS TO HOLD INTERCOURSE WITH THE DEAD<sup>1</sup>

“We would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”—1 *Thess.* iv. 13, 14.

“Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”—*Rom.* xiv. 8, 9.

In both these passages and in others, as familiar or more, that I might quote, the quiet confidence which the Christian is to experience about his departed friends is made to depend upon his faith in Jesus Christ—in His person and supreme Lordship in the whole universe, and in His death and resurrection.

I have been asked to preach to you about the attempt which is being very widely made by those who are bereaved by death to hold communication, directly or through mediums, with

<sup>1</sup> A sermon preached at S. Martin’s-in-the-Fields, on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, 1917.

those whom they have lost from the world. The matter is of so much importance that I could not decline, though I feel some reluctance again to broach the subject in this church; and I have chosen these texts because I wish to direct your attention first of all to the grounds of Christian confidence for those whom death removes from us.

There can be no question at all that our Lord, as He is represented in all the four Gospels, asks of men unqualified faith in Himself. He asks of men faith in His word or message about God, because He is the very Son, who alone knows the Father and can reveal Him. "No man knoweth . . . the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." And, more than this, He asks faith in Himself as in His own person revealing the Father. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."<sup>1</sup> And in the Epistles we see the outcome of Jesus Christ's mission: we see how the first disciples, after hearing His teaching, after their experience of His death and resurrection, and under the influence of His Spirit communicated to them, whole-heartedly gave to Christ, their

<sup>1</sup> "To know Him, as He Himself seems never to have been tired of repeating, is to know God."—Mackail, *Sayings of Christ*, p. 7.

Master, the absolute faith which He had asked of men, so that their whole confidence rested on "the word of the Lord," and at once a whole body of beliefs about God and about man, such as forms the assumed background of the whole New Testament and coheres in one indissoluble whole—such a body of beliefs arose, and was accepted as the Christian faith, and after a time was formulated in the baptismal creed.

No doubt the Christian Creed involves a certain metaphysical or philosophical view of God and the world: no doubt its central doctrine that "God is love" is from the point of view of human experience a profound paradox, which raises the whole question of how the presence of evil in the world is to be explained, a question which has always baffled the brooding and inquiring mind of man; but nevertheless nothing could have been simpler or more naive than our Lord's teaching. He glories in its simplicity. "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Our Lord did not argue or reason about God. He taught with authority out of His own inner knowledge; and He appealed, not to the reason of

the philosopher, but to the heart and moral needs of the ordinary labouring and suffering man. I say, He taught with simple authority. Not that He corresponds to what is ordinarily meant by a dogmatic teacher. He does not commonly utter definite statements, and He very rarely consents to give a plain answer to a plain question. The area of His positive teaching is very restricted. But He was able to assume a whole body of teaching given by the prophets before Him as "the word of God," as already accepted by the conscience of His hearers and taken for granted, and this He deepens and enlarges, without argument, as I say, speaking "with authority," appealing for simple, child-like faith, to the heart and conscience of the common man.

Thus the Faith of the Christian Church rests simply upon the word of God, finally delivered through the lips of Jesus Christ; but upon this word as interpreted by the experience of His seeming failure and death, and then by the experience of His resurrection. If the experience of the disciples had ended with the death of Christ, we cannot doubt that His message would not have been believed. The record would only have served to invalidate the claim of the teacher. But the resurrection

of Jesus Christ from the dead proved to the Church that the great God who made and rules the world was, after all, on the side of Jesus Christ; that His seeming incapacity to vindicate His own Son was only the most astonishing evidence that in this world at least He does not mean to interfere with the lawlessness of human wills; but that the day will come when God will vindicate Himself; and that the heart of the Church can rest quiet, in spite of the awful spectacle of failure and death, sure that on the other side of death is resurrection, and on the other side of the seeming failure of God is certain triumph.

The assurance and message of the Church is thus rooted and grounded on faith, unqualified faith, in the witness of Jesus. This Christian faith does not disparage intellect nor quench or restrict inquiry. But it claims that in Jesus Christ certain new assurances or facts have entered into the world of which the intellect must take account—which it cannot ignore—which, if the assurances and facts are true, must produce a great change in the intellectual position; and it challenges the intellectual man, just like every one else, with the question whether he really does believe the witness of Jesus Christ, and accept His claim to reveal—

what apart from Him could not be discovered—the inmost character of the one God who made and rules the world, but “dwells in the light which no man can approach unto”—to reveal, I say, the mysterious God, with the authority of an intimate and unique knowledge, in the intelligible language of common men and in the intelligible form of a human character.

Now I would speak to those who, not without waverings and anxieties perhaps, but still really, believe in Jesus Christ, or, at least, desire to believe in Him. How do you stand in the light of your faith with regard to your departed friends—to those, perhaps, whom you have lost in the present war? First of all, you will pay attention to the lesson both of the Old Testament and of the New, both of the prophets and of our Lord, that your confidence for them is to be the fruit of your confidence in God and His goodness, and of nothing else. The practice of necromancy, or dealings with the dead, was very familiar to the Jews. In the dark days of the Assyrian invasions the people resorted in large numbers to those occult modes of inquiry. “On behalf of the living,” as Isaiah expresses it, “they seek unto the dead.”<sup>1</sup> Isaiah is full of con-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. viii. 19.

tempt for such morbid forms of religion. "Should not a people seek unto their God? . . . To the revelation and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them." And the Mosaic Law sternly forbids necromancy. "As for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do."<sup>1</sup> "The soul that turneth unto them that have familiar spirits to go a whoring after them; I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." It is most noticeable that the Jews were, as it were, shut off from all speculation about the dead and all anticipation of immortality, until they had through the prophets learned the character of God, His almightiness, and His love, so that their belief in a life beyond should appear as a consequence of their belief in God and an outcome of their trust in Him. It was because God was good, and man was admitted to fellowship with Him, that they came to hope for participation in God's immortal life. It was because God was good and just, and this life did not, except very imperfectly, exhibit His justice, that they were driven to postulate a world beyond. It is, I think, of the greatest

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xviii. 14. Cf. Lev. xix. 31, xx. 6.

importance to notice that in the religion of the Bible the people of Israel, who were chosen to be "the sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life for all mankind," were debarred from dealings with the dead, and, for long years, from any revelation of life beyond the grave, in order that that belief when it came to them might grow out of their assured faith in God, and not from any real or imaginary communications with the dead. Then, of course, after the coming of our Lord the belief in resurrection and in the life of the world to come was raised to a much higher power. Not only His teaching, but even more, the actual resurrection of our Lord from the dead, raised it to a level of absolute certainty for the believer in Him. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "Now hath Christ been raised from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that are asleep. . . . As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Thus the assurance of the Christian about the departed is quite confident. He can commend them with the most complete trust to God in Christ, sure that His power and love extends beyond death: that He will do the



best for each soul: that He is the Lord of the living and the dead; that one day we shall see the issue of His work in the whole world and in every individual; and that if the fellowship of life is interrupted as it is by death and the dark veil descends, yet one day the veil will yield to give place to the perfected fellowship of the kingdom of God.

But meanwhile there is much concerning the dead of which we are, by what seems to be the divine intention, kept in ignorance. We have glorious symbolic pictures of the New Jerusalem, the perfected humanity. But we know hardly anything about the intermediate state, about the training and perfecting of the departed, or their occupations, or their knowledge of us or our concerns. The Christian Church from the earliest days has encouraged us to pray for the dead. But it had hardly any information to give us about them, save that they are alive in Jesus Christ. We may think of them as secluded in a holy retreat in preparation for the vision of God. We may think of them as praying for us; we can hardly do otherwise. We can think of them as being cleansed and enlightened and perfected: we can hardly do otherwise. But the light of revelation falls almost only on "this world" and "the world to

come," hardly at all upon the intermediate state or the abode of the dead. And with regard to no one of the departed are we allowed to anticipate the judgement of God. We are "to judge nothing before the time." Thus we are to trust our departed to God, and rejoice in our communion with them in Christ, which is none the less real because we cannot hold direct intercourse with them, and in this confidence we are to turn to do our work in this world till we too are called to join them.

Thus the Church has always discouraged or prohibited the attempt to hold intercourse with the dead. And if we examine the records of information supposed to be derived from the spiritual world by what we should call "mediums," or in visions or apparitions of sinners and saints departed, we shall not be led to assign any value to it. The Montanist prophetesses ("mediums" as we should call them) became entranced, and, when thus unconscious, delivered oracles or revelations, and the sect of Montanists despised the Church Catholic, which refused to acknowledge these communications, as superannuated and old-fashioned, and they convinced Tertullian, one of the ablest men of the day, of the truth of their communications; but as we look back

upon them we see they contained nothing of value, and that Montanism was only an inferior form of Christianity, fanatical and even tending to insanity. Again, the mediaeval Church from the days of Gregory the Great largely added to its supposed information about purgatory and hell, through what were believed to be genuine visions, some of them of a most blood-curdling description. The docile inquirer in Gregory's Dialogues asks this most natural question: "How is it that in these last times so many things about the souls are brought to light, which were not known before, so that the world to come seems to invade us and open itself to us by open disclosures and revelations?" And Gregory tells him in effect that the end of the world is so near that the curtain which shrouds the other world has grown thin and almost transparent. The night is passing into the day. The mediaeval teachings about purgatory were largely based on the supposed disclosures of the dead; and more recently-developed doctrines of the Roman Catholic world have been buttressed up with similar visions; but I think that it is the elements in mediaeval, or modern Roman, teaching, which are the most superstitious and least Scriptural, which these supposed communications from

the unseen world have originated or corroborated. If you sum up all that these supposed communications have added to the original Gospel, you will feel that they bear the mark of some much lower origin than the Spirit of Christ. The whole world would be the better if they had never been received or believed. Thus past experience certainly does not encourage us to seek messages from the dead.

But now again, in the awful anguish of the war, multitudes of bereaved persons, whose hearts are torn, are being encouraged to seek, either directly or through mediums or mechanical means, such as automatic writing or the motions and rappings of a table, communications from their dead, and I believe a great many are accepting the invitation. They ask : What harm is there in it ? May I not seek in this way comfort and assurance about my dear ones torn from me ? To such pleading I can only give one answer. I do not doubt that there are genuine phenomena which trained observers may investigate. Perhaps they can learn with more certainty what can be attributed to telepathy and what residuum of genuine phenomena there is which telepathy on earth cannot explain and which postulates influences from the spirit world. But I am not speaking to

trained observers actuated by scientific curiosity. I am talking to people who want assurance and comfort about the dead. And I would say to them : Resist the impulse to get into communication with the dead, partly because it will give the spiritual life a wrong bias or direction ; partly because in the long run spiritualism will undoubtedly tend to become a rival to the religion of the Bible and the Church.

I say it will give the spiritual life a wrong direction. For what a momentous change it will effect ! If the bereaved soul, instead of steadying itself in the consolation on which S. Paul would have us repose ourselves, is to expect or seek, through mediums or mechanical means or by direct communications, assurance about the continued existence and the welfare and the occupations and surroundings of the dead, what an absorption of mind will ensue, what a concentration of faculties upon the new quest, what an alteration of the whole balance of life, what a new kind of " other-worldliness," with what tremendous perils ! I remember many years ago lodging in France with a widow who seemed to me to occupy all her religious faculties in getting her deceased husband out of purgatory. The new concentration of faculties upon the dead will be of a quite

different kind, but will it be less absorbing or more alien to the discipline of the New Testament?

And once again: it is impossible to doubt that spiritualism, gathering together all the pieces of supposed information about the other world from the communications of spirits, will develop a body of teaching which will become the basis, if not of a new religion, yet of a new kind of Christianity. Indeed, this has already begun. Sir Oliver Lodge gives us specimens of this sort of "unverifiable matter," and leads us to anticipate what I think is a certain result of the new method—new revelations about the unseen world. They will not be like the Montanist revelations, nor like those of the mediaeval and modern Roman world; they will be more acceptable to the average modern spirit. I suppose we shall be informed—we are already being informed—that while there is discipline for souls in the other world, all are being certainly led upward to an assured heaven. I dare say we shall be led to believe—indeed it is already happening—that all souls are parts of the divine being who must at last, after whatever wanderings, resume their place in the eternal spirit. I anticipate a new sort of "spiritualistic" Christianity, which

like the Christianity of the Montanists will be somewhat contemptuous of the faith of the Church and of the New Testament as old-fashioned. But then, which are we to believe: the plain—astonishingly plain—teaching of our Lord about God and man and the awful issues of life, or the more comfortable assurances conveyed by the spirits?

I recall S. Paul's strenuous pleading: "Though we or an angel from heaven preach unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." I recall S. John's words: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." "Whosoever goeth forward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God." Is this fanaticism? I believe it to be, for any one who considers the grounds on which faith in Christ rests, mere soberness of mind. In scientific inquiry into the facts of the physical world there is no right or wrong, but only real or unreal, certain or uncertain. But in the world of spiritual influence there is, if we are not to make light of the New Testament view of the world—of our Lord's view of the world—a grave risk that, if we are wilful, we may fall a victim to a guidance from

the spiritual world which is real indeed but misleading, and proceeds not from the fountain of light, but from the spirit of error, and is part of an organized system of deceit.

Thus, if I am to counsel any one, I would advise him to have nothing to do with the attempt to seek consolation about the dead from converse, real or imaginary, with the spirits of the dead ; and that mainly on three grounds : (1) that the best sort of consolation is to be found in putting your whole trust in Jesus Christ as the unique and final revealer of God and the spiritual world ; and that the limits of knowledge under which He lays us had better be respected. (2) that the inquiries suggested are sure to lead to a morbid and excessive preoccupation with the dead, and to upset the sane balance of the spiritual life. (3) that spiritualism is certain to develop a new sort of religion, a new kind of revelation, which, again, is fairly certain to be in more or less marked deviation from the belief of the Church and the New Testament ; and that if it is so, and if it is to be taken for granted that the sources of this new disclosure are really spirits, then we must consider that spirits may be of different qualities, good and bad, and that the penalty of presumptuousness may be deception.



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