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A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

to civilization. Continuity is the watchword throughout ; the crises of saving grace are ignored. He has eliminated the conception of moral law and replaced it by the laws of Nature. He speaks of forces where a Christian thinker must speak of the Holy Spirit and of human motives. In truth, he never quite escaped from the shadow of that earlier thought, put with so much startling emphasis in his *Addresses*, that the idea of God, the knowledge of what God is and wills, is no essential element in religion.

Again, a one-sided picture ; but the emphatic colours will catch the eye ; and in a few years the residuum of truth, which is by no means negligible, will have been carefully ascertained and registered. It may be that Brunner felt he could only get

a hearing for certain truths by uttering them at the top of his voice. Subjectivism is by no means the whole of Schleiermacher, for feeling never was for him a *mere* state of the soul, as pleasure is ; it was in everything but name a mode of trans-subjective apprehension. But few will deny that theologians have as much need to sift out the truth from him as philosophers have from Kant, and in this exceptionally difficult task we need all the aid that Brunner can afford. By this absorbing and formidable book he has made a deep mark in a discussion that has lasted a hundred years and is far from dying down.

H. R. MACKINTOSH.

Edinburgh.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Hide and Seek.¹

'Was lost, and is found.'—Lk 15²⁴.

WELL ! that was a real scare, wasn't it ? No wonder you are drawing a huge deep breath of relief. For you bigger boys and girls are quite sure you have more than enough already of Ovid, and Cicero (although I loved Cicero), and Livy, especially Livy, so dry and stale and stodgy. And some silly ass, poking about in an old library, thought he had come on heaps more of him, dozens and dozens of fresh books by him. You were in for it, if the thing had really been horribly true. For in all the exams for years and years all the unseens would have been taken from these new and unknown books, and you would never have had a chance of getting a bit you had seen before. It was too bad. But, do you know, the scholars thought that it was splendid, and got as excited and thrilly over it as you did at that football match, when your back just got that fast 'three' upon the very line. They had been hoping all their lives that these books might turn up, and here they really were ! Were they ? They could hardly believe it ; they thought it too good to be true. And so, luckily for you, it was. For the whole thing was nothing but a stupid fake, and you've escaped, and they are disappointed.

¹ By the Reverend A. J. Gossip, M.A., Aberdeen.

But whatever you think about Livy, isn't it hard lines that heaps and heaps of such glorious things get lost, and they never turn up again ? We had them, and now they are gone ; and we can never get them back now, never any more. You yourself keep losing such splendid things. Why, there's your holiday, all over now and gone. And sometimes you feel quite cross with yourself. For, jolly though it was, you see now how much better even than it was it could have been. There were such lots of things you always meant to do, and yet you never did them ; such splendid runs you were to take, and yet you never took them ; there was that hill too you were always going to climb, and somehow you didn't ; and that ninth hole that you were always going to do in three, and once the ball just stopped at the hole's edge. In ? No ! a four again ! Yet you feel you could do it now. Ah ! but it is too late ; the holiday is over, and you can't get it back ; that's lost.

And you lose bigger things than that. Once on a day you were the cleanest and the straightest of little lads, straight as an arrow—but now ? Haven't you grown just a wee bit shuffling when you get into a hole, not quite, quite true. Did you really go up to bed the other night at the time that you promised mother ? Or was the book so exciting that you read on to the chapter's end, and then looked into the next one, not to read it, just to see how things were to get on, and found it so terribly

interesting, that you snuggled down, and it was a whole twenty minutes later when you next looked at the clock? I don't think that was very bad. But it was mean and horrid of you not to own up like a man, and tell mother that you hadn't quite played the game. Where is your old straightness? Have you gone and lost it? Oh, don't tell me that! Really? Why, then, we must all get down on our hands and knees and search for it, search everywhere for it, till we come on it. And perhaps you've just mislaid it for a bit, and we may find it yet.

And mother too loses things. She used to have the dearest wee lass, so sunny and bright and unselfish, who never needed to be asked, but saw things for herself and ran to do them. But where is she now? The other day weren't you real cross and grumpy about going that message, trailed off with slow, heavy feet, and such a sulky face? Wherever has that little girl gone that mother used to have? Lost her? And will she never get her back? Oh, what a dreadful pity!

And yet perhaps she may. For there is Some One who is just splendid at finding things, with sharp eyes that see what every one else has missed. And any one who had dropped anything came running to Him, and asked Him to help, and He always did. A mother had lost her boy, and He found him for her; here is a poor soul that had lost his health, and there a stupid woman who had lost her honour, and here again a man, the silly, who had lost himself, and Jesus found them all again for them and gave them back.

Once in a park in Liverpool long, long ago, I came upon a man, walking up and down, with his head bent. 'Have you lost anything?' I asked. 'Yes,' he said, 'but you can't find it for me; I have lost my life.' What a huge hole in his pocket he must have had! Yet he was wrong. If he had only thought of Jesus Christ, He would have found even that for him. And if we go to Him to-day, perhaps He will find that straightness that we have mislaid, and perhaps mother may get back her own little lass again. What do you say to try? He will be sure to help us. The other day, your doll's leg dropped off somewhere in the garden, and you went in a dreadful state and told mother about it. But she was busy, and she wouldn't come and look with you. And that hurt you. For if your leg had fallen off and was lost somewhere in the garden, she would be in a fine fuss

over it. But she didn't seem to care for you—poor you, with your one-legged baby. Jesus never is too busy. 'Oh,' He'll say when we tell Him about the lost wee girl and that straightness of ours we cannot find again, 'That's terrible! there's not a minute to be lost; and we must search at once.' And He'll put everything else aside and come. What do you say? Let's take His hand, and let's start looking with Him; let's begin it here and now. And He won't stop till what was lost is found.

'Swank!'

'For we are God's fellow-workers.'—1 Co 3⁹.

Swank! You boys and girls all know what that means, though it is a word that you won't find in the dictionary. When a boy goes out to take his innings at cricket, looking as if he were the one hope of his side; when he takes a long time getting 'centre,' and looks all round the field to see where the fielders are, as much as to say just watch me knock spots off the bowling, you murmur 'Swank!' And then when he gets bowled, first ball for a 'duck,' you just shout with glee, 'Of course!'

And what about the girls? Why, when Phyllis tells you how many new frocks she has, and all about her best Sunday hat, why you murmur . . . or rather you don't—you're too polite; but you know what 'swank' means, don't you!

Now these people to whom St. Paul was writing were inclined to swank a little. Some of them said, 'Apollos is our leader, and, you know, there's nobody in the world like Apollos.' Others said, 'Well! we don't think much of Apollos, we follow Paul.' And yet others said, 'Peter is the man for us.' And there they were despising one another and refusing to speak to one another, and each lot thinking there was nobody in the world as good as they.

Now St. Paul, when he wrote to them, said, 'We are all fellow-workers.' We each have our bit to do; we work for the same Master; we help one another; and our Master blesses what we try to do. So don't swank! lend a hand, and work together. Now that reminds me of an old legend that I heard many years ago. And this is how it goes.

Once upon a time, the fingers of a man's hand

¹ By the Reverend A. P. Bourne, Dewsbury.

were always quarrelling amongst themselves as to which of them was the most important. The first finger would say he was the best ; and the second finger would say, 'No. I am !' and the third finger would say, 'You're both mistaken, I'm better than either of you !' and the little finger would say, 'You're all wrong, there's nobody like me !' Well ! things came to such a pitch that at last they agreed that they would have a meeting, and each finger should have an opportunity of stating why he considered himself the most important, and then when they had all spoken they would settle the matter once and for all by vote.

So the day came at last, and because the four fingers didn't think the old thumb would have any chance in the voting they asked him to take the chair. Then the thumb without making a chairman's speech called upon the first finger to speak, and this is what he said : 'Ladies and gentlemen'—(I don't know whether there were any ladies there, but that is what he said)—'We all belong to a single hand, the hand of a man or a woman, and I claim that the finger which is of greatest use to men and women is the most important. Now I am of the greatest use. For when one man wishes to direct another on his way, he always uses me, and pointing with me he says, "That is your way !" If it wasn't for me, therefore, men and women would find it very difficult to point out to one another the right road.' And he sat down.

Then it was the turn of the second finger, and he said : 'I haven't much to say, but what I am going to say is very much to the point. I am the most important of you all for the simple and yet sufficient reason that I stand head and shoulders taller than any of you.' And he sat down. (Now if you happen to be the tallest boy or girl in your class you think that was rather a good speech, don't you ?)

Next came the third finger, and he said—or perhaps I ought to say she said : 'I claim that the finger is most important that is most valued by men and women. And that I am that finger I have a clear sign and proof. For often they place a little ring of gold around me. And therefore'—but at that point all the other fingers shouted 'Swank !'

Then the little finger got to his feet, and he said : 'I don't agree at all with the second finger—(of course, *he* wouldn't)—mere size is nothing. And

I only agree partly with the first finger. Certainly that finger is the most important that is of the greatest use to men and women. But it is I that am of the greatest use, not the first finger. For there is no power among men like the power of speech ; and when men desire to emphasize what they are saying, they shut all you fingers up, and moving me up and down, they say, "Now listen to me ! you must do this, or you must do that." So undoubtedly I'm the most important of you all.' And he sat down.

Then they voted ; and when the thumb announced the result, this is what it was : First finger, one vote ; second finger, one vote ; third finger, one vote ; little finger, one vote. You see, each one had voted only for himself !

Then at last the thumb spoke, and this is what he said : 'You're all wrong ! we all belong to the hand, and if we are to do our work, we must each do our best, and help one another. Why, there are some things all you four fingers put together cannot do without me.' At that, the fingers were most indignant : as if there was anything in the wide world they could not do without the old thumb ! When they challenged him to show them one thing they couldn't do without him, this is what he told them to do, and you boys and girls can try it for yourselves at home. Find the biggest and heaviest book in the house. Lay it flat on the table, and put your fingers under it ; only the four fingers mind, not the palm of the hand. Now try to lift it. Well, the four fingers tried : the first finger pushed, and the second finger pushed, and the third finger pushed, and the little finger pushed, and they all pushed together, but the book only toppled over on its side.

'Now,' said the thumb, 'you get underneath again, and I will get on the top. Then, when I give the word you push from underneath, and I'll pull from the top, and we will see what we can do.' So they all pushed and pulled together and the book went up into the air beautifully. Thus the fingers learnt a lesson which they must have remembered ever since, for my fingers never quarrel ; do yours ?

Boys and girls, you and I belong to God, and we are here in the world to do God's work, and the only way we can do it is for each of us to do our best and help one another. So, however clever we may be, we have nothing at all to swank about, we are just 'God's fellow-workers.'

The Christian Year.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ARMISTICE SUNDAY:

The Glory of a Nation.

'Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.'—Jer 9²³⁻²⁴.

To-day no word of the prophets is of greater value than this word of Jeremiah from the Lord, in which the real glory of a nation is set forth. In what does true national glory consist? Israel and Judah thought that it lay in the possession of three things—wealth, might, and wisdom. A long peace had enabled them to accumulate enormous wealth. They had for that day a large army. Jerusalem was an impregnable fortress, so they imagined. And they had some clever statesmen who had concluded fine alliances or treaties with other powers. Nothing could be better. With such a trinity they were invincible. They made it their boast. Jeremiah brands the whole thing as false. He tells them that their supposed glory was their deadly peril. Their wealth excited the cupidity of other peoples; their army invited a contest; their statesmanship bred craftiness with its train of miseries. And to support his censure, he points to the darkening horizon, and shows that Babylon and Egypt were gathering to the spoil. 'Your true glory,' he cries, 'does not lie in these things, but in another direction altogether. It consists in a spiritual response to God, who stands for loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness. If you would be secure you must delight in the things in which God delights.' In so speaking to his own people Jeremiah speaks to the whole world and for all time.

It is not necessary to labour the point that wisdom, might, and wealth are real elements in the life of all progressive peoples. We need able men, strong men, rich men, in the fullest content of these words. This trinity of forces can advance a nation's life to an immeasurable degree. Wisdom, might, and wealth, however, are only really useful to a people as they enable it to fulfil its providential mission in the world. And what is that mission? It is to promote those things in which God delights,

namely, 'lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness.' A nation has no other end than that. All its forces are given to it in order that it may discharge the mission assigned to it by God. For all nations exist by Him and for Him. That is the main truth we have to get home to the human conscience to-day. Each nation is a fraction of a large humanity which has its home upon the earth. But the earth itself is a fraction of something greater—the universe. And neither the separate nation nor humanity as a whole fulfils its mission unless it accomplishes the will of Him who is the Lord of all worlds.

1. Look at *wisdom divorced from God*. By 'wisdom' Jeremiah here means chiefly political sagacity; but the word may be used to cover a larger field. Wisdom amongst a people is a most desirable thing, but when 'wisdom'—whether personal or political—becomes our 'glory,' our boast, and is distended to absurd dimensions, then it offers a great peril to a people. At the very best our fullest knowledge is but relative, partial, ever changing, and a mere fraction of what remains to be known. To make a god of it and to worship it is the most foolish thing conceivable. Knowledge and wisdom—which, after all, are gifts of God to us—are intended for the making of character, and were never meant to be ends in themselves. But no 'character' is worthy unless at the heart of it there is harmony with the eternal wisdom, which, above all else, is marked by loving-kindness.

2. Look now at *might divorced from God*. By 'strength' here Jeremiah intends, primarily, military strength. But, again, we may use the word to cover the entire range of brute force as employed by man. No wise person would make light of the advantages to a nation of a fine physical manhood. It is well that we cultivate the athletic qualities and that we seek to eliminate weakness from the race. But men are slow to believe that strength of this kind is not the highest kind of strength. At the best it is but brute force, which, as life wears on, gradually lessens, until it wholly fails. It is nothing to 'glory' in, when it is remembered that man's highest distinction lies in the mental and spiritual realms. When might of any kind is placed under moral direction it becomes a great auxiliary of justice; but when it is divorced from God, the source of all strength, and becomes a subject of vainglory, then it is turned into an enemy of 'judgment'—a contradiction of that in which God delights.

3. Look also at *wealth divorced from God*. Jeremiah intended by 'riches' not simply private wealth, but national material prosperity. Again, we use the word to cover the entire field. It is both idle and stupid to utter a tirade against wealth, which is inevitable where industry and commerce are efficiently conducted. Wealth has a great mission. By its means the arts and sciences can be developed and beauty cultivated. Placed under the empire of moral ideas, wealth can further the very highest human interests. It becomes a medium for securing human weal—wealth of life, thought, and happiness. But when it is divorced from morality—that is, from God—it is converted into a weapon of injustice; it opposes that in which God delights. Wealth perverted to selfish uses issues in all kinds of crookedness—the opposite of rectitude.

In what does the true glory of a nation lie? In this one thing only—a complete spiritual response to God, who delights in loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness. This, the prophet says, is to 'understand and know' the living God. The 'knowledge' of God is something far above intellectual speculations about His Nature and His 'essence'; something far above philosophical and credal statements about His mode of being. To know God is to make the practical and affectionate response of the child to the Father, to be one with His purpose, to reproduce His spirit. It is our glory that we can thus know Him, for we are made in His likeness and image, and Christ has come to reattach us to Him. To know Him is more than entering upon an intellectual quest after Him. It is to be penitent, to be trustful, to be obedient, to be co-operative. It is knowledge in life and with living results in life. Nothing is barren in this knowledge; all is vital—it breaks forth as loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness. A nation 'knowing' God in this manner becomes morally invincible. Its wisdom, might, and wealth do not go astray; they are all placed at the service of God for the service of man. Their uses are moral. Within such a nation, war's injustice, bitternesses, and crookedness automatically cease. There is nothing upon which they can feed. The forces of the nation become constructive, not destructive. We must enthrone the ideal and refuse to abandon it. But we must do more. We are called to enshrine it within ourselves; to adjust our own personal life to the purpose of God; to seek the things in

which He delights. We can do that, whatever others do. Now, tell me, what is it you glory in? A man's boast is the measure of his character. Do you boast in your cleverness, your wisdom, your might, your wealth? And does it not, in this sacred hour, appear paltry and unworthy? Let us vow, from this day onwards, that our sole glory shall be to know the Lord and to delight in those things in which He delights.¹

There's but one gift that all our dead desire,

One gift that man can give, and that's a dream;
Unless we, too, can burn with that same fire

Of sacrifice: die to the things that seem.

Die to the little hatreds; die to greed;

Die to the old ignoble selves we knew;

Die to the base contempts of sect and creed,

And rise again, like them, with souls as true.

Nay (since these died before their task was finished),
Attempt new heights, bring even their dreams to
birth,

Build us that better world, O, not diminished

By one true splendour that they planned on
earth.

And that's not done by sword, or tongue, or pen,
There's but one way. God make us better men.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Forgiveness.

'Seventy times seven.'—Mt 18²².

'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.'—Mt 6¹².

1. *Historic development of the idea.*—As we examine the Old Testament we discover that, though there are isolated admonitions to forgive an offender, as in Lv 19¹⁷⁻¹⁸, 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: . . . but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' the scope of these admonitions is limited absolutely to Israelites or to such strangers as had taken upon themselves the yoke of the Law. 'Neighbour' does not, in the Old Testament, mean any man that you are brought into relation with, as it does in the New Testament. Moreover, side by side with this higher though limited teaching in the Old Testament, there are statements of a very different character, which exhibit the unforgiving temper

¹ F. C. Spurr, in *C.W.P.* cii. 259.

in various degrees of intensity, and yet regard such vindictiveness in a man as compatible with his enjoying the Divine forgiveness. The Psalmist who wrote :

‘ God is mine helper ;

The Lord is with them that uphold my soul :

He shall requite the evil unto mine enemies,’

and closed the Psalm with the expression of sated vengeance :

‘ Mine eye hath seen its desire upon mine enemies ’
(Ps 54⁴ 5⁶ 7),

felt not the slightest hesitation in believing that God had forgiven him and heard his prayers for vengeance on his neighbour. In Ps 112 this revengeful temper is ascribed to the ideal righteous man.

From the Old Testament we pass to the Jewish books between the Old and New Testaments. In Ecclesiasticus we find some slight advance on the Old Testament. There is, however, another work of the second century B.C.—‘Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs’—in which is taught a doctrine of forgiveness in relation to one’s neighbour that infinitely transcends that of Ecclesiasticus and is scarcely less noble than that of the New Testament. In this work the duty of forgiveness is inculcated in the highest form known to us, namely, that of restoring the offender to communion with us—a communion which he had forfeited through his offences. But the author shows that it is not always possible for the man who has suffered the wrong to compass such a perfect relation with the man who has done the wrong, and yet that the man who has suffered the wrong can always practise forgiveness in a very real though in a limited degree, however unreasonable or unrepentant the man may prove who has done the wrong. Here, then, we have arrived at the *first form of true forgiveness*. In this case the man who has undergone the wrong can get rid of the feeling of personal resentment and take up a right and sympathetic attitude to the offender, though he does not for a moment condone the moral wrongness of his conduct. So true forgiveness in this sense is synonymous with banishing the feeling of personal resentment, a feeling which rises naturally within us when we suffer wrong, and which, if indulged, leads to hate. When we have achieved this right attitude towards the offender, got rid of the feeling

of resentment, the way is open for his return to a right relation with us—a return, however, which cannot be effected until the offender has confessed his wrong-doing, and purged himself from the evil spirit which led to it. This banishment of resentment from the heart is the first and essential duty in all true forgiveness, and it is often all that a man can compass ; and apparently the Divine forgiveness has analogous limitations—at all events within the sphere of the present life.

2. *A double significance*.—When we come down to the New Testament, we shall not be surprised that our Lord accepts this teaching—accepts it and yet lifts it up into a higher plane, by showing that human forgiveness and divine forgiveness are essentially one and the same. Our Lord teaches us that we must cherish the spirit of forgiveness towards those who have wronged us, because such must be our spirit if we are truly sons of God. By having God’s spirit we show our kinship with God. ‘Love your enemies,’ our Lord declares, ‘and pray for them that persecute you, that so you may be sons of your Father in heaven.’ And further on the great declaration : ‘For God maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust.’ He teaches that God cherishes no resentful feelings towards His children that have sinned against Him. It is clear, therefore, that in the teaching of our Lord and in that of St. Paul the spirit of forgiveness is an essential attribute of God, and that no expiation, no satisfaction is necessary on man’s part in order to obtain it. All that is necessary on man’s part is true repentance. Without repentance on man’s part God cannot forgive, but if a man, no matter how great or heinous his sin may be, truly repent, he can take home to his troubled heart the comforting assurance that already his forgiveness is sealed in heaven.

We have now seen that as regards both God and man forgiveness has a double significance. A man forgives in the first and primary sense when he puts away from him the sense of irritation and resentment against the man who has wronged him, and entertains towards the offender the spirit of forgiveness. By so doing he shows, as our Lord teaches us, that he is a son of the heavenly Father ; for God has always entertained this spirit of forgiveness towards sinful man. But in the case of both God and man, forgiveness can often be exercised only in this limited form in this world ;

for the offender may refuse to repent, and persevere in his wrong-doing; but till a man is assured of this, he must try to practise forgiveness in its complete form. But forgiveness in the second and full sense of the word is not realized when a man masters his feelings of resentment, and entertains a spirit of forgiveness towards the man who has wronged him. It is something immeasurably larger. It is not realized until the offender is restored to communion with all that is best and Christlike in us. It cannot be satisfied till the wrong-doer has abjured the evil that has created the breach of communion with us, till he is lifted out of the evil spirit of wrongness and restored to communion with what is most Christlike in us, and so far into communion with God. 'If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him' (Lk 17⁸); and again: 'If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother' (Mt 18¹⁵). This, my brethren, is Christian forgiveness in the full sense; which of us fulfils it?

3. We are now in a position to understand *man's power of binding and loosing*, spoken of in such verses as 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Mt 18¹⁸). 'To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also; . . . what I also have forgiven, . . . for your sakes have I forgiven it in the person of Christ.' Here St. Paul forgives a man, not as an apostle, but as a representative of the congregation, and forgives because the congregation forgives. The reason, moreover, that St. Paul gives as showing it to be their duty to forgive is instructive: 'Forgive him and comfort him, lest he be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.' Despairing of man's forgiveness, he may despair also of God's. Had the congregation refused to forgive this man, it would have been to shut him out from their love, from their mercies, from the universe of God's love, so far as they were part of it, and thus to close up, so far as they were concerned, the passage of possible return. Thus, instead of remitting his sins, they would have retained them, perhaps to the utter perdition of their unhappy brother. This prerogative of binding and loosing belongs to every Christian as such—that is, so far as he attains to the ideal man.

If we but reflect, we can discover how continually this power is exercised in life by every true

Christian. Who has not known from what a burden he has been delivered when his confession of long-concealed guilt has met with loving sympathy, with human forgiveness, where perhaps he expected rebuke, or even reprobation; and how from this forgiveness he has gained the assurance of Divine forgiveness? ¹

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Citizenship.

'Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.'—Ph 3²⁰.

It is a vigorous, undoubting, soul-sustaining utterance, full of assurance, full of comfort 'when our heads are bowed with woe, when our bitter tears o'erflow'; it is suggestive of the Divine basis of human existence, calculated to reach to the true inwardness of man's being, and lift him above the sorrows, disappointments, and perplexities of life.

There is infinite suggestiveness in the use of the present tense—'is' in heaven, not 'shall be.' There is no suggestion here of heaven as wages to be waited for, or as some celestial dividend-day in the dim and distant future, when God's toilers will receive the accumulated earnings for which they have laboured. There is no sanction given here to the inadequate materialistic conception of heaven as a kind of endless transcendentalized oratorio from the enjoyment of which most human beings are excluded, or an infinitely prolonged celestial idleness.

Mark the authoritative unfolding of the true conception of heaven by our Lord to Nicodemus. He pierces his soul by one mighty word of the Spirit. Nicodemus virtually asks how he is to get to heaven. 'Ye must be born from above' is the answer, that is, from within, for the 'kingdom of heaven is within.' The word used is 'anōthen.' It is nearly the same word as that which the Lord uses of Himself and of His pre-natal being, 'our anōthen,' and the expression, spiritually interpreted, obviously implies that the way to heaven is through heaven, that no man can enter the condition called heaven who has not the heavenly nature awakened within him, and no man could

¹ R. H. Charles, *The Adventure into the Unknown*, 216.

have the heavenly nature awakened within him if it were not already there, embryonic, potential, in germ; that just as the rooting, branching powers are enfolded in the unlovely motionless seed, waiting to be born from above by the vivifying touch of soil, moisture, and sunshine, so the eternal developments of the Spirit of God are enfolded in the human being, awaiting the life-giving touch which shall call them into operative activity.

Underlying this utterance of St. Paul two things may be traced.

1. There is, first, a suggestion as to the strangely contradictory nature of man, a solution of the conflict of which we are conscious within us—'Heaven from whence we look for a Saviour.' Where is heaven? How often are we to remind ourselves that 'the kingdom of heaven is within,' that God is the inmost centre of all things and all men. What can alone change, transfigure this vile body? How is the ugly chrysalis changed into the gorgeous butterfly? Only the uprising within us of the germ of the Christ-nature, the mystic Christ, the Saviour element, the new clothing of the immortal spirit, can transfigure us. This new man is germinally within us now, we have not to wait for it to descend from the clouds; Paul calls it the 'Christ in you,' the Christ-nature, which is the attribute of all men and which was objectively manifested in perfection in the Lord Jesus. We have heard it likened to 'the wedding garment'; we have heard it called 'the armour of God.' Now we have it likened to a 'body,' a new body, a pure and glorious body, a non-atomic enswathement of the immortal spirit, a body like unto His glorious body, and it is to be evolved from the heaven within.

Now, granted that St. Paul is revealing the secret of our ideal humanity, it is from the heaven within that we are to look for this 'Saviour Christ who will change this vile body.' It is not by yearning mental concentration upon the future descent from a distant heaven of a Divine Healer that we are to be changed, while generation after generation of human beings continue unchanged. The whole of the occult saying is in the present tense. It is for us to believe, and to affirm with all our strength, that the Mystic Christ within, the vital reality of our being, which is the God dwelling within us, is now, to-day, at this moment yearning to become a recognized, kindled power in the soul; longing to build us up, to clothe us with the new body, 'like unto his glorious body'; to make us

gradually new men and new women, not by destroying the flesh nature, but by absorbing it, 'making of the twain one new man and so making peace,' and this is the at-one-ment.

What can we do to co-operate with this 'Saviour-Christ nature' dwelling in the heaven within? We can do this; we can assiduously practise ourselves in the conviction that our higher inner consciousness is the life of God within us, the type which was manifested in perfection in the historic Lord Jesus Christ. We can remember that time is not running out for us to annihilation but into development. We can say to ourselves in moments of silent meditation, 'I live because God lives.' We can practise thinking of ourselves as spirit and not as flesh, and, while not despising the 'vile body,' inasmuch as that also has been thought into being by the Omniscient Father, we can avoid concentrating thought on the body. 'Take no thought for your body,' said the Lord; in other words, 'do not be centred on it.' And we can jealously strive to make our bodies pure dwelling-places for the Holy Spirit, the true spiritual ego, the ideal humanity, remembering Paul's words, 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'

2. There is here an assurance of the utter reality of death, the phenomenon upon which we are accustomed to look as 'the King of Terrors.' Death, in human experience, is a fact, and every ascertained fact is an actuality compelling recognition. Death is a real fact, every circumstance connected with which is abhorrent in the extreme. When Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' His words had a deeper application than to His glorious power as the objective God-filled manifestation of the Absolute. His words extend to the indwelling divine nature in all men of which He was the perfect specimen. He, the Christ in man, our share of the Logos of God, is the resurrection and the life in each one of us; the life-germ in every grain of wheat might say, 'I am the resurrection and the life' of this seed. We only hate and fear death because our conceptions of life have necessarily been so closely connected with the body. Life, real life, is spirit; real life never dies:

Never the spirit was born;
The spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not;
End and beginning are dreams.

Birthless and deathless and changeless
 Remaineth the spirit for ever ;
 Death has not touched it at all
 Dead though the house of it seems.

Only the external self dies ; the Jews killed the external self of the Christ, they could not touch His real life. As the Book of Wisdom says : ' The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace.' The real citizenship of that one who, to our unwisdom, seemed to die, and to witness whose seeming death was a veritable hell of anguish, is in God ; in God to whom there is no beginning ; and the scope of that life is in God's Eternity to which there is no ending. ' Peace, peace, he is not dead, he doth not sleep, he hath awakened from the dream of life.'

Let us cultivate the assurance that there is no death. Let us believe that they who have gone before, though we miss their dear forms more and more as time goes on, are living, and loving, and watching, and waiting for us. Let us lift the conscious mind, over the narrow threshold, into the citizenship where our beloved are, and while thus seeking communion of spirit with spirit, patiently continue to do our duty here 'until the day break' (the happy day of our own release) 'and the shadows' (the shadows of earthly limitations) 'flee away.'¹

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The Judgment of the Son of Man.

'To stand before the Son of man.'—Lk 21³⁶.

There is one fact of which every Christian is certain, and about which he knows there can be no mistake. Christ must reign. Whatever the future holds, it cannot witness the reversal of the Old Hundredth—'Jesus shall reign.' That is a fact pregnant with promise, a warrant of hope and a pledge of blessing for humanity which make the Advent message a gospel of grace and glory that transcends our utmost aspirations and hopes. But, once believe it, and no man but must feel that it cannot stand alone. It carries with it consequences as certain as itself. We Christians turn back to the words of our Eternal King, and find that with Him Kingship is also Judgment. He who reigns must judge. His throne is the bar

¹ B. Wilberforce, *There is no Death*, 29.

of judgment. Sooner or later each man's life and character are to be brought up before Him as their final arbiter. The last judgment upon every life is the judgment which will be passed upon it by the Son of Man. The scales in which all human history, and the life of every human individual, will be weighed are held by the pierced hands of the Christ of God.

'To stand before the Son of man.' Christ is here pointing a contrast between the standards of judgment that claim finality in the world as we know it and that judgment of men by Himself which He declares to be the goal and destiny of every human life. And this great saying is no isolated instance in His teaching of solemn forewarning about man's future. The Gospels abound in references to His coming, and its significance for men. It is the merest folly to attempt, as some do, to ignore the words of Jesus about the last things : no part of His teaching is better authenticated than that which concerns the End.

Christ leaves unanswered a hundred questions which agitate our minds about the nature of the life of the unseen, where it is to be lived, and how we shall be related to one another in it. He reveals, rather, something which underlies and dominates the answers to all our curious inquiries, and so makes our attitude, both to the here and the hereafter, a matter of vital present importance. After all, for the practical requirements of life, what we need most is not a clear-cut, intellectual creed about the world beyond the grave, but a revelation of spiritual realities. And what can make the spiritual more real to us than this great, simple disclosure of a personal examination of our very selves by Him who offers Himself in His humanity as the supreme standard and living example of what we ought to be? The last word about us is not ours but His.

There can be nothing arbitrary or forced about such a judgment. It is as inevitable and final as is the fact of what we are. It is the coming of our very selves out into the perfect daylight of spiritual reality. There we shall see ourselves at last as God sees us, not as we have appeared to ourselves or to our fellow-men. If we think for a moment of human life, we shall see that we are accustomed to 'stand before' other presences than that of the Son of man, and to judge ourselves and to be judged by other standards than His. Broadly speaking, there are *three standards of judgment* which

we acknowledge and before which we stand every day we live.

1. Each of us knows, first of all, that he 'stands before' *public opinion*. What is public opinion? It is the world's mind about life; the greatest common measure of what men of varied convictions think about something is public opinion about it. There can be no denying the great importance of public opinion to any man's life.

But it is none the less true that public opinion, and not least public opinion upon the vital facts of the spirit, is often hopelessly misguided, and always tends to represent standards which are lower than the highest. Men come to think that, if they keep conduct sufficiently straight to avoid the censure of average judgments, they will pass muster at the last reckoning with God.

2. Then, secondly, narrowing the circle and coming nearer to reality, we 'stand before' our *friends*. It has often been pointed out that few guides to a man's character are so significant as his friendships. But that which is the strength is also the weakness of friendship. The verdict of friends is usually far too kindly. 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend': few of us have the strength to bear them, and fewer still the courage to inflict them.

3. Thirdly, and coming closer still to the truth, we all 'stand before' our *own self-judgment*. The vital fact in man's moral life is the fact of his conscience. But man is a fallen spirit, and conscience itself is broken and bruised by his fall. Few of us realize that one of our deepest needs is an educated conscience, a conscience purified from the taint of sin. In God's judgment of us there is a court of appeal beyond and above our consciences: and we can see that this must be so, if

He is to raise us up to the perfection of His own holiness. St. Paul has spoken the last word about our own self-judgment and its unavoidable limitations: 'I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.'

This, then, is our Advent certainty. Not public opinion with its fickle convictions, its shifting standards, and its dishonest compromises; not the lax and partial judgments of friends, who condone sin in us and refuse to try us by the measure of God; not even the more severe self-scrutiny of conscience, which has been duped into lowering its ideals by bitter failures, and seduced into doubting the plain warnings of the voice of God within. Not these are the final arbiters upon these human lives of ours, but the Son of Man upon the throne of judgment, the Jesus of the Gospels, human and divine, whom the soul sees with opened eyes to be the very God—perfect goodness, perfect holiness, perfect love. He and nothing less than He, He and He alone, is to try my character, my conduct, myself, when out of this world of dreams and shadows into yonder hereafter, where He reigns and there is none beside Him, I pass to be revealed as I am in the awful radiance of His throne.

How shall we prepare to meet Him? He has told us Himself in words which wrote themselves deep in the memories of His disciples, and were burned so insistently into heart and conscience that, recorded in their Gospels, they have become a guide and a beacon to the Church of all time: 'Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.'¹

¹ F. B. Macnutt, *Advent Certainties*, 19.

The Doctrine of the Trinity.

BY THE REVEREND A. D. BELDEN, B.D.,^f WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.

'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter.'

'He shall bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.'—Jn 14^{16, 26}.

'If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you.'

'He shall glorify me.'—Jn 16^{7, 14}.

THE basis of what is often regarded in these days as the strangest and most enigmatical Christian

doctrine—the doctrine of the Trinity—is to be found in the actual teaching of Jesus. The well-known passage from St. John's Gospel in chapters 14 and 16, the salient features of which are quoted above, would hardly have found a place in even the Fourth Evangelist's narrative if they did not reflect the mind of the Lord.

The baptismal formula, however, at the end of