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What this work and what these activities of the future life will be, we can at present do little more than speculate. But our Lord Himself has encouraged us to believe, through His teaching, *e.g.* in such parables as those of the Talents and of the Pounds, that all faculties worthily employed here will receive additional and fuller scope in the life hereafter :

We doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo.

So wrote Tennyson of the Duke of Wellington. And we recall how in his poem entitled 'Easter Day,' Browning's spirit kindles at the thought of the possible development in another life of such a soul and such talents as those of Michael Angelo, the sculptor :

If such his soul's capacities,
Even while he trod the earth,—think, now,
What pomp in Buonarroti's brow,
With its new palace-brain where dwells
Superb the soul, unvexed by cells
That crumbled with the transient clay !
What visions will his right hand's sway
Still turn to forms, as still they burst
Upon him ?

Yes, 'his servants shall serve him' (Rev 22³), there as well as here. God, we may be sure, will not take the tools from our hands just when we have begun to learn how to handle them. We shall carry with us into the future life not our character only, but also our capacities and powers, those capacities and powers which we have acquired or are acquiring through honest effort and service here. Into the heavenly Jerusalem the glory and honour not only of nations but of individuals shall be brought (Rev 21^{24, 26}), for their fuller development and

satisfaction. And if our different works or lines of activity here are, as Scripture teaches us, so many ways of learning and practising the life of service which is the great thing both here and hereafter, may we not suppose that no small part of the work of good and true men and women in the world to come will be the exercise of their several powers and capacities on behalf of those less advanced than themselves in the kingdoms of truth and of beauty and of love ? Will it not be the joy of the intellectually and artistically and morally and spiritually advanced to share their good things with the intellectually and artistically and morally and spiritually inferior ? So at least some of the early Christian Fathers thought. We find Origen of Alexandria, for example, representing the more perfect souls in the after-life as instructing the less perfect and thus helping them on nearer the Divine truth and goodness and love.

When, therefore, the life in heaven is represented, as it is in Scripture, and especially in the Book of Revelation, as a life of unceasing worship and unending adoration, this is not to be taken as implying that there will be no other activity than worship there. Rather it is, as it has been well expressed, that 'all occupations of every sort, being overtaken for the glory of God and in His service, will partake of the nature of worship.' 'We are mistaken,' said the late H. B. Swete, writing on this subject and drawing out the New Testament teaching, 'if we think of the life of heaven as worship only in our sense of the word. Worship, no doubt, it will be, *all of it*, because in that world all work will be worship, and every act, being brought into relation with God, will be a doing of His will, an offering of a free heart to Him, a priestly service acceptable to God through Jesus Christ our Lord' (*The Life of the World to Come*, p. 105).

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Such were Some of You ; but . . .¹

¹ Such were some of you ; but . . . —I Co 6¹¹.

THE other day I was reading about a bird—I have forgotten its name. But where people had always

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

come upon it is away down in the south of South America. It is a sea bird. It nests on the cliffs where the spray is always dashing. It lives on fish. It spends its days, like the white gulls, poised upon the long, green, lazy swell of the huge billows. And then suddenly it's gone. Well, there is nothing much in that. Many birds migrate, of course. The swallows that built in your eaves

last summer have been spending the winter in South Africa. But where did this bird go? Nobody knew; and no one could find out. They searched, and they searched, but never a glimpse of it could they see. 'It must be somewhere!' they said. But no, they couldn't find it. It was worse than hide-the-thimble, when all the rest have seen it and sat down, and keep laughing at you who feel so hot and foolish left there all alone out on the floor, and yet you can't think where it is. But these people kept on searching, and at last they came upon that bird again. But no wonder they had taken a long while. When they saw it last it was away down in the south of South America. When they found it, it was far up in Alaska, in the north of the north. They were looking for a sea bird, and when they found it, it had become a land bird. They were searching for it on the beach; and they got it four thousand feet up in the mountains; they knew that it lived upon fish, and they discovered a bird that never thought of fish, but lived only on insects. It was a new creature, living a new life, in a new way.

That's a strange story, isn't it? But boys and girls can do that too. I've seen it. For a long time they are this, or that, and everybody knows it. And then somehow they become quite different; they, too, are new creatures, living a new life, in a new way.

You remember that fellow who turned up at school—a regular muff, wasn't he? He had been molly-coddled at home; he didn't play games; he couldn't do anything; he just hung about, and what a fuss he made about a shove or a tumble. But by and by you wouldn't have known him. He got keen, he threw himself into the thick of things. When he gets the ball at football now the other side have to look out; he is so daring, so apt to break through, and is so nippy with his passes. He's the same boy, yet could he be more different?

Sir Isaac Newton was like that. He was one of the cleverest men that ever lived. Yet as a boy, even a big boy, he was a bit of a baby. He was quite dull and always sat far down near the foot of his classes, never learned anything, and the masters said he was just hopeless. He never played boys' games, he didn't go with boys at all, but mooned about among the girls. And girls didn't play much then, as they do now—had a far poorer time of it. And Master Isaac spent his play-hours making chairs and tables for their dolls' houses—a dreadful kind of boy I think, don't you? But one day the bully of the school began to bully him, gave him an ugly kick. And that kick woke him up. Somehow he got up from the ground a

quite different boy. The first thing he did was to take off his coat and thrash that bully.

That's what you always read about in the school stories. But it never happens in real life. Well, it did this time anyhow. And then he threw himself into everything. He became head boy of the school. And as for lessons, he could do them slap off as easy as looking at them, and was by miles the cleverest in every class. And fellows coming back to the old school used to stare at him. You don't tell me this is Isaac Newton who used to loaf about with the girls and play the baby! Well, I never! But he's become another fellow altogether. And he had.

There's something to cheer you up. For, perhaps, you too are rather dull. You try and try, but it's no use. However you keep trying, you are always near the foot, can't get the hang of it. Well, perhaps you'll wake up too, if you keep trying. And even if you don't, there are other things than lessons. Robert Louis Stevenson wasn't much use at his classes in his day. But tell me, who were the boys that got all the prizes and medals? Nobody knows, nobody cares. They're all forgotten. But we know about Stevenson. He did best after all. Don't you lose heart. There are other things besides French verbs and sums, and you may do them splendidly.

Or perhaps you are one of those little chaps who are afraid in the dark. You don't like to own it. But you know it's true. Out in the passage, creeping up the stair, your heart goes quick, and you can't keep from thinking there *is* something behind you. And you are vexed about it because other boys aren't like that at all, and yet you are. Ah, well! I remember once a fellow at the War who had crept out into the darkness of No Man's Land, and done wonderful things out there all alone, where every one felt creepy. And when I went to see him next day he laughed. 'It's a funny thing,' he said, 'this should happen to me. For as a boy I was dreadfully afraid of the dark, would make any excuse, would tell lies, I'm afraid, to get staying in the lit room just a wee bit longer. Well, it just shows that, if you stand up to it, you can beat anything.' He did; he became a new creature with new ways; and so can you.

So if you feel a horrid little chap in some ways; if you're ashamed about it; if, when you get into bed, you're dreadfully vexed you were so sulky and bad humoured and unkind; if you make up your mind you're done with that, and yet next day are just the same again, don't you give up! 'Such were some of you,' said Paul, after rolling

off a whole long list of hideous things—'such were some of you: but' not now. All that is left behind, and you're quite different. A sea bird that becomes a land bird; that eats fish, and that won't look at fish; that builds on the cliffs, and that leaves these for the mountains. Funny, isn't it? But that's nothing. For, grubby, crabbed, sulky, little beggar as you are, you can become, like Jesus Christ, as big and brave and wonderful as that! Really you can. What do you say? Let's have a try!

Off with his Head!

'The way of evil men, avoid it . . .—Pr 4¹⁴, ¹⁶.

Of course, you know well enough the crusty old Queen in *Alice* who was for ever ordering 'Heads off!' but the story was quite new to my lawn-mower. He listened without saying a word, as I read it to my little boy the other evening. The funny old Queen seemed a real heroine to my lawn-mower, and the next morning when I took him out of the tool shed, I heard him say, as soon as ever he began to travel over the lawn, 'Off with his head! off with his head!' He had caught sight of the dandelions and buttercups and daisies that will grow there. 'Off with his head!' he said, and sure enough those golden heads were soon off. My lawn-mower seemed thoroughly to enjoy his horrid work, and when I trundled him back into the shed again, he was purring loudly to himself, just as our dear old cat Ophelia does when we stroke her. I tell you he was pleased with himself. And he started the same game the next time, and kept it up the time after, until I had to say to myself, 'Why, the lawn-mower is splendid, he does not leave a single dandelion behind him.'

And then a wonderful thing began to happen. The dandelions and daisies although they had lost their heads had not lost their wits, for they had a 'confab' among themselves, right down under the grass, so that the lawn-mower could not hear them, and they decided that they had lost their heads because they had worn them on too long a neck, so they made up their minds to arrange for shorter necks and dodge the executioner! And they were as good as their word, for when next I brought out my lawn-mower, he was still in his old blood-thirsty mood—'Off with his head! off with his head!' he rattled as I rolled him up to the grass. But though the cutting blades were as sharp as ever, the mower went clean over the fresh dandelions, and I could almost hear them laugh at him as he

¹ By the Reverend Frank J. Gould, A.T.S., Watford.

looked back with surprise. The dandelions had beaten him! They had made their necks so short that it was impossible for the lawn-mower to touch them; and I had to go out after he had finished his work and dig them out with a knife, or I should soon have had my garden full. I can tell you my lawn-mower did not like the trick; at first he declared it was not his fault, he said the blades wanted sharpening, and he would like a drink of oil. But really it wasn't that. He had actually lost the power to cut off their heads, because they had been too clever for him. He still grumbles out, 'Off with his head! off with his head!' but he is almost as helpless as the poor old Queen, for the heads do not come off; and all his brave threats are in vain. Don't you think that was clever of my dandelions? I do. And let me tell you this, I made up my mind to try the same trick, because I know some people who always do me harm when I am with them. They say all sorts of unkind things, or they are always grumbling, or they ask me to do mean things, and I must confess that sometimes they have got me; but I am going to grow a shorter neck, I am going to keep my head out of danger's way. When they are about, I shan't be! and, I think, by 'lying low' I shall be as safe as the dandelions. Suppose you try this way too. I can see a half-dozen dandelions on my lawn that will give the method a hearty testimonial.

The Christian Year.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

A New Life.

'Let him come unto me.'—Jn 7³⁷.

No one, I think, who examines life to-day will deny the presence of two tendencies whose existence in life, especially when combined in the experience of a single individual, constitutes almost a strange paradox. The one, observable in the character and conduct of men and in that materialistic outlook which characterizes the view of not a few of our age, may perhaps be described as the spirit of self-sufficiency. The other, steadily becoming more apparent and making itself felt in spite of a superficial materialism, may be described as the recognition of some spiritual force ordering and controlling the affairs of men.

1. There is, first, *the spirit of self-sufficiency*. Never, I suppose, in the inculcation of ethical teaching, has the stress upon the power of character, the necessity for the exercise of the will, been more insistent or more widely expressed. A youth, for

example, starts upon life. What is the kind of advice that is tendered to him? Is it not something like this: 'You must train the faculties that you possess; you must mould the character which is yours; the spheres of life in which you move must reflect yourself; in you and in them lies the secret of success'?

Nor is it only in the advice that is proffered by the elder to the younger that this is to be seen. The methods of enterprise observable in every department of life, the machinery men employ, the spirit of toil, all attest it. Everywhere men who would succeed, who would mould the world to their wishes and to their will, look not so much to the passing circumstances, or to the opportunity of the moment—though they may seize it—though they look for the power of themselves to attain.

2. And yet side by side with the spirit of self-sufficiency there is *the recognition of some spiritual force ordering and controlling the affairs of men*. Science is more and more determining for us that the basis of things is ideal and spiritual. We have even novelists whose themes are not merely those of fiction or of history, but who are endeavouring to show that behind life lies some spiritual ideal. We have philosophic theories which have made the theory of materialism bankrupt.

Men may say to us that the only force which can conquer life and gain its possession lies within, that a man's attainment can only be measured by the degree in which he can impress his character upon the circle that surrounds him. But the fact remains that, affecting this method, revealing itself in unexpected ways, there are actions and principles of action which testify to the power of the unseen and the spiritual to aid them. It may give rise, as in some quarters of the world it does, to a strange and fanciful belief, or it may take a nobler form, as in much of the best speculative thought of to-day; but the point remains that it is a growing and increasingly influential power in the common affairs of human life.

3. There is one answer to the problem of *how these two tendencies* which are inherent in human nature *can be reconciled and utilized*. The Church, in spite of many a lapse, in spite of the overwhelming power of the world, which has sometimes distorted its outlook, has but one, and it is a unifying one. It takes the tendency to self-sufficiency, and shows where it may be ennobled. It takes the tendency to regard spiritual powers as a force in life, and shows what is their real basis. The Church whose foremost missionary could write such a splendid series of ethical instructions as is to be

found in the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and could dictate such warnings as are to be found in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, such a Church could never despise real culture. Nor, on the other hand, would she deprecate looking for the ideal and the spiritual. She comes to the man who has found something of these things and discovered their help and assistance, and she says to him: 'You have done well.' It is in these things that you will find strength. But you must go deeper. Behind spiritual aspiration lies some spiritual reality. Behind character lies creed. Behind all these things lies one great inspiring reality. What is it? It is that, surely, which the nature of man witnesses to, it is that which all our thoughts more or less are tending towards to-day—personality. And for us who own the sway of Christ it is the personality of Jesus of Nazareth—Man, but Son of God.

We face to-day, in the changing order of national and of social life, a noble duty and an entrancing task. What is that duty, and what is that task? It is the duty as never before, the obligation most important, of permeating the common affairs of life with the Christian spirit exemplified in Christian lives. But the noblest task by heaven decreed needs inspiration for its performance. There is no great movement in the history of the world but has started from some ideal. Some aim, some noble inspiration must lie behind it or it will fail. And behind all great movements there lies some great personality in which the ideal and the aim have become incarnate. Take an illustration.

It may well be that the conception of brotherhood and the development of social life were at the beginning of the movement for the emancipation of the slaves, but at the back of these things were great personalities—Abraham Lincoln and James Russell Lowell as the pact of its expression. For as Whittier set it down, so is it true of all movements in which ideas become incarnate in the lives of men:

The letter fails, and systems fall,
And every symbol wanes;

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is he;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

If, then, it be so—and all experience surely tells us that it is—is it not natural that when we are entrusted to-day with the tremendous task of reorganizing, re-creating, and re-uplifting in Chris-

tian principles the world about us, there should sound in our ears the warning that these things can only be done by men who have come unto the Christ? And was not the occasion of the words of our text significant? It was the Feast of Tabernacles. Two customs gave force to that significance. The one was the lighting of the great golden candelabra in the courts of the Temple, whose beams, we are told, shed light into the darkest corners of the city. The other was the drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam. The one spoke of the pillar of fire by night that guided in the desert, the other of the water that flowed from the rock. In that instant, when the thoughts of men were intent upon the wanderings of the past, and the stress and difficulty that had been, there sounded the voice of Christ, 'I am the light of the world,' 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.' It told His hearers and His disciples that there might be all the wanderings of life, but they were not alone. There might be all the pressure of difficulty and of doubt, there might be longings for better things—then let them learn that the only power that can help them, the only inspiration which can uplift them, and the only abiding force which can ever be theirs lay in union with Himself; and that with Him as their power, and with Him as their inspiration, all the difficulties, and all the stress, and all the burden, and all the care, and all the hardship, and all the problems would be solved.

The answer, then, to the question with which we started lies in one word. It is Christ. In Him the spirit of self-sufficiency is transformed into that life in the image of which we pass from glory unto glory; in Him the gropings after something spiritual and ideal find their fulfilment. For in Him we can do all things. Is not this just the message that we need to-day? The cry, 'Back to Christ,' used in another connexion, becomes in our daily life insistent.¹

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Love.

'On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'—Mt 22⁴⁰.

1. The instinct of the Pharisees was sound when they felt that our Lord's religious attitude was revolutionary even more in what He taught than in what He did, even more in His selection of the two commandments as the sum of the Law than in His consorting with publicans and sinners. For them the question with which they had so carefully

approached Him was crucial. It was meant, no doubt, to test formally the real measure of His adhesion to the Law. And they felt that the application of the test had been justified. There was something wanting in this answer, the lack of which they had suspected all along. It was possible, under the pretence of adhesion to this pious formula, to depress the value of all those traditional observances and beliefs which guaranteed and defined the exclusive efficacy of the Law. There was nothing more dangerous than this loose identification of the Law with its least exclusive elements. Where would be the unalterable necessity of the Law as the sole means of salvation if it could be thus lightly resolved into a hazy something which might embrace the whole world of men in its appeal, and yet a something which no one dare claim that he was equal to honouring fully? It was somehow thus, no doubt, that the Pharisee reasoned. And if we attempt to follow the line of his reflection, we shall probably, if we are honest with ourselves, have less reason to be surprised than we think we have at the conclusion to which it led him. Can we honestly say that the same kind of declaration from a religious teacher whose orthodoxy was suspect among ourselves might not induce similar fears in us? And might we not point for a justification of our fears to the fact that Christianity proved indeed to be the solvent of the Law as a fixed and unalterable religious tradition?

2. Let us think what the attitude of the Pharisee was. He did not hesitate for a moment, he could not hesitate, to accept the truth and even the sufficiency of our Lord's answer. He admitted whole-heartedly, or at least he honestly thought he did, that the great commandments of the Law were to love God and to love one's neighbour. But he thought, too, that it was impossible to keep those commandments save through one special discipline. The most intelligent of Pharisaic theologians would indeed have insisted that the essential value of that discipline was that it enabled men to keep the great commandments. But they would have insisted, too, that without it it was impossible to keep them. And then the great majority were not intelligent. That strict observance of legal detail which the Pharisaic reform had introduced as an aid to the fuller love of God and love of the neighbour had become for the great majority of the later Pharisees an end in itself.

It is out of such a habit of mind that religion grows hard and formal, that it forgets its true nature and dies down into a lifeless routine. And yet the pity of it is that into the narrow, distorting

¹ G. Nickson, in *C.W.P.*, xciv. 219.

moulds of that routine of formal obedience there is often run an intensity of conviction and a fervour of loyalty which, if they had been free to find the channels of God's real action upon the world, might have co-operated there abundantly with the beneficence of His grace.

3. And at such times of obstinate religious hardness there is no hope of salvation but in a new and living word of God. Yet when such a word comes, it is only the old word reasserted in its sovereign might, restored to its natural and essential primacy. All the old words remain. It is only the accent that is shifted. Not one jot or tittle of the Law is necessarily abolished. We may still need every detail of the old religious observance, but we have learned why we need them. The end has become the end, the means has fallen back into its legitimate place as the means. And that has made all the difference. That slight shifting of the accent has effected a religious revolution. The Pharisee was quite right. One never knows what the end of such momentous change will be. Men naturally take it for granted that there is only one way of reaching the end they have in view which it is worth their while to take account of. That is an inevitable consequence of the law of spiritual economy which all life obeys. We do not waste our time considering ways and means which for ourselves do not exist. The way that avails for us is the only way that counts. And there is always the tendency to deny all efficacy to any other way even for others.

None the less, God speaks the new word again and again through the mouth of His chosen servants—the new word which is only the old word recovered from the custom which, instead of enforcing, had really deadened its appeal. God trusts the heart and the living will of man where the Pharisee will trust only a fixed and consecrated habit. It was such a new word that our Lord spoke in the flesh to the men of His own generation. It is such a word that He is speaking again to this generation through His Spirit. He is reminding us once more of the true end which all religious means are meant to subserve. He is pointing the heart of man to its goal in the life which adheres to God with all its power of will and purpose. He is taking us down into the common world to show us how we may be true to God there; He is revealing to us the will of God as the salvation of this actual world of ours; the power of God in every act and purpose which would heal the world's wrong; the life of God in the best that is feebly and fitfully labouring to assert itself in the life of man; the claims of God in

the needs that clamour from human heart to human heart. He has given us, again, a world in which we can believe, for which we can labour with hope, which requires of us the spirit of love as its abiding need and our abiding satisfaction. He has, in short, renewed our religion, made it as wide as life, enlarged its boundaries to the farthest limits of spirit.

4. Well, it is just at such a time that we need the stern touch of discipline, the sincerity of a real preparation. We cannot afford to dispense with any means by which in the past our souls have been sustained in their high mission. We do not need so much to find new ways of training the soul as to use the old in all humility and simplicity of spirit. The desire to change the old instrumental discipline may be the very dissipation of our real spiritual energy. The straightforward recognition of its mere instrumentality, the sincere and steadfast purpose to use it as an instrument, will subdue and strengthen our wills to that end which God has so clearly defined for them in the satisfaction which they themselves demand—the love of God's righteousness and of our human fellows as fashioned by and destined for that righteousness. So alone is religion renewed from age to age by the reviving breath of God's spirit.¹

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Revealing Rent.

'The king rent his clothes . . . and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.'—2 K 6³⁰.

History furnishes few more graphic stories than that of the siege of Samaria. The plan of the invaders was not to carry the city in one or two assaults, but to camp about it and gradually starve out the garrison and the inhabitants. So great was the scarcity of food that an ass's head, which has but little flesh upon it, and that unsavoury, unwholesome, and for a Jew ceremonially unclean, was sold for some £5, and a small quantity of pulse or some such coarse corn, then called dove's dung, fetched about twelve or fifteen shillings a pint. It was when things had reached this extremity that the incident occurred whose gruesome details are recorded in the narrative. 'And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.' Like King James IV. of Scotland, with his iron belt, this Hebrew king had a hidden source of self-

¹ A. L. Lilley, *The Religion of Life*, 165.

imposed suffering. And in a sudden agony of grief for the wrongs and sufferings of his people the great man rent his royal robe, and through the purple rent the astonished people caught a glimpse of red and quivering flesh, teased and torn by the hidden garment of pain.

What strange and unutterable thoughts, what surging emotions, must have risen in the breasts of those who saw that sight! How the pain and the weariness and the wounds would be forgotten in the joy of communion and service with a king who stooped to share the sorrow of his subjects! The whole aspect of life, the call to defence, and the meaning of loyalty, stood out in a new light. The irksome siege took on a glory which it had not before; and the distasteful meal of ass's head became a very sacrament of valour.

The ramparts of Samaria are not more confining than the circumstances by which we all are walled about. And there are times when we grow impatient and disheartened in the endless siege and stress of life's opposing forces. And God seems to sit so unconcernedly and uninterestedly remote from, and so far above, the sphere of our sorrow. And then there comes that wonderful moment of revelation when, for the first time we look, really look, and see, through the rending of the seamless robe of God, the sackcloth within upon the heart of the Father.

To those who see it superficially, the death of Christ, the rending of the robe of His flesh, seems an evidence of weakness. There seems to such an one nothing in that sublime act which can help the desperate need of perishing men. But the people have looked and looked, and that rent which revealed the inner heart and nature of God has been the greatest evidence of power the world has ever seen. Where men thought there was but blind and unpitying might, they have beheld the sackcloth which veiled the sun, and have realized of the King of kings, according to those tremendous lines of Blake, that

Till our grief is fled and gone,
He doth sit by us and moan.

This glimpse of the hidden sackcloth has been the turning-point of many a life, taking it from among the weak and querulous and sending it forth to some post of valour on the wall. It would be futile to imagine that any single line of thought will ever enable us to enter into a full and satisfying explanation of the mystery of Calvary; and the fact that it has challenged the best human thought from its own day to ours without the last word being said

by any about it, suggests that its glory is as many-sided as life itself. But there are many who have seen its significance most sublimely and compellingly as the rent through which the sackcloth appeared for one revealing and ever-to-be-remembered moment in the world's history. The mystic is here at one with the man of affairs. 'The Mystery of the Cross,' confesses Dora Greenwell, 'did not, it is true, explain any one of the enigmas connected with our mortal existence and destiny, but it linked itself in my spirit with them all. It was itself an enigma flung down by God alongside the sorrowful problem of human life, the confession of Omnipotence itself as to some stern reality of misery and wrong.' There are many devout and honest souls who cannot find any rest or comfort in the old penal and satisfaction theories of the Cross. This much we can say simply and truthfully, that, in His pouring out His soul unto death, Jesus was not displaying some new spirit, but the Eternal Spirit who is behind and in all history. The Cross was but the rending of the garments which the King had been wearing from the first hour when the hosts of evil had mustered about the city of Mansoul.

That rending of the veil on Calvary must ever remain something of a mystery. And yet its meaning grows plainer and profounder in proportion as we share the suffering, and shudder at the sin, of the world. It was to those upon the wall that the sight of the sackcloth on their king came home with such meaning. And it is those who have taken their stand upon the wall of defence, to preserve the moral and spiritual well-being of society, who can best appreciate the meaning of the display upon Calvary. Prior to any theological approach to the Cross must be the practical acceptance of it in all its implications. This was part of the secret of the wonderful way in which the sight of those wayside crucifixes in France gripped the imagination of the men who were fighting and suffering there. There can be no doctrine of the Atonement that is not mere words for him who has not somehow felt the rub of the sackcloth on his own flesh, who has not endured something of the shame and suffering of the Cross in his own little life.

They altogether mistake the Christian revelation who think of Jesus, as so many tend to do to-day, mainly as a healer or a teacher. Such an estimate, however sympathetically, reverently, and beautifully it may be presented, does no sort of justice to the historical interpretations of Jesus, which have all, with one accord, contemplated Jesus, first of all, as a doer rather than as a teacher. and

most of all in one supreme deed. It is not the Sermon on the Mount so much as the Sacrifice on the Hill that will save us to-day. We must build our tabernacles, not upon the Mount of Transfiguration, but upon the Mount of Disfiguration—where His visage was so marred more than any man. In these days, when things every bit as horrible as the boiling and devouring of their own sons by the women who bore them are happening in our world, we must have a tremendous gospel to meet a desperate need. Calvary means this, if it means anything, that the fight is so serious that the King Himself has had to come up on the wall, and has been wounded. If we need God badly, He needs us too. Do not let us stop at the ass's head, or the devouring of widows' sons, or even at our own wounds, or we will go mad. Behold for our salvation the sackcloth within upon the heart of our King. Let us come and behold it in the sacrament of the broken bread and the poured-forth wine, and behold the eternal love of God displayed at Calvary, that love that will not let us go until He has brought forth judgment to victory.¹

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Expanding Life.

'I will make you to become fishers of men.'—*Mk* 1⁷.

Jesus chose His first disciples from the fishermen of Galilee. There were no idlers among those whom He called to follow Him: Matthew from his custom-house, Simon and Andrew, James and John from their nets. They were all hard-working, busy men. In Jesus' invitation they recognized a higher call to wider fields of service—Jesus' coming to them marked an epoch in their lives. Their life with Jesus became an ever-expanding life—a life clarified by a vision of transformed values, vitalized by larger motives, broadened and deepened by wider horizons.

The words of our text are a symbol of the expansion of life wrought by their friendship with Jesus. Hitherto they had been fishermen. Had they never met Jesus, fishermen they would in all probability have remained. They sought no greater riches than they could bring to shore in their little fishing-smacks. The horizon of their lives was bounded by the margin of Galilee, the occasional visit to Jerusalem, and the gossip in the market-places of Greece and Rome and markets beyond the seas. They were contented that their life should be spent in catching fish.

And then one day Jesus came down to the Capernaum beach, and gave a new impulse to the lives of Simon and Andrew and James and John. Straightway their lives began to grow. New purposes were awakened within them. Their eyes caught visions of riches that were greater than any offered in the markets of Capernaum. The old horizons of life were pushed farther and farther back.

Our text suggests three ways in which the life with Christ becomes an expanding life.

1. When Simon became a disciple, Jesus began to transform his sense of values. Things which hitherto he had prized highly began to lose their worth in his esteem. And other things, to which he had hitherto given but little thought, became priceless. Hitherto he had been a fisherman. The chief values in his life had been the interests of his business.

You may judge a man somewhat by his conversation. What were the subjects most often discussed by these fishermen as they rested after their long night's labour, or exchanged greetings with friends in the market-place? The size of the season's catch of fish; the market price at Taricheæ; the stirring scenes at their last visit to Jerusalem; the latest gossip concerning Herod, and Pilate, and Roman Cæsar. Then came Jesus. And a new standard of values was held before them. 'I will make you to become fishers of men.' Those hated publicans who collected Roman taxes; the sinner and the outcast whom the austere Pharisees avoided like the plague; the despised Samaritan whose very neighbourhood brought defilement—those were the men for whom Jesus invited them to set their nets. The old topics of the market-place were gradually forgotten. And in their place we hear Simon at Pentecost preaching repentance and faith and the Kingdom of God, the joy and peace of forgiveness, and the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Old values were cast aside and new values became regnant in their lives since they were called 'to become fishers of men.'

Jesus has wrought a similar transformation in the values of human society. The challenge of the Master to the fishermen of Galilee to turn their attention from catching fish to catching men is a symbol of the expansion of life that Jesus has wrought. In the world to which He came human values were of little worth. The civilization of Rome was built on human slavery. Men were not citizens but subjects, the chattels of the emperor. The story of the progress of Christianity is the story of the rising worth of human values and the pro-

¹ H. L. Simpson, in *British Preachers* (3rd series), 119.

gressive subordination of material wealth. Slavery has been banished. The position of womanhood and childhood has been lifted from degradation and misery to honour and boundless opportunity. Property interests are becoming more and more subordinated to personal and community welfare. The Kingdom of Heaven is coming. The teaching of Jesus is transforming the ideals and the values of the world.

Every individual who becomes a disciple experiences the same transformation of values and ideals. The objects for which we were striving before lose all their glamour and become sordid and petty in the light of the new vision that He gives. 'I count all things to be lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.' How trivial seems to us now the old ambition for personal profit and selfish gratification! For we have heard the voice of the Master calling us 'to become fishers of men.' We have had a vision of the riches of heaven, the incalculable spiritual blessings 'in the heavenly places in Christ.'

2. Jesus brought to Simon and his fellow-fishermen a larger and a nobler purpose. Hitherto the chief business of their life had been fishing. From henceforth they were engaged in bigger business. This did not mean that they were to forgo all gainful occupations. We cannot forget that for many years St. Paul supported himself and his missionary campaigns by the labour of his own hands. There were some in Thessalonica who were so carried away with the joy of their new-found faith that they ceased to work for a living and became a burden on their brethren. To these St. Paul wrote admonishing them to return to their tasks, and forbidding the Church to support any able-bodied men and women in idleness. The world still needed the labour of men's hands. But the task of making a livelihood was no longer the chief end and aim of their existence. The big business of these men's lives became, not the accumulation of wealth, but the building of the Kingdom of God.

This is still the message of Jesus to the world. He came to a world that was all absorbed in the struggle for bare physical existence, and for the piling up of wealth that could, by its very nature, prove nothing more than a mere transient possession. And His ringing message to men of every generation has been: 'Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' Jesus challenges us to turn our attention from the problem of making a living to that of making a life.

The life that is without Christ is still absorbed in the business of making a living. For how many of us has life little meaning other than a hard, back-breaking struggle for possession of a little hoard of material things. How much time do we spend in developing our mind, in fostering our capacity to appreciate and enjoy art and music and the things that enrich the higher life? And how much less time still do we spend in the cultivation of the spiritual life within, in deepening our faith, and in enlarging our capacity for communion with God?

When Jesus comes into our life, immediately the interests of the Kingdom of God become the major interests of life. The man who is in Christ will continue to farm, or to serve his community in the bank, or to build houses, just as he did before. And, if he is true to Jesus, he will be a better workman than he ever was before he heard the Master's call. But in his occupation he now sees not merely a means of making a living or accumulating wealth. He sees in it an avenue of service for His Lord. His life is infinitely larger and more worth while than it was before. There come to him satisfactions that were undreamed of in the past. For Jesus has brought to him a larger, nobler purpose.

3. The life with Christ is an expanding life, because it is life with ever-widening horizons. Think how amazingly Jesus pushed back the horizons of Simon's life. When first they met by the Galilean Sea, Simon's world was a very little world. We would call him provincial in the extreme. At the most none of these fishermen had probably ever been farther than to Jerusalem once a year. Their whole life was lived within the narrow limits of one of the smallest of Roman provinces. Their horizon was bounded by the margin of the lake on which they sailed their boats. They had little interest in anything outside of the concerns of their fishing business.

And then came the invitation: 'Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.' And behold how He began to push back their horizons. He taught them to think in terms of the ever-growing Kingdom of God, beginning 'in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.' John became the beloved Bishop of Ephesus. Andrew travelled through all the countries surrounding the Black Sea; Thomas and Bartholomew are said to have journeyed as far as India; and Simon Peter was martyred in Rome.

Jesus is still pushing back the horizons of men. The old narrow Jewish exclusivism is banished

from human thought. Jesus turns our thoughts and purposes outward from our narrow self-centred life and we become conscious of our neighbours. We begin to think in terms, not of our own rights and privileges, but of our responsibilities and opportunities of service. The circle of our benevolence extends from those who are immediately related to us by ties of blood or friendship and includes our whole community. Then the boundaries are pushed still farther back and we are interested in

other communities, in distant parts of our own land; and yet again, and our neighbourhood takes in China and India and Africa. World service becomes a challenging opportunity. Every revelation of human need to which we have the power of responding becomes for us an obligation of wider service. So Jesus is constantly pushing back the horizon. For the life with Christ is an ever-expanding life.¹

¹ C. E. Schofield, *The Gospel of Opportunity*, 59.

Present-Day Faiths.

Methodism.

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No great division of the modern Church bears in its spirit and structure so much the imprint of one personality as Methodism does. John Wesley still lives in its ministry, its worship, and in all its Church courts. Yet, like many other great reformers, he would have desired least of all to be regarded as an innovator. The master passion of his life was the endeavour to recover primitive Christianity. The conservative instinct which perpetually endeavours to rediscover what is best in the past, while it is prepared to lop the mouldering bough away, is calculated to leave more abiding results than the more radical temper which has for its initial motto that of Ezekiel, 'I will overturn, overturn, overturn it.' Wesley's effectiveness in Church history is due to the fact that in his personality was that rarest of combinations—the great evangelist and the ecclesiastical statesman. It was indeed fortunate that his profound interest in ecclesiastical history came before his call to the work of an evangelist. Wesley had reached the mature age of thirty-five before he discovered in a 'heart strangely warmed' the real mission of his life. He was not, therefore, in danger of losing the sense of proportion when driven by this new-found 'enthusiasm' to preach his gospel in almost every parish in England. He took no step forward without finding precedents for his action in early Church history, or that justification which urgent necessity alone could provide for a mind that was eminently balanced and sane.

Although in 1738 his days of laborious study were at an end and those of practical administration were

about to begin, yet for the remaining fifty-three years of his life his mind continued to be remarkably receptive of new ideas. He continued to read persistently and widely and was prepared to learn something from any and every man whom he met. If so simple a soul as the Moravian, Peter Böhler, was able to help him so much at a critical moment in his life, then God might speak some new message to him by any one of His children. We are therefore impressed not so much by the originality of Wesley's mind as by its wide hospitality and by the amazing way in which he put his discoveries into practice. He was a strong Churchman with a very eclectic mind, prepared to surrender his dearest prejudices at the bidding of Truth.

The prejudices of Wesley were those of a High Churchman, in the eighteenth-century use of that term. In his own mind he considered himself loyal to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England to the day of his death. He strongly deprecated the idea that the Methodist societies should break with the Established Church. They began as religious societies in connexion with the Church similar to those already in existence, some of which dated back to the days of Charles II. The spirit of the revival, however, made them missionary and aggressive, alive with contagious zeal. They claimed not only nominal members of the Established Church, but strayed dissenters and thousands who had not even a nominal Church membership beyond that of baptism in infancy. Had the Church of England known the day of its visitation it might have found a place in its organization for a