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## In the Study.

### *Virginibus Puerisque.*

Send them to Coventry and Farther.<sup>1</sup>

'Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.'—Lk 8<sup>32</sup>.

AWAY down in South America it seems they have been having quite a lot of bother with some people. There are not very many of them, but they are very noisy, and they won't let other folks alone; keep stirring up trouble and fuss and rows where everybody was quite happy. Don't work, they say; it's far pleasanter loafing about in the sunshine doing nothing. Why should you get as hot and tired as that? Don't pay taxes! It's nicer to hear the coins jingling in your pockets. Don't obey the laws! Why should you? Why not do just what you like? And at last the rulers yonder have got tired of this, and have hit on an idea. They have rounded them up, and got them all together; and they have said to them, 'Now, we aren't going to kill you, or imprison you, or punish you. But we are sick of you. You're a bit of a nuisance, and we have stood you long enough. Do you see that ship? Well, you're going on board her—oh yes, but you are—and we are going to leave you on an island, a lovely island, and there you can do whatever you like. It's a beautiful place, there are hills and woods and water on it, but it's hundreds of miles out of the track of steamers—it's quite near to Robinson Crusoe's island—and there you will be out of the way. If you don't want to work, you can starve. If you wish to make trouble, make it among yourselves, and fight it out among yourselves, till, like the Kilkenny cats, you have eaten each other up, and there's nothing left but the last yell dying away. Anyhow, you are not to stay here. So, be off with you!

That seems a good idea, doesn't it? I never saw it in our nursery, but lots of mothers use it. When you are in a bad mood, when you get up on the wrong side, when everything is amiss, when you don't want this, and don't like that, when you're cross if you lose, and horribly cocky if you win, when you keep spoiling everything, Mother at last gets tired of it, and she puts you in the corner, where you can twiddle your fingers and study the wallpaper till you know it by heart; or she takes you into a room by yourself—and, 'When you come to yourself we shall be glad to see you,'

<sup>1</sup> By the Reverend A. J. Gossip, M.A., Aberdeen.

she says; 'but we're not going to be bothered any longer with such a crosspatch as you are just now.' And that soon mends matters, doesn't it?

Don't you think we might try that? For there is a whole mass of horrid things in your heart and mine that keep spoiling everything. There are sulks and crossness and bad temper—and—oh, dear me, how many more! If only we could herd them all together, and push them on board a ship, and send them off for evermore! When a boat sails every one cheers, I don't know why. Lots of them are not happy at all, are feeling sore at heart at parting. Yet when the band of water shows and widens between the liner and the shore, every one cheers, wishing good luck to one another. But what a cheer we would send up if we could see that belt of water broadening and broadening between us and those horrid things, if we were done with them once for all.

It's a good scheme, only it doesn't work. For they won't go! Be off! we say. And they put out their tongues at us, which is very rude of them. But then they are horribly rude. They lounge about our hearts, and laugh at us. You come and put us out, my little man, they say. And that does it. For we know we can't. They are too strong for us.

Ah, but we have still a chance. Jesus Christ used to come on poor souls bothered by unclean spirits, and He used to say to those, 'Away!' And off they had to slink. For though they laugh at you and me, they are afraid of Him. Why, once He sent a whole herd of them rushing pell-mell, faster and faster, for they couldn't stop, into the lake, where they were choked; and a good end for them too. And what if He did that for you and me; sent all these horrid things rushing full speed out of our hearts for ever. If I were you I would say to Him: 'Here is a little boy or girl, who just hates the grumps and the selfishness and the—you know what—that keep spoiling everything; who wishes and wishes to be done with them, but they won't go. Please, please, dear Jesus, send them out of me, away, away, where they will never trouble any more.'

### The Name on the Heart.<sup>2</sup>

'I will write upon him the name of my God . . . and my own new name.'—Rev 3<sup>12</sup>.

It was not long after the death of the last of the apostles, and they had strange ideas then. Things

<sup>2</sup> By the Reverend J. T. Hudson, B.A., B.D., Hale.

that horrify us no one took any notice of. If you neglect a baby to-day, and some people are wicked enough to do it, you get into serious trouble. But in those days if you had a baby that you didn't want, and lots of people had, you just left it to starve to death, or for the dogs to eat, or you threw it into the river, and no one said anything about it at all. It was in those topsy-turvy days that an old man, the minister of the church at Antioch, was taken up by the police and condemned to death. They liked to have people condemned to death in those days, because people thought it fun to watch them being killed, and the more it hurt them the more those who watched liked it. And so, instead of killing this old man at once, they saved him up to be sent to Rome, where they killed people in the great open-air theatre by making them fight with one another or with lions and tigers and bears that they kept for the purpose. On his way to Rome this old man wrote seven letters of which we have copies to-day, and that is how we know all about it. His name was Ignatius, and we find that his only crime was that he was a Christian. You could throw babies away and nobody would touch you, but if you were a Christian, however good you were, they killed you if they could. Ignatius tells us that the ten soldiers who took him to Rome were very cruel to him<sup>6</sup>; they were as cruel as ten leopards. But he says it was good for him to be treated badly, because it gave him a chance of practising the spirit of Jesus, and being His true disciple. He thinks it a great honour to be killed for Jesus' sake. Jesus had died for him, and now he is going to die for Jesus, and he says he is not half good enough for an honour like that. And he is very anxious that all his friends, and especially his young friends, should be true Christians. One of his letters is to Polycarp, the minister of the church at Smyrna. Polycarp was only young then: forty years later, when he was an old man, he, too, was put to death for being a Christian, burnt alive at the stake. Ignatius tells Polycarp that being a Christian needs as much training as being an athlete. The boy that wants to do well at the sports has to go in for a lot of training. He practises running or jumping constantly: he goes to bed early so as to get plenty of rest: he has cold baths in the morning and then perhaps an early run, and, whatever other boys do, he never touches a cigarette. He learns to be master of himself so that he may be able to win. And so Ignatius says to Polycarp, 'Be self-controlled as God's athlete, be steadfast like an anvil under the hammer.' In other words,

'If you are going to be a Christian, you will have to train.'

But there are two stories about Ignatius that I want to tell you. The first story is that he was one of the children that Jesus took in His arms when He was here on earth. Possibly this is true. Perhaps it is only a story made up to explain his other name, Theóphoros, which means borne by God. The story supposes that he was called Theóphoros because Jesus bore him in His arms. Of course, you say, if that story is true, he could not help growing up a good and brave man. But even if the story is true, even if he were one of the children whom Jesus blessed, he would not be any better off than any of you boys and girls, for every one of you, too, has been taken by Jesus in His arms and blessed. Really! I mean it! Were you not brought and christened when you were very young? You see only the minister take the baby in his arms in the christening service, but Jesus is really there, and really it is He that takes the baby. And He says, This child is Mine to be My true soldier and servant unto his life's end, and the parents have to promise to bring up the child for Jesus. And when next you see a baby being christened, just say to yourself, They are giving that baby to Jesus, and they are promising to bring it up to be Jesus' faithful soldier and servant. And that is what they did for me, so that I really belong to Jesus, and I have to carry out their promise and be His true disciple.

The other story is this. It was said that when he had been killed at Rome, they cut his heart out and found the name of Jesus written on it. Perhaps this story arose out of another pronunciation of his name. It can be pronounced Theophóros, and then it means, 'bearing God.' Of course it is not really true. But its meaning is true. For the story just means that people had only to look at Ignatius to see that he was like Jesus, fearless and strong, loving and true. When Ignatius was christened, just as when any child is christened, Jesus put His name on him. When a child is christened he is baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But the name had sunk right down into Ignatius' heart, and every one could see that he belonged altogether to Jesus. Now that is why Jesus puts His name on us. Some of you know what Blackpool Rock is like. It does not matter where you break it, you find the same words, 'Blackpool Rock' throughout. Now that is what Jesus intends for every one of us. He intends us to be the same right through, so that it does not matter whether we

are at home or at school, in the classroom or in the playground, we are always found the same, like Jesus, fearless and strong, loving and true. Yes, that is why He puts His name on us. It is that it may be in us, running like red letters right through our life, so that no one can fail to see that we belong to Him. His name is on us and in us. And so every one who has been taken in Jesus' arms, borne of God, is intended to be God-bearing, intended to carry and convey God to the people among whom he lives. He is Theóphoros in order that he may be Theóphóros.

### The Christian Year.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Fellowship of Christ's Venture.

'Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give.'—Mt 20<sup>23</sup>.

James and John asked for fellowship in Christ's crown, and Christ promised them fellowship in His Cross. They desired a kingdom, and He proposed to them a quest. For what they had really asked, however little they understood their own petition, was companionship with Him who was even then on His way to give His life as a ransom. What Christ saw before Himself was the Cross, and what was His to give was fellowship with Himself, on His right hand and on His left, indeed, but on Calvary!

The laws of the spiritual Kingdom are the laws of common life. Risk is essential to human effort. Nothing is so uninteresting as an anticipated result, an assured victory, a mathematical conclusion. Where there are no possibilities of surprise there is no joy in success. The stubborn temper which can play a losing game is a much more valuable asset than the complacency which takes advantage of the swelling wave or floats to shore upon the glowing tide. The spirit that sends men out in search of adventures or urges them to hazard fortune and even life itself belongs to the noble side of human nature, and is necessary to the advance of nations. Nor is there anything more deadening to the creative powers of the race, more destructive of the faith of the peoples, than a determinism like that which filled the jaded imagination of the writer of Ecclesiastes. 'That which hath been is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.'

Nothing comes out more clearly from an attentive

study of the gospel than the reality of the moral struggle in which the Saviour of the world engaged. The exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of the Father was not achieved without that element of risk which is the essential condition of all human success. If this is not so, then the human experience of the Son of God ceases to be a reality, and becomes a hollow pageant instead of a splendid triumph. For if the will of the worker is enlisted in the struggle, then before the event the issue must always hang in the balance. If from the first the spectator is assured of the result, it is because he trusts the skill, the endurance, above all the determination of him who is fighting his way to victory, not because the conditions of the game are so regulated that, as on the stage, the palm is already awarded before the struggle is begun. The Christ did not enter the field of earthly conflict like the god from a machine in the Greek drama who saves the situation by his irresistible might. The Resurrection is not a foregone conclusion when Jesus is born at Bethlehem. He must Himself achieve it, precisely as all the sons of men work out their own destiny, through peril and toil and pain. Every step of the road by which He climbs the steep ascent of heaven carries Him into an untravelled future. He speaks of His life as His temptations, and we cannot suppose that temptation is possible where there is no trembling uncertainty. The salvation of a world once hung upon the slender thread of one human will. Christ met Satan in the howling wilderness. In the garden His sweat was as it were great drops of blood. There could have been no human struggle unless before the Son of Man there opened two pathways; unless at those awful moments in His pilgrimage Christ, and with Him Christianity itself, stood at the cross-roads. We ask, Is there, then, uncertainty with God? How could the Son of God at any moment have stood between failure and success? This we cannot answer. The death of Christ proclaims Him very man, His resurrection marks Him off as Son of God. Here in itself is a paradox which thought can never reconcile. This need not disturb us, for it is no greater problem than that which our own existence presents. But just as we will not deny our own freedom of choice because we confess ourselves to be the workmanship of an Almighty hand, the result of a long development which science is attempting to read, so in contemplation of the Passion of the Son of Man our first demand is that it shall be real. What are certainties in the secret purpose of the Father are dependent on moral effort and are therefore glorious uncertainties so

far as they concern us in the revelation which He has made to us in the Son. It is because He overcomes that He sits down with the Father upon His throne. From beginning to end His career is the supreme venture of faith. Not by His exact knowledge of the future, but by His perfect trust in the Father, was the Saviour of the world sustained. He could commit Himself to the awful risks of the Passion because He abode in the Divine fellowship. 'I am not alone, for the Father is with me.'

It is into the communion of the Eternal Love that Christ calls His followers. 'Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.' To have given our troth to Him for better for worse, for richer for poorer; to have been initiated into the companionship of His home, to sit at His table and to drink out of His cup, to be permitted to go shares with Him in the perils of our earthly lot, to abide in His love even when it involves the fellowship of His sufferings, that is a kingly heritage for loyal hearts. 'Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.'

There is no more difficult art in the world than friendship. It demands a constant and unremitting activity of the whole personality if it is to issue in a trust that is beforehand with experience. You must be prepared to labour at the task day by day and hour by hour if love is to be the guiding principle of life. It is no slippered virtue, no lazy companion of the leisure hour. The genius of true friendship is an infinite capacity for taking pains. So with that most intimate bond of friendship which is the fountain of the race. And Christ never makes any secret of the demands which He imposes upon those who would come after Him. 'Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, to be baptized with the baptism wherewith I am baptized?' It is a hard and not an easy thing to be a Christian.

'We are able.' What did it mean, this brave answer of the young men whose generous enthusiasm for the Master already placed Him on the throne, and who asked for nothing more than to sit as His assessors on either hand? What if the glamour in their eyes prevented them from seeing the wooden cross and the thorny crown. Still, it was Christ's throne that they would fain attend. It could not be that James foresaw the defeat of his expectation and the headsman's sword that was to be his portion. It could not be that John discerned from afar the rolling years which should carry from him one by one the companions of his youthful hope, and the lonely Ægean rock, and the vision of the saints beneath the altar who cried, 'How long, O Lord, how long?' Nay, the secret

of the strange unfolding of the Lord Himself and not His throne was the true object of their love and loyalty. It is those who will take the risks of His service, who will trust themselves to the unknown because He goes before—it is they that will alone endure in the cloudy and dark day.

Christ's own triumph was only reached by a resurrection. He overcame death by submitting to it. He gained all only by losing all. He set out upon His mission because He loved the Father. When it meant the closing in of every prospect, the scorn and hatred of the men whom He had come to save, the melting of His hopes, the withdrawal of the Father's smile—He still chose the Father, because He alone was worthy of His allegiance. The joy in which He endured the Cross was the supreme joy of giving up everything for God. Into fellowship with that joy He summons us when He turns upon us and demands whether we are prepared to give up everything for Him.

But do not mistake the question. Many men decide that they are not able to make sacrifices for Christ, because they do not know whether they would be ready to confess Him under hard circumstances which their imagination pictures, but which, for all they know, may never arise. They refuse to keep tryst with their Lord at the Holy Table, because they do not know whether they will be able to live up to it. This is the sort of spirit which in any other department of life they would scout as unworthy of a brave man. Do they, for example, hesitate to embark their capital in business until they have made absolutely certain that there is no possibility of failure? Does the athlete refuse to enter for a competition until he has made perfectly sure that he can stand against all comers? 'Nothing venture, nothing have' is a proverb of universal application. Did Hannington anticipate the axe of the African executioner, or Williams his martyrdom in Eromanga? Was Peter wrong when first he left his fishing-boat to follow Jesus, because in the judgment hall of the High Priest he was to deny his Lord? No! These are the men whom Christ wants, the men of generous impulse and adventurous heart, who in the glorious faith of a surrendered manhood will dare to run the risk of the years. 'We are able'—the great response rings down the centuries, as it is caught up by fresh lips and expresses the eager loyalty of generous souls, who would count it an honour to attend His drooping pennon from the stricken field, and to whom in failure as in success He is and ever will be Christ the King.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. G. Simpson, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 221.

## NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

## Gates on Every Side.

'On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.'—Rev 21<sup>13</sup>.

When St. John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, it is clear that the entrance-gates made a deep impression on his mind. Over and over again he comes back to the theme, speaking of their number, their substance, their beauty, and the names written upon them. He tells us, for example, that the city had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels. Next he relates that the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl. And once more, in this text, we learn that there were three on every side, looking away to the four quarters of the compass, on the east and the north and the south and the west.

It is all a picture, of course; a picture, not in colours, but in poetry; a picture of the great love of God the Father. God will have all men to be saved; and the twelve gates, facing each possible approach to the city, are an emblem of that. The doors of the Father's house look out to all the winds of heaven, and they are shut neither night nor day; for the love of God is open and the heart of God is waiting. Like the entrance to a great city hospital these gates are never closed.

1. Out of this mystical picture, therefore, we draw the preliminary truth that no point in the spiritual world exists from which men may not travel straight to God. When Christian people tell the story of their inner life, you discover that they set out from points very far asunder, and that the path each has taken lay through different scenes, with joys and griefs and perils of its own. Is it not all implicit in the prophet's confession long ago: 'All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way'? 'Every one to his own way'—then every one must find his own way back. No man wanders from God precisely as his neighbour does; no man's reclamation is precisely like his neighbour's.

Our sin may have been greater than our friend's, or less; but at least it was different; it was ours, as our birthday is ours, or our name, or our voice. Here is a man who ever since has given God thanks that grace came breaking in with power, and saved him from the leprosy of worldliness, so that his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and to-day he has a devout and tender heart in his bosom, and can pray. Here is another whom

passion had nearly swept down; his feet were almost gone; but Christ, the mighty to save, held up his footsteps, and brought him into the calm shelter of God's purity, and made his standing there safe for perpetuity. No wanderer is so deep in sin's maze that he may not seize the gold thread of hope that will guide him back; no land is too far, no sea too wide, or mountain too high, for Christ's seeking love to reach and find us. No kind of sinner can be named who has not been led in, through one of the twelve gates, into God's holy city—not the covetous, not the lustful, not the proud, not even the insincere and false.

2. The gates on every side call up still another suggestion; they recall the variety of motives by which men are led to faith. Men come from every direction, but they also come for every kind of reason.

Men come from a sense of duty. For there is a large class of persons who, though totally unaffected by emotional appeals, are yet filled with a powerful desire to do right. These people before long are confronted with the personality of Jesus; His words stick in their conscience. Soon they feel that to refuse to submit their will to Christ's is to evade responsibility and evade obligation. So the pressure on conscience grows. The necessity arises of choosing between the higher life and the lower, of seizing the one real opportunity of life or making the great refusal. They know that if, while seeing the better, they finally and consciously follow the worse, they may never be able to look into the face of God again. When they meet with Christ in the Gospels, or with a Christ-like man in society (and they are not so uncommon), the inward voice declares: That is the kind of life you ought to live, and you know it. When they hear, as we all do, the Master's command ring out across the ages, 'Follow Me,' a great tide of responsive feeling surges up within, and they long to obey. So the conflict in the heart is waged; so the reasons for and against are balanced. Then some day the hour of decision strikes, and the simple duty is done of saying, 'Jesus is Lord.'

Others come from vague discontent with an empty life. They long for some purpose or ideal worth battling for; they covet an experience adequate to the enthusiasm they know they are ready to give. Often they are young; for it has been said, with truth, that 'young people soon find that life is not so large and rich and animating a thing as they hoped it would be.' At first they had dreams of what existence might prove, but these dreams have not come true. The hues of

sunrise have turned to grey. Life is losing its glow, its interest, its expectancy; and hope has long parted with its splendour and its charm. It is as if nothing now remained but to settle down in resignation to a career of failure; and at times they see, stretching out before them, the long, dusty road that goes down at last into the grave. Then Christ comes to them. He says, I am come that ye might have life, and might have it abundantly. He opens great prospects before their eyes, of hope and joy and possession, of inspiration and freedom that reach out and out infinitely. It is a new world, and they realize that it is all for them. So in simple gratitude and happy wonder they accept what Jesus offers. They take Him at His word, only to find that the black poisonous core of discontent and dullness has thereby been taken out of life, because they have been lifted out of themselves into the higher life of Christ, as He goes before them into the land their souls desire.

Still others come to God for shelter. What these people—a great unnumbered multitude—seek in God is refuge. We may say that this is a side of Christianity fit only for the old and the broken; but a man need not be very old to have buried his first-born, to have felt the touch of that ancient law of God which rends loved ones asunder, and makes havoc of our plans. How many lack the things that make life clear and bright for others! They need friends, and they have only acquaintances; they are oppressed by the awful solitude of life; they are misunderstood, or thought to have nothing in them; in this huge world they feel like children lost in a great city. Once perhaps they were free and light of heart, but grief has tamed their feelings. They have been out in the hailstorms of bereavement, they are beaten by losses, they are worn with struggle. So they long to be sheltered and solaced and rested. Is it weakness in them to feel like that? Ah! no; the strongest of men have confessed the same deep need; and to any careful reader of the biography of Thomas Carlyle it is plain that even his rugged nature was filled at times with an inexpressible craving for the consolation of a love that will never die.

Still further, others come from fear of moral ruin. They have learnt that they are no match for their own nature; they have discovered how little the anchors of prudence can be trusted when the storms of passion rise. After each collapse they make good resolves, and then these resolves go like matchwood in the next strain. Gradually they yield to temptations of an ignoble sort at which in happier days they would have smiled. At length they grow alarmed.

How long is this to last, they say, and where will it end? It is not that they fear an offended God; and there may be very little sense of guilt. But there is an increasing sense of shame and self-disgust, as well as a sickening terror of the evil power that holds them in its grip. So their nerve is sapped, and they half lose each fight before it is begun. Each time the conflict is renewed they step into the field beaten men; and what they need is not the lash of a threat to whip them into battle, not doses of moral physic that will leave them weaker after every application, but a fountain of vital power within, that will renew the springs of action, and enable them to beat back these tigerish desires, and make them more than conquerors.

Finally, many come to God to be forgiven. All come to this ere long; all must so come; but also many set out from it. A writer has lately said that the feeling of guilt is dead to-day; if that be true, it will pass. There is a soul of honesty in men and women that may be trusted to keep alive the feeling of accountability, so long as there is a God in heaven, and failing, wandering mortals on the earth. In every still hour, when we face ourselves, we know that we need pardon; we are so made that to deny it is to deny our very self. Indeed, there is evil within us all which, if we could, we would fain hide from God Himself; though all the time a better instinct is whispering, surely, that He knows it already, and loves us still.

Chalmers in his great, deep, original way, said: 'What could I do if God did not justify the ungodly?' Yet this is what our Father does. There is a gate marked pardon, and over against it stands the Cross.

Thy love, O Christ, arisen,  
 Yearns to reach all souls in prison;  
 Down beneath the shame and loss  
 Sinks the plummet of the Cross,  
 Never yet abyss was found  
 Deeper than Thy love can sound.<sup>1</sup>

#### TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

##### The Phantasmagoria of Life.

'The parched ground shall become a pool.'—Is 35<sup>1</sup>.

Apart from the treachery of the mirage which offers illusive waters to thirsty lips, there is also its confusion of the real and the unreal worlds. East of Damascus it may be seen for hours together, changing the grey vacancy of the horizon into an

<sup>1</sup> H. R. Mackintosh, *Life on God's Plan*, 29.

unceasing restless kaleidoscopic spectacle of swiftly changing form and colour. All sorts of familiar scenes suggest themselves to the imagination as picture succeeds picture. But the general effect is so powerful as to defy even the sanest mind to retain its sense of reality.

This aspect of the mirage suggests a nobler interpretation of the text than that of desire. We have, after all, a deeper quarrel with life than its false promises of satisfaction and happiness. We demand a stable and abiding sense of a real world in which we are dealing with realities. In the midst of many interests and pursuits there come moments when the whole sense of life fails us and seems to evaporate.

The great idealists have sought to safeguard man's belief in the reality of his spiritual experience by the most daring philosophies; asserting, in face of all such faintings of the spirit, that the ideas dwell in heaven, and that thought is the only reality. Christian optimists, like Kingsley and George MacDonald, have dogmatized on the courageous principle that such convictions are so beautiful that they must be true. We are grateful for all such voices, yet times of doubt recur. Are we indeed children of eternity, lying on our backs in the cave, as Plato says, and seeing but the reflection of things on the roof, yet knowing that the realities are sure? or are we but ants tumbling on the huge ant-heap, taking ourselves with an absurd seriousness, and dreaming great things? Do our sins and virtues, our struggles and resistances, our joys and sorrows really matter? or are these all but the cloud-work of the desert? The voice of God assures us that the mirage shall become a pool, real enough to live for or to die for. That is what Jesus Christ has done for the world.

1. Our *work* often induces a sense of unreality. Weary toilers, whether successful or unsuccessful, feel the vanity even of finished works, and still more the vanity of unfinished works. Many a man has built his tower, done what he set out to do, and the tower falls and his labour is lost; or, worse still, his tower stands only to shame him with its imperfection, for it is not the thing he had designed. Well, finished or unfinished, satisfactory or unsatisfactory, here is God's verdict upon man's honest labour. He approves the purpose of a life, and His approval establishes the work of our hands upon us. He understands what we meant to do and knows the pattern, showed us in secret, after which we have been striving. That, in God's sight, is reality. It is work, and has eternal value.

2. *Character* is often a most tantalizing and

lamentable mirage. We see our goal, apparently possible and within our reach, and across the desert we pant after it. But which of us has attained to, or is anything resembling the man he fain would be? Old temptations recurring out of due season draw us down from high hopes to low levels of actual conduct. Honesty, justice, purity, even when we have reached them in some degree, are a compromise rather than a victory. At times a subtle doubt invades, and we find ourselves persisting, without knowing why we do so, in a moral struggle of whose worth we are by no means certain.

Again, God's word is that that mirage also shall become a pool. One day we shall be sure with an indisputable certainty of the worth of the struggle and of the glory of moral victory. He will 'take the distorted thing in His hands and make something gallant of it.'

3. *Faith*, once taken to be the surest of realities, is now discredited in many minds. The great mirage of Christianity itself is over. Jesus Christ remains but as the memory of a dream, a fair form in art, a hope from which the light has faded, a star vanished in the night.

This mirage also shall become a pool of living waters. In some form or other, Christian faith is going to prove true. Where the waters that once promised refreshment have vanished, and where now there are only deserts of intellectual routine, streams of vital truth will flow once more, never again to fail. Looking back when the change is completed, you will not count it a change from reality to unreality, but from an imperfect vision to the very truth of God and of life.

4. Each of these is but a detail in the great mirage of *life* itself. The world, with the brilliance of its spectacle and the heave and fall of its surge—we have found it out to be but cloud, and still we gaze. And heaven, as we once imagined it, that last and most delicate mirage of all—now we turn from its gaudy and inadequate cloudland. We have found out the earth and the heavens.

Yes, but beneath such shows of things there are realities—the new earth and the new heaven—an earth where life is real, a heaven where the real life of earth is made eternal. For Jesus Christ is Lord of Realities, and He is Master of earth and heaven, who 'maketh all things new.' He knows how we all dream, and how futile the dream appears on our awakening. But through it all there remain for all of us the facts of faith and love and service. These things are no dream, though on them also for a moment we may lose our hold. Yet for the faithful these will prove so real that

they will give reality to all the rest that tends so readily to fade. And at last comes death. 'After the fever of life, after wearinesses and sicknesses, fightings and despondings, languor and fretfulness, struggling and succeeding; after all the changes and chances of this troubled unhealthy state, at last comes death, at length the great white throne, at length the beatific vision.'<sup>1</sup>

#### ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

##### Vital Fruitfulness.

'By their fruits ye shall know them.'—Mt 7<sup>20</sup>.

1. Fruitfulness, we feel, is the one unerring criterion of the quality of life. The only question which in the last resort it is worth our while to ask about any life that has been lived is—What has been its effect? How has it told? What is the measure and what the kind of its influence?

And yet we feel that we are none of us equal to such a judgment, and that even if we were there is something cold and impersonal in its character which prevents our being satisfied with it. A human life is to us something more than a result even if we could measure that result justly and adequately. To us who have known it, it is something more than all its effects. If we would see how unsatisfactory this way of measuring human values must prove in our hands, we have only to consider how in fact we have attempted to apply it, what in fact have been the results of that attempt. And we shall find that we have applied it only to the great figures of history, and that in applying it we have for the most part robbed even those figures of all that was most distinctive and individual in their humanity. The hearts that have beat close to our own we could never bring ourselves to weigh in such abstract balances. And when at last a sufficient spiritual distance enables men to adjust the scales to this work of judgment, how uncertain and unsatisfying is the result. We ascribe to the great ones of the past, and perhaps with some degree of historical justice, results both for good and for evil which they themselves neither purposed nor foresaw. We say with some degree of justice, for men always effect something more and greater than they intend. Human greatness, indeed, consists especially in this, that its effects reach far beyond the measure of its conscious purpose. To see those effects is in a very real sense to compass more adequately the worth of the life out of which they have grown. Yet it is doubtful

<sup>1</sup> J. Kelman, *Ephmera Eternitatis*, 125.

whether we have any right to say that it is to know the life more fully. The Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century in all its strength and weakness, its success and failure, its promise and its disappointment, was the measure of the fruitfulness of St. Francis' life. But the real secret of that life was communicated only to the few faithful friends of his working years. Nay, the depths of that secret lay hidden in the soul of St. Francis, transparent as was the purity of that soul beyond most of the souls of men. The fruitfulness of any life is put to the proof in other and lesser lives. No soul can be fruitful save on the terms of enduring that deformation and lessening of itself. What the rest of us can make of it, that it is worth or will seem to be worth to the world. Yet it itself remains more than that realized fruitfulness. It itself remains what it was worth to God in its unrealized effort, or it may be in that supreme attainment which it could never wholly communicate to another.

2. Our Lord may not have been speaking or thinking, primarily at least, of that ultimate fruitfulness which is one undoubted test of a soul's worth when He said, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' He may have been thinking of something much simpler and more fundamental to the individual life, not of a far-off result, but of a result immediate and obvious. He may have been thinking merely of the profound difference between what the humanity in us is capable of becoming and what in fact it is usually satisfied with being. In this difference, He would remind us, lies the whole secret of religion. We would make a system of religion, a system of beliefs, of ordered devotion, of obedience to a formal rule. And all this, no doubt, religion always tends to become. Nay, all this religion, because it is human, must always be. But all this it is because it is the expression of a particular kind of life, and all this it can afford to be only so long as through it that kind of life is finding freer and fuller expression. And our Lord would remind us that the religious system must always stand at the bar of life and plead there for the judgment which alone will keep it sane and pure.

Let us think of what life means for most of us, what it means for all of us when we let ourselves slip, when we fail to hold up our hearts to the level of its greater hopes and aims. It means first of all and at its best a compromise. We compromise the great opportunity on the level of our customary careless, sluggish, cowardly moods. We trim our duties, our affections, our glimpses of a higher

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

**Breathing Spaces.**

'And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while.'—Mk 6<sup>31</sup>.

truth, to the fashion of the place and of the day. And how wretched and poverty-stricken is the show of life they make! The blight of a narrow-hearted selfishness is on them all. They yield no permanent satisfaction to ourselves. They flower with no joy or fragrance or delight for others. We labour just to keep ourselves alive, to keep ourselves content with life, and if we succeed in the one we fail in the other. Or perhaps, fate more miserable still, we succeed in both. For life may cease to become a compromise and may come instead to be a surrender and a betrayal.

It is to this death in life that we may so easily descend, to this betrayal of the life to which as our inspiring heritage we were called. For think of what God meant our life to be, of what He has made it in each of us by infallible proofs graven on every heart. He has made it a life which can never be satisfied to remain what it is, which must look for its satisfaction to its own constant renewal, which must hunger and thirst after right and truth and charity if it would achieve them, and in achieving finds its own peace. He has made it a life which must feel its roots in Him, the eternal source and groundwork of all goodness and spiritual beauty; which must labour incessantly towards Him, the eternal consummation of justice and charity. To live at all is to find the energy of the Divine nature in all the best we can aim at being and doing, to find the Divine opportunities in the world of actual duty, to disentangle and receive the Divine inspirations in the world of actual influence, to resist, in the Divine might which ever prevents and follows us, the insidious wiles of our lazy contentment with what we are and with what through us the world happens at the moment to be. This is the new life, the life in God, the life which each of us may live or seek to live, the life whose fruits will be visible to all, however little they may be able to appraise them, and will serve to feed a hungry world with the bread of life. And that life needs not to withdraw itself from the world in order to be or to continue. It needs not to build itself some rare and exquisite pleasure of the soul. It must take all the risks of life. It must fight its fight in the open. It must shrink from no smirching that may come to it in God's arena, which is the common world where God's common human souls still throng and hustle each other in blind confusion. There will its fruits be known. There will it learn how to evoke God's order out of our human confusion, God's strength out of our human weakness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. L. Lilley, *The Religion of Life*, 19.

This must have been a very welcome invitation to the disciples. They were tired men; continuous teaching had taken a good deal out of them, and they needed rest and reinforcement. They were sorrowful men, too; for John the Baptist had just been cruelly murdered by Herod, and the whole company were feeling the sadness of the occasion and the strain of the troubled time. It was a season of political unrest also, for there was a popular ferment afoot against Herod as the instigator of the vile crime; and quiet spiritual work has not much opportunity and cannot make much progress when the political passions of the populace are aroused. It was therefore a most appropriate time for withdrawal and rest, and the disciples would hear Christ's kindly words with a sigh of relief.

We sometimes cherish a one-sided, incomplete notion of Christianity. We think of it as making continuous appeals to our sense of duty, constant claims upon our moral nature, seeking to rouse, stimulate, awaken, encourage; it is the clarion call to the highest service and endeavour. The gospel is certainly that, but it is not only that. Men cannot bear more than a certain amount of strain. If body or brain be taxed beyond its strength a breakdown is inevitable. The gospel is not always crying, Arise, shine; put on your strength. Like a wise mother it sometimes says, Lie down, poor child, and take your rest. We hear a great deal now about the 'strenuous life'; but we are not often offered a sensible recipe for it. The strenuous life with so many people means a fussy life, tremendous activity, bustling, feverish excitement—a programme with no intervals. No wonder the modern man is so often a bundle of quivering nerves. He tries to keep up the pace, and finds he is not equal to the strain. Christ is more considerate for workers than they are to themselves. He goes on the principle that prevention is better than cure. The gospel story is full of beautiful instances of Christ's care and consideration for men's physical needs. What an exquisite touch of tender sympathy is that where He has compassion on the multitudes, and says to the disciples, 'Give ye them to eat; bid them sit down upon the green grass; lest they faint by the way, for some of them have come from far.' Lest they faint by the way! He would prevent a breakdown; he would fore-

stall disaster. Is this the way to deepen the spiritual life? Certainly, for the spiritual life itself has a physical basis, and no man is necessarily made more spiritual by becoming an invalid. Body and mind are so closely related, and when one gets run down the other often collapses out of sheer sympathy. Let us live the strenuous life by all means, but let us live it sanely; and we cannot live it sanely unless we take our intervals of repose, our seasons of rest, our times of recuperation and refreshment.

All kinds of labour need occasional recreation and relaxation. The secret of true success is to know what you can do and what you cannot do, and to work well within your strength. Some work by the sweat of the brow, some by the sorer sweat of the brain, and some by the sweat of the heart, which is the sorest sweat of all. If men and women are over-driven in any department of life, we must, in the name of Christ, seek to ameliorate their lot, and to create such conditions as will enable them to realize the ideal of a sound mind in a sound body. In these days of mechanical labour we must see that men and women do not themselves become machines. We talk about the dignity of labour, and the pride and pleasure of the workman in his work; and indeed, if it were his own handiwork, with the directing force of personality behind it, there would be sense and reason in our maxims. The sheer monotony of such toil is deadening and wearying, and the mechanical nature of it renders intervals of self-realization of the utmost necessity and importance.

'Come ye apart.' There is a value in occasional withdrawal. We must have these breathing spaces if we want to strengthen our bodies, stimulate our minds, and prolong our usefulness. Let us emphasize that word 'apart.' What we want by way of relaxation and reinforcement is something completely apart from our ordinary work, something absolutely different, something that takes us right out of our groove and exercises another side of our nature. Some parts of our being never seem to come into play at all; they are all locked rooms whose doors are never opened and whose thresholds are never crossed. Yet they contain much that is interesting, beautiful, and valuable; and the outlook from their windows will disclose a richer and wider landscape. Have a hobby of some kind. The holiday time ought not to be a time of pure laziness; it will be all the brighter and better and more bracing for the introduction of some intellectual element. The open air offers endless opportunities for the observer. The

flowers, the rocks, the birds, the seashore, the mountain side, the leafy wood, all have something to say to the alert mind and responsive heart. And many find a rare pleasure in watching the sky and the marvellous and ever-changing configurations of the clouds in the great wide spaces, the open expanse of heaven. It will be impossible for us to be little, mean, petty, censorious, if we can only get the sky into our souls.

Then, too, let us emphasize the words 'into a desert place.' By that is meant some place where the valuable and rare luxury of quietness can be had, some place where there is no fear of being interrupted or disturbed. It is a most happy experience to go now and then to a spot where you know nobody and nobody knows you, and where you are even beyond the reach of letters and newspapers, and telegrams—those bombshells of civilization. There is a ministry of solitude, if you can only find it. Solitude is not necessarily isolation. The silences and solitudes of Nature are grateful and healing to a tired or worried or sorrowful man; but there is a solitude of the crowd which is almost equally precious. There are few things more curiously stimulating to the imagination than to walk through a town you have never been in before, where every face is strange and the very dialect is different. It is a desert place to you—and yet how much there is to read there in the strange faces, the unknown houses, the unfamiliar streets. God has set fountains of singular freshness and inspiration in desert places. When we are half-paralysed by routine, deadened with the familiar and the commonplace, we may often regain our life and restock our brain with ideas through contact with the unfamiliar, the novel, the strange.

Then, observe that Christ does not say, 'Go ye,' but 'Come ye': He is not sending them away, He is going with them; the fellowship is not to be broken up. And what an unspeakable value there is in such unrestrained, frank, free fellowships, where one can speak one's real thought without fear of misunderstanding. There is a morality of holidays; and a large part of it consists in congenial companionship. Don't leave Christ behind; whatever we are apart from, we must not be apart from Him. The landscape will have a richer colour, the hobby a more radiant interest, the fellowship a higher tone, the conversation a sweeter accent, the laughter a more wholesome ring, if we are with Him; for Christ's presence in the heart elevates and sweetens all things.

And, then, notice the qualifying term, 'rest

a while.' It is not a giving up of the work to which the disciples are invited; it is a preparation for more toil. It is not an abandonment of our tasks, but a reinforcement of our strength for larger service. A life all holiday would be as monotonous and depleting as a life all work. Even the purest delight may pall; even the pleasantest confection may cloy and sicken; there is even a monotony of sunshine and cloudless blue. We need enough rest to give us a zest for returning labour. And be sure of it—we shall enjoy our rest the more if

we have done something to earn it and deserve it. It is the lazy man who finds the time hang heavily upon his hands. The worker comes back to his work with something more than the tan upon his cheek and a fresh spring in his step; he returns with a mind braced with the air of pure and lofty thought, with a heart full of happy memories and sweet content, and with an earnest purpose to spend and be spent in the service of the Son of Man.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Mursell, *Sermons on Special Occasions*, 71.

## The Doctrine of the Atonement.

### A TENTATIVE RECONSTRUCTION.

BY THE REVEREND P. J. BEVERIDGE, B.D., B.Sc., CATTERLINE.

THE question of the Atonement has been the battlefield of theological thought for ages. The history of theology is scattered with explanations of it that have been discarded, because they have been considered in some direction either morally unsound or intellectually untenable. Nor can it be said that the theory is even now in a satisfactory condition.

For in explaining the expiatory suffering of Christ for us, it must be laid down that no theory of a wrathful father conciliated by the sufferings of a son in place of the culprit, no theory of vicarious punishment, no theory of vicarious (substituted) righteousness, no theory dispensing with the need for repentance and personal amendment, can possibly be received. Such ideas at various periods have been favourably regarded; some of them at times have met with large adherence, but with theologians now they no longer carry any considerable weight.

Accordingly, in writers of the present time we still meet with frequent attempts to avoid the difficulty. Moberly, for example, endeavours to explain it by comparison with the shame of a good mother over a child who has fallen into grievous sin. 'The shame,' he says, 'which is her own child's, is her own.'<sup>1</sup> She identifies the child with herself, and in that identification the sin is as it were her own, and her sorrow is penitence for it. In like manner the agony of the soul of Christ, who is regarded as having identified Himself with mankind, would provide the Atonement with a similar explanation. I do not raise the question how far such identification

is more than figurative. But I think Moberly has hardly persuaded us that it would be rational to speak of the repentance, or even of the penitence, of a sinless Christ.

It is not necessary to give detailed consideration to the views of other quite recent writers, many of whom echo earlier ideas. Bishop Temple,<sup>2</sup> as the net result of his discussion, seems to find in the Atonement chiefly a revelation of the heinousness of sin. 'Free forgiveness is immoral if it is lightly given.' We naturally ask why it should be less immoral if given on account of another's suffering. But 'The cross, by showing what sin costs God, safeguards His righteousness while He forgives.' If we note that this must mean, safeguards the opinion men may hold of His righteousness, it will be seen that it is hardly an answer. But again, further, he adopts the view of Abelard, that it is such an unveiling of God's love and goodness towards us as must certainly awaken an answering love, and, in its revelation of the cost whereby God overcomes evil, draw all men to their Saviour. At the same time it presents an unsurpassable example of perfect righteousness in man. Now these effects may be producible, but do they morally justify the means? A soldier may display this love for his country by dying on the battlefield, and rouse his comrades accordingly; but however much he may thereby teach them to despise death, could he display his love for his country, could he reasonably go out into the fire-zone, if beyond heartening them he did not intend to produce some tangible military

<sup>1</sup> *Atonement and Personality*, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Christus Veritas*, ch. xiv.