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the hard struggle for faith when mocking Babylonians asked where was Jehovah. But the beginning is not the language of despair :

Like as the hart panteth after the water-springs,  
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.  
My soul thirsteth for the living God.

No agony or ache can break or master his spirit, and he ends on the note of triumphant assurance :

Hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise him, my helper, my God.

For nine hundred years this psalm has been used by the Christian Church as a sacramental psalm. In the Missal it forms part of the 'preparation of the priest.' What is it that makes it particularly appropriate to the Communion service? It certainly covers a wide range of religious experience; it begins with high aspiration after God, then, descending, moves through the depths of doubt and anguish, and finally rises again to the heights of faith. But why not at the Table of the Lord dwell simply on the amazing love of God and the certainty of our redemption?

The reason is that it is possible to be too matter-of-fact and casual in the approach to the mystery of the gospel; to become so accustomed to the splendour of God's grace as to take it for granted, as a careless lad may take for granted all a mother's care and never notice the sacrifice in it. The idea in using this psalm is that at the Lord's Table any depths that are in a man ought to be stirred. To appreciate the gospel rightly one must imagine

what the situation would be without the gospel. At the best it would be that of this psalmist, with dismay in his heart, and doubt besetting him, but with his hope indomitable, and his yearning after grace untasted yet. And as one current of electricity induces another when it is brought near a dead wire, so the larger utterances of fear and penitence and hope stir deeper thoughts in shallow minds and create an understanding of the inward conflict that is a true mark of the religious life. The double movement, toward despair as well as hope, produces a heightened tension, more sorrow, more yearning, more expectation. 'Thou liftedst me up that I might see,' says Augustine, 'and I perceived myself to be far off from Thee.'

So all night long the trouble grew,  
Whereby I knew there would be born a star.

To begin the sacramental act away back at the Old Testament stage of religion and enter into this earlier experience of doubt and struggle is a way of preparing the soul to rejoice with a right wonder and gratitude that all the days of misgiving are over.

O send thy light forth and thy truth.

Nay, but the Light of the world is shining :

Why art thou cast down, O my soul?

Yea, why? The Lord's guests are to have, not the mingled emotions of the captive, but the gladness of those who have arrived late, yet found the door wide open and the table spread.

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## Entre Nous.

### 'The Expository Times' for 1928.

Besides the usual features and the usual articles on varied subjects, we have arranged a series of articles on Personalities of special interest to theologians. Each article will be written by some one who has had close personal contact with the subject of it. The series will include Deissmann, Barth, Schweitzer, Carl Heim, Harnack, Söderblom, and others, and amongst the contributors will be Professor H. R. Mackintosh, Professor Curtis, and Principal W. B. Selbie. A short series of articles on 'Commentaries to the Old and New Testaments' is to be contributed by Dr. Peake, and Dr. A. E. J. Rawlinson will write on 'Recent Lives of

Christ.' The Sermon on the Mount will be dealt with in successive articles, and still another series will reply to the question, What is the Gospel? —the Gospel for Africa, for China, and for India.

### The Impatience of a Parson.

*The Impatience of a Parson* is Mr. H. R. L. Shepard's plea for the recovery of vital Christianity (Hodder & Stoughton; 3s. 6d. net). Perhaps we might criticise the form of the book, the repetitions that occur in it, and other things. We might say that it is provocative. But would it not fail in its end if it were not provocative? 'I want a disturb-

ance,' says Mr. Sheppard frankly. 'I want almost anything rather than an unchallenged continuation of these smothered institutional versions of the fire which Jesus Christ came to cast upon the earth.' It is doubtful if we could even spare the repetitions, for they make the book easy reading—though hard enough in another sense—and this is a book which will be read, not by a small number of ecclesiastics and theologians, but by thousands of ordinary men and women.

Mr. Sheppard's is a great vision, the vision of a united Church showing forth in its corporate life the fullness of Christ's teaching. His soul longs for the Anglican communion, his own dearly loved Church, to lead the way. In order that it may do so, he suggests a programme for the next Lambeth Conference and fills a chapter with constructive suggestions.

But instead of going into these, let us rather look at Mr. Sheppard's foundations. He has three foundation stones. He says, first, that a Church may not be corporately less Christian than the Christian individual. 'I shall declare my belief that no Church can be actually Christian that corporately expresses values which differ from the outstanding values of Christ, and which would be repudiated by an individual disciple for his own life and practice as being less than Christlike. Obvious and fundamental as this axiom may appear, it is not one which the Churches have attended to in the past.' His second foundation stone is that the Christian Institution is essential. 'A Church of some sort is necessary, not only because Jesus Christ seemed to take one for granted, but because He appeared to wish His followers to be associated together in a fellowship. "There is nothing," writes Bishop Gore, "more central to the mind of Christ than that you can only love God in fellowship." Moreover, group organization is a necessity for mankind, and the spiritual needs of the majority will not be catered for without a society, through which men may express their ideals, and from which they may obtain that which they require to keep them strong and steadfast in the way. As long as man is man Churches will be needed for all that moral and spiritual re-enforcement which common life and aims and example and worship and symbolism can give.'

But though the Christian Institution is essential, Mr. Sheppard goes on to say, in the third place, that it is subsidiary to the adventure of Christian living. 'While I recognize the absolute necessity for the Christian Society, I believe that its main purpose and function is to serve and encourage those who

have determined within their own souls to dare the Way of Christ, and have started or are starting on that venture. *The Church, however essential, is subsidiary to the adventure of Christian living*—just as to our Lord the Church of His day was subsidiary to the Kingdom of God, that condition of living in which Love prevails.'

H. R. L. Sheppard speaks.

#### CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN

'It may be true that the modern man is not worrying about his sins, yet I fancy he is frequently worried about his own moral futility and strange inability to carry through the good resolutions of the night before—surely much the same thing.<sup>1</sup>

#### PROFESSION AND ACHIEVEMENT

'I wonder how we must appear to those who watch us and hear us making our brave assertions about the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and our personal devotion to the Lord Christ. I wonder if we do not seem to them like Alpine climbers who, having greased their faces and covered them with masks, and having put on their nailed boots and taken ice-axes in their hands, then proceed to walk gravely up the mild heights of Ludgate Hill? The contrast between our profession and our achievement would be ludicrous if it were not so utterly pathetic.'<sup>2</sup>

#### WAR

'We cannot any more think of war as anything but a damnable arrest of development and decency; it is not only the willingness to suffer agony, it is the willingness to inflict it. War cannot be reconciled with Christianity: there is no such thing as a Christian war. . . . They [professing Christians] are ready to kill members of other nations if the Government of the day bids them do so. It is true that they think civil war a terrible thing, but if all men are brethren is there in the mind of Christ a distinction between an Englishman killing an Englishman and an Englishman killing a Chinaman?'<sup>3</sup>

#### CHRISTIANITY TOO HEAVY

'We live our Christianity too heavily. I know no better way of expressing what I mean than by the words which were spoken by an old lady at the poor end of a parish, who said she did not want the

<sup>1</sup> P. 57.

<sup>2</sup> P. 146.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 52, 141.

church-worker coming round saving her soul on her.'<sup>1</sup>

#### FELLOWSHIP

'Think of the churches and chapels that we know intimately, and then say which of them gives to an ordinary wayfarer, even to one who is seeking for a Saviour, any encouragement to persevere, and any impression that here for the seeking is the satisfaction of his soul's hunger? Which of them conveys to ordinary people the sense of a living fellowship one with another in Christ and of vital human concern for their neighbours' welfare? I am afraid there is often more real fellowship in the public-house than in the Christian Church.'<sup>2</sup>

#### ONE CHURCH

'Not until there is a Church like some great cathedral in which there are a multitude of side-chapels where the one God is worshipped in different ways by differently minded people, and yet all are within the One Church, is there any hope of Christianity prevailing. Not until the values of Christ and the Spirit of Christ are accepted by Christian people as the one unifying centre around which all loyalties are grouped can we talk of offering our world the Christian religion. If the spiritual eyes of my Communion were once opened, I fancy it might make a great offering to this ideal.'<sup>3</sup>

#### Material Things.

'Yesterday I came upon the following passage in an Essay by Bagehot. "Mr. O. has a story of some deputation of Indians, at which the American Orator harangued the barbarian audience about 'the Great Spirit,' and 'the land of their fathers,' in the style of Fenimore Cooper's novels; during a moment's pause in the great stream, an old Indian asked the deputation: 'Why does your chief speak thus to us? We did not wish great instruction or fine words; we desire brandy and tobacco.'"

'Why did I think of you when I laughed over this? Because no one would better appreciate the humour and the pathos of it all, and its relation to states of mind and modes of thought that you and I have met with.'

The quotation is from a letter of Mr. F. W. Macdonald to Dr. W. L. Watkinson. Dr. Watkinson died in 1925 at the age of eighty-six. Mr. Macdonald still 'watches life through the window

<sup>1</sup> P. 145.

<sup>2</sup> P. 183.

<sup>3</sup> P. 197.

of old age.' They were lifelong friends, and, during the last years, when they could no longer meet, they wrote constantly to each other of books, of current affairs, and of how they felt on the deep things of life. Both were in the Wesleyan Methodist ministry. Dr. Watkinson was President of Conference in 1897, and was known to a wider public by his published sermons and addresses. Mr. Macdonald had a long ancestry in the Church—his grandfather having been ordained by Wesley. His father was George Browne Macdonald, also a Wesleyan minister. It will be remembered that three of his sisters married Poynter, Burne-Jones, and Baldwin. A footnote to one of the letters says, 'You would see that another sister's son, Sir Ambrose Macdonald Poynter, died the other day after a surgical operation. It supplies a pathetic contrast to his cousin Baldwin's honours.' This is a little book to be enjoyed in a restful moment. The title is *The Letters of Two Friends* (Epworth Press; 2s. 6d. net).

#### Two Prayers.

The Student Christian Movement has done a real service in publishing in this country Dr. Walter Rauschenbusch's *Prayers of the Social Awakening* (3s. net). We have a rich equipment from the past for the culture of individual religion, but how few prayers express the religious emotions of social Christianity. Dr. Rauschenbusch meets this need.

#### THE AUTHOR'S PRAYER.

O Thou who art the light of my soul, I thank Thee for the incomparable joy of listening to Thy voice within, and I know that no word of Thine shall return void, however brokenly uttered. If aught in this book was said through lack of knowledge, or through weakness of faith in Thee or of love for men, I pray Thee to overrule my sin and turn aside its force before it harm Thy cause. Pardon the frailty of Thy servant, and look upon him only as he sinks his life in Jesus, his Master and Saviour. Amen.

#### FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

O Christ, Thou hast bidden us pray for the coming of Thy Father's Kingdom, in which His righteous will shall be done on earth. We have treasured Thy words, but we have forgotten their meaning, and Thy great hope has grown dim in Thy Church. We bless Thee for the inspired souls of all ages who

saw afar the shining city of God, and by faith left the profit of the present to follow their vision. We rejoice that to-day the hope of these lonely hearts is becoming the clear faith of millions. Help us, O Lord, in the courage of faith to seize what has now come so near, that the glad day of God may dawn at last. As we have mastered Nature that we might gain wealth, help us now to master the social relations of mankind that we may gain justice and a world of brothers. For what shall it profit our nation if it gain numbers and riches, and lose the sense of the living God and the joy of human brotherhood?

Make us determined to live by truth and not by lies, to found our common life on the eternal foundations of righteousness and love, and no longer to prop the tottering house of wrong by legalized cruelty and force. Help us to make the welfare of all the supreme law of our land, that so our commonwealth may be built strong and secure on the love of all its citizens. Cast down the throne of Mammon who ever grinds the life of men, and set up Thy throne, O Christ, for Thou didst die that men might live. Show Thy erring children at last the way from the City of Destruction to the City of Love, and fulfil the longings of the prophets of humanity. Our Master, once more we make Thy faith our prayer: 'Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth!'

#### NEW POETRY.

##### Thomas Moulton.

Six years ago Mr. Moulton had the happy idea of publishing an anthology of the verse which had appeared during the year in newspapers and magazines. We now have the sixth consecutive survey—*The Best Poems of 1927* (Cape; 6s. net). The collection has a twofold value. It preserves verse which might otherwise be lost sight of, and by its comprehensiveness—there are over seventy poets represented—it affords a good idea of the matter and style of the most recent poetry. We choose for quotation Louis Golding on narrow nationalism, and Clement Wood's 'The Green Christs':

##### WANDERERS' DUST.

My father lies in Doomington,  
The dark city of Doomington,  
And there my mother died.  
By this chance and that chance  
My brother died in green France  
With a wound in his side.

My father's mother by the Don  
Sleeps there near her small son,  
But that land was not theirs.  
The river thrusts its snout by  
Fields of maize four metres high  
And the lone lank firs.

My father's father's father sleeps  
Under the burnt Caucasian steeps,  
Whom the Turk there led.  
But for my mother's mother's line  
I must fare to the broad Rhine  
If I would claim my dead.

Where, then, when we are dust,  
Shall we, as dead men must,  
Go forth to claim our own?  
We that have for winding-sheet  
Only the pale bands of sleet  
And wind for a headstone?

##### THE GREEN CHRISTS.

Christ was hanged upon a tree—  
But it was slain before He.

Men say Christ rose from the dead:  
It stood quietly and decayed,

Bleeding out its pale blood  
Into Golgotha's dark mud.

Christ in heaven shines tenderly;  
There is no heaven for a slain tree.

Why do we kill its million kin  
Each time that Christ's birth comes again,

Sparing neither youth nor age,  
A leaf darker than Herod's page,

But wreaking vengeance on the meek  
Green Christs, for Jesus' sake?

In his white name who stood for love,  
Let kindness return above.

The sweet serene and dreaming sod  
Whose green lords never slew their god.

Let the world know that Christ's breath  
Breathes life, and not death!