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platitude, of the dullest type of conformity to orthodox patterns; while in every religion any writing ever cherished as a sacred book has been written by men who were facing life and the conflicts of experience, and that with the highest activities of all their powers of mind.' This is further confirmed by the certainty that in ordinary experience there is no such thing as passive awareness and apprehension.

How does mysticism stand in relation to Christianity? 'The fact is that there is no such thing in the strict sense as a Christian mystic. In so far as an external revelation, the Church, religious service and duties to fellow-mortals are essential parts of religion, mysticism is absent, at least the mysticism here meant, the essential aspect of which is that experience is not a revelation of God, but a cloud obscuring his glory, and that we must exclude all concern with it to win direct vision.' It may be

that when men lose themselves in a distracting age and in the dissipation of multifarious interests, such excursions from an active life as have been made by some Christian mystics may serve at least a temporary purpose of recollection. But the attitude of mysticism is full of moral danger. 'The contemplative who sets before himself the aim of reaching a state of vision from which he returns exhausted to practical life, there to recover vigour for a longer flight, is surely on the wrong track. . . . This is a shirking of the task of life, and not the real fulfilment of religion, which is, in freedom and independent thinking, to find our true relation to the past and to society and to the whole task of the Kingdom of God. This is a weary road, and mysticism is the most attractive of all caravanserais to linger in by the way. But, if we rest in it for the night, which for most of us at least is not for our real refreshment, we need to be up and facing all that life provides for us of venture early in the morning.'

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## The Sermon on the Mount.

### The New Righteousness (Mt. v. 17-48).

BY THE REVEREND A. J. GOSSIP, M.A., ABERDEEN.

WHAT are we to make of these arresting sayings? People who ignore Christ as an idle dreamer of still idler dreams can irritably push them aside as on the face of them impossible, and not worth considering. For life, so they object, cannot be lived in that quixotic fashion, flinging oneself at windmills, and tilting at the whole set of the world. And so they fold their hands and settle down complacently in the conventional ways, as if these were as inevitable as the laws of Nature. But that won't do for men and women who profess to take Christ seriously, and to have made His mind their guiding star. For us to skip all this, and turn to something soothing and heartening like the prodigal or some of the rich promises, conveniently forgetting this uncomfortable and upsetting teaching, is deliberately to disobey One whom we call the very Word of God: to look Him in the eyes and tell Him that He knows nothing about life; to set our jaws squarely and doggedly and answer, 'I will not.'

Yet what are we to do? Here are we set down to live in this very difficult kind of a world; and here too, obstinately, are these sayings of Christ which don't seem to fit into it at all, that look flatly impracticable, so that quite early glosses were slipped into the later manuscripts to break the force of the wind. 'Whosoever is angry,' said Christ; 'without a cause,' inserted a soul unable to keep up with Him. And indeed they are thrown down in the most arresting way without any qualifications, even such as our Lord Himself practised in the living of His own life; and sometimes with such a noisy clashing of part against part that it is not easy to piece the whole into a consistency within our dull and prosy minds, which in their pedantic fashion ask for little invariable rules and a full code of minute by-laws, and are given instead, much to their discomfiture, mighty principles which we are left to apply for ourselves; and that through the exercise, not only of loyalty and faith

fulness, but of common sense and courage and a sense of proportion and even of humour. Newman went over to the Church of Rome largely because it told him definitely what to believe and what to do, took the ordering of things away from him and so saved him from the turmoil of uncertainty in his own mind, and the bother and the danger of decision. But resolutely Christ insists on treating us, not as babes in leading-strings, but as grown men and women. Here is the mind of God, He says, here also is your life ; and, with the help of God and all the aids He has contrived for you, you must take that first and work it out into the stuff and pattern of this other with your own hands.

And the difficulty with which the Sermon on the Mount confronts us is just this, that nowhere is the immense originality of our Lord's bewildering mind more visible and staggering. For thousands of years we have been climbing towards Him, been peering up at Him, been teasing and fingering at the edges of His teaching. And yet His is still so lonely a soul that, when even now He says these things to us, we look up at Him puzzled and dumb-founded and not at all certain whether He is serious or not. He is. And our plain business as Christian people is twofold. We must with care avoid a wooden literalness, that might easily enough miss the whole spirit of what He lays upon us. That first, that very certainly. Surely, for instance, there is a very obvious distinction between wild asseverations in our common speech and an oath in the law courts, which last our Lord Himself once took. That practice enjoined upon us there may not be flattering to our veracity, may openly hint doubts which we may find insulting. Yet surely looking to the fact that the Law deals with weighty and momentous issues, that life itself may be at stake, it is bound to take all possible precautions to ensure that it is founding, not upon fictions or mere suppositions, but on facts and truth ; there too, no doubt, that precaution 'comes of evil' in the sense that it has been made necessary by human depravity, and in an ideal world would cease to be required. But, as things are, what can we do? Yet if a stodgy and unimaginative literalness is to be avoided, even more must we see to it that we are not simply leaving these disquieting laws of Christ upon one side, but are really endeavouring to work them into the practical living of our lives. It won't do to say, as a Prime Minister did not long ago, that obviously the State cannot be run upon the lines of the Sermon on the Mount. If we are not prepared to follow, both as a nation and as individuals, what we admit to be

Christ's teaching, then why call ourselves Christians at all? 'Have you taken the name of Christ,' asked Leighton long ago, 'on purpose to dishonour it?'

This at least is clear that in these sayings we have a picture of the humanity of the future. For if anything is certain it is this—that any real advance that is to be will be along the lines of Jesus Christ. It is amazing how already He has moved to the centre of things, has Himself become the centre of things. For consider the astonishing facts! Here is One who was hustled to His death as a bad man, as One whose character and teaching were polluting the people's minds and morals, so that the authorities felt they must at all costs take the most drastic action. Yet now if anybody asks, 'But what is goodness?' the inevitable answer is, and must be, Look at Jesus Christ. Even in non-Christian India the highest adjective of admiration is Christlike. He was condemned as a blasphemer. People clapped quick horrified hands to outraged ears at the dreadfulness of His views of God. It was just shocking, so they said with unanimity. Yet now the one thing certain is that, if there be a God at all, He is Christ's God, and is Himself like Jesus Christ. As a distinguished Anglican divine has put it, 'To-day people are not worrying about the deity of Christ, but they are immensely interested in the Christlikeness of God.' In His own day His practice and teaching as to the Sabbath, the Scriptures, the grace of God, a score of things, seemed horribly immoral. But now we are learning that they are the only possible truths, have found that to be right we must follow with exactness in Christ's steps. So far we have slowly penetrated into His originality. But there are still infinite deeps in it we have not yet begun to sound, as these sayings now before us, and the shock they give us, prove. Yet these too are true: and one day others will look back at us, counting us hardly Christian in any full sense at all, wondering how we could have missed or been stumbled by elements of the Master's will which by their day will have become accepted as the only possibility, and the obvious way of things.

The fact is there have been two main forks in the tree of life. The one was when the animal and vegetable kingdoms separated. The latter had an easier and prettier road to much quicker results. And very glorious these are—the stateliness of trees, the greenness of grass, the loveliness of flowers. But along that line progress was arrested and came to a halt. The other took a road that

looks uglier and more squalid, through carnage and competition and blood. But it has climbed far higher to the grace of self-sacrifice and all the glories of humanity. The second all-decisive fork is Christ or not Christ. Turn your back on Him, and you may and will reach many wonderful things. Comfort and mechanical efficiency and a hugely interesting world—all this and much more are still open to you. But if you want to climb as high as soul, you must take Christ's way and follow Him. The road is steeper, the toil is harder, but the results are far more glorious. And if we refuse what we know to be Christ's will, we are taking the downhill path to degeneracy and decay and death; or at the least to an arresting of all higher progress. The man depicted in the Sermon on the Mount is the man of the future.

There are those, no doubt, who deny this; maintaining that this teaching is not of the future, but is flyblown and antiquated and out of date, carried to our modern bustling world like a dying echo from a primitive day when life was immeasurably more simple than it is now; and the complexity of our society and the intricacy of our problems had not risen on men's minds. This, they argue in effect, is legislation that might work in some small family clan, but nowadays the thing is utterly and hopelessly impossible.

For myself I resent that bland assumption that would dismiss Christ a little superciliously as One who came out of a small time, and whose mind and teaching are coloured by the smallness of His environment. Historically it has not a statable case. For the disconcerting fact is that nearly all our problems are more or less perennial. There were doles in Greece centuries before Christ, and war-time prohibition in China thousands of years ago, and leagues of nations often in quite early days. And Christ lived in a world which in essence was quite bewilderingly like our own, and among men and women whose hearts were strikingly akin to our hearts now. And our lofty attitude towards those old days and to the Master's teaching that came out of them is silly enough. Somehow the moderns who presume to talk down to Christ and to push Him aside as out of date, on the basis of their alleged fuller knowledge of life and the larger world in which we dwell, don't look bigger or cleverer or wiser than He; in short, they make themselves preposterously ridiculous, until one blushes hot for those who have no notion what clumsy, blundering, gawky souls they really are in Jesus' presence. If Christ followed the tradition upon any subject, then be sure that that was not

merely tradition but the law of God. And if Christ, with deliberation and not hesitating to pay down the whole cost of His audacity, broke with the prevailing views, as on the sanctity of marriage, or with the unanimous prophetic custom, as on the drink question, and took a startlingly new and lonely road of His own, the Church resiles from that originality of His and goes back to the old ways He discredited, or to the prophetic views which He discarded, as to a quicker and truer and more thorough plan, at its own peril, aye, and at that of many generations. Take the instance given here, that of divorce. In our Lord's day that was granted easily on many grounds; any mere incompatibility of temper, or any roving of desire, was often held to be enough. But Christ daringly laid it down that only one reason was valid. And how much of decency and moral uplift the world owes to that. Yet nowadays a popular view is to talk disparagingly of His ruling as of a quaintly old-fashioned notion which the modern world has quite outgrown and definitely left behind. The United States considers itself a Christian nation, yet blatantly it pays little or no attention to Christ's mind upon this subject. What does it matter what He held? We know far better nowadays! And so with open eyes they have gone back to the very kind of thing from which He lifted us. It is easy fastening on vivid and distressing cases to build up a plea. Is a woman to be tied for life to a drunkard or a criminal or a lunatic? That is, indeed, a fearsome fate. And yet society must come before the individual. And where the sanctity of the marriage tie is loosened, civilization crumbles. 'For better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness or in health,' that is a covenant touched by the glow and splendour and chivalry of love. But to make a business contract which, if it does not pay us dividends in comfort big enough to please us, we immediately dissolve, that is not to pass ahead of Christ, but to slip far below the level that He set us. The full flowering time of His teaching in the world is not over and past; it lies still far ahead.

Yes, but it is not enough for us to look eagerly forward, and sing, 'It's coming yet for a' that,' with a thrill in our heart, and a huzza in our voice; and so, envying the happy people of the time to be, settle down meantime in our own ways as the one possibility for us as yet. We too must work these sayings here and now into our hearts and lives. And how?

What strikes me first about this new righteousness is the honouring claims Christ makes upon us.

That is what nowadays most thrills me in the Gospels. Not, as was once the case, the promises, but the demands, the glorious assumptions, the fact that looking at us He pitches things so high. What do ye more than others? He turns to us and asks. For He expects that Christian people will in any company move to the front by right: that as at the War men fell by natural selection and a kind of inescapable inevitableness into their fitting places, and he who could lead did lead, and he who could not fall in behind, as a matter of course, and followed, so Christian folk will by the nature of things prove themselves bigger and braver and wiser and more unselfish in the living of their lives than others. And that for two reasons. First, because they have an instinct that fastens on what matters and concentrates mainly on that, and sets lesser things into their due or secondary place. To-day many people boast with pride that they are so busy about carrying out the gospel in social reform that they have no time to be bothered with the mere rites of religion. And they say it not at all ashamed, but quite convinced that they are farther on than those who still waste time about the Churches and the like. And Christ looks at them. You are in the kingdom, He says, but just in it—'the least in it,' nothing more. And, on the other hand, there are those whose energy and thought are concentrated solely upon matters of ritual and so on, who are tremendously in earnest over these, quite staggeringly so indeed: shall we say upon early communion, and fasting and the like? And Christ declares with emphasis that if that is all they have to show they are not in the Kingdom at all. The righteousness I claim, He says, is something more than that. The real Christian, so He tells us, has a balance of mind that uses means as means, and ends as ends, and does not grow confused between the two, but puts each in its own fitting place. And further, he has something of his Master's eagerness to use his life with thoroughness and for the biggest things. Browning tells of a soul dragged forward like a conscript 'out of the glad, safe rear into the dreadful van.' But where there is sacrifice to be made, and danger to be faced, the Christian leaps forward, always volunteering, always first. So Christ expected. And yet is it so with us? Sacrifice! we say, drawing back, not liking the look of the dreadful van, preparing to slink into the safe, glad rear again. But, we stammer in confusion, I thought the whole point of this faith was that through it one gets off, that less will do, that in view of this grace of God toward us we need not worry as we used to do, nor

mind nearly so much how we live, for He will get us through somehow. Isn't it so? I understood that the Cross means that the moral laws are in some way to swerve aside in our favour, that an exception in their working is to be made on our behalf, that a poor life with Christ will be accepted in place of a fine life without Christ. Well, it doesn't. Not so did they understand it in the New Testament. Rather they caught infection from their Master's chivalry. If Christ carried His cross, then so must I; if He gave His life, here is mine too. The faith is not an opiate but a spur, an inspiration, a compulsion to do more, far more than we had ever seen before to be our duty. The whole meaning of the thing is to create a world at last of spirits like Christ, flinging their lives away for God and others in His joyous and unreckoning way; and you and me among them. And if we don't wish that, then Christ is not for us.

And then there is the almost dreadful inwardness of this new righteousness. Law is a crude makeshift affair. It deals only with what is overt. Conduct, and what is written down, and words before credible witnesses, these are its sphere, but beyond that it cannot press into what a man is in the hush and hidden places of his own heart. But all the great religious teachers follow us into these remote fastnesses—past conduct and past words, and down into the secrecy of thought. 'Thought,' says a Buddhist, 'that mysterious essence of being.' And so indeed it is. It is difficult to credit that a solid piece of matter, a dour lump of a thing, is in reality no lump, but is composed of endless mobile electrons in perpetual motion. And all this busy life about us is built up of that airy insubstantial substance, always forming in these brains of ours, that we call thought as certainly as all the vivid pageantry of his dreams and the long procession of his characters were fashioned within Shakespeare's mind. And thus if one wishes really to change and cleanse the world, one must get back to thought, the final material out of which life is woven. That is why legislation, which deals only with outward things is, and must be, so inadequate; why politicians are at best mere fumbling amateurs; why in the last resort we must rely upon God's prophets who dig deeper, and push matters farther back, and strive to change, not our environment alone, but our innermost selves. For nothing less will serve. If a river runs foul and polluted through a city, it is nothing like enough to prevent the factories within its bounds from disgorging refuse into the waters. When that is done, the cure may prove to be no

cure, and the stinking yellow scum may still float past, breeding disease. You must get powers to start far farther back, and deal with the pollutions at the river's source. So here. Because, as Browning has it :

I am ware it is the seed of act  
 God holds appraising in His hollow palm,  
 Not act grown great thence on the world below  
 Leafage and branchage vulgar eyes admire.

And so our Lord, lighting a candle, takes us down into the dusty little-visited recesses of our hearts. Conduct, He says, that's little ; let us probe much farther in. You have not murdered: are you sure of that ? Look at your hands again ! Is not that blood on them ? If you have hated any one, or been angry with any one, that itself ranks as murder, as I judge. If you have been contemptuous to any even in thought, have sniffed at him, so the word seems to mean, there is no penalty that you do not wholly deserve. If looking down upon a man of lesser chance and smaller education you have said or thought, 'You stupid ! Even the flaming of Gehenna were not too dreadful for a heart like yours !' So Christ says, and He means it ; and He is to be our Judge. Truly if these be His standards for us, and if this is what He calls sin, if He should mark iniquity, who could stand !

And He passes deeper yet, past thought itself, and down into the imagination. Ezekiel has a terrible picture of certain old men, much respected in the city, leading clean and unchallengeable lives, who when the darkness fell, stole out into the night, and furtively slipt through the streets, and up into the Temple, locking its doors behind them, and so to a hidden postern let secretly into a wall, and through it, locking it too with care, and in that room where none might follow, and where even God's eyes they felt did not see, its walls all covered over with loathsome pictures and obscenities of hateful crawling filthy things, they carried through unspeakable orgies to unthinkable gods, and so watchfully crept forth, and back through the now silent streets, and out into their irreproachable lives again and the respect of decent unsuspecting men and women. What do you dream about ? asks Christ. What do you picture when you are alone ? And holding up that searching light of His, He flashes it upon the walls of our imagination to show—what ? Is it reptiles and crawling things and horrors hidden away ? Are we as true and pure there in that secret place, with never an eye to see, as out in the broad light of staring day ? Your conduct may be blameless,

and your words irreproachable, your very thoughts immaculate. But what of your imagination ? Dare you face that test ?

And yet so terrible is it to Christ that one should be smirched by evil even there, that He plunges into that terrific metaphor, surely the most heart-shuddering thing in Scripture, about the right hand cut off and the right eye torn out—anything, everything to be saved from this foul, festering pollution ! Once on a day I had a ghastly experience. The 'phone rang early in the morning, and an hysterical woman's voice bade me come instantly. I went, and found that a most brilliant student had suddenly gone crazy in the night, had with a safety-razor blade cut off his hand, and lay there laughing exultantly. 'I did right,' he cried, 'I can look Jesus in the face.' They took him to the hospital, his hand beside him in a paper bag, and from thence to the asylum, poor crazed soul ! But as I stood there in that blood-splashed place, Christ's hate and terror of sin even in thought came rushing in upon me. Pluck it out ! Cut it off ! Or it will fester, poison, slay your soul !

Lastly, this new righteousness is a positive and not simply a negative thing : is more by far than mere painful avoidance of evil ; it is a glorying in doing right, and that according to a marvellous standard. Stevenson once sent a letter to his mother which he headed 'A Christmas Sermon,' denouncing the gloom of his father's religion, and underlining this conception that Christianity is much more than a not-doing this and a not-doing that. These negative commands, he wrote, have a 'black, angry look' ; and, indeed, till one has actual 'pleasure in these difficult decisions,' things are not well with us ; and after all the whole of essential morality is 'just kindness.' Well, Christ agrees with that. What we have to do, said He, is just to love. But when Stevenson imagined that that makes things greatly easier for us, in the deepest sense he is surely entirely wrong. Not easier, but harder ; far, far harder. For look at what Christ means by loving. Take those tremendous sayings that have puzzled the world ever since they were uttered, and around which there is a constant din and never-settling dust of controversy about non-resistance and the like. They look as if they outlawed war : they look as if they ruled out law : they look as if they opened the door of opportunity for every impudent and importunate scamp to fatten on his fellows' kindness and credulity. And what are we to do with them ? Are they meant to be vivid metaphors, like that about the hand and eye ? Or are they

to be taken literally? Is the world, for example, waiting for a martyr nation, who will not resist when threatened by war, but go to its Cross, as Christ went to His, and so lift the earth to better things? Perhaps I have a barbarous soul that has been left behind by the rising tide of understanding of what the faith means. Yet there are wars conceivable to which, should they spring upon us, I for one would have to go again; or else not be able to look Christ in the eyes. And I believe in law as a Divine appointment that has changed this world from an uneasy scene of tyranny and insecurity into a safe and kindly place. And I will not give to some rogues whose life is a deliberate deception of better, aye, and sometimes poorer, people than themselves, and who by that are losing their own souls. But I will do my little part as a voter and as a Christian to prevent wars of aggression, and seek to stamp these altogether from God's earth: and I will pay my taxes uncomplainingly to help my less fortunate fellows, and try to be generous upon the Christian scale: and I will seek to be easy to live with, and not quarrelsome even about my undoubted rights, but forbearing and large-minded and kind. But easy! The truth is, says Christ, that what is wrong is that you are all using far too low a standard, with the result that you are much too quickly satisfied. It is not nearly enough to be just—though even that God knows is hard to practise; or to claim no more than your bare dues; or to pay your fellows their full rights, or to deal with men as they deserve. All that is far less than your bounden duty. When you use such things

as your scale of measurement you are taking custom, or the conventions, or other people round about, or at the best the worthiest of them, as your index of how you ought to live and what you ought to be. And none of these will do. For your standard is God. For you to live deliberately on a lower moral plane than God is failure. And look yonder! There is an open sinner; yet you see the sunshine does not skip his fields! And there a scandalously immoral man; yet on his croft the rains fall just as healingly as upon any other. And you too in God's generous way must blot out enmity however well deserved as men judge things, must forget ingratitude, must meet rank unworthiness and worse with a queer stubborn love that keeps on obstinately loving in despite of everything. So only shall you prove yourselves the children of that Father who, whatever you have done, still unaccountably persists in loving you.

But who is sufficient for these things? Like some barbarian looking into Plato, aye, far more confusedly, so do I peer into the mind of Christ, as at a thing how far beyond and above me as yet. Only you remember Bunyan, how the evangelist asked, 'Do you see yonder wicket gate?' And the man answered, 'No, I don't.' 'Well, do you see that shining light,' he was next asked, and he replied, 'I think I do.' Keep that light in your eye, and you will reach the goal in time, so he was told. Let us, too, keep our eyes on Christ, and follow Him on to the end of all we see to be His will, as that will becomes ever fuller to us. And in us also it will all come true in time.

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## Latinity of the Pastorals.

BY THE REVEREND F. R. MONTGOMERY HITCHCOCK, D.D., TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS, MALDON.

ST. PAUL moved with the times. He was keenly alive to every opportunity for founding a new community. And, if possible, he would carry out his plan, frustrated so long by Jewish cabals, of winning the vigorous people of Gaul and Spain to the faith. He must have seen that the great Latin peoples that had recently come into the empire were intensely proud of their new status, and would prove worthier converts than Oriental or Greek. The Apostle's style had been considerably changed by his two long imprisonments

in Cæsarea and Rome. His powers had been curtailed, his vigour sapped. He was a prematurely aged man in his Roman lodging. His circumstances and inclinations and his bodily weakness made him briefer and more concise in his periods; and perhaps a little more egotistical, and at the same time more human. We cannot think that he was so engrossed in his controversies with Jews and Gentiles, and in the affairs of the Churches he had founded, that he had not some mental recreation. In the Argiletum, the next street to