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Entre Nous.

Men and Movements.

The Rev. F. A. Iremonger during his editorship of *The Guardian* had the happy idea of having a personal interview with a number of prominent personalities in the Church of England. Most of those chosen were specially identified with some movement in the Church. So, for example, we have an interview with Dr. Temple, the leader of Copec. 'The object of the Copec, in a sentence,' answered the bishop, 'is to attempt to apply the principles of the Gospel to the ordering of social and economic life.' Another interview was with the Rev. G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, M.C. In it the aims of the Industrial Christian Fellowship are brought out. 'Crowds are irrational. The danger of democracy is that men are swayed merely by their feelings. What we have got to do is to sublimate these feelings, and make men be moved not by them but by a passion for the Kingdom of God. That is what is meant by the usual phrases about a Christian outlook on industrial and economic problems. . . . I am never tired of repeating that what the movement requires is good men with a sense of the over-lordship of God and reverence for Him, who don't blame their neighbours but themselves.' In conversation with the Rev. P. T. B. Clayton, M.C., one detail after another of Toc H. was explained to Mr. Iremonger—its five hundred honorary padres, its Groups and Branches and Houses, and the awarding of the Lamp which is given to a Group only when it can point to a good record of corporate service. 'Yes, I know all about that,' said the Padre; 'but you must spare a bit more space to explain that in our Houses we have every sort and kind of men living cheek by jowl. . . . And each man pays on a sliding scale, according to his earnings. In one House we have two men sharing the same room, one paying four guineas a week and the other seven and sixpence. The average is twenty in a House, with ten guest-beds which are reserved for men who are looking for work or running away from it. Toc H. is meant to be the biggest Friendly Society of its age.'

The last two interviews—all are now issued in book form by Messrs. Longmans (*Men and Movements in the Church*; 4s. net)—are with the Bishop of Birmingham and the Bishop of Chelmsford. These did not appear in *The Guardian*, but are now published for the first time. Three fundamental truths of religion, Dr. Barnes thinks, should receive a fresh

emphasis. The first of these is the Fatherhood of God. 'I prefer "Fatherhood" to "Love." There is a severe side to the character of God which the idea of Fatherhood retains. As is well known, leaders of modern physical and biological science show a distinct recoil from mechanical concepts of development. But they are naturally led to a somewhat colourless pantheism if they confine attention to scientific research. I would have the Church of England show the necessity of passing from such pantheism to belief in God as our Father. Secondly, I would have the Church preach Jesus as the Christ, One Whom the modern world can rightly regard as the Anointed of God. . . . Liberal Protestantism presents the world with an idealist social reformer. Catholicism puts forward the central figure of a mystery-religion. We need to present, instead of such fancies, the Son of Man. . . . Thirdly, I wish to urge that the ethical content of the Gospel should be more simply and courageously proclaimed by the Church. We relegate the Beatitudes to the Gospel for All Saints' Day. We ought to have them Sunday by Sunday to make men understand the mind of Jesus Christ. After all, He is the peculiar glory of the Christian religion.'

Evangelistic Missions.

Parochial Missions, far from having had their day, have never been more needed, says Canon Peter Green. And by a parochial mission he means an Evangelistic Mission, where the aim is to induce men and women to make the great decision and to accept Jesus as Saviour, Master, and Lord.

Under what circumstances should a Mission be attempted? With quite surprising frequency Canon Green gets letters in which the writer says: 'I came to this parish a short time ago. Owing to the long illness of the late incumbent (or his great age, or some other cause) the whole place is utterly dead. Would you advise me to have a Mission?'

His answer in these circumstances is an immediate negative. 'If a clergyman finds a parish dead, and his church empty, he must set to and gather a congregation by the ordinary methods of visiting, Sunday School work, the after-care of confirmation candidates, and attention to communicants. Seven years of steady pastoral work may not be too long a period in which to build up such a body of workers as shall justify aggressive evangelistic work.'

If when the congregation is cold and dead that is not the time for aggressive evangelistic work, what is to be done then? 'Try a dose of Foreign Missions,' Canon Green answers. 'I can only say that nothing that I have ever known, in the whole course of my ministry, has ever done so much to quicken and revive a parish, or done it so quickly and with such lasting results,' as the Mission held in the rural deanery in 1923. Any priest who thinks of having a Parochial Mission should read Canon Peter Green's book on the whole subject which has just been published by Messrs. Longmans. The title is *Parochial Missions To-day* (4s. net). He will find in it the fullest advice on such subjects as the length of a Mission—longer than ten days at any rate, and, if possible, lasting over four Sundays; the number of missionaries; whether a children's Mission should be held at the same time; preparation for the Mission; how to secure a great volume of prayer; advertisement; preliminary visitation, method of decision, and after meetings.

This is Canon Green's mind on the question of decision. 'There must be some definite act of decision. . . . "Where there is no expression there is no impression" is a sound maxim in religion as well as in education.' People do not want to be committed. 'As a working lad once expressed it to me, their attitude is "I don't want to put my hand out any further than I can pull it back again."' The Mission then must supply opportunities for confessing Christ openly, and the confessions should not be made too easy.

After the Mission is over, should we try to make the emotion which has been stirred up permanent? If not, should we try to stir it up periodically? Canon Green believes that the Mission atmosphere should not be prolonged; that the Mission Hymn-book (for example) should not be used one Sunday evening a month. 'What we ought to aim at is to use these times of warmed affections as to form habits of right living, habits which, "by a patient continuance in well-doing," may build up lasting Christian character.'

Confessing Christ.

'When the night came on which I made up my mind to ask for decision I stood for a few moments on the chancel step while no one moved. Then a man of about sixty, a leading man in civic life and the head of a great business, came slowly up the aisle and took a card. He was absolutely the last man one would have expected to act so. He

said to me afterwards,—"I think caution, call it cowardice if you like, has spoilt my religion all my life. If I could have preached at a street corner, or stood a bit of persecution for religion, it would have made all the difference. But I'm no great speaker, even on matters I really know something about. And no one gets persecuted for religion these days. It's the other way round; you get praised and flattered. But that going out before the congregation was just what I wanted. No, that's wrong! I did not want it. I hated it. I was all sweating and trembling. But if I did not want it, I needed it."'¹

Ecclesiasticus 5^o.

'There are texts that are elusive and intriguing on the surface; they seem to deal with one subject, plain and practical; but in the heart of them they deal with something else, deeper, more significant, something moral and spiritual. "Winnow not with every wind, and go not into every way." On the surface of it, it deals with farming; in the heart of it, it deals with morals—or the wise conduct of life.

'What did the son of Sira mean by winnowing with every wind? In the old days corn was winnowed by being tossed by a shovel into the air, so that the wind might carry away the chaff, while the heavier grain fell back upon the threshing-floor. One had, therefore, to consider the wind before one decided to winnow the grain. To winnow in a very light wind was to waste one's time and toil, for the chaff would not be carried away but would fall again on to the threshing-floor. To winnow in a very strong wind was to run the risk of having the good grain carried away along with the chaff; so that a man who winnowed in every wind was likely at once to waste his time, waste his toil, and lose his harvest. We smile as we look at the picture of the man winnowing in every wind. William Law in his "Serious Call" has given us a full-length portrait of the man under the character of "Flatus."

'But in the moral sphere, in the conduct of life, what is the equivalent of winnowing in every wind? It is partly explained by the sentence that follows, "Winnow not with every wind, and go not into every way." The suggestion seems to be that we must exercise some discrimination and some restraint in the things we attempt to do. We must not try to *excel* in everything, or even *be* in everything. . . . There is a kind of man who has a

¹ Peter Green, *Parochial Missions To-day*, 91.

figdety desire to be on every Committee, but he is not much use on any of them.

'But there is a more serious side of this restless vanity—this itch to be in everything. In giving way to it a man loses the power to fix steadily the direction of his will, and so takes up one thing after another and drops each in turn. He is more eager to express himself, as he puts it, than to pull steadily in the harness. He may even become curious of too many things, foolishly desirous of tasting every fruit in the garden of life, even the forbidden fruit. One might add a verse from another chapter, "My son, meddle not with many matters; for if thou meddle much thou shalt not be innocent," or as Dr. John Tauler puts it, "He who entangles himself with a multitude of matters, outward or inward, and will meddle with everything that is going forward, will also have a share in the evil thereof." It is possible for a man to know life too well for his security. "Winnow not with every wind, and go not into every way" is wise counsel.

'But after all the man who does this is not so much any particular individual as just vain human nature in general, which needs to be checked, controlled, disciplined, that it may acquire singleness of aim and steadfastness of purpose. And so the son of Sira gives our restless human nature this counsel.'¹

'There is nothing hid from the heat thereof.'

A volume of essays in Mr. Boreham's best vein has just been published by the Epworth Press—*The Fiery Crags* (5s. net). He is now the author of more than twenty-two volumes. The publishers put twenty-one on the title-page and then add etc. etc. An amazing output! The first essay in *The Fiery Crags* is called 'The Boy,' and with it we at once enter into Mr. Boreham's confidence and rejoice with him over a great happening in his family. "'It's a boy!'" The thing seemed incredible. Nobody knew what to make of it. We had spent nearly twenty years on the cultivation of a choice little garden of girls. But a *boy!* Who could have dreamed of such an astounding and sensational development.'

Heat is the subject of the last essay, and it starts in the delightfully inconsequent way characteristic of Mr. Boreham—from a casual remark made to him. 'I was chatting in the park last night with Basil Clements, the manager of a big gas concern. "We have made up our minds," he observed,

between the puffs of a particularly fragrant cigar, "We have made up our minds that we've been sailing on the wrong tack. We've always regarded *light* as the crucial test of gas; but now we pay more attention to its *heat*. We have come to the conclusion that heat is the vital quality!"' Mr. Boreham ponders his friend's words, and these are some of his thoughts. 'We have a ponderous literature,' he says, 'penned in praise of the light of the sun. But David says nothing about the light of the sun. He extols its heat for three reasons. (1) When, under the guidance of the astronomers, I contemplate the sun—a furnace of fire a million times the size of the earth—I see that heat is its essential output: light is a mere by-product, valuable but distinctly incidental.

'(2) Light is superficial; heat is profound. Light glances on the surface; heat is all-diffusive, all-pervasive, all-penetrating. The light is easily evaded. The photographer knows that. Darken the window or descend a mine, and you are beyond the sovereignty of the sunlight. But the heat! From the core of the earth to its crust, there is nowhere a grain of sand or a speck of dust or a drop of water, or an atom of matter of any kind, that is beyond the influence of the sun's all-searching heat.

'(3) The light represents the things that we see; the heat represents the things that we feel; and it is by the things that we feel that life is dominated and controlled. The entire history of mankind goes to show this. "How do you know that there is any Christ? You never saw Him!" demands Augustine St. Clare, taking his stand on the light-principle. "I feel Him in my soul, massa!" replies poor Uncle Tom, taking his stand on the heat-principle. Robert Elsmere tells his wife of his doubts and of his intention of leaving the ministry. "Robert, my husband, my darling," she cries, in an agony of entreaty, "it cannot be! It is a madness, a delusion! Come away with me, away from books and work, into some quiet place where He can make Himself heard! . . . What can books and arguments matter to you and me? Have we not *known* and *felt* Him as He is, Robert? Have we not? Come!"'

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¹ A. F. Taylor, *Meditations in Ecclesiasticus*, 77.