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pioneer Dr. Barnardo. Although he was giving his life to save poor and homeless boys and girls, yet enemies did their best to hinder him. They even dragged him to the police court. But he faced the dragon. He came to grips time after time with that huge but cowardly monster DIFFICULTY. And he won, and won splendidly. That is why we honour him so much.

There is another dragon who tries to make us whine and pity ourselves and run away. His name is ILL-HEALTH. He tried to daunt Robert Louis Stevenson, and spoil all his plans. But R.L.S. showed how much can be done when a brave heart is within a weak body. It was because he faced his dragon, and fought him and won, that he has left us such rattling stories as *Treasure Island* and *The Black Arrow*. The same dragon crawled into the way of Frances Ridley Havergal, who wrote so many of our lovely hymns. She used to say: 'People are sorry for me; *but* I am not sorry for myself.' What a big **BUT** that is.

One of the worst dragons is TEMPTATION. This beast lives in a nasty marsh, evil-smelling and miry. He comes raging forth to meet us and tries to drag us down into the nasty mud. Alas, he overcame one of the men who wrote our Bible! Listen to this defeated and miserable man: 'Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin . . . wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow . . . blot out all mine iniquities . . . create in me a clean heart, O God.' Oh dear! he knew he was covered with nasty slime. But that dragon like all the others has a weak spot. We must face him and fight him with courage and prayer. Let us make sure that we are well equipped for the battle by putting on the whole armour of God. Let us keep our sword sharp, and our shield bright. Then we are ready. That dragon TEMPTATION will not take us by surprise. No! we shall be able 'to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.'

The Christian Year.

EASTER DAY.

The Faith of Easter.

'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.'—Col 3¹.

For us Easter is the faith that Christ is risen, that in His death He found Himself, found the eternal significance and reality of all He had been, that through the grave and gate of death He entered into eternal and perfect union with God,

and through that union with God is now and for ever one with all that is eternal in human life, its supreme source and creative spirit. For us it is a necessary act of faith, an act of faith almost as necessary and instinctive for the spirit as is the act of breathing for our lungs, that Christ must have risen, that He could not be holden of death. For our faith holds that life is deathless in so far as it works with God, feels with God, wills with God, has already its certainty of eternal values in itself. It knows that life is not expressing a merely personal purpose, that it is not working for merely personal ends, that it is not resting in merely personal satisfactions. It is sure, with a certainty which it does not gain from outside but which is given in itself, in its own vital commerce with God, that an eternal purpose is working in and with it, that an eternal end is being somehow subserved by its activities, that the satisfaction into which it enters is a satisfaction of needs which are felt by God and the whole world of spirit. And the life of conscience, of conscious dependence in all our activities on God, does not need to support its faith by a minute investigation of certain historical problems of the Gospels. It finds in the gospel as a whole the figure of One who was its own supreme type and fulfilment. Its faith that that Perfect Life of Conscience could not be holden of death, that there was nothing left in it which belonged to the order that death can touch, is immediate and unshakable. Christ is risen.

But that Easter faith must come nearer home to us. It is not fulfilled for us till we know ourselves risen with Christ. It is in the here and now of every passing generation that the Resurrection is fully accomplished. It is not of a moment in time, but of all time. Our faith in it is vain if we are yet in our sins, if we live contented with the life of selfish aims, of mean activities, of petty satisfactions. It is vain if the Eternal has not come to be the soul, the conscious directing purpose, of all we do and are. It may seem an impossible claim. The things we do are of such paltry significance that it seems but a gratuitous self-deception to idealize them on any plane of values which can be called eternal. We are grubbing in offices among files of dusty papers, manipulating with a mere mechanical skill meaningless arrays of figures at the dictation of an unseen will. Or we are ourselves the dictators of that life of daily routine for thousands of our fellow-mortals. We are selling behind a counter or buying in front of it the myriad little necessities of daily life. Our whole care is centred on the infinitely little, whose sum makes

up the only magnitudes we know. How, we think, can such things find any place in a system of eternal values? How can they matter to God? It is our own innate sense of the eternal, fitful and inadequate as it is, that fills us at times with an utter weariness of these things and brings home to us their essential insignificance. We cherish visions of an order in which they will be unnecessary, in which every human toil will have become magically interesting. But is it the case that we need such deliverance? Is it not a certain vulgarity in our imaginations that is seeking the refuge of an imaginary order from the real world in which we must find the measures of eternity if we are to find them at all? The simplest duties are part of a real order which is building up the human temple, which is laying deep and wide and strong the physical foundations on which it rests, which is strengthening its walls with cement of blood and tears and sweat of body and soul that within those walls the great spiritual ministries may endure. Without these unnecessary labours that sustain man's body and all his bodily needs, that give those needs perhaps a greater scope and urgency with each generation, where would be the growing triumphs, ardours, enjoyments of his spirit? We know well how his spirit has striven and strives to-day for the things that endure, how it has witnessed to them and witnesses to them to-day, with a very minimum of either demand or satisfaction for the needs of the body. Yet what we call civilization is an element in all corporate spiritual growth. The increasing mastery of Nature is a triumph of spirit and a contribution to spirit. And if the growth of civilization at its lowest, of mere material mastery, means an increased specialization of our human functions, an apparent disintegration of human interests, let us remember that it is not really so, that we are really engaged in making a civilization at its highest, an increased spiritual mastery.

That is the faith in the risen life, the faith that the eternal is here, that in our most ordinary activities we are inevitably its instruments and only come to ourselves as we become its conscious and most loyal ministers. It is the faith that all that we do can and does create eternal values. But it is more than that. It is the faith that what we do reveals its most immediate effects in what we are becoming. There, in the inner world of character, the eternal is already ours. Whatever the outer result of our activity may be, the power that it makes is of eternal moment to the world. The world, we feel, lives by its soul, and our character

is of its soul. For that soul of the world is always in the making.

And all the life of that world of spirit is eternal, that which is in the making equally with that which is unchangeably itself, that which is in the making because it can come to be only in so far as it is rooted in and nourished by that which is. Religion through every variety of change has held to that inveterate faith. It is that faith native in man universally, abiding in him against all the might of appearances, that makes man naturally a religious being. The faith has been always the same, in its crudest form as in its most refined and developed, the faith that in whatever man is doing he is working out for and in himself an eternal hell or an eternal heaven, an eternal discontent and self-torture or an eternal satisfaction, the faith that the issues of life are declared in the quality of life and that those issues must somehow be eternal because that quality is immediately felt by us as eternal. That is the reason why faith in the Risen Christ depends upon no laborious marshalling of historical evidences, but in an immediate native certainty of the soul. Being what He was, what the gospel reveals Him to the dullest, He could not be holden of death. Man's faith in himself proclaims that Christ is risen and that we must be risen in Him or else we are not yet in any satisfying sense ourselves.¹

I know

There is no death, 'tis but a phantom fear
That haunts the soul apart from God.

Christ Rose.

The stone was rolled away, and echoing,
His voice startled Death's sentry guards.

'Behold,

I live for ever, and have cast the keys
Of Hell into the bottomless abyss.'

Lift up your heads, ye golden gates, for all
To enter in who will to walk the Way.

Christ lives, and round the living Christ new worlds
Burn to their birth in light, new triumph songs
Make music mid the silent stars, and swell,
Like ocean's thunder on a sounding shore,
Life! Life! More Life! Christ lives for evermore.²

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Life's Responsibility.

'The signs of the times.'—Mt 16³.

If we are to do any sort of serious thinking about the time in which we live, it is clear that we must

¹ A. L. Lilley, *Nature and Supernature*, 233.

² G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, *Songs of Faith and Doubt*.