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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*.

cut our way through to the essential and defining meanings of the age.

As one watches the passing show there are, to be sure, many indications of the typical thought and action of the period from which we are just passing. A little while ago the mechanistic interpretation of matter and life spoke with a self-confidence which was little less than regal. And there are no end of people who believe that they possess cultivated minds who still bow down before the mechanical as the final. Such blunt sentences as that in which Sir James Jeans declared at Cambridge University a little more than a year ago that mechanism had shot its bolt, must prove very startling to those who have sold all their idealisms at the command of a mechanistic determinism which is already becoming decadent. To be sure, it did seem for a period that, to use a phrase of Emerson, 'things are in the saddle and ride mankind.' Men were only puppets in a determined world. The view was set forth with intellectual distinction and literary grace by Thomas Hardy. It was set forth with coarse vulgarity by Theodore Dreiser. And there were hosts and hosts of others. But even more as an atmosphere than as a formal interpretation of life determinism was subtly and potently present everywhere.

The observer of the passing show of thoughts sees much of another feature which is likewise a hangover from the period just behind us. For there are still machines to the right of us, machines to the left of us. And there are machines above us. Whether we are to regard the universe itself as a vast machine is more and more open to question. But the presence of incalculable numbers of machines in the world of our constant experience no one can deny. Once in a while some one tries to estimate what these machines have really done to us. Mr. Arthur Pound in *The Iron Man in Industry* has confronted one aspect of the problem with results for his own thinking which are dark and tragic enough. Mr. Stuart Chase in *Men and Machines* has tried to view the whole problem in a large and comprehensive way. And while he tries to say a good word for the whirring machines, it is evident that the spectacle of a billion wild horses set loose among us is one which he finds startling if not indeed terrifying. Can we use machines without becoming machines? This is the fundamental and searching question. Can the makers of machines remain persons while they work? Is automatic industry the inevitable foe of all those great values which we associate with the personal life? Will the machine age beget

generations of 'robots' where we once had men? Will the sense of speed developed by the high-powered automobile and the airplane make men incapable of thinking in terms of destination? Will they be content to move rapidly without asking any questions as to direction or as to goal?

When Sir James Jeans says that modern physicists are coming by a very different path to conclusions not dissimilar to those of Berkeley, we feel that great doors are indeed opening. And when Sir Arthur Eddington is ready quite frankly to admit that our conceptions of the physical world are essentially symbolical and that consciousness is the indubitable reality, we feel that a great scientist is facing problems, which scientists have not always met with such clear analysis and such unhesitating candour. It really seems odd that we should have been so obsessed by the uniform relations the physical and biological scientists discovered, that we should have ignored the importance of the free-moving, darting intelligence which discovered these uniformities. When we once have seen that the cool and clear intelligence of the scientist is more fundamentally important than any formula whose working power he discovers, we have entered a new world of critical insight. Then we begin to realize how entirely right Sir James Jeans was when he declared that mechanism had shot its bolt. Only we are not quite sure that it ever really had a bolt to shoot. If we had taken the trouble to understand the scientist and his own processes of creative thought we should never have been very much worried about the mechanical interpretation of the universe. The scientist himself is the rock upon which all deterministic systems break.

Then as we listen to the whirl of all the machines of this machine age we turn from the automobile to the driver and from the airplane to the pilot. In each case we have a fascinating mechanism used for his own purposes by a free mind, the free mind of the driver, the free mind of the pilot. It is the driver who determines directions. It is the pilot who turns his machine toward Brussels or toward Paris when he leaves London. Indeed, both the driver and the pilot live at the very spot where freedom and necessity meet. The free mind directs the uniformities whose formulas it has mastered, and so the machines become the slaves of freedom. The world of responsibility may seem to disappear when we consider an automobile. It triumphantly returns when we think of the driver. The world of free energy may seem to vanish when we consider an airplane. It trium-

phantly returns when we consider the pilot. And as one thinks of pilots and drivers one is perplexed that one should ever have been caught in the bog of mechanism. And when one thinks of the inventor of the machine it seems incredible that one ever failed to see that personality free and responsible is on the throne from the beginning of the whole process to the very end.

The world in which we see that scientists and inventors and drivers and pilots are more important than the uniformities they discover and the machines they construct and use, is a world in which we are ready really to think of the human values. There is good ground for believing that as the century behind us was an age of great machines the century before us will be an age of great persons. At least we may have it so if we will.¹

For generations we have been attending to economic results, and leaving human results to take care of themselves. But to-day we realize that, if the choice must be made, we ought to do the exact opposite. For we are beginning to understand at last the burden of that eloquent prophet whom God sent to rebuke England for her worldliness and secularity: 'There is no wealth but Life—Life including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings.' Civilization, said Baron Liebig half a century ago, is economy of power, and English power is coal. Civilization, retorted Ruskin, is the making of civil persons. 'And English power is by no means coal, but, indeed, of that which

When the whole world turns to coal
Then chiefly lives.'

The same principle has its application to ethics as well as to economics. Nay, it enters into the substance and fibre of ethics, which can never be reduced to a subject of abstract speculation. Germany may admonish us on this point: 'In no country is psychology more studied, and in no country is human nature less understood.' To-day we have begun to revolt against the tyranny of abstractions and to take refuge once more among the children who are partakers of flesh and blood. We used to argue in an abstract way about the British army, until we learned to talk fondly and proudly of 'our men at the front.' That change is the symbol of a spiritual conversion. For it is the one grand characteristic of Christianity that

¹ L. H. Hough, *The University of Experience*, 15.

it translates abstractions into personalities. After all is said, good and evil are mere names unless they stand for personal qualities. Right and wrong have no proper moral meaning except when they describe the relations between persons. And the essence of immorality lies in treating a living person as if he were no better than a thing. Slavery is hateful because it involves dealing with human beings as though they were chattels. We do despite to God when we take a fellow-creature, made in God's image, and turn that fellow-creature into the mere instrument of our own profit or our own self-indulgence.

To a Christian, things are of no account compared with persons; they have worth only as they subserve persons. Our religious organizations and institutions are all means to an end; they become useless, they may even become harmful and poisonous, unless they minister to the spirits of living men. Our theology grows vital when it turns away from abstractions and goes back into partnership with flesh and blood. It may almost be said that a man's Christianity is tested by the way in which he regards faces in the street. Browning's biographer has described how the poet looked at the fellow-creatures he met. To him, each one of them wore some expression, some blend of eternal joy and eternal sorrow, not to be found in any other countenance. He was hungrily interested in all human beings, but it would have been quite impossible to say of Browning that he loved humanity. He did not love humanity, but men. His sense of the difference between one man and another would have made the idea of melting them all into a lump called humanity simply loathsome and prosaic. For Browning 'believed that to every man that ever lived on this earth has been given a definite and peculiar confidence of God.'²

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

First Things First.

'To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.'—I S 15²².

This is a priceless bit of spiritual history, full of wonderful insight into the strange perversity of the human heart; full of humour, too, for we are funny creatures when we try to fool God.

There are few stories, and there is perhaps no figure in all history, so tragical as that of Saul; the man who had so many chances and who never seemed able to take them, who had somehow the knack, amounting almost to genius, of doing the

² T. H. Darlow, *Holy Ground*, 146.

wrong thing. There is no man in the Bible who so often said, 'I have sinned.' Not that he was ever really sorry. It meant little more than an intimation of the fact, as if he said to himself, but without regret, 'Wrong again!' 'Saul the mistake,' as Browning called him. 'Saul the failure.' The Bible speaks of him as one of God's mistakes! Again and again we are told that 'God repented having made him king over Israel.'

Some will say that Saul was not really responsible; that he was forced into a position for which he was not fitted, made to bear responsibility for which he was not able; that, by force of circumstances, the course of his life was twisted into ominous turnings. They may quote George Eliot's saying that 'Character is not the whole of destiny; circumstances have also to be reckoned with, which more often than not tell out the tale.' It is true that circumstances have to be reckoned with, and it is only when we have the character to reckon with them that we have any chance at all against them. Character may not be the whole of destiny, for intelligence also counts. A man may be good but stupid. John Buchan recently drew attention to the fact that Bunyan made all his great leaders—Mr. Greatheart, Mr. Valiant-for-Truth—to be men not only of character, but also of intelligence. They were men who used their minds. Others, who were good but stupid, he made to be followers, not leaders. Saul was not equal to leadership, not from lack of intelligence, but from lack of character. He had nobility of nature and generous instincts. Yet these were the very qualities in which he came to be completely lacking. Most of us are generous because we feel we can afford to be. We may be free from jealousy only because no one has ever stood in our way. Saul never knew jealousy until David appeared. The roots were doubtless there; or, as we would say, the tendency. He tried to implicate others and to shield himself, so as to escape the consequences of his own action. God, through His prophet, had asked him to deal with a certain situation. It was a very painful thing for any man to be asked to do; but do not let us get sidetracked by raising questions as to the ethics of this command to exterminate Amalek.

We know what Amalek stands for. It stands for all in our nature that is still a temptation to us; all that makes our complete deliverance and sanctification from sin difficult, if not impossible. The word that came to Saul is the word that comes to us, to destroy Amalek root and branch. Nothing must be spared; the good must go with the bad, the good that is not good enough. Up to a point

we act on God's command, but we leave a large margin for our own reluctance. We take sides with our own nature against God. It is really the most subtle form of self-deception, and none but the Holy Spirit can help us to see where we stand. It was because the Holy Spirit had departed from Saul that he could not even see where he had gone wrong. He said, 'I have sinned,' but he had no real regret, no repentance. He quite easily justified himself. He refused to justify God. I remember a sentence from one of Principal Rainy's prayers: 'We have justified ourselves and refused to justify Thee: we have forgiven ourselves and refused to be forgiven by Thee: we have added yet this to all our sin, that we have approved of all our sin.'

Did not the end justify the means? Saul spared the best of the sheep and oxen in order to sacrifice them unto the Lord. He made religion a cloak for his disobedience. We give any old reason as an excuse for holding on to what we know must go. We often make ourselves believe that we have made a complete response, that there is nothing more that God can possibly expect of us; which just means that we fix the limits of our obedience and leave a wide margin for doing our own pleasure. That is what we often do, and it does not need a prophet to tell us whether and in what particular we have done wrong. Any one who knows his own heart, to whom God speaks, can tell us where we are wrong, without our speaking a single word. Of course, Samuel was an expert at getting guidance. He began at a very early age to listen to the voice of God, and now that he was old he had the insight of experience, the knowledge of intuition, as well as that of direct revelation. He knew all that had happened on this occasion. When Saul was brought face to face with the prophet he tried to wriggle out of his responsibility by blaming others—'the *people* spared the best of the sheep and the oxen and the fatlings, to sacrifice unto the Lord *thy* God.'

It was then that Samuel spoke this great word: 'Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' In other words, the only right that we have to exercise before God is the right of obedience. No other right that we may claim to exercise—the right of private judgment or of worshipping God as we please—can take the precedence of this prior claim of God on our obedience. It is about the last thing that we are ready to give, but it is the first thing that He demands. We excuse ourselves by pleading that we are not always clear as to how we should act.

How can we be clear as to the journey on which the Lord will send us, when we refuse to take the first step; or, when we start off with a mental reservation as to how far we shall go? We cannot take any step of this road until we are ready to take every step. We are committed to the end in the beginning.

O Jesus, I have promised
To serve Thee to the end.

This is the meaning of faith. The keynote of faith is obedience, not belief. Obedience is the prerequisite of clear vision and knowledge of God's will.

Are we ready to obey all that may be revealed to us? Or are we afraid to go all the way with the destroying of things that are dear to us and bound up with us? They may in themselves be quite good things, and for that reason we are so tempted to spare them. Our prejudices, for instance—our religious and ecclesiastical prejudices. We have been brought up to worship God in a certain way, and it is not always easy to be tolerant of any other way. Or, it may be our national prejudices. We have been born into a certain national tradition, with a background of history, which has determined our ideas, political or racial. These things in themselves may be quite good things, but they may easily stand in our way of obeying the will of God. Or, again, there are things quite definitely bad that we try to spare just out of sheer, wilful self-indulgence—things that we have set our hearts upon and which we cannot find it in our hearts to destroy; things that are not good in themselves at all, and certainly not good for us. We try to rationalize our most inveterate habits. We surround them with all sorts of supposed 'convictions' to protect and spare them from destruction; when all the time we ought to be subjecting them to ridicule, or tearing them out by the roots. When Diabolus and all his forces were driven out of the city of Mansoul, he presented a petition to Immanuel that he might have only a small part of the city; when this was rejected, he begged to have only a little room within the walls. But Immanuel answered, 'He shall have no place in it at all—no, not to rest the sole of his foot.'

Are we keeping something in reserve for a special act of sacrifice, which, in the meantime, will help to comfort us for the things we have destroyed? Do not let us reserve anything, no matter for what high and holy purpose, that God has marked out for destruction. We may be waiting for guidance to make a complete surrender in every particular,

but that is not the way we come to learn the will of God and do it. 'Overdone solicitude to discover God's will means unwillingness to listen at once to conscience,' says Marcus Dods. We must act on the knowledge we have and by the light we have. We must go all out to destroy the thing that lies nearest, which we know to be a difficulty, which we know to be a sin, and then our next step will become plain. If we cannot give Christ our obedience, we need not try to worship Him, for that is only giving a religious cloak to our sin. He wants the gold of our obedience. That is how to worship Him in the beauty of holiness, in spirit and in truth.¹

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

What is Religion?

'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.'—Jn 14¹⁸.

One of the acutest minds of our time has recently suggested a somewhat novel and startling definition of religion: *Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness.*

If we were asked what religion was, we should probably hesitate, and then go on to identify it with church attendance; corporate worship; good behaviour; a strict adherence to a high moral standard of life; the avoidance of the grosser sins; belief in God; trust in the Saviour, and so on. Who amongst us, however, would identify it with solitariness and maintain that if we were never solitary we were never religious? Yet, if we allow ourselves to ponder the implications of this new definition, we shall recognize a profound truth in it. We shall recognize the truth of Professor Whitehead's contention that the great religious conceptions which haunt the imaginations of civilized mankind are scenes of solitariness; Prometheus chained to his rock, Muhammad brooding in the desert, the meditations of the Buddha, the solitary Man on the Cross.

To be alone; to be by ourselves; to enter into the silence which can be felt; to realize the intense and awful loneliness of human existence. There are so many people who are afraid of the consciousness of themselves. They must be in company. It is the herd instinct. They are moved by an unknown fear and seek to stifle it by plunging into the crowd.

What do we do with our solitariness? The answer in too many cases is simply that many do nothing with it. They never succeed in attaining to the state of isolation. They fear to enter into the

¹ E. Macmillan, *Seeking and Finding*, 17.

possession of their own souls. They halt upon the threshold of self-possession and flee away to the comfort of the companionship of their fellow-men. And in doing so they avoid that awful contact with reality which is the very nerve of the truly religious life. They fall short of the realization of the great truth that ultimately we are alone. There is a principle of individuation running through the whole created universe, exemplified in the minute differences which distinguish even the electrons one from the other, and finding its highest and most marked expression in the sphere of human life. Experience, in whatever direction we examine it, bears upon it this unmistakable stamp of uniqueness. My experience is *mine* and cannot, in that sense, be a shared experience with another. Hence our sad recognition of the truth that in relation to our brethren, however near of kin they may be to us, we are onlookers in their struggles; external observers of their joys and fears, and left ultimately to ourselves in the passage from time to eternity.

This is our solitariness, and religion is what we do with it.

Let us assume, now, that instead of seeking to avoid our solitariness we deal seriously with it. What is the result? We make the effort to shut out the external world. We hush the inner senses to a holy calm. We cultivate the power of silence. We retire from the noise and clamour of the external world into the inner sanctuary of our own souls. We shut the door and listen. What is the first fruit of such a discipline? Surely the sense of the void; solitariness, desolation; the sense of being forsaken: these are the first moments in the experience. The sense of fear comes next. And here we are at once conscious of what Professor Rudolf Otto has termed the 'numinous.' 'How dreadful is this place'—that which in religious language we call the fear of God.

Many reach this stage, and then flee in terror back to the external world to shelter amongst their companions. These, though Christians in name, never come within measurable distance of the sound of the gospel of Good News. This is a religion of law and lacks the saving grace of faith. First the void, then the terror, and the last word is Fear. Dare we stop there?

Let us persevere in the experience. There is no way out towards light except through darkness. There is no path to companionship except through the sense of being forsaken—even by God. Yet if we will deal faithfully with our solitariness there awaits us an exceeding great reward. What is it?

The sense of companionship. All the great men of prayer bear witness to it—the sense of His Presence! That is the reward of successful striving in the prayer life. In the region of our solitariness there is a Seeker. We are the objects of a Divine pursuit. Into the region where our nearest and dearest could not penetrate He can find an entrance. The barriers of self fall before His approach, and at long last we are safe and found in Him. First the void, then the fear, and then the Love! Fear of the All-Holy melts into joy in the presence of the All-Loving.

May we imagine it? The sob, the tears,
The long, sweet, shuddering breath; then on His
breast,

The great full flooding sense of endless years.
Of Heaven, and Him, and Rest.

He has kept His promise. 'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.' What would we more?

We should ponder carefully the setting of this experience, as it throws a flood of light upon the meaning of Calvary. Christ is rightly named the Solitary Man on the Cross. Why? Because it was there that He was able first in His own experience to bridge that awful gap separating fear from love in our human solitariness.

Unredeemed sinners could not themselves bridge it. Were it not for His work, we should still be at the foot of Mount Sinai, dwellers in the dark, fearful of an All-Holy God; lacking the sense of His Presence as Love, and knowing that Presence only as a numinous sense of fear and horror. But the solitary, because the Holy, Son of Man, endured first in Himself the sense of being forsaken—the penalty of our sins. The climax of all our human solitariness was experienced in His Person in one bitter cry of dereliction. And that culmination of our cry in Him and His cry for us issued in Atonement, Reconciliation. There was as its reward the restoration of Communion; there issued from Calvary, Resurrection, and from Resurrection, Pentecost. 'I will not leave you comfortless.' Death is not the last word; nor is isolation the final state. The lost are found; the condemned are liberated; the people sitting in darkness see a great light.

And this is possible as an experience for each one of us in Him—a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness—a conflict in the void with fear issuing in a victorious experience of redeeming love and reconciliation with God in Christ.

If we yield ourselves by faith to Him who thus

reveals Himself to us as the Man of Sorrows, then we move from fear towards love.

Then thro' the mid complaint of my confession,
 Then thro' the pang and passion of my prayer,
 Leaps with a start the shock of His possession,
 Thrills me and touches, and the Lord is there !

It is this sense of His Presence, this assurance of His Companionship, this conviction of His undying Love, which turn our solitariness into something which no description in human terms can describe.

St. Paul knew it, and he does justice to it when he cries out in terms of victory : ' I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life . . . nor things present, nor things to come . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'¹

*
 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Truth.

' If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples ; and ye shall know the truth.'—Jn 8³¹. (R.V.).

In these words our Lord states what a man essentially requires for the attainment of membership in His Kingdom, and this is the knowledge of the truth. ' If ye abide in my word, ye shall know the truth,' and become citizens of Christ's own Kingdom. The truth here designated is spiritual and ultimate. It is the perfection of this truth that makes its quest a permanent duty—nay more, calls down our reprobation on all contented acquiescence in the ignorance of any kind of truth within our reach.

If, indeed, there is no such relation as the text implies between abiding in Christ's word and the knowledge of the truth in its essential character, then indifference to the claims of truth can entail no moral responsibility, nor error in its quest any practical loss.

To be free in any province of practical human life, we must discover and obey the truths that regulate it. First, there are the laws or truths of Nature. These teach us to achieve what is possible on the one hand, and not to attempt what is impossible on the other. They multiply indefinitely the material comforts of life : they free us from belief in magic, sorcery, and the superstitions that were prevalent in the Middle Ages. With such triumphs of science no age is more familiar than our own. But such conquests of Nature impart no

¹ H. M. Relton, *Messages from a Troubled Church to a World in Trouble*, 33.

moral strength. They can give man a certain mastery in the physical world, though all the time they may be enthralling his moral and spiritual powers, and making him merely a citizen of this world, a mere serf of the material triumphs that he has achieved.

The truths which our Lord refers to are not the laws of Nature, though the knowledge of these laws is invaluable in its right place, and constitutes a further revelation of God's world.

No more are we to identify the truth in our text with moral truths. Moral truths hold a far higher place than the truths of science, since they warn us against the encroachments of the lower and sensual elements in our nature, and teach us to cast off all fear but that of wrong-doing. Furthermore, they convince us that it boots little that the head bows to no foreign yoke, if, after all, the heart is the victim of vice, or ignorance, or fear, and that the most dangerous evils are not those that invade man's outward interests, but those that vitiate his character : they condemn that frequently accepted lie that statesmen and nations are not bound by the same morality as individuals ; they make it manifest that, when licentiousness stains the lives of princes, or falsehood sways the policy of cabinets, they breed a moral pestilence in the nation at large, and teach the subject the same indifference to purity and truth that has the sanction of his ruler's example : they proclaim that the government that uses its powers selfishly, or sacrifices to its own ends the interests of the State, becomes an authoritative preacher of crime, and instructs the citizen to betray the public interest, and become venal when it suits his turn : they declare that a selfish policy to the stranger must encourage the growth of selfishness at home, and that bad passions aroused in a people's foreign relations will finally issue in internal and domestic strifes.

But it is not our intention to deal with moral truths in their general bearings. Rather let us limit our thoughts to truth considered in its lower character as veracity, and in its higher character as essential truthfulness. When strictly used there is a wide gulf between the two conceptions, veracity and truthfulness. Veracity implies nothing more than an agreement between our words and thoughts, though the thoughts may have no facts behind them ; whereas essential truthfulness expresses a real correspondence between our thoughts and reality, a correspondence that is only partially possible in this life.

Mr. Bettany in his life of Stewart Headlam says : ' I am told that Headlam's father said of him as

a boy, "Stewart talks and argues well, but the worst of him in argument is that he is less keen on finding out the truth than in demolishing you as his opponent."

Is veracity or truthfulness, then, obligatory in all emergencies? Some moral philosophers deny any such obligation, and, although they admit that lying is always in some degree evil, maintain that in certain emergencies it is a lesser evil than the evils it is used to avert.

Professor Sidgwick, in his *Methods of Ethics*, declares that 'it is obviously a most effective protection for legitimate secrets that it should be universally understood and expected that those who ask questions which they have no right to ask will have lies told them,' and maintains that we should not 'be restrained from pronouncing it lawful to meet deceit with deceit, by the fear of impairing the security which rogues now derive from the veracity of honest men.' Even Martineau writes: 'The theoretic reasons for certain limits to the rule of veracity are convincing and unanswerable, and compel me to defend any one who acts in accordance with them.' Yet he adds, 'when I place myself in a like position, at one of the crises demanding a deliberate lie, an unutterable repugnance returns upon me, and makes the theory seem shameful,' and he admits that, if he acted on such a theory, he could not 'escape the stab of an instant compunction and the secret wound of a long humiliation.' 'How,' he asks, 'could I ever face the soul I had deceived, when perhaps our relations are reversed, and he meets my sins, not with self-protective repulse, but with winning love?'

The vice of lying is marked with a treachery and a meanness which are all its own. For the gift of speech is based on the supposition that our words will express what we believe and what we feel, but the liar, taking advantage of this all but universal presupposition, secures for his falsehoods a confidence and trust which were otherwise beyond his reach. Hence the inevitable shame that befalls the liar when his guilt is brought to light. Thus Bacon writes: 'There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious,' and this holds true in a special degree when we lie for our own advantage. 'A lie,' writes Kant, 'annihilates the dignity of man,' and Montaigne declares that 'the liar is brave towards God, but a coward towards man.' Thus lying springs in the main from cowardice, whereas veracity and truthfulness, that habit of character in accordance with which we both say and do what

we actually believe, form the basis of all personal excellence.

We might add here that persons who are untrustworthy in matters of small moment can seldom be trusted in things of greater moment.

But it is urged that it may be difficult to be veracious or truthful in certain cases because we lack complete impartiality; to wish to discover the truth on one side rather than on the other is almost unavoidable. This, however, need entail no moral hurt, if our judgment refuses to be biased by our inclinations. In such circumstances we can attain to a high degree of impartiality, and avoid perverting the evidence at our disposal.

It has, however, been objected that an unbiased state of mind is unattainable. But, because perfect veracity or truthfulness is more difficult of attainment than any other human virtue, are we therefore to give a loose rein to untruthfulness? This question needs no answer.

The duty of veracity or truthfulness to our neighbour must not be treated apart from the duty of scientific inquiry, which includes the duty of revealing any truth we find. This latter duty is not always recognized. As the late Dean of Carlisle writes: 'There is probably, in this country at least, too much . . . unwillingness to communicate to the ignorant and the young the results of Science or of scientific Theology, for fear they should weaken the reverence and the morality which have in the past been associated with beliefs no longer tenable.'

The fact that our fathers found truth for themselves does not absolve their sons from the duty of seeking it for themselves: our fathers' findings only furnish a guarantee that their sons, too, shall find truth, if they truly seek it, and make it their own at whatever cost. Truth can never be static. It is a thing that grows from age to age in the school of God. If, therefore, we are children of the truth, and the truth is still to preserve our allegiance, our faith must be at once dynamic and progressive.

All ages of progress are marked by a progressive revelation of truth. It is only to the *intellectually dead* that the creed of the present is the mere reproduction of the creed of the past. Such a creed is in its essence an obedience without knowledge and spiritual growth. Hence such as profess it fear to study its tenets, lest they should make shipwreck of whatever faith they possess, and shun thought and research, lest they should lose whatever religious convictions or prejudices they may chance to have.

'Living truth,' says Schweitzer, 'is that alone which has its origin in thinking. Just as a tree bears year after year the same fruit and yet fruit which is each year new, so must all permanently valuable ideas be continually born again in thought. But our age is bent on trying to make the barren tree of scepticism fruitful by tying fruits of truth on its branches. . . . Not less strong than the will to truth must be the will to sincerity. Only an age which can show the courage of sincerity can possess truth which works as a spiritual force within it. Sincerity is the foundation of the spiritual life.'¹

¹ *My Life and Thought*, 259.

In conclusion, then, the true man is he who bows to no authority save the God who witnesses within him; whose mind is open to all light whencesoever it may come; whose creed rests not on mere tradition, but on the strength of personal conviction; till at last he attains, so far as possible in this world, *truth in word, truth in deed, and truth in oneness with God in Christ*, and so, finally, in the power of the divine life, he overcomes the bondage of the senses, the world, and self, loves goodness and God for their own sake, and becomes in very deed a true disciple of Christ.²

² R. H. Charles, *Courage, Truth, Purity*, 10.

Morality without God.

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THROUGHOUT the ages there have been many forms of opposition to Christianity; the opposition of the ruling powers, of persecution, of patronage, of philosophy, of popular hatred, and of scientists, experts in their own domain, who have thought that their findings must be fatal to Christian doctrine, and to the supposed historical facts upon which the gospel is builded. The Church has profited, in more than one way, as the result of the polemic directed against her life. She has developed at once a power of resistance, and a power of absorption—two expressions of vitality: resistance to what has been inspired by malice; absorption of what has proved itself to be true by whomsoever discovered. To-day she has little to fear from Philosophy or Science, both of which have become her allies.

In our time a new attack has been launched, or, to be correct, an ancient attack has assumed a novel aspect. Humanism, never wholly absent from the world, has invaded Christian territory and declared itself to be the possessor of a terrain which is claimed by the Church to be its own. The new attack has its war cry, 'Morality without God, or Christ or Christianity.' There is no plea for immorality on the ground that each man may do exactly as he pleases. The plea is rather, that everything truly ethical in Christianity can be gained and preserved far better without God than with Him. The new humanism offers itself as something superior, being able to function without any such handicap as that which it is supposed

the gospel applies. The leaders of the movement speak thus: 'We begin by assuming that the Universe has no interest in man. Of God we know nothing; of man we know much. There is a good life to be lived, and we can live it without reference to any Divinity. It is for man to decide what is that good life. The ancient *gloria in excelsis* must be replaced by a new one, of which Swinburne is the author, "Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things." We are wholly unmoved by any ideas of rewards or punishments. The fear of hell, which once urged men to external morality, has now gone for ever. We know only one world, and we devote ourselves to it, seeking to promote duty, truth, beauty, and human interests alone.'

It must not be supposed that the neo-humanists are kin with those prodigals who company with swine, and who mock at all morality. Many of them appear to be earnest men who really think that they can live the good life apart from the Eternal goodness. Their attitude is intellectual. For the first time, *on scale*, they have offered an intellectual *apologia*, for what in others is already a settled but unexpressed opinion.

Yet the new Apologists, ere their warm breath cools, speak again, and unconsciously retract what they have just affirmed. The late President of the Ethical Society was compelled to admit that 'the hunger and thirst for something beyond the sphere of sense, which is left totally unsatisfied, produces at length a restless, tormented feeling