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In the Study.

Virginitus Puerisque.

The Mezuzah.

BY THE REVEREND CHARLES M. HEBURN, B.D.,
MOULIN, PITLOCHRY.

'And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart. . . . And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thy house.'—Dt 6^a.⁹ (R.V.).

If some one asked you, 'What is the Mezuzah?' you might probably say, like the old lady when she saw a giraffe for the first time, 'I don't believe it—there's no such animal.' In this case neither there is. Indeed, it isn't alive at all.

But before I say what it is I would like to explain what led me to think of it. Some time ago I had the privilege of seeing a splendid cinema picture called 'The House of Rothschild.' George Arliss acted Nathan Rothschild. Some of the scenes were in the Jewish quarter, because the Rothschilds are Jews. As old Nathan Rothschild came out of the house he touched something at the side of the doorway, and then tapped his head and heart. Some one with me said to me, 'What is he doing?' and I replied—and I thought it was very clever of me—'Oh, he's touching the Mezuzah.'

What exactly, then, is this Mezuzah? It might be compared to a small tube or case. It is fixed or fastened slantwise to the upper part of the right-hand doorpost of the house. It contains a small roll of parchment on which are written the two passages with the great commandments in Dt 6³⁻⁵ and 11¹³⁻²⁰. In the case there usually is a small opening opposite the word or name Shaddai or God. Its purpose is that the Jews may remember the presence of Jehovah or God. On entering or leaving his house the pious man touches the metal case at the word God and repeats a little prayer.

I remember reading some time ago a very interesting thing about it. A little 200-ton sailing-ship called the *Emmanuel* was launched. It is apparently the first ship in modern days to sail the seas with a Jewish captain and to be wholly manned by a Jewish crew. It belongs to a Palestine trading company. Jewish customs are observed on board, and there on the doorposts of the two cabins is fixed the Mezuzah, which is to be found on the door of every true Jewish home, high or humble, all over the world.

But to go back, the word Mezuzah means doorpost, and you remember the order in the text, 'And these words (*i.e.* the commandments in the

container) shall be upon your heart, and ye shall write them upon the doorposts of your house.' All of which is good. But not enough. Because the right thing to do with commandments is to obey them, and to try to live them out in life. In Korea, which probably you know is near China, some years ago a native Christian came to one of the mission stations. After the usual greetings he was asked the purpose of his visit. His reply was that he had been memorizing some of the verses in the Bible and had come to recite them. He lived a hundred miles away and had walked all that long distance to do this. Without an error this man recited the whole of the Sermon on the Mount. He was told, however, that if he simply memorized it, it would be a feat of memory, but nothing better; and that he must practise its teaching: whereupon his face lighted up and he replied, 'Why, that is the way I learned it. I tried to memorize it, but it wouldn't stick. So I tried this plan. I would memorize one verse, and then find a heathen neighbour and practise the verse on him: and then I found it would stick.' Ah, he didn't need to have any Mezuzah, this humble Christian. He got the commandments fixed in his mind, because he first lived them in his life.

L.S.D.

BY THE REVEREND SIDNEY H. PRICE, GREAT SHELFORD,
CAMBRIDGE.

'They offered unto him gifts.'—Mt 2¹¹ (R.V.).

When it is your birthday you always expect to receive gifts, and when it is other people's you like to give them presents too. Sometimes when you are unable to afford to buy a present, you puzzle your head until you think of something to make. Perhaps your mother will say, 'It is not so much the value of the gift as the thought and love it expresses.' And that, of course, is true.

When you read about those Wise Men who came to bring birthday gifts to Jesus, don't you wish you had been one of them? The gifts they brought were very costly, and you would not have been able to afford them. There is a hymn you probably know which says:

The wise may bring their learning,
The rich may bring their wealth.

Jesus says that if you cannot bring either of these,

there is another gift every one of you can bring, you can bring your L.S.D. I hear you say, 'But that is just what we have not got. L.S.D. is money, and we haven't much of that yet.' The gift Jesus means is something He wants very much from you. It is also the kind of present He wants to give you. This L.S.D. is much more valuable than money. I can see I am confusing you, so I had better explain just what this L.S.D. really is.

What is the best gift your father and mother give you? A good home, food, clothes, toys; anything else? Yes, many things. But why do they give you these things? It is because they love you, and Love is the golden letter 'L.'

There is a story about a little girl who watched the Wise Men take their gifts to the infant Jesus. How she wished she too had a present for Him. Feeling rather sad because of her poverty, she hung her head, and there at her feet were some lovely flowers. Quickly she plucked them and ran after the Wise Men to Jesus, and said, 'Here you are, Jesus, I have brought you these, and myself.' That is just what Jesus most wants, He wants you to bring Him yourself.

I knew a little boy aged three named John. One day he ran to his mother to tell her how much he loved her. 'How much do you love me?' she said. Looking up into her face he replied, 'All John.'

'S' stands for the shillings and other silver coins, but it also stands for something much more precious than silver. When we love people we try to help them, don't we? A little boy noticed how busy his mother was. She had a baby to look after, and dinner to prepare, and so many things to do. The breakfast things had not been cleared away. While she was busy, he crept into the kitchen, and as quietly as he could washed the cups and saucers and put them away. Because he loved his mother, he wanted to serve her. Service like that is much more valuable than silver.

'D' is only for coppers, yet in the coinage of Jesus it is a very valuable gift. You see it in every home where brothers and sisters are what brothers and sisters should be. You see it in hospitals where doctors and nurses do their best to make people well again. You see it in church when people love one another and love Jesus. 'D' is for devotion.

These are the gifts Jesus wants us to bring, lovely gifts. If we can bring these we are much richer than a man with plenty of money, unless he, too, knows the L.S.D. Jesus wants. Gold and silver and even the pennies are good gifts to bring

for our missionary boxes, but better than these is the L.S.D. which stands for Love, Service, and Devotion.

The Christian Year.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Sweet Reasonableness.

'Let your moderation be known unto all men.'—Ph 4⁵.

The Greek word here translated 'moderation' does not convey to the mind of present-day readers all the thought intended by Paul the Apostle. Seeking to discover in its freshness the meaning of this key word, Dr. Moffatt translates it 'forbearance.' But Matthew Arnold's phrase 'sweet reasonableness' brings the meaning still closer to us. And this is certainly one of the shining virtues of Christian men. In human relationships the lack of it becomes painfully evident. Without it harmonious progress is not possible. Its absence is the explanation of the darkest tragedies that have ever shadowed the history of man, and has resulted in fratricidal strife of such magnitude that for years stunned and staggering nations have been groping to discover a highway to peaceful prosperity.

In the more limited sphere of industry and commerce the same lack of sweet reasonableness has been felt. Common sense acknowledges that Capital and Labour are like scissor-blades—useful in co-operation, but when separated or even loosely held together, they are of little service. The success of scissor-blades depends on their close co-operation. So is it with Capital and Labour; they should be held securely together by 'sweet reasonableness.' All employers are not tyrants and profiteers, nor are all workmen diligent, oppressed toilers. Sweet reasonableness—sanctified common sense—should show plainly that the entire country must produce for the mutual benefit of all. This cannot be done unless the spirit of unfeigned confidence is established between employers and employed. The message of the Church to both is 'One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.' Browning saw and proclaimed this with fine courage. Out of material before us we can each unite in building cities of fellowship.

The common problem, yours, mine, every one's, Is—not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be,—but, finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means: a very different thing!

As Christian men and women we share the responsibility for the perplexing condition of affairs to-day. While the aggressive propaganda of Communism with its wild, unbalanced statements has been proclaimed in every land, and has deluded the unthinking by specious promises, the Christian Church has been content to whisper feebly within doors a message of goodwill and sound sense, that should be proclaimed from the house-tops. Every communist is a missionary. What about Church members? We leave it too much to official representatives, whose teaching capacity is often nullified by the multitudinous burdens laid on their shoulders. The urgent need of the Church to-day is preachers whose message will touch and transform the core of society. The salvation of nations will be more effectively secured by Saint Pauls and Wesleys than Machiavellis or Mussolinis.

Sweet reasonableness is necessary if Eastern and Western nations are to find a way to moral health and material prosperity. This can be achieved if the number of loyal servants to the 'Master of all good workmen' continually increases. Charity in judgment, cleanliness in dealing, and sincerity in thinking are elements in that sweet reasonableness by which the Kingdom is to be built, into which the nations may bring their glory and honour.

Much foolish criticism of missionary enterprise is due to confusing Western civilization with Christianity. We have spent ourselves and our resources in Westernizing Africa and India rather than in Christianizing them. In Kenya, for example, intelligent, thoughtful natives complain that we have broken down tribal discipline before it could be replaced by anything better. 'Before our advent, tribal discipline was a very real thing. It required no system of gaols, and was enforced by taboos, fines, eviction (a very real weapon), or death. Further, by the employment of large numbers of lads on tea estates and elsewhere, we take the adolescent away from his community at the very time when tribal discipline would, in old days, have been most potent. And in townships we open beer-shops where those whose tribal custom would not allow them to drink can break tribal custom under our protection. To Christianize is to offer a new creative spirit that will preserve and enhance all that is good, while eliminating what is evil in personal and community life. To Westernize is to offer or even enforce conditions whose influence may be detrimental to personality that has been reared in a simple environment.

It is a disturbing fact to thoughtful men, and cannot be other than hurtful to the cause of Christ,

that there is a melancholy lack of sweet reasonableness in the Church's programme for evangelizing our own country. A dingy hall, an underpaid, undertrained ministry for an over-populated area of the poor, and a palatial sanctuary staffed with well-trained preachers and cultured assistants in areas of affluence appears to be the policy of the Church of our land. Sweet reasonableness would surely see that able men are made available for the most densely populated spheres and that they are as generously supported as those who minister in affluent but perhaps not less difficult places.

The shallow cry 'I care not what a man believes; only what he does is of importance' has been unmasked in all its mendacious stupidity. Men act on their beliefs. Belief determines character; 'as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.' The urgent task of Christian men is to propagate the eternal truth of the gospel and the principles of Jesus with an earnestness and publicity equal to that of well-meaning but misguided enthusiasts, who have still to learn that man doth not live by bread alone. To complain that wrong ideas are capturing the minds of our working classes, while declining to share in the service of furnishing the elevating idealism of Christian faith to them, is certainly a lack of sweet reasonableness. An intelligent man's gift of service may be of more value than gifts of gold.

There is much need for 'sweet reasonableness' and forgiveness on all hands. Menacing clouds of suspicion and restlessness hang heavily on the horizon. Nation looks nation in the face, hungering for satisfaction and still smarting from war wounds. Let us not judge harshly, or without understanding sympathy, nations whose sufferings spring from the same bitter root as our own. Sympathy is a noble word, whatever some may say; but it has been soiled through expressions of tyrannous selfishness. Hate and malice are always with us, but only the spirit of forgiveness will soothe and heal the aching wounds they make. Christianity makes man great through reasoned forgiveness, and we all have opportunity to show the sweet reasonableness of a forbearing spirit. On no other basis will there be a real settlement, and it must be shown by and to every one.

Sweet reasonableness will terminate the blundering hostility that regards religion as a foe to labour. Mazzini declared that 'not until Democracy became a religious movement could it hope to carry the victory.' Carlyle with prophetic insight declared that the conflict of the future would lie, not between Tory and Radical, but between believer and un-

believer. Of all the forces that mould and control human destiny economics and religion are the mightiest. Not by bread alone, nor yet by the word of God alone, does man live. It is the will of God that man should have both, and he greatly errs who would put asunder what God hath joined together. No fair-minded person can be satisfied with conditions that hinder the development of personality, and deny men the opportunity of such comfort as is necessary to the discharge of domestic responsibilities. Nor should it be forgotten that even the most just economic conditions will not result in human satisfaction unless the spirit of reasoned goodwill is behind them. If out of the present turmoil there comes the will to peace and a sincere desire to co-operate, the strife shall not have been in vain. Many already discern glimmerings of dawnlight after the cheerless dark, and are convinced that much good will yet accrue if with sweet reasonableness we unite to rebuild nationalisms on spiritual foundations.

The world is learning that the injury of one nation is the concern of all, while only the wilfully blind can fail to observe that the welfare of all nations ought to be the concern of each. Let us hope that the widespread upheaval of our day will result in wiser outlook and deeper sympathy capable of delivering us all from national prejudice and racial selfishness. With able leaders, wise in counsel and pure in motives, we may look forward to better days for all. We require men of scientific temperament and religious conviction who, beyond the strife of the present, see the beckoning vision of a nobler fellowship in which, by the glad consent of all, the leadership of the ablest will be fraternally accepted.

Problems are better solved by sensible men of sound character without genius than by men of genius without character. Character rather than cleverness is greatly required in all nations to-day. Browning declared :

The acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it.¹

CHRISTMAS DAY.

' Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name : that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that

Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'—
Ph 2⁹⁻¹¹.

Christmas is with us again, and once again the ancient magic is working its spell. For a moment the strain and stress of a labouring world has slackened, and in the pause the simple pageantry of our childhood moves across the scene. We have lifted our hearts to listen again to the story of the angels singing, of the running shepherds, of the pilgrim kings. Our tired eyes have rested yet again on the sweet sight of the Virgin Mother and the Babe laid in a manger amid the cattle of an inn, and the familiar refrains have sounded in our ears. We have felt the Spirit astir that has sustained, against the pressure of the centuries, man's undying belief in the love of the good Father in heaven, and in the peace and joy made ours by the Babe of Bethlehem.

There is no tale so telling. Those of us who have seen the mystery play of *Eager Heart* have seen with a new force how the gospel of the Holy Babe fell like dew on the fatigue of the Roman Empire in an age so like our own, when the whole population had been drawn together out of their ancient homes into the homelessness of enormous cities ; and the wealth, and hope, and promise of a splendid civilization had begun to sicken under a vast sense of disappointment ; and humanity dimly suspected that it had gained the whole world only to lose its own soul ; and the restlessness of panic shook it into strange and feverish credulities.

And to them, as to us, came suddenly out of the unknown silence of the East, from a stable in a village, the gift of a gracious peace, the restored simplicities of the pure heart, the sight of a home in its primitive perfection, the assurance of God made present among men in the Divine wonder of a little Child.

Ah, how the good tears started ! How the cold hearts grew warm and young and tender again ! God is with man, man is with God. Christ is born. Glory to God in the highest ; on earth peace to men of goodwill.

The story is deathless ; we can feel that still. But many, who are with us so far, are asking to-day whether it is not only as a story that it will so live on for ever. Quite true, they say, that the story can never lose its charm as a perfect symbol of the faith to which our whole being clings. God and man can be at one. That is the truth sealed to us. The high work of reconciliation is completed. The pardon and peace of God enter again and yet again into the manhood that is yielded to them. We have but to surrender ourselves to Him, and ' it

¹ W. E. Blackburn, *Christ shows the Way*, 52.

will be to us even as he will.' That is the law of life revealed through Jesus Christ. The knowledge gained through it is the essential matter. So long as the story conveys that, it has fulfilled all its purpose.

Why cannot we accept this way of putting the meaning of Christmas Day to ourselves? Let us think. The offer supposes that the whole significance of the gospel story lies in the new knowledge about God and about His inner work upon our souls which it serves to convey. Knowledge—that is what we have gained.

But the primal offer of Christianity is not knowledge of God. That is not its vital significance. As a fact, it leaves us in total obscurity about much that is essential to our apprehension of God, of His purpose with us. This does not matter to it; for what it professes to announce in its gospel is a deed which God has done. God has come into action on man's behalf. That is what it proclaims; that is its splendid news. God has put out His Will. A new step has been taken, a step which is final; for it releases into activity the full and ultimate resources of God's love. He has sent His only-begotten Son into the world. Nothing can go beyond that. The whole power of God has been brought to bear upon our human world. It is here as a power—a pushing, pressing, and aggressive force. It is here laying hold, possessing itself of us; shaping facts to its will; transforming human nature; purging, penetrating, piercing, fusing, burning, scouring, cleansing, breaking, throwing down strongholds, purifying, quickening, and transfiguring. It is put out upon us in vigour, in violence, in victory. God is in our midst, a very present help in trouble. God is helping, delivering, undoing fetters, bursting prison bars, binding the hostile powers, stripping strong and evil tyrannies of their armour, spoiling their goods. God is here loosing, pardoning, conquering; a tremendous, overpowering fact. That is the Christmas gospel. That and nothing else. That and nothing less. Here is the wonder that staggers St. Paul. 'It is the exceeding greatness of his power to us, according to the mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him on his right hand far above all principalities and powers and might and dominion, and hath put all things in subjection under his feet.'

Dr. Stanley Jones, in *Christ at the Round Table*, illustrates this as follows:

'W. E. S. Holland tells of a Christian student who was given to secret immorality. He was introduced to a missionary, and in a few months

came back transformed. Several months later there was a Hindu student in the same immoral condition. There was no use to talk to him about Christ, for he was uninterested. So Holland went to the best Hindu he knew, the head of a reforming sect, and told him of the two cases. "Now tell me," he said, "of a Hindu saint or teacher to whom I can take this lad: a Hindu home, or institution, or influence where there is good hope of his being reformed. I want him saved this week." He shook his head. "What," said Holland, "can Hinduism do nothing for the case?" "No," he said sadly. "Then what am I to do?" asked Holland. And the reply came: "Can you not take him to your chapel, pray with him, read the Bible to him, lend him the lives of the Christian saints?"'

Of course such acts are, also, revelations of God's mind; they add to our knowledge of Him. But this knowledge does not carry us away from the phenomenal facts; it concentrates our attention upon them, it intensifies their significance. 'God so loved the world that he sent his only-begotten son.' We learn that God is love, but we learn it in and through the fact that He sent His Son. The fact is the proof, the pledge, the evidence of the love.

And observe, our knowledge, far from outgrowing the fact, has yet got but a very little way into the fullness of its reality. The fact that God sent His Son contains far more meaning than has ever yet been found in it. The love disclosed in such an act is itself inexhaustible; we never come near to the end of it; it goes far beyond our powers of comprehending it; and, therefore, the fact stands on and on over our knowledge of it.

And we therefore cannot but examine and verify with keen insistence, with passionate anxiety, the witness of those who stand before us saying, We saw it; this is what He did; 'that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled—for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us—that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us.'

A deed wrought in power by God: is not that the gospel which we need to-day? Would anything short of that be a gospel at all? In the world of morals we have found to our cost that mere knowledge is not power. This is our melancholy prerogative in Nature; that we can know and

not do ; that we can desire good and yet find ourselves impotent to obtain.

Any one with eyes to see knows of a thousand things done under our very eyes which, to a Christian conscience, are absolutely intolerable. True, we are beset by many problems to which we can see no solution. We grope in great darkness and see no light. But is that blindness not judicial? Are we not stricken with blindness because we will not or cannot do the things that we do see ought to be done? If we would but be true and brave about what we know to be wrong we might find light where, now, we cannot see our way. But where is our courage to go forward in doing that which we know ought to be done?

Dr. Gilkey, in his Barrows lectures, has told of a young Chinese who had finished his studies in New York and was about to return to China to become superintendent of schools in one of the large Chinese cities, who said to Dr. Fosdick: 'I want Christ, and I want Christ because I want power that I may live a serviceable life for my people before I fall on sleep.' No Chinese, going back to China or already there, has yet been reported as saying that he wanted Mr. Bertrand Russell or Professor Dewey because he wanted power that he might live a serviceable life for his people.

And, in the personal life, is not the cry that goes up so plaintively, so deplorably, from us all, a cry for power? Spiritual energy is so weak, spiritual aspiration is so thin; we cannot get on; we cannot escape out of the night; we struggle and struggle with a strange futility, like men in a dream.

It is not our great sins that break the heart. We know where we are with them; we have dis-counted them in making up our accounts. No, it is the impotence of the good in us which is so terrible and so alarming; it has in it the note of death.

And it is to those stricken with this terror, whether for society or for themselves, that this great consolation is given. The gospel is proclaimed again, of a deed of power wrought in our very midst; wrought once for all; wrought in real and actual verity of fact; wrought with a knowledge that is undying, that no weariness of time can touch or stale; wrought by the might of the Almighty God into our very flesh and blood; done unto us so that His will smites into our will, and His love flings itself into the core of our life.¹

¹ H. S. Holland, *Vital Values*, 13.

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

Light and Darkness.

'And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not.'—Jn 1^s (R.V.).

This is one of those large, simple, luminous sentences, so characteristic of the writings of St. John. Here, in a single sentence, is the moral history of every individual man, the moral history of our race, the moral history of our world. There is light and there is darkness, and there is perpetual struggle between the two, the light seeking to banish the darkness, the darkness seeking to overwhelm the light. There is light and darkness in the physical world. There have been morning and evening from the first day. But in the physical world light gives place to dark and dark gives place to light in regular and ordered sequence. They *succeed* one another, they do not co-exist. But in the moral world light and darkness co-exist side by side. They are for ever contending for the mastery.

1. This is the moral history of *every individual man*. 'The light shineth in the darkness.' There is a measure of light in every man. Some, it is true, enjoy more light than others. We who live in a country like this, which has been blessed with Christian teaching for centuries, possess fuller light than do—let us say—the primitive peoples of Papua or the half-savage people of the heart of Africa. But no one is entirely without light.

In his *War Diary* Lord Riddell preserves a certain description which Mr. Lloyd George gave of Lord Kitchener. He said he was like a revolving lighthouse, sending forth periodically great shafts of light which were then followed by total darkness; now and again there would issue from him some word of almost prophetic insight and foresight, a beam of light that illumined the whole field, and then would follow times of utter silence. Another illustration of this fact about human nature which the Evangelist here enunciates will be found in Mr. Hutchinson's latest story, which he entitles *The Soft Spot*. It is the story of a man who had plenty of good impulses, but there was a 'soft spot' in him—it was love of his own comfort and ease. Life for him was a continual struggle between his better impulses and this besetting weakness of his. He really and truly loved his brother, but when reports of his brother's death, while engaged in an exploring expedition in South America, reached England, he went out, not to try to find his brother, but to find proof of his death that the estate might become his. When, after all, his brother turned up alive and well, he was honestly

glad to see him ; but again, one day when his brother was out hunting, he saw him riding straight on to a barbed-wire fence. His first impulse was to shout, and then thoughts of his own comfort intruded themselves and the warning shout was not given.

2. 'The light shineth in the darkness'—this is not only the moral history of the individual man, it is also the *moral history of our race and of our world*. There is good and evil in our world, and the history of our world is the history of the struggle between the two. That is how Zoroaster, the great Persian prophet and sage, conceived of the world—it was a sphere of conflict between Ahura Mazda, the power of light and truth, and Ahriman, the power of darkness and evil. And so it is. The light shines. The race is continually getting visions of finer and nobler heights of living. But it shines in the darkness, for every attempt to scale these loftier heights is fiercely opposed by all the vested interests of evil. We need not go beyond our own day and time to find abundant illustrations of this. Take the matter of the Economic Conference held not very long ago. It was held to promote world recovery by a fuller recognition by the nations that they were members one of another. Admirable speeches were made at the beginning of the Conference about the abolition of trade barriers, and so on. Statesmen saw what ought to be done. But when it came to practical action each nation stood stiffly in defence of what it conceived to be its own interests, and in the last resort nothing was done. The light shone, but it shone in the darkness. To broaden the issue a little, every sane person knows that the happiness of the world's future depends upon the cultivation of a generous internationalism. Wise and serious men recognize this and emphasize it. But they do not, by any means, have it their own way. We are witnessing a revival of nationalism—fierce and aggressive, as in the case of Germany.

3. Now all that has been said up to this point is true to fact—this little sentence puts into a few words the moral history both of the individual and of the race. But it was not of the struggle between light and darkness which goes on in the individual soul and in the world-soul that the Evangelist was thinking. He was thinking specially of Jesus and of the reception *He* met with. In the preceding verse he says that 'in him,' *i.e.* in the Incarnate Word, 'was life, and the life was the light of men.' The struggle between darkness and light, between good and evil, came to a head and focus in the conflict between Jesus and the world of His day.

From the very beginning Jesus had to face a hostile world. Herod sought to kill Him in His cradle, and priests and scribes at last put Him to death. Here is the life of Jesus in a sentence—'the light shineth in the darkness.'

And this, the Evangelist says, was the reception the light met with. 'The darkness apprehended it not.' Now that Greek word translated 'apprehend' is not altogether easy to understand. The word means 'to lay hold of,' 'to seize.' We talk about 'seizing a point' in the sense of understanding it. And the translators quite evidently have decided for that meaning here. 'The darkness apprehended it not.' Of course that translation makes good sense, and it is a true description of the reception Jesus met with. The people of His day simply did not understand Him. They did not appreciate Him.

But we are inclined to agree with those commentators who say that 'apprehend' is not an accurate translation. The word occurs in another passage in this Gospel, and there it is translated 'that darkness overtake you not.' The sense there cannot be doubtful. The darkness 'overtakes' men in the sense of coming down upon them and enwrapping them. As applied to light it includes the further notion of overwhelming and eclipsing. That must be its meaning here. The darkness did not overwhelm and extinguish the light. So that then the verse would read, 'The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it,' or, as Moffatt translates it, 'but darkness did not master it.'

It *did* look as if the powers of darkness had triumphed when Jesus hung upon the Cross on Calvary. It looked as if the light had been eclipsed, extinguished, finally put out. But on the morning of the third day the grave was found empty, and Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples alive. The men who had jeered at Jesus as He hung there in mortal pain were in a few weeks at their wits' end as to what to do about this Jesus and His followers. They stoned Stephen, they sent James to the scaffold. But it was in vain. These are little sentences which tell us of the progress of the struggle. 'Many that heard the word believed.' 'They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.' And that has been the story of the conflict all down the centuries.

Let us think of the old story of Latimer and Ridley as they went together to the stake. 'Be of good cheer, Brother Ridley,' said Latimer. 'We have lighted such a candle in England as by the

grace of God shall never be put out.' And it has not been put out.

However the winds may blow it about ;
 Latimer's light is here to stay
 Till the trump of the coming judgement day.

And all this is true not simply of the Church and of the Christian faith, it is true of every good cause. The cause of social betterment, the cause of peace, the cause of internationalism—they all seem at a discount to-day. But let no one imagine that the darkness is ever going to swamp the light. The end of all these conflicts of ours will be the triumph of the light—the darkness cannot master it.

That is one of the marks of the new earth which God is creating—'There shall be no night there'—the last remnant of darkness shall have been abolished. So let us be of good cheer !¹

THE EPIPHANY.

The Gifts of Epiphany.

'When they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'—Mt 2¹¹.

The Gentile world has unpacked its treasures in the presence of the King that it may yield them up as the gifts which are due to Him. The gifts that it offers are of the things that were most prized in that Eastern world—the precious gold, the fragrant incense, the healing and comforting myrrh. They are symbols, those gifts, of all that man has to offer, of all that too often he desires to store up as treasure for his own enjoyment. For us, gold is the symbol of all man's mastery of the earth and all its material results. We would keep it jealously stored up in our treasure-packs, or draw it forth only to spend it still more jealously upon ourselves. And so long as we do either the one or the other, it belongs to that material order which must perish in the using. Only when we dedicate it to the Lord of Right, to whom it is due, does it increase with the using and become part of the treasure which enters into life itself and will endure there when we no longer are. And let incense be for us the symbol of man's thought. That, too, may be among the treasures which we would jealously reserve to our own use and advantage. The activity of the mind may be self-centred and, in the truest sense of the word, materialistic. Only by offering itself to the Lord of Truth can it gain its share in the eternal order and minister fully to that life which is made for truth. And again let the soothing myrrh stand for

the activity of the heart, of all the affections that are hidden in life for its sweetness and purification. But that activity, too, will inevitably lose itself and become distorted into something altogether baneful if it will not lift itself in patient and arduous self-offering to the Lord of Love.

1. *The Gift of Gold.*—We are made for action. It is in us to subdue the earth and to make it fruitful, to reduce its baffling disorder, its obstinate sluggishness, its lazy barrenness. To sit with folded hands, content with things as they are, however good they may be, to refuse the urgent inner call to modify increasingly all that is without us, to repress the instinct that tells us that the best we know can be bettered and that we are here to better it—that is somehow to fall short of even ordinary manhood. And in improving things, man has learned to grow himself. The reach of his spirit has enlarged.

And it was the sturdy realization of the crudeness of the concrete fact that led the old Hebrew writer to speak of the necessity that drove man forth to conquer the earth as the primal curse. So, indeed, surely it would seem, for its most immediate result has been the lust of possession, a lust which has become fiercer in its impulse and more relentless in its temper with every fresh satisfaction it has compassed. Think what this lust has accomplished, what it is accomplishing at this hour. It has permanently enslaved a large section of mankind by condemning it to an incessant routine of hard mechanical toil which leaves bare room for food and the heavy sleep the exhausted body demands. And another smaller section it has still more tragically liberated from every wholesome restraint and launched upon the pursuit and invention of the most degrading luxuries, of the most soulless pleasures, of the most frivolous and unhealthy amusements. Between these two sections, indeed, lies the vast body of sane humanity. But even here how inadequate is our realization of the great trust which God has committed to us in our capacity for action, in the irrepressible purpose of the human will ! We have hardly yet begun to realize it as an imperative social duty that we should organize the total industrial effort of the community in the interest of the worthiest and completest life that is possible for each. Yet so alone can our industry be moralized and humanized. We do not wish to deny that that accumulation is due to the differences of will-power and aptitude which characterize us as individuals. Yet there are other things which we must also remember—namely, the immense responsibilities and duties which devolve upon the

¹ J. D. Jones, *Morning and Evening*, 197.

few who by their superior skill in acquiring wealth control the lives and destinies of the many whom Nature has less efficiently equipped. It is not wonderful, perhaps, if some of us are persuaded that the time has come for a large social control of those responsibilities and regulation of those duties. We do not want, no sensible man wants, an equal distribution of existing wealth. That would be to stereotype and universalize poverty, and to sterilize effort. But we do want to recover for each the creative opportunity of turning to the best and most fruitful account that capacity with which Nature has endowed him. To labour for such an end is to redeem and justify our wealth by offering it as an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord of Justice. How little we need for our strictly personal use—wholesome food and decent shelter and healthy amusement, and the due equipment for carrying on our special work—all but the last the commonest or the cheapest things that Nature yields to our patient forcing of her hand. Well, outside those necessities all that we have is due to the Lord of the common right. And in offering it all to Him and to the execution of His beneficent designs in the world of men, we are truly offering Him also ourselves and all that we had to spend upon ourselves in equipping ourselves for His service. If, on the other hand, we fail to render it to Him, we are frustrating, or at the least resisting, the coming of His righteous society and ruining ourselves in a wanton self-indulgence.

2. *The Gift of Frankincense.*—All fruitful action is profoundly rooted in thought. True, the roots may strike so deeply that there need be no conscious dependence upon them for the purpose of specific action. It is just when a tree has got secure and massive grip upon the soil that its growth becomes steadfast, uninterrupted, assured. Yet there was a time when it was struggling for the mere right to exist. And even when the tree has made its grip secure, its effort to exist is never so unimpeded as it seems.

Is not this the parable of our human life? Our conscious individual life has no higher measure of its worth, nay, of its very reality, than the extent to which it gains living hold upon the ultimate and eternal truth so that all its branches may be strong and beautiful and its fruit rich and satisfying.

And yet think of the ordinary activities of our minds. How little concerned we are with making them an offering to the God of Truth! Think, for instance, of what a wild orgy of self-seeking and self-assertion the world of modern business has become. Instead of being an associated effort of

human wills to force a reluctant Nature into yielding us its utilities, it has become the unblushing attempt of the strongest to monopolize those utilities and control them in their own individual interest. And why has such a monstrous defiance of the most elementary principles of human justice become possible? It is simply because the whole business activity of man had grown up as an affair of blind and irrational haphazard. If he had realized, what the very word would have taught him, that wealth meant well-being and that the associated production of wealth had no other meaning and purpose than the social diffusion of well-being, then the industrial structure serving its true purpose need have feared no cataclysmic disaster.

And yet it is not enough that in this matter we have not made of the uses of our mind an offering to the Lord of Truth. There is worse behind. For we have made of them an offering to the Lord of Untruth. Think of the gigantic abuse of brain-power which has gone to the transformation of common industry from the peaceful and considerate partnership which it ought to be into the cruel and truceless warfare which it is—the ever-extending ramifications of merciless underground intrigue, the lying or at the least grossly misleading advertisement, the development of bribery into a fine art. And the tragedy of it all is that the agents of this universal mischief are also its most pitiable victims. They are its victims because they do not suspect the mischief which they are working, or, if they do, have to harden themselves to perpetrate it on pain of going under.

No faith can exist which is not rooted in reason, in the unceasing effort of the mind to apprehend the import of life, and to exhibit in action and in every outward expression of our life that truth in which life itself is rooted. True, we shall never apprehend it fully. But so long as our effort to gain hold upon it is real, patient, sincere, it purifies life, it brings us nearer to the God of Truth.

3. *The Gift of Myrrh.*—To us who have been moulded by the long tradition of Christian life, God is supremely the God of Love. But have we thought of what is implied in this certainty of ours? Emerging, perhaps hardly, from sterner conceptions of God, we turn with relief to this picturing of His nature so fully authorized by the evangelical witness itself. And we do not wish to deny that there is legitimate reason for the relief. We can trust a perfect love as we can trust nothing else in the world. Yet let us think again. How can we answer this love of God? If perfect love casteth out fear, an imperfect love ought to be its greatest occasion.

And so it is that when religion has become the definite recognition of God as Love, it has become more and not less exacting. Its exactingness is henceforward from within, the soul's own demand upon itself.

But there is still another reason for the difficulty of any true service of the God of Love. With regard to the use of the mind we know with something like accuracy when we are serving God through it and when we are turning it to evil and destructive account. But our whole emotional life much more easily escapes our judgment. It is so instinctive, so immediate, so overwhelming. It was not so much the positive evil of his own heart that alarmed St. Augustine as its utter confusion, its chaotic play of feeling, the inexplicable suddenness and tyranny of its movements.

But we are sure that if the emotions are not enlisted in the service of action, action itself must remain arid and ineffectual for any high human end. We recognize the truth of that saying of the author of *Ecce Homo*, 'No heart is pure which is not passionate, no virtue is safe which is not enthusiastic.' And so we are growing to learn the terms on which alone we can offer the activity of the heart as a worthy sacrifice to God, as indeed our only reasonable and satisfying service of His will. We *can* control our emotions into a permanent motive of conduct. And we must in the interests of our soul's health gain such control.

And with this change of view, at once its cause and its effect, there has come the sense of the close alliance of all life. And here is the inexhaustible field of activity for the human heart. Here is the promise of its infinite growth towards its destined perfection. The heart alone has the immediate key to that communion which makes us. It is the healing ointment which soothes all the wounds of life. It is the myrrh which can deaden the sting of even the fiercest pain, which will allay the bitterness of that cup of suffering from which all must drink. So may the activity of the human heart become the worthiest instrument of the most perfect offering to the God of infinite mercy, the God of redeeming love.¹

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The Two Sides of Sympathy.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.—Ro 12¹⁶.

Here is one test and triumph of our Christian faith; does it move us to enter into the happiness and into the troubles of other people?

¹ A. L. Lilley, *Nature and Supernature*, 5.

Such a habit of fellow-feeling is one of the ethical forces which go far to foster justice and harmony between different classes in a nation or between different peoples in the world. Bad blood is made when people come to feel that others care very little for their welfare or are indifferent to their misfortunes; the consciousness of this drives men and women apart, and it may take long for them to overcome the sullen suspicion that they are being neglected by their fellows. Nothing is worse for this world of ours than the spirit which makes people act as if they were thinking, 'I am I, and you are you—and that's the end of it.'

We, are we not formed as notes of music are
For one another, though dissimilar?

As we live together, there is not a week which does not bring its ups and downs to some within our circle; sunshine streams into one life, clouds gather over another. Rejoice, then, with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Such is the Apostle's direction for our Christian behaviour. We want to say three things about it.

First, that *it is more easy to do one of these than both*.

Most of us are specialists in character; that is, by temperament and training we have our strong points and our weak points, inclining more readily to one side of this broad duty than to the other. Thus, some folk have an instinctive gift of sympathy. Any trouble or pain among their friends at once calls out their powers of relief and generous aid. Yet the strange thing is that these same natures are not always so responsive to the happiness of their fellows. Then again, as we know, there are hearty, sanguine souls who like to rejoice with their companions. But they tend to hold aloof from a man who falls or is hurt, largely because trouble is a depressing thing, which seems to lower their vitality.

The difficulty is to be all-round, to rejoice with the joyful and to weep with the sorrowful. And, to begin with, very few of us are capable of this broad contact. Some notes in the music do not seem to be formed for us. We lean to one or other of these sides in sympathy, and perhaps we are not altogether dissatisfied with ourselves if we can manage to perform at least one of them, to play our tune in the human relationship either on the black notes or on the white.

The second thing is, that *it is more easy to show sympathy with trouble than to rejoice with happy folk*. We can see the truth of this if we look at the very word 'sympathy.' Originally it denoted feeling

with others, entering into their lives with a cordial human interest, whether they were unfortunate or in good spirits. But nowadays sympathy means fellow-feeling with the sad or wounded who have come down in the world. The term has been narrowed, because sympathy with pain and loss was found to be the more obvious channel for ordinary people. Successful men and women may not always want our congratulations; they have lit their own fire, and they sit round it to enjoy themselves, better able to dispense with our company as a rule than those who are out in the cold. Victims of trouble are more grateful for sympathy. Also, it does appear to be more of a duty to sympathize with folk in their handicaps and losses. For decency's sake we would be ashamed to remain callous in presence of a friend's distress; but when some one prospers, it's a different matter. For here we encounter an insidious temptation to envy.

In *As You Like It*, Shakespeare describes two brothers, each in love with his chosen mistress. One succeeds in his courtship. Whereupon the other exclaims, 'How bitter it is to look into happiness through another's eyes!' That's a candid confession; it is not simply a word for the stage but for the drama of human life, as we have to play it.

It is not always easy for the sorrowful and the afflicted to rejoice in others' good. Macaulay describes the 'turn of the tide' in the reign of James II., when Lord Delamere, whom the King sought to ruin, was acquitted by the Peers.

'The public joy at the acquittal of Delamere was great. The reign of terror was over. The innocent began to breathe freely, and false accusers to tremble. One letter written on this occasion is scarcely to be read without tears. The widow of Russell [who had been unjustly executed in the previous reign] in her retirement learned the good news with mingled feelings. "I do bless God," she wrote, "that He has caused some stop to be put to the shedding of blood in this poor land. Yet, when I should rejoice with them that do rejoice, I seek a corner to weep in. I find I am capable of no more gladness; but every new circumstance, the very comparing my night of sorrow, after such a day, with theirs of joy, does, from a reflection of one kind or another, rack my uneasy mind. Though I am far from wishing the close of theirs like mine, yet I cannot refrain giving some time to lament mine was not like theirs."'

The third thing is, that *it becomes more easy to do both, as we grow older.*

Taught by time, my heart has learned to glow
For others' good and melt at others' woe.

So one of Homer's heroes sang. It is, indeed, one of the lessons to be learned in the long school of time and experience, the school where we never finish our education. The years may bring us this good discipline. Taught by time, we may master the two sides of the problem.

There's a sweeping, intolerant note in our youthful views of other folk, and it is only as we get older, for the most part, that we acquire the power and desire to enter into the little troubles and joys of our fellows, without feeling that we are thereby being taken away from our own line. When we begin life, we expect others to rejoice with us rather than to be called upon to rejoice with them. And we do tend, do we not, to demand sympathy rather than to extend it? In one of his studies Walter Pater describes a young French lad in the sixteenth century, a shy, sensitive soul, who 'in the sudden tremor of an aged voice, the handling of a forgotten toy, became aware suddenly of the great stream of human tears falling always through the shadows of the world.' That is a beautiful description, but it is not typical.

No, and not even the passage of the years will bring the wide power of sympathy to us, for older people may be just as selfish and envious as they were in their youth. 'Taught by time'? But time and experience together simply offer us the opportunity of learning the deep lesson of which the Apostle is speaking.

Dr. Reid in *The Springs of Life* says: 'There is a suggestive little story of Galsworthy's about a juryman who found himself during the Great War trying a soldier for attempted suicide. His reason was that he could not bear to be separated from his wife. Most people laughed. But this juryman began to think. He had caught a glimpse of something that had never come to himself, and as he went home he longed to go to his wife and say: "I've learnt a lot to-day—found out things never thought of. Life's a wonderful thing, a thing one can't live all to oneself; a thing one shares with everybody, so that when another suffers, one suffers too. It's come to me that what one *has* doesn't matter a bit—it's what one does, and how one sympathizes with other people. . . . It's the first time I've ever felt the spirit of Christ. It's a wonderful thing, really priceless.''

When one Evangelist described His ministry, he noted that the first house Jesus entered was a home where some one lay sick; Peter's mother-in-law

was ill with malarial fever, and Jesus went to that anxious home at once. Another evangelist, recalling his own memories of the same ministry, remembered that Jesus began by attending a wedding; He went to a house full of happy guests and friends, to share their delight. So His Spirit ripens in us the same generous fruit of rejoicing with the joyful and of sorrowing with the sorrowful, a double fruit. We learn from Him, if we are learning anything, to be more at one with each other in the ups and downs of our common life. Within the Christian fellowship, if it be a reality at all, we are disciplined gradually to be more fully sensitive to the lives of those who are within reach of us,

alive not merely to 'the stream of human tears falling through the shadows of this world' but also to the rise of cheerful happiness in life after life around us, like a fountain leaping into the sunlight. Never let us be so busy with ourselves, so absorbed in our own prospects of joy or of trouble, that we have no time to stand beside both of these experiences in the case of our neighbours. Let us be more aware of how they are faring.¹

'I prayed to God,' says George Fox, 'that He would baptize my heart into the sense of all conditions, so that I might be able to enter into the needs and conditions of all.'

¹ J. Moffatt, *His Gifts and Promises*, 176.

The Heretics of the Church and Recurring Heresies. Socinianism.

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SOCINIANISM is not a single heresy; it is a coherent heretical system. While it had little or nothing of its own to say on some subsidiary topics that are usually handled in theologies, yet on all the essentials it had its own view. As a system it hangs together; no part could be changed without changing all. It has its own doctrine of God, its own Christology, its own soteriology, its own anthropology, its own view of Scripture, the Church and Sacraments, its own eschatology. 'It is a complete and well-digested system, professing to present a full account of all the leading topics which it most concerns men to know, of everything bearing upon their relation to God and their eternal welfare.' 'It is characterized throughout by perfect unity and harmony, by the consistency of all its parts with each other, and by the pervading influence of certain features and objects.'¹

We shall set down as concisely as possible the main features of that coherent system which finds classical expression in the Racovian Catechism, omitting a good deal of the matter—*e.g.* invocation of Saints and image-adoration—on which Socinians were in close agreement with Evangelicals; then we shall look at its history, and finally at its influence.

I. The Racovian Catechism had a longish history

¹ W. Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, ii. 171, 183.

of its own and acquired its final form only by degrees. Several able men laboured successively towards perfecting it. It was first published in Polish in 1605, and was translated into German in 1608, and into Latin the next year—the Latin version being dedicated to James I. of England. This was reprinted in England in 1651 with a Life of Socinus prefixed. In 1652 the English Parliament ordered the book to be burned. An edition in English, however, was printed abroad in that same year, the translator being perhaps John Bidle, 'the father of English Unitarianism.' The work was by no means a close translation, in several places being rather a paraphrase. About 1665 Schlichting published a new edition considerably revised and enlarged. What may be regarded as the final and authoritative edition appeared at Amsterdam in 1680, the long title bearing that the original work had been revised and improved by Krell, Schlichting, Ruarus, and Andrew Wissowaty, while notes by Benedict Wissowaty, and an anonymous F.C. (probably Florian Crusius) had been incorporated.²

The main characteristic teaching is as follows: The method of serving God which He has Himself declared by Christ is the Christian religion, and may be learned from Holy Scripture, especially the New Testament, the authenticity of which is demon-

² T. Rees, *The Racovian Catechism*, Introd.