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that Peter ever reached Rome. It seems to be taken for granted too easily that the letter was meant for Jewish Christians; there is nothing specially Jewish in its ideas, and διασπορά (1[2]) without the article might conceivably be simply an extension of the idea of παρεπιδήμοις, 'the scattered pilgrims.' It has been assumed too readily that Peter never preached to any one but Jews, on the basis of Gal 2[8]. Streeter's arguments against Petrine authorship were examined. They are (*a*) that Peter was not a witness of the sufferings of Christ (cf. 5[1]). It was felt that Lk 23[49] may be taken to imply the contrary. There is no proof that Peter remained in hiding from the denial onwards; all we have to rely on is psychological probability. (*b*) That Peter as ἀπόστολος could not speak of himself as συμπρεσβύτερος, as the two offices were distinct. There were divided opinions in the Seminar on this question, but it was felt that ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος is not quite the same thing as πρεσβύτερος merely, and that an apostle who had ceased to travel and had settled down modestly put himself on the level of the Church officials whom he was addressing. The real question is, Was the term ἀπόστολος inclusive of the term πρεσβύτερος, that is, was the apostle *ex officio* πρεσβύτερος of any Church in which he settled for a period, or was it strictly exclusive? It was felt by some that we cannot draw the lines of demarcation too rigidly at this early stage of ecclesiastical organization. The passage in 5[1] evoked a lengthy discussion. Two theories of its interpretation were offered: (*a*) That the writer claims (i) to share with all the πρεσβύτεροι the office of Church leadership; (ii) to share with all the inner circle of the disciples of Jesus the privilege of having witnessed His sufferings; (iii) to share with James and John a glimpse of the coming eschatological glory at the Transfiguration. This the Seminar eventually rejected, though the chairman still held to this view. Doubt was expressed as to whether μάρτυς here means 'eye-witness' or merely 'preacher.' If the latter, ὁ should be taken with μάρτυς as well as συμπρεσβύτερος. They are all πρεσβύτεροι and μάρτυρες together, and all κοινωνοί in the coming glory. (*b*) That τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης refers to Pentecost and means the glory which was then, at the time of τὰ παθήματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, destined shortly to be revealed. This involved an interesting inquiry into the use of μέλλω *c.* present infinitive. Neither interpretation gained full acceptance, but neither is incompatible with Petrine authorship. On the other hand, opinion was unanimous that ἡ συνεκλεκτή (5[13]) denotes 'sister Church,' not Peter's wife.

A more serious difficulty may be found in Peter's lack of culture (Ac 4[13]); the fact that Silvanus is the amanuensis and something more may lessen that difficulty and account for Pauline language, though it is not certain that he is Silas. The fact that the language, rather than the underlying ideas of the Epistle, is Pauline seems to tell in favour of the view that the subject-matter may be Petrine (or at least derived from the general current of primitive Christian thinking), not specifically Pauline. Silvanus has expressed non-Pauline ideas in Pauline language, just as Luke, another companion of Paul, had used Pauline language (*e.g.* χάρις and δικαιόω) in a non-Pauline sense. Paul's friends and followers caught his tones but missed his meaning.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Bridge Builders.

By the Reverend T. Crouther Gordon, D.F.C., B.D., Ph.D., Clackmannan.

'It was a river that I could not pass over.'—Ezk 47[5].

For more than two years I have been watching the new Forth Bridge from my study window. Slowly but surely it has crept out into the middle of the fairway of the broad river, until now the two halves have been joined by the centre span. I am too far away to see the workmen, but this lovely thing has grown day by day as if by magic, until now it fills the landscape. Of course, it's not the first bridge over the Forth. Every boy worth his salt knows that. There is that mighty three-span bridge down at Queensferry, which makes nervous ladies sick to

look down from! Yes, and long, long ago, the Romans built a bridge on top of pontoons quite near to the Kincardine Bridge. Severus did this in A.D. 209. But no bridge is quite like this new one. Think! It's got the biggest swing span of any bridge in the whole of Europe. And a little bird whispers that soon a very important person will come to open it.

One biting December afternoon the engineer took me over this wonderful construction, and I asked, 'Why have you taken so long to build it? It should have been ready ten months ago.' 'Well,' he explained, 'the reason is that we have had so much frost. You cannot build a bridge of concrete in cold weather.' So I thought, boys and girls, of other bridges that could not be built in frosty weather. You and I are bridge-builders. We build bridges between one another, and across these bridges pass to and fro our thoughts, our gifts, our letters and postcards. What a lovely thing is a strong bridge of friendship! But we cannot build it if people are cold and frosty and unkind to us. Jesus was always building bridges across to other people, and if the air was frosty His kindly smile and warm heart made every one thaw. Let us try to show His warm heart of love, and soon we shall be able to build bridges to even the coldest of our friends.

The engineer was keen to explain one part of the bridge, because it revealed how he had solved a problem. In hot weather the bridge, made of some thirty spans, would expand and crack, so a special joint was devised to allow the spans some play, without endangering them in any way. Thus the bridge comes and goes according to the weather. Now I venture to think that our friendships should be a little like that. We must not be too rigid. Some boys expect their friends to go wherever they go, to fish whenever they fish, to swim whenever they swim, to play whenever they play. But if our friendship is not to crack, let us come and go, let us give and take in the spirit of good humour and comradeship. Once a boy, after a naughty day, was told by his mother, 'John, do not let the sun go down on your wrath.' John replied, 'I cannot help what the sun does!' But Johnny did not see that he could help being angry. We shall build an enduring friendship if we learn to come and go, to give kindness and gifts as well as take them.

But not every bridge opens and closes. Here's the thrill! A man lives in the very centre of this bridge and works an electric motor all day. When he opens it to river traffic, it is closed to road traffic. When the motors rush over it, the ships must stop. It cannot be open to both at one and the same time. Don't you think, boys and girls, that our minds are very like this new bridge? They let only one train of thought through at a time. When we try to think of two things at one time, what mistakes we make! You remember how Mummy sent you an errand the other day, and you forgot all about it when you met some chums playing football. And God has made you the motor-man who opens and closes that bridge. You can open the way to beautiful thoughts, and so shut the way to ugly and mean thoughts. The lever is in your hand. Our souls, too, are like this bridge, for when we open them to God we shut them to men. Jesus used to climb the mountains at night and open the bridge of His soul to God, and it made Him so brave and true, and in the morning He opened the bridge to men, and how happy and strong He was! The lever, my boy, is in your hand; see to it that you keep opening it to both God and men.

The New Stamps.

By the Reverend H. L. Picken, Rhos-on-Sea, North Wales.

'God created man in his own image.'—Gn 1^{27}.

On September 1st the new stamps were on sale in all the Post Offices of this country, stamps bearing the features of our new King—King Edward VIII. When a little boy I know saw them, he said, 'Oh, what lovely stamps! I can see the King's face quite distinctly. How clear it is!' Yes, in colour they are the same as the old ones, but very different in other ways. It is a great improvement to have the King's face so clear and distinct. It is a photograph that is used this time instead of a drawing. Then the old ones were so covered with ornamentations, fishes and scrolls and wording that one could hardly see King George's face.

Do you know why our postage stamps bear the image of the King? It is because the post which carries letters for us is the King's post. You remember it is called the Royal Mail. Many years ago there were no posts by which people could send letters. The only post was that which carried the letters of the King himself to different parts of his dominions. Then later the King's post was allowed to carry letters for the public, though it cost a lot of money to send one. So it went on, and now millions and millions of letters go through the post every year, but it is still the King's post, the Royal Mail, and so the stamps bear the King's image.

These stamps remind me that *I too bear the King's image*—the King of heaven, God Himself; for the Bible tells us, 'God created man in his own image.' Yes, there is some likeness to God in every one of us. And these stamps remind me *to keep the King's image clear and distinct.* How easy it is for our lives to get so crowded and filled up with things that the King's image is hardly to be seen. They may seem attractive things, like the ornamentations on the old stamps, but they prevent the King's image from being clear and distinct in our lives.

Can you guess what some of these things are? There is a word which describes many of them—selfishness. People who are selfish want all that they can get, and want it all for themselves. And the more they get by selfishness, the more do they hide the image of the King. The lives in which the King's image is most clearly seen are those which seek to give as much as they can; giving their means, their strength, their thought and time for others. Remember to let the King's image be seen clearly and distinctly in our lives.

Another thing about these stamps. You notice each stamp has its stated value. See those figures in the left hand corner. And yet that is not their real worth, for with one of them, a three-halfpenny one, I can send my thoughts across the world. I can send love and give joy to others far off. I can comfort lonely hearts, help the needy, and do many such things—things the worth of which cannot be stated in pounds much less in a three-halfpenny stamp.

And so these stamps remind me too, that though in the world my value may be small, yet because I bear the King's image, through me His Love and His Joy can reach loveless lives, the sorrowful and the sad. He can comfort the lonely, help the needy, and do many such things, the worth of which can only be stated in the currency of heaven.

These stamps, then, remind us of three things:

1. That we too bear the King's image.

2. That we must keep the King's image clear and distinct.

3. That our real worth is in being used in the King's service.

The Christian Year.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Why St. Paul was Saved.

'Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.'—1 Ti 1[16].

In this chapter a few verses occur, ending with the text, in which for one moment the Apostle lifts the veil from his own life-story, and relates not merely some wonderful experiences, but his own opinion as to what they meant. Self-revelation is always interesting, as may be seen from the lasting popularity of books like the Confessions of St. Augustine or Rousseau; but the value of these books, after all, depends on the greatness of the man revealed.

St. Paul must often have told the story of his conversion. The special interest, however, of this passage is that, continuing his frankness, he explains not only what God did, but just why it was done—why so great a sinner was forgiven; and in the added explanation we gain at once a most winning glimpse of the Apostle's heart and one or two instructive thoughts about ourselves.

First, observe *the contrast between Paul's judgment of himself and God's treatment of him.* Now his verdict on his own life and character is stated unequivocally in the verse before. 'Sinners,' he writes, 'of whom I am chief.' No beating about the bush, and no ostentatious labouring of the point either; just the plain, quiet, manly statement that, looking back to his persecuting days—the part, for instance, he had played in the death of Stephen—he regarded himself as having been the most guilty of men.

Does it look strained and artificial and savouring of cant for an obviously good man to say of himself that he is the chief of sinners? And yet is it not quite intelligible that the better a man is, the more clearly he will perceive the gulf stretching between his evil and God's holiness; just as it is the sharpest-eyed look-out who can best tell how far the ship still is from land, or as Lord Kelvin, the leading physicist of his generation, could describe his own scientific career, as he did near the end, by the one word 'failure'?

There, then, we have the Apostle's verdict on himself; now mark the contrast in the attitude of God. How was this self-condemned man dealt with? Christ drew him close to the Father's heart, blotted out the past, and opened up the future. Instead of rejection he found a welcome that gave peace even to his tortured heart.

Now we have here a clear principle that operates unfailingly in the relations between God and man—the judgment of God on the sinful is in this respect the precise opposite of their judgment on themselves. What he imparts, always, is what we

should not dare to claim. The Pharisee, pouring out a flood of self-congratulation on his virtues, missed all the sweetness of God's mercy; the publican, standing with head bowed and heart heavy with self-loathing, learnt there and then what it meant to be forgiven. He *was* bad, but he knew it, and cast himself on God; therefore he obtained just those blessings of acceptance and conscious sonship of which he felt unworthy. Perhaps both men would have been astounded had you told them how different God's thoughts were from theirs.

Jowett once was asked by a clever talker at an evening party what he thought of Jesus Christ. 'The really important thing,' said he, 'is not what I think of Christ, but what He thinks of me.' And we *can* discover what Christ thinks of us—and His thought is God's—by ascertaining what we think of ourselves. If we can deliberately pronounce that, all things considered, our record is fairly satisfactory, and, by comparison with the majority of our neighbours, more than gratifying, then we have everything to learn of the mercy of God. But if we know enough of our own heart to interpret for us the words, 'sinners, of whom I am chief,' be sure a work of love and pity has been begun which a faithful Redeemer will make complete.

Then note *St. Paul's consciousness of special Divine love.* His language on the point is curiously emphatic; so much so that we can perceive he regarded his own case as being a test case. His actual words are: 'I obtained mercy, that in me as the foremost of sinners Jesus Christ might shew forth the *whole* of His longsuffering.' In those far-off persecuting days, he had all but got beyond the reach of God's love. All the forbearance of Christ had had to be exerted to keep a place for him. In retrospect he now saw that his recovery had put a heavy strain on the Divine pity, and how all the resources of mercy had had to be called into action.

Ruskin somewhere says that, as we stand and contemplate the Divine works in Nature, we are often moved to say, not 'There has been a great effort here,' but 'There has been a great power here.' The impression we receive of God's omnipotence in the physical world is that of might operating without exertion. But in redemption it is very different. There the Bible represents the Divine love as ransoming us by a vast effort of self-sacrifice; the breach yawning between right and wrong could be healed only by God exerting Himself to the utmost and throwing the whole strength of His nature into the chasm. There was a conflict in which the power of man's sin and of God's love was tried, and victory remained with love because it was willing to pay the cost and take up the burden.

So, whatever happens, let us try to preserve our sense of wonder at the love of God. We needed 'the whole of Christ's long-suffering'; nothing less would have sufficed. Let that prompt a glad, effectual service.

Once more, *God redeems men for the sake of other people.* As Father Nicholas of Serbia used to put it during the War: 'We can be saved only in the plural, not in the singular; only collectively, not as individuals; that is, *we* can be saved, but *I* cannot be saved' in isolation. God's purpose has wider bounds than our single destiny.

How far, let us ask, do we carry that indispensable conviction into our thoughts of the spiritual life? What has it meant for those nearest to us that we bear Christ's name? Has there been anything in and about us which has led them to think well of our Master and envy our discipleship? We fathers and mothers, are we as conscious as we might be that Christ found us not because He sought us alone, but because He cared for the young lives we are training? We take endless pains to secure that our property passes on to them intact; are we as eager to ensure their possession of our faith in God?

But more, the faith cherished solely as a private luxury inevitably fades and withers. The talent which too many believers take and wrap in a napkin and bury down in the ground, well out of sight, is just their faith in Jesus. In that sphere they live like Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, holding communication with nobody; with the result that, since imports mostly vary with exports, their faith grows no richer or stronger with the years. *They* obtained mercy, as a pattern to those who should afterwards believe—that broader purpose has been forgotten. But the cleansing stream which has entered the heart must flow onward, as a river of living water.

It all means that, if one man has found eternal life, it must be meant for everybody. St. Paul makes that point with emphasis. He felt that his own experience had fixed a principle, namely, that the Divine mercy has no limits. So that every Christian has a right to stand up and say to his neighbour: 'I have been saved. I have been given the friendship of God, therefore you need not despair.'

The Duke of Wellington once in a foreign land had to get his men into safety, but for that a deep

rapid river must be crossed. Neither bridge nor ford could be found, though they hunted up and down to find one. At last the Duke went to a hilltop with his telescope, and far down the river-side he saw a town, and on the opposite bank a village, and he said: 'Between town and village there must be a bridge or ford'; and so it turned out. So to the disheartened, this voice of St. Paul comes bidding us keep up our courage. Other men have been in straits and they have found the ford.[1]

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Evil Days.

'Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.'—Eph 5^{15-17} (R.V.).

There is a note of urgency in the apostolic writings as of men desperately in earnest, who know themselves to be 'set in the midst of many and great dangers,' as of soldiers on service, keeping vigil against powerful and subtle foes. St. Paul bids the Ephesians to be on their guard against the danger of drifting through life, unobservant of its character, unregardful of its opportunities, unmindful of its purpose. He tells them that there is a special reason why they should heed his counsel, for they are set to live in perilous times, 'the times are evil.'

The Apostle makes three assumptions. He takes for granted that his converts are their own masters, that they can choose the attitude which they will adopt towards their life, that they can deliberately let themselves drift, or hold themselves back from drifting. He is far from explaining and excusing all moral failure by the plea of natural necessity, as if men and women were fatally ordained by the mighty occult forces of heredity and circumstance to be what they actually are. He holds the manly creed of individual responsibility which requires a man to answer for what he is, for what he does. 'Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, *i.e.* as senseless, irresponsible creatures, but as wise.'

Next, he takes for granted that life brings opportunities to those who are on the watch to seize and improve them. The phrase in the text, 'redeeming the time,' is not free from difficulty. In the margin of the Revised Version the more literal meaning of the Greek is given thus, 'buying up the opportunity.' The suggestion seems to be that of an intelligent merchant watching the markets that he may know when to buy at advantage, and when to sell with profit. Commercial success depends on such intelligent vigilance and prompt action. To the Christian, St. Paul says, life also brings opportunities which must be seized when they present themselves, or altogether lost.

Again, St. Paul assumes that life is charged with Divine intention. It is, he suggests, the high task of the Christian to perceive, and to assist, this intention. 'Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.' History is not a mere meaningless movement of mimes and marionettes. God is in it, pursuing a quest of His own, working out a policy of righteousness worthy of Himself; and always He is claiming, and in a true sense needing, the co-operation of men. The life of man only then rises to its true height, and discloses its true meaning, when it has been deliberately and joyously bound into that supreme and wondrous quest and policy of God. Then it gains release from the stamp of futility and the bondage of death, and takes to itself the majesty of Divine purpose and the persistence of Divine life.

St. Paul pressed his counsel on the Ephesians because, he said, 'the days are evil,' and therefore it was particularly easy to lose hold of the fundamental postulates of self-respecting human life. Perhaps we may distinguish three reasons why the age of St. Paul was rightly regarded as morally perilous in uncommon degree:

The first century of our era was an age of unsettlement. Many causes have been assigned for this fact: the fact itself is undisputed. The expansion of Greek culture which followed the conquests of Alexander had diffused ideas which acted as solvents of men's inherited beliefs: there was much confusion of mind; much trouble of conscience; much disturbance of moral standards. The long civil wars within the Roman world, which preceded the establishment of the Empire, had impoverished society, and created widespread wretchedness among the populations. Famine and pestilence stalked in the rear of the armies. War, as always, broke down local and national barriers, and brought in a flood of scepticism and vice. It was an unhinged, unbalanced, unhappy world into which the religion of Jesus Christ was introduced. Out of this misery and distraction sprang a rank growth of superstition. The wretched people lost faith in their gods, and morality could not withstand the influences which proved too strong for religion, and a wave of licentiousness passed over the world. The disciples of Christ could not be unaffected by this.

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Highway of God*, 147.

We have but to read St. Paul's Epistles to see how clearly he perceived the danger to which his converts were exposed.

But pagan society was not only corrupt, it was also becoming bitterly hostile. St. Paul, proud of his Roman citizenship, and boldly conceiving the possibility of making Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, had been slow to realize the inherent antagonism between the Empire and the Church: but the inner discord could not long be hidden. Christianity came into conflict with the habits and customs of pagan society at every turn. St. John, writing probably in this very city of Ephesus, where had lived the Christians to whom St. Paul addressed the text, gave frank expression to the prevailing Christian sentiment about the pagan society. 'The whole world lieth in the evil one,' he said. St. Paul could perceive, however, the good side of the Roman Empire, and he was eager to claim for Christian uses all the good he saw. Thus he appeals to the Philippians to think on whatsoever things are honourable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report: but he knew the danger of the bitter hostility which could not but grow, from the gradual realization of the conflict between pagan habits and ideals, and the mind of Christ.

The age of St. Paul was an age of unassimilated truth. The Christian revelation was ill understood by those converts from paganism. They had been won to Christ by some genuine vision of the truth, but the vision, though genuine, had been very partial, and very limited. Their settled mental habitudes could not be altered quickly or easily. Their minds were haunted by the old fears and hopes. Like the early English king, of whom Beda relates that he had 'in the same fane an altar for Christ's worship and a smaller one for the worship of demons,' they were disposed to attempt the impossible task of harmonizing Christianity and paganism.

Let us turn our thoughts from Asia Minor in the first century to Great Britain in the twentieth. Would it be an improper or an unintelligent description of our own age to say that it, too, is an age of moral and religious unsettlement? Would it be untrue to say that the most distinctive and powerful tendencies of modern society are not favourable or friendly to the faithful profession of Christ's religion? Would it be quite irrelevant to the case of the modern Christians to say that they, too, are often hampered rather than assisted by the tradition, albeit nominally Christian, in which they have been reared, that their moral and spiritual difficulties are largely inbred and hereditary? Is not our age also pre-eminently an age of unassimilated truth?

The nineteenth century was a time in which scientific method was perfected, and applied fruitfully over the whole field of human inquiry. We have to make our count with an accumulation of scientific gains so vast and so various that no man, however well-equipped by nature and education, however resolute and conscientious, can make his own more than a tiny portion of the world's intellectual treasure. We are all depending on one another for the materials of our thinking, and the more we realize the measure of this involuntary and unavoidable dependence, the more there grows in our minds a doubt of our premises, a sense of helplessness, a forfeiture of self-respect. Theology lies apart from the general scheme of knowledge in an embarrassing and dangerous isolation. Moreover, a situation of intellectual and religious embarrassment is unfavourable to moral stability, and hardly consistent with spiritual certitude. 'Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time.'

But St. Paul though fully conscious of the special difficulties of his age was far indeed from being daunted or discouraged. He calls his converts to praise and thanksgiving. They are to be watchful, temperate, sober-minded, but never despondent or terror-stricken. In truth it is a high privilege to live in 'evil days,' for then life is big with promise, and rich in opportunity. Dangerous? Yes: but the compensations are great and many. 'Evil days' are days of decision, when human life quickens its pace, and widens its prospects. 'Evil days' are those 'days of the Lord,' of which the prophets were wont to speak, days of judgment, and of revolution, when men are put to the test and called to the greater ventures of faith.[1]

All Saints' Day.

The Strong.

'We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.'—Ro 15[1].

All strength, physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, is for use in the haunts of weakness for the purpose of dissipating infirmity of whatever sort. That is the principle in its broadest aspects which is enunciated in this text. Strength is not a luxury but a force, not a toy for self-pleasing but an instrument for effective use. So far as men surrender themselves unreservedly to the control of this principle they contribute to the advancement

[1] H. H. Henson, *The Kingdom of God*, 35.

of God's Kingdom among men ; so far as they are shy of it they impede its progress.

This principle is in conflict with the spirit of the world. One need only take up a newspaper and read it sympathetically to see what we are making of life in this twentieth century. On the first page are the advertisements, revealing the eager struggle, the unveiled self-interest, the fiercely competing forces engaged in this commercial war. In the next one reads paragraphs urging us as a nation to bestir ourselves, to gain in efficiency, to be watchful and jealous of the success of others, to leave no stone unturned to push others out. And, as one reads, one sees in the background the enormous fleets of the nations and the hosts of armed men, maintained at a cost which is crushing Europe into bankruptcy, but all maintained and called into being by self-interest, by jealousy, and by fear. Then we turn the page, read the laudatory paragraphs concerning the successful few, and the menacing cry of labour. We have around us the problem of the unfit, the problem of labour and capital, and the problem as it affects tens of thousands who echo with bitter hearts the poet's cry :

> Our life is but a narrow raft
> Alone upon the hungry seas,
> Whereon is but a little space
> And each must look out for a place
> To thrust his brother in the sea.
> And so the sea is salt with tears,
> And so our life is worn with fears.[1]

'There are two struggles going on around us,' Henry Drummond said. 'First the struggle for life and for the means of life ; this has competition for its law, and its end is accumulation for self without consideration for others. The other is the struggle for the lives of others ; this has Love as its law, and the end is the protection and salvation of the weak by the strong.'

Clemence Dane's play, *The Mariners*, is the story of a domestic tragedy. The Rev. Benjamin Cobb is a saintly parish priest who in his youth has made an unfortunate marriage. Her vulgar vanity and pride contrast with her husband's disinterested devotion to his work. His life, in the opinion of the village, is one long martyrdom. Miss Dane presents us with a penetrating study of the power of human love to maintain itself and to win through patient suffering the salvation of a devil-possessed soul. Divorce is the easy solution, but we are here introduced to a higher ministry of grace. True that the story ends in tragedy : the rector dies from influenza, and his half-mad wife listens in an awful and strained silence to the indictment of her wicked treatment of him. Yet the voice of condemnation is not the last word in her case. Did he pull it off ? Did he save her soul alive ? She dies from exposure and grief after a night spent in an agony of remorse and soul-shattering grief across his grave in the bitter winter. The question is pressing, because upon the answer hangs the fate of others. The quiet intensity of the closing scene is in marked contrast to the white heat of elemental passion which marks the climax of Lily's awful remorse. The dramatist puts the story of the married life of the rector and his wife inside another—the lives of Joan Shepperley and Gerry Despard ; the one a self-reliant girl, and the other an unstable youth who has come through the ordeal of the trenches more or less of a wreck, and who stands in desperate need of a stronger character upon which to lean until he can find his own feet again and make good. The rector's life has not been lived in vain. He has vindicated the saving power of human love when tried in the furnace of affliction. So Joan and Gerry are inspired to set out as mariners.[2] 'Granted that they wrecked themselves, but think of the stars they steered by.'

So in the relation of nation to nation the law finds expression in internationalism. Internationalism stands as the practical expression of a mutual service among nations, each giving to each, the strong bearing the burdens of the weak. So, too, in religion. Inter-denominationalism is a step towards unity—and by this is not meant un-denominationalism any more than un-nationalism. Internationalism and inter-denominationalism stand alike for magnanimity based on conviction, and bear the marks of strength, not weakness.

From whom can we seek strength ? Though we may be rich, or think ourselves rich in our intellectual pride and our material possessions, we are poor until we know Jesus Christ as our individual friend and our national Saviour. The example of the Master who pleased not Himself was to give His character to His fellows—who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich. He is available for all who truly seek Him. If He fails us, to whom can we go ? From whom can we seek that strength which alone will enable us to bear the infirmities of the weak ? Whatever we think of Christ, He stands to-day as the one fascinating, compelling figure in the universe.

[1] J. Burns, *Laws of the Upward Life*, 146.

[2] H. M. Relton, *Messages from a Troubled Church to a World in Trouble*, 65.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

An Armistice Sermon.

BY THE REVEREND RODERICK BETHUNE, M.A., ABERDEEN.

'And hath made of one blood all nations of men. . . .' —Ac 17^{26}.

One of the major assertions of the Christian faith is that all life began with God and that every man, whether red or yellow, black or white, is alike precious in the sight of God. To some the proposition has seemed preposterous. The pride of the Athenians, for example, was hurt when Paul, visiting their city, dared to make such a suggestion, for they reckoned themselves a people apart in much the same way as did the Jews. Other men and women were on a different plane from them.

Racial pride, like class pride, dies hard. Down through the years the attitude of the Athenians and the Jews has persisted. But, so far as the Christian is concerned, there can be no doubt where he should take his stand. Any endeavour at superiority or superciliousness must be in direct conflict with the words and the life of Jesus whom the Christian professes to follow and who embraced within the scope of His gospel the Jews and the Samaritans alike. And we are coming to realize that. At an important function in Glasgow, recently, one of our best known missionaries spoke of the changes which had occurred since he first set sail for alien soil. In recent years, so he averred, men's attitude to one another has changed. Now, more so than before, the favoured regard the unemployed sympathetically. People generally have ceased to regard coloured races as beneath their notice. And such statements are, to my mind at least, true to the facts. Here and there we come upon men fanning the flame of racial pride, but the majority of us Christians, as well as many who would refuse such a label, are characterized by something bigger and broader than nationalism. So far as some are concerned the transformation in attitude has been wrought by travel; we have discovered Germans and Austrians and Italians with ambitions and aspirations not unlike our own. For others the change has come through reading; we have our Shakespeare, Spain her Cervantes, Germany her Goethe—all of them masters in a common art. For yet others the change is due to a new realization of the message and the significance of Jesus Christ. But how the change has come is of no great material importance. Sufficient that it has come and that now there is a considerable consensus of opinion in favour of this major assertion of the Christian Church that all life began with God and that every man, whether red or yellow, black or white, is alike precious in the sight of God.

I. Starting from such a statement we must proceed logically to what belief in such a statement implies. If our life began with God and if we have, according to the plan of God, a certain destiny to fulfil, then it behoves us to handle our trust with respect. Certain things will be shunned by us; certain practices will not be indulged in; our conduct will invariably betray the purity of our motives.

But there is more to such a belief than obligations to oneself; there are obligations to one's neighbours. And it is in such a connexion that one finds one's beliefs difficult to practise. It is so difficult to treat our neighbours as we should like to treat them. Why? Because, we tell ourselves, they are irritating, quarrelsome, or are always insisting upon their rights. Or so, at least, it seems to us. In other words, we have come to believe every man precious in the sight of God but to make our belief evident to the other man is sometimes far from easy and involves a price which we are not always prepared to pay. But, cost what it may, our conduct towards our neighbour, who sometimes may not be so tractable as we could wish to see him, should be as Christlike as can be. 'During the Great War,' writes Dr. Fosdick in a recent article, 'a Roman Catholic chaplain went out under fire to a boy who lay dying in No-Man's-Land. As he came close the boy said, "Padre, I do not belong to your Church." "No," said the Padre as he knelt down, "but you do belong to my God."' And that can be said about the least attractive of our neighbours. They do belong to our God. We daren't do anything which would prevent them realizing their destiny. Was Jesus' consideration ever measured by man's reception of it? Did He ever forget that His neighbours belonged to His God?

But belief in such a statement does not end even there. If as a nation we dare to proclaim ourselves Christian, then, surely, having taken to ourselves such a name, we are entitled to live in accordance with our claims. Our name should be honoured by others because of the standard we maintain. We should be trusted for our integrity. Our conduct should be determined not by non-professing nations any more than an individual's conduct should be determined by his non-professing neighbours. It is just there, of course, that the difficulty lies. We are living in a world which has several different standards of morality. We are not all equally

advanced. We excuse ourselves—and sometimes our excuses seem reasonable enough—for our failure to exemplify our belief in our conduct. The difficulties of the nation are, in many instances, the difficulties of the individual writ large. But, difficulties or no difficulties, we ought to be making some endeavour to lead and not to be led.

II. As individuals we are living in a world that is far from ideal; and yet there are hundreds of sincere men and women, without whom this world would be a worse place, who are endeavouring to do unconventional but definitely Christian things in order slowly to transform the world. Where should we have been without the pioneers in personal conduct, in business, and even in recreation, who have shown a more excellent way? There was a time, for example, when men who had a difference were regarded as doing the only possible thing in the circumstances when they fought it out with their bare hands or with more destructive weapons. But that day has gone. Public opinion frowns now upon such encounters. Any who indulge in them must answer a charge of a breach of the peace. Public opinion frowns upon duels, did we say? And who mould public opinion? You and I and men and women like us. Our forerunners were sure that, in these encounters, might was not always right and that there was a more excellent way of settling disputes. Were they wrong?

If public opinion is moulded by you and me and men and women like us, and if public opinion can dismiss for ever such a practice as we have named, ought we not, who are proclaiming ourselves Christian, to be endeavouring to mould public opinion in other directions? We may be living in a world in which changes are difficult to obtain and in which it is unconscionably hard to do always as one would wish to do, but cannot we try at least to move the world slowly towards the ideal? We are not called upon to do impossible things, but to do our honest best in a great and worthy endeavour to make the world more like God's world. Many problems are calling for attention, but to-day one problem is uppermost in our minds. It is the problem of war. We owe it to those whom we remember to-day, and whom some of us will never forget, to do something constructive with regard to the problem. After all they suffered and taught us by their suffering, are we still convinced that there is only one way of settling differences? If there is a more excellent way than by a duel of settling a quarrel between individuals, must we still involve ten million men before we can settle quarrels between nations? There are some, I know, who aver that war brings out courage and all that is best in this human nature of ours. During the sinking of the *Titanic*, says A. A. Milne in his book, *Peace with Honour*, courage was witnessed that did credit to the human race. But, because of that, Britain did not arrange thereafter for vessels crossing the Atlantic to strike icebergs in order that such courage should be witnessed again.

To-day there is no need to describe to any one what war involves. All of us are fully aware of what it means, and none more so than those who were personally implicated in the last holocaust. Nor is there any one, I'm convinced, let alone a professed Christian, yet to be persuaded that modern warfare, with all the modern developments due to science, is anything but dastardly. Duels were bad enough, but they had this saving grace that, in most instances, they involved only the two men who were at variance. Modern warfare demands not only the fairest of our manhood, but involves both women and children. We are told that Richard Cameron, the Lion of the Covenant, Luther-like, nailed his protest to the cross at Sanquhar. About him were a few stalwarts alike determined to stand for the freedom of their faith. Out in the open they held their services, and not infrequently had narrow escapes from the ever-vigilant dragoons. At length they were caught in a position from which there was no possible escape, and, sizing up the situation, Cameron got to his knees and prayed the pathetic words: 'Lord, spare the green and take the ripe.' Such a prayer is worthy, but in warfare is doomed to remain unanswered. Is it to our credit who are represented as sharing, with all men, the same Divine heritage, that we are still contemplating war as the only medium for the settling of our disturbances? Is it beyond human ingenuity to discover some other method more humane and more reasonable which will not involve millions of men and women and children? Is it too much to hope that the nations of the world from now on will refer their disputes to arbitration? Don't you think that, instead of preparing for an eventuality, instead of creating armaments and so breeding distrust, we ought to be giving ourselves to every constructive plan for the peace of the world? If public opinion were strong enough there is little doubt that war would be for ever a thing of the past.

III. And mention of public opinion this time suggests the power that is in the hands of the Christian Church. Some have spoken sarcastically of the Church and of the Church's Faith and views. The Bishop of Croydon, in one of his books, quotes

one man as suggesting that the only thing the Church and Christianity do is to encourage men 'to be kind to Granny and the cat'! But it was the late Field-Marshal Earl Haig who said: 'It is the business of the churches to make my business impossible.' And, having been so invited, can we not try?

There are some within the Christian Church, like Dr. Fosdick, who, having come through the Great War, have renounced war for ever as being entirely contrary to the mind and purpose of Jesus Christ. Henceforth Dr. Fosdick's voice and energy are to be used in proclaiming saner methods, and methods more humane and more reasonable. And remember that when I say that there are many like him within the Christian Church I refer not alone to the Church in our own land but to the Church throughout the whole wide world. If you and I, as fellow-members with them, feel that we cannot conscientiously go such a length at the present time, then I suggest that to this distance at least we all must accompany them—we must support every constructive programme for the peace of the world, and we must create such a public opinion that the Ministers of State, who, when the churches' Peace Delegation visited them, invited the deputies to press and to keep pressing them, will be left in no doubt about our attitude.

Remember that you and I belong to a professedly Christian nation. Remember that a Christian believes, among other things, that all life began with God and has a Divine destiny. Let us remember that we have a share in deciding to what extent our nation will exemplify its Christian beliefs in its conduct. Public opinion is in our hands. Are we amongst those of whom the poet speaks?

> Who goes there at the dawn
> Across the sun-swept plain?
> We are the hosts of those who say
> It shall not be again.

The Best Books on Religious Education.

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One or two words of explanation are necessary as an introduction to this selected list of books. Every one who reads it will detect omissions. That is inevitable. If I were to include all really good books on this subject, or books which might be said to have a bearing on it, I should need a considerable part of this number of The Expository Times. Some of the omissions I have been compelled to make have caused me acute mental agony! Some have been made because the subject they handle will be dealt with separately. I include among such subjects Comparative Religion, the Theory and Practice of Education, the Psychology of Religion, and specialized subjects like the Teaching of Jesus. My aim is a strictly limited one. It is to give the teacher (in day school or Sunday school) some guidance as to the books most useful for his work. The teacher I have in mind is one who wishes to know of literature that will make his teaching first of all intelligent and then interesting, and will also help him to train the child in habits of worship.

A criticism that is just as inevitable is that the list is too large. To fling a miscellaneous collection of books at a teacher without discrimination is to give him very unhelpful guidance. In order to avoid this mistake I have done two things. One is to add to the titles of the books short notes indicating the special worth of the volume mentioned. The other is to mark with an asterisk the books which the teacher should *possess*. The unmarked books ought to have their place in a library to which the teacher will have access. Education authorities are providing libraries for their teachers which contain books that the teachers could not easily purchase for themselves. This asterisk business is a little difficult. It is very much determined by price. It would not be too much to say, *e.g.*, that if Sir George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* were mastered by our teachers it would revolutionize the teaching of the Bible in our schools. But it costs 25s., not a penny too much, but too much for many teachers. And, therefore, I am compelled to let it go without an asterisk.