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A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expository-times\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php)

pdfs are named: [Volume]\_[Issue]\_[1<sup>st</sup> page of article].pdf

tion for,' 'render in return for.' Hence the whole passage would read, 'You have heard that it was said, "An eye in return for an eye, and a tooth in return for a tooth." But I say to you, "Do not render evil in return for evil (or do not match evil with evil)."' Such a rendering may possibly, but not necessarily, mean that τὸ πονηρὸν has been omitted from the text.

Jesus proceeds to apply the principle He has

laid down to insults, litigation, and forced labour imposed by the Roman government. In all these cases He urges that men should not give as good as they get, but 'overcome evil with good.' He is dealing here with the spirit of vengeance, not, as is often supposed, with the question of defending one's life or the existence of the State.

H. E. BRYANT.

Grimsby.

## Entre Nous.

### Current Affairs in the Pulpit.

What place should current affairs occupy in the pulpit, and how far is the minister justified in dealing with social questions which arise from week to week?

Preaching must deal with life and be concerned with seeing life in the light of God's face. We cannot afford to ignore the great unseen realities, but they must be related to the lives of common people—the eternal things found in present events. We are spokesmen for God as were the prophets in ancient Israel, and our task is not merely to see God's truth in relation to their own time as they saw it, but in relation to our own. It is important to hear the authentic voice of God in our time. Revelation has not ceased. God is still unfolding Himself, and each phase of life and each succeeding generation serves to reveal yet further reaches of His wisdom and His pity.

But there is reason for thinking that our social concern and our interest in current events have run away with us. Preaching should be something more than a running commentary upon the events of the past week. It should have scriptural background. It must hold on to the great central mysteries of our Faith which create awe and reverence. It must be conscious of God in the midst of life, and this gives to the preacher a steadfastness and a certainty that is seldom hurried or disturbed.

Sensational preaching lacks poise and staying power. It has no educational value and ultimately it defeats its own end. There is not a sufficiency of sensational things happening every week to sustain interest at a high pitch, so they have to be manufactured, or ordinary events have to be treated in a sensational way.

We are sent of God to declare His will and reveal His love. Our preaching should be saturated with the spirit of a great commission. But this spirit should be brought to bear upon the life of

our own times. While we should be fully informed on doctrinal subjects and familiar with the expository background of our preaching, we should find our subjects in life rather than in the books upon our shelves.

There is a definite place in the work of the pulpit for instruction and information. We neglect it at our peril. An illiterate church is a dangerous menace to our usefulness and a prolific source of heresy and superstition. But much of this instruction can be conveyed not by abstract academic presentation but rather in concrete and personal incidents around which, and in which, the religious truth is revealed. When we have some truth which we wish to present to our people, we should look for some Scriptural incident or character through which that truth can be presented. The truth must be translated into concrete and familiar forms, while the characters must be made to speak in modern terms. The traditional terms of our Christian Truth must be changed into modern thought-forms. In this way we can keep our background and we can continue to keep the Scriptures central in our work. Our preaching is too serious in its intention to be lightly turned aside to deal with passing events or to be swallowed up in a hectic series of sensational stunts.

Some men have solved the question of the place of current events in the pulpit by instituting a five minutes' talk on Public Affairs at some point in one of the Sunday services. It forms an item in the service apart entirely from the sermon. I have tried this method for some years at different periods, and I have found it successful. There need be no slashing attacks upon social evils nor violent tirades upon some recent event, but a sane Christian comment given by way of direction to one's people to frame and sharpen their own judgments, and to furnish them with information of the bearing of

Christian Truth about this subject which has intruded into public or social life.

Some social evils are complicated, and there are many sides to every question that arises. It is difficult for busy people who have neither the training nor perhaps the capacity to see the trend of certain movements or the results of certain actions. Here lies the opportunity of the minister. He can become familiar with a subject in most of its bearings. He ought to be able to summarise a many-sided question and give his judgment upon it as a Christian minister trained to declare the Will of God in relation to life.

It does not follow that his statement is final and authoritative for all his people. It should not be presented in an aggressive way. But many of our people would welcome a Christian comment upon Public Affairs. We ought to be able to gather up a situation in one handful for them and show the central and important things in it. We can give a lead to their thought and content to that thought.

The Pulpit Editorial can serve many purposes. I have used it successfully in giving Pulpit Reviews of Books which I thought my people should read, or I have told them about the book and given them a brief summary of its contents and significance. On special occasions I have given them a few historical notes on the origin of an event and its historical associations. Anniversaries, centenaries, deaths of famous men and women all provide opportunities for such comments. Attention can be called to the pronouncements of the leaders of Christian thought and to movements within and without the church. Charitable appeals and collections for special purposes in Christian Missions present an excellent opportunity for the minister to give a vivid cameo sketch of the Charity, or the Mission in some one of its many activities.

Most public events and social occurrences have a religious or moral side, and this side is the one generally ignored in the Press. This is our opportunity to supply what is missing. It is advisable to avoid what are known as party issues. No minister of Christ has a right to belong to any party so exclusively that his party allegiance to Christ is obscured.

The minister must be equipped and prepared to handle subjects when they are thrust into prominence. This involves a knowledge of things other than are found in theological text-books. Behind him there must be an ordered system of reference, so that in a few moments he may place his hands upon facts, figures, and opinions about the subject on which he wishes to speak. W. H. STUBBS.

*Wolverhampton.*

#### Rahator of Bombay.

It was while on his way home from India in the third year of the War that Dr. James Moulton died from exposure—his ship having been torpedoed in the Mediterranean. While he was in Bombay he saw a great deal of the work of the native Indian Missionary, Samuel Rahator, and when he got back to England he had meant to let the Methodist Church know something of what Rahator was doing. 'It was worth while coming to India to see Rahator,' he said. 'It is a purifying thing to find love like his in such appalling surroundings.'

An account of Rahator's work has had to wait for nearly twenty years. It has now been described by Mr. Frank Hart in a way that could hardly be bettered. He calls the volume (*Rahator of Bombay*: Epworth Press; 2s. 6d. net) not a biography but an 'appreciation,' and it was intended to mark the spiritual jubilee of this Indian Christian. On Easter Monday last year, just after the manuscript was finished, Rahator died. It should be noted that Mr. Hart is giving all the profits from the book to a fund which is being raised for the training of Lemuel Rahator, B.A., Rahator's youngest son, as a candidate for the Methodist Ministry.

Samuel Rahator was born of Christian parents. His father was descended from the Rajputs, and his mother belonged to an old Marathi family. It was while he was in Government service that his own heart was touched. In the early spring of 1885, General Campbell (then Major Campbell) was conducting Evangelistic services at Igatpuri. Many years later General Campbell attended a Missionary Garden Party at Richmond College, and he heard there for the first time the story of Rahator's conversion. He had sowed in faith and had his reward. Rahator went to Igatpuri because it was a novelty to listen to a British General doing the work of a padre. 'The most striking thing,' Mr. Hart says, 'about Rahator's conversion is the passion and adventure with which he made the supreme choice. . . . The day of salvation was to him the definite hour of enlistment. He said one day, "When Christ came into my life, He drew up all the blinds, opened all the doors, and His joy came blowing in from everywhere."'

In January 1887 the Rev. G. W. Clutterbuck landed in Bombay. He had been sent out from the Methodist Mission House to establish an English Church in Bombay, and one of the earliest entries in his diary was, 'I have engaged the services of a young Marathi Christian as our first Native Evangelist.'

'Rahatorji has shown us another way of doing

things,' so an Indian said when discussing the problem, almost a hopeless one it seemed, of the outcastes in the Bombay Presidency. His work for the outcaste was only a small part of all that he did, but it shows as well as any other perhaps what he was and what he was able to accomplish. He pitched his tent in the scavenger world and became a scavenger.

O wet red swathe of earth laid bare,  
 O truth, O strength, O gleaming share,  
 O patient eyes that watch the goal,  
 O ploughman of the sinner's soul.  
 O Jesus, drive the coulter deep  
 To plough my living man from sleep.

He put his hand to the plough, determined to drive 'the coulter deep.' The implement that he used was courtesy, gentleness, unvarying kindness. He saw 'each man always as a man, respecting and honouring him as such, and in a thousand courteous ways making him aware of their equality.'

Every year the great simple truths that God lives, that God loves, that Christ is our Salvation, grew simpler and dearer to him. When he was nearing sixty, at the request of the Government, he took over the care of a large number of people of the criminal tribes. Behind all his work there lay long periods of solitary prayer. 'It is in the solitude of prayer,' he said, 'that we see our frail lives lifted to the heights and our commonest duties united to everlasting strength.' Rahator approached the men of the criminal tribes, Bhamptas and Mang Garudis, not as criminals, but as men, respecting the absolute value of each man's personality. 'If he was gentle towards their failures, and even indulgent to their vices, it was because he knew they would be cured once their will was set in the right direction. The value of the meanest unit of society was one of the fundamentals of his belief. It was this saving sense of the sacredness of personality, even outcaste personality, the glowing confidence in the salvability of all men, even habitual criminals, that gave him a hearing, and made his appeal successful where others had failed. He did not offer them a new religion, but confronted them with the actual thing, the strong, gentle, self-forgetful, persistent passion of a soul who brought to them the touch of Christ.'

Rahator did not leave much behind him in the way of Mission buildings or of elaborate Church organization, but the life that he lived will not soon be forgotten. And it was his life that told. He himself said, 'Argument is no good, it is like a sparrow going for an eagle; our lives must be our work.'

Mr. Hart has written of what he knows intimately; he has also a delightful literary touch, and he conveys to his readers the real atmosphere of the West of India. This is a little biography which should not be missed. Each chapter is preceded with quotations from Indian writings.

#### The Veil of Death.

'Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.'

Principal Wheeler Robinson in *The Veil of God* writes of six ways in which the vision of God can be obscured. This fine little book is the second volume in the Dean of St. Paul's 'New Library of Devotion' (reviewed under 'Literature'). The last chapter is on the 'Veil of Death.' It is not written for all Christians—not for those to whom death is but a welcoming door at the end of the journey. 'An old friend of mine, who has almost reached its threshold after a long life of faithful service, writes to me: "I cannot commune with men much now. I am rather deaf. But the doorway above is open, and I live mostly there."' The chapter is written for those who have not escaped the doubts and hesitations of the modern world as to the reality of life beyond death. 'There is, in fact, much more variety of outlook amongst Christians themselves than conventional statements would lead us to expect; indeed, there are often varying attitudes in the same man at different times.' Two questions Principal Wheeler Robinson puts: 'What are the obstacles to a Christian view of life after death?' and 'In what does the Christian view of life beyond death essentially consist?'

The chief obstacle is the contrast between the unknown forms of the life beyond and the warm familiarity of the life on this side of the veil that makes the unknown seem unreal. 'To-day, many a Christian shrinks from the unknown world where all that is familiar and dear seems left behind. I remember standing, as a youth, by the deathbed of a man who had lived a long and faithful Christian life, and I recall my surprise at hearing him say, "I don't want to leave all this." To my inexperience, the words seemed unnatural on Christian lips. I know now that they are natural, but that does not make them right. . . . The old-fashioned truth remains that we are strangers and pilgrims here, even though we may not, like Archbishop Leighton, feel that it is fitting we should die in an inn (a wish strangely granted him). Gustav Frenssen begins one of his remarkable village sermons with two simple incidents from his pastoral experience. The first is that of a little boy crying in the street, unable

to say where he lived or even to give an intelligible name. The other scene is that of an old woman dying, and as she looks round on the faces of her children and grandchildren without recognition, she says, "Nothing but strange faces!" He makes these incidents a symbol of man's state when, sooner or later, he is detached from the familiar but transient things of this world and brought face to face with "the deepest things" that are rooted in eternity. How will it seem to us when *we* are asked, "Who are you, and where do you live?" From this point of view the inscriptions on the monuments of church and graveyard are a strange comment on the Christian life, dwelling as they so often do on the familiar things of earth, its now forgotten achievements and irrelevant pride. There is something wrong with the emphasis of our life if such things figure largely in our own minds or those of our friends, when the time comes for us to die. . . . We miss the revelation God would give to us by letting ourselves become too much absorbed in the trivial and the transient. It is the abiding vision of the whole of things that we all need, so that, however busy we must needs be, some higher purpose informs and transforms things temporal

—to him who looks

In steadiness, who hath among least things  
An undersense of greatest; sees the parts  
As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.'

In what does the Christian view of life beyond death essentially consist? 'In this life there are both transient and permanent elements; it is a subtle blend of both. What are the permanent elements that make "eternal life," which Christian faith can legitimately project into the world beyond experience? Surely, all those that belong essentially to the new personality which God creates in us (2 Co v. 17; cf. iv. 6).'

'If the "values" of the spiritual life abide—and their very nature removes them from dependence on conditions of time and space, and demands an eternal world for its full expression—then the personality which they constitute also abides; indeed, they have no meaning apart from such a personality. If it be asked whether this means the continuance of individual existence the answer is plain. They are so bound up with the relations of individuals that they would become unrecognizable without them; a Christian fellowship in heaven as on earth implies such relation. A redemption of individual life such as Christian experience knows must point to fuller use of that which is redeemed at such cost, if this is a rational universe.'

**Amy Wilson Carmichael.**

We have welcomed many books from the pen of Amy Wilson Carmichael.

The S.P.C.K. has now published *Toward Jerusalem* (2s. net), which contains a number of her devotional poems. Many are old friends collected from the Dohnavur books, but some have been added to and considerably altered. Others appear to be new—in any case they are new to us. Very characteristic is the poem quoted:

IN ACCEPTANCE LIETH PEACE.

He said, 'I will forget the dying faces;  
The empty places,  
They shall be filled again.  
O voices moaning deep within me, cease.'  
But vain the word; vain, vain:  
*Not in forgetting lieth peace.*

He said, 'I will crowd action upon action,  
The strife of faction  
Shall stir me and sustain;  
O tears that drown the fire of manhood cease.'  
But vain the word; vain, vain:  
*Not in endeavour lieth peace.*

He said, 'I will withdraw me and be quiet,  
Why meddle in life's riot?  
Shut be my door to pain.  
Desire, thou dost befool me, thou shalt cease.'  
But vain the word; vain, vain:  
*Not in aloofness lieth peace.*

He said, 'I will submit; I am defeated.  
God hath depleted  
My life of its rich gain.  
O futile murmurings, why will ye not cease?'  
But vain the word; vain, vain:  
*Not in submission lieth peace.*

He said, 'I will accept the breaking sorrow  
Which God to-morrow  
Will to His son explain.'  
Then did the turmoil deep within him cease.  
*Not vain the word, not vain;  
For in Acceptance lieth peace.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Amy Carmichael, *Toward Jerusalem*, 40.