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'The Lord's servant must not fight, but be peaceable towards all men, apt to teach, patient of evil, gently schooling the adversely disposed; lest at any time God may grant them a change of mind to recognize what is true, and they may recover themselves out of the devil's snare—held captive by him, as they are, a living prey to *his* (sinister) will.'

JAMES P. WILSON.

*St. Quivox, Ayr.*

# Entre Nous.

**The Life to Come.**

It is one thing to believe in the life to come, another to form some conception of it. Our conception of it will depend very largely on our views of the relation of soul and body.

According to the Greek tradition, in its most typical form, the soul is an everlasting thing. It does not perish with the dissolution of its earthly tabernacle. Already, indeed, before its entrance into the body it possessed the quality of everlastingness. Here it tabernacles for a season, leading a dull prison-house kind of existence. But at death it escapes from the prison-house, and emerges once more upon the broad and glorious expanses of eternity. The body returns to the earth from which it came, and the soul or spirit is united once again to the Infinite and Eternal Substance of God.

Through Wordsworth's famous Ode, English readers have been made familiar with this notion of the everlasting nature of the soul, never born and never dying. He perpetuates for us the old Greek conception, which is also the Oriental conception, in poetic and transfigured form. Under the influence of Plato's doctrine of the soul as an eternal and indestructible thing, and more especially of his doctrine of reminiscence or recollection, he represents the soul at birth, which he describes as but a sleep and a forgetting, as coming fresh from God's imperial palace; so that the child is nearer than the man to the vision splendid. And it is apparently implied that after death the soul must reach again its home in God, beyond that immortal sea which brought us hither, where the mighty waters roll for evermore.

So far the old Greek and Oriental conception of the soul and its relation to the body. At the present day it is chiefly expounded in Hindu philosophy and among Western theosophers.

Turn now to the Christian tradition. In the Christian tradition the notion of the soul's pre-existence is virtually ignored, most people in the Western world regarding it as merely a haunting speculation. Christian thought rejects also the Greek and Oriental view of the future state, in which the soul, being part of the Divine Essence or Substance, is at death merged again in the Infinite, as the stream loses itself in the ocean. Such a view is regarded as subversive of the feeling and consciousness of moral responsibility: if there is no personal survival in the world to come, then it is difficult to think of this world as in any real sense a sphere of moral discipline and preparation.

What, then, does Christianity affirm as over against the Greek view? In the Christian tradition the effort is made to conserve the idea of personal survival. According to the Hebrew doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, soul and body though dissolved at death shall yet meet again, and thus the complete or entire person be reconstituted.

But the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, of the reassembling of the material particles of the body, presents difficulties of its own. St. Paul did not accept it, at every stage of his thought at least, and it was in view of St. Paul's teaching that in the English Prayer Book version of the Apostles' Creed the phrase, 'I believe . . . in the resurrection of the flesh,' was changed into the less materialistic phrase, 'I believe . . . in the resurrection of the body.' The notion that the soul and the body of flesh shall meet again must always have been a difficult notion for thoughtful people to maintain, and the advance of physical and chemical science has made it now almost unbelievable.

How does St. Paul conceive of the state of personal existence in the hereafter? In 1 Co 15 he draws a distinction between the natural body and the spiritual body, and affirms that in the resurrection of the dead it is not the natural but a spiritual body that is raised: 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.'

In 2 Co 5 he appears to reaffirm this distinction in a more figurative way. Here on earth, as he says in effect, we dwell in a tabernacle, a tent, a building made of perishable stuff, liable to collapse at any moment; there in heaven we shall dwell in a building of God, immaterial, spiritual, eternal—in a glorious body, a spiritual not a natural body; fashioned by the Divine Artificer—as we might add—to be the organ or instrument of the Christlike soul. 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' WILLIAM FULTON.

*Glasgow.*

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**Christianity and the Individual.**

Professor Halford E. Luccock of Yale University has chosen a vital subject for his latest book, *Christianity and the Individual* (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s. net). Those who know Professor Luccock's previous books, and who look for fresh ideas put in a way essentially easy to follow, and lit up by the many illustrations with which his mind is stored, will find here all they expect.

Professor Luccock considers the forces which are running over the individual 'like a fleet of steam rollers,' crushing out personal values. And these are not only found in Totalitarian States. In democracies, economic forces, the tyranny of mass thinking, and other movements overrun personality. And so his object is to rethink the place of the individual—to consider what is the Christian contribution to the achievement of personality; in brief, what is the individual gospel. In considering this, Professor Luccock does not forget the Social Gospel.

This is a book for preachers, and while all is good, we have no hesitation in saying that the best is the last chapter, where Professor Luccock writes on preaching to personal needs. For he agrees with Dr. Coffin that preaching is 'truth through personality *to a person.*' Preaching is not broadcasting to the universe, but 'must be aimed at a definite receiving end' and the preacher must bring ideals into moving relationship with the machinery of everyday living. Here he uses the symbol of William James, 'The upper mill wheel above a lower one may be turning, but unless there is some sort of a peg joining the lower one to the upper, the motion of the upper wheel will not turn the lower one. The upper wheel may represent ideals, faiths, professions; the lower one, the practices of everyday life. Often there is little or no connexion between the two. There is need to drop down a peg from the upper to the lower wheel so that faiths and ideals may be brought into effective relation to the machinery of everyday experience. Preaching has much to do with "pegs."'

But he enters a caveat against 'practical' preaching, and reminds his readers of the passage in Canon C. E. Raven's autobiography in which he tells of his disappointment in schoolboy days over the preaching which left out any deeply religious challenge.

'One of the highest offices of friendship is expectation, the demand of faith and love, which holds a friend up to his utmost. Jesus never failed men in that high gift of friendship. The friendliest word He ever spoke was, "Take up your cross and follow me." It was a persistent friendship for the highest possibility in men.'

Preachers must disturb, or they will merit the words of Joseph Auslander:

We who were prophets and priest-men
For the Kings of the East and the East-men,
The bugles of God to the beast-men,
  His terrible seal on our brow—
Physicians of music and makers
Of language and law and the breakers
Of battle, strength-lifters, heart-shakers—
  We are nice poets now.

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**'Ye have heard it said.'**

'Henri Bergson, in his *Two Sources of Morality and Religion,* whatever his book may lack as a completely satisfactory ethics or philosophy of religion, has put preachers deeply in his debt in his suggestive distinction between the morality of "obligation" and that of "aspiration." By the "morality of obligation" he means those moralities of customs and habits which are useful instruments for social cohesion for the family, the tribe, and the nation. It is a type of morality necessary if societies are to be kept stable and fixed. So much of the stress of organized religion has gone into the teaching of this kind of morality, often to being blind to any other variety. There is also, Bergson says, a morality which springs from intelligence as opposed to bundles of habit, a morality tinged often with scepticism toward much traditional moral "obligation." It is the morality which is not forced by obligation, but in which the vision of some ideal incarnate in some saint or moral hero "beckons the individual to some vital variation," some new expression of moral feeling. It will be readily seen that it is in this second type of morality that there is the largest and indeed the only hope for a Christian world. It is the kind of morality which lies close to the heart of Christian teaching, as put in Jesus' contrasts, "Ye have heard it said, . . . but I say unto you.'[1]

**Truth.**

Mr. Arnold Lunn contributes an article to the September number of *The Nineteenth Century,* in which he urges the eradicating of the 'greatest of all heresies, "It does not matter what a man believes so long as he behaves." '

'We have not repudiated Christianity in England,' he writes, 'but we treat it as irrelevant and unimportant. English education is based on the implicit premise that it is more important for a boy to know when Queen Anne died than for him to discover why Christ rose from the dead. We have accepted with uncritical faith the greatest of heresies, that it does not matter what a man believes so long as he behaves, and we are unmoved by the evidence which suggests that men cease to behave when they cease to believe. We are losing our respect for truth, but we forget that truth has its claims apart from the social consequences of truth. The events of the first Easter Sunday belong to history, and if it be important to know what happened at Waterloo, it is equally important to know what happened in a garden near Jerusalem on the first Easter Sunday, even if the social and ethical consequences of that happening were of no importance.

'Christianity is something more than a useful adjunct to "house spirit." A young friend of mine summed up his experience of public school religion. "At Eton," he said, "they told me that Christianity would help me to be good. I did not particularly want to be good, so I was not interested in Christianity. Some years later I discovered that Christianity was true, and from the fact of its truth certain inconvenient conclusions followed, among others that I ought to try to be good." '

**Beauty.**

'Walking, two mornings since,' writes Robert Nichols in *Time and Tide,* 'along a narrow damp alley, I looked up and saw some five or six sprays of a creeper with orange-red flowers silhouetted against the pure blue of the sky. "For those six sprays," I said to myself, "I would surrender man-made Venice entire." Pondering this discovery, I ask myself why man-made Venice should move me so little and those few hundred tiny leaves and twenty-one flowers so much. My answer is lame enough but, such as it is, I believe it to be made without self-deceit. "I feel as I do because there is a blessing in these flowers which either never was in these buildings or has departed from them." I do not quite know what I mean by blessing, but I know that life for me is becoming more and more impossible without the sense of it. To what this sense of blessing in these flowers is due, I cannot exactly say, but I fancy it has to do with an immediate perception that these flowers are the work of an artist of extraordinary spontaneity and apparently effortless and quite illimitable power.'

**The Little Region of Palestine.**

At the British Association meetings at Nottingham last month, Mr. H. G. Wells was president of the educational science section, and he had a number of provocative and thoroughly Wellsian things to say, especially on the teaching of history. 'And I have to suggest another exclusion. We are telling our young people about the real past, the majestic expansion of terrestrial events. In these events the little region of Palestine is no more than a part of the highway between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Is there any real reason nowadays for exaggerating its importance in the past? Nothing began there, nothing was worked out there. All the historical part of the Bible abounds in wild exaggeration of the importance of this little strip of land.

'Is it not time that we recognized the extreme insignificance of the events recorded in Kings and Chronicles, and ceased to throw the historical imagination of our young people out of perspective by an over-emphasized magnification of the history of Judea? Look at our time-table and what we have to teach. If we give history four-tenths of all the time we have for imparting knowledge, that still gives us at most something a little short of four hundred hours altogether. Even if we think it desirable to perplex another generation with the myths of the Creation, the Flood, the Chosen People, and so forth, we haven't got the time for it—any more than we have the time for the really quite unedifying records of all the Kings and Queens of England and their claims on this and that. No reason why much of that stuff should not be picked up in private reading—by those who like that sort of thing.'

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[1] H. E. Luccock, *Christianity and the Individual,* 197.

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