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D. F. S.

LENT

A MANUAL FOR THE CLERGY

THE SUBJECTS INCLUDE

THE HISTORY OF LENT

FASTING

SERMON OUTLINE

SUGGESTIONS, ETC.

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S. P. C. K.

LENT

A MANUAL FOR THE CLERGY

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GOOD FRIDAY
A MANUAL FOR THE CLERGY
By VARIOUS AUTHORS

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THE welcome given to the volume *Good Friday* has suggested a companion volume on *Lent*. The Authors' names are given only in the Table of Contents. Where no name occurs the matter is editorial.

W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE,
Editorial Secretary of the S.P.C.K.

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LENT

A MANUAL FOR THE CLERGY

I

A NOTE ON THE HISTORY OF LENT

LENT* grew out of the fast in preparation for Easter, which Irenæus mentions in his letter to Pope Victor (A.D. 189-199), quoted by Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History*, v. 24) : "Some think they ought to fast a single day, but others two, others again even more. And in the opinion of others, the 'day' amounts to forty continuous hours [*i.e.*, ending with the meal following Easter Communion]. And this variety of observance did not originate in our time, but much further back, in the times of those before us." The Friday fast (*Didache* 8) would have been observed with particular solemnity on the anniversary of the Crucifixion. But the Lenten fast seems to have originated in a backward extension of the fast undertaken before the Easter baptisms. Thus as early as the *Didache* (probably about A.D. 100) we read (*c.* 7) : "Before the baptism let the baptizer and him that is baptized fast, *and such others as can.*" In the middle of the third century Dionysius of Alexandria, writing to Basilides, refers to "the six days of the fast" and to the prolonged fasts undertaken by some.

* The word is derived from Anglo-Saxon "Lencten," *i.e.*, spring, the time of lengthening days. The French *carême* comes from *quadragesima*. "Carnival" (late Latin *carnelevamen*, "solace of the flesh") describes the days before Lent.

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The word for Lent (*τεσσαρακοστή*, *quadragesima*) occurs first in Canon 5 of the Council of Nicæa (325) as a period in which synods are held. In Canon 45 of the Council of Laodicea (c. 380) the Forty Days season is mentioned in connection with preparation for Baptism.

Socrates in the fifth century records the variety of custom existing in his day (*Hist. Eccl.*, v. 22) : "The fasts before Easter will be found to be differently observed among different people. Those at Rome fast three successive weeks before Easter, excepting Saturdays and Sundays. Those in Illyrica and all over Greece and Alexandria observe a fast of six weeks, which they term 'the forty days' fast.' Others, beginning the fast from the seventh week before Easter, and fasting three five days only, and that at intervals, yet call that time 'the forty days' fast.' It is indeed surprising to me that, thus differing in the number of days, they should both give it one common appellation [*i.e.*, *τεσσαρακοστή*]; but some assign one reason for it, and others another, according to their several fancies."

The connecting of this period of preparation for Baptism with our Lord's forty days in the wilderness was a devotional afterthought, which appears first in the middle of the fourth century. St. Gregory of Nazianzus shows this clearly : "Christ fasted a little before His temptation, we before Easter. As far as the forty days are concerned it is the same, but the difference in the seasons is no little one. He armed Himself with them against temptation; but to us this fast is symbolical of dying with Christ [*i.e.*, in Baptism], and it is a purification in preparation for the festival. And He fasted absolutely for forty days, for He was God, but we measure our fasting by our power" (*Oratio* xl. 30).

The normal reckoning of the fast after the time of Socrates was seven weeks in the East, deducting seven Sundays and six Saturdays, and six weeks in the West,

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deducting Sundays. Each method of reckoning produced thirty-six days, practically a tithe of the year (Cassian, *Coll.* xxi. 25). The extra four days in the West were added about the beginning of the fourth century. The Ambrosian Rite at Milan still begins the season on the first Sunday in Lent. In the Eastern Church today the Lenten offices begin on the Sunday corresponding to our Quinquagesima, and meat is given up in the preceding week.

Easter in the early Church was marked not only by the baptism of catechumens, but also by the restoration of penitents. The weeks before Easter were thus doubly consecrated to the theme of repentance and amendment of life. When in the Middle Ages Communion became very rare and largely confined to Easter, Lent was still associated with penitence, but primarily as preparation for Easter Communion.

In England after the Reformation the associations of Lent with fasting and penitence continued, thanks to the Prayer Book rubrics and services, including the Communion Service. The "special services" universal today grew up in the nineteenth century, when artificial light made late services on week-nights possible. It is common to find fault with nineteenth-century arrangements, but there seems to be nothing wrong with these additional services provided the genuine Lenten tone of the preaching is preserved. Lent, by the standards of the early Church, is a time for self-examination and penitence, also for instruction in the faith. It is above all a season for recalling the implications of Baptism, a sacrament which is too little preached about in this period of revived Eucharistic worship.

II FASTING

I

It has become a commonplace of cultural anthropology that in religion the habit of fasting, along with many other practices of asceticism, is almost universal.

It is very unlikely that mere experience of the value of its effects, even when tested over the wide range of humanity's religion, has established the practice so strongly. We have very good grounds for believing that mankind has an inner urging towards ascetic practice, which it would not be very far wrong to describe as an instinct. Thus a really scientific study of man ought to take account of the self-denying instincts as well as of the physical self-preserving appetites. So any account of man which describes him primarily or solely in terms of pleasure-seeking, pain-avoiding reactions, even below the levels of consciousness and still more below that of self-consciousness, is not true to fact. There is an excellent discussion of all this complex issue in Part I of G. M. Stratton's *Psychology of the Religious Life*,* a book strongly recommended by Baron von Hügel. It concludes thus:

"The commonest human emotions, of self-regard and self-depreciation, of sympathy with others and with the world, and of antipathy toward these, are of influence upon the whole religious system and conception. They directly give forms to the world of reward and punishment, and to the relation of God

* George Allen and Unwin, 1911 and 1918.

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to men. And furthermore, the mind, by its very attention to a more impressive form of existence, finds itself drawn to opposite poles of feeling: now honouring and now despising the self; loving or else hating the ways and institutions of the world; viewing the relation between humanity and the divine, now with excitement and now with calm, and in particular with gladness or with sorrow."

Thus self-abasement, world-renunciation, ascetic prowess are the leading motives that evidently lie behind fasting and other forms of asceticism.

II

As our concern is primarily with fasting, we must now turn from these attractive ramblings in the field of the philosophy of religion to a rather more precise examination of the subject.

Though it would be interesting to trace the historical developments in non-Christian religions as well as in our own, for the sake of clearness it is better to keep to modern Christian practice and theory. As a matter of fact, there is extraordinarily little theory at all, and very little systematic treatment can be found by the present writer.

At the outset it is well to be clear about terms. The term "fasting" is popularly used to cover two distinct practices: that of going without food for a stated period, and that of reducing the quantity or the quality of food. The former is fasting in its strict sense, and the latter is known as "abstinence." The distinction is a very old one, going right back to the early centuries of Christianity, and it is common both to West and East.

In this essay, therefore, the term "fasting" will be used for the custom of deferring or omitting a meal, and "abstinence" for the custom of refraining from

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certain foods. The two practices may be combined on the same day, as, for instance, a Friday in Lent, according to the modern ruling of the Roman Catholic Church.

Now as to the motives for fasting and abstinence.

(a) Obviously there is the desire to discipline the sense of taste. Most people, even those of temperate habit, have their favourite foods. Sometimes there is a physiological basis for this. The sour apples beloved of choir-boys are the result of a natural craving for acids seemingly necessary at this age. There are also persons with different types of body-chemistry who naturally and wisely desire different proportions of protein (meat), fat, and carbohydrates (sugars and starches) in their diet.

But when all has been allowed for these differing physiological needs that the body automatically feels, there remains the fact that some foods and flavours have a special attraction for even temperate eaters. Here the need for the discipline of the sense of taste comes in. Most people know what a struggle it can be to refuse certain much-fancied foods.

Here is an example from the Life of Fr. William Doyle (p. 129):

"God has been urging me strongly all during this retreat (September, 1913) to give up butter entirely. I have done so at many meals without any serious inconvenience; but I am partly held back through human respect, fearing others may notice it. If they do, what harm? I have noticed that X. takes none for lunch; that has helped me. Would not I help others if I did the same?"

"I feel Jesus asks that which I have not the courage to give Him—the promise to give up butter entirely. . . .

"For the present (July, 1914) I will take butter on two mouthfuls of bread at breakfast, but none at other meals."

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Such struggles, whether prolonged or sudden and decisive, are a sharp test and a valuable practice of the will.

The exercise of the will in the power to say "No" to a desired thing or to say "Yes" to an uncomfortable duty is a most valuable element in the training of the self.

The value of such self-mastery is twofold: It enables us to avoid harmful over-indulgence in specially attractive food, and it helps to induce unselfishness towards others when there may be need for it owing to the limited supply of food or dainties.

An occasional exercise of abstinence for this purpose is all that is necessary for most people. The resolution to make such abstinences must be deliberate and not impulsive, for the motive is more a training of the will than that of the emotions. Therefore a temporary rule of small abstinences faithfully kept through the period set is better than a more ambitious rule badly kept.

(b) The appetite for food is one of the three elemental instincts for the preservation of life, and therefore, like the sex instinct and the self-protection instinct, it pervades the whole being.

In addition to the sense of taste, the body has also the appetite of hunger. It is not only the palate that calls out for gratification; the stomach also cries for food at its customary times, and the body tissues call out for replenishment. These two latter physiological needs constitute hunger.

A discipline in the matter of the quantity of food is thus a discipline which extends to the whole being.

It is quite true that some people eat too much, but not so many as at one time—to judge from the middle-class literature of Hanoverian and Victorian days. For these gourmands a Lent is a wholesome and health-giving discipline that might well become life-

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long. But in these days, when urbanisation and the rush of life have developed other things more interesting than eating, the average person is an average, temperate eater; it is with him that we are concerned.

In abstinence which for a period, short or long, means the reduction of the quantity of food, we are dealing, not with a variable caprice of the senses, as in the discipline of the sense of taste, but with a mortification of a necessary and universal appetite of the body.

Such abstinence means a pitched battle with part of the libido or stream of desire that constitutes the most important part of the will to live. It goes beyond the discipline of the senses, and it is in effect a mortification of desire. The stream of desire is really a unity, though it has innumerable manifestations. When it is denied in one place, the denial affects the whole stream.

Ascetic writers have often spoken of the need of "detachment" for growth in the spiritual life. In an article in the *Church Times* several years ago, Dr. Hermitage Day spoke of detachment as being both the distinguishing and the essential quality of the Saints. It means, of course, more than mere detachment from physical things, and obviously includes such things as detachment from the love of money or honour and the gratifications of friendship. Nevertheless, as the desire for food is so elementary and universal, the lessening of desire for food is an important factor in the learning of detachment.

Now, desire is not wrong in itself. The Buddhist philosophy which declares all desire to be wrong is in clean contradiction both to natural science and to positive Christian philosophy. The Christian aim is to purge the passions, *i.e.* desire, and to direct them aright. But since desire is so disordered, common sense and experience teach that it probably needs some

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violence to be done to it before it can be reordered aright. The Gospel in its vivid metaphor is full of this teaching. To pluck out the eye, or cut off the hand, is often a practical necessity. The force of one of the Lord's sayings, "Let him deny himself," is often missed in the English translation. In the original Greek it means not to deny something (accusative) to oneself (dative), but to deny or disown oneself (accusative). To thwart one of the primary elements in the libido is in effect to deny oneself. And since hunger is a primary element of such importance, such denial has important effects throughout the whole stream or system of desire.

Whilst the direct effect of fasting is the assertion of the will over the appetite of hunger, its indirect effects are to be seen in the mastery of other appetites which may not be as well trained as the desire for food.

Furthermore, desire is not a fixed quantity, even in one individual. It is something that grows by exercise and still more by indulgence. Thus fasting not only strengthens the will, but also reduces inordinate desire. There are some vices that come from overdevelopment of a natural instinct. For instance, pride is an exaggeration of the self-protecting instinct.

There are other vices, which come from the underdevelopment of instincts—cowardice, for example. The vices of overdevelopment will obviously be hit by fasting and other forms of denial of the self. It was when Jeshurun waxed fat that he was tempted into kicking; and it needs no very deep acquaintance with life to see how easily hunger will bring down the high looks of the proud.

There is a great deal of evidence to make us suppose that in the lower animals the libido is not conscious; but in man, in addition to the unconscious libido, there is also both consciousness and self-consciousness concerning it.

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Thus, over and above the conscious bearing of discomfort from fasting, there is also the possibility of the mortification of the higher self-conscious emotions and sentiments, such as resentment, pride, anger, self-deceit, or other forms of overweening egotism. So battles may be won over these more complex turbulences in our being in the field of such an elemental matter as food and eating.

To thwart a primary instinct in its God-given task of supplying one of the physical necessities of life may seem both an unnatural and a dangerous experiment. Anxious mothers and—more likely—an anxious self may urge the danger to health of fasting. Though there is not much overeating nowadays, as has been stated earlier in this section, most people have a reserve of nutrition that will easily enable them to stand a short fast of a day, or even a few days. But a prolonged fast or abstinence needs some scientific thought and arranging, not only in the matter of food proportions, but also in regard to the supply of vitamins.

(c) Thus far we have been thinking of fasting for its value in the discipline and training of the self. Now we come to a motive for fasting which has no regard to its practical consequences or its effects. Fasting, in so far as it is an uncomfortable or even a painful proceeding, has frequently been used for penance, for reparation, or for an act of devotion.

This is not the place for an examination of the theology concerning either penance or reparation. But one element necessary in acts that are to express these activities of the human soul is that they should be costly to the giver. Sometimes this "costingness"—to use a favourite word of von Hügel—is in the region of mind or spirit; for instance, a humiliation imposed upon itself by a proud spirit or a denial of mental pleasure; but more often it is bodily.

Since the body, and its desires, is so elemental a

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thing, a penance or reparation which involves the giving up of bodily comfort or the incurring of bodily pain has all the value of a primary thing, that must affect every kind of person regardless of temperament. It is easy to make fancy penances which cost nothing; fasting, as a rule, runs no such danger of unreality.

The same thing may be said of fasting as a sympathetic devotion. It is quite true that grief often takes away appetite. The occurrences of natural life, like the pain of bereavement, a bitter disappointment, or great mental suspense, may give rise to a natural fast. Doubtless there is a natural element such as this in the motives that first inspired Christians to keep a Friday fast in sympathy with the Lord's Passion or a Lent in honour of His forty days' fast; but it takes more than a natural impulse to maintain the practice of these fasts when they have become habitual and emotion has lessened. Here the costingness of the devotion comes in.

Though there is something fine about the spontaneous fast of the saint from Maundy Thursday till Easter Day, there is something fine, too, in the Good Friday codfish and parsnips of the *homme moyen sensuel*, undertaken simply because it is the custom, or because it is the Church's rule, or because it is the decent thing to do.

Fasts of devotion undertaken simply out of love for God have this advantage. They strengthen the devotion by giving it expression. It is a well-known fact that an emotion, or a sentiment such as this, if it does not find its outlet in expression, is likely to die away, or even to cause disturbance in the subconscious self. There are more people suffering from repressed religion than from sex repression.

Imitation, that fundamental characteristic of mankind, when seen in the imitation of Christ, is obviously the stimulus to such expressions of devotion. This

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fact, however, does not explain the validity of the idea that devotion may take the form of hardship or suffering. That problem, like the question of the theology underlying reparation and penance, is outside the scope of this essay.

At the beginning of this section we saw that these motives for fasting, arising out of a desire to do penance or make reparation, have no forward-looking purpose or desired effect in view, but that does not prevent them being offered with a special intention.

It is only when calculation and arithmetic enter in that one feels that the ground becomes dangerous and full of unattractive possibilities. However, danger is not a necessary indication that we should refuse to go forward. So, in spite of abuses that may arise, or have in historical fact been known to arise, from such experiment in the way of penance and reparation, it is well to commend such a use of fasting.

Any good thing may be spoilt, but that is no argument for forbidding it. The same is true of fasting as an aid to intercession, or even as an intercession in itself.

It is to be noticed that all these three purposes or motives for fasting treated as (a), (b), and (c)—discipline of taste, discipline of the body, and penance or reparation—have one feature common to all three. Fasting in these three categories is only one out of many means of mortification. The hair shirt, the vigil, the discipline, and the countless other practices of asceticism are all of a piece with fasting in the buffeting and training of the body.

(d) But there is one respect in which fasting stands alone. It has physiological, or, rather, psychological, effects peculiar to itself. These effects are of great importance in the complex reaction of mind and spirit.

One of the effects of fasting is to stimulate the imagination. In short fasts or moderate abstinences

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the flow of imagery or fancy in the mind is much quicker and richer. In severe fasts the imagination is so much stimulated that it may even give rise to the seeing or hearing of things that are not there. The present writer, after a long night march without any food during the war, saw a whole column of his brigade on the march, whereas after-enquiry proved the road to have been empty at the time and the ambulance column in question not in that locality at all. The question of fatigue, of course, entered into that one particular experience. But many persons who have performed both short and long fasts bear witness that the imagination, both on its sensory and its intellectual side, is stimulated. The gross sexual temptations of the imagination experienced by many ascetic persons are largely due to this cause.

With this heightening of the imagination often goes a lowering of the power of attention and of other operations of the involuntary will. The voluntary will is strengthened, both at the time and afterwards; but the unconscious conative element, seen especially in the exercise of concentration, is weakened. A well-known professor has spoken of his inability to decipher and consider a textual manuscript when fasting or living on a diminished diet. Probably these two phenomena—the heightening of the imagination and the depression of the power of attention—are related to one another as two sides of the same process.

In a note on the life of Sundar Sadhu the authors say that the Hindus regard fasting as a means of “enhancing spiritual perception.” The phenomena we have been considering are almost certainly the material basis for this process.

Fasting aids the acquisition of new and spiritual values in considering life. We have already seen that not only bodily appetites, but pride and other forms of self-assertion are purged by fasting. The way is now

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free for the values of higher things like love, purity, and self-surrender to be appreciated and appropriated. The Sadhu speaks of the great fast of forty days, which he began but never wholly completed, as having enriched his sense of peace and happiness, of clearing away his doubts whether his spiritual experiences were not merely subjective, and of lessening his temptations. Though it is but guesswork at present, it seems likely that such spiritual processes have a physiological basis, and that due to fasting.

The metaphysic of values, as seen for instance in Temple's *Christus Veritas* and Streeter's *Reality*, is a subject of which modern philosophy is only just beginning to take note. And that being so, the psychology of the matter is an unexplored area. Certainly we have in this subjective transformation of values that takes place as the result of fasting some material for the enquiry that some day must be made.

In a fast the flesh becomes unreal and the spirit the great reality.

In addition to this transformation of values there is also another process at work, the reintegration of the personality. In our mental life we have many centres round which are arranged our interests and sentiments—home, business, amusement, self. As a result of this multifocal arrangement there are inevitably conflicts. The process of deepening the religious life consists in rearranging these sentiments round one central focus, God. At first the focus is but one out of many, but ultimately that centre is one that is a centre for all the others. (The metaphor is clumsy, and breaks down; but we cannot escape the use of metaphor in dealing with spiritual things.) This process of re-integrating our life round God is one that is never finished, or, to put it in more familiar language, conversion is never complete. It is a lifelong task, of which there is a daily instalment to be done. But a fast has

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proved over and over again to be a most valuable and critical stage in this process.

All that has been said above concerning the re-valuation and reintegration of life implies that a mere physical fast, without any active mental effort accompanying it, is not of much importance. So fasting should always be accompanied by prayer and meditation.

Furthermore, it makes a great difference whether a fast is made voluntarily and gladly. There are several motives leading men to fast other than the desire for improvement—*e.g.*, religious convention, obedience, the spirit of emulation—so that the willingness of the fast is often a very real consideration. It makes all the difference whether it is carried out with acquiescence or whether there is a continued state of rebellion against it. In the latter case it may be of value as a test of obedience or of endurance, but it will not do its best work unless it is taken with joy.

If there is rebellion, needing to be curbed by a ceaseless effort of the will, the imagination, being absorbed with the self, will not be free to soar into the heights, the sense of values will still be distorted, and the process of reintegration gravely hindered.

(*e*) The problem of the observance of fasting as a mere matter of obedience to rule is one that must now be considered. So far we have been dealing with the fast as a voluntary means of self-training, and as an individual matter. It is obvious that it must now be considered as a practice undertaken in obedience to the command of the Church, or, in the case of those belonging to religious communities and guilds, as a part of their obedience to rule.

For Anglicans this is not only an academical question but also a very practical one. The Church of England, in common with the other Catholic Communion,

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orders her members to fast or abstain on a very large number of days in the year, and only a small proportion of those members observe these rules. In these circumstances the matter of fasting as a mere matter of obedience is obviously a very important one.

First, there is the question of personal obedience. Obedience is not conspicuously an English virtue. The strongly individualistic character of the typical Englishman has its great virtues of independence, self-reliance, personal initiative, and individual conscientiousness. But it has also the weakness of its qualities, and a lack of the spirit of obedience is one of these.

This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the merits of the virtue of obedience, but it would not be out of place to remind readers that the obedience of Christ is singled out in a great Pauline passage as one of the chief glories of the Son of God (Phil. ii. 8, 9).

The Book of Common Prayer makes no distinction between fast and abstinence; nor does it lay down in what manner a fast or abstinence is to be kept. But the command is there, and English Churchpeople ought to obey. As with so many other matters in the Prayer Book, familiarity with past custom is implied and therefore implicitly commanded. When the book was compiled and issued it was the tradition that a fast or abstinence meant that no meat should be eaten. So English Churchpeople could take that as a minimum of what is required of them in their observance of the fasts or abstinences authority requires of them, save perhaps in availing themselves of episcopal dispensation for the days of Lent other than Wednesdays and Fridays.

Secondly, to follow a pious practice because it is ordered and not self-chosen removes from the practice a good many of the dangers of subjectivism. By that the writer means the mental habit of liking or disliking,

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of adopting or rejecting practices, just as they appeal to or do not "help" the individual concerned.

An undue subjectivism is the great danger to English religion. In his churchgoing the Englishman is very apt to measure the value of that practice in terms of edification of the self and not of objective worship of God. To do a thing because it is of obligation is a lesson well worth learning.

To fast from mere obedience to the rules of the Church is a valuable and much-needed discipline. Such obedience naturally has its dangers. It may be unintelligent, it may even degenerate into superstition or Pharisaism. But those dangers are easily exaggerated, especially when one is trying to rationalise and justify a temper of disobedience and individualism.

This brings us to our third point.

Obedience to a common rule is a valuable habit with which to combat individualism. By individualism, used in this sense, we mean an overemphasis of the individual in the delicate balance and interplay between corporate and individual action and responsibility of which all life consists.

Again, no Englishman can consider himself immune from this danger, whether it be in his secular life or his religious.

We are rightly frightened of the idea of the omniscient state in political action, or of Cæsarean bureaucracy in religion; but if there is one need in English religion at the moment, it is the need for corporate thinking and feeling. Therefore, corporate action in a matter like fasting would be a most valuable corrective to the disruptive tendencies of modern individualism. Moreover, corporate devotion is a fine and an impressive thing in itself. It is an admirable thing when individual Christians are to be found keeping their Lent or their weekday Friday abstinence in honour of their Lord. But it would be a far greater

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thing to see the whole of Christendom keeping its fast corporately, moved by a common sense of the devotion of the Church to its Lord and by a common obedience to His Body, which is the Church.

In this matter of fasting because the Church commands it, the value of the act of obedience will be all the greater if that obedience is both willing and intelligent. Blind obedience and obedience against one's inclinations have their merit. But it is not merit we seek; it is devotion and godliness. The necessary conditions of godliness are joy and peace, and these are not likely to be present if obedience is grudging and unintelligent.

III

Having discussed the rationale of fasting, the next section of our subject must be a survey of past and present-day practice. Owing to the limits of space and of a general reader's interest it will be necessarily only a very rough survey, with all the crudeness that big generalisations must contain.

Throughout it must be remembered that there is a very big difference between the official orders of the Church and the popular practice of Christians. Dispensation may reduce severe obligations to a minimum; and in the opposite direction the voluntary austerities of the devout often go far beyond the official requirements, both of the Church and of the religious orders.

(a) Fasting was an accepted fact in the Jewish religion. Though the official fasts were few, the fasting of groups such as the Pharisees and of individuals like Anna the prophetess is evidence that fasting was a well-established practice.

Presumably the Jewish Christian Church took over the practice, and Gentile Christians were not slow to learn of the Jews or to bring their own pagan practices to be christened. So there is evidence in the New

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Testament and in primitive Church history that fasting was a regular practice of religion. Notably it was the prelude to important events such as baptism and ordination, or a preparation for the keeping of feast days.

The Friday fast in honour of the Lord's Passion is a very primitive custom. The Lenten fast grew very rapidly from a forty-hour fast before Easter to three and then to six weeks by the fourth century, and to its present forty weekdays by the seventh century.

Noteworthy is the custom of bishops and other authorities ordering a general fast for special calamities or needs.

In general the historical development may be described as follows:

The official fasts at first were not numerous, though severe to our modern views; but the examples of individuals and the pious practice of groups led the Church gradually to increase the official number of days and to lay down official regulations for the way in which the fast was to be kept.

Even with this increase there were individuals going far beyond the minimum in such movements, for instance, the hermit life of the desert and, later on, the various recurrent phases of monastic austerity. Such movements always tended to make the authorities increase the number of fasting days.

By the time the Middle Ages were established there was a vast and complicated ascetic discipline; but it is a doubtful question how far this discipline was really observed, owing to the existence of dispensations, official subterfuges, and popular disregard. With the passing of the Middle Ages the system was still retained in the Roman communion, but with various slight modifications and large measures of simplification and alleviation in 1781 and 1917.

The Anglican reform simplified and slightly reduced

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the number of days, but popular practice and non-enforcement of the regulations led gradually during the ensuing four centuries to a widespread non-observance of fasting.

The practice of the Orthodox Churches remains practically what it was throughout the Middle Ages.

In short, the history of fasting in the Christian Church is one of gradually increasing severity, followed later on by alleviation in the shape of dispensation or official reform.

(b) As we have seen earlier, the history of food-asceticism shows that there are three separate elements to be considered: the deferring or missing out of a meal, the reduction of quantity, and the abstinence from certain rich or pleasant foods without reduction of quantity. The two first come under the heading of fasting, and the last under that of abstinence.

In fasting proper the traditional practice has been to limit the number of meals in the day to one full meal and two small portions of a meal. The one full meal was generally deferred by rule to the afternoon or evening. At this there was no limit to the quantity, but it was generally ordered to be a meatless meal, though sometimes any kind of food was allowed. The little meals were generally very much restricted in amount, and all things forbidden in "abstinence" were forbidden at these.

In modern Western Europe we have become accustomed to three comparatively large meals in the day. This development is rather exceptional. In large parts of Europe two full meals only are still the common custom; and in many areas of the globe—*e.g.*, Africa and Asia—one full meal only is the general habit. This is partly due to the climate necessitating less food and partly to lack of food. The bulk of people living in Asia and Africa have still the same shortage of food

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from which Europe suffered down to the fourteenth century.

The restriction to one large meal a day was therefore not so severe an ordeal to the ancient or mediæval Christian as it seems to us.

Furthermore, the geographical spread of Christendom was for many centuries mostly limited to tropical or subtropical countries; and in such regions food requirements are not so great as in cold countries.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the very existence of the one-meal-only regulations of the Church implied a certain amount of self-discipline and deprivation to the mediæval or the Mediterranean Christian.

In regard to abstinence, the general tradition has been to rule out flesh meat, fats derived from animals, and sometimes eggs and milk, as in modern Russia.

It is as well to ask why abstinence should take this special form of the barring of animal foods. And in this connection we must remember to look at the matter in its historical context.

Prior to the sixteenth century Northern Europe lived mostly on flesh meat, eggs, fish, milk and butter, wheat or other cereal products, and beans or peas. In the South, other vegetables were known, and fruit was indigenous. The scientific and geographical discoveries of the sixteenth century have added enormously to the general range of food, sugar and tropical fruits being the most outstanding additions to nutrition, and the beverages and spices to the flavours of food.

We see, therefore, that to exclude all meat and animal-derived foods from a diet was formerly a very severe measure. Fish, being allowed, was a fair substitute for meat, but it could not have been abundant except round the coast and near a few well-stocked rivers.

It is therefore somewhat of a puzzle to know what the mediæval peasant and poorer burghers of a town

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lived on during the long abstinence or fast of Lent. It gives rise to a suspicion that current practice was a good deal different from the official regulation.

The modern Western Church has inherited this traditional way of abstinence in excluding flesh meat, though animal products are largely allowed to the laity by dispensation on all days in Lent except Wednesday and Friday.

With the enormously widened range of other foods that has become available owing to the opening up of other continents and the improvement in European agriculture, abstinence has ceased to be as exacting as it was formerly. And this we must bear in mind when we pass on to consider what is desirable, or to be recommended, nowadays.

(c) If we look at current practice today we find that popular Anglican practice has very largely come down to an observance of abstinence only and no fasts, save possibly the Good Friday fast till after three o'clock.

The same is very largely true also of current Roman Catholic practice. Until a short time ago in that communion there were precise observances concerning Lent and Advent, but dispensation modified them considerably. The recent revision of the Canon Law has simplified them further still, and the Roman popular practice is now very much the same as the Anglican.

The religious orders of both communions, however, still retain some of the former severities, and fasting proper is yet found there.

Pious individuals, too, go far beyond the necessary official minimum. Biographies like that of Fr. de Foucauld are a reminder that there is still to be found an impetuosity of faith that ventures far in mortification of the flesh.

The Tractarians in England were very severe with

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themselves, and their example is still occasionally followed.

In the diocese of Zanzibar, for instance, the native Christians and the European staff of the mission are under obligation to keep twelve days of fasting during the year—the six Fridays of Lent, the Ember Fridays, and certain vigils. On these days a cup of tea or coffee, without sugar or milk, is all that is allowed until after 3 p.m., when one meal of abstinence food, and later a small collation, is taken.

In regard to the periods or days appointed for fasting there is a good deal of variation between the three great communions of Christendom that officially regulate fasting.

The Orthodox East has a great many more days than the West, notably in the addition of a fortnight's fast before the feast of the Assumption and forty days before Christmas. And it must be remembered that the Orthodox regulations forbid on such days a good many foods allowed by Western Christendom—*e.g.*, eggs, milk, and butter.

Anglican and Roman practice are very much alike. The English Church keeps as fasts some vigils that the Roman Church does not, and *vice versa*. But the latter has certain regulations for Advent not ordered by the English Book of Common Prayer.

Fasting and the practice of abstinence are not unknown amongst the Free Churches. Sir Henry Lunn in his autobiography records that at the Wesleyan College of his own training to the ministry a weekly fast or abstinence and a quarterly fast were the rule. This is probably a survival from the fasting practices of the Wesleys themselves.

In considering the Protestant bodies it must be remembered that fasting is only one form of bodily mortification or self-discipline. This consideration reminds us that the ascetic spirit has shown itself in other

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forms within these bodies. Granted that total abstinence, the banning of stage plays, and the barring of certain games are primarily protests and precautions against notorious abuses, it will nevertheless be seen that these self-privations are one expression of the instinct for asceticism. The Salvation Army in frowning upon tobacco entails a very real deprivation upon those used to it before their conversion; and the old-time Quaker simplicity in dress must have been a very real mortification to many of the younger members of the Society of Friends.

(d) It will not be amiss to remind readers of this essay that outside Christianity there are two religions of today which impose fasts upon their followers.

On the day of Atonement no Jew lets any food whatsoever pass his lips, from the sunset of the beginning to the sunset of the ending of that day. This passes the average Christian observance of Good Friday.

During the month of Ramadan no orthodox Mahomedan will eat food or take drink till after sunset. This, particularly in the matter of abstinence from liquid in a hot climate, is something very big. It is no wonder that, as many observers from India bear witness, Mahomedans keeping Ramadan are not able to perform any duties involving hard manual work during that period.

IV

Before we can go on to make any practical recommendations for people under present-day conditions, there are some facts to be noted and discussed. And first come certain physical facts.

(a) Physiological needs vary very greatly. The actual diet of lumbermen in America is more than twice that of patients in asylums for the aged or for

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the insane. This variation corresponds to the difference of their needs. A minimum diet requires 2,700 units of food value, ordinary heavy work 4,200 units, and specially heavy physical work brings the demand up to 6,000 units or even more. In calculating diet starch and protein are of about equal value, and fat is double the value of either.

The heat and energy equivalents of food have been found by experiment, and these diets have been calculated upon an *a priori* basis. They are found in effect to correspond with actual experience, so that we may reckon ourselves to be on safe ground.

There is an irreducible minimum for the bare maintenance of life, so much extra for each unit of work-energy that has to be expended, so much for extremely cold climates, and a bonus for well-being and reserve against illness or other unforeseen needs.

(b) But the value of his food to a man is also affected by his powers of digestion and absorption. The latter varies even more than the former; and it is the experience of every physician that some persons need the supply of very much more food than others owing to their poor assimilative powers. Although the three main constituents of diet can replace one another, they cannot do so indefinitely, and a balanced diet is an essential, both for digestion and for appetite.

(c) In addition to actual energy food-values the body requires certain salts for gland activity and certain vitamins for the well-being of the tissues.

The absence of fresh meat, vegetables and milk from a diet, if long continued, may lead to certain forms of disease due to vitamin starvation. This should be taken into account when arranging a diet for a long period of abstinence like Lent.

(d) The psychological state of a person has a considerable effect upon his unconscious bodily processes. A great deal depends on whether a person is fasting

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willingly or not. In the malnutrition of those in want, not a little of the bad effect is due to the thwarted desire for food and resentment at the involuntary fast.

Something of the same thing is to be seen in the willingness or unwillingness with which persons give themselves to a self-imposed fast or a fast imposed by authority. A fast accepted joyfully produces much less symptoms of lassitude, headache, and unpleasant subjective feelings in general.

There are reliable records of some saints whose diet fell far below that of the minimum prescribed by science. And there are even cases, like St. Catherine of Genoa, where there was complete fasting from all food except the tiny physical sustenance of the Holy Communion for months at a time.

Such phenomena, like other preternatural phenomena of the saints, seem to go completely against the laws of physical science. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the psychological state produces important modifications of the physical state of the person who is fasting.

(e) It is the fairly general experience of those who from various causes have had to enter upon a complete fast from food that the sensation of hunger disappears after the first twenty-four hours. Therefore, if fasting be valued for its effect in the controlling of the bodily appetites, the complete fast of some days is not so valuable as an abstinence or diminution of food for a day or for a period.

Although water contains no nutritive material it has a very profound effect upon fasting. The medical textbooks agree that life with neither food nor water cannot be prolonged beyond five or seven days, but with water and no food people have been known to fast for forty days and even more. In such cases special physical conditions have been arranged, such as extra warmth and complete absence of bodily

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exertion. A person exposed to cold or performing physical exercise could not fast completely for anything like so long a period as forty days.

One of the common symptoms likely to accompany a fast is headache. The liability to this can be very much diminished by the taking of large quantities of fluid, especially warm liquids. The psychological factor referred to above is very important in this matter of headache. It is also very much a matter of habituation, for a young priest who has to take a late celebration will often find that after a few months any tendency to headache will disappear, especially if he ceases to be worried or anxious about his fast, and if he is careful not to take too large a meal immediately after the fast is ended.

If the usual daily evacuation of the bowels is missed or deferred till late in the day, this also may help to induce headache.

(f) We pass now to some psychological considerations.

It is not uncommon to find in the biographies of saints or holy persons that they practised considerable austerities in youth or in the early days of conversion, but that after a period they gave them up or reduced them. There is both practical wisdom and spiritual danger in this.

The tide of bodily appetites runs strongest in youth, and it is particularly necessary to establish command over them early in life. The temptations of middle age are generally of another kind. The divine wisdom has provided an almost universal spontaneous desire for asceticism in some form or the other in youth. It may show itself in the matter of food, or it may be concerned with the endurance of other forms of bodily hardship, like fatigue or the bearing of pain. It is further complicated by the spirit of emulation and of adventure. In boys it may show itself in athletic zeal,

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especially when it involves training or the discomfort of long-distance running, or the hard knocks received in boxing. In girls it is more likely to show itself in doing without food or dainties, or in the saving of money spent in pleasure or dress.

All this instinctive asceticism may be directed towards training the appetites of youth. And it is not necessarily a bad thing if such severity with the bodily self be modified when it has done this work.

There is, however, another reason for severity in youth. In most people the self has got to be broken before real spiritual progress can be made. In some once-born souls, to use William James' phrase, this may not be necessary. But for most people the experience of being born again is necessary. The spiritual awakening from commonplace religion that comes so often in the teens may necessitate a complete remaking of the old Adam. And certainly the conversion of a person from sin or indifference demands such a breaking-up or death of the self. In both these cases, fasting along with other bodily mortifications—as the word "mortification" implies—is a potent spiritual weapon.

Here again the asceticism of early life or of early conversion may be modified later with wisdom.

But there is always spiritual danger waiting round the corner. To abandon asceticism because it is no longer thought to be as necessary as before may very well lead to a most obdurate complacency—obdurate because it is perhaps an unconscious rationalisation. All of us like our full measure of food, and fasting is unpleasant. Therefore, to use the argument that asceticism having done its work in us need no longer be practised may very well be the argument used when our real motive is love of comfort.

Though the bodily appetites of all sorts are strongest in youth, they do not leave us in middle age. They

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only change their form. Quality rather than quantity is the attraction, not only in regard to taste and hunger, but also to the other senses.

So it is never safe to imagine that we are masters of our bodily desires, and that we can safely give up an asceticism learnt in youth. In fact, middle age has its special physical temptations. Miss May Sinclair's picture in *A Cure of Souls* of a priest being slowly engulfed in luxury is a standing warning to the middle-aged.

Besides all this, asceticism is not merely for self-discipline. As we have seen above, it is also penitential, reparative, and one way of worship.

(g) This observation brings up another matter for thought: how far must fasting always be associated with special prayer, or special intensity in prayer?

In the Scriptures prayer and fasting are generally mentioned together. And this traditional association is continued in the Spirit-guided action of the Church.

Fasting by itself may speedily degenerate into mere ascetic achievement, and rather self-satisfied achievement at that. The story of some of the ascetic rivalries of the desert hermits shows this. Furthermore, prayer is the great safeguard against a relapse into excess when the appointed fast is finished. Such reaction of excess is not unknown, in Christian as well as in pagan religion.

On all points, therefore, the wisdom of the Church in associating prayer with fasting is justified. Moreover, as fasting is a means for developing the faculties used in prayer and a condition of elevated prayer, it seems obvious that the subject of fasting must never be considered apart from prayer.

A good deal of criticism has been levelled against the custom of increasing church services in Lent, but obviously at the bottom of this custom, however un-

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thinking its developments have become, is the instinctive wisdom of linking prayer with fasting.

(h) In addition to the universal basic appetites of the body, there are certain articles of consumption that in varying degrees have become habitual foods or stimulants. Tobacco, alcohol, tea, coffee, and spices of various sorts are enjoyed by the greater number of persons. All of these are drugs of varying potency and effect. Because they are drugs they are liable to produce habituation in more or less degree, and the most noteworthy in this respect is alcohol.

Whilst tea, coffee, and tobacco mainly restrict their effect to the bodily organs, alcohol has in addition to its physical results profound effects in the mental and moral being. So it is doubly dangerous.

The practice of occasional asceticism can be a most useful corrective to overindulgence in any of the first group of these drug-foods. Of the value of a recurrent abstinence from alcohol, with its insidious dangers, it is almost impossible to exaggerate. Although in alcoholism there are generally morbid psychological conditions as a large part of its causation, and sometimes physical predisposing causes, there is also an alcoholism that comes about from a thoughtless slipping into self-indulgence or convivial drinking.

Lent and other times of fasting are a valuable opportunity to provoke self-examination, to purge the desires, and to practise the will in habits of self-restraint.

V

(a) In making recommendations for the following of the laudable custom of fasting, we must first of all remember that the circumstances of life under modern conditions vary greatly for different classes of people.

The chief variations in circumstance of which we have to take notice are: occupation with its physio-

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logical differences between heavy and light physical work, between outdoor and indoor labour; habitual diet in the matter of well-paid and poorly-paid workers; and age with its varying needs. And, of course, there is the variation in the motive of the fast, whether it be to tame unusual appetites in the interests of temperance, or to learn detachment, or to inflict a real penitential hardness on the self.

(b) To take the question of age first.

Apart from abnormal cases of gluttony a child needs all the food it can get. But the substitution of plain for luxurious food and the deprivation of dainties provide a useful bodily discipline.

Late adolescence is a time when real gluttony may show itself, and the regulation of quantity as well as quality is a wholesome discipline for use at definite times.

A little later, in early adult life, comes the first wise occasion for real fasting. And such fasting may be kept up through life, even into comparative old age. The Roman regulations excuse all fasting after the age of sixty, save that before Communion, which stands in a different category; and the selection of this age errs, if it does err, on the side of leniency. Many keep up habits of fasting into the seventies without any bad effects.

(c) The outdoor worker with heavy physical labour can best make his fast by deferring his first big meal until a later hour, but may and ought to take enough some time in the day to satisfy physical needs. The English custom of a big breakfast is not a physical necessity, as the dietetic habits of the Continental peasant prove. Mr. Belloc pokes great fun at the Englishman who prides himself on his physical strength, but finds himself unable to face the day without a magnificent meal of porridge, meat, eggs and an ample supply of toast and marmalade. No doubt he has the

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middle-class man in mind, but the British working man also likes his heavy breakfast.

The indoor workers, who form the bulk of our population, might well sacrifice some of their breakfast on fast days without any great harm to themselves. But since we have insisted on the need for the association of prayer with fasting, the cutting down or omission of lunch or tea and the giving up of some of the lunch hour to prayer are a more profitable method of keeping a fast than the mere deprivation or lessening of breakfast without such prayer. For city workers, with an open church close at hand, this plan ought to be particularly workable.

(d) In the long-drawn-out weeks of Lent the secular layman or laywoman ought to devise a wise system of abstinence—the cutting off of luxuries or dainties, with a sufficient diet of plain food.

The ancient regulation which barred meat and animal derivatives was in mediæval times a very real discipline of abstinence. Today, with the enormous variety of non-meat foods available, it is possible to keep a day *maigre* and yet enjoy oneself very well. A real spirit of abstinence, though it may not diminish the quantity of food, ought to be ready to make genuine sacrifices of nice food, and not merely remain within the letter of the law forbidding meat. Cake might well disappear from the tea-table in favour of bread and butter, pastry and cream from the dinner-table.

A rigorous discipline of sugar, sweets, tobacco, tea—especially early morning tea—will not come amiss to anyone, and will provide a real means of edification. The value of abstinence is not to be measured by its occasional severity, but by its faithfulness in performance over a long period.

(e) With the long abstinence of Lent and the weekly abstinence of Fridays ought to go also occasional real fasts. The Church provides for these in her vigils.

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The example of the Church in Zanzibar might well be followed by many at home, especially by priests and religious.

The difficulty of the plan for lay people is that they cannot take the morning, or even a section of it, for prayer, owing to the exigency of modern work. They might, however, be able to do something by missing their midday meal on Saturdays or half-holidays and giving the afternoon to prayer, or by not taking their tea and their evening meal until they had spent time in prayer after work was finished in the afternoon.

(f) The yearly holiday is a time generally given over to pure physical enjoyment, but for pious people who are ready to make sacrifice for their religion there is here an opportunity for special observance of religion. Some retreat houses might with advantage cater for such folk by something other than the formal silent retreat.

A large number of readers of this book will be priests and religious and persons of leisure. They have the opportunity of a short but severe fast, a day or half a day at a time, and this essay would venture to suggest that such a practice will be found most profitable.

(g) Putting together these various recommendations, we have a general plan in front of us: regularly recurring days of abstinence, a long period of abstinence, and occasional real fasts.

This is very much in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer design, though the directions therein make no distinction between fasting and abstinence. After four centuries of use, and in view of the changing circumstances of modern life, one or two alterations in these directions may be suggested.

Something ought to be done about Lent to bring its formal regulations into line with the common practice. As things are, most people avail themselves of official or unofficial dispensation, keeping only the Wednesdays

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and Fridays, and those merely as abstinence and not as fast.

A suitable revision might suggest ways in which there should be some abstinence for all of the forty days, further abstinence on Mondays and Wednesdays, and a true fast on Fridays.

The three Ember days at each of the four seasons should be kept in their entirety by those to be ordained then, and the Saturday made into a big fast in view of the solemnity of the new step in life. For Church-people in general, to reduce the Ember days from three to one would probably lead to a better keeping of the one day. The prayer of Embertide, however, ought not to be diminished.

The three Rogation days, too, in view of their later origin and their lesser importance, might be reduced to two, the Monday and the Vigil of Ascension Day, with a greater severity for these two days.

Vigils probably need the greatest revision of all. The Prayer Book, following the mediæval precedent, evidently aimed at providing a monthly fast in those months when no approaching moveable feast provided a vigil and a fast. The result is not all that can be desired. The vigils of St. Thomas and St. Matthew complicate two of the Ember seasons and lead occasionally to four fast days on end. This is apt to lead to unreality or formalism.

The vigils to be observed might be reduced to four or five of the major Saints' days. Those who keep the feast of Corpus Christi might also observe a fast on the vigil. With the now established and recognised custom of anticipating a feast by a first evensong, there is always a sense of incongruity in beginning a feast overnight, but still keeping the fast. This essay would like to recommend that the fast of a vigil end at 6 p.m. and a full meal be permitted for the beginning of the feast.

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(h) There remains, finally, the question of the relation between the public corporate directions of the Church and the devotion of the individual.

As things are in this country, we have had for many years a widespread non-observance of the Church's rules in the matter of fasting. To keep the rules merely out of obedience to the Church has, in addition to the intrinsic merit of obedience, the teaching power to create a greater "Church-sense." This is most profitable for the rather individualistic Englishman; but mere automatic obedience in itself has only a very limited value. Obedience must be both intelligent and willing if it is to be a real virtue.

Therefore, some understanding of the purpose of fasting and a spontaneous desire to make use of this means of spiritual advance are almost a *sine qua non* of any movement designed to obtain better observance. Herein the *ecclesia docens* has need to play a more active part, and an authoritative and paternal pronouncement by the Bishops would be most valuable.

The fast is both a corporate action of the Church and a personal devotion on the part of the individual.

The official Church might wisely ordain a minimum regulation of days and methods of fasting, but encourage individuals and communities to go far beyond this minimum, as the Spirit led them. Here the individualism of the Englishman might play a valuable part. In addition to his share in the corporate and public fast of the Church, he might use his own initiative and spiritual enterprise voluntarily to enter upon a further asceticism than is required of him by canonical obligation—an ascetic discipline based upon the needs of his own individual soul and upon the personal call to him from God to a life of mortification.

THE TEMPTATION

the new grace will bring new dangers.) Our Lord's baptism brought to His human consciousness a new realisation of His call to Sonship and service. He needed the solitude of the desert to think out the meaning of the vocation that now lay before Him. Perhaps it was only now that He became conscious of miraculous powers, and of the possibilities that were involved in their possession. The question must have presented itself, "Am I to make plans for the fulfilment of My mission, or be content to be guided at every stage by My Father's will?"

The account of the Temptation can only have come from Jesus Himself. It was part of the course of teaching in which He unfolded to His disciples the true nature of the Messianic Kingdom. It was neither a Kingdom of material well-being (Luke xiv. 15); nor a Kingdom founded on political activity (John xviii. 36); nor a Kingdom established by "signs and wonders" (John iv. 48). All these, so He told them, He had rejected at the outset. So He revealed to them, in pictorial form, the final stage of the inner conflict from which He came unscathed, because the suggestion of disloyalty to the Father's purpose found no response from within (John xiv. 30).

The First Temptation

Physical exhaustion lays a man open to the temptation of losing sight of all other claims in the effort to supply his needs. So the suggestion came to Jesus, "If I am the Son of God, surely I can turn these rounded stones into loaves of bread." Why not? Partly because the very act would imply distrust of the reality of that Sonship. The suggestion was—prove that you are the Son of God by doing what only God could do. But the Son of God was also Son of Man; His acceptance of human experience could only be real if He lived

III

SERMON OUTLINES AND SUGGESTIONS

(a) THE STORY OF THE TEMPTATION

THE story of the Temptation is recorded in all the Synoptic Gospels. St. Mark writes that immediately after His baptism Jesus was "driven out" by the Spirit into the desert (a word softened in St. Matthew into "led up"). He was there forty days "tempted of Satan; and He was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him." The reference to the wild beasts has given rise to some rather fantastic speculations, but all that is in the mind of the Evangelist is, probably, that Jesus was guarded by the Divine protection. He may have had in mind Psalm xci. 13.

St. Luke has a striking phrase: "He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil"—where there is an obvious reference to the forty years' wandering of the people, with its experience of guidance and temptation (Deut. viii. 2).

The fuller narrative of the Temptation in St. Matthew and St. Luke was probably derived from their common non-Markan source ("Q"). It is generally thought that St. Matthew gives the temptations in their original order, and that St. Luke has reversed the order of the last two—perhaps to show the successive assault on the physical, mental and spiritual nature of our Lord.

In all three Gospels the Temptation is closely associated with the Baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit that followed it. Times of spiritual exaltation are often followed by spiritual conflict. (This is true of Confirmation, and young people should be warned that

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as men live, dependent on the Heavenly Father for daily bread. Throughout His earthly life, He deliberately set aside the right to call supernatural powers to His aid (Matt. xxvi. 53). So in His answer He identifies Himself with humanity. "Man—any man—does not live by bread alone." There are spiritual values that must come first (Matt. vi. 33). The Heavenly Father will care for His children, as He cared for His people in the wilderness (Deut. viii. 3).

The Second Temptation (in St. Luke's order)

Our Lord thought of Himself as standing on a mountain top, with the whole inhabited world (*οικουμένη*) spread out before Him simultaneously. May we not see in this vision the consciousness, already present in the mind of Jesus, of a mission, not only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," but to the whole human race? Then, as He looked out on the world of men, there came to Him the thought of the Satanic dominion. "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." The dominion of the Evil One over mankind is a tremendous reality. In lands like our own, where Christian influences have leavened society for a thousand years, we do not feel this tyranny of "the rulers of this world's darkness" as men feel it in lands where the sense of Satanic power gives urgency to the prayer "Deliver us from the Evil One." It is significant that Jesus does not represent Himself as disputing the devil's claim. It was the truth of that claim that constituted the very purpose of His Mission (Luke xi. 21-22). So the true King and the usurper stood face to face, and before the battle was joined that should decide human destiny for ever, the usurper suggested a compromise.

The word translated "worship" (*προσκύνησις*) does not necessarily involve the claim to Divine honour. It involved what the act of homage of a feudal tenant to

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his overlord involved—the recognition of the legitimacy of the claim to lordship. To rule the world as the viceroy of Satan—that meant the separation of political authority from moral responsibility. In the career of Herod the Great the disciples could see an illustration of what this meant. The kingdoms of the ancient world were founded on intrigue and bloodshed. On what other basis could kingship rest? Our Lord's reply was, "on the worship and service of God." The true king must be the vassal of God and the servant of His purpose. He must choose "not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

The temptation to win power at the cost of disloyalty to moral conviction is one that has assailed all men who have set themselves to serve the cause of humanity; and we need not be surprised that such stories of temptation are told of other religious leaders—notably in Ahriman's temptation of Zarathustra, and in Gautama's renunciation of Mara's offer of universal rule.

The Third Temptation

Our Lord felt Himself carried, like the prophet Ezekiel, to a pinnacle of the temple. Not much is gained by attempts to identify this *πτερύγιον* (lit. winglet). It was a high and sacred place, suggesting alike danger and Divine protection. Looking down from the dizzy height, there came to our Lord the suggestion to test the reality of His Sonship by one supreme act of faith—to risk even life itself in vindicating the right to trust the Divine protection. Why not? Because God's care is no justification for human presumption. There is probably no special significance in the omission of the words "to keep Thee in all thy ways." But it is only in God's ways that His children can rely on His protection. The temptation to come down from the cross—to take the control of His life

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into His own hands—was essentially the same temptation. To both temptations the answer of Jesus was the same, "I can do only what My Father wills."

To trust God is one thing, to test Him is another. If He calls us to put our lives in danger, we must not hesitate, assured that He will give His angels charge over us; but if it is Satan who bids us cast ourselves down, we can only echo our Lord's "begone, Satan."

It has sometimes been suggested that the pinnacle was the summit of the Great Porch of the temple, from which one could look down on the throngs of worshippers in the courts below, and that the devil's suggestion was that Jesus should plunge headlong from the height and descend, borne by angels, to claim the Messianic kingdom. We cannot rule out this possibility, but there is no suggestion of the kind in the narrative. There must certainly have been present in the mind of Jesus the idea of signs and wonders as a means of winning adherents, and the story may represent His definite repudiation of such methods. He never encouraged His disciples to take needless risks, or make dependence on God an excuse for neglect of ordinary human foresight. As compared with some other religious leaders, Jesus Christ showed throughout his public career what we may without irreverence call practical commonsense. Only when He knew that it was the will of the Father that He should die did He commend Himself to His Father's care and plunge into the gulf of death, "that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

If we accept the view that the story of the Temptation was told to the disciples by our Lord Himself, we must believe that He was conscious that the solicitations to disloyal self-assertion originated from an evil personality in the spiritual order. The idea of Satan as the ruler of a kingdom of evil belongs to a late period

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of Jewish thought, and it is in the Apocalyptic writings of the second and first century B.C. that we find the story of the rebellion in heaven with which Milton's *Paradise Lost* has made us familiar. The story of the Temptation does not involve the acceptance of this Apocalyptic mythology, but we cannot regard the devil in the story as merely a symbol for the promptings of human nature. Suggestions of evil could only come to our Lord from outside His own personality, and the whole story falls to pieces unless we believe that there are evil influences in the spiritual world that are able to assume the guise of personality, and "assault and hurt the soul" unless it is guarded by the Spirit of God.

"The devil departed from Him for a season"—(*ἄχρι καιροῦ*, until a convenient opportunity). The opportunity came when the traitor Judas became the tool of the Evil One (Luke xxii. 3). In Gethsemane, Jesus fought His last victorious battle with the Powers of darkness (Luke xxii. 53). At the outset of His public ministry He had refused to take any other way than His Father's: and the ministry closed with the same resolve, "Not My will, but Thine, be done."

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews sees in the temptation of Jesus a guarantee of His sympathy with all who are tempted (Heb. ii. 18). But there are two ways in which the Temptation in the wilderness differs from the temptations to which men are subject. (1) It was founded on the unique Sonship of which He was conscious. It was an attempt to stir up the human mind and will of Jesus to acts of disloyalty to the Divine purpose, and so destroy the whole meaning of the Incarnation by breaking the unity of the Divine and the human natures of the Son of God. (2) Every man, when he is tempted, must beware of treachery within the citadel of his own inner life (Jas. i. 13). But in Him no traitor within responded to the suggestion of disloyalty. He was "in all points tempted like as we are,"

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for a humanity immune from temptation would be no true humanity; yet He was "without sin," for sin is the response of the human mind and will to temptation, when a man forgets his allegiance to God.

Yet in some measure the Temptation in the wilderness has its counterpart in human experience. Physical need may lay a man open to the temptation to put the claims of the body foremost, and forget that "your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Material well-being must never be the first concern of the Christian—he must be prepared to face discomfort, suffering—yea, death itself if need be—as the cost of his loyalty to the Kingdom.

Again, ambition brings with it the constant danger of moral compromise. And spiritual exaltation involves the danger of presumption. All high places are dangerous places. A man who sees all the kingdoms of the world at his feet may grow dizzy, till he mistakes himself for God. So Dr. Hodgkin speaks of some of the Roman emperors as suffering from "spiritual vertigo." And a man who stands on a pinnacle of the temple may grow dizzy, till he forgets that God is not his servant but his Master, and falls headlong, like Lucifer, through spiritual pride. We need to walk humbly on all high places.

Life has three main aspects—Economic, Political and Religious—and in all three the temptation is to ignore the moral foundations on which it rests. Loyalty to moral ideals is the only way to true welfare in economic, political and religious life. "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly (in economic relationships), and to love mercy (in the political order), and to walk humbly with thy God (on the religious side of life)?"

ASH WEDNESDAY

(b) ASH WEDNESDAY

For the Epistle, Joel ii. 12-17: The Call to Repentance.

In face of disaster, the Eastern mind tends to fatalistic resignation ("kismet"). But the prophet's aim is to rouse the people to activity. Repentance turns God's judgments into blessings.

1. *The character of Repentance.* It must be *sincere* ("rend your hearts") and *universal*—all involved together: sin is a social fact, and no man can stand outside his own world and say, "I have no share in the wrong-doing that goes on." We cannot bear the sin of the world as Jesus Christ did, but every good man is called to bear the sin of his own world.

2. *The ground of Repentance—the character of God.* God's purpose may be changed by man's repentance. See Jonah iii. 10; Jer. xviii. 5-12, etc. For the character of God, see Exod. xxxiv. 6. It is not judgment but mercy that He loves best.

3. *The outcome of Repentance—the honour of God.* God is dishonoured by man's sin (Rom. ii. 24; 1 Tim. vi. 1). The deepest motive for repentance is not the desire for material prosperity, but jealousy for the honour of God. The best witness for God is a holy life: the next best is a repentant life.

The Gospel, St. Matthew vi. 16-21: The True Law of Fasting.

1. The Christian Church inherited from Judaism the idea of Prayer, Almsgiving and Fasting as the expression of a man's true relation with God, other men and himself. But all religious acts must face towards God. "Do all to the glory of God."

2. In modern life we are not liable to the mistake of ostentation in our fasting, but it is possible to think of fasting too exclusively as self-discipline for our own good. The true motive of all self-discipline is not to benefit ourselves, but to "please God," and the recom-

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pense we want most is the consciousness of His approval (Heb. xiii. 16; Mark i. 11).

3. The child of God has secrets that he shares only with his Father. Without this, religion would tend to become formal and externalised. (See Browning's *One Word More* on the two-sidedness of the moon:

God be thanked, the meanest of His creatures
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her.)

4. This does not mean that the Church ought not to tell us *when* and *how* to fast. But only God knows *why*, for only God can read the secrets of our hearts.

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Isaiah lviii : Fasting and Service.

Christian morality has two aspects—self-discipline and service. During the exile, the Jews adopted a rigid system of fasting. After the return, this system was relaxed till it ceased to have spiritual value. So in this chapter the prophet tries to recall the people to the true meaning of fasting. His impeachment is twofold.

1. There was no real self-denial or self-discipline in their fasting. "On fast days you find business to do, and overtax your workmen." You associate your fasts with "strife and contention," and with oppression.

2. They did not associate their fasting with active works of charity—the breaking of the yoke, the feeding of the hungry, the clothing of the naked.

The prophet's teaching is summed up in the words of Jesus: "These ought ye to have done (not merely pretended to do), and not to leave the other undone" (Luke xi. 42).

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Jonah iii. : National Repentance.

The lesson here is the same as that of Joel (see above). God loves to forgive rather than to punish. Notice the twofold character of repentance: (1) sorrow for the past expressed in fasting; (2) amendment in the future—they "turned from their evil ways."

For our Lord's comment on the chapter, see Luke xi. 32. The men of Nineveh believed in (1) Divine judgment. For the conscience of the heathen, see Rom. ii. 15. (2) Divine mercy. The healing shadow of the Cross falls back over all human history.

St. Mark ii. 13-22: The Fast and Vigil of the Bride.

Notice the three controversies—about consorting with the unrighteous, about fasting, about sabbath observance. In all three cases Jesus Christ shows that "love is the fulfilling of the law."

It is probable that St. Matthew's feast took place at a time when strict Jews were fasting—perhaps on the second or fifth day of the week. Our Lord's answer reminds us that fasting is the expression of sorrow as well as a means of self-discipline.

1. Sorrow would be out of place while the disciples were with the Master. During the seven days of bridal festivity, the friends of the bridegroom were excused from certain religious observances (see Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 23; Edersheim, I. 355).

2. In the new order, fasting will express man's consciousness of separation from God. Even the "first-fruits of the Spirit" cannot satisfy the desire of the Bride for the Bridegroom's coming (Rom. viii. 23). Our fast is the witness of our hope (Eph. v. 27).

Heb. iii. 12-iv. 13: Labour and Rest.

"Let us give diligence to enter into that rest."

1. Labour and rest—God's gifts to men. Both go back to Him as their source. God is always active

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and always at rest. (Rest does not mean inactivity but perfect correspondence with our environment.)

2. The ideal of rest expressed (*a*) in the story of creation; (*b*) in the institution of the sabbath; (*c*) in the promise of Canaan (the rejection typical of man's constant rejection of God's call); (*d*) renewed in Christ.

3. Rest achieved by faith and effort. Both needed (Phil. ii. 12). Lent a call to renewed faith and more courageous effort.

(c) THE SUNDAY EPISTLES

The Epistles for the first three Sundays have to do with Christian discipline, (*a*) as shown in the life of the apostle, (*b*) in relation to the body, (*c*) in relation to the mind. The Epistle for the fourth Sunday deals with Christian liberty, and the Epistles for the last two Sundays with the Sacrifice of Christ, (*a*) in relation to the past, (*b*) in relation to the future.

I.—2 Corinthians vi. 1-10 : *Apostolic Discipline.*

The minister of Christ must live the discipline that he preaches. St. Paul's enumeration of the characteristics of the Christian life falls into three sections.

1. *Seven aspects of Christian character.* Endurance comes first, and endurance is proved (i.) in the discipline of outward circumstances (the pressure, compulsion and restriction of things); (ii.) in the discipline of human hostility (blows, imprisonments, disturbances); (iii.) in self-discipline (hard work, sleepless nights, hunger). Then follow Sincerity, Insight, Forbearance, Graciousness (Courtesy), Holiness of spirit (not the Holy Spirit), genuine Love. To these inner graces, St. Paul adds two special equipments for service—the word of truth and the power of God (note the association of truth and power).

2. *The change of preposition from ἐν to διὰ suggests*

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a new section. The Christian life brings with it : offensive and defensive weapons—the sword in the right hand and the shield on the left arm; praise and blame; good and evil reputation (the distinction seems to be between what people say to us and what they say about us).

3. *Appearance and reality*—what the Christian missionary seems, and what he is. He seems to be a deceiver, a nonentity, moribund, chastened, sorrowful, poor, “having nothing”—even his own life does not belong to him. But seen from within, the apostolic life is one of truth, fellowship, life, progress (through chastening accepted, Heb. xii. 11), gladness, bestowal of riches, wealth. “The whole world is the wealth of the believer” (Augustine).

II.—1 Thessalonians iv. 1-8 : *The Discipline of the Body.*

St. Paul is dealing with sexual morality, and he sets it within the framework of general principle. The foundation of all Christian morality is man's relation to God. So St. Paul reminds his readers that the true test of conduct is that it pleases God, and that the Christian life ought to be a life of progress in this. And at the end he reminds them that the Holy Spirit is available as their Helper, and to reject the Christian standard of life means rejecting God. (Compare the Confirmation prayer, “that he may . . . daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more.”) Within this framework of Christian thought St. Paul sets his exhortation to sexual purity. He had to meet the idea (common alike in ancient and modern times) that the soul is not responsible for the actions of the body—that the physical nature has the right to its indulgences. In these verses St. Paul deals with:

1. *The true law of marriage.* Some commentators take *σκεῦος* as meaning the body. But *κτᾶσθαι* certainly means “to acquire,” not “to possess,” and a man does

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not acquire his body. On the whole, *σκέυος* probably means a wife, as in 1 Peter iii. 7. If so, what St. Paul means is that men and women should enter on married life, not in the passion of lust (compare the Prayer Book, "to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites"), but in the spirit of mutual reverence and consideration. Marriage founded on mere sexual passion is not Christian marriage, and provides no adequate safeguard against unfaithfulness.

2. *The sin of adultery.* "Any matter" should, almost certainly, be "this matter." God is not indifferent to sexual sin. There is a moral judgment that "avenges" impurity by moral deterioration.

On ignorance of God as the cause of sexual degradation, see Rom. i. 28.

III.—*Ephesians v. 1-14: The Discipline of the Mind.*

1. The framework here is in two sentences—Walk as children of love, imitating the fragrance of the Divine sacrifice; and, Walk as children of light, sharing the fruitfulness of the Divine illumination. Love redeems and Light reveals.

2. Impurity and covetousness are associated, because they are two forms of self-indulgence. Both are idolatry, because they are putting lust and greed into the place of God as the guiding influence of human life. So they are not to be "named" as possible to a Christian man.

3. Then we are warned to beware of the approach to evil. There is talk that is dirty, and talk that is merely silly, and mere jesting about these matters; and all alike are wrong. Verse 12 seems a contradiction. What it really means is, "These things are unspeakably shameful; we must drag them into the daylight, where they will perish." Evil suppressed lives on in the darkness: evil exposed becomes "unfruitful." It cannot breed in the daylight of God.

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4. The idea of light serves to bring out the positive character of the Christian life. The life of the flesh—the life of self-indulgence and acquisitiveness—is a life of illusion. The real life is the life of the Spirit.

IV.—*Galatians iv. 21-31: Christian Freedom.*

St. Paul's allegory seems to imply that in the Jewish religion bondage to legal observance and freedom through grace were both present. The promise to Abraham is older than the law (Gal. iii. 17); the Mosaic order was an interlude "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." Behind the immediate controversy between St. Paul and the Judaizing teachers lay a fundamental issue.

1. *The doctrine of grace.* The contrast is between the idea of salvation as the free gift of God and salvation as won by human merit or acquired by membership of a community with exclusive right to the favour of God. Only the gospel of the grace of God can be a universal gospel, for the impartiality of God is the foundation of man's redemption.

2. *Grace and gratitude.* The difference between the bondman and the freeman does not depend on what they do but on the motive for doing. It is the motive of gratitude that transforms servitude into that service which is "perfect freedom." Sarah, Isaac, "the Jerusalem that is above," all represent the truth that God's promise and purpose come first, and then the response of man's acceptance. St. Paul loves to call himself the bondservant of Jesus Christ. But the love that springs from gratitude transforms this bondage into freedom, for the discipline that has love for its motive is the truest liberty.

V.—*Hebrews ix. 11-16: The Better Sacrifice.*

One difference between St. Paul and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is in the view they take of

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the Law. St. Paul thinks of the gospel as superseding the Law, while this writer thinks of it as fulfilling the Law. The reason for this is that while the Law means to St. Paul a body of moral legislation, it means to the writer of this Epistle a ceremonial system that pointed on to deeper realities.

We may group the thoughts of these verses around three contrasts.

1. *The better High Priest*—(1) because His office deals, not with symbols but with realities—"good things to come" (cf. x. 1), (2) because He serves in a heavenly, not an earthly tabernacle.

2. *The better sacrifice*—better (1) in what it is—"His own blood," (2) in what it does—not an external purification, but an inner transformation, (3) in what it achieves—not a temporary reconciliation (x. 3) but an "eternal redemption."

3. *The better covenant*—better because it provides both for the past and the future; it atones for the transgressions of the past and it provides an "eternal inheritance."

Notice the three aspects of the work of Jesus Christ—as High Priest, Sacrifice and Mediator. The writer thinks of all these as belonging to the eternal order. It is specially the ceremonial of the Day of Atonement that is in his mind. But the symbolic acts have now become eternal realities.

The Epistle to the Hebrews treats of the death of Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of all to which the sacrifices of the Law pointed forward.

VI.—Philippians ii. 5-11 : Triumph through Humiliation.

In this passage St. Paul sees the triumphant vindication of the cross in the exaltation of Jesus Christ.

1. *The Humiliation.* This is presented to us in two aspects: (i.) What He surrendered—*equality*, that He might become subordinate; *authority*, that He might

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become a bondservant; *divine prerogatives*, that He might become man. (ii.) What He accepted—*human experience* (*σχῆμα* is the outward form of things rather than their inner reality, *μορφή*); *human obedience*; *human degradation*. As a man He lived, and served and suffered.

2. *The Exaltation* (Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14). The "Name" in Hebrew stands for a man's status—what he is. So the Name above every name means the authority that is above every authority. He was restored to the authority of which He had "emptied" Himself, carrying His human nature to the throne of the Universe. So, in the end, He gathers to Himself all the worship, and all the belief of mankind. All worship is offered in His Name: all truth is comprehended in the confession (which formed the earliest Christian creed) "Jesus is Christ and Lord" (Acts x. 36; 1 Cor. viii. 6).

In the exaltation of Jesus Christ God the Father is glorified. For as the redemption of mankind starts from the Father's love, so it ends with the Father's glory. "Man's chief end is to glorify God."

(d) THE SUNDAY GOSPELS

I.—See (a) above.

II.—*St. Matthew xv. 21-28 : The Grace of the King.*

In Lent we try to learn how to pray. In the story of the woman on the borderland of Tyre we see Jesus giving His disciples a lesson in the meaning of prayer.

1. *The reluctance of Jesus.* He had retired from Galilee partly to escape from the importunities that left no time for quiet intercourse with His disciples (Mark vi. 31). Apparently His fame as a healer had reached the Tyrian borders, and one act of healing might bring many demands. Moreover, it was no part of His plan to

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extend His ministry beyond His own nation. The time would come when the bread rejected by the children would be offered to the "dogs," but till that rejection was definite and final, His appeal was to His own people (Matt. x. 6).

2. *The easy solution.* "Give her what she asks and send her away." If this is what ἀπόλυσον αὐτήν means, the disciples seemed kinder than their Master. But it was only superficial kindness. Even a child will sometimes think that if he were God he would give people what they asked at once. It would be so much easier. But we must remember (i.) that to give us what we ask may hinder larger purposes of good, and (ii.) that prayer is a method of spiritual education. If we received at once whatever we asked for, prayer would lose most of its value.

3. *The victory of faith.* Even allowing for the fact that the word He used was "little dogs," the household pets of the children, our Lord's reply to the woman sounds harsh. But the meaning of a reply depends on the tone of voice in which it is spoken, and the look that goes with it. The woman's faith was not discouraged, but reinforced by the humility that claimed, not a place among the children, but the right to the crumbs from the table. For true prayer is always an appeal to grace. It is grace that feeds the little dogs who wait for their portion, it is just their need and dependence that constitute their claim. Jesus Christ sets aside the normal limitations of His ministry rather than disappoint the faith that is not easily discouraged. The great purpose is modified to leave room for an act of mercy. May we not believe that "the supplication of a righteous man" may change the purpose of God?

4. *The lesson of the story.* Prayer must be earnest, not easily discouraged: *humble*, not claiming as a right what must always be an act of grace: *trustful*, even when God seems indifferent.

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III.—St. Luke xi. 14-28 : *The Warfare of the King.*

Our Lord thought of the world as a battle-ground between the Spirit of God and evil spirits that were able to gain control over human lives (Eph. vi. 12). When confronted with Him, these evil spirits always admitted His authority. In this Gospel we have:

1. *A twofold vindication.* The charge that "He casteth out demons by Beelzebub" could only arise from irrational malevolence (how irrational hatred can make men!). Even evil spirits know the folly of disunion; the tragedy of the Christian war is that a disunited Church goes out to battle against a united enemy. Then, again, in their effort to discredit Jesus Christ, His enemies forgot that in God's Name Jewish exorcists were sometimes able to drive out demons.

2. *The victory of good.* There is a kind of peace in a life wholly subject to evil. Christ came to challenge this false peace (Matt. x. 34). Good is always stronger than evil, except where a human will sets itself on the side of evil. The victorious Christ overcomes evil, reduces it to impotence, and gives back to God that of which He has been despoiled (Col. ii. 15). A man is saved when his whole self is rescued from sin and restored to God.

3. *The victory of evil.* To cast out evil (as the Jewish exorcists did) was not enough. The Jews believed that desert places were haunted by demons. But evil will always try to re-enter human lives. Only when the grace of God guards our hearts and thoughts (Phil. iv. 7) are we safe. An empty life is a perpetual invitation to evil. A merely negative religion ends in catastrophe, and a worse slavery than before. Our Lenten discipline aims at driving out evil (indolence, self-indulgence, covetousness, pride) to make room for good. Evil must be cast out in order that God may come in.

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IV.—*St. John vi. 1-14 : The Banquet of the King.*

There was a Jewish tradition that the Messianic Kingdom would be inaugurated by a great banquet (Isa. xxv. 6). In the feeding of the five thousand (as afterwards in the Upper Room) Jesus claimed to fulfil this prediction. "The feeding of the multitudes is quite simply the Lord's Supper by the lake-side."

1. *The King provides for His people.* But the disciples, and the people, alike failed to recognise the sacramental significance of the act. They did not understand that in a spiritual kingdom man did not live by bread alone. It was only in the Upper Room that He told them plainly, "This is My Body," and then they understood the deeper meaning of the earlier miracle.

2. *The disciples as the almoners of His bounty.* At every stage, He associated the disciples with His act. In the provision, the distribution, the gathering up of the fragments, He claimed and used their service. He could hardly have shown more clearly that in the kingdom there was to be a definite ministerial office as a channel of His grace.

3. *Teaching and Feeding.* The association of these is significant. As the great Minister of the word and sacraments, Jesus Christ taught and fed the people. The order is significant. We need first to "perceive and know what things we ought to do," and then we have "grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same."

V.—*St. John viii. 46-59 : The Rejection of the King.*

The whole of St. John's Gospel might be described as an attempt to answer the question why the Jews rejected Jesus Christ. In this chapter he presents the issue in the form of a dialogue between Jesus and the Jews. That our Lord actually spoke in this way is improbable. Much that was implicit in His teaching becomes explicit in the evangelist's record. Funda-

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mentally, the Jews' rejection of Jesus Christ was due to an instinctive feeling that to accept Him meant turning their backs on all their existing religious convictions.

In this Gospel we have a threefold challenge.

1. *The challenge of truth.* (i.) The challenge. "If I am wrong, say so; if I am right, believe Me." (For the same dilemma, in regard to St. John the Baptist, see Mark xi. 30.) Then follows a great truth. Belief in Christ is not a natural process (John vi. 44; 1 Cor. xii. 3), but an outcome of Divine grace. Only in reaching up towards God can any man know the truth. (ii.) The reply. "You are no true son of Abraham—you are not even sane." (iii.) The appeal. "My aim is to honour God: your aim is to discredit Me. Let God judge."

2. *The challenge of life.* (i.) The challenge. A man who keeps (fixes his attention on) My word shall never see (gaze upon) death. What does this mean? He who accepts the whole body of Christ's teaching (His "word") is set free from the fear of death, for His teaching carries us beyond death into the eternal world. (ii.) The reply. "You are claiming to do what none of the fathers of our nation were able to do." (iii.) The appeal. Again, the appeal is to God. A right understanding of God would lead to the recognition that His glory is revealed in Christ (2 Cor. iv. 6). "The fathers taught you about God, but you have not learned to know Him. I know Him: to claim less would be falsehood."

3. *Christ and Abraham.* (i.) The challenge. When did Abraham rejoice to see the day of Christ? Was it when he saw in the assurance "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" the promise of a Divine deliverance? See Heb. xi. 13. (ii.) The reply. A deliberate distortion of Christ's words. (iii.) The appeal. A solemn affirmation of His right to the name that expressed the eternal Being of God (Exod. iii. 14).

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The underlying thought of the whole passage (very characteristic of St. John) is that it is a wrong view of God that leads men to reject Jesus Christ.

VI.—*St. Matthew xxvii. : The Silence of the King.*

Out of the story of the trial and death of Jesus Christ, we take this one episode—His silence. It is easy to understand Pilate's surprise. He must have been accustomed to many noisy protestations of innocence and excited appeals for justice, but this calm silence was a new experience.

1. *The silence of an accepted destiny.* Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should die. He was "delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," and He would utter no plea that would seem to imply reluctance to face the whole cost of human redemption. With one word of power He might have cowed His accusers, and struck terror into the heart of Pilate—but the word remained unspoken.

2. *The silence of innocence.* Honest charges might be refuted, but wild accusations, with no sincere conviction behind them, deserved no refutation.

The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

Pilate and the Chief Priests knew that from motives of political expediency or religious antagonism they were putting an innocent man to death. The silence of Jesus was a sterner condemnation than any speech could have been.

3. *The silence of compassion.* We cannot doubt that this was part of the meaning of His silence. These men were sinning almost beyond forgiveness, for what is the sin against the Holy Ghost but just the refusal to admit what in our hearts we know to be true? His silence was an appeal to their conscience. Does not God still appeal to men's consciences by His apparent

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silence (Ps. 1. 21)? When perfect love is confronted by perfect hatred, it can only keep silent: and by that silence it shows itself stronger than hate. Hate is passionate, but love is patient; hate destroys, but love redeems; hate is noisy, but love is quiet.

(e) THE SUNDAY LESSONS (1922 LECTONARY)

I.—OLD TESTAMENT

First Sunday in Lent.

Genesis xviii. : The Ministry of Intercession.

God's angels had passed on, and Abraham was left alone with God. He asks nothing for himself, his heart is full of the thought of the doom of Sodom (contrast Jonah at Nineveh). He founds his prayer on his assurance of the *justice* of God. When we pray "Our Father," we pray in the assurance of His *love*.

Notice the character of Abraham's intercession—it is bold (even seeming to ask for a change in God's purpose)—humble—definite—persistent.

Other Suggestions.

1. The duty and reward of hospitality (Heb. xiii. 2). Contrast Luke ii. 7.

2. The laughter of unbelief (Gen. xviii. 12) and the laughter of thankfulness (Gen. xxi. 6).

Genesis xxi. 1-21 : Man's extremity, God's opportunity.

Hagar in the wilderness, at the end of her resources—nothing left but to weep. What God heard was not Hagar's crying, but "the voice of the lad"—the cry of helpless need. So there comes (i.) a call to faith and courage, (ii.) the opening of eyes to see. The well was there all the time, but Hagar had not seen it.

How often we throw away our ideals, as Hagar threw away her child. Then God says, "Go and take

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them up again." And we find a well of refreshment and strength where we thought there was nothing but desert (Ps. lxxxiv. 6). For another woman who did not see the spiritual well that could renew lost ideals see John iv.

Other Suggestions.

1. How God overrules the cruelty of men. Ishmael, driven out of his home by Sarah's jealousy—made a great nation (Ps. lxxvi. 10).
2. Ishmael and Isaac. The carnal and the spiritual—the life of nature and the life of grace. Not good and evil, but the higher and lower ideals of life. Cannot live together (1 Cor. xv. 46-50).

Genesis xxii. 1-19 : God's Supreme Claim.

In primitive religion, the sacrifice of the first-born expressed the idea of the primacy of God's claim. A man must give his best to God.

1. Abraham's obedience was (1) immediate, "Theirs not to question why"; (2) sustained, right up to the final act (Heb. xi. 17). The "way of escape" (1 Cor. x. 13) only came when his faith had been tested to the utmost. Mount Moriah was Abraham's Gethsemane, and the outcome was the same—"not my will but Thine be done."
2. Abraham's reward. The man who is to be a blessing to all the world must have learned to trust God absolutely (Job xiii. 15). Contrast Rom. viii. 32.

Other Suggestions.

1. Isaac and his father, the giving of our sons to God—an Embertide lesson.
2. Jehovah-jireh. We can give to God only what He has given to us. In the Mount of the Lord He provides the sacrifice that we offer. "God will provide the lamb."

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Second Sunday in Lent.

Genesis xxvii. 1-40 : Doing Evil that Good may Come.

How often men have thought that they could forward God's purpose by unworthy means. So in this story all the actors sinned and suffered, and yet God's purpose (that Jacob should inherit the promise) was fulfilled. Only faith and right-dealing can further God's purpose. Isaac and Rebecca were both afraid, and fear led to foolish attempts to secure the good for which they ought to have trusted God (*cf.* 2 Sam. vi. 6; John xviii. 11).

Other Suggestions.

1. True and false repentance (Heb. xii. 17). A blessing once "despised" cannot be recovered. "We can never be what we might have been." Yet real repentance opens up new possibilities. So

Men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

Real repentance learns to say "it was my own fault."

2. An awakened conscience. If we may suppose that Isaac knew that Jacob was the destined heir of the promise, we may see in the story an attempt to frustrate God's purpose. "Isaac trembled exceedingly" when he realised that his attempt had failed (*cf.* Acts ix. 6).

Genesis xxviii. 10 to end : Grace.

Jacob in the desert, lonely, uncertain about the future, perhaps regretting the wrong that had aroused Esau's anger. He was not seeking God but God was seeking him. Grace means God reaching down to the undeserving. Perhaps Jacob shared the common idea that God's rule only extended to his own country. So he learnt that from every spot on earth there is a ladder

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that reaches to heaven. God's blessing comes first, and then Jacob's response. It is a twofold response—the pillar of remembrance and the promise of loyalty. There is a mercenary note in the promise (our response to God's Grace is always imperfect), but at least it means that the covenant of Bethel is to be permanent. Our greatest danger is forgetfulness. For example, Confirmation needs its pillar of remembrance if it is to be a lifelong consecration.

Other Suggestions.

1. The true ladder from earth to heaven, the Incarnation (John i. 51).
Through Him the angels carry men's prayers to God, and through Him they bring God's gifts to man.

2. The angels keep their ancient places,
Turn but a stone and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But when so sad, thou canst not sadder
Cry; and on thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched between heaven and Charing Cross.
FRANCIS THOMPSON.

Genesis xxxii. 3-30 : The Lesson of Dependence.

Jacob's return in prosperity. Ingenious efforts to avert the anger of Esau, and secure the right to enter on the promised land. But he needed to learn that the promise was God's gift, not man's achievement. So a mysterious opponent bars the way.

1. Jacob's Resistance. He tries to force his way, to drive away his opponent. "Let me have my own way."

2. Jacob's Submission. He is lamed in the contest, as the man who resists God is always lamed. Then

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he tried not to drive away, but to hold, his opponent. Instead of "let me go" his cry is now, "I will not let thee go." So he receives the blessing that comes to every man when he has learnt to yield to the purpose of God. When we resist God He seems to be our enemy: when we yield we know Him as our everlasting Friend.

Other Suggestions.

1. "Jacob was left alone." The need of being alone in the crises of life that God may come to us. Perhaps it is only when we feel ourselves alone that we are most conscious of God (John vi. 15; xvi. 2).

2. The Name of God. See Robertson's Sermon on this passage, *Sermons*, First Series, No. III., and C. Wesley's hymn, "Come, O thou traveller unknown."

Third and Fourth Sundays in Lent.

Genesis xxxvii. : Dreams and Disillusionment.

1. Youth is a time of high ideals, which sometimes bring with them a touch of priggishness. Perhaps it is better to keep our dreams to ourselves. But it is right that we should cherish youth's "vision splendid" while we can. So Joseph dreams of his high destiny while serving his brethren as a lad—or, as we should say, an errand boy.

2. After the dream, the disillusionment. Stripped of his coat (was it a priestly vestment?), flung into a disused cistern in the desert, and then sold into slavery. How often the sordid realities of life seem to mock our dreams. But if Joseph believed that his dreams had come from God, we may think of him, like Moses (Heb. xi. 27), as enduring, "as seeing Him who is invisible." Our reaction to the troubles and disillusionments of life is a test of our faith in God.

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Other Suggestions.

1. "This dreamer cometh." The contempt of the mere man of the world for spiritual aspirations. Did not Jesus Christ seem to the practical men of His day a dreamer, whose dreams they resented? "His own received Him not." Yet His dreams came true.

2. Service through suffering. The sojourn in Egypt a necessary stage in God's education of His people. Joseph chosen to be the instrument of God's purpose, and so called to the discipline of suffering. He was "despised and rejected" by his brethren, but God's purpose was behind it all (Gen. xlv. 8; cf. Acts ii. 23).

Genesis xxxix. : Faithfulness.

The characteristic feature of Joseph's character is Fidelity—he was a man who could be trusted. In Potiphar's house, in the prison, and at Pharaoh's court, he exhibited the same trustworthiness. As the story in this chapter shows, fidelity to God was the foundation of all other fidelity. But fidelity does not always lead to honour: it led Joseph to prison. Yet

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.

We might draw the lesson that "honesty is the best policy"—in the long run, but the real reward of faithfulness is "a conscience void of offence."

Genesis xlii.—xlv. 7.

For homiletical purposes, it is hardly possible to separate these chapters. No doubt they are chosen for Lenten reading because Joseph's rejection and exaltation suggest the rejection and exaltation of our Lord.

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1. "Him did God exalt . . . to be a Prince and a Saviour" (Acts v. 31). Joseph's recognition (i.) that it was God who had raised him to power, and (ii.) that the purpose of that exaltation was the preservation of his brethren.

2. His gifts to his brethren. (i.) Repentance—he taught them to be ashamed of their sin; (ii.) forgiveness; (iii.) nourishment—which was to be a free gift (hence the return of the money); (iv.) a permanent home.

"Be done by as you did." Joseph's treatment of his brethren was deliberately designed to bring home to them their treatment of him. As they had spoken roughly to him, accused him of being a spy (Gen. xxxvii. 2), imprisoned him, made him a slave, so it was done to them. How often we only see our behaviour to others in its true light when the parts are reversed. Before Joseph can publicly forgive his brethren, they must show that they have realised their sin. The test is their treatment of Benjamin. Their loyalty to him, even when he seemed to be exposed in a mean theft, showed that they were changed men. [Note the significance of the test—"they ill-treated me, how will they treat my brother?" (Matt. xxv. 40).]

F. D. Maurice has a fine sermon on "Joseph and His Brethren" in the volume of sermons entitled *Patriarchs and Lawgivers*.

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

Exodus ii. 23—iii. end.

These chapters are selected, presumably, because Moses, the chosen deliverer of his people, is a type of our Lord (Heb. iii. 1-6).

The New Revelation of God.

Moses, like Jesus Christ, was sent to bring to his people a new revelation of God. We do not know

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what gods the children of Israel worshipped in Egypt, but Moses was called to recall them to the worship of the God of their fathers, under His new name of Yahweh. The origin of the name is obscure, but the writer of Exodus connects it with the Hebrew verb to be, so that Yahweh means "I will be." What does this mean? The meaning is illustrated by verse 12—"I will be with thee"—and by the symbol of the fire always burning yet not destroying the bush. Yahweh is the God who has the future in His keeping: who is always present in the life of the chosen people. The name is God's offer of a covenant relationship with the people—a covenant to be ratified when they came to Horeb (verse 12). The difference between Israel's relation with Yahweh and the relations of the nations around with their gods lay in the conception that Yahweh had *adopted* the people by a deliberate act. He did not belong to them as the gods of the nations belonged to the nations. "I will be" implied an act of choice—"I choose to be your God." So in the Mosaic revelation of Yahweh lay the germ of the Christian revelation of God as Father (see Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, p. 74).

Other Suggestions.

1. "I have called thee by thy name." God's message to individuals (*cf.* Luke xxii. 31; Acts ix. 4; Gen. xxii. 11; etc.).
2. Reverence. See Otto, p. 77, for the gradual moralising of the "numinous."

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God:
But only he who sees takes off his shoes,—
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.

E. B. BROWNING.

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Exodus iv. 1-23, iv. 37-vi. 1: The Way of the Deliverer.

Moses, like Jesus Christ, called to a task of deliverance. Notice (i.) the humble coming, (ii.) his early success, (iii.) the change when the cost of deliverance begins to be realised, (iv.) the temptation to discouragement, (v.) God's reassurance.

Bondage and Freedom.

Jesus Christ comes to set men free from the bondage of custom, circumstances, habits (all that is included in "the world, the flesh, and the devil"). When we try to be free, we become conscious of our bondage ("no straw"). We are tempted to ask to be left alone. We need faith to believe that Jesus Christ is stronger than all the powers of evil that hold us in bondage.

Sixth Sunday in Lent.

Isaiah lii. 13-liii. end.

The most helpful exposition of this great passage will be found in Sir George Adam Smith's *Isaiah*, vol. 2. The analysis that follows is founded on his.

The Suffering Servant.

The passage is in four strophes.

1. God as speaker. The Promised Triumph. My servant shall bring his undertaking to success, and be exalted. As many were astonished at his humiliation, so many shall be startled (not "sprinkled") at his triumph.

2 and 3. Penitent Israel as speaker. (a) Past neglect confessed. We did not believe what we heard. Though he grew up like a young plant we saw no beauty in him. (b) Present experience affirmed. Now we know better. We thought that he was punished for his own sins, but it was our sins that he bore.

4. The prophet as speaker. (a) The humiliation.

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He humbled himself—was silent under unjust sentence, violent death and a grave with evil and rich (*i.e.*, godless) men. (*b*) His triumph. All this was God's purpose in order that, offering a guilt offering, he should see his seed. His sacrifice becomes a triumph.

NOTE.—To the question whether the prophet is speaking of ideal Israel or of Christ the answer is that Christ *is* the ideal Israel. As the life-history of the chosen people begins in one man, Abraham, so it ends in One, Jesus Christ.

Other Suggestions.

1. The problem of suffering. Early idea, suffering as the punishment of sin. In Job, suffering as the test of loyalty. Here, suffering vicarious and therefore sacrificial. Vicarious suffering a truth of human experience. Christ's sufferings unique in that they were *wholly* undeserved and *wholly* voluntary.

2. Christ's sufferings the purpose of God. It was the purpose of Yahweh to bruise him (not "it pleased the Lord").

3. Four aspects of the Atonement—pierced for our crimes—crushed for our fault—chastised for our peace—smitten for our healing.

Exodus x. 21–xi. end : The Final Rejection.

"See my face no more."

1. Repeated warnings. Pharaoh's rejection of the one man who could remove the plagues by his intercession. So left to his fate.

2. The innocent suffering with the guilty—a fact of human experience. Part of the awfulness of sin is that it brings suffering on others.

3. "The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart." The truth underlying these words is that what we choose to be we are at last obliged to be. Divine retribution is the "other side" of divine grace.

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Other Suggestions.

1. The plague of darkness. The religion of Egypt was the worship of the sun-god, so darkness represented the defeat of Pharaoh's God by Yahweh. The idea of light as God's gift and darkness as man's curse runs through the O.T. For this plague see Wisdom xvii. *Cf.* Isaiah lviii. 10, lix. 10, lx. 2, etc.

2. Uncompromising obedience. "There shall not an hoof be left behind." Pharaoh's successive offers of compromise. God claims all—not less than all.

Isaiah lix. 12 to end : Redemption through Judgment.

The first stage is man's recognition of sin as an offence against God. Then the recognition of sin leads to the recognition of God as the eternal Enemy of sin, going out as an armed warrior, self-reliant and irresistible. Then, last, comes the recognition of God as the Redeemer of His people.

Notice the striking retranslation of verse 19 in R.V.

II.—THE NEW TESTAMENT

First Sunday in Lent.

St. Matthew iii.

1. *Preparing for the Kingdom.* The work of the Church in preparing for the coming of Christ (*a*) in the life of the individual (*e.g.*, in Confirmation); (*b*) in the life of the Christian community (purpose of Lent); (*c*) in the world. He cannot come unless we prepare His way.

2. *Repentance* (μετάνοια). A change of outlook (*a*) towards God; (*b*) towards sin (hate what we have loved); (*c*) towards mankind.

3. *The consecration of Jesus Christ to His mission.* Baptism (self-dedication), Confirmation (the gift of the Holy Spirit), Vocation (as the Son of God, to do the will of the Father).

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The Holy Trinity one in the cause of man's redemption.

Hebrews vi.

1. *Progress and Reversion.* Going forward and going back. This is not a denial of the possibility of repentance to lapsed Christians. What it means is that they must begin again from the beginning. Probably verse 6 ought to read—"while they are crucifying." See also Mark x. 27.

2. *The activity of Patience.* Its inspiration—hope: its expression—diligence: its assurance—the promise of God.

St. Mark xiv. 1-26.

1. *Gratitude and Greed.* The love that desires to give and the lust that desires to get. Works of charity not a substitute for personal devotion to Christ. True love for other men springs from love to Him (1 John iv. 21).

2. *The Unknown Disciple.* Perhaps St. Mark's father. His offering—(a) The Upper Room. Jesus asked for the *κατάλυμα*; the disciple gave *ἀνάγαιον μέγα*. (b) "Furnished and prepared": ready for the Master's use (the "furnishing" and "preparation" of our lives both needed).

3. *Three stages of Fellowship* (verse 25). The fellowship that was ending—fellowship in material things. The fellowship that was to come—fellowship in spiritual things (*καινός*—belonging to a new order). The fellowship between—spiritual gifts in material forms. We drink of His cup, but He does not drink it with us yet.

2 Corinthians iv.

Three Contrasts of the Christian Life. (a) The hidden light and the earthen vessel (see Judg. vii. 16). (b) The body that dies and the Body that lives. (c) Things

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seen and things unseen. Notice the paradox—fixing our gaze on invisible things. Newman chose for his memorial tablet the words *Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem.*

Second Sunday in Lent.

St. Matthew ix. 1-17.

1. *Three challenges.* (a) The scribes challenge the power of Christ; He answers by a miracle. (b) The Pharisees challenge the compassion of Christ; He answers by an appeal to the prophets. (c) The disciples of St. John challenge the authority of Christ; He answers by a parable.

2. *The Old and the New.* (a) The mistake of treating the Christian gospel as a mere patch on existing habits of life. It is a new garment. (b) The mistake of trying to restrict the Christian life within rigid forms. Spiritual life needs institutions (a visible Church), as wine needs wine-skins—but they must be flexible, or they will break.

Hebrews ix. 12 to end.

The Three Appearings. He appeared, once for all, for atonement on earth. He appears, once for all, for intercession in heaven. He will appear, once for all, for salvation.

St. Mark xiv. 27-52.

1. *Tragedies of Love.* The love that grows overconfident (Peter). The love that grows hypocritical (Judas). The love that grows timid (the young man—was he St. Mark?).

2. *A Lost Battle.* St. Peter. The victory of the devil—of pride over humility (verse 29; cf. Luke xxii. 31). The victory of the flesh—sleep instead of watchfulness (verse 38). The victory of the world—violence instead of patience (verse 47; cf. Matt. xxvi. 52).

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2 Corinthians v.

1. "Knowing no man after the flesh." The transformation of all human relationships in the Christian life—marriage, business, social life, recreations, all sacramental in Christ. ("Knowing Christ after the flesh" means knowing Him only as human.)

2. *God's invitation; man's response* (verse 19). God's sacrifice: God's forgiveness: God's invitation. Man can only accept what God has done. To refuse is to insult God, who has gone all the way to meet man's need.

Third Sunday in Lent.

St. Matthew xviii. 1-14.

God's Little Ones. (a) He honours them because they are humble, and therefore we must imitate, and not despise, them. (b) He cares for them because they are dependent, and therefore we must receive them and not cause them to stumble. (c) He seeks them because they are gone astray, and therefore we must seek them too.

A call to self-denial (in the right sense, the ignoring of personal claims); self-discipline (as against the modern creed of self-expression); self-sacrifice.

Hebrews x. 19 to end: Three Essentials of the Christian Life.

"Let us draw near"—Worship (with pure hearts, assured minds, clean bodies). "Let us hold fast"—Faithfulness. "Let us consider one another"—Service.

St. Mark xiv. 53 to end.

1. *Stages of Repudiation.* Prejudice that tries to disprove—Direct denial of Christ's claim—Insult and mockery. (The true order of human experience is often respect for Jesus as man—recognition of Jesus as

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Christ and Lord—growing understanding of the truth of Christian witness.)

2. "Peter remembered." The danger of forgetfulness. Repentance the result of remembrance.

2 Corinthians v. 20-vii. 1.

Christian Self-discipline (vii. 1). 1. Its motive—that God's promise may be fulfilled in us. 2. Its purpose—(a) cleansing—twofold, physical nature and spiritual nature (cf. Heb. x. 22); (b) consecration. Notice force of *ἐπιτελοῦντες*—the progressive character of the Christian life.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

St. Luke xv.

1. *Studies in failure.* (a) The carelessness that wanders—the undisciplined will. (b) The apathy that just stays where it has fallen—the paralysed will. (c) The selfishness that demands self-expression—the rebellious will.

2. *God the Redeemer.* (a) The adventure of God—the shepherd's quest. (b) The search of God—the woman's care. (c) The patience of God—the Father's love.

Hebrews xii.

1. *The Christian Race.* (a) Its position—the public stadium. (b) Its preparation—external hindrances and internal entanglements. (c) Its effort—endurance and obedience ("set before us"). (d) Its aim—concentrating attention on Jesus, as the forerunner (*ἀρχηγός*) and the goal (*τελειωτής*)—"begun, continued, and ended in Thee."

2. *The Christian Inheritance.* (1) The City of God. (a) The mountain and the city—the divine foundation and the social order. (b) Its guardians—"innumerable

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angels in festal array." (c) Its citizens—sembled and enrolled. (d) Its Ruler—"God as Judge."

(2) The Way to the City. (a) The end of the journey—"just men made perfect." (b) The guarantee of the journey—"Jesus the Mediator." (c) The beginning of the journey—"the blood of sprinkling."

St. Mark xv. 1-21.

Three Questions. "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" "Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" "What then shall I do unto Him whom ye call the King of the Jews?"

Has He the right to be our King? Shall we set Him free to be our King? If not, what shall we do with Him?

2 Corinthians ix.

Right Giving. Lent is a time for self-examination. St. Paul, in appealing for the Church in Jerusalem, deals with the motive of giving. (a) Not thoughtless, or merely casual. (b) Not reluctant. (c) Not obligatory—just because public opinion expects it of us. (d) Joyfully (the Greek word is *hilarious*). See Septuagint of Prov. xxii. 8—"God praises a cheerful man and giver."

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

St. Matthew xx. 17-28.

The Fellowship of the Cross. (a) The preparation of the place (see Matt. xxv. 34; John xiv. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 9). (b) The preparation of the disciples. The drinking of the cup (Mark xiv. 36; John xviii. 11; Mark xiv. 23) is sacrificial service—the self-oblation that gives its all (Rom. viii. 17).

Hebrews xiii. 1-21.

The Purpose of God (verses 20, 21). (a) The purpose—the restoration (*κατάρτισις*) of human personality to the

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unity of good (2 Cor. x. 5; Eph. i. 10). (b) The three-fold guarantee—the Divine character, the Divine act, the Divine promise. (c) The co-operative achievement (Phil. ii. 13).

St. Mark xv. 22 to end.

The Darkness of the Cross. (a) The darkness of triumphant evil (Luke xxii. 53). (b) The darkness of human unbelief. (c) The darkness of Divine mystery. The return of light means evil rejected, faith restored, truth revealed.

2 Cor. xi. 16-xii. 10.

Right and wrong weakness. (a) The weakness that thinks itself strong (xi. 19-20). (b) The strength that knows itself weak (xii. 9-10).

Sixth Sunday in Lent.

St. Matthew xxvi.

Three warnings to St. Peter. (a) Against over-confidence (verse 34). (b) Against slackness (verse 41). (c) Against impetuosity (verse 52). (The need of humility, watchfulness and patience.)

St. Luke xix. 29 to end.

The Coming of the King. Jesus still comes to men by His Spirit. And still (a) He accepts the offerings of men (the ass, the clothes of the disciples). (c) He asks for the welcome of men (note the contrast between simple-minded enthusiasm and cold detachment). (c) He sorrows for the sin of men (the grief of the Judge "heart-sick at having all his world to blame.") "A pauper king, who makes his public entrance into his city mounted on a borrowed ass, with his followers' clothes for a saddle, attended by a shouting crowd of poor peasants, who for weapons or banners

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had but the branches plucked from other people's trees, was a new kind of king."—Maclaren.

The crowd of Galilean peasants were not the same crowd that cried "Crucify Him" a few days later.

St. John xii. 1-19.

Holy Week in the light of the Resurrection (verse 16).

(a) The perplexity of the disciples—how could the events that were happening be reconciled with (i.) the predictions of the Old Testament and (ii.) the divine purpose of good? (b) The Resurrection as the interpretation of both (Luke xxiv. 25-27).

(f) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SERMONS

The output of sermon literature is so great that an apology is needed for adding to it. The suggestions that follow may, however, give hints which will lighten the task of a hard-pressed parish priest. Numbers I. to VI. are by the Rev. A. S. Roscamp, the rest are editorial, either original or summarised from books.

I.—JESUS AND THE MOUNTAINS

I.—St. Matthew iv. 8-10 : The Mountain of Peril.

Hill behind Nazareth. His outlook as a boy. What He saw on land (caravan route) and sea (horizon) suggested to Him scope of His Gospel. Salient points of His Life associated with mountains. Mountains and hills and their association with religion. Moses and Sinai, Elijah and Horeb (Psalm cxxi. 1).

Our own experience. Contrast how the mountains suggest to us God and His doings, while valleys suggest man and his doings.

Come to text. Contamination of the best things. The devil on a mountain. The devil's promises. A

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"catch" somewhere—compare the public easily gulled by advertisements.

The mountain of peril, because Jesus at the cross-roads. What rested upon His decision. The short, easy way or the hard, long way. The reply of Jesus declares the only way out of our troubles and into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is worship and service, simple goodness and simple duty. Contrast other ways offered—"direct action," "capital levy," etc.

Conclude Isaiah's vision (Isa. vi.). Six wings: four engaged in worship, two in service.

II.—St. Matthew v. 1, 2 : The Mountain of Preaching.

A mountain fitting place on which to deliver loftiest teaching ever heard. The Sermon on the Mount—

1. Something higher than anything that had gone before it; superseded law and prophets. Contrast Sinai and mountain in Galilee. Sinai: desolate, storm-rent, threatening crags and yawning abysses; Galilean mountain: grassy slopes, wild flowers, rising gently above a blue lake. Show how teaching on the two mountains similarly contrasts, and compare the gentle voice of Jesus with Sinai's thunder. Galilee did not contradict Sinai, rather completed it; did not supplant, rather supplemented ("not to destroy, but to fulfil"). A mountain sometimes has two sides—one frowning and precipitous, the other a gentle slope. So God is terribly opposed to evil, but exceeding gracious to all who are struggling up to righteousness. To know a mountain must know *both* sides. Suppose ignorant of one side, then the revelation of it will be a surprise. To discover the precipice, a shock. To discover the gentle slope, a delight. Unsafe to be wandering on mountain if ignorant of precipice (1 Peter iii. 12). Forget not Sinai in adoration of Galilee; yet thank God for Galilee; the positive rather than the merely negative; mercy rather than bare justice (Matt. v. 39).

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2. Something higher than audience at the moment dreamt of. "Blessedness." What did hearers imagine Messianic blessedness to be? Ridding of tyranny of Rome, material comfort and prosperity, etc.; but Jesus bade them "Seek ye first, etc." (Matt. vi. 33).

3. Something higher than we have yet learnt to appreciate. Still we seek earthly riches and are ensnared by them. Still we look to religion to entertain us and cater for our amusements, and at best to promote "social welfare," "improved circumstances." Do we yet really admire virtues of Sermon on Mount—*e.g.*, meekness? Do we really admire purity, or do we vote the teller of an unclean story or the singer of a suggestive song a fine and funny fellow?

Refer to Jesus' action under such circumstances (John viii. 6). Do we admire modesty, or say it is narrow and easily shocked? Contrast modern standards with standards of Jesus. Get hold of and keep hold of lofty ideals—ideals of mountain—and remember saying of the first Teacher, "Without Me ye can do nothing."

III.—*St. Matthew xiv. 23 : The Mountain of Prayer.*

1. "Apart," "alone." Public worship no substitute for private prayer. Jesus and the Temple and the Synagogue. Yet Jesus and the mountain apart, alone. "Shut the door" (Matt. vi. 6). Sweep aside doubts, difficulties, arguments; follow example and obey bidding of the Perfect Man.

2. "When He had sent the multitudes away." Because they were a distraction; describe the busy day He had spent. In Lent "send away" the multitudes of engagements, frivolities, distractions. Again, the multitudes were a temptation to Jesus. The attempt and desire to make Him King. "Send away" what is a temptation to you—a book, a person, the devil.

3. "Into a mountain." Prayer like climbing; hard

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work; sweat—*e.g.*, Gethsemane. High-level prayers and low-level prayers. Some prayers belong to the foot of the mountains, others to the summit. Low-level prayers: "Give me this at all costs"; "Spare me this or I'm done." High-level prayers: "Give me this or, if not, teach me to do without it"; "Spare me this or, if not, help me to go through it." Highest level prayers: Forget self altogether and concentrate on the glory of God and the needs of others. Note order of petitions in the Lord's Prayer.

Conclude with picture of Jesus on the mountain very near to God, yet not unmindful of His friends toiling in rowing, with wind contrary. What a picture for an artist! It describes position of Jesus and ourselves today and always till we reach land.

IV.—*St. Mark ix. 2 : The Mountain of Purity.*

"Exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can whiten." Not the purity of His clothes, but of His character shining through His clothes.

They saw God on the mountain of the Transfiguration: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they," etc. Not only purity, but prayer: "As He prayed the fashion of His countenance was altered" (Luke ix. 29). How prayer alters things, transfigures them!

Use the familiar skeleton or headings used when treating the story of Saul of Tarsus and his conversion: (1) The Vision, (2) The Voice, (3) The Vocation. Same subdivisions suit treatment of Isaiah vi. and Exodus iii. and 1 Kings xix. Allude to these four instances.

The Transfiguration: 1. The Vision. That comes first because light travels quicker than sound. The vision granted to the Apostles to convince their wavering faith, and to give them a memory which would carry them through life. They saw also those who were dead, still alive. The subject of conversation was the eager expectancy of those on the other side with

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regard to the time when those on this side will join them (Luke ix. 31).

"After six days" (Matt. and Mark), "about eight days after" (Luke). Roughly a week, suggests our Sunday vision, Christ revealed in lessons, sermon, under veil of Sacrament.

2. The Voice. Out of the cloud—even at brightest moment a cloud. "They feared when they entered into the cloud." It is then that we need a voice to reassure us. When the clouds pass away we shall see "Jesus only" (all three evangelists mention this).

3. The Vocation. Peter must discard his idea of the three tabernacles.

Describe the scene at the foot of the mountain. Their vocation lay there. The world expects something from its religious people.

We must take into the world what we have acquired on the mountain.

V.—*St. Luke xxiii. 33 : The Mountain of Pain.*

"There is a green hill." Calvary. Golgotha, "place of a skull." Well-known knoll outside city in shape of human skull—*e.g.*, Helm Crag, near Grasmere. Shape of lion couchant. The spot not now to be identified with certainty. God has obliterated all relics, lest they should be sold under the hammer as such and lest turnstiles and paygates should commercialise them.

We are not to say, "Lo here" or "Lo there"; rather, "the Kingdom of God is within you."

"Survey the wondrous Cross." Contemplate the mystery of it, the cruelty of it, the pitifulness of it. The effect it had on world's history; the effect it should have on you and me. Out of many lines along which we might approach the subject, select one. Let it be "the madness of the people." To kill the world's best Friend! To crucify the world's Good! To reject the perfect Love! To refuse the Divine Wisdom! Mad-

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ness! (See John i. 4, 5, 10, 11.) Was it pure ignorance? (Luke xxiii. 34), or was it wilfulness as well? (See John iii. 19, 20.)

Why did they do so mad a thing? Simple answer: They wanted to get rid of God out of their lives. Many have same desire and are making similar attempt today. Result of it—misery, destruction, death. (See Luke xix. 41-45 and Matt. xxvii. 24 and 25.)

Subsequent history of Jesus illustrates sequel of such madness.

Attempt to get rid of God not only mad, but futile.

Easter morning proved its futility.

Why did Jews attempt this? Because Jesus' ideals and system of life and conduct did not conform to theirs. Whenever the two came in conflict the Jews "sought the more to kill Him." Jesus claimed first place in their lives, but they wanted it themselves. Jesus cut clean across their "vested interests"—the Temple hucksters and profiteers. (*Cf.* Demetrius of Ephesus and his gains gone.)

Men still trying to get rid of God out of their lives and for same reasons; illustrate; Sunday non-observance, dishonesties, impurity (but you cannot get rid of God by drawing down the blinds; it is only the daylight you can so get rid of, and the gaze of men). Because the Church stands for God, men sometimes try to get rid of it: once upon a time by persecution, now by indifference. Imagine England without the Church. Imagine industry without God. Politics ditto. Illustrate from Russia. The little bit of heaven's influence. Appeal bring God back into public and private life—our only wisdom and hope of salvation.

VI.—*St. Matthew xxviii. 16 ; St. Luke xxiv. 51 : The Mountain of Parting.*

Mountain of the Ascension. Partings are sad—*e.g.*, railway station, quayside. But a departure platform

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means an arrival platform somewhere else. Contrast happy welcome there with sad parting here. See Psalm xxiv. 7-10. Same thought a consolation to all bereaved. Our dear lost ones have not only departed, they have *arrived*, and they take news with them to those eagerly awaiting it. Did the disciples realise this at all on the Mount of Ascension, did they remember? (St. John xiv. 28). They did rejoice (St. Luke xxiv. 52, 53).

Think of other partings not caused by death. The last goodbye is not our only parting—business man off to the city in the morning; child going to school; guest departing after staying with us. How shall we face partings? Not selfishly; consider the good, the happiness, the life's work (God's purpose) of him or her who goes. Not sadly; there is a worse sort of separation than that measured by yards, earshot, horizon. A parting in love, or in faith, is a tragedy. If union of heart and confidence remain, then no tragedy. Not selfishly, nor sadly, but steadfastly, determined to carry out and carry on what he or she from whom we are parted most desires.

Illustrate last missionary command of Jesus. Such steadfastness involves loyalty, gives a purpose to all we do and so enables us to go on our way with a song.

Old legend of Gabriel's questioning of Jesus on arrival of Jesus in Heaven. What precautions had Jesus taken? etc. Jesus had told Peter, etc.—they, good fellows, would not fail Him. Gabriel's continued misgiving. Jesus' reply: "You don't know my Peter; you don't know my Mary."

Jesus left us commission, promise, legacy of love. When the days of parting are over, the nature of the meeting will be decided by our faithfulness or unfaithfulness during days of parting.

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II.—"IN NEED OF . . . NOTHING?"

Object (1) to break down self-satisfaction, to awaken a sense of need of the highest things, and to suggest that the Church can supply that need. (2) To suggest God's need of us.

I.—I *Corinthians xii. 21* : *I have no Need of Thee.*

St. Paul's illustration of human body.

Application (a) The Spirit of man cannot do without the body with which to express itself. In the after life God will supply this need in a manner not yet known to us.

(b) The Spirit of Christ needed a Body, hence the Incarnation.

(c) The Spirit of religion needs a Body, hence the need for organised religion and the Churches.

If the outward form perishes from neglect, the inward spirit will in course of time be forgotten.

II.—*St. Mark ii. 17* : *No Need of the Physician.*

No man can say that indefinitely concerning his body. Occasion of the saying, biting sarcasm of Jesus.

Compare parable of Pharisee and Publican: one knew, the other did not know his need of the Physician.

Who correspond to Pharisees today? Not those inside the Churches—there are few sanctimonious hypocrites inside the Churches today—rather those outside the Churches, who boast themselves to be better than us and seem to need neither pardon nor power.

Illustrate doctor's surgery: invalids not Sandows gather there; so it is "sinners" not "saints" who approach our altars.

Industry sadly needs the Physician; pleasure-mad society ditto. The individual also if he is to share restoration with the springtime.

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III.—*Revelation* iii. 17 : *And have Need of Nothing.*

The Laodiceans: "No use for it," "Not today, thank you"; but they were nauseating (v. 16) to the great Amen. Laodicean, famous for banking and exchange, fleece merchants, school of medicine (v. 18). But these things do not suffice. Need of religion.

Illustrate cathedral city, Durham or Liverpool. River, market-place, university, on one level after another in ascending scale, but cathedral on the top. A well-ordered life as a well-ordered city, gives to everything its proper place.

IV.—*St. Matthew* vi. 8 : *What Things ye have Need of.*

Not repetitions, but vain repetitions condemned. Not for God's information, but for our own good and our consciousness of dependency, we are to pray—just as we are to praise not for God's satisfaction, but for our own elevation.

Illustration of prayer attitude—your dog silently watching you when you are writing a letter and waiting for you to take him for a walk. It demonstrates knowledge of you, affection, patience and an absolute trust in your good will.

We don't know what we have need of, only what we would like. It looks like a loaf, but it's really a stone. We do need knowledge of God (see His photograph in Gospels), forgiveness, strength for the future especially a sense of the Divine Presence, but that cannot be called up as you call up a telephone number. It must be practised.

V.—*Acts* xvii. 25 : *As though He needed Anything.*

Only relatively true, not absolutely true, that God needs nothing. St. Paul is contrasting God with the idols, who, according to their devotees, apparently needed a great deal! Housing, securing, repairing, etc., and keeping in a good temper. Idols had open

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mouths, open hands, open laps. They sat at the receipt of custom.

God is the Giver of all good things. If God needs a Temple, it is that we may worship there. Cf. Solomon's Prayer at Dedication of Temple (2 Chron. vi. 18). (See also Psalm l. 9 and 10, etc.)

Illustrate the Atonement. It was not that God needed to be persuaded or satisfied, but rather that we needed to be brought to repentance.

Illustrate also our church-going. If we absent ourselves, we are ourselves the losers, not God. God only needs us that He may bless us.

VI.—*St. Matthew* xxi. 3 (*Palm Sunday*) : *The Lord hath Need of Them.*

The colt in preference to the old she-ass. His need of the young. Those who will face adventure and risk. It will not be time enough to turn to religion, when we have no longer the nerve to ride a motor-bike. Fresh flowers, not faded flowers, make the best offering.

Owner's consent wanted—owner of ass, owner of upper room, owner of Simon's boat, owner of Joseph's grave. The poverty of Jesus; His need of everything; yet He might have accepted the Devil's offer (Third Temptation).

We hold the wherewithal for God to accomplish His purposes in the world. Some are holding it up. They nailed Christ's hands, therefore God needs ours. Are we not available? (See Acts ix. 6.)

III.—THE OCCASIONAL SERVICES IN THE PRAYER BOOK (ILLUSTRATING THE COURSE OF HUMAN LIFE)

I.—*Initiation.*

Introduce course by teaching how to find one's way about the Prayer Book. The Regular Services. The Occasional Services.

Explain course: To three of these services we only

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come once in a lifetime—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Burial of the Dead. Of the others, Marriage less “occasional” in these days of easy divorce than intended it should be! Visitation of the Sick, the more “occasional” the better!

Holy Baptism: Compare Divine Society with Human Societies. Human Societies also have forms of initiation, with vows and promises on the one hand, and rights and privileges on the other. Good to look back on contracts and review how they have been kept—*e.g.*, man and maid in marriage; also, *e.g.*, Priest and God in Ordination; *e.g.*, also Oddfellows and Freemasonry.

Picture initiation ceremony at the Font. The hopes of those gathered there concerning the initiate, and the reminder it gives of one's own initiation; the beauty of it; the idealism of it. Refer to abuses of it in minds of parents, getting child “done”; also to abuses *re* godparents. The writer knows of a man who will stand godfather to any child in the street for a pint of beer, and he is frequently called upon. Baptism is initiation into the Body of Christ, the Family of God, the Kingdom of Heaven. Note position of Font—at the door. Regret absence of congregation—contrary to rubric, a concession to impatience (quote rubric). Infant Baptism in accordance with teaching of Christ and with practice of first apostles and early Fathers. Our Church provides for Adult Baptism (reasons given in “The Preface”), also in some churches immersion (Torquay and Lambeth). Stress the gift, the grace of Baptism. Illustrate banknote: its power to convey cash value to you depends on promise of Bank of England; ditto in Baptism we look to promise of Jesus. Conclude with appeal to individual to stir up the gift that is in him.

Ancient ceremonies which may be referred to: the salt; the white robe, the lighted taper, the three gentle blows upon the face.

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II.—Education: the Catechism.

Note progress marked by structure of church: First Font, then Confirmation steps, then Altar steps; but between Font and Confirmation steps come the pews—these suggest education. Refer to rubrics requiring Catechism before Confirmation. Meaning of word found in heart of it—ECH.

Echo means repeating after one—so Catechism was taught in olden days, before people could read. Refer to rubric calling upon parents and masters or employers to see that children, apprentices, and servants attended church to learn Catechism. Dwell on responsibility not only of parents but also of employers in spiritual matters. (Regret Limited Liability and soulless Companies.)

Three words sum up the Catechism: Back, Before, But.

(1) Back: What Baptism did for you. (2) Before: Life before you with the two duties to God and your neighbour. (3) But: Impossible without grace of prayer and sacrament.

Scout law based on Church Catechism. As taught in the old Church schools, the Catechism formed the character of England. Importance of Training Colleges for Teachers, hence of Parochial Quota. Mr. Fisher on Education: “We assume that education should be education of the whole man, spiritual, intellectual, physical.” Trinity in each of us.

Develop body only and become fierce ruffians. Develop mind only and become clever rascals. Add to these development of soul and become good characters. School curriculum: games, science, religion. Which pays best? Which greatest asset to nation? “The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.”

III.—Confirmation.

Meaning of word, strengthening or sealing. Original association of the word with what is done for the

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candidate by the gift of the Holy Ghost; secondary association of the word with what candidate does by ratifying baptismal vows.

Three sorts of people in a congregation: (i.) Those who have been baptised, but not confirmed, and don't intend to be; (ii.) those who have not been confirmed, but do intend to be; (iii.) those who have been confirmed. Address each sort of people separately.

To (i.): You are rejecting a rule of the Church, cutting yourself off from Holy Communion. The clergy or officers of the Church are to administer the rules of the Church, and have no right to set them on one side. You are also rejecting an ordinance of Scripture and of apostolic authority. Confirmation presumably after the mind of Christ. If Baptism built upon Circumcision and Holy Communion upon Passover, then Confirmation built upon Jewish ceremony for boy of twelve years which admitted him to full membership of Jewish Church (refer to rite of laying on head of candidate box containing texts). Saucers would not be placed upon a table unless the cups were to follow (*cf.* Jewish and Christian ordinances).

Further rejecting means of grace (see Acts viii.). Only a form? Then it is because you make it so. Others no better for it? Do you for that reason give up saying prayers? Not good enough? "They that be whole have no need of the physician." Too shy? The martyrs faced the lions. "Whosoever will confess Me before men," etc. (Matt. x. 32, 33).

To (ii.): Expect great things. Believe you will receive what is as a prop to a tree or a buttress to a wall. Prepare yourselves, hearts and lives. Remember it's the dirty milk-jug that turns the good milk sour, and if your milk-jug is dirty don't blame the milkman or the cow. Don't be "put off" by others. Don't be surprised or discouraged if you find yourself amongst the few.

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To (iii.): The tragedy of lapsed Confirmation candidates. The despair of the clergy. An offence to new candidates. "Whosoever shall offend," etc. (Matt. xviii. 6).

IV.—Domestication.

In olden days first part of Marriage Service, called Betrothal Service, used to take place some time before marriage. If this were restored it might prevent hasty marriages.

For a happy marriage, besides respect and love advisable there should be social equality, intellectual sympathy and sufficient means, and, most important of all, spiritual unity.

Deplore Registry Office marriages. Even in pagan Rome, in addition to civil ceremony, couple offered worship and sacrifices to the gods, and the bridal pair used to partake of a sacrificial cake.

In olden days Holy Communion always followed Marriage Service, and because of necessity for fasting before Holy Communion, hence the term "Wedding Breakfast." Relic of this is approach to altar of couple for conclusion of Marriage Service. Note rubric at end of Service. The Church strives to idealise matrimony; likens it to spiritual marriage, mystical union between Christ and His Church. Develop what sort of relationship between man and woman is suggested by this comparison.

Points of interest: In Christian Service man stands on woman's right hand. Jewish usage contrary (see Psalms xlv. 9). Woman no longer merely man's servant, his right hand; rather his treasure, and his right hand must be free to protect her.

Note also bride given not directly by father or guardian, but by priest, signifying she is the gift of God.

Symbolism of ring: Placed on third finger of woman's left hand; stated in old Prayer Books to be so placed

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because vein connects that finger with heart. Pure gold, unchanging in colour and without alloy. Perfect circle, unending, as true love. Puritan objection to ring in 1660 happily overruled. "With my body I thee worship"—not the worship which properly and solely belongs to God, but *cf.* His Worship the Mayor, the Worshipful Company of, etc. Worship=worth-ship—the bride is worthy of respect.

Quotation from Ruskin: "In her husband's house she may be his servant, but in his heart she is his queen. Whatever of best he can conceive, it is her part to be. Whatever of highest he can hope, it is hers to promise. All that is dark in him, she must purge into purity. All that is failing in him, she must strengthen into truth. From her, through the world's clamour, he must win his praise. In her through all the world's warfare, he must find his peace."

Another writer: "Woman was created, not out of man's head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be beloved."

Conclude with appeal for preservation of English homes. King George: "The foundation of a nation's glory is laid in the homes of the people." Deplore what breaks up homes; legislation loosening ties, literature ridiculing them, too frequent week-ends; hotel Christmases. When we have laughed "Home, sweet Home" off the stage, what will then be left?

V.—Tribulation.

In life's story sooner or later a chapter "Under the Shadow" (John xvi. 33).

Refer rubric in Visitation of Sick *re* making one's will and necessity of being reminded to do so whilst in health. Also refer what rubric says *re* "making of bequests." Death-bed charity is being generous with

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what in a few moments will belong to someone else; it is taxing one's heirs, simply adding to Death duties.

Refer what rubric says *re* repentance and forgiveness and reparation. Exhort to attend to these things whilst in health.

When the devil was sick, the devil a saint would be; But when the devil got well, the devil a saint was he!

"One effectual death-bed repentance in Bible, lest any man should despair (dying thief); but only one, lest any man should presume."

Canon Dwelly: "Birds when they are full of life and activity are almost always on the wing (swallows particularly), but when they are tired and done they must flop somewhere—on to some telegraph wire or branch of a tree or roof of a house, and they will flop down where they have been accustomed to perch before."

Where will you flop? To what will you fly when you are done? Is there anything in the Visitation of the Sick where you can perch? Only so if you perch there from time to time now in days of health.

Suggest make from service for the Visitation of the Sick a service for the healthy.

"Communion of the Sick." If offered you, don't reply, "Oh no, I'm not as bad as that." The service is not called "The Communion of the Dying."

1. *Sickness a time of preparation.* Inaction not uselessness. Nature looks inactive in winter time, but it is preparing for spring. In a river lock is enforced inactivity, but you are preparing for a higher stretch of the river.

2. *Sickness a time of purification.* The old refiner watched the furnace, and when he saw his image reflected in the silver he knew his work was accomplished. Tribulation a furnace to purify and bring

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out the image of God which was lost. Beware—chaff is consumed by furnace.

3. *Sickness a time of participation.* God is not a cushioned and distant despot, but a bleeding and suffering companion. If we share Christ's cross, we shall share His crown.

VI.—*Translation.*

Refer to last sermon in course. Course illustrates how Mother Church tries to tend her children with a mother's love from cradle to grave.

Burial Service attended by those who never attend a place of worship; therefore it is the only service by which they judge the Church and her services. How lamentable when gabbled! Yet add a word of sympathy for cemetery Chaplain. A miracle of grace if he keeps fresh and obviously real.

What does our Burial Service mean to vast majority who listen to it in mute astonishment or uncontrolled grief, or sullen resentment, or unbelieving indifference? Give instances and explain difficulties—*e.g.*, "baptised for the dead," "protest by your rejoicing," "thou fool."

Explain custom of throwing a handful of earth into grave. Refer to rubric directing same, also to rubric in First Prayer Book of Edward VI. ordering this to be done by Priest. "Within a hallowed acre, He sows yet other grain."

Refer to rubrics *re* unbaptised and suicides. General supposition is that Church is narrow and uncharitable, and that clergy will refuse to take *any* service in such cases. Explain rubric only states that the particular wording of this service as it stands would be unsuitable and inapplicable in such cases, and would require alteration.

Explain "vile body." The Church does not dishonour or insult the body. Word "vile" in old days

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not opprobrious; meant simply "of little comparative or lasting worth."

Point out triumphant note of service. Refer to our surrender of plumes and streamers, etc. Death a translation from lower to higher floor in the Father's House. Yet "We give thee hearty thanks" often sounds unreal, especially in case of premature closing of a useful life. Point out First Reformation Prayer Book wording: "We give thee hearty thanks *for* this thy servant"—*i.e.*, for God's gift of him or her to us. But extremists amongst reformers changed this, lest it should suggest prayers for the dead. Conclude with word *re* prayers for the dead. Discuss prohibition of abuse. In Jewish synagogues and in our Lord's day prayers offered for dead. Ordinary custom of Christian Church as early as A.D. 150. Martin Luther and Dr. Johnson prayed for their dead.

If New Testament contains no command, it certainly contains no prohibition; therefore liberty of conscience. Rejoice in such liberty and exercise it as conscience guides.

IV.—THE FACE OF JESUS

- I. "He looked on the fields" (John iv. 35).
- II. "He looked on Peter" (Luke xxii. 61).
- III. "He looked with anger" (Mark iii. 5).
- IV. "He looked with compassion" (Matt. ix. 36).
- V. "He looked and loved" (Mark x. 21).
- VI. "He looked and wept" (Luke xix. 41).

V.—THE "EXCEPTS" OF JESUS

- I. "Except ye repent" (Luke xiii. 3).
- II. "Except a man be born anew" (John iii. 3), R.V.
- III. "Except ye turn and become as little children" (Matt. xviii. 3), R.V.

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IV. "Except your righteousness exceed" (Matt. v. 20).

V. "Except ye eat . . . and drink . . ." (John vi. 53).

VI. "Except a corn of wheat fall . . . and die . . ." (John xii. 20-24).

VI.—THE LONELINESS OF JESUS

I. "They understood not the saying" (Luke ii. 50).

II. "Into the wilderness" (Matt. iv. 1).

III. "And yet hast thou not known Me?" (John xiv. 9).

IV. "He was withdrawn from them" (Luke xxii. 41).

V. "They all forsook Him and fled" (Matt. xxvi. 56).

VI. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Mark xv. 34).

VII.—THE MONASTIC VOWS

I.—*Poverty.*

"As poor, yet making many rich" (2 Cor. vi. 10). Roman Empire fell before barbarians in fifth century. Pressure of taxation on declining population such that barbarians welcomed and a lower civilisation preferred. St. Benedict in sixth century organised monastic life in West, thought only of serving God, but incidentally preserved culture.

Monastic vow only for the few, but Christians in the world a kind of Third Order; should cultivate appropriate virtues.

(i.) Employment of money. Wise apportionment between saving and spending. Risk of underspending from unduly prudential motives.

(ii.) Fear the characteristic modern neurosis; especially of poverty, and of letting down standard

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of living. Inconsistent with worship of crucified Saviour. "Though He was rich . . ."

(iii.) Cheerful acceptance of taxation. God's will for us. "Thou couldst have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above."

II.—*Chastity.*

"God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (1 Thess. iv. 7).

(i.) Ascetic revulsion against interest in sex justified by over-sexed character of Gentile civilisation. A necessary stage. Over-emphasis on sex had been followed by declining birth-rate and "failure of nerve." Benedict offered abstinence from marriage, spare diet, regular work, companionship of own sex. An ideal for few only, but taught the many that chastity was possible.

(ii.) Wheel come full circle. An over-sexed and decadent civilisation again. No return to Victorian tabus possible, but must recognise dangers. Stimulus from generous diet, novels, plays. Need of supporting the good in art and literature—more urgent than that of trying to revive Puritanism.

(iii.) Need of discipline of affections. Nature gives us the mating instinct. In choosing the particular person, reason, wishes of family, etc., to be considered as well as impulse. Should one ever *fall* in love?

III.—*Obedience.*

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph. v. 21).

(i.) The monk obeyed the Abbot, the Abbot obeyed the will of the Community embodied in the rule. Obedience to those set over us, just because God has put them there, the greatest need of our age, which makes a fetish of self-determination. A strong character needed to swim against the current and *obey*.

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(ii.) (a) *Family life*. In most things the husband defers to and obeys his wife; the wife cannot evade a measure of obedience to her husband. At work she has to obey the "boss," for whom she presumably has no love; why should it be *infra dig.* to obey the man whom she loves and has chosen?

Children should obey their parents; however, it is imperative that parents should not provoke their children to wrath by issuing arbitrary commands, but make obedience easy by tact and courtesy.

(b) *Church life*. Most of our troubles would disappear if Bishops, clergy and laity vied with one another in obedience to the Prayer Book.

IV.—"Stabilitas."

"All the Athenians . . . spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing" (Acts xvii. 21).

(i.) Description of ourselves? "News," every hour of the day. To the Athenian mental restlessness we add bodily restlessness. Motoring, week-end habit, speed as an end in itself. All agreed that we need change.

(ii.) Over against this, the characteristic Benedictine vow of "stability," to stay till death in the monastery of one's choice. Almost terrifying to us. Yet from it grows great-heartedness, *μακροθυμία*, power of sticking to things. A virtue of the static eighteenth century, on the accumulated reserves of which we are living.

(iii.) Content to stay where God puts us. Roots deep in ground. Perhaps a condition of bearing much fruit.

VIII.—TYPES OF REPENTANCE

I.—*David* (2 Sam. xii.).

Generous, impulsive, easily swayed towards good or evil. (In estimating him we must consider the extent

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of his conformity to the moral standards of his own age, and in particular we must weigh motives.)

David's sin—appalling treachery. Falling off from generous-souled man of 1 Sam. xxiv. and xxvi., or of 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. Self-deception caused by lust, which is closely allied to self-love.

Nathan's parable. David sees himself in the hypothetical sin of another. "Thou art the man." Whole story inconceivable under any other ancient Oriental monarchy. Rights of individual cherished in Israel, power of prophets. (Cf. 1 Kings xxi., where Naboth, a small holder, is able to hold up a scheme of "public improvement," as Ahab might have called it in modern phraseology.)

David's splendid act of reparation in instantaneously seeing himself as others see him. Repentance accepted by God. David remains a weak and faulty old man, but the direction of his life is changed. Accepts consequences of his sin.

II.—*Jonah*.

A study of a religious man typifying Israel, blind to God's purposes for his race, who is gradually educated. The conversion of Jonah is the point of the story, not that of Nineveh.

(i.) Jonah, bidden to go East, goes West rather than do missionary work. The Hound of Heaven pursues him. A great deliverance, one striking mercy, opens his eyes.

(ii.) Does God's will at last. Peeved at repentance of Nineveh. Like the elder brother of Luke xv., annoyed at sinners being let off so easily. Has he come so far just for this?

(iii.) God's patience with the Pharisaic type, as with the heathen. Slow education. Jonah's exasperation at the destruction of the gourd. "What a *pity!* It was so useful to *me.*" *A fortiori* argument—then what

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must God feel towards the inhabitants of a vast city, in which, to say nothing of the downright sinners, there are hundreds of thousands of innocent children—and animals? (Cf. Matt. vi. 24, x. 29.)

III.—*St. Peter.*

Can be profitably used as a type of the man who has no sudden change in his life; the just, whose path shines more and more unto the perfect day.

(i.) According to Mark i. 16-18, based on his memoirs, the first to be called; obeyed at once. One of the three chief disciples (v. 37, etc.).

(ii.) The first to recognise Jesus as Messiah. Others accepted men as leaders of Messianic movements (Acts v. 36, 37). Mark viii. 32 shows that Peter in verse 29 could not yet accept a crucified Jesus as Christ.

(iii.) Peter's "fall" should not be exaggerated. He alone (except John, who had friends at court) followed Jesus into the high priest's house. Showed extraordinary bravery. A defensive "lie," when a man is in the enemy's hand, is not necessarily a sin. His tears show that his conscience was remarkably sensitive. The restoration ("more than these") in John xxi. 15-17 suggests that the reproach refers not to a failure in love, but to his boastful comparison of himself with others (Mark xiv. 29). "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine" might have been said to him. Notice how generously he receives the younger Gentile brother in Acts.

IV.—*St. Paul.*

The classic example of the "twice born." The interpretation of Rom. vii. as autobiographical is sufficiently certain to be used along with Acts ix., xxii., xxvi. to reconstruct his conversion. Before conversion Paul served God, as a slave: afterwards, as a son

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(cf. John xv. 15), through union with the Son of God. The conversions described in James' *Some Varieties of Religious Experience* are nearly all of the Pauline type, which indeed, largely through the influence of Rom. vii., and of St. Augustine and Luther, has been the norm in Evangelical circles. Such dramatic conversions are probably becoming less common, but some such experience of putting to death the Ego and reforming one's personality round a new God-directed centre remains a necessity if progress is to be made. The preacher can appeal to a wide if shallow acquaintance with popular psychology in dealing with the subject. He will find abundant material in A. E. Taylor's *The Faith of a Moralist*.

IX.—PREPARATION FOR EASTER COMMUNION

The last answer of the Catechism (coupled with the Short Invitation).

"To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins (ye that do truly and earnestly repent), stedfastly purposing to lead a new life (and intend to lead a new life); have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men (in love and charity with your neighbours)."

I.—Self-examination leading to Repentance.

The root difficulty is that the instrument we use is faulty, vitiated by self-love. Need of help, especially from (a) daily weighing of the Scriptures, (b) deferring to the judgment of God's ministers. Another way is to accept the unfavourable judgments passed on us by others, which we overhear, or which come round to us, as just, instead of resenting them.

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II.—*The New Life.*

Repentance—*i.e.*, primarily a change of outlook, a new orientation. It is consistent with many subsequent falls, since all growth, and especially growth in grace, is slow. The penitent can say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see," but sustained loyalty to the heavenly vision is a lifelong struggle.

III.—*A Lively Faith.*

The double meaning of "belief." The slackening of effort on the part of communicants is largely due to a failure to believe the facts of the Creed, and this in its turn to neglect of effort to understand it. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Heb. xi. 6). A living faith is fundamental. If we really believe in God, we must trust Him. We cannot trust in God pragmatically, if we in our hearts are not convinced that God, as Christianity understands Him, exists.

IV.—*Charity with all Men* ("your neighbours").

Your "neighbours" in a sixteenth-century parish were "all men" and were also identical with the communicants. By sectionalising English Christianity, developing schools of Churchmanship, and losing the indifferent from the altar, we have made the duty of charity towards our fellow-communicants very easy. The Prayer Book ideal includes the whole population with which we are brought into contact.

[Note that the Catechism provides much valuable material for Lenten sermons. It is the bond of union in the English Church, accepted by all schools of thought. Its phrases awake echoes of Confirmation instruction; and to revive memories of the catechumenate is in harmony with the primitive idea of Lent. See p. 3.]

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X.—A SERMON ON LUKE XV.

Three things lost, varying in degree of responsibility.

I.—*The Lost Coin.*

It was lost *by* someone. Responsibility that of others. The misfits of our social system; never, so far as we can see, had a chance. God's love seeks them. They are inside the house.

II.—*The Lost Sheep.*

Some degree of responsibility, but no one blames a sheep very much. The herd-instinct, followed the rest of the flock, lost before it knew what was happening. Note God's care for the individual. In days when we think in millions and mass-production dominates commerce, good to be reminded of the shepherd's care for one sheep.

III.—*The Lost Son* [omit the elder brother].

Knew what he was doing. Turned his back on home. The father did not seek him. Had to wait till he came to himself, his true self. Then saw him a great way off and ran to meet him. To which class do you and I belong, if we go astray?

XI.—THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

I.—*A Member of Christ* (1 Cor. xii.).

The Covenant relationship binds both sides. If we fail in our obligations we forfeit our relationship. What is involved in it?

Members of Christ receiving life from Him, with varying offices—all necessary. He is the Head of the Body (Col. i. 18), that which all must obey—His godly motions—communications to be kept clear. Members

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one of another. Healthy membership of the Body. The members must pull together—Reunion.

II.—*The Child of God* (Eph. iv. 6).

God above all; therefore worthy of all obedience. Through and in all; the family likeness should show in us. The child's attitude (Matt. vi. 8, 32), trustful dependence in the Father's house. The honour of the family in our hands.

III.—*An Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven* (Luke xii. 32).

Given, not earned, yet most costly (Matt. xiii. 44). Its powers seen in the joy of the early chapters of Acts. Its citizenship and obligations (Phil. iii. 20). Need of loyalty. A present possession.

IV.—*Renunciation*.

The devil, who sets up a rival authority, trying to seduce the child of God from his allegiance into so-called "independence." But Rom. vi. 12, 16. The world, which sets up as a counter-attraction to the Kingdom. But 2 Cor. iv. 18. The flesh, which tries to use for itself the body which is a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Ghost. But Rom. viii. 13.

V.—*Faith* (Heb. xi. 1).

"That which underlies all hope." "Wherever there is true hope a reality lies behind it . . . the proof or test of matters which the eye does not behold" (Nairne, *Ep. of Priesthood*, p. 388). The necessity of right faith. What is the reality that lies behind? "He has a confident belief in the reality of truth, and an assurance that in its substance he possesses it already, because he is in touch with its living centre. Truth is a person whom he knows and loves" (Bishop Chandler, *Ara Cæli*, p. 161).

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VI. *Obedience* (John xv. 14; Rom. xii. 1; Exod. xix. 5).

Our conduct depends on the kind of God we obey. Hence the necessity of right faith. He, the Life, lays down the conditions of living. His plan requires our co-operation. Membership of the Kingdom requires obedience to its laws (Phil. iii. 20).

Laws summarised: Matt. xxii. 35-40. But John xiii. 34, 35; cf. Rom. xiii. 9, 10. Jesuits said, "Obey as a corpse," and did marvels. Christ said, "Obey as friends." "When the Lord in the old law commanded His people to love their neighbours as themselves, He had not yet come to earth, and knowing well how much we love ourselves He could not ask more. But when Jesus gave His Apostles a new command—His special commandment—He did not only require that we should love our neighbour as ourself, but as He Himself loved him" (Thérèse of Lisieux).

Christ's own obedience (John xiv. 31, to the Cross; John xx. 21, *as*).

[In part suggested by P. Dearmer, *Lessons on the Way*, vol. i.]

XII.—OUR PROFESSION

"Baptism doth represent unto us our profession."

I.—*The Professional Standard*.

"Why go without? Why not stand your self . . .?" (Advt.). Why? Yet Lent calls to self-denial. Professional and amateur. The skill and finish of professional work due to study and self-discipline in all that affects the profession. Is the standard of our Christianity professional or amateur? Yet "Baptism doth represent to us our profession . . . Him." Its professional standard set out under various titles. Christ the standard. His work finished in every detail. The discipline of His life (Matt. v. 48). His standard that by which we are judged by outsiders.

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II.—*The Athlete* (1 Cor. ix. 24, 25).

His training. "Temperance is of many kinds, and is annexed to various virtues by which a man governs himself" (2 Tim. ii. 5). His concentration on the race. His goal (Heb. xii. 1, 2). A Marathon race, for life. His prize. The crown of no intrinsic value. Its value in its significance of victory, and of the authority by whom the victory was recognised (2 Tim. iv. 8).

III.—*The Soldier* (2 Tim. ii. 3, 4).

"There is a war on." "It is too often assumed that the spirit of Christianity is all gentleness, meekness and humility, but this is to leave out all that sternness, that courage, that unflinching resolution which is equally characteristic of the spirit of Christ" (Bishop Gilbert White).

A double battle-front: (a) in a man's own life; (b) against the evils of the world at large. The equipment (Eph. vi. 11-18): the whole armour. The discipline: courage, loyalty, self-sacrifice, watchfulness, enterprise. The drill and exercise: services of the Church.

IV.—*The Merchant* (Matt. xiii. 44-46).

"Christianity is betting your life there is a God" (Donald Hankey). Men offered the biggest speculation of their lives. Nothing short of all would buy it. Was it worth it? What did He offer? Business methods in Christian life (Luke xvi. 8b).

Speculation occasional; regular trading lifelong (Matt. xxv. 14 ff.). A constant judging of values, buying up opportunities of service. "Good money-changers."

V.—*The Servant* (Luke xii. 35-48 with 16-21, *doulos*; Mark xiii. 34).

A study in the possessive case. Note the "I" and "my" in 16-21. The servants have nothing of their

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own, but are left to administer their lord's goods, in his house. To every man his work, not all the same (1 Cor. iv. 2). The spirit of good service (Eph. vi. 5-9). He is bound to provide for His servants (Matt. vi. 33). But Matt. vi. 24.

VI.—*The Friend* (John xv. 13-15).

His initiative (Rom. v. 7, 8; cf. John i. 39). The condition (John xv. 14). The corollary (1 John iv. 11). "The true lover does not desire to think of his service, but only of Him whom he serves" (Sufi Abu Nu'aym). "The Lover said: He who fears not my Beloved must fear everything, and he who fears Him may be bold and fervent in all things beside" (Lull). "Christ the faithful Friend, for whom there is nothing that may be taken in exchange: who hath been deserted and provoked by us and yet never deserteth us, but by His own blood hath made His foes His dearest friends" (*Eucharistic Month*). The final command (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

[In part suggested by sermons of Bishop Gilbert White.]

XIII.—SINS OF RELIGIOUS PEOPLE (based on the book of this name, now out of print)

I.—*Low Spirits* (1 Cor. x. 10).

"Indulged melancholy wrongs ourselves, our neighbours, our God." Continued murmuring condemned Israel to forty years in the wilderness. The cup may be bitter, but a share is "the privilege of all those who would stand near the Cross." For some the cure is work; looking off from self to serve others. For others the sacrifice offered to God of untoward circumstances, sorrows, and sickness (Hosea ii. 14-16).

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II.—*The Tongue* (James iii. 3-5; Matt. xii. 22; Prov. xvi. 20).

Misuse of speech; little breaches of charity, of truth, gossip. The overbearing, or merely tattling tongue; the desire to appear knowing. Misuse of silence; when protest is a duty; not speaking first after a quarrel; the selfish silence of offended pride; the "dumb devil." Control of the tongue includes speech as well as silence (Matt. xii. 36, 37; Mark iv. 24).

III.—*Lukewarmness* (Rev. iii. 16).

Laodicea not told of any particular sins like the others, just a comfortable doing nothing one way or the other. "Father is a Christian, but he's not been working at it lately." Browning, *The Statue and the Bust*. Dante's Drifters who take "the surest though admittedly the most comfortable way to hell" (Bishop G. White). Christ had no use for half-measures; His own doings; His requirements "all." Characteristics of modern Laodiceans. But iii. 20. Such a supper at Emmaus sent two eager messengers over a long road to bring good tidings to their friends.

IV.—*Possessiveness* (Luke xii. 15-21).

A study of the possessive case. He takes his security for granted. Because of "my goods" he can say to "my soul." But his soul is not his own. His security insecure. Contrasting picture (verses 35-39). Servants (*douloi*) in their master's house. Their support his responsibility. The security adequate. Trouble begins when a man treats his master's goods and servants as his own (verses 45-46). But what a Master! (verse 37). Dare we trust Him, or do we feel unsafe in His hands?

V.—*Fear* (Rev. xxi. 8; Isa. vii. 9b).

An Eastern, being asked what he admired in Christ, said, "His courage." He calls for courage (Matt. xvi.

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24-26). Test ourselves by the saints in Heb. xi. (the incentive, verse 13), or by 2 Cor. ix. 23-27; Phil. iii. 7, 8 (the incentive, verses 9-13); 1 John iv. 18.

VI.—*Egotism* (John xii. 24-26).

"Psyche means more than the life, not mere existence, but the very principle of personality, the soul, the self." Test by (a) 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3: Self-protection. Do I stop short of hurting myself? (b) 1 Cor. xiii. 4-7: Do I call attention to myself? The Body of Christ (1 Cor. xii. 12 ff.) is built up in love (Eph. iv. 16). Saul the Pharisee became Paul the great lover, because Christ loved in him (Gal. ii. 20).

XIV.—SINS OF RELIGIOUS PEOPLE (*Series 2*)

I.—*Godly Sorrow* (1 Cor. vi. 20; Heb. vi. 1, 2).

The soul that has found God has an anchorage where others are tempest-tossed. Why call to further repentance? Christian life has only begun, not ended. Called for God's use and purpose. What hinders our efficiency?

(i.) All sin, ours or the community's, holds back God's purpose (Rom. viii. 20). What is our share?

(ii.) It was the sins of religious people like ourselves that brought Christ to the Cross. They were out of harmony with His purpose.

Which do we care for most, our comfort, prestige, etc., or God's purpose? Some small sin may break the circuit and cause that recurrent sin for which we repent so fruitlessly and which holds us back from full service to the glory of God.

II.—*Inside and Out* (Matt. xi. 5, 6).

Healing of the paralytic, not inside without outside nor outside without the inside. Present-day emphasis on conditions and environment, philanthropy, etc. If

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we had better Church conditions. . . . But the slum mind makes a slum anywhere, because it does not *really* want to change. Do we really *want* to be changed inside? or noticeably changed? Being changed we can change the conditions. How far are they due to us?

(i.) "Thy sins be forgiven," cleansing of the inside (John xxi. 23).

(ii.) "Arise . . . house," change of condition; able to live differently. The neighbours knew it had happened.

III.—*Thought* (1 Cor. iii. 18; Rom. viii. 5).

"As a man thinks so he is." Well-known writer says that a good way of self-examination is to ask ourselves suddenly what we are thinking of. We catch unsuspected preoccupations. What is our chief interest? What are we making of ourselves? Not necessarily what do we do, but what do our thoughts play with? Wrong interests (Rom. i. 18-21, 25-28). Not always immoral (Rom. x. 2, 3). Right interests (Phil. iii. 13-14; iv. 8). Does this seem more exclusive than we are prepared for? (Mark viii. 36, 37).

IV.—*Unforgiving Spirit* (Jonah iv.; Matt. xviii. 21-35; Eph. iv. 32).

Our feelings are hurt; our just rights and our dignity ought to be respected. What are the limits of forgiveness? What is God's limit? (Luke vii. 41-47). The debtor was not able to pay even the lesser sum. The condition (Matt. xviii. 32-35). The quality of forgiveness, "from the heart." Religious and even physical effects of bearing a grudge. Physical as well as spiritual poison. The example (Luke xxiii. 34; 1 Pet. ii. 23).

V.—*Afraid to Confess* (Rom. x. 10; Matt. x. 32, 33; cf. Acts iv. 8-12).

Often as hard to confess our desire for goodness as our faults. Why fear to confess Christ? Laughter?

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Not able to live up to? Nothing to confess? Why fear to confess sins to Him (before Priest)? Not like dragging into the open what we think hidden? He sees (Heb. iv. 13; 1 John i. 8, 9). Why fear to confess to others our sins against them? Facing up to them ourselves? No news to others (1 John iv. 18: Discipline of facing up to ourselves and our fears).

VI.—*Discouragement* (Mic. vii. 8).

(i.) *Fall*. Trying to do better, and fall. Why? Habit? Weakness? Don't sit down under it. "When I fail in my duty, I readily acknowledge it, saying, I am used to do so; I shall never do otherwise if I am left to myself" (Brother Lawrence).

(ii.) *Sit in darkness*. We are not always given joy in God. Von Hügel says there are times when, as on the mountains, a mist comes down upon us and hides all. The mountain is still there, and we must sit fast. "Be certain that the Lord makes use of the veil of dryness, to the end we may not understand what He is working in us" (Molinos). "He made darkness His secret place." Hold fast. Seek if caused by our own fault.

Christ went through (Mark xv. 34), and so came to Easter.

XV.—COMINGS OF THE CHRIST

I.—*The Desire of all Nations* (Haggai ii. 7).

Nations feel something lacking, look for its coming. Jews the Messiah, Islam the last Imam, Far East Maitreya Buddha, Hinduism last emanation of Vishnu. Their desire (John i. 14). He came. Was He what they wanted? Why not? What we want? (Matt. v. 6; Isa. xxvi. 8, 9; Ps. lxxxiv. 2). Is our appetite depraved? (John v. 44; xii. 42-43). Is our desire too costly? (Prov. xiii. 4; Matt. xiii. 44-46). Our response (Luke

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v. 11 or iv. 28, 29?). "Seek from Him a hunger and thirst after righteousness, so that ever longing after that which is more perfect thou mayest be worthy to attain eternal satisfaction."

II.—*The Sun of Righteousness* (Mal. iv. 2).

The Light of the world (John viii. 12; 1 John i. 5-7; Rev. i. 15). The Light of the sun reveals (John iii. 19-21). Dare we face it? Do we want to see? The light of the sun heals. Do we need it? (*cf.* Rev. iii. 15-16). The light is a guide to walk by (John viii. 12; xi. 9, 10). Had we rather sit in twilight? Our response (1 John i. 7, 8 or John ix. 39-41). Our calling (Matt. v. 14). "Love Him with a burning love, so that for love of Him thou mayest glow and melt and mayest kindle and inflame all things around thee."

III.—*The Fountain of Living Water* (Jer. ii. 13; John iv. 13, 14).

The Living Water does not grow stale. In the Law living water used for cleansing (*cf.* Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27). Thirst the most insupportable privation (Rev. xxii. 2, 17). Does He find Ps. xlii. 2? His offer (John vii. 38; *cf.* Ezek. xlvi. 1, 9; Rev. xxii. 1, 2). Home and foreign missions.

IV.—*The Good Physician* (Luke v. 31; Matt. viii. 16, 17; Luke x. 30-37).

Sickness is of soul and body (Isa. i. 4-6). He is healer of soul and body (Matt. ix. 1-7). (The Eucharist the medicine of immortality.) What does He find? (Rev. iii. 17, 18; John ix. 39-41; or Mark vi. 54-56; vii. 24-30?). His offer (Hosea xiv. 4-7). Collect for St. Luke. "Seek from Him the Spirit of Counsel, that thou mayest know to choose salutary measures for thy salvation."

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V.—*The Redeemer* (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

The Old Testament religion was one of redemption, beginning with Egypt. "It was all free. No price was paid to Pharaoh. There was no bargain, no haggling over ransom, no compromise. The oppressor was spoiled, and the captives went out freely" (S. C. Carpenter). *Cf.* Isa. xlviii. 17, 20, 21; His free act of grace. In the New Testament redemption is victory over sin and death to which man is enslaved (Col. ii. 13-15; Rom. viii. 1-3; Luke xi. 21, 22). "He breaks the power of cancelled sin." What does He find? (Eph. ii. 1-5). Our response (Rom. vi. 17-22; Eph. vi. 11-18; or Heb. iii. 12; iv. 1?). His offer (Col. i. 12, 13). Our response (1 John iii. 16).

VI.—*The Lord to His Temple* (Mal. iii. 1-3; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; 1 Pet. ii. 5).

What does He find? (Rom. xiii. 11-13; Luke xii. 35-48; Matt. xxi. 12-13). His offer (Rev. iii. 20). The response (Phil. iii. 4-9).

[M.D.R.W., based on *The Eucharistic Month*, from which unacknowledged quotations are taken.]

XVI.—TEMPTATIONS OF THE LORD AND HIS FOLLOWERS

I.—*The Temptation of the Lord* (Heb. iv. 15; Matt. iv. 1-11).

A reality, necessary to complete sympathy.

(i.) Temptation of the flesh. A real need, but not to be illegitimately supplied.

(ii.) Temptation to spiritual pride and self-confidence. Your importance is such that you can do what would be presumption in another. Nothing justifies us in presuming on our relation to God.

(iii.) Temptation to ambition, visible results by His personal leadership. Virtue under compulsion in-

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volves compromise, if not worse. He must apparently fail, that God may have all men to serve Him from free choice, but with no compromise.

II.—The Temptation to seek Personal Fame (John vii. 46).

He could have done anything He liked. Men followed Him at a word. Crowds hung upon His lips. The Doctors of the Law could not entangle Him in His talk. He chose the way of lowliness.

(i.) Luke ii. 47, 51: There were scholarships for brilliant boys. His Father's business lay at Nazareth.

(ii.) Mark ix. 30, 31: His concentration on a few pupils, and they not very distinguished.

(iii.) Phil. iii. 4-8: Paul threw aside what looked like a distinguished academical career.

Their words have gone into the ends of the world. Universal, not local. Not I but the Father: Not I but Christ.

III.—The Temptation to Individualism (Rom. xii. 4, 5).

(i.) He could have done things so much better Himself. But chose team work. Sending the twelve, the seventy. My friends (John xv. 15). The Body (Eph. iv. 16), every joint, every part. The witnesses (Acts i. 8), responsibility delegated.

(ii.) The Apostles. Before Pentecost, each wanting to be the greatest. After Pentecost work as a team in the same spirit.

(iii.) St. Paul always worked with a team. His message to Philippi to pull together (Phil. ii. 1-5).

IV.—The Temptation to overpower by His Personality (Luke ix. 57, 58; Matt. xxii. 42).

The difficulty of finding any explicit claim to Godhead in the Gospels. His refusal to claim Messiahship,

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which has led some to deny it to Him. He left His Personality to speak for itself, and those who lived with Him could find no other category but Son of God for their Master (Luke ix. 20). But He insists on thought and choice in His followers. They must follow, not only from a glamour which might fade in His absence but from solid conviction (Luke xiv. 25-35; xxiv. 45; Matt. xv. 16; xiii. 20, 21; x. 16-25). When people put persons before convictions we get 1 Cor. i. 11-13.

V.—The Temptation to Self-importance (Luke xxii. 25-27).

Aristotle's "magnificent man" knew that he was magnificent and showed it. Great Rabbis went about attended by crowds of disciples. Christ was at the call of everyone that needed Him. Jostled in the street. Called from dinner (Matt. ix. 18). Without time for meals (Mark vi. 31). After the Resurrection. The great work of the Father finished, His greeting the ordinary "Good morning" of perfect simplicity (Matt. xxviii. 9). His explanation "Ought not?" (Luke xxiv. 16). The call of the saints to be "nothing" based on His simplicity.

VI.—The Temptation to Short-Cuts (Mark xv. 32; Matt. vii. 24-27).

From the wilderness to Calvary He was continually tempted to short-cuts, something less than the absolute standard, something easier than the Cross. On Palm Sunday He was Master of Jerusalem. He deliberately laid aside His advantage and went to the Cross because only so could He redeem us. He deliberately laid before men the hardships of the Kingdom. His way the only one, as He the only Door (Matt. vii. 13, 14, 21-23; John vi. 37; xiv. 6).

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XVII.—SOME POINTS OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE

I.—Silence (Ps. xl. 1; xxvii. 16; xlv. 10).

Be still and know. "The sense of unreality which so persistently haunts the beginner in prayer is due to the fact that he is engaged in a monologue and not in a conversation" (E. Herman).

(i.) The silence of waiting upon God. Not always for audible response.

(ii.) The "cell in the heart" in daily life.

(iii.) Silence to God only won by disciplining the "lust to speak" to man.

II.—Meditation (Mark vii. 21).

"Meditation is nothing less than the art of thinking well and thoroughly upon the truths upon which prayer is based" (E. Herman).

(i.) Thinking it over with God.

(ii.) Need for meditation.

(iii.) A simple method.

(iv.) What to choose.

(v.) The reward. "In meditation God grows upon us until we are saturated with Him."

III.—Detachment (Matt. v. 3; Phil. iii. 7, 8; 2 Tim. ii. 4).

The disentangled man. Yet not slothful in business. "Detachment then implies that we are on active service under the absolute command of God" (Bishop Chandler).

(i.) Thorough. "God must be everything or nothing."

(ii.) Must not demand recognition or distinction.

(iii.) May not mean changing our work, but our attitude to it.

(iv.) God the lord of our leisure, the auditor of our expenditure (2 Cor. vi. 10).

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IV.—Disillusionment (Gen. i. 27; Eccles. iii. 11) (marg. *eternity*).

"Man, made in God's image, can only rest in God, and is irrevocably doomed to disappointment with anything else" (Bishop Chandler).

(i.) A disillusioned age. Impermanence, disunion, incompetence.

(ii.) How do we use disillusionment? It may "not take us further than a querulous disposition or a philosophy of despair," or it may be "the starting-point of experiential religion; it does more than anything else to give substance and sincerity to faith."

(iii.) It may "bring us to the one, unchanging and eternal Christ," with whom there is no disillusionment.

V.—Discipline (Col. iii. 5; 2 Tim. ii. 3; John xv. 11.)

John xv. 11, spoken as Christ went forth to the great test of His disciplined obedience to the Father. "We cannot really know the nature and power of prayer until we know something of what it means to be crucified with Christ." "The determining principle behind the Cross was not sacrifice but obedience."

(i.) Our spiritual impotence not a thing to be resigned to.

(ii.) Daily dying to self necessary for living to God.

(iii.) The joy of the early Franciscans.

"In the last resort both love and life resolve themselves into *spiritual staying power*. And there is no spiritual staying power without life-long unremitting discipline" (quotations E. Herman, *Creative Prayer*).

VI.—Love (John xv. 9; xiii. 34, 35; 1 Cor. xiii.).

"The four cardinal virtues of heathenism could be practised in isolation. But the three Christian virtues take man out of his narrow individuality." As the Father Me: so I you: so ye one another. How did the Father

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love Him to sending to the Cross for us? How did He love us? (Matt. x. 16-33; John xv. 13). How are we to love? (1 John iii. 16). "The Christian is bound to make great demands on others, because he makes great demands on himself." "True love is compatible with and even demands severity." "The love of Christ is both avid and generous. All that we are, all that we have, He takes. All that He is, all that He has, He gives" (Ruysbroeck).

[M.D.R.W., largely from Herman, *Creative Prayer*; Chandler, *Ara Celi*.]

XVIII.—THE GENERAL EXHORTATION

I.—*Why go to Church?* (Acts ii. 2; Matt. xviii. 20; Rev. v. 11).

(i.) The order: Where do *I* come in? Same place as in Lord's Prayer, which is plural, not singular. Promises to prayer in Gospels largely in plural.

(ii.) Worship in Revelation corporate; we go to share that activity. Opportunity, not obligation.

(iii.) Do we take our part or leave it to be done by deputy?

(iv.) Value as witness to our faith; needs completion in week-day life.

II.—*To confess our Sins* (1 John i. 8, 9; Mark i. 4, 15; Luke xiii. 3; xv. 18, 19; Acts ii. 38).

(i.) The first point in the message of the Kingdom.

(ii.) Matt. iv. 16, 17. The grace of being allowed to repent with promise of forgiveness.

(iii.) "An act of the will, not a state of feeling." Baptismal promises, renounce, believe, do. Belief makes repentance worth while: repentance makes doing possible: absolution.

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III.—*To render Thanks* (Luke xvii. 15-18; xxii. 17; Matt. xi. 25; Rom. i. 21; Phil. iv. 6).

(i.) The place it took in Christ's Ministry.

(ii.) Recognition of what God has done, so often overlooked.

(iii.) "Thanksgiving is the parent of confidence." Lack of it a factor in disbelief.

IV.—*His Most Worthy Praise* (Rev. v. 9; Acts xvi. 25; 2 Chron. xx. 21; Ps. lvii.).

(i.) Recognition of what God is. Therefore of what He can do.

(ii.) Revelation shows praise most constant where God most clearly known. How would we live in an atmosphere of praise?

(iii.) Old Testament regards praise as the right reaction in difficult circumstances. Turn the flank by praise: Benedicite.

(iv.) Prayer Book a manual to teach praise.

V.—*His Most Holy Word* (Luke i. 1-4; iv. 4; xxiv. 25, 27; Rom. iii. 12).

(i.) Christ as Bible student.

(ii.) Bible, like stars open to all, yet expert can open ever new wonders.

(iii.) Our faith, praise, penitence based on data given in Bible (Art. 6).

(iv.) Prayer Book gives the real "Gospel service," and Bible Reading scheme.

VI.—*To Ask* (Matt. vii. 7; xviii. 19; John xv. 7; 1 John v. 13-16; Jas. i. 5, 6; iv. 2, 3).

(i.) Wideness of Prayer Book intercession. Book of the family. All requests in plural. Belief in singular.

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(ii.) Some conditions of answer. Needy man asked for friend. "Many a man fails to obtain an answer to his requests for support, forgiveness and deliverance because he has forgotten to pray for his brother who is worshipping by his side."

(iii.) We have to carry home our own answers. How often do we call for them and acknowledge the receipt?

M.D.R.W.

XIX.—SOME MARKS OF CHRISTIANITY

I.—The True Fast (Isa. lviii. 3-8; Matt. xiii. 23b; vi. 16-18).

No question but that there will be a fast. But what constitutes it?

(i.) Do we "tell off our bodies to do the whole work," and let everybody know by our irritability and demands upon them?

(ii.) Is there an inward fast as well, from self-assertion, dominance and exactingness, remembering always that whatever score we have against others, God has a longer one against us? (Matt. xviii. 33).

The Curé d'Ars, when asked how to promote penitence in those who came to him, replied: "Give them a light penance, and do a heavy one on their behalf." Will our keeping of Lent promote penitence or annoyance in others? Make it easier for them to dwell together in unity?

II.—Patience of the Saints (Ps. xxxvii. 3a, 5).

(i.) The Old Testament shows the choice of men of long patience, because of long views, to be God's heroes. "If trust means anything at all, it means a steady . . . believing that He in whom we trust is right, although we cannot see it." Good resolutions may show in immediate result. Hold on.

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(ii.) Patience not acquiescence in present conditions. Trust in God makes us do all our work with a single eye (Matt. vi. 22). "The grace of prayer is the grace of the single eye. [The Saints had] a certain large leisure which went hand in hand with a remarkable effectiveness. . . . They always seemed to hit the mark" because of their "habit of referring the smallest actions to God" (E. Herman). But it takes time (Luke viii. 15); "with patience." Phil. iv. 7.

III.—The Freedom of Holiness (2 Cor. iv. 18; Ps. xl. 2).

In Scott's novels we read of the moss-troopers riding fearlessly across bogs where others could not follow, because they alone knew the hidden path of firm ground. Days of uncertainty (Luke xxi. 26). What is going on under the surface? "The supreme interest of human history . . . is unobtrusive and by most unmarked." In this world "the awful all-surpassing issue may be finding its decision along hidden ways where God alone is watching it" (Bishop F. Paget). Who can walk securely? Those only who know the Way. Thence a certain recklessness of the Saints, who know and dare to walk. Not only to walk but to rejoice (Phil. iv. 4-7). We hear "pagan" used as if it meant joyous and untrammelled. But "the pagan virtues, such as justice and temperance, are the sad virtues, and the mystical virtues of faith, hope, and charity are the gay and exuberant virtues" (G. K. Chesterton). Not only rejoice, but "to serve Him is to reign."

IV.—The Independence of Dependence (John xii. 49-50; xiv. 10; Luke vii. 8a; viii. 1-3; John xix. 28).

Double dependence on God and man, freely acknowledged. The humility of confessed dependence on man. We admire independence. Yet are essentially

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interdependent (1 Cor. xii. 25-26), and others depend on us. Yet by dependence on God it becomes independence. The only safe independence because it goes with love. Christ's independence of the world's lures. He is the sure footing for our freedom (Matt. vi. 24-34). Independence of the Saints of material resources.

V.—*Right Habits* (Ps. xci. 11; Cant. ii. 15).

“Sow a habit and reap a character, sow a character and reap a destiny.” We do not know which of our acts will mark our destiny. Judas betrayed Christ. Not his first fall through desire for money (John xii. 6); once he sold Christ. Peter denied Christ. Not his first ungoverned impulse. Pilate condemned Christ. Probably not the first time he had let the innocent suffer for his career; once it was Christ. (The story that later in exile he heard Him mentioned and had forgotten all about Him.) Christ went through to the Cross. No exceptions in His obedience (John viii. 29b). Watch the beginnings. Collect Trinity 9, *always*.

VI.—*Christian Courtesy* (1 Peter ii. 21-23; 17a; iii. 8, 9; Phil. ii. 3; John xiii. 35).

The badge of discipleship. “See how they love” once the wonder, now the scoff, of outsiders. The example of Christ. Judas, Malchus, Pilate, Thief, silent where impossible. The value of man. Christ died for him (Rom. xiv. 15), (even the most trying). Seeing the potential Christ in men.—Michelangelo letting loose the angel in the marble. “Manners maketh man.” “Manners are not idle but the fruit of royal nature and of noble mind.” Not only the thing done, but the manner of the doing tells.

[M.D.R.W., based on Sermons by Bishop F. Paget.]

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What follows is suitable for children:

XX.—SERVICE OUTLINES FOR HOLY WEEK

MONDAY.—*Subject: “Cleansing the Temple”*

Introduction.—What Holy Week means. . . . It will be *holy*, or different, in two ways: (1) We shall come to church each day; (2) we shall try specially hard to please our Lord. In church we shall have a part of the story each day.

Go back to Palm Sunday. Our Lord went back to Bethany. Today returns to Jerusalem. What catches His eye? Describe Temple. What was Temple for? Repent together: *Every temple is meant for the service of God and for nothing else.*

What did our Lord find? What ought He to have found? What did He say? What did He do?

We have now learned two things about the Temple of God: (1) *Every temple . . . else.* (2) *My house shall be called the house of prayer.*

What temples have we?

1. Churches. To be kept beautiful and used for worship.

2. St. Paul said our bodies are temples. What did he mean?

(a) They are for the service of God. He sometimes finds them used wrongly.

(b) They are houses of prayer. Our daily prayers.

Hymn: “Blessed are the pure in heart.”

TUESDAY.—*Subject: “The Day of Questions”*

Introduction.—Vivid picture of the crowd in the Temple eagerly asking: Is He here again today? The Scribes and Pharisees do not like this. Why not? Jesus is always making them appear wrong. Worse still, He makes them feel wrong. He must be got out of the way. But first get hold of Him. Why difficult? He must

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be made to appear wrong. Catch Him by means of questions.

The authority question. Our Lord's clever answer: What about John? ("Oh yes," say the onlookers to themselves, "What about John? they didn't stop him teaching even if it did not do them much good"). "We don't know," the Pharisees reply. "Then we need not talk about authority any more, need we?"

Then our Lord thought, What a pity: all these people who have not been at all good at obeying religious teaching are now willing to listen and learn, whilst these professors of religion are not. The parable of the two sons.

The Herodians' tribute question, and the answer.

The Sadducees try to make fun of His teaching. Why our Lord turns the tables. "Why, I thought you people were so good at your books: what do they say? 'I am the God of Abraham . . . etc.'" The Sadducees are answered and confused.

But all this horrid arguing brought out one really good question, much the most worth while remembering of today's questions; it was: "Which is the great commandment?" What was the answer?

Hymn: "He who would valiant be."

WEDNESDAY.—*Subject: "The Betrayal"*

Introduction.—You can imagine how angry the chief priests and Rulers were by now. They withdrew to make plans. "It is no good trying to catch Him so long as He is surrounded with all these people: we must find some other way." "Yes, but even if we catch Him, we can't put Him to death." Why not? "Then on what charge can we take Him to the Romans?"

Explain: two things would make a sufficient charge—(1) Blasphemy, (2) Disloyalty. They plan, therefore, to catch Jesus and fake up a charge on these lines. A

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notice put out that evidence must be given about where He or His friends were.

Where did Jesus go? Camping out on Olivet amidst friendly bivouacs all round.

Picture that last day of freedom. How would the day be spent?

We know how part of it was spent by one of the disciples—one rather different from the others. Tell about Judas, from Judæa, the keeper of the bag: ambitious, avaricious, unscrupulous. Tell dramatically the story of the betrayal for £4 12s. 6d., six months' wage for a labourer, or the price of a slave. What of Judas' feelings when the deal was complete?

Judas was a trusted friend (1) who felt a tug and let the wrong side win. We know that tug. (2) Who had warnings: we get warnings.

Jesus tried to save Judas. Remind of lost sheep, and of how the good shepherd would go on trying to save to the end.

Hymn: "The King of Love."

THURSDAY.—*Subject: "The Upper Room"*

Introduction.—Most of the week we have been speaking about Jesus and His enemies: today about Jesus and His friends.

1. The crowds in Jerusalem: what for? What was the Passover? Jesus especially wanted to be at this Passover with His friends: why? But it had to be prepared, but not in the daylight: why? The plan of the *man* carrying a pitcher. The two are sent.

2. The arrival at the upper room. The arrangements for footwashing. Who is to serve? The discussion about being the greatest. Who is to have the best place? Who has the best claim?

Our Lord's footwashing described. St. Peter's protest: answered by our Lord. "I have given you

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an example that you should do as I have done to you"; let the children repeat and apply to their own situations, unselfishness at home, at games, jobs undertaken for others.

3. The meal proceeds. Describe the Institution. That is why our Lord had wanted this particular Passover meal with His friends so especially: He wanted them to have *their* continual service. Refer to the Easter Communion. But first He was betrayed and forsaken. Refer to Good Friday, and obtain resolution to be in church at a definite time.

Hymn: "Jesu, good above all other."

A. R. B-W.

XXI.—BETHLEHEM TO CALVARY

1. A Stable: The Step of Humility.
2. A Worship: The Step of Obedience.
3. A Temple (Luke ii.): The Step of Self-Dedication.
4. A River: The Step of Penitence.
5. A Home (Bethany): The Step of Fellowship.
6. A Hill (Calvary): The Step of Suffering.

See C. R. Newby, *Bethlehem to Calvary* (St. Christopher Press and S.P.C.K.).

XXII.—THE HANDS OF JESUS

1. The Hands of Jesus.
2. The Eyes of Jesus.
3. The Feet of Jesus.
4. The Face of Jesus.
5. The Heart of Jesus.

See M. B. Wright, *The Hands of Jesus* (St. Christopher Press and S.P.C.K.).

The same ideas are worked out in an S.P.C.K. 1d. pamphlet for use in Holy Week (St. Christopher, No. 34, *The Feet of Jesus*).

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(g) MODERN METHODS OF PRESENTING THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

It is natural to use the Sundays of Lent as a definite preparation for the keeping of Holy Week with devotion and understanding. To this end there must necessarily be a suitable use of direct emotional appeal, resting upon the familiar and traditional lections, prayers, and hymns. But this appeal must also have its proper intellectual setting, though how far the intellectual presentation of the doctrine of the Atonement can be stressed in, for example, a series of Sunday morning sermons or of week-day addresses must depend upon the type of congregation. What would be suitable for the ordinary morning congregation in a suburb might be quite unsuitable in a poorer district close at hand, and in either case it would be difficult to use the full method of developed instruction appropriate to a course of special addresses to business men or to communicants. The notes which follow are intended to suggest some ways of developing this intellectual background. It may not be amiss to preface them with a warning that their application to the needs of any particular congregation will need the most careful consideration.

We may start by noting one or two practical difficulties which face any preacher who is prepared to take account of the realities of modern life.

1. It is no longer, despite the familiar language of many of our hymns, possible to use such phrases as "saved by His precious Blood," or "Thy Life was given for me," in the assurance that they will be accepted simply and without challenge. They are true upon the lips of the saints, but most of those who sing them today, so far as they think about their meaning at all, connect them with a verbally literal doctrine of substitution, and are very far from entering into the mystical experience which alone can make them intellectually coherent. And it will not do to

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expound them by simply repeating the phrases of a Calvinism which nobody now accepts in its crude form. There will be very many in any average congregation who are frankly doubtful whether they believe them, and some who resent them as unworthy and untrue. Their theology is altogether too vague to enable them to face the historical paradox. They cannot deal with the problem of time and eternity, and so cover the great and growing gap between Calvary and today. If, then, we are to use the familiar phrases, we must do more. We must expound them in such a way that they have meaning. And, before we begin, we must be sure that they have meaning for ourselves.

2. It is easy to escape this difficulty by falling back upon the appeal to sheer sentimentality, heightening the æsthetic appeal, and trusting, like the tragedian, to the purifying effect of a "catharsis" of the emotions. There can be no question that this will be effective, in the sense of drawing together a sincere and devout body of worshippers. It will do good, as all lofty tragedy must do good. And perhaps in Holy Week itself it will be desirable that this form of appeal should be uppermost. But it is impossible to maintain the continued tension of such appeals over any long period, nor is it desirable. The more thoughtful of our people will rightly refuse to allow their questionings to be silenced, and the period of preparation must allow for the claims of reason if, when Good Friday and Easter come, emotion is to do its perfect work, uninterrupted by the challenge of difficulties to which no answer has been given.

3. It is sadly true that very few people today read or know their Bibles in a way which makes it possible for us to depend in our preaching simply and directly upon the text of Scripture. We cannot today use the great phrases of the Bible, and especially those of the Old Testament, as a sufficient exposition in themselves of

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the meaning of the Cross. Some of our hearers will have a smattering of modern critical knowledge, without the wider vision which gives that knowledge its value. Others will have forgotten even that little which is today taught in our schools. They will be quite ready to believe that the great familiar phrases of Isaiah liii., or of Psalm xxii., or of Lamentations, are the words of St. Paul, or were even spoken by our Lord Himself. For some types of congregation the preacher might do much worse than to endeavour to expound, during Lent, the setting and significance of some of the Old Testament anticipations of the Passion. It will not suffice simply to treat them as miraculous vaticinations. Prophecy in that sense means very little to the modern mind. But prophecy as spiritual insight, proclaiming a truth about God which has meaning for all time, and which was made fully plain to man by the Cross, is something upon which we may well rest a series of expositions. This, however, is a special line of preparation, and should only be undertaken by those who have the knowledge to make such preaching live.

Bearing these preliminary difficulties in mind, we may turn to the general problem of presenting the doctrine of the Atonement to the modern world. For it is already clear that, in one form or another, the preaching of the Atonement must be, now as ever, the cornerstone of all our message. It is by far the most natural use of our Lenten opportunity, and the suggestions here made are intended to provide material capable of adaptation in many ways, according to the varying abilities and understanding of preacher and congregation.

We have already pointed out the inadequacy of certain only too familiar lines of approach. What is the most natural starting-point today?

The older evangelism found its point of attack in the

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conviction of sin. Both in living experience and in theological theory it is the fact of sin which makes an Atonement necessary, if the purposes of God are not to fail. The newer evangelism to which we are called today need ask no other starting-point. If the events of Holy Week are to mean anything to us, it must be as a solution of the problems which man's sin has set not only for man but for God Himself. But unquestionably the whole conception of sin has changed and is changing. We have passed completely away from the period when the Ten Commandments could head a code of statutes, as though they were comprehensive of the whole moral law. We are nearer in time to the Puritan interpretations which multiplied sins, and sought, though in vain, to identify piety with gloom, but even further from them in spirit. Few indeed would care to record their happiness, with the stern evangelical preacher Henry Alline, that they had been to a wedding and had been the means of preventing carnal mirth. Men today are impatient when we speak to them of sin, because they believe, often enough, that the clergy still cling to these old rigid conceptions. And that being so, we must speak to them of sin not less but more. But we must speak to them in a new and more living way, with no less gravity but with a wider sympathy, in the spirit not of Sinai but of the Sermon on the Mount, judging first ourselves and then others by the law not of Moses but of love.

To say this may be to many something of a platitude, but it is a platitude which is of real significance if we are to develop a living presentation of the Cross. For the doctrine of the Atonement has always taken shape against the background of the evil of the world. As conceptions of that evil have changed, so has the formulation of the doctrine. And if we are to develop a statement of the doctrine true in all essentials and at the same time adequate to meet man's spiritual need, we

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must first of all try to envisage as clearly as possible the nature and extent of that need. It is obviously natural, and, indeed, in close accord with traditional usage, to make our Lenten preaching the occasion for such a study.

It may be suggested that this study of the fact and problem of evil should, at least in the preacher's private reading, run side by side with a study of the history of the doctrine of the Atonement. The successive theories and explanations of that which our Lord accomplished by His death will be found not to be simply alternatives, of which some one is more or less right, and the rest more or less wrong. The truth is rather that each one of them emphasises some aspect of man's plight, and of God's way of succour. There is no theory, however crude, not even such theories as those of a ransom paid to the devil or of sheer and irrational vicarious punishment, which does not contain positive elements of truth well worthy of study, and often in danger of being overlooked by those who believe that they have found some more enlightened theory, better suited to their needs.

The analytical development of this enquiry into the evil of the world can readily be adjusted to a fivefold scheme, which might be followed upon the first five Sundays in Lent. Such an analysis is given below, followed by some notes on the historical development of doctrines on the Atonement, and, finally, by some general considerations which should be kept in mind throughout.

A.—THE FACT OF EVIL

1. The starting-point to this problem, for the friendly well-meaning people within the Church and without, is clearly the general fact of chaos, disorder, disaster and cruelty, to which our eyes are opened from time

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to time. For the most part men refuse to face the simple facts. They accept it as the inevitable course of Nature that species should be at war with species, and individual with individual. And they join, cheerfully enough, in that warfare, until it comes too closely home to those whom they love. Man accepts his place as part of the natural system, and yet he rebels against it. But his rebellion is, from the first, in vain. His own individual life can never be complete and final in its achievement. Physically, morally, spiritually, it is a ceaseless struggle against the oncoming and inevitable end. No truer account of the sheer facts of life, even at its tenderest and bravest, has ever been written than that of Ecclesiastes, whose quiet pessimism stands in our Bibles as the true foil to the saving work of Christ. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity." Here we have the very core of that from which we pass in Christ, and in Him alone, to "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Further, this life of the world is not only pitifully futile in its transience and incompleteness, it is also horrible at times in its sheer and, as it seems, wanton cruelty. Pain is a biological necessity in that it warns us against disaster, but again and again it passes beyond all usefulness into the long agonies of some lingering and irrational disease. Sheer chaotic accident sweeps across man's path, maiming, paralysing, destroying the fruits of whole years of toil, crippling high endeavour. Many and many a man has had faith and hope and love crushed out of his life by some stroke so deadly that we, who hold to our faith, find it hard indeed to say any word of comfort. Those who believe in evil spirits, those who believe in a personal devil, have grounds enough for their belief. Is not the mockery of demonic laughter to be heard wherever pain triumphs over courage, wherever effort is thwarted by sheer emptiness, in every slum and in every hospital? What of the

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earthquake, of plague and cholera, of the insane child, of the huge void of a Universe slowly freezing to death?

The facts may be extended indefinitely, and will be immediately understood and accepted by our hearers, little as they may like being forced to think about them. It is important to begin the survey of the facts of evil at this point, because it completely forestalls the ordinary type of objection. Here at least is evil which cannot be lightly explained away or excused as something due to mere psychological complexes, or to heredity, or to environment. It may be well to point out how different this approach is from that natural in New Testament times, though St. Paul, in Romans viii., shows his sense of the problem almost in a modern form. We shall see later that there is a closer parallel than appears upon the surface. In the Old Testament the outstanding discussions are those of Job and Ecclesiastes.

In preaching upon these lines it is necessary, if the sermon is not to be a mere barren Jeremiad, to point out that whatever else is true of His work, our Lord unquestionably entered to the uttermost into the evil which we have described. All other religions of the world have evaded this issue. They offer an escape from the urgency of the problem. He sought no escape for Himself, and offers none to us. There is a better way.

2. The second factor which strikes home to us as we look out upon the world is that of injustice. At this point we pass beyond the irrational, demonic chaos which fills man with panic dread, to something in the end more deadly still. For here man wrongs man, and wrongs him knowingly, willingly, and unashamed. It is not merely that the ungodly prosper in this world—that, with the writer of Psalm lxxiii., we could endure, so long as we may ourselves go "into the temple of God," and find in Him "the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever." But what is terrible beyond

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endurance is that man should wish to prosper at the expense of others. Partly, we know, it is lack of education, partly lack of imagination, that allows men to live at ease while their fellow-men struggle and starve, crippled in body and in spirit by conditions which they did not make and cannot break.

It is not difficult to throw the blame for this state of affairs upon God, as FitzGerald does, for example, in *Omar Khayyam*, and as the writer of Psalm lxxiii. was tempted to do until the vision came. But the poet in his Persian garden fails utterly in his arraignment of God. His indictment falls back upon his own head. If the world is indeed so evil, why does he sit there all the day idle? We know, and our hearers know too, so far as they are prepared to be honest with the facts, that it will not do to sit still ourselves, complaining the while of God's inaction. Rather more than twenty years ago a conference of students met to discuss the evils of modern society. They broke up with a great conviction, which had burst in upon them with all the splendour of a revelation: "We are the social problem." They were right. We are.

But realisation of this fact does not ease matters much, though it may drive us to make some effort towards their mending. The utmost that we can do falls hopelessly short of the need. That is why would-be reformers are so often over-strained and short-tempered. The victims of man's injustice, even if it be, in part, of their own injustice, are everywhere about us. In some degree all are victims. How can man escape from this world-wide bondage, of which he is himself the cause?

And again we have to note that our Lord faces this issue too. He accepted for Himself the world's injustice, and met its full force without resisting. That He triumphed is a fact of history, whatever the interpretation of that triumph may be.

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3. The third aspect of the evil of the world is the failure in man of the reality of worship, or, put in rather different terms, the failure to honour God. It is easy enough to deal with this part of our problem in theological terms. The remark that sin shuts man off from God is, in one form or another, so familiar as to have lost almost all its very real terrors. And it is obviously true that when the commands of God, even of a God of love, are met by continued and wilful disobedience, there must inevitably be a breach in that free relationship and intercourse with Him which is His will for His children.

But to say things of this kind is almost meaningless to most of our hearers. They are not at all sure what is of God and what is of man in the commands which we (or the Church) lay upon them. And though they have qualms of conscience, they are certainly not conscious of continued and wilful disobedience. Nevertheless, the issue can be put to them in ways free from this theological unreality. For the essence of the whole matter is that man is desperately desirous of remaining, in St. Paul's phrase, "conformed to this world." It is the issue that has lately been put in the most convincing manner in the reports of the Jerusalem Conference. The struggle today is not between religion and religion, but between the whole religious conception of life and secularism. In all religion, and not in Christianity only, man pays to God that honour which is His due. That man, confused by sin and groping blindly after shadow-gods, has made many and grievous mistakes in his quest does not in the least alter the essential fact. The complaint of Micah is the bitter and unanswerable complaint of a whole world against the modern culture which so lightly destroys its gods: "Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and are gone away, and what have I more? and how then say ye unto me, What aileth thee?" (Judges xviii. 24).

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It is not simply that our modern civilisation challenges, in the name of science or of criticism, the traditions and ceremonies, the magic, the superstition, the historic records, and the practical value of religion. It sets up over against them a new (yet a very ancient) spirit, the spirit of this world. It challenges that very sense of reverence and godly fear which has in fact been the root of all that is highest in human endeavour. It bids man work indeed, for his comfort and his peace depend upon his striving, but without any goal less transient than the toil itself. At its highest it envisages the universal brotherhood of man, but even so great an achievement would still be vain unless there were some purpose for the brotherhood to fulfil, and a purpose which lies beyond the brotherhood itself.

Thus we may see true religion in many a social visionary who denies the very existence of God. We may see a woeful absence of religion in many of those who acknowledge formal membership of some Church. It is only too possible to be active in defence of our chosen version of the faith, to pay honour to forms and ceremonies, and to be very far from paying honour to God. And in the world at large, the world of friendly people about us, this darkness of the soul seems, so far as we can judge, to be growing apace. We ought not to be too hasty in our assertion that the Church has failed, an assertion perhaps commoner a few years ago. Yet superficially such an assertion contains a truth. The Church *has* failed wheresoever it gathers men into its activities and its worship without bringing them into contact with the living God. And even if that failure were far more complete than it is, it would still not be amiss if it forced men back once more upon the Cross of Christ, though they should "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after the city which is to come" (Heb. xii. 13, 14).

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4. It will be by this time possible to come back to that which lies, after all, at the root of the whole problem, the fact of individual sin and individual guilt. It is true, and probably it is well, that men are restive when they are attacked uncompromisingly as sinners. Yet they are ill at ease in spirit, and they know it, and of all men none knows it so well as the pastor whose intimacy with his people goes even further than the sacred privacy of the Confessional. But direct and open attacks upon their faults can do but little good, and in many cases they must do harm. In the friendship of our personal dealing with individuals we may sometimes find the need and the opportunity for straight speaking. In the pulpit we must find a way which escapes the dangers of arousing on the one hand resentment and on the other a callousness and familiarity which can permit the thought of sin without its shame. Many sermons intended to awaken conscience have the very opposite effect. The congregation may easily applaud their eloquence, and remain, spiritually, asleep.

Incidentally it may be remarked that the effort to arouse the sense of shame by proclaiming the terrors of Hell, or the vengeance of an angry God, is now, happily, out of date. Such preaching has been productive of results, but whether those results have been of real spiritual value may well be doubted. A superficial obedience may be based upon fear, but true shame is the response not to fear but to love. And the modern investigation of neurotic conditions shows what terrible results have sometimes followed from an unbalanced and emotional proclamation of the wrath of God.

Probably the truest approach to this aspect of sin is through the sympathetic understanding of human weakness. In our heart of hearts each one of us knows how great is the gap between achievement and ideal, between our scanty accomplishment and our high

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purpose. We know that we fall back upon those lesser goods which we call temptations simply because we have not the inner strength, the grip upon our own wills, which would enable us to win the higher freedom. We know that we are the slaves of our appetites, our emotions, our desires, that these things shape our lives when we would fain shape them for ourselves. We know what it is to have an ill conscience, but often we are wholly vague as to the wrong upon which it pronounces sentence. We are sick at heart, on poor terms with ourselves, whatever may be the face which we show the world.

If we preach to men of this inner sickness, this lack of power, they will listen, for they will know what we mean. And they will listen too when we show them how it is just this sickness of the individual soul that is the root and cause of those wider aspects of evil with which we have been dealing. The cry of the fairy story, "New lamps for old," is a parable (and no accidental one) of the need which we all feel. Tell men that they are "miserable sinners" and they will resent it, for the phrase threatens the last fragments of their self-respect. Speak to them of the peace and power and self-control which might be theirs, and they will know without the telling the misery of their sin.

Here again, at the very heart of the problem of evil, we must point to the figure of our Lord, sinless in His self-mastery because He thought not of Himself but of the Father, sinless and the Friend of sinners, in whose presence a good man broke down in tears, crying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

5. The full gravity of this condition of inner weakness in which our human nature finds itself involved is only felt when we realise that it is not only individual but corporate. We started from the consideration of the chaotic, irrational evil so widely manifest in the natural order, and passed on to find in human society, which

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is the expression of human nature, an evil condition taking shape as injustice, the counterpart in man of that strife which seems to be inherent in the lower stages of the development of living things. We saw this evil shown, too, in man's failure to honour God, his refusal to "love the highest when he sees it." How dark this picture can be when it is painted in the actual colours of life can be seen in the opening sections of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. And yet even this is not the whole. The darkness of the world would matter but little if we could set over against it the triumphant achievement of human nature, winning its way ever upwards and onwards.

But that is exactly what we do not find. True, we can point to a Socrates or a Gautama, and there is no need, for the sake of our thesis, to belittle their greatness. But if we view history as a whole, its great men have failed. The powerlessness of the individual soul reveals itself as the powerlessness of nations, of social systems. Apart from those nations which the teaching and the Spirit of Christ has touched, it may fairly be said that history is the story of human failure, of high ideals seen and thrown aside, of great opportunity made and wasted, of goodness attempted and yet thwarted at every point by man's refusal to trust his fellow-man and himself.

Not only in the devastating omnipresence of evil but also in the powerlessness of the good are we to read the story of man's disastrous case. Everywhere we may see good impulses striving, as it were, to express themselves in the social order. And everywhere some inner weakness of man reduces them to impotence and ineffectiveness.

If we simply declare this in the abstract it will probably, and even plausibly, be challenged. Yet a very few illustrations will put the case beyond all cavil. The number of people who actually desired war

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in 1914 was small enough, yet the good-will, the peacefulness, even the good sense of a whole world was powerless to stop the march of events. It was easier to take the fatal step than to stand for an ideal which almost all men desired. If the individual will finds itself weak, how much more terrible is its powerlessness when the whole corporate soul is infected with weakness too. Or take, again, the example of the wide injustices of our social systems, injustices manifesting themselves in many ways, of which the preacher can readily select sufficient examples. Nobody desires these injustices, save the very few who reap direct benefit from them. And even these few are, for the most part, restless and discontented. Yet the desire to mend them seems almost powerless against sheer corporate feebleness and inertia. There are plenty of attempts at good government. Most politicians are in fact idealists, and even saints, but they dare not trust their own idealism. Good government seems always to be threatened by a cynical futility. There is no nation in the world today, even where Christianity is strong, where there is not a widespread doubt as to the possibility of a government actuated by ideals. Even the Christian Churches do not wholly escape suspicion.

The case can hardly be put too strongly, but it must be put with care, since it is quite obvious that the coming of Christ has in fact made a profound difference in those nations which have come directly or indirectly under His influence. Idealism is not yet triumphant, but it lives and is effective. Civilisation, though ever threatened with futility, is nevertheless not wholly futile. The failures are obvious enough, but the seeds of life are there.

If we try to develop this theme we should remember that our Lord's answer to the futility of the social order was not given by way of criticism or denunciation, but by the formation of a living society in which His Spirit

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might dwell, the Church, which is His Body, the mode and means of His continuing self-expression in the world. The little company of disciples, linked in a fellowship of mutual love and trust, were to be the nucleus of a world order in which ideals might live and be strong. In the Church the weakness and ineffectiveness of the individual will was to find itself met, not by a greater and more widespread weakness and ineffectiveness, but by the new and corporate life of the Spirit. It is not simply a fellowship of belief or a fellowship of obedience, but a fellowship of new life to which we are called. In that fellowship we find the true answer to our inner need. It is not in solitude but in the living company of believers that man finds both his own true self and God.

B.—THE ATONEMENT IN HISTORY

For our purpose the development of the doctrine of the Atonement may be treated in the broadest outline. Those who wish to follow its progress in more detail should read some one of the more recent histories of the doctrine.* The suggestions which follow are an attempt to relate the different theories of Atonement to various aspects of the problem of evil, aspects still of grave importance despite changes of terminology. It will be seen that the numbered headings which follow correspond with some exactness to those into which we divided our treatment of the problem of evil.

1. For the first thousand years of Christian theology, after the time of the New Testament itself, the ordinary popular account of the work of Christ in His Passion

* I may perhaps be permitted to refer to my own *Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement* (Manchester University Press), and to the recent volume of essays, *The Atonement in History and in Life* (S.P.C.K.). This latter, despite defects inevitably incidental to a composite volume, contains perhaps the widest range of material for those who wish to work along the lines suggested above.

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and Resurrection is that the devil is defeated or tricked, and the souls of men set free. In its crude form we find this expounded by Gregory of Nyssa and Rufinus, upon the basis of the account of the snaring of Leviathan (Job xli. 1). The evil monster swallows the bait of Christ's humanity, only to be pierced by the hook of His divinity. Other writers, Cyril of Jerusalem, Augustine, Isidore of Seville, vary the simile. Ambrose speaks more directly of a conquest of the devil. We must read such passages remembering the world in which they were written, a world full of demons, evil forces, the surviving devil-gods of ancient cults and superstition, the "horned god of the West" who contributed so much to the medieval drawings of Satan.

In the New Testament we have not only St. Paul's sense of the triumph brought upon Calvary over "principalities and powers" (Col. ii. 15; cf. 1 Cor. ii. 8; Eph. vi. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 8, 9; 1 Tim. iv. 1; etc.), but the obvious importance attached by the evangelists to our Lord's victory over the unclean spirits. Even more significant is the ancient conception of the "harrowing of Hell," in which our Lord was conceived as passing from His Cross to shatter in conquest the gates of the underworld. This undoubtedly underlies the stories of the two earthquakes, one at His dying (Matt. xxvii. 51-53), and one at His breaking forth from the Tomb (Matt. xxviii. 2).

We see here, however bizarre the form, the recognition of the irrational, demonic, cosmic evil which still remains so definite an element in our survey of the natural order. And we note two highly significant things, more important than the curious mythological setting through which they are expressed. The devil, or, more generally, the cosmic forces of pain, darkness, and sin, are shown to be *weak* when set against the unresisting strength of Christ, and to be *foolish*. Again and again these writers depict the devil as a fool, self-

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deceived by his own greed (Origen, Gregory of Nyssa), or his own arrogance (Leo the Great). The thought is one upon which we may well linger. Evil is always in the end weak, and always foolish.

2. From the time of Irenæus, but most prominently in the Latin fathers, led by Augustine, emphasis is laid upon the supreme justice of God. That which He does must be just. Even the devil himself must have no cause of complaint. It is this thought which underlies all the so-called Ransom theories. Sometimes it is the Law which must be fulfilled, sometimes it is the recognition (so shocking to Gregory of Nazianzus) that even the devil must receive his due. The devil, says Augustine, is no stranger either to God's justice or to His love. Sometimes the emphasis is upon the wrong done to God by man, who yet cannot, in his sin, pay back any equivalent, still less the full value of the debt itself. This thought, prominent in Athanasius, is developed in Gregory the Great into the Penal theory, which reappears at the Reformation and becomes characteristic of Calvinism and of much modern Evangelical preaching. If civil justice cannot be satisfied by the payment of the debt, at least criminal justice can be satisfied by the infliction of punishment.

Thus we have the theory, illogical enough from the point of view of strict justice, that God Himself provides the substitute in His Son, who alone suffices to bear the punishment of our sins. This theory is seldom held in its rigid form today, but it is well worth while to notice its emphasis upon the necessity for some act of God which will meet the injustice of the world. We see this most naturally, and most unbearably, in the wrong which man does to man, but it is the gravest part of our problem that this wrong is wrong done to God as well. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." For us the answer goes beyond justice altogether, for

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even justice must be interpreted in terms of love. The immense vitality of the Penal theory is due to its greatest inconsistency. It has touched men's hearts not because of the exactness of the justice which it was supposed to indicate, but because of the love and mercy in which God Himself provides an escape from that which strict justice must demand. Thus a theory, in itself almost intolerable to the human conscience, became the basis of some of the most intense and effective mission preaching which the world has known.

3. The genius of Anselm brought a new element into the problem. He saw the urgency of the personal claim of God upon man's allegiance. It was a feudal age, and the whole stability of civilisation rested less upon law and order than upon the stable dignity of the feudal overlord. What, then, of the honour of God, which man by his sin has injured? This thought led him to the Satisfaction theory, which has remained, with certain changes of emphasis, the basis of practically all the later "objective" theories of the Atonement. God might have destroyed man in his sin, for that would at least vindicate His outraged holiness. But such a destruction of His own creative work would defeat His own purposes in Creation. Therefore He finds another way. In Christ man restores to God that honour which is His due. The death of Christ upon the Cross is a free gift, for He was sinless, and the death due to the sinner could not justly be exacted from Him. Yet He died, linking Himself with our lot, and the Father, in recognition of so great an offering, grants to His unhappy brethren that immortality and blessedness which otherwise lay utterly beyond their grasp.

This theory, as Anselm states it, is incomplete and inconsistent at many points. It rests upon a conception of God which almost ignores His love, and the curious argument by which Anselm shows how the dignity of God must needs make some return to Christ, a return

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which Christ cannot receive, since as God He has already all things, and which is therefore bestowed upon man, is almost puerile in its lameness. Yet more than any other theory which has been framed, it recognises the essential need in human life for that honouring of God which is best expressed in worship, and it shows how that recall of the soul to this fundamental obligation must come from the side of God and not from the side of man. Sinful man has lost his very sense of his need. It is not man that comes to God, but God who in Christ was and is reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. v. 19).

In its later forms this theory has come to be expressed less in terms of satisfaction than of sacrifice, and it has been very closely linked with Eucharistic teaching. It would take up too much space to develop the implications of this change. It must suffice to point out that where sacrifice is defined in personal terms, and freed from connotations which retain elements of primitive superstition and magic, there is probably no more adequate mode of presenting the doctrine of the Atonement.

4. It was one of the most important aspects of the later Penal theory, as held by the great Reformers, that it dwelt mainly upon the relation between the individual soul and God. The Reformation took place as a part of a great movement of national development, out of which modern democracy has sprung. The dignity and responsibility of the individual had never been so emphasised before, save in the narrow and aristocratic communities of the Greek city-states. And thus we find a wholly new emphasis upon the individual sinner, an emphasis which comes to its classical expression in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. And apart from all consideration of the difficulties of the Penal theory itself, it has played an immensely important part in bringing home to each individual sinner the significance of the

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Cross for him personally and particularly. This is an emphasis which is true and of the most intense urgency, if our preaching of the Cross is to be effective. We do not naturally now concern ourselves very greatly with the doctrine of election and with the controversies of the seventeenth-century divines as to whether the Divine purpose in Atonement was universal or limited, conditional or unconditional. But we must not lose sight of the truth that, whatever theory of the Atonement we may prefer, as most satisfying to the intellect, its application is not to mankind in general, but to men in particular. We must preach in the conviction that the Atonement matters to ourselves, and to each single individual in our congregations. So alone can we meet the fundamental issue of the shame of conscience which men feel, of the radical weakness of the will which is their hidden distress.

But if we are to preach this we must preach something more than the Penal theory. We must preach not only a Christ that died bearing our sins, but a Christ that lives bearing them still, bearing them with and in us, and so transforming our lives by the splendour of His Resurrection. Or, if we will, we may preach the doctrine of the living Spirit in whom we, who were dead in sin, may live and move and have our being.

5. It was mainly through the work of Grotius that this individual conception of redemption was developed once more, and now more consciously, in its corporate aspect. In his so-called Rectoral theory he conceived the work of Christ as restoring to the world the good government of God. Again the details of the theory are inconsistent and inadequate. To say that God inflicted upon Christ just so much punishment as would re-establish the authority of His law and deter those who are tempted to offend against it invokes the obvious retort that no law is really vindicated which penalises the innocent in order to warn the sinner. But the

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importance of the theory is far greater than its rather crude original statement would suggest. It enabled man to think of God not as some feudal overlord concerned with His own honour or as some strict judge concerned with upholding the penal rigours of an impersonal and terrifying justice, but as a wise and good Ruler, who rules for the good of His people. And it has been a natural development of this train of thought that, during the last century, there has been a return once more to the teaching of Christ Himself, who taught men to pray to God as their Father, and to think of Him in terms of the highest and most personal relationship known to man.

Sometimes such teaching has tended to slip into the vague sentimentalism of the so-called "Moral Theories," the "He's a good fellow and 'twill all be well" of the rather bitter parody of *Omar Khayyam*. But in such writers as R. C. Moberly and Scott Lidgett this conception of the Fatherhood of God has been used to develop perhaps the most satisfying form in which a doctrine of the Atonement can be stated. For in fatherhood we see not mere benevolence but love, love which can and must take full account of sin, love which may not rest until the unity of the whole family is restored by the restoration of the sinner. And thus satisfaction and penalty, sacrifice and that utter self-giving of God which alone can make the sacrifice possible, find their full meaning in love and holiness together. For holiness and love at the last are one.

C.—SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Two or three points may be added, which may be kept in mind by those following out the above line of thought. They may, of course, be used as independent suggestions for sermons or for study.

1. The Anselmic doctrine that the action of God in

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Atonement is *necessary* is of great importance in principle. We must not conceive that which God has wrought as in any way arbitrary. It springs wholly from what God is, and the being of God cannot be liable to any inner contingency. This is the important truth underlying the doctrine of the Divine impossibility. No necessity can be laid upon God. There is no Eternal Law, as some of the later Calvinists taught, to which He must be subject. He is Himself the ground of His own being and of all being. To say that God *finds* a way out of the *impasse* which results from sin is less than the truth. He *is* the way. The Cross is the inevitable and complete expression of what He is.

This perhaps rather difficult point is really of the very greatest practical and homiletic importance. For it means that God cannot ignore sin, or rest content unless the sinner is won back to His allegiance. And thus it is true to say that our sins today still inflict upon Him the wounds of the Cross.

2. It is worth while to consider fully the nature of forgiveness in man and in God. At first sight it is something simple and easy, but as we study it we see that it involves the whole personality both in Him that forgives and in him that is forgiven. True and full forgiveness takes no easy way with sin, for such forgiveness can only exist where the whole shame and strain of the sin is felt to the uttermost. It cannot be without cost, and the completeness of the cost is to be measured only by the fulness with which the sin is realised. The complete realisation of sin is only possible where it is known within a setting of perfect holiness. Only there can the cost of sin be truly paid. But it follows that only God can bear the cost of sin.

3. It is important throughout to connect the doctrine of the Atonement with the full Christian doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation. Where either of these doctrines is lacking any conception of the Atonement

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ment as wrought through the Cross at once becomes inconsistent and even unworthy. It is here that the "objective" accounts of the Atonement so often fail. If Jesus is not wholly one with God, His treatment by the Father remains unjust. If He is not wholly man, that which He effected upon the Cross can have no efficacy for us.

And, further, His manhood displays His Godhead not only in His dying upon the Cross. We must not leave out of account the whole Incarnate life, of which it forms the necessary and inevitable climax, or the Resurrection, in which its full significance was released in power.

(h) SUGGESTIONS FOR HOLY WEEK

The Gospel of St. Mark falls into two nearly equal halves. The dividing line is in ch. viii., St. Peter's Confession. Hitherto Jesus has been alone in His Sonship, the only representative of the Remnant of Israel. Now the People of God, which has been cut down to One, begins to grow, as one after another accepts the seemingly incredible, that the Kingdom is here in Jesus the Son of God. From this moment the Passion dominates the scene.

So predominant is the Passion that the events of the last week occupy about 40 per cent. of the whole Gospel. This in itself shows how central the Cross was in the earliest preaching. St. Mark is the Roman Gospel and shows us the historical background of fact on which the readers of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans would put the Apostle's doctrine of the Atonement. Regarded merely as literature, the Gospel story of this week stands alone in the intensity and pathos of its tragic drama. To the Christian, who trusts to be saved through his dying and risen Master, every detail is precious, and the yearly repetition of the story with the preacher's sincere and modest comments can never pall.

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Recent criticism of the Gospel has asked searching questions as to the origins of the different sections. It is clear that, long before the writing of a complete Gospel, or even of a part of one, isolated narratives assumed a well-defined shape, whether in written or merely oral form does not matter. The little group of disciples would converse together, their hearts burning within them, as they recounted the experiences of the Great Week, the mighty works God had wrought among them. The Passover of the year following the Crucifixion must have marked an epoch, for the deliverance of a year ago would dwarf in their minds the deliverance from Egypt which formed the usual theme of conversation. Without undue rashness we may assume that the main outline of St. Mark's story of the Passion, as told by St. Peter on this occasion, was that familiar to us. The disciples, too, in their new home at Jerusalem would be constantly reminded of the events of that week. The Temple, in which they were found continually, according to the Acts, would recall the Lord's cleansing of its courts and the disputes therein; the High Priest's and Pilate's houses would conjure up memories of the trials as the disciples passed by; and the cenaculum, at once, in all probability, the scene of the Last Supper, the home of Mary the mother of Mark, and the meeting-place of the community, would keep fresh the memories of Maundy Thursday. Each visit to Bethany would evoke memories, and, above all, no Christian could pass Golgotha and the Garden Tomb without emotion. Those who are sceptical as to Christian tradition respecting the Holy Places pay insufficient regard to the continuous residence in Jerusalem of persons like James the brother of the Lord up to the eve of the Jewish War. It is hard to believe that when some Christians crept back again after A.D. 70 the tradition was rudely broken.

The preacher will be well advised to base his sermons

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mainly on St. Mark. Not only is the Second Gospel the earliest, but it has unique authority for Holy Week in that it gives us in the fullest form the preaching of St. Peter. The details, too, which are often lost in St. Matthew's abbreviation, are helpful. Compare, for instance, the sending of two disciples to prepare the Passover in Mark xiv. 12-16 with the impoverished version of Matt. xxvi. 17-19.

St. Luke and St. John had access to special Jerusalem-sources and may safely be used to supplement St. Mark. St. Matthew, however, contains some special material in the concluding chapters which it is hard to treat as historical. To many it will seem unlikely that an authentic account of a message sent from Pilate's wife to her husband reached Christian circles, and the appearance of the saints in Jerusalem (xxvii. 52, 53) is clearly legendary. It will be noticed that their resurrection is described in contradictory terms: it took place on Friday afternoon, but "after His resurrection" is added lest the teaching about "Christ the firstfruits" should be impaired.

The story of Pilate's wife is typical of the problem to be faced in a number of instances. Ought we to use material as to the source of which it is hard to be sure? Each must answer the question in his own way, but the following considerations may be helpful. The Gospels as a whole are homiletic rather than biographical in origin. They show no interest in facts as such, without spiritual value; it is sufficient by way of illustration to point out that no Evangelist gives us any idea of what Jesus looked like, not even the author of the Fourth Gospel, writing at a time when eyewitnesses had passed away. The Gospels are homiletic in the sense that they contain the selection of the works and words of Jesus which was made by the preachers of the Apostolic age. The different sections, rounded and polished in the minds and on the lips of many preachers, and shaped to

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meet the needs of varied audiences at the gatherings of the primitive Church for worship "in the Spirit," are inspired in a far higher sense than if they were literary compositions of a biographer, however accurate and scholarly. Modern preachers will be well advised not to try to be wiser than those of the Apostolic age.

It is advisable not to pay much heed to archaeological details, but, at least in preparation of one's self, to make a fresh effort each year to enter into the mind of Christ. Much of what results from such study will be too inconclusive to be passed on to the congregation, but the effort to understand will discipline and humble the preacher and help his people indirectly. So we suggest some lines of study, which may be followed up devotionally in meditation as well as intellectually at the desk.

(a) Fundamental is the conception of the Son of Man and of His relation to the Kingdom of God. Whatever other meanings *bar-nasha* (the common Aramaic phrase for "man") may have, in Mark xiv. 62 it is a clear identification of Jesus with the heavenly figure of Daniel vii. 13. The greater our appreciation of the amazing sanity of His words elsewhere and of the unclouded dignity with which He went to death, the more impossible becomes the suggestion that He went mad at the trial and made an absurd claim. But the insight which prompted the claim grew gradually, it would seem. The various stages of increasing vision and knowledge of the Father's will, culminating in Gethsemane, form a subject which can never be exhausted.

(b) Arising out of this is the influence of the Old Testament on the mind of Jesus, and especially of 2 Isaiah. What part did a study of Isaiah liii. play in the development of His Messianic consciousness? Such study is especially valuable at a time when there are so many well-meaning but mistaken attempts to isolate our Lord and neglect the Old Testament.

(c) Somehow or other the preacher must try to reach

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conclusions, if only provisional, on the eschatological problem. If Jesus really lived and taught in the expectation of the immediate end of the world, can He be a trustworthy guide to modern life? Such is the difficulty felt by many. A careful reading of John xiv.-xvi. suggests that the problem was even more urgent at the close of the Apostolic age and that here we have a transmuted eschatology. But in any case the Church must have an eschatological outlook. Immediateness, the here and now, is the Church's watchword. The truth of slow development and evolution is not denied, but the other truth is for us more important. We must always be proclaiming that, for the individual at least, "it is the last time," "now is the day of salvation." The Tabernacle, it has been said, rather than the Temple is the symbol of the Church, which can never settle down on earth.

(d) We who live in an age of great tension between Church and State, and are consequently distracted by our conflicting loyalties, cannot study too carefully the political situation which conditioned the life of Jesus. He had to reconcile loyalty to Cæsar, the suzerain power, with that due to the secularised priesthood of Jerusalem, the religious authority of the Scribes, and the local power of Herod. In the trial scenes, where Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate appear, the conflicting jurisdictions were for the moment at one. Jesus had to walk as on a razor-edge between the allegiance due to the various secular powers and the traditional representatives of God on earth on the one hand, and to the Heavenly Father and His Kingdom on the other. That He reached the goal triumphantly cannot, in view of His full humanity, have been without strain and stress, but in a sore conflict God gave Him the victory.

(e) Lastly, we must never in our loving preoccupation with the details of the incarnate Life forget the doctrinal

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meaning that underlies the story. The preacher must always try to see God in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. Gethsemane, the High Priest's palace, the *Via Dolorosa*, must be viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*. Somehow or other we must make real to ourselves, and get across to our people, the truth that God is revealing Himself most fully in the Passion and Cross.

A few words about Holy Week Services may be added here. The traditional Western Services are treated elsewhere. The provision made by the Prayer Book seems meagre to some. Doubtless it is, to clergy who say Mattins and Evensong throughout the year. But Holy Week is the one occasion when we can get a substantial number of our communicants to the daily offices. Accustomed as they probably are to choral Mattins and Evensong on Sunday, the austerity of the said services is wholesome and even by contrast attractive. Nothing could be better than the fourfold repetition of the Passion narrative in the lections, with the Old Testament readings from the 1922 Lectionary and the select psalms now in common use, to which the Last Discourses from St. John are added. We lose the sense of observing a great liturgical tradition, like the Latin rites, but have the advantage of being faithful to our local English tradition, which is in danger of disappearing, of detailed Bible reading.

The preaching appropriate to Holy Week is surely as objective as possible. The congregation, like the preacher, need to be taken out of themselves and helped to see eternal realities. A sermon is "truth through personality," and we must be ourselves in the pulpit. But let them be chastened penitent selves, purged as far as possible of desire to shine. Let truth be in the forefront and personality in the background, at least during this week. The hearers will be regular worshippers who know us well and will not expect great efforts; they will be content if we preach Christ crucified.

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Sermons in the first part of Lent may fitly take the form of a mission course. But in Holy Week the Retreat model is better. Only in this week of the year can we, in most parishes at least, count on a body of communicants prepared to come to church each day; the opportunity should be used to the full.

IV
ANGLICAN ADAPTATIONS OF LATIN RITES
AND CEREMONIES*

[THE information which follows is given because some at least of the clergy will find it helpful and interesting. No responsibility is taken by the writer for the opinions expressed regarding the extent to which the rites described are permissible in the various provinces of the Anglican Communion, a matter which naturally belongs entirely to the authorities concerned.]

(a) *Ash Wednesday.*

The observance of Lent, as the Communion service reminds us, is originally connected with the system of public Penance. From about the seventh century those who had committed serious sins, and were prepared to submit to public penance, were sent into a monastery at the beginning of Lent for their penitential exercises and did not emerge until just before Easter. In Rome such penitents were ceremonially presented with a hair shirt on Ash Wednesday in token of what was in store for them.

A little later, with the decay of public penance, the idea grew up of the whole Church putting itself to penance during Lent, and already we find the connection of "ashes" with the title of the first day of Lent in the eighth century. Alfric, *c.* 1000, recom-

* Reprinted, in shortened form, by permission, from the relevant sections of the article with the same title in *Liturgy and Worship* (S.P.C.K., 1932).

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mends the pouring of ashes on the head in token of penitence at this time, and the Council of Beneventum (1091) seems to assume it as a general custom.

The present Latin custom is to bless the ashes in church and immediately afterwards to touch with them the foreheads of the congregation one by one. The ashes are blessed, sprinkled and censed; and the people kneel to receive them. This service is often merely translated into English and used in Anglican churches without alteration.

(b) *Palm Sunday.*

The ceremonial of Palm Sunday is in its essence far more ancient than that of the two solemnities we have hitherto considered. We have already seen how even in the fourth century there was a procession with palms in the Holy Land. The mere fact that the observance always fell on a Sunday meant that the ceremonial could always be carried out with some pomp and dignity, and its position as the inauguration of the most solemn week of the year naturally gave it a prominence beyond that of less important days.

We notice at once that the service for the blessing of palms, unlike those for the blessing of ashes and candles, has a complete liturgical structure of its own. It is a service, not a mere blessing of something to be used in a service. As we shall see, it has a form very like that of the Mass itself; and some have thought that it is the relic of a Mass said in the early morning, in addition to the usual mid-morning Sunday liturgy. It is perhaps more probable that it represents a service which took place at another church than that in which the great Mass of the day was to be celebrated. The palms would thus be blessed at the close of service in one church, and carried in procession to the other.

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The service, as it stands in the Latin rite today, begins with an antiphon which reminds us of the introit of the Mass. This is followed by a collect, a lesson, a chant (corresponding to the gradual or tract) and a gospel. All these are recited with the same solemnity as the corresponding features of a High Mass, except that the celebrant wears a cope instead of a chasuble. A eucharistic preface follows with Sanctus and Benedictus; then, corresponding to the canon of the Mass, comes the blessing of the palms in a form similar to the blessings used on Candlemas and Ash Wednesday. The palms are distributed, carried in procession, and held at the Gospel. The procession on this day goes outside the church, if possible, and a station is made outside the principal entrance. Meanwhile the hymn *Gloria, laus et honor* is sung by cantors within the church and the rest of the choir outside answers with the refrain. At the end of the hymn the subdeacon strikes the door with the end of the processional cross, the door is opened and the procession enters the church. (In the Sarum rite three other stations were made: one for the reading of the appropriate Gospel, one before the Rood, and a final one before the Altar.) Then Mass begins and is sung as usual, with one very striking variation. The greater part of the Gospel is not sung with the usual ceremonies, but chanted dramatically by three deacons, while the choir sing the words which belong to "the multitude." The last few sentences of the Gospel are sung by the deacon of the Mass in the usual way, except that the acolytes do not carry their candles. Usually they hold palm branches instead.

The whole of the Palm Sunday service is of the most exquisite beauty, and there seems no reason why its special ceremonies should not be used in their completeness in Anglican churches. For the most part they fall outside the official service of the Book of Common Prayer, and the singing of the Passion by

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three deacons and the choir is no more than a technical breach of the rubric which says "then shall *he*" (*i.e.*, apparently the celebrant) "read the Gospel." (The rubric in the English 1928 Revision is as follows: "The Deacon or Priest that readeth the Gospel . . . shall say . . . And the Gospel shall be read." The same revision allowed the whole of the Passion according to Matthew to be used on Palm Sunday, instead of only the 27th chapter, as provided in the Book of Common Prayer, and recognised the distinction between the "Passion" and the "Gospel.") It must be acknowledged, however, that the service is a very long one, and in many churches the preliminary service for the blessing of the palms is considerably curtailed.

(c) *Tenebræ.*

The service known by this name is simply the Mattins and Lauds of the last three days of Holy Week, sung by anticipation in the afternoon or evening of the preceding day. In parish churches of the Latin rite these are the only occasions on which Lauds is ever sung publicly. In consequence these three offices have come to hold the position of special Holy Week services. They are accompanied by a remarkable ceremony. A triangular stand of candles is placed near the Altar and one candle is extinguished at the end of each psalm, until only one is left alight. Then, during the Benedictus, the Altar candles and any non-ceremonial lights are put out. Finally, the one remaining candle is concealed, behind the Altar while the *Miserere* is said or sung. Then, after the collect of the day, there is a time of silence, broken at last by a *strepitus* (any kind of harsh noise), which is the signal for departure. The remaining candle is then brought out and left alight at the top of the stand.

The symbolism of all this points very clearly to the

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death of our Lord with the physical and spiritual darkness and disturbance which accompanied it. The one candle concealed, yet still alight, seems to typify the descent of His Soul into Hades, and its restoration to the top of the candlestick may be a foreshadowing of the Resurrection.

It is obvious that there is no proper place for this service in the Anglican rite. It is an integral part of the regular course of the Latin offices which continues throughout the year. If it is taken over it must be simply on the pragmatic ground of its beauty and its associations. In other words, it must be treated as though it were really a special Holy Week service, and of course it must be recited in addition to the canonical Anglican Morning and Evening Prayer. Used in this way it is liturgically a solecism, but that does not prevent it from having its peculiar beauty and appeal.

A very praiseworthy attempt has been made to provide an Anglican Tenebræ, by grafting on to the appointed order of Morning Prayer some of the most striking features of the Latin office, and in particular the lessons from the Lamentations which the Book of Common Prayer has rather strangely relegated to the earlier part of Holy Week.* It is recognised by the compilers that this service could only be substituted for the canonical one by special permission of the bishop; but it is thought that some bishops might consider themselves justified in giving such a permission. This experiment does not seem to have been tried in many places.

(d) *Maundy Thursday.*

From the earliest times this day has been kept with great solemnity in commemoration of the Last Supper and the institution of the Holy Eucharist. It is natural,

* See *Holy Week Book* (published by the Society of SS. Peter and Paul).

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therefore, that it should have always been a day of general Communion. So, also, in the early Middle Ages was Good Friday. But because the whole weight of tradition has always been against the idea of actually celebrating the Eucharist on Good Friday, it was necessary to reserve the Blessed Sacrament against the Communion of the following day. Hence comes the most notable peculiarity of the Maundy Thursday Mass, the fact that the Consecration is deliberately arranged to provide for Communion on Friday as well as on Thursday. The custom of concluding what Anglicans call the "Ante-Communion service" by a public Communion with the previously consecrated Sacrament has been common in the Church from the earliest times, and not only on Good Friday. The Quinisext Synod (692) approves it as already ancient. In the East, to the present day, it is the regular official form of service for all Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent. But in mediæval times in the West this rite was only used on Good Friday, and thus on Maundy Thursday attention was vividly called to the fact that the service was, so to say, to be continued on the morrow. A second Host of suitable size was consecrated and reserved conspicuously in a place of great dignity. (In the Sarum rite *two* additional Hosts were used, one being required for the Easter sepulchre.) By the close of the Middle Ages frequent Communion had quite died out, and in consequence no Communion was contemplated for Good Friday on the part of anyone except the celebrant. No special reservation was therefore made for a general Communion.

In the Roman Church there is normally only one Mass in any one church on Maundy Thursday, a reversion to the archaic custom that all should usually assemble together to feast on the Bread of life.* The

* But curiously enough in the primitive Church Maundy Thursday was an exception to the general custom. St. Augustine

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rite is celebrated in white vestments, and concludes with the solemn placing of the Holy Sacrament in what the Missal calls a *locus aptus* until it is needed for the Good Friday Communion. It is usual to ring the bells and play the organ at the singing of *Gloria in excelsis*, and neither are heard again until the first Mass of Easter. After the service the Altars are stripped, and in some places the mediæval custom of washing them with wine and water is still retained.

It is obvious that there are more difficulties in adapting this ceremonial to the Anglican rite than in the cases of Candlemas and Palm Sunday. The little ceremony of the bells and the organ loses all point if the Gloria is sung at the end of the service. The white vestments accord very ill with the story of the Passion which is assigned as the Gospel of the day. The former ceremony, therefore, has to be omitted unless the priest thinks himself justified (just for once) in having Gloria sung in its traditional place. Probably all priests who use vestments wear white ones on this day; and a way out of the second difficulty might be found by having the story of the Passion sung by three deacons with violet stoles and maniples as on the earlier days of Holy Week, and supplementing the rite with a Gospel borrowed from the Missal, for which the white dalmatic would be suitable. But of course there is no authority for this.

testifies to two Masses on that day, the earlier for those who wished to take a bath, the later for those who desired to fast all day. In Rome about the sixth century there were three Masses, one for the reconciliation of penitents, one for the blessing of the oils, and one for the commemoration of the Last Supper. See Schuster, *The Sacramentary*, Vol. II., pp. 13-20, 199; Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer*, p. 165.

V

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AMONG all the helps to a good Lent there can be few more important or more valuable than study. We need not be afraid of the word study, as though it meant something for students only. Any thoughtful reading of the simplest book is "study," most of all the reading of the Bible.

And if it be true that sermons are not what they used to be, or, if they are, that people do not attend them or listen to them as they used to do, that makes it all the more necessary to get people to read and think for themselves. We are, indeed, far removed from the day when the parishioners of St. Clement's, Eastcheap, listened to the sermons which are familiar to us as Bishop Pearson's *Exposition of the Creed*, perhaps even further still from the days of the early Stuarts when the King and the Court listened to the sermons of Bishop Andrewes. This is not to say that we are to neglect the making of sermons, or to persuade ourselves that we need not spend too much time or trouble over them, however many excuses the Evil One may put into our minds for so doing. The Lenten sermon is one of the parson's greatest opportunities, which he may not neglect without risk of grievous loss to his people, and possibly even more grievous loss to himself. He must preach, and preach his best, whether the people read for themselves or not, and for the more thoughtful of them the sermon may help their own study, even as their study may serve to supplement the sermon. Here it may be said that the sermon and the private study may be related to

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each other in one or other of two ways: they may be on quite different lines, and concerned with quite different subjects, the sermon for example doctrinal and the reading devotional; or they may, so to speak, play into each other's hands, as, for instance, when the sermons are about the Lord's Prayer and the book for private study is a book on prayer in general, or on the Lord's Prayer itself.

This chapter is not concerned with sermons, and nothing further need be said about them; enough has been said to emphasise the importance of the relation of the sermon to the reading. Its purpose is rather to offer suggestions to the parish priest in teaching his people, especially those who need detailed guidance; advanced souls can look after themselves, or else require specialised help.

A

As to Lent reading. The parish priest is greatly concerned at all times with his people's mental and moral and spiritual welfare, and regards the Church's provision of the forty days before Easter as one of the greatest means to this end. Whether from the pulpit, or in a short pastoral letter, he will take care that his people have clearly set before them this side of the Lenten duty and observance. He will not forget the Church's own injunction to godparents—and all Christian people are potential godparents—that they should cause the children committed to their charge to "hear sermons," but he will also lay stress on their own duty to study for themselves, and above all to "search the Scriptures," not as the Jews did with a superstitious regard for the outward letter, but as witnessing to God's own revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ.* He will perhaps think it worth while

* So Bishop Westcott, *in loc.*, explains St. John v. 39, 40.

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to insist on the great need of these modern days for a closer study of the *ipsissima verba* of the Old and New Testaments, being convinced himself of the truth and wisdom of the words of Bishop Gore: "There is no plant in the spiritual garden of the Church of England which at the present moment needs more diligent watering and tending than the practical, devotional study of Holy Scripture. The extent to which spiritual sloth, or reaction against Protestant individualism, or the excuse of critical difficulties, is allowed to minister to the neglect of this most necessary practice, is greatly to be deplored."*

The parish priest, in his persuasion to this godly exercise, will not fail to point out how fitting it is for the season of Lent. Historically he will recall the fact that it was pre-eminently the usual time for the instruction of catechumens, before their Baptism on the Great Sabbath, when they put on the white robes the deposition of which gave to Low Sunday its liturgical name of the *Dominica in albis depositis*. It is therefore a fitting season for instruction in Holy Scripture, and for acquiring a greater and better knowledge of the Catholic Faith—a season, moreover, when secular and "light" literature may well be replaced by the reading of theology, or biography, or Church history, or of one of the classical books of devotion. The parish priest may indeed commend the practice of more serious reading to his people as one form of abstinence from things good in themselves which is one of the duties of Lent, a form, indeed, of the Christian duty of Fasting. And he will point out how great the gain will be if such reading during Lent should lead to a settled habit of serious and religious reading on at least one day of every week when the Forty Days are over; an act of discipline for Friday, it may be, for

* Preface to *The Sermon on the Mount, A Practical Exposition* (1896, but not less true today).

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those who have more leisure, or a point of Sunday observance for those who have less.

Quite in the forefront of Lenten reading the parish priest will put the studious reading of the Bible. If only it could be made part of the discipline of Lent in every parish, much would be done to roll away the reproach that the Bible is becoming a sealed book to the majority of English reading people. And whatever difficulty many people may find in the Old Testament, however they may even be tempted to disregard the value of its teaching or to listen to those who dare to ridicule or despise it, the parish priest will insist upon the study of the Gospels and Epistles, not only as an exercise most profitable in itself, but also as leading the way to a reconsideration of the Old Testament at the feet of Him who alone can open to them its scriptures and their concern with the full Revelation of Himself.*

No study can be so valuable, or so needed, as the study of the Bible, and that must come quite first in our plans for Lent. It is only when that study has received its rightful place, that the parish priest may go on to advise the possible addition to it of the study of other books—books of history, or doctrine, or missions, or biography—though he will probably think it wise for most people not to attempt more than one of these subjects, in addition to the Bible, in any one particular Lent.

B

Thus far by way of introduction, seeking to explain the task which lies before the parish priest in commending to his people the duty and the profit of Lenten study. In what follows, an attempt is made to give more detailed advice as to the books to be read

* St. Luke xxiv. 27.

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and studied. This will be best done under separate heads, each dealing with a special branch of religious and sound learning, with the addition, under each head, of such notes as may seem helpful or necessary.

(a) *The Holy Scripture.* It would be well to lay stress on the value of reading the actual words of the chosen book of the Bible, before beginning its study with the help of a commentary. To do this with the study of the Gospels, apart from other great gains, will help to the greatest gain of all, the habit of reading those precious chapters with the object of getting from them not merely great truths for the guidance of our own lives but a deeper, clearer knowledge of the Lord Himself. A striking article in *The Times* on Maundy Thursday, on reading, perhaps at one sitting, the Gospel of St. Mark, more especially that part of it which narrates the Passion, said some very true words about this; (by so reading it) "We may return to the indubitable truth that it was the Crucified and Risen Saviour, not the sagacious Teacher or Preacher, who won the homage and adoration of the world." And speaking of the whole Gospel, the article says: "The reader . . . will be more than repaid by the cumulative, the almost overwhelming, impression made by the Gospel as a whole."*

From this the parish priest will go on to suggest books which will help people to study for themselves, such, for example, as the following:

(1) Dr. Swete: *Commentary on St. Mark* (for those who can read Greek), (Macmillan).

Professor Turner: *St. Mark, Introduction and Commentary* (S.P.C.K.); very cheap, and unrivalled in its clear exegesis.

Bishop Gore: *Sermon on the Mount; Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols.; *Epistle to the Ephesians; Epistles of St. John* (John Murray).

* *The Times*, March 24, 1932.

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Dr. Swete: *Parables of the Kingdom; The Last Discourse and Prayer; Appearances after the Passion; The Ascended Christ* (Macmillan).

(2) For simpler reading :

A. C. Buchanan : *Meditations on the Four Gospels* (S.P.C.K.).

(3) J. Paterson Smyth : *A People's Life of Christ* (Hodder and Stoughton).

Bishop Gore : *Jesus of Nazareth* (Home University Library).

(b) There will be some of our parishioners who will be glad to use the season of Lent as an opportunity for making the acquaintance of those great works of Christian devotion which have won the right to be described as classics, or, if they know them already, to find in them new lessons in the way of discipleship and Christian living. Such are the *Confessions* of St. Augustine; the *Imitation* of Thomas à Kempis; the *Holy Living and Holy Dying* of Bishop Jeremy Taylor (2 vols.); the *Serious Call* of William Law (all published in Methuen's *Library of Devotion*, 2s. each); *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War* (published by S.P.C.K. in abridged form, illustrated, 3s. 6d. each). To this list may be added the sermons of J. H. Newman, R. W. Church, F. W. Robertson, Bishop Francis Paget, and many others which, without exaggeration, deserve to be described as classical.

(c) A very important branch of study is the History of the Church, and, very closely connected with it, the biographies of Christian men and women. It is, however, very difficult to suggest books. We shall do well to emphasise the fact that no history can rightly be described as merely secular, for the Christian cannot but trace the working out of the Mind and Purpose of God in all history; at the same time our nearer concern is with the history which in a special sense is sacred, that is the History of the Catholic Church,

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more especially as it has unfolded itself in our own country. It will perhaps be best to mention those books which aim, more particularly, at the instruction of our less learned people. For the history of the early Church there are: Canon Robertson's *Sketches of Church History*, A.D. 29 to the Reformation (S.P.C.K.); Professor Whitney's *The Second Century* (S.P.C.K.); the *Historical Essays* of Bishop Lightfoot (Macmillan); *History of the Church*, 325-451, of Dr. Bright (only to be had second-hand); some of the volumes in *Epochs of Church History* (Longmans); some in the *Studies in Church History* series (S.P.C.K.). For the later history, more especially of the English Church, there are the later volumes of *The History of the English Church* (Macmillans); H. O. Wakeman's *History of the English Church* (Rivingtons); and some of the volumes in the two series mentioned above (S.P.C.K. and Macmillans). To these may perhaps be added Dean Church's *Oxford Movement* (Macmillans).

Biographies are without number. But, without wishing to exclude others, it may be permitted to mention some of those published in recent years by S.P.C.K. There are those concerned with the great personages of the Church of France in the seventeenth century: St. François de Sales, Ste. Jeanne de Chantal, Bishop Bossuet, St. Vincent de Paul (Heath Cranton), and those most inspiring modern lives of *Bishop Frank Weston*, *Temple Gairdner*, *Mother Cecile*, and *A Heroine of the North* (Mrs. Bompas). Other missionary biographies and books on foreign missions may easily be found at the depots of S.P.G., C.M.S., and U.M.C.A. Before closing this section of our subject, it may perhaps be suggested that for those of our parishioners who have little time for reading, we must by no means despise the historical and biographical volumes in the Home University Library (note especially Dr. Bevan's *Christianity*), nor even the little sixpenny books in Benn's Library.

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(d) It remains that something should be said about the subject which, next to the Holy Scriptures themselves, is the most important, because the most needed, of all subjects of study—the study of Christian Doctrine. The ignorance of the English Churchman is almost beyond belief, and not only his ignorance but his mistakes and misunderstandings about the Faith which he confesses with his lips. And what wonder, when his one guide to what the Church teaches is too often what he reads in the newspaper or the statements of those, whether hostile or not, who think they know what the Church teaches! It is better not to attempt to give any list of books. The parish priest will be able to recommend such books as he thinks most suited to the individual case. He may think it wise to give instruction himself on some one great doctrine, and recommend books referring to his subject. He will try to help his people to understand what is meant by the four great doctrines about which there is such widespread ignorance—the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Church, the Sacraments. He will find great help, for himself at any rate, in Bishop Gore's great "trilogy" (*The Reconstruction of Belief*, 7s. 6d.), and he will not find it difficult to find books which will help his people. If he wants to give a comprehensive manual he will be glad of Bishop Gore's *The Religion of the Church* (Mowbrays), or K. D. Mackenzie's *The Way of the Church* (also Mowbrays); or a very popularly written book may be recommended, K. E. Maclean's *A Religion for Monday Morning* (S.P.C.K., 1s.).

C

In conclusion, some quite practical things may be said:

(1) Look to your tract-case before the beginning of Lent; remove some tracts (they can be replaced

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later) and add others. Nothing has been said about tracts in what has been written above, because it is really a subject by itself. But the teaching of many of the present-day series of tracts is excellent, and the subject of the sermon may often be reinforced by the appropriate tract which the people may be asked to take home and read. The *Little Books on Religion* series (S.P.C.K.), containing about eighty little books, is excellent; so also are *The Churchman's Penny Books*, and the *St. Christopher Books* for children.

(2) Make it as easy as possible for people to obtain the books which you recommend. Offer to get for them any book which they want. It is really not an easy matter for people who do not live in London, or in a town where there is an understanding bookshop, to get religious books for themselves.

(3) Be prepared to lend books as far as possible, and to keep books in church (larger than tracts) which people can borrow to read in church or at home.

(4) Some have found it useful to keep single copies of the Gospels for sale somewhere near the tract-case. These can be bought from the Bible Society or from the Scripture Gift Mission for 1d. or 2d. A little book, like these single copies, well and clearly printed, which a man can keep in his breast-pocket or wallet, may help to a great deal of Bible-reading which cannot be secured in any other way.