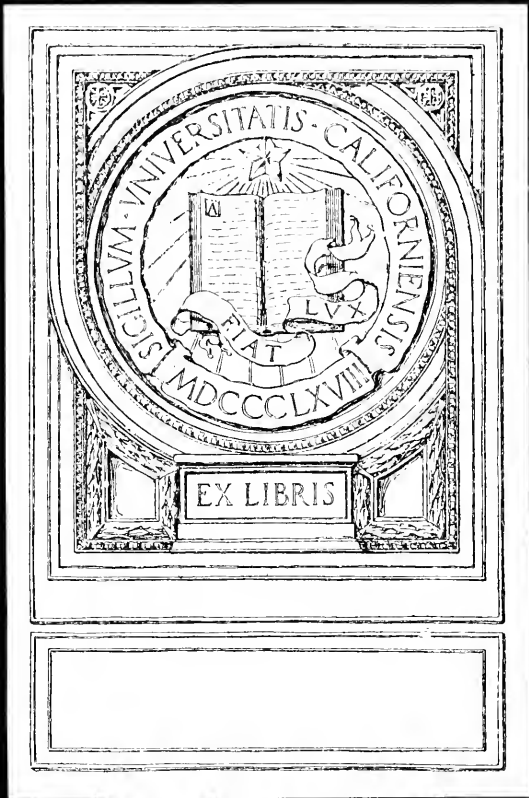


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# The Church the Hope of the Future

By

**J. H. OLDHAM, M.A.**

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## BASIS OF PUBLICATION

This series of Papers is issued under the auspices of a Committee drawn from various Christian bodies and political parties, and is based on the following convictions :

1. That Great Britain was in August morally bound to declare war and is no less bound to carry the war to a decisive issue ;
2. That the war is none the less an outcome and a revelation of the un-Christian principles which have dominated the life of Western Christendom and of which both the Church and the nations have need to repent ;
3. That followers of Christ, as members of the Church, are linked to one another in a fellowship which transcends all divisions of nationality or race ;
4. That the Christian duties of love and forgiveness are as binding in time of war as in time of peace ;
5. That Christians are bound to recognize the insufficiency of mere compulsion for overcoming evil, and to place supreme reliance upon spiritual forces and in particular upon the power and method of the Cross ;
6. That only in proportion as Christian principles dictate the terms of settlement will a real and lasting peace be secured ;
7. That it is the duty of the Church to make an altogether new effort to realize and apply to all the relations of life its own positive ideal of brotherhood and fellowship ;
8. That with God all things are possible.

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# THE CHURCH THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE

## I

EVERY day brings home to us more directly and more poignantly the terrible price which our nation with our allies is paying for the maintenance of freedom and right. The question presses harder on us whether there can be any return great enough to compensate for so great a loss. There is but one thing that can reconcile us to the sacrifices which have been made. It is that the suffering should be the birth-pangs of a new and better world. If things are to go on in much the same way as before, if with energies exhausted and resources depleted and infinitely poorer by the loss of its bravest and best the world is to resume unchanged its former course, then of all tragedies that which we are now witnessing is the greatest.

Never was blood so freely shed. The agony is greater than we thought we should ever live to see and feel. But the saddest thing of all would be that the suffering should be in vain. How could we bear the thought of the countless graves in Flanders and in France, and on many far-off shores, or of the brave lives which the sea has engulfed, if from this sacrifice there is to come no commensurate fruit? Those who have fallen gave their lives for the sake of freedom and of right between man and man. We who still live owe it to them to see that the price has not been paid for nought. Not by our own choice, but by the fact that our lives and possessions are still ours only because other men have died, we are dedicated to the task of making the world worthy of so measureless a sacrifice.

If we are to succeed in this task, we must be clear with regard to the real causes of our present evil. As to its immediate cause we are not in any doubt. The war was brought about by the temper, ambition, and folly of Germany. But if our analysis stops there, we have not

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penetrated far beneath the surface, and have failed to reach the heart of the evil. As an explanation of political events the answer is adequate. But in regard to the religious meaning of this terrible tragedy it does not go deep enough. The real depths of the problem were sounded long ago in the pregnant saying, 'Lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death.'

It is not enough to know that Germany is responsible for the war. It is necessary to inquire further how Germany became what she is. We are blind to the real problem if we forget that Germany grew to her present state as a member of the community of European nations. She has allowed her life to be poisoned by false teaching, the true character of which stands clearly revealed in its execrable fruits. But it would be absurd to maintain that the other peoples of Europe were in conscious and open revolt against these false ideas. It would be easy to fill a volume with quotations from English books and magazines vehemently advocating the very doctrines with which we are supposed to be at war. German ambition and German diplomatic methods in the past half-century have much to answer for, but it cannot be said that in the history of other nations Germany could find much to point her to a higher and better way. However great the guilt of Germany may be, we ignore the root of the evil if we fail to see that the European tradition is at fault. If men's minds remain under the sway of the same ideas as before, if the attitude of the nations to one another continues to be one of rivalry, suspicion and armed hostility, there is no reason why the catastrophe against which our hearts revolt should not occur again. The war is the final condemnation of the whole system of ideas on which international politics and diplomacy were based. The defeat of Germany in itself would mean no more than the cutting down of a noxious growth; the roots would remain to bear in the future the same pernicious fruit. No political advantage, how-



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ever great, can reconcile us to this expenditure of blood and tears ; only for the sake of some large spiritual gain can we feel that the travail and sacrifice have not been in vain.

But it is not merely the unsoundness of international relations that the war has laid bare. Its fierce light has shown on what insecure foundations western civilization rests. It may be that the war with all its horrors has saved Europe from a still greater calamity. When it broke out, Great Britain appeared to be on the verge of an unprecedented industrial upheaval. The other nations of Europe were also seething with social discontent. If the growing embitterment between capital and labour had been allowed to continue unchecked, it might have led in the end to a conflict more awful than war between nations. Tragic as the present struggle is, it is in some degree redeemed and glorified by the social solidarity which it brings about within the nation, the subordination of selfish interests to the public good, and the readiness to make sacrifices for the preservation of national ideals and the loved traditions of a great past. Industrial strife, like the conflict of nations, may be inspired in some measure by ideal ends. But a struggle which is primarily economic is in danger of becoming sordid ; and when class is pitted against class, sympathy and understanding may be so lacking that the conflict may attain an undreamed-of bitterness and lose the human touch which survives even in war. In the minds of many thoughtful men the universal industrial unrest was no less grave a menace to western civilization than the national rivalries and armaments which have resulted in the present explosion. The conflagration might have been occasioned as easily by the one cause as the other. It will avail little to put an end to militarism and to deliver Europe from the incubus of armaments if the industrial struggle is to continue with unabated intensity.

Again, behind the antagonisms of western nations there looms ever larger the question of the relations between the white and the coloured races. Year by year the

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problem grows in magnitude and urgency. The war has in many ways made a right solution far more difficult. The nations of Europe, weakened by their losses, will be less fitted to discharge their enormous responsibilities to the peoples of Africa. The splendid loyalty of India, which has so deeply moved us, marks the opening of a new stage in the relations between Great Britain and India, in which new and harder demands will be made upon our sympathy and understanding. If the destiny which has so strangely united peoples so diverse as those of India and of Great Britain is to bring blessing to both and not be their undoing, some power hitherto unknown must make its presence felt and character must rise to heights yet untried.

The plain truth is that without an inrush of new spiritual forces human society can no longer hope to hold together. Disintegrating influences have long been sapping its strength, and under the present strain the whole fabric is in danger of collapse. What such a calamity would involve it is impossible to conceive. The civilizations which history shows us were far less comprehensive in their extent, far less complex and closely knit. For the first time we have a world civilization so interdependent in all its parts that its dissolution would spread universal ruin. Yet the war makes plain that a civilization based on materialism and egoism must ultimately compass its own destruction.

If this lesson be deeply learned, the war will not have been fought in vain. Nothing less, perhaps, would have opened our eyes to see where the world was drifting. The conflict has thrown into clear relief the disruptive principles at work in society and the consequences to which they lead. Germany, without knowing it, may be the means of recalling the world to a better mind. With her unique gift of systematic thoroughness and scientific precision she has carried a certain view of life to its logical conclusion, until the conscience of the whole world has risen in revolt. But the principles which Germany has

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applied so ruthlessly are principles which have deeply penetrated the whole life of the world. The sum of her offending is that she is pursuing what she conceives to be her material interests without the least regard to the rights and feelings of others. But is not this just the principle of conduct which, less clearly recognized and less openly avowed, is the root cause of commercial rivalries, industrial disputes, class antipathies, race antagonisms, and all the other disruptive tendencies that threaten the stability and well-being of western civilization? Our war is with the German people only in so far as they have identified themselves as a nation with this destructive principle; the real and final conflict is with the view of life and temper of mind which can produce such dire results.

In letters of blood and deep scars upon our hearts the war is impressing the lesson that a social order based on egoism cannot survive. The eternal truth on which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament continually insist, that there is an indissoluble connexion between sin and death, has again been forced home on our forgetful minds. The bravest and best in Europe have died in hundreds of thousands to expiate our worship of false gods. Yet the moral government of the world which has established this connexion between sin and death has a redemptive purpose. God is calling us to strike at the evil root which has borne this harvest of death.

The call comes not only in the tragedy of failure and the agony of loss, but also in the exaltation and inspiration of the hour. For never was it so clear how splendidly worth saving society is. The war has shown that the social organism is suffering from terrible disease, but it has at the same time revealed its magnificent force and health. If a nation can even now reach the heights to which the nations of Europe have risen, what could it not do if its life were sound and whole?

It is not difficult to see the principle which human society requires to give it cohesion and health. What is

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needed is that the good of the community should be set above all selfish interests. The individual must acquire the habit of thinking not merely of his own interests, but of the needs and feelings of the other man. In the industrial sphere capitalists must not think chiefly of defending themselves against the claims of labour, nor working men of obtaining at all costs the maximum concessions from capital, but both must set themselves to learn what is fair and equitable and right between man and man. Nations must rise to the difficult height of setting the good of the human race above particular and selfish national interests. To state the principle is simple. But its application would completely transform the life of the world and opens up an infinite task. The attempt to reconstruct the whole life of the world on sounder social principles will demand no less 'iron sacrifice of body, will, and soul' than has been poured into the death-grapple of the European nations. It is not necessary that the task should be completed all at once. What is urgently needed is the right kind of leaven. A salt that has not lost its savour can keep the body from corruption. But this salt there must be. Unless there is some mighty quickening of new energies of life, the pain and travail of this awful hour in human history will not be, as we trust and pray it may be, the birth-pangs of a new and better world, but the dying agonies of a civilization lacking the moral strength or right to survive.

### II

From whence can these fresh spiritual energies come, of which the world stands in such dire need? Only from God, the fountain of all life, and mainly, as regards the human instrument, through the Church of Christ.<sup>1</sup> For the Church has been set in the world for the realization of that social ideal of fellowship and brotherhood which

<sup>1</sup> The term 'Church' is used in this Paper to denote all Christian bodies which claim the name. Whether they all have a full right to do so is not material to the present purpose.

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the world needs if it is to be restored to health and soundness. It is a daring thing to make this claim for the Church. The world does not believe that the Church has this contribution to make to its life. The witness of the Church has not been so clear and unequivocal that men instinctively think of it as a fellowship founded on different principles from those of the world and committed to deadly war with selfishness and materialism. If therefore we are to continue to believe with heart and soul that the social order, if it is to be saved at all, must be saved through the Church, it is necessary first to re-examine the grounds of this belief, and then to inquire what the Church must be and do if it is to accomplish in the future what it has failed to achieve in the past.

The Church has the power to redeem the social order, because its starting-point is not aspiration and effort, but faith. It comes to its social task not with the weakness which attaches to all human aspiration and desire, but with the strength which is rooted in the knowledge of what God is and what God has done. Its ideal for human society is no dream at variance with the hard facts of life, but the living reality of the dawn into which the darkness of night is passing. For its aims and hopes are based on the nature of God Himself. In the heart of history God has set the Cross of Christ—the weakness of God which is stronger than men. On the sacrifice of the Cross He has placed the triumphant seal of the resurrection. Thus God stands revealed as eternal love. In His inmost nature He is the Father. And because He is Father it is His purpose to bring many sons to glory and unite them in the bonds of brotherhood. The whole creation is waiting for its deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The same power that moves the tides of the sea and that urges on the stars in their courses is working for this great and splendid consummation. The faith of the Church is the victory that can overcome the world.

Being born of God the Church is the vehicle of a

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transcendent life. The powers of the world to come work in and through it. Its roots are struck deep in the eternal order. Even if European civilization were to break and dissolve, the life of the Church would still continue. And it is just because of this truth, and in proportion as it believes it, that the Church has the power to save civilization. Because it is deeply aware of the insufficiency of this earthly life for the full desire, outreach, and capacity of the soul, and has its hope set on the eternal city whose builder and maker is God, the Church can see the true path through the confusion and perplexities of the passing day. Beholding the face of God and worshipping in His presence it is able to mould human life in accordance with the pattern in the heavens. It remains serene and strong because its life is continually renewed by communion with the living God, in adoration, prayer, and sacrament, and in the study of the Scriptures, in which God has been revealed. It can draw upon inexhaustible power, since all the resources of the infinite God have been made available to prayer and faith.

Again, the Church is the chief hope of social salvation, because it aims at a radical cure. It does not deal with symptoms, but with causes. It demands from the individual a complete change of heart. It proclaims the judgement of God on the spirit of selfishness and materialism which is the canker at the heart of our civilization and tells men that they cannot serve God and mammon. Because the Church preaches a Gospel which brings men into the presence of a holy and loving God, it can create that temper of profound humility united with a supreme confidence in God, out of which great reforms and great achievements can be born. The Christian Gospel leads men to repent deeply and yet not be discouraged. It raises them to new heights of resolve, and sends them forth as converted men in the whole-hearted, enthusiastic, passionate service of a new ideal.

The ideal to the service of which men are called in the Church of Christ is a social ideal. It has to do, that is

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to say, with the relations of men to one another. The evidence of the New Testament on this point is unmistakable. Christ Himself made it quite clear that He intended to create a type of society which should be governed by principles entirely different from those prevailing in the world. 'You know the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men overbear them: not so with you. Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave.'<sup>1</sup> Throughout the New Testament there is the most intimate connexion between the supernatural powers of the new life which broke into the world in Christ and the expression of that new life in changed human relations. In the Gospels the Divine forgiveness is made inseparable from our willingness to forgive others. St. Paul has continual recourse to the argument that because Christ humbled Himself and took the form of a servant, Christians must learn to forbear one another in love, not looking each to his own things, but also to the things of others. The breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ which the apostle explores in the opening chapters of the Epistle to the Ephesians have for him the practical consequence that fathers are to behave in a certain way to their children and masters to extend a particular kind of treatment to their servants. No one can read the New Testament with a fresh and open mind without discovering that the Church depicted in its pages was essentially a company of people, who because they had seen a new revelation of God and had experienced the power of a new life were seeking to realize a new kind of society governed by principles quite different from those accepted in the world.

### III

All this the Church was meant to be and to do. But looking back on the long process and play of forces which

<sup>1</sup> Mt. xx. 25, 26 (Dr. Moffatt's *New Translation of the New Testament*).

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have culminated in the present catastrophe, we can see how little the Church has leavened society with the principles of fellowship, brotherhood, and service. It has not succeeded in expressing its own social ideal with such clearness and force as to make the world aware of the presence in its midst of a way of life radically different from its own.

When, therefore, we speak of the Church as the hope of the future, it can only mean a Church different from what it has been in the past. And the difference will lie in a new consecration to the task of creating a society, which in its life and organization will truly express the Christian spirit. In embarking upon such an adventure the Church will be thrown back on its supernatural resources, and will discover unsuspected depths of meaning in the faith by which it lives. The power of our Lord's life in its human aspect lay in the unflinching resolve with which He brought the principles by which He Himself lived into full and direct contact with the real life of the world. What raised His life to such an immeasurable height, and gave to it such an infinite meaning, was the tremendous clash of truth with error, and of love with selfishness.

It is a simple and, in a sense, a very obvious thing to say that the Church must take its own social ideal seriously and apply it to the whole of life. Yet this would herald a revolution in human thought and a far-reaching transformation of social life. All that it would involve we cannot yet apprehend, for it is a law of the spiritual life that only as we use the measure of light we have is fuller light granted to us. But already it is possible to see clear lines of action which lead directly to the goal, and which can claim the devotion, the energy, and the enthusiasm of a lifetime.

1. It is clear that the first step is to begin to realize the ideal of brotherhood in the ordinary relations of our daily life. Many of us have given so little thought to this that we are hardly aware how greatly the accepted conventions and habits of common life conflict with the true spirit of



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brotherhood, or how remarkable a social transformation would take place if Christians were to put their professed principles into practice. The relations of mistress and servant, of employer and employed, of buyer and seller, of neighbours who do not belong to the same social circle, the chance encounters of business and travel will furnish all the school we need. At the bottom of much of our industrial unrest lies the fact that the working man has been treated too frequently as a 'hand' and not as a living man with ideas and wishes of his own that require to be taken into account. The actions and words of most of us are apt to be determined by our personal convenience, with little thought of the way our demands affect those who serve us, or of the needs of those to whom life offers few opportunities or of the loneliness of the stranger or foreigner whom we might cheer by an invitation to our home. The first lesson in the school of brotherhood is to learn that to be a Christian means to act differently in such matters as these from those who have never sat at the feet of Christ. It would mark a great advance if the Church were to give this truth a new prominence in the instruction and education of its members.

2. We should thus come increasingly to think of the Church not only as a place where we gather for the common worship of God but as the meeting-place of those who practise a new way of life. That in itself would be a remarkable change. The Church would be distinguished for its atmosphere of friendliness. It would consist of people who regard nothing that is human as foreign to them, and who welcome every opportunity of passing beyond the narrow limits of their class, their profession, their denomination, their individual tastes and prejudices, and of entering more fully into the deep, pulsating life of humanity. If it should seem that this is a somewhat trivial and earthly view of what the Church was meant to be, we can appeal to the authority of St. Paul, for whom, as we have already seen, the sublime mysteries of the Christian faith had as their practical consequence the

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establishment of right relations between masters and servants, and between fathers and children.

3. There is abundance of room for the exhibition of the Christian spirit not only in the personal relations of members of the Church with one another but also in its formal deliberations and actions. The proceedings of ecclesiastical gatherings are not always such as to leave in the mind of an outside observer the feeling that he is in an atmosphere notably different from that of an ordinary public meeting. If we would set ourselves to the task, it should not be difficult to create a habit of conducting business in which we should be less concerned to defeat our opponents than to assimilate the truth which they are trying, however partially and mistakenly, to assert, and should rely for a solution of our difficulties less upon controversy and more upon prayer. The habit once acquired might be expected to extend its influence to our relations with our fellow Christians belonging to a different fold. Another high end for which we may strive is that the Church should make it indubitably clear to the world that the Christian good of the nation and the service of the common people are far more important in its eyes and awaken a more passionate enthusiasm than the maintenance of its own rights and privileges as an institution. The Church was meant to be, and to exhibit to the world, a new type of society, and its influence will be in proportion to the degree in which it succeeds in expressing in its corporate life its own distinctive genius and spirit.

4. The existence within the State of a body of people whose entire energies are directed to the promotion of understanding and reconciliation would in itself be an enormous contribution to the health of the social organism. But the Church is called to more than this. It needs to think out with far more thoroughness than has yet been attempted the social implications of the view of God and the world to which it is committed by its faith. It is not, of course, the business of the Church to frame political measures or economic theories. But behind political and

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economic questions there lie views of life with which the Church is very much concerned. If these are changed, the political and economic questions assume a new aspect. If, for example, it is taken for granted that every one will try to make as much money as the law permits him to make, certain political and economic doctrines will naturally follow. But if we can convince men that the welfare and healthy growth of human life is much more important than any financial interests, new forms of political and social organization will become possible. It will not do for the Church to stand outside the organized life of the world and proclaim the Christian ideal. That life has to be brought into obedience to Christ, and this can be done only by Christian men taking the Christian ideal with them into the market-place and workshop and seeking to apply it to the social life around them. We need Christian thinkers who will approach political and economic questions with Christian presuppositions, and behind such men there must be a Church passionately concerned to see the Christian social ideal realized in practice and the will of God done on earth as it is in heaven.

5. Side by side with the intellectual effort to understand the social implications of the Christian view of life must go a great courage in applying what we already know to be true to the actual conditions of the world's life. There is no use in denouncing evil in the abstract. It has to be attacked in the concrete.

An illustration will make clear what is meant. Among the national weaknesses which the war has laid bare is our moral powerlessness in face of the drink evil. It is not necessary to approach the subject from the standpoint of fanaticism. Room may be left for widely differing attitudes towards the drink problem. It is not a question whether the proposals brought forward by the Government were sound and wise ; very probably they were not. The damning fact is that the nation, even in the hour of supreme emergency, was powerless to deal freely with an evil that was a menace to the national safety because the

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financial interests with which that evil was bound up were too strong. We know now that it is an easier thing to defeat Germany than it is to overthrow this enemy of national well-being in our midst. It does not matter what kind of temperance legislation we believe to be best ; the point is that the nation is not free to adopt any kind of temperance legislation which conflicts with all-powerful financial interests. It is the plain truth that the moral health of the nation is at the mercy of money power. Against such a state of things the Church ought to be in open and hot revolt, if it has any prophetic mission in the world at all.

This is but one of the many powers of darkness with which the Church is called to engage in mortal combat. The spirit of selfish egoism is deeply entrenched in the accepted standards, traditions, conventions, and customs of social and national life. Against this spirit in all its manifestations the Church is called to declare open and relentless war. The world is dying for the lack of a great moral adventure. Why should not the Church, which acknowledges as its Lord One who, daring all things, bade His disciples attempt what is impossible with men but not with God, cast aside unchristian caution and embark on what would be the greatest of all crusades ?

Not with a light heart or with blowing of trumpets can the Church enter on such a crusade. No one who through the months of war has seriously tried to judge national conduct by the light of Christian standards can have failed to realize how hard it is to see one's way in the midst of such great and confused issues. The Church will always need to be chary in asserting that in a complex situation one particular policy is the only Christian course to take. But if we are diligent in cultivating the spirit of brotherhood in small things we shall be able increasingly to bring to bear upon the larger questions of social and national policy the conciliatory temper and instinctive regard for the rights and feelings of others, which are a surer guide than mere intellectual power. Only by

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a thorough mastery of the elementary lessons in the school of brotherhood can the Church acquire the insight and capacity to deal rightly with the larger and more complex problems of social and national life. Nor dare it undertake these greater tasks without a deeper experience of the life of communion with God. Only by taking refuge in the hidden place of prayer and by the discipline of waiting to hear God's voice can it escape the danger of serving the ends of a political party and of confounding 'will-worship' and earthly motives with the pure and high service of God. But though the larger tasks are beset with danger and difficulty, and cannot be attempted without long preparation and severe discipline, the Church cannot flinch from undertaking them. For Christ must be enthroned as King of the whole of life. His followers must seek to set Him there or be prepared to die in the attempt.

6. What has been said may perhaps be summed up in the remark that whereas in the past the Christian ideal has found striking and splendid expression in the lives of individual saints, the task now confronting us is to devote our energies to securing that it should find full expression also in the corporate life of the Church. It is, of course, necessary to bear in mind that the Church is not composed solely, or mainly, of Christians who are full grown. It is a home for the infirm and a school for the immature. We need cherish no illusions of a perfect Church. And yet the Church alone, and not individual Christians, can accomplish what needs to be done. The truth of this will be evident if we recall to our minds the character of the world in which we live.

The significance of the life of the community in relation to that of the individual has been brought home with fresh force by the war. We have seen men prepared to sacrifice themselves in thousands for their country, because they felt that apart from their country their own life would have no meaning or value for them.

Who stands if freedom fall ?  
Who dies if England live ?

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It is only in and through the community that the individual lives at all. Take from a man the knowledge which past generations have accumulated, the institutions they have created, the social, intellectual, and spiritual atmosphere which he breathes every waking moment, and he ceases to be himself. His family, his school, his class, his country, humanity as a whole live in him and make him what he is. The British Empire in a peculiar degree has been the result of individual adventure and initiative, and yet it is not individuals who have made it. It is the genius and spirit of England, of Scotland, and Ireland, that working in and through their sons have created this mighty fabric.

The dependence of the individual upon the community becomes greater from year to year. Economically the world has become so interdependent in its different parts that the collapse of a business house in the country may affect the lives of individuals in twenty others; and an inventor in the United States or in Japan may, without intending it, deprive of their means of livelihood hundreds of people in rural France or England. The system of knowledge is so vast that no one can become master of more than an infinitesimal fraction of it; for the rest he must rely upon the work of others. The work of the world has become so complex and so highly organized that only through co-operation can anything effective be accomplished. The individual must unite with others if he is to achieve any large or great purpose.

The deep and elemental truth that no man lives for himself alone is as true in the spiritual as in the natural sphere. Christ's work was with individuals, but it was to bring them in the fellowship of a society. 'We being many', wrote St. Paul, 'are one Body in Christ.'

This truth, always essential to the full and perfect expression of the Christian religion, is increasingly pressed upon our attention by the circumstances of our time. We live in a world which is highly complex, and organized on the basis of co-operation. As a result of the immense variety of its interests it is divided into more or less self-

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contained groups of people who are absorbed in their own profession, pursuits, and hobbies, and who restrict their reading to a particular and often narrow range of literature and newspapers. In such a world a mere individual, however gifted, can exercise only a limited and circumscribed influence. The big things which have to be done for Christ can be done only by a Church. If civilization is to be saved from becoming a soulless machine, it needs the inspiration of a social ideal. There must be the leaven not only of Christian individuals but of a Christian society, the example not merely of regenerated and sanctified personalities but of a social order redeemed and inspired by Christ. The goal on which our eyes must be set is a Church that will in its own corporate life conspicuously express the Christian ideal of fellowship and brotherhood, and at the same time strive persistently to mould national, industrial and social life in accordance with the principles which are the fountain light of all its day.

It is clear that the Church, as we have known it, is not equal to the great spiritual adventure which the occasion seems to demand. But may it not be that at the touch of God's finger the Church will awake, and that its light will shine with a brightness that the world has not yet seen? The war marks the end of an epoch in human history and the opening of another. The men of to-morrow will think and feel quite differently from those of yesterday. The civilization we have known has broken in pieces; the new structure which will rise on its ruins, whatever shape it may take, will be altogether unlike the old. Amid such mighty changes can the Church, to which has been given the Spirit of Truth, be content with the attainment, the outlook, the aims and the ways of days that are gone? Out of experiences so overwhelming will it not gain a fresh and deeper understanding of the treasure of the Gospel which it possesses and of the purpose for which God set it in the world? Let us pitch our expectations high. Let us believe in the power of God to create something wholly new. Let our ears be open to the voices of the morning.

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and our eyes be quick to catch the flush of dawn. For of such calamities as those through which we are now passing our Lord has said: 'When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.'

O Lily of the King! low lies thy silver wing,  
And long has been the hour of thine unqueening;  
And thy scent of Paradise on the night-wind spills its sighs,  
Nor any take the secrets of its meaning.  
O Lily of the King! I speak a heavy thing,  
O patience, most sorrowful of daughters!  
Lo, the hour is at hand for the troubling of the land,  
And red shall be the breaking of the waters.

Sit fast upon thy stalk, when the blast shall with thee talk,  
With the mercies of the King for thine awning;  
And the just understand that thine hour is at hand,  
Thine hour at hand with power in the dawning,  
When the nations lie in blood, and their kings a broken brood,  
Look up, O most sorrowful of daughters!  
Lift up thy head and hark what sounds are in the dark,  
For His feet are coming to thee on the waters!

O Lily of the King! I shall not see, that sing,  
I shall not see the hour of thy queening!  
But my Song shall see, and wake like a flower that dawn-winds shake,  
And sigh with joy the odours of its meaning.  
O Lily of the King, remember then the thing  
That this dead mouth sang; and thy daughters,  
As they dance before His way, sing there on the Day  
What I sang when the Night was on the waters!

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