LETTERS OF OSWIN CREIGHTON

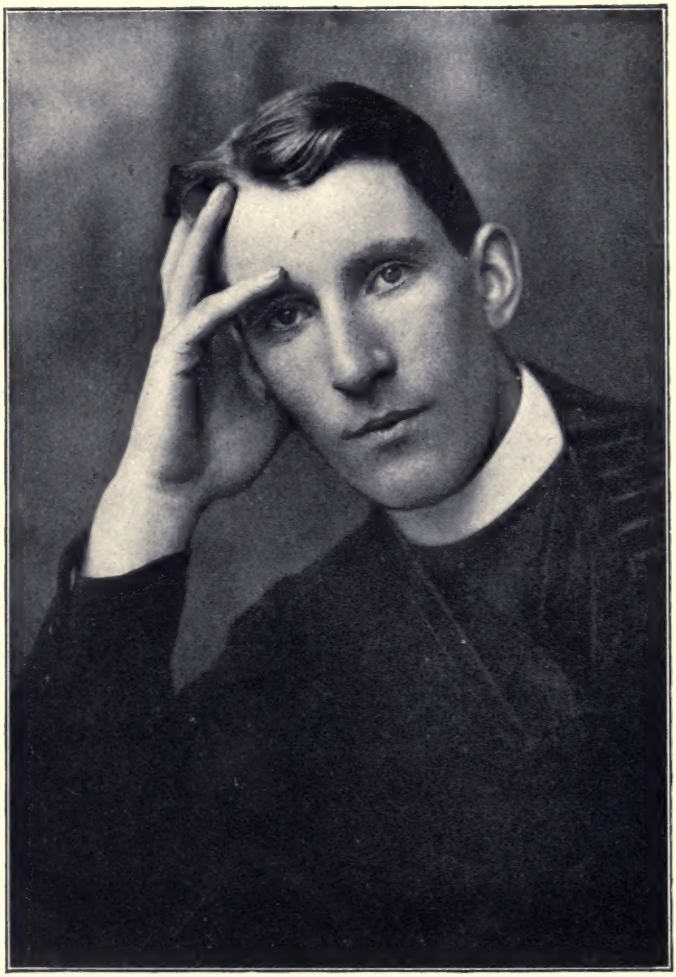

Photo: G. C. Beresford.

OSWIN CREIGHTON, 1910.

LETTERS OF OSWIN CREIGHTON, C.F.

1883–1918

EDITED BY HIS MOTHER

LOUISE CREIGHTON

"He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

WITH SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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"We'll teach the men," he said, "to laugh at Death;"
Yet not as one who counted not the cost,
Or reckon'd nothing-worth the fleeting breath,
Or play'd with chance and mock'd at what was lost:

Rather his eager spirit look'd beyond,
And, grappling onward to the coming task,
Brook'd no delay, whate'er his hand had found;
Should it be here or there, he did not ask.

Therefore when death's swift hour upon him came,
He smiled his welcome, like a captive free
From earthly doubts and trammelings; and we,
No lower let us learn to fix our aim,
To smile at suffering while our task we claim,
And lose the present in the thing to be.

C. B.

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE put together these selections from Oswin Creighton's many letters, in the hope that those who came across him during some part of his full and varied life may be glad to know more about one who, whatever they may have thought of him, must at least have attracted their attention. It has seemed best not to attempt a regular memoir, but to let him disclose himself in his own words. He liked to pour out in his letters the thoughts and ideas which crowded his active mind. But he said again and again that what he wrote must not be taken as considered opinions, that very likely in a few days or even hours, he would think quite differently. So his letters must not be thought to contain carefully weighed expressions of opinion. They express the mood and thought of the moment, but at the same time they reveal the man who wrote them. They show an eager soul, a fearless seeker after truth, frank, impulsive, spontaneous, longing to give affection, delighting in the affection he received.

The circumstances of his life, as well as his own inquiring and critical disposition, made it impossible for him to be content with accepted opinions or conventional methods of thought and action. Life, whether in a Notting Dale slum, on the Canadian prairie, or on the bloodstained battlefields of Gallipoli and France, brought to him an endless series of questionings and problems. These he always stated fearlessly, for he was absolutely sincere. He did not live to work out the solution of his problems. His letters must remain as an unfinished story. But his statement of the questionings forced upon him in the midst of experiences, searching, testing, often terrible, may help others to go on working to find the answer. It is sometimes even more illuminating to ask than to answer a question. Ever a learner, a truth-seeker himself, he never wanted to impose his opinion on others, only to help them to think out things for themselves. Those who read are

likely to differ from him often, but as they differ they will be compelled to think, and that was to him the supreme necessity.

In making selections from the vast mass of his correspondence I have been guided by the desire to make him reveal himself. Descriptions and accounts of travelling experiences have for the most part been omitted, and of necessity also his many amusing character sketches of the people he met. These were never malicious. He loved men and women, and his interest in them was unlimited. I have not thought it necessary to indicate where passages of the letters are omitted, and have tried to make them tell the story of his life in its main outlines. Where there is no other indication the letters are addressed to me. I have made no attempt to collect letters from friends. Few people, especially few young men, keep letters, and Oswin's letters to his family suffice to reveal the manner of man he was. There has been no need to conceal anything. He had nothing to hide, and as he was, so he shows himself in these letters. But no written word can convey the sense of boundless energy, of intense vitality that his presence brought with it, nor the depth of his powers of affection.

LOUISE CREIGHTON.

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OSWIN CREIGHTON, C.F.

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

Oswin Creighton was born on June 10, 1883, at Embleton Vicarage, Northumberland, the sixth child of Dr. Creighton, afterwards Bishop of London. His happy childhood was spent between Cambridge, Worcester and Peterborough.

In 1895 he went to Marlborough, having till then been educated at home. His school career was in no sense brilliant, though the reports as to his conduct were always excellent. He went to school determined to be a clergyman, and this determination was never shaken.

Marlborough.

June 10, 1900.—Instead of not wanting to become a clergyman I think I get to want to be one more and more every year, and my mind is quite made up. All I hope is that nothing will happen to make me change it.

Hazelrigg, Northumberland.

Sept. 5, 1900.—I find that the reserve with which I talk to the members of my family leaves me when I talk to Katie. I was surprised last night when I was talking to her to find there was a good deal in me which I did not before know of. I feel as though a turn had come, and that I am at last growing older in my thoughts. I see and I understand the world and its wickedness more than I used to, and I feel more and more the desire to stick to my profession. The many conversations and discussions which I have heard at home have not fallen idly upon me. I find it easier to form and have opinions upon things. I suppose St. Paul's words apply to me in a certain sense and that now that I am becoming in a certain degree more of a man, I think as a man and I leave off childish

things. . . . Do you know I have already begun to make sermons to myself and I rather love doing so?

On January 14, 1901, Oswin's father died. Oswin left Marlborough that Easter and spent the next months in preparing for Oxford. For financial reasons Keble was chosen as his College, and he went there in October 1901.

Keble College.

Nov. 1, 1901.—You ask me about my work. I find that it is regarded, especially by persons in for pass mods, as quite a minor detail of their life here. We have very few lectures, and very little to prepare for them; most men don't prepare at all.

Keble College

Jan. 25, 1902.—The Carl Rosa Opera Company has been at the theatre this week and I have been twice and should have gone more often had it not been for the time and the expense. It is a strong assertion, but I think a true one, that I never enjoyed myself more than in seeing *Tannhäuser*. I have seen it twice before, but never did it impress me so much. The whole hidden meaning of the story gives one such a lot to think of and take away with one. I kept waking up and thinking about it all the next night.

Oct. 19, 1902.—I went and saw my tutor about my history work. I had rather a difficulty in choosing my foreign period, and finally settled on the one from 1400–1596. This takes in the Reformation and is father's period, and *The Papacy* will be of great use; also it is very useful for a clergyman to have learnt about the Reformation from the historical, as well as from the purely religious, side.

Keble College.

Feb. 15, 1903.—I heard the Bishop of Worcester (Dr. Gore) preach. The University Church was absolutely packed with undergraduates. He preached an admirable sermon on religious doubts and difficulties, but did not seem to make it very clear how to get over them. It is strange how nearly half the people I meet here have doubts, or say they have, and I am not conscious of ever having had any myself. I believe that they say they have doubts simply because they are lazy and don't want to go to church more than is necessary.

Keble College.

June 25, 1903.—It is curious I always have been accused at home of being young, but here I must say I feel much older than other people really older than me, and they seem to regard me so. It is curious, too, the way about this time one feels oneself developing and sees others doing so too. It is the curious kind of life one leads up here that determines a man's character, I suppose. At first one thinks it an ideal life and is in a continual state of rushing about seeking enjoyment, and then one goes on to look for something more and craves to get hold of something definite.

The Old Parsonage.

Oct. 23, 1904.—The dons seem fairly pleased with me and to regard me as a more or less serious person. This is partly because I am beginning to take myself a little more seriously. My separation from Keble has been much more complete than I expected. Besides attending daily chapels, occasionally eating a dinner and coming in for a few minutes to see my tutor I am never there. I am at last beginning to see there are other things in this world than those I had previously contented myself with. I am beginning to come into touch with a new life, a life whose existence I had hardly even remotely conceived before. I don't think it would be too much to say that one of the chief impulses in this direction I have had has come from "The Life." [1] I have thought much about the ideal of life which father put before himself. I can see that you and he *lived* in the fullest sense of the word, and I am stirred inwardly to try and understand what real living means by your example. But it is a process subject to many disappointments. I think at one moment I have made advance in some respect, when I find myself falling back into the old sluggishness. So though I feel impatient at intervals yet I see the advance must be a gradual one. At any rate I have begun to think, and that surely ought to be a step towards action.

Feb. 12, 1905.—I have just been reading the last chapter of *The Life*. I was so absorbed that I could not stop. I like to begin Sunday with reading a part of it. Doing so brings me into a fresh atmosphere. New aspirations, higher ideals, and a fresh desire for effort follow. I feel

[1] The life of his father, which had just been published.

that in father there is a possible ideal on which to do my utmost to model my life. You have made father by your book and conversation so easy to understand and to get a grasp of . . . having always lived in an atmosphere where you have held up the principles on which father formed his life, though these principles are hard to grasp thoroughly, and very difficult indeed to carry out, yet everything points to their being the ones for me to base my life on. As I get to understand them more, the feeling of sympathy for them increases.

At his final examination Oswin was placed in the second class. His tutor wrote that he was "at the very top of the seconds," and that the examiners "expressed their appreciation of the good work he had done in a very hearty manner."

He was only twenty-two when he left Oxford, and before going to a theological college, he decided to gain further experience by going as assistant master to a boys' school at Smyrna, kept by the Rev. A. S. Hichens, the chaplain there. The Bishop of Gibraltar licensed him as lay reader, that he might help in the services and do some work for the Mission to Seamen.

CHAPTER II

SMYRNA

Oswin was in Smyrna from September 1905 to July 1906. In the school holidays he made excursions into the interior of the country, and at Easter visited Syria and Palestine.

Sept. 2.—What a delightful place Smyrna is and what endless occupation and interest it affords.

Sept. 7.—I have so much to do and do nothing. I want to explore the place. I must start my seamen's work. I must work up my mathematics, see people and try and do a little work. So I think I had better keep quiet yet awhile and do little in the way of exploration.

Sept. 14.—I find I like boys even better than I thought and am already making heaps of friends among them. I am at my ease at once when I am with boys and can talk and behave absolutely naturally, with no effort. I am quite looking forward to the beginning of term next week. It will mean hard work, but will be very interesting I expect.

Sept. 21.—Dear me! what an exhausting day, exhausting chiefly because of the novelty of the proceedings; my first day of teaching a lot of new boys, no settled time-table; services, drill, elections of officers, superintendence of boarders, general arrangements! Isn't this enough to make one's hair stand on an end? I remain very calm and try to make the best of things.

Sept. 23.—This afternoon was my free afternoon. I went over to Buya and went to the lawn-tennis club, where I was at once taken charge of by several boys. I am so spoilt by all these boys, they seem to take a perfect delight in looking after me and giving me a good time.

Sept. 24.—For the first time I feel utterly thrown on my own resources. At home you always have done all the prompting.

I must confess that I have not felt homesick really, at

all, that is to say in the sense of feeling gloomy and depressed and wishing myself elsewhere.

Hichens has given me practically no hints how I am to teach. I must find out my own methods and work my own way. I think he is very wise in this. He gives me a perfectly clean slate and is always ready absolutely to respect my independence. I have been given very little help with regard to my sailors' work. I must find it all out for myself.

Please do write to me often. I find I am very happy here, but that a reminder of home is a sort of unexpected luxury, like an ice after a good dinner.

Sept. 26.—I decided I must do some sailors' work. It is still very strange and I don't like it much. I found several boats in, and having selected one, managed to get on board. The captain was rather disagreeable, but said I might go where I liked. Actually all the crew was English. I first of all went to the part where the ordinary sailors lived and found a few loitering about. One was very nice and I had a little talk while some lay on their bunks and had tea. After a time I suggested, as it was Sunday evening, having a little service. They made no objection, so I said a few prayers and then read part of Psalm 107, and said a few stumbling words on the comfort and need of religion and what a difference it would make to their lives if they only took the trouble to acquire it. I then went to the other end where the firemen live. I found several of them sitting about and began to talk, but as soon as I mentioned the word service several shifted off. All I could say was that I would not have service against their wishes, and after a little conversation left.

Smyrna.

Oct. 7, 1915.—Yesterday I tore down to the harbour as soon as school was over and visited two ships. In the first the crew was Greek and I only stayed a few minutes. On *The Adjutant*, where the crew was English, I had a long talk with the captain. I gently broached the subject of holding little services on board, but he said it would not do. We got on very well, and he seemed to approve more or less of my methods. But I fear perhaps I am not aggressive enough. I then went and talked with the men. They were particularly nice and friendly and full of fun.

Oct. 9.—On Sunday evening I visited my old friend,

The Adjutant, and held a service in the men's cabin. Returning home I called at the Rest where there was to have been a Presbyterian service. I found several men collected, but no minister, and I was asked to take the service as no one came. I was quite unprepared and the men were dissenters, but they said they wanted any service; so I said some prayers and we sang two hymns, I playing them on the piano. I also gave an address. I did not feel at all nervous though the service and my address were quite extempore. I felt glad at having at last been able to do a little definite work.

Nov. 26.—I am afraid people have a poor opinion of me. "Do you play whist, Mr. Creighton?" "No." "Billiards?" "No." "Golf?" "No." "Do you shoot?" "No," etc. I think they think me pretty useless.

I feel by now quite like an experienced schoolmaster, with all sorts of ideas as to teaching and discipline. I don't know what the boys think of me and how much they like me, but feel more and more that it is not necessary to trouble to think about it. I am very strict, and some old and idle boys in the second class who want to have their own way are a little disgusted to see that I mean to be master; but they see the necessity for submission.

Smyrna.

Dec. 5.—Certainly I have nothing to complain of here; but many things to interest me: nice walks, meeting agreeable people, letters from home. Some of the people here are really very nice and kind and there is plenty of variety. In fact, I am quite in the whirl of Smyrniot society. I see many new people and have interesting talks, and try to keep my ears open and learn about things. I don't know how I shall ever have time to read all my books about Turkey, they are all so interesting.

I am really quite devoted to one or two of the boys who are quite the nicest I have ever met. I love all the quaint people one meets on the roads, riding in curious costumes on donkeys.

Though I am so happy here, still I often feel how nice it will be to be home again. Your account of Oxford rather made my mouth water. I have such a love for Oxford, the place, and sometimes feel rather a longing to be back and see it again, rather than for the sake of the life.

Dec. 17.—This is going to be only a little Christmas letter. It is not very nice having to spend Christmas away from home, especially for the first time. Still it is nice that I shall be able to have quite an English Christmas. It has made a great difference living in such a thoroughly Christian atmosphere; and everything connected with the church is very nice.

I don't suppose you will find me much older when I get home. In fact I seem, if possible, to grow younger and am generally considered as only a big boy. People are very kind and say all kinds of nice things about me which I am sure I don't deserve. It is nice to feel that I am appreciated and I don't quite know why it should be wrong to feel it. It does not make me any more conceited or self-satisfied, but is simply a little gratifying to feel that one may have given a little pleasure to others, and makes one desirous to give more if possible. I hope this does not sound priggish, it is not meant to.

Dec. 26, 1905.—Hichens, Eric and I rose before six and took train for Ephesus. Arriving there we started off at once for the ruins. We looked at the excavations made of the Temple of Diana which are quite recent, and filled with water, with lots of birds swimming about in it. All the ruins of the city are merely foundations, and great blocks of marble, some most exquisitely carved, lying there in reckless profusion.

Nasli.

Dec. 27.—We found Mrs. Hichens and Teddy in the train and travelled to Nasli where we were met by Mr. Pengelly. The Pengellys are most kind and have a most comfortable house; there is a nice boy, Fred, of about seventeen, who has taken charge of me. After tea Mr. Pengelly produced Kiepert's magnificent series of maps of Asia Minor, which made me very happy and I spent the evening poring over them.

Dec. 29.—I am enjoying a most delightful holiday and seeing a little bit of Turkey and genuine Turkish life. People are willing to take endless trouble on our behalf and are very kind. Nasli has the advantage of being a real Turkish place.

If the weather holds fine I have delightful plans of going to Sokia with Fred Pengelly and from there making joint shooting and ruin-inspecting excursions.

Sokia.

Jan. 7, 1906.—To-day I decided to stay quietly in Sokia and not rise at 4.30 and go off duck-shooting. I am no sportsman, and it is no use my trying to pretend to be one. At first I thought it might be very attractive, but I am beginning rather to despise it. Sportsmen seem incapable of enjoying the country in itself, unless there is a prospect of shooting a few birds. Part of my holiday I have enjoyed a great deal, but this last part at Sokia has not been a very great success. It is not really a very interesting place. On one side is the Meander valley, absolutely bare, on the other are the mountains among which I have clambered a good deal. There are magnificent views to be got, but otherwise they are not very attractive.

Though Asia Minor is a very grand country, I don't feel that it can compare with England for beauty. I don't go into raptures about the scenery as often as I used in England. There are magnificent mountains, huge valleys, gorgeous views, foundations of ruined cities, blazing sun, everything on a large scale, but practically no trees, flowers, or green, no delightful corners, woods, streams, etc., in which England abounds. It is all a little forbidding. Of course, the people are immensely interesting and all the sights one sees in villages or on roads, and it is really this I enjoy much most.

Jan. 8.—We started to ride to Miletus on three old nags which would hardly go at more than a walking pace. We rode across the Meander plain for about three hours. It is as flat as a billiard table carpeted with a soft close turf. We came across enormous flocks of simply thousands of wild geese. The plain and a large marsh were simply black with them. There were also flocks of wild ducks and a few wild swans even. The birds certainly made the plain most interesting.

Jan. 14.—I am now back at work again and enjoying myself thoroughly. In fact, I am feeling about as happy generally as I could be. Every one is nice, especially the boys. I have been being rather a success at various places lately and am getting a little bumptious in consequence, I fear.

Friday, being the Greek Epiphany, Hichens gave a whole holiday; so I carried off eight of the boys on what

turned out to be the best of many good walks. We wanted to go to Lidja, a place high up in the mountains. We went up through groves of ancient olive trees with the most gorgeous views of the bay, gleaming blue among the trees. We arrived at Lidja after about three hours and sat in a coffee house and ordered drinks. We then all clambered up the mountain a little way to get the view and eat lunch. We always take masses of food with us on these occasions and made an enormous and excellent meal. Some of the boys were very keen about going further up the mountains. The place has an evil reputation for brigands, so I said I would not be responsible for them. Some were tired and returned to the hotel, while I went on with three whose parents were less timid, and we simply tore full speed up the mountains, over 2000 feet, I suppose. As soon as we got to what looked the top, we found a higher one and they insisted on going further, and we returned the other side of a narrow valley, running down most of the way. I have seldom been so energetic. The views were beyond description, as was the whole of the expedition.

Smyrna.

Feb. 11, 1906.—I have decided to write to the Bishop of Winchester about going to the Farnham Hostel. I don't feel as if I shall have much difficulty in the practical side of clerical work. Whenever I have tried it I have found it comparatively easy. I really feel the need of a perfectly quiet time before Ordination. What is absolutely essential for me is to build up my spiritual nature, which I feel so weak and feeble. I want really to study, read, think.

March 13, 1906.—I am trying to make arrangements for my holidays. I hear through Mrs. Macnaughton, of the American College, that a party is starting from Beyrut on April 10 to ride to Jerusalem. This seemed a chance that should not be missed, so I am hoping my long-cherished plan may at last come off.

I must say I rather look forward to getting to real work, though, as you know, I am very happy. But I don't quite feel as if I were using all my powers and best gifts here, though I suppose one ought never to feel one's scope too narrow, and ought continually to be seeing new channels, but this is a peculiar place and a peculiar life.

Jerusalem.

Friday, April 12.—I have so much to write that I don't know how I shall ever find time to put it down as I rush about from morning to night.[1]

The amount of kindness I have received is really wonderful, considering that I have thrust myself absolutely uninvited upon the party.

Jerusalem from every point of view has far surpassed anything I could possibly have imagined. In fact, I have seen so many wonderful things that I cannot possibly realise them all. Everything seems like a dream. I rush from one thing to another and have not had time to think them over yet.

Through the American Consul I got into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to see the Holy Fire from a window in the triforium. It was the most extraordinary thing I have ever seen. I can hardly realise it now. It was too extraordinary to think about being shocked at the moment, though beforehand I had doubted whether I should go at all. It was very instructive in the light it throws on certain sides of human nature.

April 24.—On Monday, April 16, we left Jerusalem, a party of eleven. The horses were all pretty good except mine. Its doings were the subject of much amusement to the party, but not to me. One cannot enjoy the scenery properly while perpetually flogging and urging one's horse. . . .

The view from the top of Tabor is magnificent. We had lunch under some spreading trees at the top. It is regarded by the pilgrims as the scene of the Transfiguration; we met 210 of them climbing up as we rode down. There was something very pathetic seeing these aged Russian men and women, wearily clambering up with the help of stout staffs, intent only on getting to the top.

On getting back to Beyrut I was determined to get to Baalbek, and so the morning after my arrival rose at 5.30, despite my longing to stay in bed. I got to Baalbek at 12.30 and went straight off to the ruins where I spent about four hours wandering about. They are simply stupendous, far exceeding my expectations, which were great. The six enormous columns of the Temple of the

[1] Very few extracts from his Jerusalem diary are given, as it deals with places often described.

Sun, standing on the top of a great wall against the sky, are simply gorgeous. The only blot is the most glaring and hideous white marble slab which has been inserted into the inside wall of the Temple of Jupiter to commemorate the German Emperor's visit.

I found to my disgust that the steamer which was to take me from Beyrut to Smyrna was a small, dirty boat with 1200 Russian pilgrims. Fortunately, the weather was perfect all the way. The pilgrims were wonderfully inoffensive, such mild and gentle old men and women. They used to have long services going on all the afternoon nearly, down in the hold. They would sing chants continuously, and very melodiously they sang. There was something very wonderful in their simple, earnest faith. Poor things, they didn't seem to know much what they were doing! We watched one old man who continuously through one long service lasting two hours, crossed himself and bowed without any pause, till he looked nearly ready to drop with the exertion of it.

Smyrna.

June 10, 1906.—I seem to have passed a particularly unnoticeable birthday. I can look back on a year which, however unsatisfactory, at least has been one perhaps richer in experience than any other. I seem to be getting a little older and perhaps more stable in character. I hope also it will not be wrong to say that perhaps I am growing out of some of my faults, though I am still much too lazy and averse to any real hard work.

July 5, 1906.—Wednesday was the last day of the school. When I took the third class I was rather touched with the things they said. They did not want me to go at all, and said they must all have my address so as to write to me.

Sea of Marmora.

July 9, 1906.—Though it may sound vain I must record some of the nice things people have said to me on leaving Smyrna. When I said good-bye to Mrs. Williamson (Mrs. Hichens's mother) she said, " Well, I don't suppose we shall meet again, but thank God we have met." Eric writing to Mr. Hichens, said, " Many of us will miss him more than we can say, more than our own greatest friends." Mr. Hichens said, " I know I shall never like another master

as I have liked you." But I must stop this or I shall get vain. It is nice to feel that one has given even a little satisfaction.

We left Smyrna on Sunday in full consular grandeur.[1] Everything was done for us, state-rooms found, etc., without our troubling.

Constantinople.

July 13, 1906.—I was quite overcome when we got to the top of the hill on which the Nortons' house is situated, it was so beautiful. I have an enormous window in my bedroom, opening wide on to the Bosphorus. All day long a constant succession of boats of every kind pass up and down. The lights are always changing and always beautiful, whether raining or fine. Constantinople is in every way quite the most wonderful town I have seen. Here I feel all the mysteries of Turkish life. To go down the Bosphorus and see the great palaces and mysterious Turkish houses, to hear all the stories told about them, whether true or untrue, and of what is going on behind those towering walls, to see the crowds of people dressed in every kind of robe and colour—to hear the cries from the minarets at night across the Bosphorus—all these and countless other things make the place teem with an interest far more absorbing than anything I have read or heard talked about. One feels things are going on here and that this is the heart of a great empire, where amongst all the decay problems of every kind are being worked out and history is in the making. The uncertainty of everything, the impossibility of getting at the truth of almost any story, the decadent government, the oppression, the absolute backwater seen on all sides, only add to the charm of everything. I spend half my days in talking about Turkey from every possible point of view, religious, antiquarian, political, social, etc. I have learned more during my ten days here about Turkey than during all my time in Smyrna.

Constantinople.

July 10, 1906.—I really have had a splendid time here and feel it is a good conclusion to my year in Turkey. It

[1] He was travelling with Mrs. Norton, wife of the American Consul, with whom he was going to stay on the Bosphorus.

has been a wonderful and I hope a lasting experience altogether.

I don't expect any one to care to know much about what I have learnt out here. If they wish to know I shall love to tell them. What I feel about a real experience like this is that it is essentially a possession for oneself.

CHAPTER III

FARNHAM AND LONDON

Oswin went in the autumn of 1906 to read for Orders at the Bishop's Hostel, Farnham, under the Rev. B. K. Cunningham. During the summer he shared the family holiday and visited some friends.

Uppingham.

Sept. 20, 1906.—I had a delightful time in Wales. The Raikes are such a particularly nice family, so energetic and full of interest and outdoor pursuits. Mr. Raikes [1] looked up some old photos of College days, and one of father I particularly liked was in the Merton eight group. Mr. Raikes said he was a wiry and reliable oar. He was very nice and told me a good deal of college days. He wrote me a very nice letter afterwards, saying, " I am so glad to have found you and sorry the time was so short. When will you come again and do me some more good? You remind me of your father, and I should like to be friends."

Farnham.

Oct. 25, 1906.—First of all I am most ideally happy. The atmosphere of this place is extraordinarily congenial and delightful. Everything is absolutely informal. I like every one here and some of them quite particularly. There is no regular system; one does as one pleases. Everybody is absolutely genuine and there is no vestige of unreality. We are all expected to go to morning prayers in the parish church at 8. That is all we are definitely expected to do, except dress for dinner. One only goes to lectures and works if one wishes. There is no type or stamp set by the place. Every one thinks, acts and speaks as he pleases. There is no holiness, sacerdotalism or cant. Every one has a keen sense of humour, and we all rag and chaff each other. But behind it all one feels a tremendous reality and earnestness. It all suits me admirably.

[1] R. T. Raikes, a College friend of Dr. Creighton's.

I must come to details. Cunningham, whom in future I will always call the Professor, by which name he is universally known, is absolutely the right man in the right place. He makes no attempt to exercise any authority. Everybody is decided that it is necessary to destroy a theological atmosphere, the Professor most of all. Yet one feels all the time that he has all of us under his control. He hates to exercise any direct influence and would never dream of doing so, but every one genuinely loves him and respects him. We never have morbid, holy discussions; not that we don't discuss things.

Farnham.

Nov. 4, 1906.—I am going to-night to the Wesleyan Chapel. I do not know what you will think of my idea of making the round of the various places of worship in Farnham. I want to know what they are like while I have the chance. Once I am a clergyman it will be difficult.

These dissenters have a great deal to teach us, and while these experiences make me more and more certain of the Church of England, I feel they are superior to us in many points. The Church should be more adaptive and try to assimilate what is best in all systems.

Dec. 2, 1906.—I have just come in after going first to the R. C. Church. I tried to go quite unprejudiced and hoped to be able to worship God there. I do so want to try and understand them and remove intolerance. I have done it to a very large extent with the dissenters; but the R. C. service was terrible, far worse than I could have imagined; absolutely endless Ave Marias and Pater Nosters, sentimental mawkish hymns, far worse than the dissenters. What I felt most of all was for the miserable little boys who go through all this endless mummery; yet I suppose it cannot really be mummery. The people were reverent and probably virtuous. I cannot understand it. I instinctively felt God so far away, a thing I have never felt with dissenters. When I fled and went into the parish church, where there was a very large congregation and where I heard a very fine sermon, the change was simply extraordinary. I equally instinctively felt God to be present. I suppose, however, that this must really simply be the result of prejudice and custom.

Farnham.

March 10, 1907.—Meeting so many people on such different subjects it becomes difficult to get one's thoughts straight. I sometimes feel that things are going so fast and there are being so many new movements that all one's old ideas are getting upset; people talk so much and there are so many problems, and every one goes their own way and scouts all authority, so that one begins to wonder what value is going to be allowed to the Church or the Bible or religion or anything. However, it is all very interesting and one is not allowed to vegetate, but is forced to think and go to the bottom of things.

Bossington.

April 14, 1907.—Everything is perfectly ideal, and unless I restrain myself, I should write a never-ending effusion.

The boys[1] make excellent companions. They are capital walkers, which is a great comfort. On walks I sometimes amuse myself with discoursing to them at length on subjects such as the L.C.C., Trades Unions, etc., which seem quite to interest them, and which they really seem quite to enjoy, much to my astonishment. It helps me to collect my scattered thoughts on subjects about which I know singularly little. I expect all this sounds dreadfully schoolmastery, but I assure you it is not. I always feel much more natural and myself with boys than at any other time.

Farnham.

May 5, 1907.—I have had a threefold episcopal benediction on my first curacy.[2] The Bishops of London, Stepney and Kensington all write that I could not go to a better man or parish. The Bishop of Kensington[3] writes that he wants to be allowed to take a very special interest in me.

Farnham.

June 10, 1907 (*his birthday*).—A birthday is a good time for reviewing one's past year and looking forward to the

[1] These were some former Smyrna pupils, now at school in England, with whom he was spending the holidays.

[2] He had agreed to go as curate to Rev. R. M. Carrick, of St. James's, Norlands, Kensington.

[3] Dr. Ridgeway, now Bishop of Salisbury.

coming one. One thing I do feel very strongly and that is that I have quite chosen my right line in life. In fact, now, I could not imagine doing anything else. And I think also that my own religion is getting to mean more to me. My chief difficulty is to decide whether I ought not to go out as a missionary somewhere. I am always thinking about it and find myself torn in so many different directions. But at present I feel it is best to put the question out of my mind as far as possible till I have been at work a year or two in London.

Oswin was ordained Deacon in St. Paul's Cathedral by the Bishop of London in October 1907, and went at once to work in St. James's Parish, Norlands, under the Rev. R. M. Carrick. His special charge was a mission in a slum in the notorious district of Notting Dale. But he assisted also at the Parish Church. As he was now able to come home frequently, his letters during the years spent at St. James's were not so frequent as at other times.

56 St. James's Road.

Oct. 20, 1907.—Let me give you an idea of my Sunday, and you will see it is pretty severe. Up at 6.30, round to the Mission to assist at Celebration 7.15, straight on to parish Church to assist again at 8; breakfast; 10 o'clock open Sunday School at the Mission; 11 o'clock service at Parish Church and preach; lunch; 3.15 Lesser Catechism at S. Gabriel's; back to Parish Church and take two baptisms. Now I am waiting for tea. At 7, I have to take service at the Mission and talk to the people there.

The worst of it all is that one has so little time to prepare for all these services. I cannot get into the right frame of mind. I expect all will get better with use. It is all rather difficult and agitating at present. . . . My chief difficulty and the great thing I am always fighting against is self-consciousness—taking the bad form of always asking, "How am I impressing these people? Am I being successful?" etc. Of course one must ask oneself these questions in some form or other, or else one may go entirely off the mark. But if I am to deliver my message—and I do feel so strongly sometimes that I have a message to deliver—I can only do so by absolutely effacing myself. If I seek self-praise in its delivery it will utterly fail. But if I learn really to realise that—not merely as a pious opinion, but as an actual practical piece of knowledge—in so far as I speak the truth—it is

not I but God that speaketh in me, then I may be of some use and my message may succeed. I often think of what the Bishop of Kensington said in his charge, of the hideousness of flattery—such phrases as "a beautiful sermon." I hope I shall always learn to flee from it.

St. James's Square.

Feb. 5, 1908.—I find myself going on with a continual struggle against depression at the want of success in everything I take up, or have to do with, here. I feel this is very wrong. Every one tells me simply to plod on and do my best and look for no return. But nothing succeeds well. You see I am generally in rather a grumbly, dissatisfied condition, which is wrong. Certainly it is all good discipline for me and will help to humble me properly.

I have taken to teaching three mornings a week at the schools, as there, at least, work is open, and I can get into touch with many of the children.

At any rate people seem quite glad to see me now that I am going round and visiting them a second time.

Aug. 7, 1908.—I am going ahead strong with my scouts Another patrol has joined me. We are going camping for a couple of nights on Tuesday week.

St. James's Square.

July 15, 1908.—It is strange the effect that reading some people's lives—and especially father's—has on me. I am reading it again for the third time now; and I always get up from it feeling everything so much bigger than I am apt to regard it. It always has the same sort of exhilarating effect, making me feel how much fuller life is than I usually regard it and that I must try and widen and look at things from an altogether different point of view. Even though I am not in the least expecting it, this is the effect it invariably has.

The result of my boldness at Denham was that I got a letter from Mrs. Day, saying her farmer had no objection to our camping, that we would be met and shown our ground on Tuesday, and asking us all in to tea on Wednesday. So we are being well looked after. It really is very kind of her as she knows nothing about me.

Dear me! I wish I knew what to do to bring religion to these people. There were at the outside fifteen adults at the Mission to-night. I wish I knew if it was I that

empty the place, and if it would be any better if any one else went there. But nobody tells me anything, and I feel so absolutely in the dark.

32 St. James's Square

Aug. 13, 1908.—So many people have been in to see me, mostly boys, this evening, on some pretext or another. I only got back just in time after having spent the afternoon at Denham, my favourite village, where I have been making arrangements for our camp next week. I went to both the big houses to see about getting a good camping ground. The owner of one was away, the owner of the other, a lady, was most friendly. I hope to get an absolutely secluded place beside a stream in the most lovely country.

The open-air services have been going better lately. We have a new place where many more people collect. I find I can draw quite a crowd chiefly because I have a loud voice.

St. James's Square.

Oct. 11, 1908.—The parish is simply humming. I am too much up now and shall have a down if I don't take care. I don't know where to turn with the amount of work I have. Everything seems to be going ahead.

Dec. 22, 1908.—What you say in criticism of my preaching is very true. The Vicar says I speak too loudly and emphatically and there is not enough pleading in my voice. But I think a pleading voice cannot be assumed; it must be a man's natural expression of himself. Somehow when I look at those people, I feel they are so sleepy and need to be kept awake.

Dresden.

May 5, 1909.—I am having a most delightful and successful little holiday. I was met here by Mrs. Norton [1] and her old mother. Nothing could be kinder than the way I am looked after. Unfortunately I am being a little lionised (don't laugh). A special paragraph in the Dresden English paper about my preaching next Sunday; a reception is to be given here jointly in my honour and that of ——, who is giving University Extension Lectures here. Unfortunately I cannot avoid one of his lectures to-night. The Saxon Court goes and it is the fashionable thing to do. I am always being introduced and shown off.

[1] The American lady with whom he stayed at Constantinople.

I shall not be able to do as much as I should like owing to days being taken up with receptions, etc. The whole thing is too ridiculous and Henry Jamesy.

Denham.

Aug. 1, 1909.—This is our third day in camp. My family grew last night to twenty-six. It has been great fun and a great success in spite of the weather. To-day we have been nearly washed away. I have put all the boys into a large barn till everything dries up again.

I started with sixteen boys. Last night was most amusing. From four o'clock to twelve either one or two extra boys or men turned up every hour, several quite unexpectedly. However, we produced meals whenever wanted and I had plenty of room to stow them all away. I sat up by the fire nearly all the night making meals for the people as they turned up. I only went to bed at 3.30 and slept about two hours.

I am becoming quite an accomplished cook and the boys thoroughly relish the meals I serve them. Altogether I am feeling rather proud of myself.

St. James's Square.

Sept. 19, 1909.—I find work rather difficult to get into again after my holiday. In fact, things seem to worry rather on getting face to face with them again. I wish sometimes I were an R. C. or extreme High Churchman. It would be so nice to have things more definite. But I cannot help feeling that for many people a certain amount of perplexity and worry is necessary, if they are to get anywhere. I am being much interested in Pusey. It is interesting to read his life and father's side by side. What different people they were, the one so intense, the other so essentially human. Figgis's mind seems to be a sort of combination of the two. I have been reading another book of his, *From Gerson to Grotius*. He compares father's and Lord Acton's views of liberty, agreeing most with father. I think his sermon on other-worldliness rather bothered me. I preached and taught about it last Sunday, but did not end by feeling quite satisfied with my conclusions. We must seek first the Kingdom of God; but we must not divorce it from the world, we must seek it in the world. I think it is just this that father teaches me above all things and in contradistinction to all the intense

people of the Pusey type. All human relationships and interests and occupations were sacred to father because in them he saw so much of the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. So I found myself preaching on these lines to-day. I rather launched out against the type of hymn which says, "The world is very evil," etc. What is the use of groaning about the wickedness of the world, the want of religion, etc.? Goodness knows there is enough wickedness! My visiting this week has taught me that well enough—the terrible prostitution among women. But it is no use to lament. There is good somewhere, and surely it is one's business to bring that out here and now, and not worry and speculate too much about an indefinite future. We must have some fairly tangible end to work for here. We get into such a sea if we divorce our end altogether from this world. I find the best thing to do when speculatively worried is to go and do some hard disagreeable visiting. I am little good at doctrinal teaching. All at present I feel I can do with real conviction is to try to moralise and spiritualise ordinary human relationships and occupations.

I went to the Follies one night and enjoyed them enormously. I laughed till I could laugh no more. Their humour is so refined and spontaneous. I have just been put onto a care-committee at a Board School. I am probably going to take a temperance mission at Hoxton.

St. James's Square.

Sept. 22, 1909.—I did not mean by seeking the Kingdom of God in this world that there was ever to be hope of an ultimate millennium. I hate all the preaching of social reforms as an end in itself. It is possibly what I read into Figgis's sermon that I felt I could not quite agree with; a sort of feeling that as a result of the views expressed he could see no solution but to become a Mirfield brother. Certainly it is one solution. But is it the only one? Doesn't it arise from feeling that only by leading a life tending towards asceticism and the desire to escape from the world as far as possible, people can hope to find the Kingdom of God for themselves? This is what I feel so strongly about the Pusey type of mind; the Kingdom of God can only be formed by rigorous external discipline, fasting, etc., by the Catholic system. One of the great

ends of life is the repressing of self—losing one's life, if one would find it. Can this only be done by means of the Catholic system? No man seems to me to have succeeded in so utterly repressing self as father. And yet I cannot feel he did so by means simply of the Catholic system.

My whole difficulty is how to get a stronger hold of things, a deeper personal faith—by the Catholic system or by means of one's work and dealings with others? Where are we to find God? In antiquity and the Fathers? Or in the world and oneself? I cannot help inclining to the latter, though I expect a combination of the two as with most things is the best. I cannot help feeling that it was by reason of his great sympathy very largely that father got his intense faith. Every relationship was hallowed because it served to reveal God. Life was an opportunity for loving. I always pray that I may learn the lesson of his humility, his discipline of himself and his great sympathy. Pusey was certainly one of the greatest of saints. I go on reading his life with intense interest. It would be presumptuous to dare to criticise him. I don't want to, only his system. I do long for the lighter side of life. Pusey had not got it. He was so intense. But he was absolutely true to himself, and that was all we can any of us hope to be.

The question of sin remains. Goodness knows one feels the absolute cramping of sin. But it always seems to me an obstacle one has to fight and knock down rather than something to sit down and cry about. I want to fix my eyes on what lies on the other side of the wall, rather than on the wall itself.

On coming to St. James's Oswin had told the Vicar that, after three years' work there, he would wish to be free to work abroad, and early in 1910 he offered himself as a member of the Archbishops' Mission to Western Canada, which had been just inaugurated under the leadership of the Rev. W. G. Boyd.

As much time as possible was given during the spring and summer to preparation for his future work. He attended, amongst other things, courses of medical lectures at Livingstone College.

St. James's Square.

Feb. 24, 1910. Nothing much happens here. I feel that it is impossible for me to effect anything. But I have spent my three years here in order to gain experience and not to effect anything. It certainly has afforded

endless opportunities of learning and getting ideas, and, after all, it is not my business to cause a revival or work anything up. So perhaps I need not feel too depressed at leaving the parish precisely as I found it. I certainly shall not be the same as I was three years ago.

St. James's Square.

May 23, 1910.—I am going to Canada on August 12. The Bishop of London is going by that boat. I saw him on Saturday and he insists on paying the difference between 2nd and 1st fare, so that I may go with him. I cannot help thinking it is rather immoral to go 1st, but it really is most kind of him and much nicer than going alone.

June 15.—I think there is only one thing that makes me dislike going to Canada, and that is that I shall be separated from you. It is horrid to think I may have to be years without seeing you. Yet I don't suppose any one could have been more blessed in his parents. Somehow with all my wretched critical propensity, I have never wanted to criticise either father or you. Instead of forgetting father I think he gets to mean more and more to me every year. The great joy is the thought of meeting again, if only I can be worthy to do so; but I don't want to write much about this as one feels more than one cares to express.

Some comments on Oswin's work at St. James's, made after his death, will show what kind of impression he made there.

"I shall never forget his street preaching in the slum district of Notting Dale. On fire with enthusiasm he drew those poor fallen men and women around him by his strong and helpful words; and the fruit of his labours could be seen during the week's Mission which was held in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, when it was filled to overflowing with the lowest and most degraded from the slums around. Those were happy days, for his enthusiasm fired every one else." (A worker in the parish.)

"Oswin was very much to me during three years of happy work together. It may even be a little help and support in your sorrow to know how all who had to do with him realised he was no common man in personality and power, and how all looked for him to go very far. . . . I shall always think of him as one of the finest men I have met." (His Vicar at St. James's, Rev. R. M. Carrick.)

CHAPTER IV

THE EDMONTON MISSION

Early in August Oswin started for Canada. The S.P.C.K. appointed him chaplain to the emigrants on board the ship on which he travelled with the Bishop of London. Before going to the West he had decided to go to the Church Congress at Halifax and the Consecration of the Cathedral there, and Bishop Brent had asked him to act as his Chaplain.

C.P.R., Atlantic Service.

Aug. 14, 1910.—It is quite ridiculous how busy I am. I find that a chaplain's work is limitless and never done. The captain gave our party a special table. There are six of us, the Bishop, Gilson, Prebendary Storrs, the Bishop's niece, a young Adderley, ex-guardsman, and myself. Altogether there are about 1500 passengers, about 900 third class. It is impossible to talk to everybody one would like to. I hold a service every afternoon; crowds gather round and sing hymns. I have to try to get at all the 3rd passengers and find if they are Churchpeople, and if they are fill in papers for them to give to the clergyman at the place they are going to. After the service to-day, finding they were trying to get up some sports, I thought it best that they should be properly organised. So I formed a little committee and we met and drew up a programme.

We had Evensong in the 3rd Class on Sunday and I had to preach, with the Bishop, the Prebendary, and a Presbyterian minister present. It was rather alarming. The Bishop thanked me, but was nice and critical.

Aug. 19.—I must finish my account of the voyage. I have seldom enjoyed a week quite as much. I got busier and busier and made more and more friends. There was a regular succession of games and concerts and competitions. On Wednesday night I was specially asked to go down to the 3rd Class. I found that it was in order that I might be presented with an address by the sports committee

in the name of all the passengers. The words of the address may interest you. I copy it:

"We . . . wish to express our appreciation of your kindness and thoughtfulness in arranging sports, etc., thereby sacrificing your own pleasures in the first saloon for our comfort. We also thank you for the religious services you have held in our midst and pray that God will help you in the Christian work you are called upon to do in the country of the Maple Leaf," etc.

The boat carries an official called the Inspector, a huge great man of 6 ft. 4 in., who keeps order and is a sort of policeman. He was very stern and uncommunicative, and I was rather alarmed at him and could not get him to say much. I discovered that some of the men had been making a row on Tuesday night. The Inspector had taken their names down and was going to report them. That means that they would not be allowed to land and would be sent back to England again. I asked him for their names and he pointed them out to me. I took each of them aside and had a talk and pointed out the harm they were doing themselves, and I had a talk to them all together. They were threatening to make a worse row and be unpleasant to the Inspector. I told them to keep absolutely quiet the next night and go and apologise to the Inspector. They said they did not much like doing it, but would. Yesterday I asked the Inspector how things had gone, and he said they were all quiet as a mouse and had apologised. He added what has been my highest praise, "I wish you came with us every voyage."

On the last morning we had a Celebration in the 3rd Class. Among the communicants was the man who had been the ringleader of all the row. There was not nearly enough time to talk to all the people I wanted to. I said good-bye to a good many of the emigrants. I have never known little services so much appreciated. I have made many friends all over the world.

After some days at Quebec, Oswin went to visit Canon Scott in his holiday camp at Beaupré.

The camp is on a sandy, rocky bit of soil out of sight of any habitation. Canon Scott called on me at once to come and bathe, which I did with the greatest joy. . . . He is very delightful and quite mad. He does not in the

least mind what he says, is seldom serious for two minutes together. Above all, he is a poet, one of the chief Canadian poets. . . . Well, they were all so friendly that I have taken up my abode here and been going great expeditions every day. One great expedition was on Friday. The party consisted of Canon Scott, Gilson, Adderley, the two older boys and myself.

We first of all went to Petit Cap, the summer resort of the seminary at Quebec. Our reason for going there was really to get the key of a little chapel belonging to the seminary right on the top of Cap Tourment. We had a climb of over an hour through thick forest until eventually we came out on the most charming little white chapel with a red roof, on the top of a promontory 1500 ft. immediately above the St. Lawrence. I have seldom enjoyed anything so much as my night up there. The whole experience was so unique. Spending the night in this lovely spot in a R.C. Sanctuary where Protestants had never stayed before, in this weird company, with a wild Canadian poet and two proper Englishmen was something unusual. . . . The sunset was quite wonderful. I have never seen hills become so absolutely brilliantly purple. Our little house was built on to our little Church; there was one little room with bunks in which we slept, and another with a stove where we ate and cooked our food which we had carried up with us. We rang the Angelus and had Evensong in the Chapel, later on Compline, and in the morning Matins. It was like a little pilgrimage. We stayed up till late as it was so beautiful, we could not bear to go in.

We were up soon after four to see the sun rise. It was absolutely gorgeous again. Two great lines of clouds were moving all the morning down the river underneath us, looking very mysterious. Gilson and Adderley had to go off early and I sketched, and Mr. Scott lay beside me and talked. We have subscribed to give the seminary a little sanctuary lamp for the Chapel. We got back to camp and spent a lazy afternoon. There was something particularly charming about the whole atmosphere of their family life, and the way they spent their holiday.

In the Train, Halifax to Montreal.

Sept. 9.—I never had such a time as I did at Halifax. I would not have missed it for anything. . . . The opening

service was very beautiful and brought tears to my eyes. I thought I should never get a Cathedral atmosphere again after leaving St. Paul's, but though on a small scale, it was a real Cathedral atmosphere. . . . I was very fortunate in being Bishop Brent's chaplain. It gave me a position and got me into everything. It did not amount to much more than carrying his bag and doing a few odds and ends.

It was most delightful being with him. I saw a great deal of him, as we always went in and out to meetings together and discussed everything. I found it hard to remember that he was a Bishop, he seemed more like a companion. He is perfectly simple and sincere and holy, with a lot of humour.

I could not have had a better introduction to Canadian Church life. I think Congresses only tend to make me less, rather than more, churchy. I listen to papers for or against Apostolic Succession, and when I meditate I find these things do not affect me one way or the other. I don't really believe any one cares about them. They are terrified of surrendering them because of the results they feel would follow. There is such a terror of a smug, selfish individualism, that people have a feeling we must cling to all these things, and throw ourselves into them as the only possible antidote.

Well, good-bye, my dearest mother. When I get settled down to real hard work, and all this excitement is passed, and I am in a little lonely shack somewhere in midwinter, I shall begin to miss home and all of you. Now there is little time to think. I have so enjoyed these three weeks. What I really feel as the result of hearing and meeting so many different people is what a totally different kind of mind and character father had. I cannot help always wondering what he would say. Certainly not what they do.

To his sister Mary—

C. P. R. Train.

Sept. 12, 1910.—I seem to have managed my introduction to Canada splendidly. I really have enjoyed myself every moment except for about one hour after I left the steamer. I somehow felt that was the parting of the ways, and that from henceforth I must become a Canadian. But I don't think I am ever likely to be homesick. I am too interested in the things at hand to lament what I have left behind.

Everything continues to make me convinced that I have done absolutely the right thing in coming out here. That year in Smyrna did me a great deal of good. I shall never forget the first week or two after coming back and the feeling that no one took any interest in me. Nor especially a walk one evening at Varengeville, when we sat down under some fir trees and the whole family set on me. Now, however, I don't care whether any one is interested in me or not. I am content to be interested in myself. I have also, since that conversation, learnt to be more interested in other people, to look at life from a more detached point of view and to take things as they come without too much intensity. I hope you are being interested in all this, because if you are not, you ought to be. Really life is most enjoyable, especially when you always feel, sleep and eat as well as I do. It is really wonderful how I sleep. I never forget what some one who had been ill and sleepless said to me, that when we were well and slept well we forgot to be thankful. Every morning since I have thanked God for my sleep.

I enjoyed the Congress. I like hearing people discuss problems. It always makes me feel how unimportant they really are.

You have helped to make me learn to dislike everything that is false or artificial, or said for effect, or because it is the proper thing, or because you are expected to say it. How many times I have come back from preaching or teaching and thought to myself, I only said that because I was expected to, or because it was the proper thing to say! If only we could give up saying the proper things! People are such a strange mixture of truth and artificiality. The only thing is to ignore the latter; and if one only can take their Protestantism or Catholicism or any other *ism* calmly and pay little attention to them, they don't really very much matter.

The Mission House, Edmonton.

Sept. 19, 1910.—My last letter I wrote from the train. I awoke to find myself in the prairie. It was very beautiful to watch the sun rise, and the colour was wonderful. As the day went on, I began to find it depressing. The absence of trees or any features, the little naked houses, looking just as though they had been dropped down by mistake, struck me as very dismal. I began rather to hate it,

though it certainly has a kind of beauty of its own. . . . I began to feel an awful loneliness at the thought of seeing no more trees. However, the great white wall of the Rockies in the distance was very lovely. But I must say I felt a longing for a bit of English country. . . . Gradually after Calgary, the train got amongst wooded country and masses of trees appeared on all sides. At intervals we passed beautiful lakes or crossed lovely rivers. The trees are only small, mostly a kind of poplar with a white trunk. They are wonderfully delicate, and everywhere the leaves had turned a wonderful pale, transparent gold. The colour effect was perfectly lovely. I almost danced for joy.

Boyd was at the station to meet me. We walked up, crossing by a ferry. The river is wonderfully beautiful. The banks are very steep, covered everywhere with trees, all pure gold. This is a little wooden house on the river-bank where we are living temporarily. Boyd has decided that I am to stay in Edmonton for the present. I was rather disappointed at first, but I think I see now that it is best. A large hostel is being built in an outlying part of the city which is almost certainly going to be an important artisan suburb. Attached to it a chapel is also being built opening into a schoolroom which is to serve as the parish church for the district, St. Faith. A large piece of ground has been bought and eventually a proper church will be built. The chapel is being given by Sir Henry Pellat, and the schoolroom and site by Boyd's aunt, so that the Fund only pays for the actual house. This is the idea all through, that the Fund only provides for the maintenance of the living agents. All churches etc., must come from other sources. This parish will be a big and important piece of work. Boyd will be responsible for it. But besides that, in the city we have the parish of St. Andrew's, for which a church is shortly to be built, and this is to be my job. Then also we have two outlying districts. One is called Packing Plant, where there is a huge factory where meat is killed and packed. Here a room above a store is being used, but a little church is to be built shortly. Then there is a place called Calder, where are railway works of the G.T.R. I am to help there as well. Besides this Boyd and I will take it in turn to go off at intervals and help in the outlying districts where there is no priest. I am beginning to see an

absolutely endless field of work of the kind that appeals to me.

I enjoy the household work. I spent the whole of one morning cleaning out the larder. I don't care what I eat as long as I get enough. I told Boyd that was all I demanded, that I could sleep anywhere, do any work he liked, provided I could have enough to eat. After this statement, there is a little disappointment that after all I do not eat so enormously.

Boyd at present has ten or eleven men under him scattered all over the country. Naturally they refer every question to him and are continually coming and going. I go with him up to the architect's office, and to the hostel every day. We have much deliberation as to colours and decorations generally. Next Monday I go to the country with Boustead. We are to walk out about fifty miles to where Whitaker is that I may take the Communion to his people.

This is really a most wonderful country. There is an extraordinary feeling of youth and development in the air. People look so absolutely different from what they do in England. Every one seems so independent, and they walk about as if they were their own masters. Every man is your equal and treats you as such.

Edmonton.

Sept. 20.—For the first few days I wondered how I should fit in here. . . . I began to wonder if I was not really too much of a heathen. I think perhaps there was a little lack of humour. The men don't talk much when we are together. But I am writing first impressions. I feel they are already changing. I think the feeling, and certainly it is the feeling of the country, is that each man should be himself and perfectly natural. So they don't seem to mind my being rather frivolous.

Sept. 24.—"Cookie" (*alias* Watkins) has returned and is delightful. He works from morning to night and is always happy and lively. I have never known any one with quite such an even, contented disposition. I think it must be the result of three years of Kelham training.

I preached to a nice congregation at a little church for harvest festival this morning. It is a delight to find the sexes evenly distributed and such keenness among the men. Their competence amazes me. It is quite an

education to be at a vestry meeting when the building of a church is discussed.

Everything, at present, seems to be learning and taking in things. It is all very different. But this is the country to form character.

Oct. 10.—On Monday, September 26, Boustead and I set off for our trip to Lac La Nonne. We started by train. I carried a pack weighing nearly 30 lb. on my back. At Morinville we took the mail stage for ten miles and then started on a tramp of twenty-one miles. We reached Sion Post Office, a stopping place, at about 10 p.m., where we slept. I did not feel the least tired, despite my heavy pack, but understood the true significance of the term tenderfoot. Next day a man drove us part of the way in his wagon. We had only about eight miles more to walk, but found them much more tiring than all the day before. We toiled on and eventually found the house right down by the lake. We were feeling very dead and to our dismay found the house locked up. We opened a window and broke in. Boustead went off to another house close by, the present store, kept by an Englishman, who, with his family and his brother's family on the other side of the lake, form the nucleus of a congregation. They told us that Whitaker had gone off on the previous Saturday before he got the letter announcing our arrival, and was not expected back till the next evening. Boustead returned with a loaf and butter and some tinned salmon, and we made a meal and rested. This was Tuesday evening. Whitaker did not return till Thursday morning. So we had time to look around. He returned, full of apologies and of the results of a long tour of inspection he had made. I had really come to help him, as he is only a deacon, but he had heard of my coming too late to make any arrangements. I asked if there was not anywhere I could go up country where people would like a Celebration. He told me of some very specially keen Churchpeople he had just discovered, and said he felt sure they would like one. So finally I decided to go. There was a half-breed near by who had a nice-looking pony which I borrowed. The next morning I started off. A half-breed boy of about fourteen rode along with me a good deal of the way. We rode round the lake and then I started along a most desolate trail—the old Klondyke trail—along which so many hundreds of people started

when the rush was on, while only two or three got through. The trail led for ten or twelve miles through densely wooded country, rough and hilly. It was, indeed, a wild desolate country and I was wondering where I was getting to. Eventually I came to a place where two trails met and where there was a shack and a man sawing wood. I explained who I was and why I had come; he seemed most delighted and at once took care of me and my horse, talking all the time, drawing water from a well, showing me the stable and getting hay. He then asked me in and began telling me his story. Every one in this country has a story and they are all interesting. He and his brother had come out in 1881, and had wandered all about. Eventually they had decided to take a homestead and had settled there some four years. It was delightful to find them so deeply religious, and they had had no Anglican service at all since they had been there. One of them took me over to their married sister's house a little way off in the woods. This was a most delightful family, rejoicing in life and in each other's society. I have seldom felt so absolutely at home; they were so delighted to have me, and had been longing for a service. They kept a spare room, where the bed even had a sheet and I was most comfortable. The children were delightful, and I amused them in the evening with tricks, and making things from paper and card games. The next morning we had the service at 10.30. I arranged a nice altar, went into the workshop and made a wooden cross for it, picked a few wild flowers, and it looked quite like a little church. It was very reluctantly that I tore myself away from so delightful a family. Somehow our coming seems so often to have aroused new hope in some of the settlers' lives. They have been so lonely and felt themselves out of it.

Altogether it was a most interesting and illuminating trip. It made me feel what endless opportunities there were before the Church; of course there is very little demand for the Church as the Church; but I am thinking more of the need there is for the Church if this new life is to grow up as it should. There is hardly any one who has been in that part of the country for more than four years —everything is new and beginning. Who is going to take the lead? Any of the settlers themselves? This would doubtless be best if possible, but is very difficult, and settlers as a rule go simply to get a living, not to benefit

the country. . . . Each new township as it gets settled seems to require at least three things: (1) a school; (2) a townhall (as it is called, used for entertainments, dances, debates, etc.); (3) a church. As far as I could gather endless disputes and jealousies gathered round the erection of any of these. If a man could go in with no personal interests to serve, so that no possibly unworthy motives could be attributed to him, so much might be done. Here is the Church's opportunity, not to step in and advance itself, but the whole township, in all its various activities. Perhaps these are wide generalities based on insufficient observation, but I give them for what they are worth.

Edmonton.

Oct. 6, 1910.—You embark upon various controversial points in your letters arising out of letters I have written. The last is the word "Churchy." I am so surprised you don't understand what I mean by it. I think it came on me with a rush when I got back here and was telling Boyd of my experiences and of a new district I had been exploring, when he at once said, "Is there any chance of holding services there?" I suppose this was only the natural question to ask. But I have long been reflecting. Is the only object of the Church to hold services? Or is it its main object? Churchy is to me the attitude of becoming absorbed in services and all that appertains thereto. People have got it rooted in their minds that the parson is merely a means for holding services and that his main object is to contrive fresh ones and then get a larger congregation than the next denomination. Is this really an ideal to live for? Whenever we come in from holding "services" the first question asked is, How many people did you have? I cannot always plead innocent myself. But to me religion is life and not services. I love to go to services, especially in Cathedrals, myself, because they supply a large place in my life. I think it right that other people should have the opportunity, and in fact be helped to see the part they might play in their life, but I consider that life is what we are working for, not services. I find that it is when I consider "services" and "churchiness" as the end, that I get depressed. The results are so poor, and when they are attained what are they worth? At last a "churchy" individual has been formed. But is he really much better than any one else? What next?

Or are we to stop there and be content? But I find comfort in the thought that the object of life is to lose it, and the best place to lose it is in other people, and so in God through them. All joy in life comes from losing self in God, and that, I take it, means in others or in nature or beauty, wherever God is reflected. And in all this process the Church plays its part, and a very important one. But the Church exists to serve the whole process, not itself. Sometimes I find myself looking at religion from the purely churchy point of view. And then I ask myself what is all this going to serve? I have been up through the country and find all the little denominational jealousies and squabbles active. We must hurry up and get in before the others do. We must hasten to arrange services and count our congregations. And meanwhile the congregations perish because there is no vision. It is lost in churchiness. But hope and joy and life in all its fullness come when one learns to go in and out among the people simply desiring to share their life and enter into all their feelings and help mould their ideals and strive to open their eyes to visions with no ulterior motive. I don't know why I have launched into this effusion. Please don't think it results from any desire to be cantankerous or critical. I try hard to keep from that. I am chiefly anxious to criticise my own motives. I don't for a moment want to appear to resent people going another way, even if it be the churchy one. But let me go my own way. " Be true to yourself even if that self be the devil," said Canon Scott to me, and surely that is true. All one has to do is to guard against that self being the devil, and here the Church and religion come in to help.

The Mission House, Edmonton.

Oct. 13, 1910.—I was rung up on Monday and invited to go up the line with Mr. Grenfell's party. So on Tuesday morning I got into a special train, consisting of a private Pulman car, and travelled up in enormous luxury on the new G.T.R. line, with six financiers. I don't know what they thought of having a parson there. They all belong to the Western Canada Land Company. They produced endless maps and papers and discussed finance all the way till about 11 o'clock, when we got to Waburnum, where is a large lake. I started to drive with them to their model farm, but knowing we had two of our men near there,

asked the driver where they were and found we were just passing their shack, and one of them, Mog, was there. He was just going to have the site for a church, which we had procured, pointed out to him. So I accompanied him, and started to help him clear the site of brush and trees. I worked hard with a brush hook until two o'clock, hoping they would return. Eventually we got so hungry that I went to the shack and had something to eat. We could see the car as the track was close by. I expected they would pass the shack and return, but instead they crossed the lake in a boat and got in on the other side and the train was off before I could get in. It was going up to Entwistle so I knew it would be coming back, and went on working at clearing the church site. It was getting dark when we heard a whistle and I flew down to the track and stood on it with outstretched arms, screaming. The engine flew by and still I yelled and started to run after it, and eventually it drew up and I got in. They were still deep in finance, but dinner was shortly served and I was able to have some talk. They were very nice and it was interesting to have an insight into the wealthy financial world, quite a new one to me.

Oct. 20.—I went to open a little series of Bible readings to the Women's Auxiliary belonging to St. Andrew's. The ladies here love raising money for a church by sales or socials or something of the sort. But for the Church itself, they don't seem to care much, probably because they know so little about it. Mrs. Lloyd was very anxious that I should try and teach them about things generally. This was a formidable undertaking. As a rule when they come together they do nothing but chatter and pay no attention to the parson's presence. I decided to take a sort of general course which I shall call "the character of Christ." I set them a subject for next month and talked generally and they were quiet and passive. Mrs. Lloyd seemed quite pleased.

Yesterday, as soon as we were through with housework, we worked till dark at getting the tent fixed up. I enjoy manual labour more, I fear, than mental. It is much less effort. It takes one's mind off all the endless things that fill it. The work here is very difficult. In a way it is the same so far as I am concerned, as an English parish, and yet so absolutely different. I think I hate the multiplicity of churches most. It is different

in England where the Church has all the history behind it, and where one can see clearly that it is one's duty to carry it on. But the Church here has no history. People, for the most part, are quite content without it. I don't mind people being lethargic. I got inured to that in England. But I do hate and loathe the rivalry with other denominations. We all profess to work on friendly terms. But we all want, in our heart of hearts, and often in our words, to get in before the other (I include myself), and to hurry up, or Mrs. So-and-So and her children will be going to the Methodists. Does the Church really exist to get people into it? What is the real place and work of the Church? That is what I am always asking myself. What is to be the main object and end of one's life? I think I hear you saying, "to be a witness to the truth." That, I feel, is the true answer. But surely it is the part of a witness to try and influence (a word I abominate) others. The first great commandment is an individual one. But from it we pass to the social one. That is simply to love, not to *influence*, to *get*, but simply to give. But to return to the practical question. Does it really matter whether people go to the Methodists or not? Isn't it better simply to ignore the differences, (I mean in one's own personal outlook, rather than in one's action and words, which are often only superficial, said or done for effect,) to keep hold to the fact of the personal need of witness, and then to go among other people with no object whatever, except to try and make them happy? If Mrs. Jones goes to the Methodists, even if she was baptized and confirmed and a regular communicant (I take an extreme case), had she not better continue? I mean had I not better leave the whole matter to Mrs. Jones, and settle not to allude to it (and what is most important) not to let it enter my mind, unless Mrs. Jones suggests it. I believe the Church and the ideals of the Church to be more comprehensive and more fruitful than those of the Methodists. But I can best help Mrs. Jones to realise this by being a true son of the Church myself and showing her some of the fruits. The important thing is that I should try and love Mrs. Jones. If I have an ulterior object in my mind, the opportunity of showing some little act of sympathy may pass. I believe the very fact that I am trying to win Mrs. Jones back to the Church, rather than simply coming with the sole motive of love for Mrs. Jones, hides her real

nature from me. I find my mind is always full of schemes of getting Mrs. Jones to church and her children to Sunday School. Isn't it exactly what our Lord warned us against when He told us not to be anxious? I preached twice on the whole passage in St. Luke xii., one of the most fruitful in the Bible, on Sunday. Aren't these just the things which the nations of the world are seeking after? Religion is so often conformed to the world's standards. The Church is an institution to be run. That is exactly the attitude out here among clerical and lay of all denominations. Cannot we afford to put all that absolutely aside? "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you." If numbers and results are things worth having they cannot be *got;* they can only be *given* us by God. And the condition of the gift is that you seek His Kingdom and righteousness. The Kingdom of Heaven is within us. It is an individual search. But at the same time it is a corporate one. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." That was once said to twelve men. There are twelve of us here. Need we be anxious or worry about Methodists or Mrs. Jones having left the Church or anything of the sort? Haven't we joined together to help one another and to bear witness to the truth? Does it really make the least bit of difference whether two or a hundred people come to church? Need I consider the question at all? You may say that probably the best way of helping Mrs. Jones is by bringing her back to the Church. Possibly this is true. But had not Mrs. Jones better find that out for herself? Surely I must not have this at the back of my mind while I am talking to Mrs. Jones? This is really what I want to get at. I go and see Mrs. Jones. I talk to her endlessly about anything that turns up, hoping to get on friendly terms with her. I have a measure of success. Now I think is my opportunity for putting in a word about the Church. Possibly the fact that she is feeling friendly disposed to me may lead her to come to the Church. There possibly my eloquent sermon (really much better than the Methodists, if only the people had an opportunity to judge), or the music or something else will make her reconsider her churchmanship. So I may succeed in winning her to the congregation. So as I see my congregation grow and my church become popular, I shall have the gratification of feeling that my

life has not been spent in vain, and all the pleasure which comes from results and success. These are what I am ultimately aiming at. I may be ready to put off their attainment, to use indirect rather than direct means of winning Mrs. Jones, if there seems the chance of their being more successful. But success is what I must have. I am saved, justified by my success. I judge myself by my success. I expect God to do the same. But it is just here that the Cross has its lesson and one which I am trying to learn. It is hard. All outside influence is against me. How many were there at church this morning? Is there any chance of getting So-and-so, and all the rest of it, seem to be the questions which dominate and direct all one's motives. And the difficult part of it all is that however much I may argue with myself or with any one else against it all, I do want St. Andrew's, Calder, and all the rest to be successes. And I don't know that it is really wrong to want this, though I am absolutely certain it is wrong to make it in any sense the criterion of one's work. I was reading Du Bose yesterday and was much struck by what he said about justification. He made it so much clearer to me. It is only God's grace or righteousness that justifies. It is only God that can make a man righteous. Nothing I can do will make me more righteous. I can only try and bring my whole nature into harmony with God. Righteousness as simply God-given must take one's thoughts from oneself (and therefore from results as dependent on self) till one can lose oneself in God. I believe there is nothing more illuminating than this thought. I know it is all obvious and elementary. So is all truth in itself. But it is in its application that it is not so obvious. Can I therefore conclude with this? That my purpose and object in life is to try and keep the Commandments, *i. e.* to be industrious, humble, above all, sympathetic, while at the same time I am trying to find God's Kingdom and righteousness, *i. e.* trying to get into personal union with God through the Church? Is this adequate? What have I left out?

My dearest mother, you say you like to share my life; I must say I don't see much worth sharing. I feel I am often being cross, irritable, superior towards the others. I don't think I am worse than I ever was, only there is more scope for it all here.

This letter has drifted on and on. The others meditated

next door. But I have been meditating to you. I really think I have disclosed myself more than I have succeeded in doing before. As we cannot meet there is nothing for it but to become egotistical. This letter has been a relief to me, so I hope you don't mind wading through it.

The Mission House, Edmonton.

Oct. 31.—On Monday we got all our possessions, furniture, etc., out into the garden, and we loaded everything onto a huge van, I sitting on the top. The house here is still being built, but the attic is finished, so we hauled bedsteads up to the top with a rope. We worked till late and made some messy tea in the attic. The window had no glass in it and it was very cold. There was ice on the table when we sat down to breakfast. In the morning we fixed up the attic a bit better, cleared out the stable, laid a wooden floor, fitted up dressers and shelves and made it into a most elegant kitchen. That evening several of the men came in. There are no stairs, and we have to climb up on planks. On Wednesday morning I fitted up a room above the stables as a sitting-room and drove over to Calder to prepare the church for the opening. . . . The service was to be at eight, the Bishop and the clergy driving out. There was a congregation of about thirty-five. We had a procession and sang psalms, and it was a delightful service. Next morning the chapel at the Mission House was dedicated by the Bishop at the eight o'clock Celebration. On Saturday I had a wrestle with my cases and got them all unpacked and tried to get a little order into chaos.

I believe I wrote a ridiculous letter last time. Don't take it too seriously. Life is such a strange mixture, so full of difficulties and all kinds of nice things. A visit or a letter or a fine day cheers one so much. Religion is the only difficulty. I am always ready to do any amount of work from break of day till ten at night. I don't mind what it is. But I expect it is that I am too much of an individualist. I can say my prayers alone by myself, but it is difficult to do these things to order. A community life has its difficulties, but has far outweighing advantages. I think we are all very happy. One learns, at any rate, to be unselfish and everybody seems to think quite naturally of other people first of all. Such a contrast to the community life of school where everybody is

essentially selfish and trying to get their own way. I believe I did more or less succeed in telling you the real difficulties of life in my last letter. These disappear at intervals, but come up at times in all kinds of ways. The difficulty is not about the truths of Christianity, which I don't think have ever caused me any trouble, but the application of these truths to oneself and other people, so that it does not become professional or formal or stereotyped, but is the real expression of oneself. I am really extremely happy and extremely fortunate in being with such delightful men and having such a big bit of work to do with such endless possibilities. Nothing gives me such happiness as the delightful letters I get from home.

The Mission House, Edmonton.

Nov. 7, 1910.—I must begin by continuing the discussion on churchiness. It seems quite possible to carry on a discussion even at long intervals. I find that in it is contained all my difficulty, or perhaps I should say, the greater part. I know one should not worry oneself about what other people say or do. I don't think it is really that one minds their taking a certain attitude, but one finds oneself being influenced by their attitude and then blaming them, when really it is one's own fault for not being sufficiently strong-minded to go one's own way. I am sure the secret of life is absolute independence of thought.

I am beginning to feel more and more that my work here is to spend all the time I can in getting to know as many people as possible and trying to share their lives. I have the great advantage of being probably the only person they meet who has no other object in life. Every one else has to make money. Fortunately I need not consider that. But I am always having to try to get a true perspective. While I can easily avoid the temptation to desire material success, it is so difficult to avoid the desire for a religious success. One thing I know is that I only feel at all contented with myself when things are real and true, but that an evil spirit within me makes me strive after unreal and unworthy objects, which can bring me no peace of mind. I feel happy to-night because I have just come in from visiting people with whom I have had pleasant conversations and been making good friends, and then have found letters from nice people, all of which

make me feel how real relationships with other people are. What can be truer than what father said, that life is the sum of relationships! It seems to me that the object of religion is to step in and cement and uplift and make real and permanent all of these, that the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit which unifies them all, that the Church is the Body of Christ in so far as people are able to realise this too for themselves. The difficulty is to make this real and in harmony with the rest of our lives.

Edmonton.

Nov. 14, 1910.—Some day I suppose life will become a little more methodical. " Chores " (this means all forms of household work, and jobs connected with the machinery of life generally) take such a lot of time. Ideally people should be self-dependent and not have others do things for them which they can do for themselves. But then they cannot do their own work.

Everything to do with St. Andrew's has been simply delightful. They have been trying to build a church for years, but everything seems to have gone wrong. Now at last we have been able to give them the necessary impetus, and the people who have longed all through will see their labours crowned. The church was built in five weeks, and used yesterday for the first time. It is a delightful little building on the top of the river bank.

Edmonton.

Dec. 1, 1910.—Even my mornings are taken up now, and the worst is that it is in such futile ways. Chores seem to occupy all the time. And chores are so largely the outcome of " organised Christianity." I mean that this demands churches, and churches have to be fitted up, cleaned, heated, etc., and all this takes endless time. So that I neither read nor write, and visit very little. The real difficulty is to lead a sufficiently detached life. A man's life certainly does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses, or, in fact, does not possess, but in what he is himself, or rather in his relationship with God. But I feel I depend so terribly on outward things. If they go wrong I am depressed, if right I am jubilant. I always feel that father lived a life so independent of the effects it had so far as they concerned himself. I mean

that he simply strove to give expression to his true self and to make that self something worth giving expression to. I wish my letters did not always seem to become so introspective. I am afraid I use you as a sort of pail into which I pour all my slops. The fact is I have never yet succeeded in disciplining my character or my mind, and it is difficult to know how to do so. Somehow one's realisation of God is the only thing worth getting. But I find it so very difficult to talk with reality about this. It is so easy to get into a sort of emotional and fervent state of mind, and to aim at a religion based on conventional ideas. Dear me, I wish I did not go on like this. It all comes from my wretched critical nature.

Edmonton.

Dec. 7, 1910.—I have just been filling my pen under difficulties, as the ink was frozen. Everything freezes now, the milk, the eggs, bread, pig-pail, etc. We have not had it more than twenty below zero, and people always say, "Wait till you get it sixty below." The house is now heated a bit, and will be ready in a few days. It will be a tremendous business to get settled in. I don't feel quite clear that a central house is satisfactory for our ordinary work. It means that Bailey and I both have to live two miles out of the parishes we are in charge of, and never really get to feel we are living among the people. I felt this very strongly for a while, but am now beginning to see things rather differently. I am not sure that my first duty does not lie towards the Mission and helping Boyd. Boyd, Bailey, and myself really form a little headquarters staff.

I have been going through turbulent waters at St. Andrew's. When I first came I was told I had a very difficult, self-willed, headstrong, quarrelsome set of people to deal with. But everything went smoothly till the dedication, and all centred round the fact that I placed and lit a pair of candles on the Altar for the early Celebration on St. Andrew's Day. One lady said she was so upset she only slept three hours that night. A man with whom I had been on the closest terms of friendship, turned round and attacked me. There was no doubt there would be a considerable, if only a temporary, secession. Don't think the dispute was about such a petty thing as candles are in themselves. But the principle at stake was how

far the priest is responsible for the conduct of services, etc., and how far the congregation, and also whether a spirit of narrow, religious intolerance based on the old "No Popery" cry was from the outset to control the new church. I put the candles there, because they were given to the church, as naturally as I put on a surplice. I was asked to call a meeting, and put it to the vote. I was considering it, and met the wardens last night for the purpose. To my amazement Mr. C., my chief friend and adviser, rounded on me, said I was arbitrary, and unless the candles were taken away he must resign. He had got it into his head that I was coming out as a young Englishman with the intent of *ruling* the Canadian Church. This to him was Popery (not the candles, but the determination to keep them there), and he would have none of it. I did not see how I could possibly hold out against him. For two years he had worked splendidly to get this church started. His resignation was out of the question. I hardly knew what to say. He began rather to lose patience and said the matter must be settled at once, thus forcing my hand and making it impossible for me to hold the meeting, or discuss the matter with the Archdeacon or Boyd. He finally said if I did not decide at once, he would begin to think I was a Papist myself. Well, matters were getting serious, so I suggested that we should say a prayer, and after a little reflection I went up to the Altar and took the candles away. Two things were clear to me: (1) That I respected him too much to allow anything not absolutely vital to come between us. (2) That a large share of the responsibility must fall on him as he had demanded it. Then they asked me to say a prayer and we parted in peace.

Edmonton.

Dec. 8, 1910.—Your letters have simply made me feel that I was in continual conversation with you. You seem to enter into everything and it makes letter-writing a joy.

Another point you raise in your last letter. Prayer is a great difficulty. I do not pray easily, though I may spend a long time at it. It is not natural. I am beginning to get terrified of artificial prayer. I am so often conscious of it. I find it so difficult to pray to order, *i. e.* at stated times. Christ seems to have prayed very irregularly. But I try and pray a lot for you all, and find practical

intercession the easiest. Things would be very different if it were not for the constant feeling that you were almost, as it were, with me. I am your feeble and unworthy son, but a very loving one.

Dec. 10.—Last night we actually moved into the house. I am now sitting at my beloved writing-table in a most delightful room, the library.

Edmonton.

Dec. 28, 1910.—Christmas Day was a strenuous day. I got up at five and walked down nearly two miles to the Hospital, where I joined the nurses at 6 o'clock, who were singing carols in the corridors to the patients. Then at 6.30 I celebrated the Holy Communion in the Nurses' Home. There were only two or three church nurses among them; but I thought on one day in the year it would be so nice for them to have a service all together, and decided to ask no questions as to what churches they belonged to. They all behaved so reverently and followed the service so well, that I am sure it was all right. Then I went off to St. Andrew's, lit the furnace, and had another Celebration at 8.30. Then back here to breakfast; down to St. Andrew's again at 11, Matins, another Celebration; back again to Christmas dinner, when two nice railway men and one or two other men whom we invited to spend the week-end were present. At 2.30 I harnessed up the buggy and drove Mrs. Lloyd over to Calder, where we had a very nice little service with quantities of carols. Then I drove back, had tea and went down to St. Andrew's for another service with carols.

The Christmas reunion is on now.[1] The out-men came in last night for three nights. Our whole party is now fifteen. The accounts of the out-stations are encouraging.

This house has endless possibilities and I hope it will be well used. The laymen are going to stay on, and I am to give some lectures on the Bible.

Edmonton.

Jan. 10, 1911.—Up at 6.45 this morning; 7.15 celebrated in the chapel, where there were eight degrees of frost and my hands nearly froze to the chalice. Outside it was thirty-five below zero. Then, after chores and meditation I settled down to read and was interrupted a

[1] The practice of the Mission was to bring in all the men from the out-stations for a reunion at regular intervals.

good deal. Now it is 2 p.m., and I must go and visit. Such is life, rather strenuous and barren of results, with little crumbs of encouragement.

I sometimes long for a little one-roomed shack next to St. Andrew's, where I could stew in my own juice, do my own chores, live my own life on about 2*d.* a day, and be right in among the people. However, I suppose even then I should think things were not quite as they should be. Dear me, my letters get dreadfully egotistical.

Edmonton.

Feb. 3, 1911.—Yesterday there were endless things to be talked about and business to be done with Boyd, as he departs this afternoon for California.[1] I have to be in charge in his absence of the house, etc. In the evening choir practice at St. Andrew's, followed by a little committee meeting to arrange a concert to get up funds, and then a long and animated vestry meeting. These are strange things. I am largely ignored and treated with contempt. Canadians are often rude and never consider other people's feelings, but they have much energy and will work tremendously. There were cantankerous members present who found fault with everything. But it is a great consolation that people will take the trouble to turn out on a bitter cold night into a cold room, even if only to find fault.

In your last letter you ask about a piano. I have been longing for one. A large house like this is absolutely incomplete without one. Bailey and Cookie were more than delighted at the prospect. Do send us one. We never can have any singing. We could dance among ourselves in the library and have all sorts of fun at the next reunion if we had one. It should be able to be here by then.

Edmonton.

Feb. 8, 1911.—The congregations at St. Andrew's seem to get smaller and smaller. I don't know what is the matter. I am afraid I am not the right man for it. It should go better than it does. There is something quite wrong. I don't really understand the colonial mind yet, and preach wretched bad sermons. You will say this is pessi-

[1] Mr. Boyd had been ill, and was ordered to go to a milder climate for a time.

mistic, but I am not feeling particularly so to-night. It is only plain truth. I have a few friends, no particular enemies, but certainly don't feel as if I was at all popular. Not that I wish to be or think that it matters much.

Edmonton.

Feb. 11, 1911.—I have something I wish to consult you about. Ever since St. Andrew's Church has been built, I have longed to be able to live close to it. But I saw so many difficulties. Also I had a feeling that I owed the Mission a certain duty and that that really came first. I was first of all a member of the Mission, only secondly in charge of St. Andrews. But after having tried it for six months I cannot truthfully say that I feel really suited to a community life. Not that I do not like it. I don't really wish to put it negatively at all. I want to get at it positively. I believe I should get on best quite alone. I have tried hard to put this idea out of my mind, but it keeps coming back to me. I hate to feel that I want in any way to leave the Mission. I don't. I want to remain a member of it. All I feel I want to do is to live alone in the middle of my work, whilst still remaining a member. I love the idea of association with the rest of the men. But I had always contemplated work in the country where I should be alone. However, I have tried my utmost to fit in with ideas here and to help the corporate life. Again, I do not want to be negative and say I am *not* fitted for it. That is a poor line to take and the obvious answer is that I should hurry up and make myself more fitted for it. But even when in England, I had a longing to go and live in a little hole in St. Katharine's Street, right among the people I was working with, and sharing their life with them. This has always been my ideal. Now I would prefer to go and live in a little hovel close to the church. I could work out my own ideals much better then. At present I must largely be working out some one else's. Perhaps that is really the humbler and better course to take. But it only tends to make me critical and at times a little inclined to rebel. Let me outline my scheme. Under St. Andrew's Church is a very decent basement room. There is a little cook-stove there; it could be made quite comfortable. St. Andrew's parish is very large. I have not been able to visit it nearly as much as I should. I feel convinced I ought to live in it if I am to do my work

properly. I hope that my little room would become a sort of meeting place for young men, boys, parish workers, etc., who would always know where to find me. . . . The question is, Am I being actuated by an undisciplined spirit, and is it not possibly better for me that I should go on as I am and not wish to be independent? Of course I shall leave the matter in Boyd's hands. Only I feel sure he would return it to mine, and I do not wish to put it in the form of a definite proposal, till I feel more clear about it from my own point of view.

Perhaps this desire to be independent is evil, and it is really good for me to be absorbed (very largely) in the round of community life. Is it necessarily wrong to feel one is more suited for something else? I should be able to have an answer from you soon after Boyd returns. Perhaps by then I may see things differently. However, it helps me to write it all down to you.

Edmonton.

Feb. 24, 1911.—There is such endless visiting to be done. Every family seems to have a tragedy of some sort, and I feel I can be of real use to a number of people simply as a friend. I first want to live among them for a bit. I am only a visitor at present. I could spend hours at the hospital alone. It is all very well running organisations and holding services, but people I feel convinced need a friend first of all, some one to tell their troubles to. And they all have troubles, and all we do is to badger them to come to church.

Edmonton.

March 3, 1911.—It seems to me more and more that life in a new world like this makes people wish less and less for religion. The one craze is for development and progress. Things go at an extraordinary rate. Edmonton is practically only about five years old. There is a sort of exciting absorption in seeing the city develop and things go ahead. The great virtues, especially with a man like Roosevelt, are courage and energy, the great vices cowardice and sloth. One has to try somehow to accept these things and make Christianity fit in with the whole scheme. It is no use decrying them. Meanwhile religion seems to me to be drifting into a kind of vague humanitarianism. The churches are regarded as a kind of mutual improvement societies. All one can do, I suppose, is to try

and give expression to the truth as far as one can see it. It is not much use bewailing general tendencies.

I am afraid I get stupidly depressed. I know it is a great sin. I gave a little discourse on it one evening to the other men in the chapel. It is so often said to be due to physical causes. I believe rather that it is due to absence of law in daily life, and to living only for the moment. If so, it can and must be cured.

Edmonton.

March 8, 1911.—I always imagine that one of my few gifts is sympathy. I do love other people intensely for themselves. I want to understand all about them and know them. But I bluster in the process, and exercise little restraint and tact, and so often get wrong. There is nothing I would not do for them. This is religion and life to me. What is there in this world to live for except other people, and through them God? Because it is really all the same I am sure.

I am not so depressed as I was. I am afraid this is only owing to circumstances. Four girls and two boys whose analyses I returned yesterday, all got full marks and did so well. The little boys' club is going well. The men's club is promising. The ladies are improving. The choir is promising. The communicants are better. The congregations are still very small, but there seems to be more general peace. I am now going off to meet a number of boys and discuss scouts.

Depression, I become more and more convinced, is really the result of one's own evil nature. I think the whole secret of it is that the main stimulus to work is the gratification we get as the result. Then when we do not get the gratification, we blame conditions and get depressed.

Edmonton.

March 17, 1911.—I entirely agree that contact with Nonconformity makes me convinced that there is something lacking in it. I am not perfectly clear yet, though, that it is the Church. Rather I feel it is true independence of thought, the readiness to see truth everywhere, and the absence of the spirit of Protestantism. I think the Church is and can be a great power for propagating truth. But truth means something far vaster than the Church. To speak of the Church in theological language as the Body of

Christ, while it conveys one of the profoundest truths, may be misleading, because this is not what people mean when they speak of the Church in opposition to Nonconformity. They mean something in which Bishops and so on and organisation generally play an essential part. Truth, I know, is a vague and misleading term also. But it is what a man *knows* that matters. It was because Peter, speaking for the disciples could say, "Thou *art* the Christ of God"; and we have believed and *know* that thou art the Holy One of God that they were able to build up the Church. But the Rock on which the Church was built was the essential thing. All truth, I suppose, once grasped will clothe itself in some form of organisation. But the danger always seems to me lest we attach too much importance to the organisation.

I hardly find any one, least of all the Nonconformists, who really believe in Christ in the way the disciples did, I mean who have really lost their lives to find Him. They are usually so busied with their churches and their beliefs and their pet ideas or systems of morality and temperance and the like, that Christ as a reality seems lost. I wonder if even the pious Nonconformist has really lost himself. In a sense I suppose he has. He has lost his desire to please and live for himself. He will suffer and endure anything. But has he surrendered his traditional outlook, his bias, his preconceived ideas?

What I mean is, I do not wish to emphasise the Church because I feel the Nonconformists lack so much. I wish to know Christ better because I feel that neither I nor they know Him; and perhaps I feel, further, that they are on the wrong road to a fuller knowledge, and that I have had my eyes opened to a better one, and to the avoiding of certain obstacles which seem to me to block the way.

Thank you for your remarks on my letter *re* living at St. Andrew's. Time has inevitably modified things. I think I have been gradually inclining to your conclusion, which is also Boyd's, and that is that I should live there a night or two each week.

Edmonton.

March 21, 1911.—I have at last started the scouts. I wondered if I was going to be able to keep off it. But the break in the weather, and the discovery of a large number of boys ripe for it, decided me. I spoke to about a hundred

of them in the big school opposite my church. The majority wanted to join. I selected twelve of the oldest. I only want to begin with twelve. After a good deal of work we have now got the basement of the church fixed up, and it makes a very good and suitable room. I shall probably start sleeping there next week.

Edmonton.

March 24, 1911.—My most interesting news is that there seems to be a prospect of my joining Mowat [1] at the end of April for a few months. His priests cannot come out till the middle of the summer. He badly needs men. Canon Beale wrote suggesting we should lend him one of our men. It seemed more satisfactory to send some one used to the country. From my point of view it is admirable. It will be a thorough change; I shall get a lot of experience. I like Mowat particularly and would like to see his methods of working.

I am always being nice to my ladies. They are gradually improving, I think. They are so absolutely different to the holy woman.[2] They are mostly singularly profane. But they all have a great deal of character. I think you make a great mistake when you say my boredom with holy women at home makes me inclined to neglect the women here. They are so totally different that I do not associate them together. I feel, as I never did before, the absolutely essential part women play in church life. I wrote and read them a little purely spiritual discourse for their last meeting. I think they were rather surprised. But I hope it may have done a little good.

Edmonton.

March 29, 1911.—I believe one might almost make it an occupation in life to leave one's country and go out into the wilds and write to all one's friends and relations and discuss the philosophy of life. I sometimes feel that the most profitable thing I can do for a boy is writing to him. I still write to Smyrna boys and feel I know them much better than ever I did.

I am feeling rather pleased with life at the present moment. I am sitting beneath my church. It is 11 p.m.,

[1] Rev. W. H. Mowat was the head of a centre of the Archbishops' Mission in Southern Alberta.

[2] A name given in joke to the pious church-worker in England.

and at last I am quite alone and away from every one. Outside it is sleeting and, except for the sound of dripping from the roof, it is absolutely still. The men's club has been meeting. There were quite a number to-night. They were all very nice. Some day I hope this room will become a regular rendezvous. I came down yesterday with a bed and some food and some books. The scouts met last night and continue to be very promising.

I must say I like this independent life. I suppose it shows my evil nature. But I can get enough of discipline and routine. The mere fact of saying one's prayers when and where one likes, adds, I think, to their value. I feel sometimes there is a terrible tendency for community life to become artificial. We do not live in our work, as it were part of it. We lose touch. We swoop down from outside with our minds made up. It is really a question of atmosphere. You may do exactly the same things under either conditions, but you will do them differently. I talk to a woman, I think, differently after coming from the community atmosphere from what I do coming from an independent atmosphere. The mere fact of getting up alone and making my own breakfast and doing everything myself seems to have its effect all day. The very fact of getting away for a bit from the community standpoint seems to give fresh light. I do not say this in the least detracting from the Mission. But I shall return to the Mission to-morrow much more ready to appreciate its atmosphere and benefit by its discipline. Dear me, I wish I did not talk so much about myself. I am simply lazily thinking in writing.

April 5, 1911.—I wish I could get at a right principle with regard to other denominations. I know that I could not be a Methodist myself at any price. But I have not yet found a reason why other people should not be, if they wish. I feel more and more a desire simply to live my own life, to witness to the truth as best I can and to let other people go their own way. But as it exists now, the Church seems to have developed into an institution, the purpose of which is to prevent other people going their own way, and using every possible means to stop it. The R. C.'s issue commands. The Methodists use bribes. We feel uncomfortable in either method and so have adopted a sort of *via media*, persuasion, or prayer, mistakenly so-called. If we cannot influence another's

will ourselves, we ask God to do so for us. This so often seems to me the tendency of the devout person. But I take it that a person's will is his own, and it is neither the business of ourselves or of God to influence that will. God is Truth, Holiness, Perfection, Beauty, Love personified. "I, if I be lifted up . . . will *draw* all men unto Me." If the attributes of God are not powerful enough in themselves to draw men unto Him, then man is no better than an animal and must be left to himself. Our Lord neither issued commands, used bribes, nor resorted to persuasion. He simply moved in and out among people. And yet it is an absolute fact that practically every parson goes visiting every afternoon with the primary object in his mind, "How can I get this person to church?" I tried to explain to S. that there was another purpose in life. He said, "Dear me, this sounds very revolutionary." That is what we have come to with our ecclesiasticism. We are revolutionary when we try to be human. How true! I believe these words are well worth meditating on. I seem to see in them the key to many things—especially to the deadness of the Church and the boredom of the average parson, however virtuous. And yet here I am the worst offender myself. That is the funny thing. I can hardly ever be natural with people, because I am always after an ulterior object. I sometimes wish there were no church and no services.

Edmonton.

April 11, 1911.—I cannot say I have much internal peace. But I don't see how I could expect to have any. I think I am gradually learning, and coming out here I feel to have been so good for me for this very reason. People talk about the value of confession, but I always have preferred to have you as my confessor and perhaps Holy Week is a suitable time. I think I must be infinitely more innately selfish than the average man; I mean to say that I see quite clearly that I have hitherto been doing everything that I have done from my own point of view. It is terrible how this consciousness of self comes into everything. I cannot attend to what I am saying in church as a general rule. I find I have said prayer after prayer and been thinking about all kinds of things—what effect my sermon will have—why there are so few people in church, why so-and-so is not there, and so on. Well, I

feel that until every word I say in church is—at any rate, as a general rule—said in forgetfulness of everything except what is divine, any church where I am ministering had probably better be empty.

What I really want to say is that I feel that my time here is being extremely good for me, that successful or easy work would have been very bad, that I am not really unhappy at all, because I see clearly where the fault lies, and I am determined to try and get straight. Now this is quite enough about myself—too much. The subject does not really interest me. I am very distressed to hear of the Bishop of Gibraltar's[1] death. I like to think of his being buried at Smyrna. He was a great and holy man, and it was a privilege to have known him. He certainly has taught me much and been a very good friend to me.

Edmonton.

April 17, 1911.—Mowat writes that he wants me to make my headquarters at an Indian home on the Blood Reserves run by C.M.S. I shall be chaplain to the Home and have a large district of homesteaders. It sounds most interesting.

It seems quite possible the scouts will go well here. We had a splendid afternoon and evening out on Saturday. I took specially chosen boys down the river two miles, where we found a deserted house in an ideal situation, which we at once captured as our headquarters. Some of the people here are rather disgusted with me for going just as they are getting to know me. But I feel it is as well they should not regard us as parish clergy, especially when they do not pay for our support.

Edmonton.

April 28, 1911.—The very fact of the comparative insignificance of our Church out here makes it necessary to get back to first principles. In England all we needed to do was to maintain a tradition. We had a position, we were established and organised. There was no necessity really to consider the essential place of our Church if we did not wish to do so. But out here things are absolutely different, and one realises the difference more and more every day. We have very little position. Methodists,

[1] Dr. W. Collins.

Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, all seem to be considerably stronger, richer, more popular, better supported, than ourselves. We are quite neglected, and I think are regarded as comparatively insignificant and obscure. Are the Methodists on the one side, and the Roman Catholics, on the other, the only alternatives? Is not the chief purpose of the Church that it is called upon to play quite a different rôle?

I cannot help feeling—and I don't want to appear presumptuous or critical—but simply to make suggestions which may possibly lead to the formation of principles, that the work of the Church is totally different. I believe that the Church is not simply the Church *in* Canada, but the Church *of* Canada—not in virtue of the number of its adherents, or its wealth and position, but in virtue of the fact that in every land where it exists it should be a national Church—a Church, that is, which is something more than a denomination which strives to win adherents, a Church whose main business it is to strive to enunciate and bear witness to those principles on which alone national, industrial, civic and family life can be built. The Church should be able to rise above denominational strife. It is not a denomination. It is the Catholic Church, whose one business it is to bear witness to the truth, and to show the application of the truth as it discerns it, to the developing life around it. The Church's responsibility cannot be limited to those who nominally belong to it. The question is not, Does this man by virtue of some accident of birth or other circumstance call himself a Churchman or Methodist?—but, Is he able to understand at all those principles and ideals which it should be the Church's business to propagate?

What principles and ideals? They cannot be exactly and definitely stated. Rather they are concerned with a temper of mind, with that attitude towards life which makes the truth the most vital thing, which can afford to be indifferent to success or results or numbers, which sets an infinite value on any human being because it sees something of God's image in every one, that attitude of mind which looks above and beyond immediate interests and is concerned with general tendencies, that attitude of mind which makes our relation with each individual we come in contact with an opportunity. That love in its widest, truest, most disinterested sense is the highest

motive which can sway mankind, and that loving service is the principle on which everything that is worth doing must be based. Selfishness is the most hideous and glaring vice here. Hardly ever does any one act from a disinterested motive, and this is often, only too truly, the case with religion. Each worker works for his own church and his own denomination. I feel then that the Church's chief work is to set a standard of absolutely disinterested service towards individuals and society as a whole, and to show the way towards a lofty unfettered, unprejudiced search for truth and reality. Hitherto the Anglican Church has been too weak and loosely organised to take up any definite position. But a body like ours, I take it, is almost unprecedented in Western Canada. Here are some eighteen of us gathered together, all united in a common purpose. What is that purpose? Have we any clear sense of mission to this growing national life? We must form saintly personal lives, but we must at every moment bring those lives into intelligent contact with the life around us. We are face to face with a tremendous and vital problem. As far as I can see there is no religious interest in this new life as a whole. We are called upon to make Canada religious, not merely to make Anglicans more Anglican.

To his sister Gemma—

Edmonton.

April 8, 1911.—I do not think that a clergyman's work should be regarded as a profession. His only point is that by his ordination he has committed himself to live simply and solely for other people, and through them for God; that he is now entirely free from any personal motive. I think this has come more and more clearly to me of late. When I shall succeed in the least in approaching the ideal I do not know. The fact of the matter is, that when I calmly and collectedly examine the situation, I find that from first to last I lead my life for my own sake. Still, I suppose that to a certain extent everybody must feel this, and it is not much use grubbing about in oneself.

CHAPTER V

ST. PAUL'S MISSION

St. Paul's Mission, Blood Reserve

May, 1911.—Since I left Edmonton impressions have been crowding on me so thick and fast and I have seen and heard and done so many interesting things, met such a variety of people, been in such beautiful country that I must try and write about it all before I forget.

I got to Macleod on the evening of May 7; Mowat had come in by train to meet me. Next day he told me my duties and we discussed the work generally. Hall (the Vicar of Macleod) went out to some of the livery barns to see if there was any one in town who would be driving out, and came back saying he had found a lady whose face he knew, but whose name he could not remember, who had offered to drive me. She came round with a very light rig and we started off. She was English, from Bournemouth. We drove and conversed for about twelve miles, when she set me down beside a white house on a hill, where she had to go north and I south. I went to the house where some people called Glass lived. Mr. Glass was away. They are Canadians. I found old Mrs. Glass papering the house. She had done it all by herself (she must have been well over sixty), better than many professional paperhangers. The old-timers can do anything. A young fellow appeared at tea. He hitched up an old mare to a buggy, and the school-teacher, who lodged there, started to drive me a little further on my way, as she wanted to visit some people. We had not gone far, when we met Mrs. Turner, the lady she wanted, riding to meet us. It was getting late and I had four miles to walk to get here. Mrs. Turner insisted on my going home with her and spending the night. The Turners were extremely friendly and made me very comfortable. They have a very nice girl of about fifteen, who dashes about on horseback, rounds up the cattle, milks the cows, and is supremely happy,

I had to walk four miles to the Mission over a stretch of gradually descending prairie, and eventually the trail dropt down to the river. Across the valley on the other side of the river rose the low banks of the Blood Reserve, the largest in Canada, 500 square miles with 11,000 Indians. Another quarter of a mile brought me in sight of St. Paul's Mission. I was astonished at the array of buildings. I found Mr. Middleton, the Principal, giving out stores. I am to live here and board free in return for taking services and preparing confirmation candidates, etc. Mr. Middleton is preparing for ordination and I had been instructed to offer to help him if he would accept it. He jumped at the offer.

One of the staff is Miss Wells, who has been a school-teacher here for sixteen years, but has just decided, as soon as a new teacher can be found, to go and live on the Reserve with her old pupils. There is no Missionary at all on the Reserve. The children are taken in here, baptized, taught, confirmed and then sent back with no one to care for them. Middleton, as soon as he is ordained and can find a successor, is going there with his wife. Miss Wells is really a remarkable woman. She is a Canadian, and suddenly asked me at a meal if I was a Liberal, and clapped her hands when I said I was. She came in and talked to me last night. She does not say much, and sits on the hardest chair she can find and chuckles peacefully with her arms folded. She goes whenever she can across the river to the Reserve and stays there till late, working in her future garden.

But I have left out the most important part of all, the beloved children. I loved them the moment I saw them and have loved them ever since. These are the children of the men whose country we have taken, and whom we white people have done our utmost to corrupt and degrade. I feel we cannot do too much for them.

I am taking prayers now that Middleton is away. I was to take a New Testament course, and chose the Resurrection as it seemed to fit in best all the way round. I am afraid I am very unconventional, I draw pictures on the board and tell them stories and make them laugh. But the staff are delighted. I must say I love doing it. The children listen splendidly.

Sunday evening was lovely. The sun was streaming into the Church and everything was still. The boys and girls were just in front of me and sat perfectly quiet with eyes fixed on me. I felt I must try to explain to them that

"none is good save God," and we can do no good thing to inherit eternal life. That our part is simply to keep the Commandments in order that God's goodness may be revealed in us. I took my favourite illustration of an electric tram, which stands motionless till the current is switched on, but then can do nothing unless it is all properly fitted and oiled, and kept on the lines already laid for it, and the arm is raised to receive the current. I could not help feeling pleased when G. came round the next morning on some business and came in specially to thank me. He said "It set me thinking, and I see how I have been being selfish to my wife." He also said he was glad E. had been there, as he felt it would help him. E.'s great joy is polo. He had arranged a little informal game for Sunday afternoon. Mrs. H. had told me Mr. H. was going to play, was I very shocked? I said not if he came to Church. This was the first Sunday for some time either he or E. had come to Church. E. asked me afterwards if I minded their playing. The ground was on his lands and if I did, he would stop it at once. I don't think there are many people out here who would say that.

St. Paul's Mission.

May 23, 1911.—I am very comfortable here, in fact thoroughly spoilt. I have no chores—not even to clean my boots. I mostly sit and read or write. Du Bose's *Gospel in the Gospels* is interesting me. I always feel inspired after reading a Robertson sermon. It is one of my greatest treats.

St. Paul's Mission.

May 30, 1911.—On Friday May 28, I started off on my journey to Cardston where I was to take Mowat's Sunday work. I saddled up Pedro and started off on a thirty-five mile ride. Fortunately it was not raining though still cloudy. Everything was very soppy. Pedro carried me well and I got to Helliers, twenty miles, for dinner. It was interesting riding through some Indian villages. I got instructions as to my way over the Reserve to Cardston. "Never mind if you miss the trail, you are sure to find some one to direct you." I did not meet a soul. I followed the directions as carefully as I could and rode through a hail-storm. The Reserve is absolutely bare and mostly flat prairie, and very large. I came to a stream,

crossed it, found various trails, followed the one I was told to, as I thought, and rode on mile after mile. At last I came to a deep valley with a river at the bottom and knew it must be the boundary of the Reserve. I could see a house on the other side at last. I had to ford the river and felt rather alarmed, as I had never done so before. However, I got over safely. I inquired at the house and found I was eighteen miles from Cardston and had come in totally the wrong direction. In fact, I was further away than when I started. Imagine my disgust. There was Mowat expecting me, and I knew he would be in a state if I did not arrive. I could not possibly take the horse much further and did not want to get lost in the Reserve at night. I found there was a " town " two miles further on where I could get accommodation. I realised I was in the Mormon country. I rode on and came to a desolate collection of little sort of packing-case houses on the side of an open dreary hill with snow lying about. I found a store and inquired where I could get put up. They said the " hotel " was next door. It looked like a glorified packing-case. Downstairs it served as the school and meeting place for the " town " (they really preferred to call it a " city "). Upstairs was the hotel. An elderly, stout, grey-haired man came out and took Pedro, while his wife prepared me some supper. They were regular hard sort of Yankees. Some neighbours came in and talked. Every one was called Brother and Sister So-and-so. I went out with the old man to watch him feed his hogs, and he became quite communicative. I was up at 5 next morning and started away at 6.30. I was not altogether sorry to leave. I had to recross the river and ride for many miles over the Reserve, getting in at about 11 o'clock. Mowat lives in a little log shack. I found a letter on the table for me. Mowat was much agitated at my non-arrival. He had gone to Lethbridge on his way to Calgary, and unless I arrived at midday and phoned through to him, he would phone to the Bishop, say he could not go, and return to search for me. I was directed to a young fellow called Payne at the Bank of Montreal, who was to look after me, and I had a little conversation on the phone with Mowat, who was much relieved to hear of my safe arrival. I was to go to a place twenty miles out for Sunday morning service and to drive out that afternoon. Payne drove me in a buggy with two horses. He looks after everything for Mowat, and is extraordinarily

keen. The road was terribly muddy and heavy. We were to stay with the Harrises. Mr. Harris is an old-timer and has a ranch with a comfortable log house. Sunday was a perfectly gorgeous day. We had five miles to drive to the school-house where service was to be. Twelve people turned up, a record congregation, and we had a very nice little service. Immediately after service Payne and I had to hitch up and drive back to town, eating cake on the way, as I had to take Mowat's Sunday School at 3.30, and we had twenty miles to go.

May 31.—Mowat was to pass through Macleod to-day, where he expected to spend an hour and a half, so I drove in in the morning to meet him. It was hot and very fine. When we got in I tied the horse up at the station. He looked tired out with his fifteen miles' drive. I was going off to get some lunch when I thought I had better give the horse a feed of some oats I had with me. I did not like to think I was eating while he was standing there hungry, he looked so dejected. So I did a very foolish thing, which I had already been warned against. I took off his bridle while he was still in the shafts, to put the halter in its place. The moment the bridle was off, he gave a snort and off he bolted. There was nothing to catch hold of and I saw him tearing off through the town. It was very hot, but I had to start in pursuit. I tore down street after street, different people directing me where he was gone, in an agony to think Mowat's brand new buggy would be smashed up. Past a school with crowds of children waiting and jeering, I tore. Eventually I found he had got to the livery barn, and had been unhitched by a man and was being led in. Fortunately, no damage was done to the buggy. So I returned to gather up things that had fallen out and to meet Mowat's train. The Patersons were going to put me up that night. As they had a stable I decided to bring Jock round and save livery expenses. I drove him off from the barn and was just going to turn him in to the Patersons' stable when he bolted. I had a firm hold on the lines but could not stop him. He tore down the street over the railway track. I saw a motor coming, but was able to turn him off and got out on to a large flat stretch of prairie with no obstruction. Round and round he galloped. At intervals I was able to stop him. But he would start off again. I could see he was thoroughly excited, and I was getting rather unhinged. I did not know what to do.

I dared not drive back into town again. It was getting late. I saw an Indian tent not far away and drove towards it and called to the Indian. He came up and held the horse while I ran and picked up my hat. I asked him if he would drive the horse in for me, but he did not seem anxious. I tried to lead him, but he started to bolt again. So I decided that discretion was the better part of valour and unhitched him, and put the halter on, while the Indian hitched up a pony of his and drove the buggy into town while I led Jock. We formed an ignominious little procession, but I sighed a sigh of relief at getting back safely.

Wednesday, June 4.—Last Sunday I preached in the evening about the Day of Pentecost, when, as a result of the outpouring of the Spirit and the Apostles' consequent preaching, "they that *gladly* received the word were baptized," etc. I cannot feel I can pitch into people or talk about the duty of church-going and communicating, when I feel that if they cannot do these things gladly they had better not do them at all. The sad thing is that the faithful do not do them gladly. There seemed little gladness about the T's. Still the Apostles only made the people glad by first preaching repentance. I feel more and more convinced that the real difficulties underlying Christianity are not concerned with its content, but with the method of its presentation. Is it concerned with duty and forms? Somehow I feel something must be done and I must go out now and do it. I feel more and more force in the response, "And make Thy *chosen* people *joyful*." The underlined words both convey much.

June 24.—I want to go on discussing what you say in your last letter about Inge,[1] the Church, etc. I think your suggested subject to Inge is good. How is the Church to co-operate with the Spirit of the Age? I cannot agree that the Spirit of the Age is crooked or perverse. I get more and more admiration for the ordinary people I meet, I cannot help admiring people who work so hard and incessantly. Everybody works hard, at least so it appears. A man cannot get on at all if he is idle. I have not found an idle woman, or even a leisured woman, in the country. This is a strenuous country. I seem at present to be the only idle person. Now I take it, the tendency of the age is towards strenuosity, and surely this is a good point.

[1] This refers to the addresses given by the Dean of St. Paul's to the London Women's Diocesan Association on "The Spirit of the Age."

There are no luxurious people out here. Even when they get rich they go on working just as hard, it seems. The tendency of the age seems to me to be more dominated by Nietzsche's philosophy than anything else. To a certain extent men out here are striving to be supermen. Even when quite old they will work amazingly hard. This is no country for an idler. They exist, of course, but go to the wall. It makes the people look hard and old and not very attractive. But it seems to dominate everything. And then one contrasts Christian teaching: "It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early and so late take rest and eat the bread of carefulness." "Thou fool, this night shall thy life be required of thee, and then that thou hast whose shall it be?" What is the object of it all? What is every one after? "The dollar" is the usual answer. I do not believe it is altogether so. I believe there is a sort of feeling that life is lost and found in work, and people very often like work for its own sake as well as for what it brings. Somehow one does not feel this is very attractive. There is little thought, few ideals. And yet it is fine. Contrast it with Notting Dale! How is the Church to co-operate with this? "By providing the social life," the Methodist says. But how are spiritual things to be brought in? The country must be developed and progress made as rapidly as possible, as well for the country's as for the individual's sake. But there seems no sense of the spiritual, no desire for it, or room for it as taught for instance through the Sacraments. At its best I should not call it a selfish age, but an unspiritual. What has the Church to say? That it is "but lost labour"? I do not feel that is very satisfactory. Is not this tremendous atmosphere of energy something rather new? What is it all going to end in?

These thoughts have been at the back of my mind for some time. I have not yet got them quite clear. I have just written them down as they came to me. I do not think people are very happy. Not that they are unhappy. But they do not think. The man whose talent made ten more, worked, I suppose, ultimately that he might give the ten to his Lord. I believe this is the clue to the problem. It must be lost labour if done for any other end. At present I feel more like the man who wrapped his talent in a napkin —not perhaps for his reason—but because I am uncertain what to do with it.

People cannot go on working without some end in view.

Eventually the tremendous work that is being put into this country must reap its reward. What will the man do with his ten talents when he gets them? Unless the Church is to guide him, he will use them for himself. Certainly it is a strange and puzzling world. Somehow with so much to admire in it, it does not seem very Christian. Meanwhile some of the denominations seem to be pretty successful in co-operating with its spirit and running successful and flourishing shows with untiring energy and efficiency.

I must stop this effusion. But you raise questions. I think if I have an ideal, it is to try and make other people happy. Only I must have their energy if I am to do so.

St. Paul's Mission.

July 4, 1911.—A humiliating piece of news has just reached me from Boyd, and that is that a deputation of St. Andrew's ladies waited on him to ask that I should not return. He says they had nothing very definite against me, no more than that I am habitually full of my own convictions and enthusiasms, and unconscious of the feelings and opinions of others. Boyd says, "I think if I were in your place I should want another try." I answered that he is sole boss, and if he wanted to remove me, was not to consult my feelings in the least, but if he wanted to know what I felt, I was quite prepared to have another try. He is to consult the vestry meeting before any more is decided. I do not quite know how to feel about it. Certainly, I have been very deceived. I left believing that people were sorry at my going at all, and would be glad to have me back; and now after two months' interval, they come to this conclusion. Of course it is only the ladies, and I imagine only one or two among them who have influenced the rest. I expect Mercer is doing very much better than I was. He is much more agreeable and systematic. Just for this reason I wanted to give Boyd a chance of making a change. But I must say I should feel it a crushing blow if, as a result of a petition of the ladies, I were removed. After striving to build up a parish to be asked to leave it without a word! People are strangely hard and callous out here. I do not know how matters will end. I have perfect confidence in Boyd. I was going to have written you a long account of my trip with the Professor,[1] but this news is a little over-

[1] Canon B. K. Cunningham, who had come out on a visit to Western Canada.

whelming. I am not sure that it is not very good for me. I was rather in danger, at times at least, of thinking myself a *persona grata* universally.

We certainly had a delightful trip. We made a round trip going through the mountains by the Crow's Nest Pass, then north along the lakes and back by the main line. The Professor was an ideal companion. It was delightful seeing him. What I said all along was how I longed to take you the same trip; I wonder if it would ever be possible.

I feel I am writing a dull letter. Forgive me. I have not yet got over being asked to retire from St. Andrew's by the ladies. How can I put it out of my mind as I ride through the country? I keep wondering at every place I visit if the people do not want me to come back. I seemed to have been getting on so much better with them. They had nearly all confided to me all their troubles, and everything seemed to be going so well; and then perfectly cold-bloodedly and deliberately, after I have been away two months and am thinking of returning, they go and ask Boyd that I should not come back. I had four testimonials on leaving my old parish and three presentations; and now I am asked to retire! Have I become such a terror? I have hardly had a trial yet. Dear me, I don't really care much where I go, but what can I possibly be to the Church if after six months of, I must say, fairly hard work, I am asked not to come back? However, I have had only one letter and nothing was decided, and the vestry had expressed no opinion. Perhaps you can understand what I feel, however wrongly.

St. Paul's Mission.

July 18, 1911.—I have just returned from a week's camping to find my mail with various very grateful letters. Boyd writes: "The vestry would not in any way endorse the action of the ladies' committee." I must say I sighed a sigh of relief. It would have been too awful to have been condemned by one's vestry. But a new and weird solution of the difficulty presents itself in the fact that the Dean of Belfast is in Edmonton, and wants to stay, and the St. Andrew's people are trying to get him if they can raise the money. I return to Edmonton next week and wonder where I shall be despatched next.

I will go on and tell about my boys' camp. We started on Monday morning, there were nine boys altogether. We

took two democrats (four-wheeled carts) and one little two-wheeled cart and two saddle ponies. I took my two horses and a tent Middleton lent me. We drove about twenty-eight miles the first day, and camped on the Belly River. The weather was lovely all the time. Soon we left the fenced country, and lost our trail and had to strike over open undulating prairie, covered with long meadow grass full of lovely flowers. We gradually drew near the mountains, left the prairie, and descended to the Kootenay Valley, where the river flows out of the lakes. We crossed one easy ford, then a long and difficult one; and eventually came to the furthest and largest lake. I got on a pony and went on with one of the boys to explore. The country was thickly wooded and full of lovely flowers, and such magnificent mountains and the lovely lake to our left. I found a suitable camping ground close to a lovely stream.

The next day I started to climb one of the mountains with some of the boys. Some turned back soon, but two came with me till we got to a wall of rock which stopped us. We had a splendid view and then clambered down and had a bathe. With the help of some of the boys I prepared supper, which consisted of potatoes, bacon and tinned beans fried in batter in a pan—very savoury.

The boys fished all the time at intervals, but caught very little. I am so glad I do not care about fishing, it simplifies life. I hated going away at the end, it was so lovely, and there were lots of expeditions and climbs I would like to have made. We packed up, took the tent down, and hitched up the horses. We intended to make about fifteen miles. Where we came to the ford we found the two-wheeled cart had broken down over the rough trail. So they tied it behind one democrat and tied the horse beside my team. Taking it the reverse way I missed the ford, and found myself getting into difficulties in fairly shallow water, but a very muddy bottom. Fortunately the other team saw this and managed to get out all right. Billy, one of my horses, began to plunge and got his foot over the pole. Jock then sank on his side into the mud, and the led horse jumped up between the two and there was a mass of groaning sinking horses, who began absolutely to give up. I was in despair. There was nothing for it but for us to take off our clothes and get into the water. With some difficulty we managed to unhitch the horses and extricate them. I had to plunge through mud and water up to my waist.

A team passed us on the bank and looked at us with interest, but made no effort to help us. The boys waded to shore, but there was the democrat left, stuck in the mud. I got the other team, and one of the boys led it into the water, where the ground was rather better, and I tied ropes on the back of the democrat and hitched the horses on, but they only sank into the mud and groaned. So we unhitched them. I simply did not know what to do, and have never been in such a corner. Then I decided to carry everything to shore. We got most of the things out, and then several of us got at the wheels and pulled, and at last lifted them a little out of the mud. So we decided to try the team again, and this time, to my unbounded relief, after a tug or two and a lift by us, the democrat left the mud and was hauled triumphantly to shore. I have never sighed a deeper sigh of relief. I must have been in the water nearly two hours. It was nearly eight and there was nothing for it but to camp there, which did not matter as it was a lovely spot. It was a gorgeous night, so we just spread the ground sheet and slept in the open.

Macleod.

July 25, 1911.—My last Sunday was very nice. I had a good congregation at Haslemere. At the close of it the people's warden read a petition for me to stay on, hoping a church would be built and that I would stay to get it up. In fact, everybody was most kind, and various subscriptions were promised; Stand-off people have been very kind and seemed anxious for me to stay on. If I do not return to St. Andrew's I would rather return here if the people would have me. I feel as if I am just getting a hold on the district, and I wrote and suggested this to Mowat, saying I would discuss it with Boyd, but that, of course, they might have other plans. I must say I should like it myself.

Edmonton.

July 30, 1911.—Now I am back again and one of our reunions is on. First, I had better say that as far as I can see I shall continue on at St. Andrew's. I gather the action of the ladies did not come to very much, and I am going to ignore it altogether.

I wish I did not feel Quiet Days such a trial. Canon X. took ours. He was very good in his way. Religion to him

(to judge by what he says) is perfectly easy and straightforward. There can be no doubt about anything. Like so many people he kept saying, "I want you to do this, or that, or think this or that." I often wonder whether any one ever does. A little thought is what I cry out for. I spent the day mostly in studying Jeremiah preparatory to giving a lecture on him the next day. That certainly was refreshing. I had also been reading Robertson's Life, for which so many thanks. How abhorrent communities would have been to either of them. They are very similar in many ways. They both made themselves so one with the life round them. Jeremiah feels and lives and suffers for his nation. It was righteousness, truth, holiness of national and social life for which each fought; not getting congregations, or winning success or preaching dogmas, or even, in a conventional sense, being devotional. Jeremiah did not go to people with a programme of what he thought was correct for them to receive. He hated having to go to them at all, but he could not help himself. He had such a passionate love for his nation, such a loathing of its aims, such a compelling sense of his messages that all disinclination had to be overcome. What a strange man Robertson was; I think he was the unhappiest nature I have ever read about. But I don't think it can have been a happy age. Pusey, Liddon, Newman, F. D. Maurice were none of them what you would call happy men. They were much too harassed by controversy and mental struggle. We seem to have emerged from the whole conflict into a kind of false peace in which every one has a settled little programme of quiet days, eucharists, meditations, etc., and to leave it all at that. That is the heritage of the Oxford Movement. Whatever it may have effected in individual sanctity, it has destroyed the sense of a National Church. It is like Ezekiel in Babylon arising from amid the ruins of his race to re-erect it on a sacerdotal basis. I prefer to go to Egypt with Jeremiah and try to identify myself with the Alexandrian school which produced the Wisdom literature.

To his sister Gemma—

Edmonton.

August, 1911.—As far as I can see true religion consists in faith in the Resurrection. Robertson has a splendid sermon on the *Illusiveness of Life*. He shows how, while

the whole Old Testament was full of promises, none of them were ever attained; that while we press on we shall never attain anything. If we did, the world would become its own end. And yet all recent teaching seems to emphasise the fact that there is something permanent, and that is character. I am never happy unless I am in touch with character. This is why I love scouting; not because of itself, but because it brings me in touch with a boy's character at its primitive period. Here is something real, because here is something eternal. But character is usually regarded as something which is of value here and now only. You can train it and form it now, but its value lies not in what it achieves here, because that is nothing, but in what it is in itself. That is why the history of events is often dull and dead, but that of people full of meaning, as bringing one in touch with what is eternal. But people do not look at life in connexion with eternity. It is the Christian's business to do so, and to show that his whole attitude to life is affected by the fact. He will not be grasping at wealth, he will learn to see sorrow and suffering in its true proportion, and above all, he will feel that his character, apart from the judgment others pass upon him, is his most valuable possession, and will endeavour to do nothing to injure it. And he will find its truest method of expression is in relation to other people. But he will find all this very hard. He will be forced to look outside himself, and he will find that the Christian revelation gives him the means of doing so. He will find in the historic Christ of the Gospels the complete and final expression of all that he aims at himself.

To his sister Mary—

Edmonton.

Aug. 15, 1911.—I have been away from home a year now, and yet I do not feel that this country has any sort of hold upon me. I do not understand it. I do not know what people are after. I do not feel inclined to cut myself off from them and call them an untoward generation. I feel they must be studied and understood. I wish it were possible to go about the world and regard people simply as human beings. It is awful to feel that one has to reform and convert them or get them to go to Church. But it is not peculiar to a parson. A business man has to see what he can get out of the people he meets. We all have an ulterior end.

Edmonton.

Aug. 28, 1911.—The Dean and Mrs. Robinson turned up to lunch last week. He has decided definitely to take charge of St. Andrew's; and I quite hope that things will flourish under him. At first I felt it rather a wrench to be torn away; people have really been very nice. I cannot now understand the cause of the row at all. I think it must have been fostered by one or two. Now the people are very sorry I am going. I must say I am glad. I shall leave with at least a pleasant taste in the mouth.[1]

Edmonton.

Sept. 1, 1911.—I am occupying myself mainly with scouts. I have more and more faith in scouting for the boys out here, who without it, get little either of discipline or recreation. This by itself is going to keep me quite busy, and with my studies and taking more or less charge of this parish while Boyd is away, I shall be fairly occupied. I am arranging two courses of lectures—one on the history of the Church in the Apostolic Age, the other on some passages from St. Luke, for our next reunion.

Edmonton.

Sept. 25, 1911.—I have for years been trying to discipline myself and my use of time, but I fear I have utterly failed. I feel all people who have been of any use have managed to do this, and their usefulness depended on it, especially when the object was not simply money-making. It is all very well having a reputation for activity, but that is a very different thing from self-discipline. I am sure a definite routine by which every moment of the day is planned beforehand is a cure for all kinds of evil, the critical spirit, depression, etc. But I must try and make another effort when I get to Edson.[2] In some ways it will be easier, but I don't think circumstances have really much to do with self-discipline. It is equally hard anywhere. There is a kind of dead weight of sloth and disinclination perpetually to be overcome. When I was with Bishop Brent at Halifax, I found he got up every morning at six o'clock and did an hour's writing before breakfast. He said he had always done this. He found it a good plan definitely

[1] A few days later he was presented with a dressing-case from all the ladies of the parish.

[2] He was to be sent to work at a G. T. R. camp at Edson.

to compose an hour every day. It did not much matter what. I am trying to write one or two things, but I doubt if I can manage the six o'clock part.

I am so looking forward to Edson, where I shall have a definite job. I should be wiser when I get there. I know you will pray for help and guidance for me. I feel your prayers have saved me from much; and I have a constant sense that father is caring so much and longing to help me if only I would let him. The sense of a controlling Providence is very wonderful sometimes.

From a circular letter written *October* 1911.

Oct. 2, 1911.—I had a letter to-day from my successor down south to say that they have decided to build a church at Haslemere to be called St. James after my old parish (in London). This is the only prairie district I have been in and I should dearly like to know of a church being built there.

A letter arrived from the Bishop (of Calgary), asking if I could go to a place called Alix, about half way between here and Calgary, out of our district, but for which the Bishop has for some time been trying without avail to get a man. It sounded rather an interesting piece of work, and the Head decided I should go. I am to go down there with Canon Dewdney on Monday. I seem fated to be a wandering stone. It is not an altogether satisfactory part to play, but it certainly is interesting.

CHAPTER VI

ALIX

Lacombe, Alta.

Oct. 9, 1911.—I must write to you as often as I can at the beginning of my new work and let you know, as far as possible, all that is happening.

On Sunday I preached twice at Edmonton. When I got back to the Mission House I found eleven visitors; all the men whom I have been getting to know in town turned up to say good-bye to me. They were very nice, really an exceptionally nice and quite intelligent set of men. I was up at 5.30 and finished packing. They all got up and had breakfast with me. Boyd was very nice. "I shall miss you dreadfully," he said. I don't know why, because I have been a cantankerous member of the Mission I fear; but they have learned to put up with me.

When I got to Lacombe, where I change to go east to Alix, I met Canon Dewdney, who was coming up from Calgary. I understood he was going to take me to Alix, but he said he wanted to get back to-night and arranged for me to stay the night with Padstowe (the Lacombe clergyman), and go to Alix to-morrow. Canon Dewdney was one of the priests father ordained at his first London Ordination. He worked in North London till he broke down. As he was not allowed to resume London work he came out here and devotes himself to voluntary work throughout the diocese. He goes to any parish that is in difficulties and keeps things going. He has been doing this in Alix for a year. We talked at the hotel the whole afternoon and discussed the work. I go to Alix for three months, but the general wish seems to be that I should stay. There are three churches: Alix, Clive and Mirror. The Church property at Mirror has unexpectedly gone up in value; and the Church has sold it and invested the proceeds. The other centres will also contribute to my stipend, which

the Bishop says is to be 1000 dollars. This seems tremendous wealth.

The job sounds an extremely interesting one, and one that will exactly suit me. Whether I shall be able to do it, I do not know. I am losing a good deal of my self-confidence. However, I am only on three months' trial, and shall have Dewdney to advise me. He gave me much encouragement. After he had gone I returned to Padstowe. I am afraid I soon found myself at my old hobby. I discovered there were scouts in the town, but they were being badly run. So after supper we went and called on the scoutmaster. He was delighted to have suggestions. I am to see the boys before leaving to-morrow.

Alix.

Oct. 12, 1911.—On arrival at Alix I was greeted by a man who said his name was Panrucker. He is a store-keeper and churchwarden. He used to live at Worcester and had often heard father preach. He took me to the Church, a really pretty little building, white with a red roof, and nicely fitted up inside. I was charmed with it. East of the church the ground slopes down to a little lake.

My welcome certainly has been extraordinary. I shall have nothing to do with regard to my own arrangements. Everything will be done for me. We discussed the possibilities of putting up a little shack for me on the church lot. Then Edward Parlby drove up with his little girl to take me out to his place, about three miles away.

I do not see how I could have a more interesting and delightful piece of work to do. It seems such an extraordinary contrast to everything else. Every one seems determined to make me comfortable and support me in every way as much as possible. Best of all, there is an enormous amount of work to be done, with a vast district which has never been properly visited, and all kinds of railway development, and new towns springing up. Nothing has been done in the past and the people, as they tell me, are longing for some one to come and take a lead.

Perhaps this is hardly the work I came to Canada to do. But there is nothing pressing up north. So I feel I am right in coming here. Yet I have a kind of uncomfortable feeling I ought to clear out of here as soon as possible. People are really too kind, and I don't deserve it. This cannot be

called missionary work. I have found no skeleton yet. I am expecting one in every corner, but none appears.

Mirror, by the way, is named after the *Daily Mirror*, which has been advertising it a great deal.

From a circular letter.

Alix.

Oct. 13, 1911.—I walked out two and a half miles in the morning to see my other Alix churchwarden. I found him in his fields stooking his wheat, and I gave him a hand. He took me back to his shack to dinner. I walked back to Alix and then on to the M.'s. They live in a fine sort of villa on a lake called the Haunted Lake. They have a perfectly endless number of relations all about here. I arranged to come and take a Celebration on Sunday. I walked back on the other side of the lake and visited the H.'s on the way. They also have a delightful house. Mrs. H. said they were so afraid I would not stay as the work was not missionary enough, and assured me there was as much missionary work to be done as on a railway or in a mining camp.

Alix.

Oct. 16, 1911.—Though I have written a lengthy circular already to-day, I feel I should like to send you a special one before I go to bed. I must have been writing stupid letters and grumbling about Edmonton. I expect I was suffering largely from a want of definite work. . . . Somehow I seem to have had to spend my first years of clerical life in uncongenial surroundings. I have been forced to paint pictures of a tree instead of sawing it up into planks. But to drop the metaphor, I care unceasingly less and less whether a man is a churchman or not. I hate and loathe denominationalism, and yet I find I am very denominational in many ways. I long to get away from it, but shall only do so by gradual and careful schooling. My real desire is to strive humbly to live for the truth, irrespective of Anglicanism, Methodism, and all the rest. But one must live in a house of some sort, and I prefer the Anglican style of building. But real life is out of doors with Nature. I want to know people as they are. I want to get them out of their house and meet them on the mountains. Now the only hope for Anglicanism is to try and raise people above the denominational atmosphere. I like our Prayer

Book, and am happy when people come gladly of their own free will to join in its use with me. But I believe I really feel at heart—though I am always denying it—that preaching is the main thing. This is a terrible confession. It depends upon what you mean by preaching. The sermon must simply be the expression of the principles on which one is trying to found one's life, and the light which has been revealed to one in that effort. It is not an oration which begins and ends in itself, but it is an attempt at expressing what one is trying to make one's aim. I do not somehow feel that public worship is very easy. Christ went up into the mountain alone to pray. When people collected He preached to them. His worship expressed itself in His life. I somehow feel that getting away and finding myself in a position of responsibility, alters the whole aspect of things. Everything I say or do is important. If my religion is anything it must show itself in my whole life and to every one I come in contact with. . . .

My dearest, this is all very negative. Positively I feel a growing desire to give my wretched self to God's service. I feel more and more the sense of His over-ruling care, and want to try and make it my one object to lose myself in doing His will, because I feel so clearly that there is a certain work He wants every one to do. But I must be alone. Somehow getting away here seems to give new life. Will it last? I believe it may if I can only escape denominationalism and the desire to get people to Church.

Alix.

Oct. 20, 1911.—On Tuesday I went to Lacombe for the ruridecanal meeting. These meetings of clergy are most important. Our deanery has the reputation for being very lively, and we were livelier than ever. Altogether a valuable, interesting, and lively gathering; we may be few, but we are not dead.

When I returned here I found my two wardens were going round interviewing various people about building me a shack. It was all a little mysterious. I was told nothing. A meeting was called in the evening. They evidently did not mean me to be there, and were going to do it all themselves. I have never been so looked after.

The whole situation is strange. I can either be a great success and really have every one with me, or a failure. They are all prepared to do everything to help a man they

like. But the personal element comes in too much. Somehow I feel on the brink of a precipice. Any moment I may do the wrong thing or say it. Experience has taught me the fatal danger of being run by men who are not what they should be. I feel I always have to be cautious. I am told that if I " take on " I will have every one behind me and the Church will be full. Somehow I have little ambition in these directions. I have no desire to run a simply " going " concern or to be a popular preacher. But what I am so thankful about is that people have opened so effectual a door for me, and that I shall have no worry about ways and means, and that there is such an enormous amount of work to do. The worst of it is, I cannot keep quiet and go slowly. I am already evolving many schemes.

Calgary.

Oct. 25, 1911.—I came here on the 23rd for a Missionary Convention, and travelled on the train with Canon Dewdney. According to him, the people are anxious to keep me, and I decided that this uncertainty was neither fair on them or on myself, and that I would ask the Bishop if he would make the appointment permanent. This is what he has all along wanted, and as Boyd seems resigned I expect it is all right.

I was to have stayed with Canon Dewdney, but he lives out of town and I wanted to attend the evening meetings of the Convention. This was one of a series of Student Volunteer gatherings. I heard Mott twice. He impressed me more than ever. I think he is one of the most remarkable men I have come across. He disarmed criticism. (By the way on this point I must make a reflection. If I am critical, I am also appreciative. It is all very well saying " do not be critical." But the people who are not, are often not appreciative either.) He is one of those people who seem able to be non-denominational. He has facts to tell you and he weighs his words. He has no introductions or perorations or apologies, but goes direct to the point, and he is entirely free from any kind of cant or conventionality. The first night he talked about Canada and the task for us here. I was struck by his insight into the real situation. He spoke of the enormous importance of creating true civic life in the big towns, and instanced as examples non-conformists like Spurgeon and Chalmers, and then the present Bishop of London and the late Bishop of London. It was curious

THE RECTORY, WITH THE RECTOR AND HIS TEAM, ALIX.

to hear father's name brought up in Calgary before an audience mainly of Canadian dissenters to whom his name can have meant nothing. I introduced myself to Mott afterwards. He said he had read father's life three times. He went to see him before he paid his first visit to Russia. He asked me to come and see him in New York.

On Wednesday the Convention separated into denominational gatherings. We had interesting sessions. I spoke at the morning session on the Archbishops' Western Canada Fund, and said what it was doing. Our gathering, though small, was at any rate a valuable one, if only as showing how insignificant our work was in comparison with that of other bodies, the almost total lack of interest shown by our laymen, the miserable financial support we get. It really is almost incredible how backward the Church is, how unorganised, how short-sighted, the extraordinary opportunities we have missed. However, it is one good thing if at least we can recognise this.

But I do not feel very attracted by these other bodies. Their enthusiasm and keenness seems to be about so little. When one thinks of all we have to be keen and enthusiastic about in comparison, one may well wonder.

Calgary.

Nov. 9, 1911.—At the present moment I am sitting in the Synod Hall. This is the afternoon of the third day, and we have sat almost continuously. After this I hope to have more time, and not to have to leave the parish any more. This is the fourth clerical gathering I have attended in so many weeks. I must say I have rather enjoyed the Synod. We have had some pretty healthy fights, and have managed to get through a good deal of business. The interesting thing is to feel that we are really a self-governing body.

Now I am back at Alix. The weather has turned extremely cold, rather early for twenty below zero. I got back here to find my shack nearly ready. I spent most of Saturday in helping the men who were building it.

The Rectory, Alix.

Nov. 17.—At last I have got into my shack, and am writing after a heavy day's work clearing things up.

This place was in an indescribable mess of mortar, sand, paste, etc. The carpenters finished at midday and now the

last nail has been hammered in. I cleaned the place out and then set to and scrubbed the floor. I find the horses take up a good deal of time. I think it will be very snug in here, though it is very minute. But I have great schemes of fitting things in, with many cunning dodges.

Alix

Nov. 21, 1911.—The work continues to be interesting, but I am in the stage of realising the difficulties and problems before me. Novelty is worn off and I am regarded as any one else. Sometimes I feel a little uncertain how to proceed, but I am trying to develop a definite line of my own.

I really think I am better alone. I sit with such a sense of peace and repose in my little shack. I can think my own thoughts undisturbed, and things become more living.

The Rectory, Alix.

Nov. 27, 1911.—I am trying to arrange my time better, but it is terrible how quickly it can be frittered away. This morning I had everything done by nine o'clock. Horses take a good deal of time. They have to be groomed and watered and fed, and the stable cleaned out. I am afraid I enjoy messing about too much. I am trying to keep the place nice and tidy and clean. There is always wood to be chopped, water and coal to be got in, and I am always finding fresh shelves and things I want to put up. I am arranging an elaborate panelling to cover up the joins of the rough felt paper which lines the inside, and am framing some of my Italian photos in it. I like the young fellows to come in, and most nights have one or two for a meal. I am trying hard to do a little reading in the mornings. I have practically finished Peabody. I think the book is simply admirable. He seems to explain everything connected with life; but he says nothing about the Church as an organisation. Christ never seems to have concerned Himself about an organised Church. Yet somehow people must join together in order to realise their highest life. Only it must be done willingly and gladly, and with absolute sincerity of motive. I keep on coming back to this point, and emphasised it very strongly last night. The early Christians continued steadfast together and with one accord, and ate their bread with gladness and singleness of heart. These seem to be the four essential characteristics

of the Church. If church services make people bored they fail of their object. If they are urged upon people as a duty, or a favour conferred, they at once appear in a false light. I am trying to work on this basis, but have so much innate churchiness that I find it exceedingly difficult. The other thing I am striving to do is to realise and show that a man's life does, as a matter of plain fact, not consist in the abundance of things he possesses, or wishes to possess. There are few texts more applicable to this state of society. The amount one talks about the price of things is really terrible. It is so absolutely soul-destroying; life seems simply to consist in making oneself as comfortable as possible and getting the means to do so. There seems no other object. Have I ever told you one most strange and, I think, sad feature of this life?—that is the almost entire absence of any demonstrated affection? I really don't believe there is a Canadian husband who kisses his wife. You never see couples keeping company. I think they are fond of each other in a way, but they never show it.

To his sister Gemma—

Dec. 11, 1911.—I must write a Christmas letter, which will probably reach you late, and a wedding letter which should reach you in good time. The only way in which I feel I can mark the occasion is by naming one of my horses Cyril. I hardly know if it would be a suitable name for a horse or a compliment to Cyril. I wonder if matrimonial arrangements are taking a lot of time and thought, and if you are feeling harassed with the complications of life. I suppose I am living what would technically be called the simple life, but my experience is, the simpler it looks, the more complicated it becomes. However, you will not have to cook. Here all the ladies do. It is quite a pleasant occupation. I made such a good oxtail soup to-day. But I should have been writing Christmas letters instead. Such is life.

As a general principle, I believe in marriage. I feel in my case it would more absolutely change life than anything else. I feel a desire for companionship—some one to share one's life—and what is more important still, another life for oneself to share. I think marriage must be the greatest means of losing oneself, because a definite person is produced in whom to do so. Otherwise the process may

resolve itself into vague abstractions, which we consider as desirable, but which do not materialise.

Alix.

Dec. 18, 1911.—I am not quite clear how much I ought to be travelling about, how much I ought to stay quietly here. There are vast districts I ought to be exploring, and every trip makes me find more people I should be visiting. Then I feel I should have quiet for reading and writing here.

I have more and more a longing to be a real missionary. There is practically no religion except among the few English old timers. I don't want this to appear pessimistic, but only that I feel surrounded by an atmosphere which I cannot comprehend. The mass of farmers, mostly American, attend no service and, as far as I know, are absolutely without any religion. I could spend my time going round the English families where I am always welcome, but I feel I cannot ignore the other farmers. Some one must go and see them. I badly want some one to come and help me with the work.

I now have a delightful team, fast, easy to handle, young and pretty ponies. I was bothered as to what to call them. At last I decided to call one Cyril and the other Bailey to signalise the event of next month.[1]

I have simply heaps of work to do in connexion with my magazine, sending out church almanacks, arranging various Christmas entertainments, carols, etc., and I don't know what else—all futile things—but am flying away on Tuesday after Christmas for a few days' repose at Edmonton.

From a circular letter.

Alix.

Jan. 1912.—It is interesting to have pretty well explored the larger part of the province. This is the prettiest part I have seen, hilly country, covered with scrub and small trees, mostly black poplars, in some cases spruce. Among the hills nestle an innumerable quantity of lakes of all sizes. The largest is Buffalo Lake, some eight miles away. I look straight out on one from my window. At present, of course, they are all frozen solid, and are excellent places to drive on. The views are sometimes very beautiful from the low undulating hills over the valleys, and very extensive.

[1] His sister's marriage to Mr. Cyril Bailey, of Balliol College.

The trails are rough, as they have to go straight, though they have to dodge the lakes except when they are frozen. But they are always raised, and this makes driving about the country very agreeable.

At this time of year the country is without colour, just dirty brown trees and everything else white. You don't see anything of the earth from November to April. Some ten days ago the thermometer dropped to fifty degrees below zero, but my experience of the country is that the cold is overrated; people exaggerate and remember the exceptional rather than the normal. We do have it cold and bitter, freezing in the true sense, so that unless one takes care, one's face or hands or feet freeze. But it does not last more than a week or so at a time. All one has to do is to keep quiet during the cold spells, and to realise one cannot do much outside and wait for a chinook (a west wind). This is ideal, perfect weather and a splendid time for getting round the country, as the trails are so good and sleighing is delightful. The nights are gorgeous. One feels so well.

The towns present the great problem for the future out here. Here I am at Alix six years old; seven miles to the north is Mirror, six months old. I must explain about the church there. Some seventeen years before the town of Mirror was ever dreamt of, the early settlers had built a little church, St. Monica's. Seventeen years later the G.T.R. determined on a town site there, and bought the fifty-nine acres belonging to the church for a sum which will bring in a yearly endowment of eight to nine hundred dollars. I believe it is the only endowed church in the diocese. It has made my work possible here without outside support. The endowment has procured me a splendid team, buggy and sleigh, and is available for about half my income. Fourteen miles west by rail is Clive; between here and Clive is Tees, a very small place which is rapidly dying; to the east nine miles is Nevis, a very minute place.

Of course the really important people in the past and present are the farmers. They have made the country, and till now the business people have existed for them. We stand on a dividing line. The country is changing from a purely farming one, to one with its possibilities of railway and mining developments, but the farmer will always continue to be an important person, and the real influence behind all development.

Just round Alix is one of the most interesting settlements in Alberta. Some twenty-five years ago the brothers Parlby, sons of a Devonshire squarson, made their way as pioneers into this part of the country. They were followed by other English families. This forms the English settlement. They all have nice houses and nice things in them, some have motor cars, some are able to go home for the winter.

It is because of these primarily that I am here. They built St. Monica's Church at the present Mirror, seventeen years ago; now with the help of a few English townspeople they have built St. Pancras Church here, and provide 400 dollars for my stipend.

As far as I am concerned I might be in an English country parish, but all around are the regular heterogeneous mass of Alberta farmers, with many settlers from the Western States. You could not imagine a greater contrast to the English; interspersed among them are Canadians from Eastern Canada, ordinary English settlers, half breeds, foreigners of different nationalities.

My district extends in almost all directions as far as I can go. There is a clergyman twenty-five miles west at Lacombe, another twenty-five miles east at Suttler. To the north the next man is entirely out of reach. I have a love of exploration and each trip discovers some one of interest. But it is difficult to find time to do much exploration.

I am a tremendous believer in the importance of children's work—not merely Sunday School work. In the country districts the children have a very uneventful life; as soon as school is over they go home and do chores. They seldom play or know how to. When they get older they ride all over the country of an evening to a dance or anything that may be going forward. But I believe that the mirthless, uncivil western manner is due to the fact that they were never children in the proper sense of the word. They remind me of the calves I used to see in Turkey, which looked more like small cows than calves. The children are small men and women. I love getting up any kind of children's party or entertainment. I have had some delightful ones since I have been here, the main object of which was a good old romp. The children loved them all. Now I have discovered a wonderful invention—a Radiopticon, or post-card projector. I have collected children once or twice to

see it, and they have loved it. I am getting a magic lantern for services and larger audiences of adults.

Then there is the vital question of co-operation with other bodies. I am experimenting, and prepared to go almost any lengths. I think I feel prepared to do anything so long as I make it perfectly clear that I consider our branch of the Catholic Church infinitely superior to theirs. But after all " the Church " is not really the pressing problem. This is a new, rapidly developing country, and it needs guidance. We need something beside a Church for churchpeople. This certainly is needed. But still I feel that sympathy is what is needed most, and I fear churchiness sometimes destroys sympathy. The parable of the Good Samaritan teaches a lesson the mere " priest " needed to learn. If this be granted, we cannot set any limits to our neighbour. I feel I should go wherever I am welcomed, and not bother to ask questions about their denominations.

This is an independent country, and I have always had an independent disposition. Freedom—absolute, unfettered, is an essential. It is limited only by one thing—that is, charity. Rivalry, intolerance, working against others in any form are and must be an abomination. But charity does not necessarily involve approval of other people's methods. It is not really so much a question of approval, or disapproval, as whether one should feel limited in any way by what others are doing. It is not my business really to criticise another body or to compare it with my own. It is doing a work. " Forbid it not " Christ would say. But He still went on His own way quite independently of it. Help it if possible to do its work better. Love its representatives and adherents as much as any one else. Do anything in your power with this object. But this does not necessarily " weaken your position " (how I loathe this ecclesiastical phrase) or " compromise " yourself. As long as you do not commit yourself I do not see that it matters what you do. Never surrender in any way your private judgment or rather your individuality.

These are the principles on which I have been striving to act. Now for the application.

Mr. D. is the only other minister here. He is a Presbyterian. I have just returned from a Bible study which he and I have organised conjointly with members of our respective congregations. He read a lesson at a special

Christmas service I had in our church. He even came and communicated at a special weekday Celebration I once had. I did not exactly invite him, but I told him I was holding the service, and though I could not invite him, I could not refuse him. I am not clear whether it was exactly wise, but I enjoyed the service all the more for his being there.

Mr. M. is the Methodist minister at Clive. I asked him to read the Lesson on Christmas Day, when he and his choir attended and sang the anthem. He has asked me to speak at the anniversary of his church.

Mr. Mc. is the Methodist student at Mirror. I understood that he was having a little difficulty in finding a place for his services. I phoned to him that I would be only too glad to let him use our church at any time when I was not using it. He thanked me, but did not avail himself of my offer as occasion did not arise. He called later and said he was thinking of changing his evening service to the morning once a month and would be very glad if I would hold an evening service on that day, as several young men who were in the habit of attending in the evening might drift away.

From all these cases nothing but good seems to have come. I raised the whole question at our ruridecanal chapter last week and we had an interesting discussion. Some thought I had gone too far; others sympathised, but said, "Do not go too quickly."

I have three churches: the one here is a nice little sort of suggested cruciform wooden church, that can hold fifty, with a congregation varying from eight to forty people. The bulk of the congregation is made up of the English country people. The Rectory, a shack 22 ft. by 12 ft., was built soon after I came. It is hardly large enough, as I have a man living with me now. I have a slip of a bedroom. We have to cook, eat, live, and he to sleep in the main room, 12 ft. by 16 ft.

An ex-colour sergeant who was in South Africa is with me now. He does all the chores, which is a very great comfort and looks after the horses well.

The church at Mirror[1] built seventeen years ago is almost the oldest church in the province. It is rather a

[1] Oswin had belfries put up on the churches at Alix and Mirror from drawings made by himself of French belfries at Quebec. These greatly improved the look of the churches.

dear little snug log building. The church at Clive is an absolute white elephant, the prime movers in building it have recently moved away; it is double the size needed, and it cost double what it is worth, and there is a debt of 1100 dollars on it. I am supposed to receive 200 dollars a year from Clive but have made over my stipend towards the reduction of the debt.

The work is exceedingly difficult and perplexing. It is a great school for learning discipline and patience. One can rest on no false security. The Church is not a respectable or respected institution. One is forced back to what is of the essence.

To his sister Gemma—

Alix.

Jan. 7, 1912.—You wrote to me about luxury. I don't know that I have any clear views. I like it when I get it. But I can well do without it. Sympathy is far more important. It is the one thing really that makes life worth living. It is all very well saying that it is better to love than to be loved. That is really not the point. What one longs for is people who want one's love—natures that will expand to one's own. How Christ seems to have longed for sympathy. "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" But chores can become a bore because they absorb time. Christ had time to talk to the woman while the disciples did the chores, *i.e.* went off to buy provisions. I have missed so much lately the time for writing. Now I have a weird man living with me who does all the chores. This certainly is conducive to the peace and profitableness of life. Also plenty to eat. That is necessary. The Son of Man came eating and drinking. He was always ready to sit down to a good meal when invited. But these things settle themselves. Take what God sends you and don't worry. Do your best and trade with your talent, and all these things will be added unto you.

Alix.

Jan. 10, 1912.—One should be able to do chores and still have time for other things. I believe the harassing sense of having something to do concerned merely with the business of keeping life alive is more soul-destroying than anything else. I begin to see how the working classes so easily sink into a listless apathy about anything else than their

bodily welfare. It is so much easier for people who have no chores to attend to spiritual matters. Somehow the chores themselves must become part of one's religion.

Alix.

Jan. 17, 1912.—I had a visit this morning from Captain Worsley, the Inspector. I think he really came because he and I are great friends. You remember I spoke of him at Edmonton. He is a nice man. All the men in the force almost worship him. He is absolutely straight, very strict, and does his work extraordinarily conscientiously. Worsley has a great admiration for me. He wonders why I work in a place like this and thinks I ought to have large educated congregations to preach to, so I am afraid he is not very good for me. People are funny; at one moment they complain that the clergy are so inferior, and at another they wonder why they waste their time on such small congregations.

I seem to get on so much more easily with older than younger men. I can usually get on with married men or boys, but not with men of my own age. I believe that this has always been my trouble. Here it is just the same. I cannot get on with any of the young fellows about town. I don't feel I am in the least on friendly terms with any one of them. I don't think they dislike me. I engineered a very successful smoking concert at the Institute last night. The place was crowded and every one enjoyed themselves. But I never seem to get to know them. I invite them in at intervals and they seem quite to enjoy coming. But they never drop in, nor have they ever invited me to their places.

I meditated recently on the words, "And when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with comparison, because they were distressed, and scattered as sheep not having a shepherd." His motive was always one of compassion. He saw how distressed and scattered they were and longed to help them. The sheep here certainly are distressed and scattered. Distressed—because they nearly all seem so utterly to lose sight of the real meaning of life, and to miss the happiness that might be theirs, independently of outward circumstances. Scattered—well that is obvious—no cohesion of aim or unity of purpose. What He felt was needed was a shepherd. But the good shepherd goes before and calls, and the sheep follow because they hear his voice. It is one they have learned to love and trust. He does not

go behind and say you ought to go to church or have your children baptized. The shepherd must be a good one, not a hireling—a professional. "Yes, you are paid to do that." People must trust him for what he is. Otherwise he is useless. The shepherd's motive, then, must be compassion for the sheep. His power must be an attractive, not a compelling or inducing one—the pure light of his own inherent goodness. And above all, he must learn patience and be ready to go slowly and to fail over and over again. The sheep will not always listen to the voice, however sweet.

Do I make myself clear? Need I worry because H. does not attend church and Mrs. S. does not have her children baptized? "Be not anxious" says Christ. He never seemed to worry. To be certain of oneself and of one's own life and purpose, to live one's own life but not hide it under a bushel, these are the main things.

Dear me, if one knew God better and was more sure of oneself, free from distraction and worry, built on a rock, leaving issues to God; for after all we work for Him and with Him.

Bores are a difficulty. I wonder how Christ would have treated them. Perhaps the man who said he would follow him when he had buried his father was one. A stern answer is the only thing for them.

Well, I have discoursed enough, only do throw a light. The Church as an organisation can only exist on lines of absolute freedom. Its only power must be one of attraction. We talk much of liberty, but free countries only seem to issue in trade unions, etc., which wield an extreme form of tyranny. Let the Church point to the true meaning of liberty. Let it cease to be anxious about money, etc., and let its members be sure of themselves and what the Church means to them rather than what influence it has on others.

To his sister Gemma (Mrs. C. Bailey)—

Alix.

Jan. 22, 1912.—I am so glad the wedding was so nice and father seemed so near. He does seem wonderfully close and his influence seems an absolutely undying—rather a growing—one to all who ever knew him.

I am feeling rather happy at present. I am a little sensitive, you know, and little indications of late have made me feel that certain people who I thought despised me do not

think so badly of me after all. A number of young men were in church last night of this kind—some of whom had never been all the time I have been here; and I succeeded, in my own estimation, in expressing to the utmost of my ability a large part of my gospel, saying what I really think. It was not a popular sermon, far from it, but it interested and helped me. I meditate on a subject for a week and then preach it in different ways, three times maybe a Sunday. At the end it seems to shape itself.

Alix.

Jan. 27, 1912.—I think what people out here, and for that matter everywhere, need above all things is happiness, joy—I am surprised to find how much this word comes in the Gospel and what a prominent place it has in our Lord's teaching and life; it is the Church's first business to show people that Christianity holds the real key to this. It is when I go and visit people in this frame of mind that I feel my visit has been justified. People do so need real friends. I am sure there can be no higher object in life than to go about and just try and cheer people up and enter into all their little troubles, making them, when possible, a part of one's prayers and leaving ways and means and difficulties to God. I am beginning to feel it must be a crime to let oneself become depressed or worried. It must be fought against for other people's sake. How happy Christ seems to have made people as He went in and out among them. They heard Him gladly. I feel it all very uphill at times, especially after a day in Alix, where people grumble and gossip and are selfish and inhospitable—but so unhappy. So I am going to try and force myself not to worry or be depressed. Don't think me lonely. I am fortunate in having a few people like Walter Parlby I can really talk to. The family letters and yours above all are a continual joy. True joy is an inward possession and must not depend on circumstances. How wonderfully God helps one if one only lets Him.

Alix.

Feb. 21, 1912.—Somehow father's example is always before me, the expression that he gave to all that was in himself, by self-discipline and self-control, and in his relationships with others, courtesy, consideration, understanding, the unfailing desire to help and to give himself. I do

Winter in Alix, 1911.

not think that any one should, under any circumstances, approach any one else with any other motives. But parsons are always being exhorted at Quiet Days, etc., to be parsonic in their methods; even Mr. R., who is not very parsonical, said the best visits we paid were those in which we had some special object, *e.g.* to urge some one to Confirmation. I do not believe there should be any such special object unless it comes quite naturally.

I am hoping that I shall find the solution to many things by working among the children. I have always felt my peculiar gifts answered best in this direction. I had the children at the school for a special evening yesterday. I taught them how to cut out paper animals, played games and showed them the Radiopticon, and the children were very happy. It has resulted in my launching a scheme for forming a children's club. The teachers are very enthusiastic, and so are the parents I have consulted. The man who brings me milk, who has a large family and is an old-timer, said to me this morning, "You are the first who has shown any interest in the children since we have been here." The children are wild about the idea.

I do hope people will send me slides for the beloved children's sakes. I don't think I must spend any more money myself. Leading the simple life makes me wonder how people manage to spend so much money on themselves. I don't think I would spend any more if I had it; I would on my work though, that I can understand.

It is midnight. Good-night, my beloved mother. Writing to you is no duty. It is one of my chief joys. I am afraid this must be because it is all about myself. To other people I hardly mention myself.

Alix.

March 1, 1912.—Perhaps I have exaggerated a little in talking about people's unhappiness here. Perhaps it is more the want of happiness than actual unhappiness. Occasionally one meets some one who is content, but as a rule they are the people who have never experienced any other kind of life. Most people do certainly strike me as discontented. That is why they are always moving away and shifting about. Certainly this ceaseless worry after money makes life ugly.

Alix.

March 7, 1912.—Your quotation from my early letters amused me. I think I largely hold still by the opinions

there expressed. The people *were* kind and the country people still *are*, but I must have bored the townspeople. The job *is* too good for me. I am not good enough for it. The work *is* interesting still, but that does not make it any easier.

You are quite right, I have no business at all to be depressed. It is foolish and sinful. I think it all comes, though, from the rather difficult position a parson out here is bound to be placed in. Here, to be a parson is to be a missionary really. If only one kept that point of view clearer, I think it would be easier. But one tries to make it a profession and to organise, which I believe is a mistake.

We certainly do not live in a beautiful age. Here beauty is almost totally lacking; there are no ideas, thoughts, or outward expressions of beauty. If you admire a sunset, you are asked " Haven't you got over that yet? " I used to think it a hospitable and friendly country. It is so in the real country on the farms, but as soon as people become collected together, it all seems to vanish. The English community in the country here is a little oasis that really has kept alive the idea of beauty outwardly and inwardly to a very large extent.

Edmonton.

March, 27, 1912.—On Tuesday I came down here to find there was no sermon as I had expected, but I had arranged to take the lantern to St. Andrew's. I found Bailey looking up an old lantern to take over to Calder, so I at once volunteered to take my own and drove over with him. It was very nice picking up old ties again, and I told them of the connection between the Church there and the mission in Sirdar Road (in St. James's Parish, London). I had just had a letter from a girl who sells balloons at Lancaster Gate and who subscribed to the Cross I put on the Altar at Calder; and it turned out that the churchwarden's wife there had often bought balloons off the same girl.

On arrival I walked to the churchwarden's house at St. Andrew's and found the W.A. ladies gathered there. I enjoy picking up old relationships so much. The boys are very nice. I am carrying one off to Alix to-morrow. He seems wild with excitement, but will find it very dull I fear. I find it difficult to write because I have been talking so much. I seem to want to let off a lot of superfluous steam pent up for the last three months.

Alix.

Good Friday, April 4, 1912.—I am trying a Three Hours' Service here to-day. It sounds pretty bold, and I don't expect any one will come. However, I thought I would like it for myself, and decided to read the *Lessons from the Cross* for my own benefit and thought I might as well read them aloud in case any one might care to come. I don't think I ever remember having missed the Three Hours. I must go and light the fire in the church.

Alix.

April 10.—For the first hour of my Three Hours' Service, Sid came in and he and I were alone. Then he went out and a Mrs. L. arrived. For the last hour there were eight people, but I was glad I held the service. We (or perhaps I should say I) sang all my favourite hymns and read all the Good Friday psalms, and I so much enjoyed reading father's addresses again. I loved them very much.

I started on Easter Day with a Celebration here at 8.15. Sid had some breakfast ready for me and the horses all hitched up and we drove off at once to Clive, getting there at 11.30, where I held another Celebration while Sid gave the horses a feed. We then drove eighteen miles to Mirror, munching sandwiches on the way, stopping to rest the horses and have a cup of tea at the Walter Parlbys' and getting to Mirror at four, where I held a third Celebration and after it a vestry meeting, and then drove back here to Evensong at 7.30. No organist turned up and we had planned to sing the psalms and I had to play and do everything. Four services and forty miles' drive was fairly severe. Next morning, to rest the horses, I walked over to the Haunted Lakes to give Mrs. M., who had been ill, the Communion; after church walked back here and had a picnic by the little lake with the Alix children. Then after a hurried supper to the Bible study circle. Next morning I grappled with the Parish Magazine and drove twelve miles to give a lantern show. This afternoon a practice for a concert to be held here on Friday, then drive to another school-house to give another comic lantern show; to-morrow drive eighteen miles for a baptism, party, and Celebration next morning, back here for the concert; Saturday meet scouts on the way to Clive, then drive to Clive for a parochial gathering with lantern in the Church, then ten miles south for a Celebration on Sunday morning,

back to Clive in the afternoon, back here for the night; Monday, if possible, go to Edmonton for the end of the Reunion and a little peace. Such is life at present, so you see it is hard to write letters.

Alix.

April 29, 1912.—I am sitting down to write to-day, feeling, I must own, utterly discouraged. It is no use trying to get away from the fact, but I am an absolute failure here in Alix. One must judge to some extent by congregations; at least, when they get smaller and smaller as the weather gets finer, it is difficult not to form conclusions; even the nominal churchpeople do not attend. I thought it my duty to plod on, and pay no attention, but I don't see how one can go on for ever. They toil to get up a concert to pay for this miserable little shack and drive in miles in a blizzard, but simply ignore the Church. Easter passes with nine communicants. Good Friday is ignored and celebrated by the town with a fair. What do the facts point to? Either I am an utter failure and absolutely unsuited to the place, in which case my course is clear—to make room for some one else; or the people are grossly heathen and materialistic, in which case I would much rather not take their money. I had much rather go out and work for my living. The whole thing seems such a mockery. I have felt it for some time, but have tried to say as little as possible and wait. "Be patient," every one says. Yes, but that does not mean sitting with folded hands and saying "Kismet." Isn't there need for some one to take a decided line and to show people that the faith they hold is a matter of life and death, and one for which they are prepared to sacrifice everything?

My dearest, I hope this is not a naughty letter. It is not exactly that I am depressed, but I find it hard to justify the organised system of the Church when people utterly disregard it. I have given my life—and despite my failings, I hope I shall never falter—to the spread of Christ's Kingdom. I am ready to do anything rather than make the whole thing a mockery as at present. Would it not really be better if I were to go out to work and earn my own livelihood, and be of some economic benefit to the community, than be supported by people who don't in the least care about the Church?

Perhaps this is all too personal. I want to look at it from

the Church's point of view. Can I, judged by the facts, in any sense claim to justify my continuance here as a rector of an organised parish? Am I using the best years of my life to the best purpose? Can it be good for people to have an ordained man, with the amount of education I have had, at their disposal only to ignore him? Seriously, looking at the situation from the highest point of view, would it not be better to go out to work, and organise minute little congregations who would put Christ first, and would have a little reasoning quality and exercise a little discipline? A rector, a rectory, an organised parish with churchwardens, delegates to Synod and all the rest, seems such an utter mockery.

Well, it is not much use going on like this, but there is a lot of steam I have bottled up for some time, and I feel I must let off. Forgive me if it has gone with too great an explosion. But I do long to do something in the cause of Christianity. Tell me perfectly plainly what you feel and think. I will do anything, sell my horses, walk round the parish and live on charity, far rather than this utter mockery.

April 30.—Before I send my letter off I feel I must add a little. I half thought I would tear it up. But no, I think I will let it go, as you want to know what I am thinking, and you had better know the truth. The most cheering part is the kindness of people in England. The piano has been such a joy.[1] I had a little gathering in here last night of the chief members of the Bible Study Circle. We sang and played a lot, and had a most enjoyable evening. These people are all very nice and good and friendly; but they don't care in the least about our Church. I went and had a talk with my churchwarden about things. I implored him to be absolutely candid. He said he knew of no "kicks" against me; had heard no complaints except that I did not always choose sufficiently familiar hymns. He told me I was being childish when I said I did not much like accepting the last cheque he had given me. It is beyond a Westerner's comprehension how any one can refuse a cheque.

Outside of my work there are many delightful things. I sat out by the lake yesterday morning and was surrounded by wild ducks, crows, woodpeckers and blackbirds singing delightfully. The first flowers to come out are the wild

[1] Some friends in England had subscribed to send him a piano.

crocus. But it takes a tremendous time for things to get green. As I look out of the window the trees look just as dead as in winter and the grass brown. But as I look close into the grass I see it is beginning to get lovely and green.

Alix.

May 8, 1912.—I am afraid my last letter must have disgusted you. It is very hard not to get like that sometimes. I do not think there is any real objection to myself. At least I cannot get at it. The fact is, that almost every one is practically entirely wrapt up in their own schemes and concerns, and doesn't care really for religion or anything else that is a disturbing element to their own selfishness. I told a man this morning who told me about his latest deal, that he was always money-grubbing. He said he would not be here unless he wanted to make money. I imagine that is pretty general. Even a nice boy like D. C. told me that he refused to go in for any kind of amusement or sociability as long as he was here: all he wanted to do was to work and make his farm pay, and he would think of other things when he went home again.

Our children's party came off last night and was really a delightful show. There was no charge—an unheard-of thing—and we entertained the parents and friends, and fed them on buns and lemonade for nothing. The children really did very well, especially the little girls who did a scene from *Alice in Wonderland.* They also sang and acted a lot of old English action-songs Miss Reed had taught them. But the house was most brought down when Miss Reed and I sang, "I will give thee the keys of heaven." I absolutely let myself go, and the audience was greatly tickled. It was a perfectly informal evening, and people sat about anywhere, and the children danced in and out among them as well as on the platform.

To his sister Gemma—

Alix.

May 16, 1912.—I find I suffer from lack of hard work. Life seems composed of endless little futile things. If I stay round Alix my time seems to fly away and nothing is done. People are extraordinarily non-friendly here. I don't know that I would call it unfriendly, as probably they mean nothing. But it is a negative attitude and nothing I can do can break it down. The country-people are different,

and I enjoy a day's visiting outside. But I have a sort of feeling I ought to be doing more for the people here. I feel they regard me as a kind of freak and can see no reason for my existence.

How one longs to lead one's life to some purpose. When one gets away and considers religion in the abstract, it all seems so clear and inspiring. Then when one comes back to deal with people in the concrete, one seems utterly in the dark. I suppose, however, that parsons are useful people to have—that is to say, if they try to be consistent. Their profession forces them continually to inquire into questions and problems the solution of which, if they were not parsons, they would probably take some narcotic, as mother calls it, work or dissipation, to stave off. Sometimes I cannot help feeling a little amused at the way I live out here, contrasted with life in England. Here I am called a rector, living in a rectory. In England I should probably be the most important person in the village and have the largest house. Here I have quite the smallest shack (not even painted yet), live pretty well the simplest and cheapest life, and am the least important person in the place. Of the two I really think the latter is the best plan. But I can well see how men used to English ideas drop out of the ministry into lay life. As a missionary it is difficult to keep the missionary spirit alive when you feel people despise or ignore you. As a "rector" it is difficult to maintain a purely solitary dignity.

Alix.

May 25, 1912.—I tried to gather a little meeting of people to study natural history. G. was very keen about it, and I asked him to write a paper on birds. The meeting proved a failure as no one turned up but Miss M. and Miss R., and two who came in late, but he read us a really delightful paper, and I was charmed to find such a beautiful soul behind a quiet and unobtrusive nature.

Alix.

May 26, 1912.—It is a difficult life out here. I wrote one letter in a bad moment showing something of its extent; but here I am and I don't suppose it matters much where one is. Everywhere there is an equal opportunity for being Christ's witness, and after all that is all He tells us to be. This is always much in my thoughts at Ascension time; and there certainly is as much need of a witness to

Him here as anywhere else. Platitude though it is, it cannot be said too often that the issues are His.

I find the piano rather a snare, I fear, at times, and get more and more fond of playing and am amusing myself by learning a little thing of Tchaikovsky by heart.

Alix.

June 5, 1912.—I really love being here. I love this independent life. The country is charming and there are many nice people. If I were to go in simply for enjoying life I could do so very easily. But one must justify one's life by doing something, and fight against it though I try, I cannot get out of the way of using Sunday services as the measure by which to test one's usefulness. Sundays really are depressing days.

My seeds are gradually coming up. I hope they will be nice when you come. My Smyrna boy writes that he has not changed his mind and still hopes to come in the New Year. I find at present I am rather liking being alone. Summer chores are very much fewer. I don't want another boy at present.

Alix.

May 30, 1912.—I don't think I want to leave here even when most depressed. I have been moving about too much lately, and except for some very special reason would rather stay three years here before contemplating a move. I shall have times of depression, but I recover fairly rapidly.

I took your advice and walked over in the pouring rain and tackled ——. He is an awfully good fellow. He said he had had a quarrel with the Church in the past. They owed him money, but it had eventually been settled after he had vowed never to have anything to do with the Church again. I said it was a good thing to forget the past. He said that was quite right, but supposed the real fact was, people did not care about the Church. Mrs. —— began making all sorts of excuses about being tired, etc. He said it was nothing to do with that. They simply had lost all interest. Then I went to the X's. I discovered that she is a convinced agnostic. So is he I believe. But he at any rate admitted that life as a Christian would be more enjoyable; at present it was just a bore. The ignorance people have of the Church is amazing; and when I tried to explain things all they answered was, as others have said to me before, " Oh, but the Church does not teach that, you

cannot be a proper churchman." They seem to set up an imaginary Church and then start to demolish it.

Boy Scout Camp, Parlby Lake.

July 17, 1912.—Picture me lying in a large barn with some twenty-five boys. We have made a pile of hay in the middle, and hung a lantern from the centre of the roof, so that we all lie like the petals of a daisy with the lantern behind us. It is earlier than usual, so I am letting the boys who like read while I write, but silence must be kept. Here we have been since Monday week. We have had rain every single day, but it has not damped our ardour in the least. Mrs. Parlby has been simply splendid and has done everything for us. I started with twenty-eight boys from round here and some from Edmonton who came down with Cookie. Everything has gone very smoothly and easily. I cannot imagine anything more useful than a camp like this. The boys are happy, people round like it, parents are appreciative; we are inundated with invitations to tea. On Church Parade Sunday we were fêted by the Alix Board of Trade on ice-creams. This week we are quieter, not going out, but trying to do more work. I have managed everything, so have been pretty occupied. I shall have a varied summer: reunion, camp, ruridecanal gathering here, your visit, and then the Mission of Help.

In August I went to Alberta with one of my daughters to see Oswin. We stayed at Calgary and Edmonton, and with the Walter Parlbys at Alix. Oswin accompanied us on a trip through the Rockies and to Victoria.

Alix.

Sept. 23, 1912.—I am ashamed that I have not written to you sooner, I seem to have been very occupied since you left.

On Sunday evening I drove on after service at Mirror fourteen miles to Bashaw. They were not quite certain of my arrival, and no preparation had been made; but a nice little congregation of about twelve gathered together in the doctor's consulting room. I found the nice Raynors, the druggist from Peterborough. They are quite the most hospitable couple I have met in the west, and their little diminutive 8 ft. square kitchen is at any rate home to two stray men. Good news had reached me previously that we had had two lots given us to build a church on by a real

estate man who wants to develop his property. We are going to try to raise 300 to 400 dollars before spring, and build a little church there costing about double the amount. We have arranged to collect some of the people at a picnic on Friday, and see what can be done.

I did not feel after I had said good-bye to you that I had succeeded in saying anything I wanted to; I said no word of how I had loved having you and Mary out here. I feel that the whole visit was a successful one in many ways, much more so than I dared anticipate. It was really just like being at home again. Certainly I gained a whole heap of new ideas resulting from talks with you both. Your visit helped me enormously in countless ways.

From a circular letter.

Alix

Nov. 26, 1912.—Much of my time and interests is being absorbed in preparation for my winter campaign, to take place after Christmas. I am having a "caboose," or mission van, built, a wooden framework covered with canvas to go on sleighs. I am going to drag it from place to place in the country districts, stopping about a week at each place, and holding a series of lantern services and little gatherings of children, etc. I shall set it down outside a school-house and visit all round and try and really get to know the people in the different places. I hope to be able to have a little altar at one end, so as to hold Celebrations for people who have not been able to have one for long; to baptize children and look for possible confirmation candidates. I am going to make it as snug and warm as possible inside. To my great joy Mr. Boyd is going to lend me Cookie, from the Mission, for January and February, so I shall not be alone. The farmers are the most important people out here. This is the slack time, when they have nothing to do and things are very dead. I feel it is a great experiment, but I have been encouraged to make it by my fellow clergy and it may prove an experiment of general value. I must say I shrink from it a little at times.

Alix.

Dec. 2, 1912.—On Saturday I drove to Bashaw. It turned very cold, with a bitter wind, dropping I believe to about eight below zero, and I was nearly frozen when I

arrived. Sunday was just as cold. The hall where we had morning service was simply freezing. The water froze on the Paten at the oblations, and the people huddled round the stove. Even so there was a congregation of nearly twenty, with nine communicants. I had a horrible drive of twenty-two miles back here, where there was a very small congregation. I then drove to Mirror for a Lantern Service, and finally back here, getting in about eleven o'clock after forty miles driving altogether. I was very tired and slept till late this morning, and then had to clean up in here. Six scouts arrived on the afternoon train. At four o'clock crowds of children arrived, but no Miss Reed, and the shack was packed with scouts and little children, and I had to try and amuse them all. Then I got supper for seven scouts. Then more local ones arrived, and we rehearsed our play and practised different things and finally games till ten o'clock. Three are now sleeping in my double bed.

Dec. 9, 1912.—I have been much engaged in building my caboose. Mr. Hickling has been doing it for me. In the afternoon I worked with him. We built it straight away on the sleighs and finished the floor. Next morning we got the sides up and started the roof. Next morning we finished the roof, put on the canvas walls, put in the windows and practically finished the construction work. I imagined I had engaged Mr. Hickling to do the job, but he would not take a cent.

Alix.

Dec. 16, 1912.—I do not feel I can launch into a discussion of the Virgin Birth, etc. I think I feel it is rather essential to believe in it; and I cannot help feeling it a little presumptuous for a person to reject it. You have to set yourself up as knowing better than other people. There are a great many things which one must accept purely on authority. They are the unimportant things. If St. Luke says Christ was born of a virgin I am content to leave it to him. Personally, I can see no difficulty and I am rather bored with people who think it necessary to make a fuss about it; I wish they would make more fuss about all the things that the Church is supposed to teach and does not. Let these be attacked.

I feel at intervals a terrible poverty of spiritual life. I suppose it is a healthy feeling, as it probably shows I have been thinking more about it lately. I have been trying

to give some addresses on Prayer on Thursdays this Advent. Practically no one has come to them, but they have had the advantage of making me try and think the subject out again. Also Inge's lecture on "The Mystic as worshipper" set me thinking. . . . I think we must face things as we find them. We cannot force ourselves into grooves that were not intended for us. Neither can we start at the wrong end. I think we have to get back to the beginning. Sympathy, love, whatever one likes to call it, is the one thing that really matters. I think the true mystical and sacramental side of life will then follow. If I am feeling kindly and sympathetic, and I feel that there is a bond with those who are present, then the Holy Communion can be the greatest joy. I know these people and I do really care about them. And if I have not cared for them as much as I might, the very fact of their kneeling there beside me draws me to them; I forget that which has irritated me in them; they are on the same all-important quest. Even if I do not know them personally, I can feel a bond with them. I don't want any teaching or explanation or theory. I am content with a feeling which is stronger in proportion as my feeling of love is stronger. So with all teaching and preaching: if it flows from the heart ultimately disciplined by the will and arranged by the mind it will be all right; otherwise, it will feel wrong. I have been perplexed how to help these boys of mine to care about religion. I had badgered them about going to church. I have given them little books of prayer. I don't feel either has helped much. The one thing that matters is that I should love them aright, for their own sakes, not my own. I read to them about the Baptist just now, and tried to explain and then talked to them about prayer and asked them if they would like me to pray a little and they said they would, and I tried to quite simply. These are the times when one gets down to realities and feels one's own absolute paucity.

Alix.

Dec. 7, 1912.—I have been rehearsing the scouts for their play afternoon and evening. I have a strenuous time of Christmas entertainments before me. I seem to have been wasting all my money buying toys for the children. To-morrow I and the mother of some delightful children and wife of a commercial traveller are giving a joint Christmas

party to some of the children and their parents. People are not very good at entertaining the stray bachelors, and I am inviting some of them too. I want to do what I can to make a happy Christmas.

Tuesday I spent with the Parlbys finishing the caboose. We had tea in it. It is really most elegant inside. The ceiling is covered with wall-paper put on in elegant panels with little strips of stained wood; the floor is stained and oiled. Mrs. Parlby made me some sweet little curtains. She is also going to make an Altar frontal and has given me a handsome pair of old brass candlesticks. The door and outside trimmings are painted dark green. There is a little stove inside which keeps it very warm.

Dec. 29, 1912.—The craving for definiteness about the vital things of life seems to me to make everything so small. People cannot learn that the truth is the only necessity and that a definite indefiniteness is better than a false definition.

Alix.

Jan. 8, 1913.—Here I am rapidly recovering from a slight attack of the flu. I have thoroughly enjoyed a peaceful day; it has seemed such a strange thing.

Times of longing for some real spiritual experience are very strong at intervals. But the answer to the longing clearly is that the only way to get a deeper spiritual insight is by quietly and patiently plodding away—correcting faults—doing one's work better—getting away from oneself more. What I think is the real difference between the parson and the layman is that the parson is forced to go on trying if he cares at all for his work, while the layman can give it all up—let it go—and be content with a mildly prosperous and respectable life. I don't see how a parson could ever become contented except in a false atmosphere, and I always come back to the fact that the kind of experience I have here forces me back on myself, and while I must pass through the misery of realising the extent of my faithlessness and the prevalence of sin, yet at any rate I can start with something that is real if ever I do build something that will last.

This is dreadfully introspective. Sometimes I have such a burning longing to talk with father about all these things. But surely we may believe that he understands and can help quite as much as if we could still see him.

Alix.

Jan. 13, 1913.—I have been doing nothing these last days but get the caboose fixed up. Cookie and I have been at it till nearly 10.30 to-night. I had to change it from the sleighs to wheels this afternoon. My terror at present is that the ponies will never be able to draw it. I reckoned on snow. There has been practically none this winter, which is very unusual.

Jan. 24, 1913.—I suppose I told you what a terrible business I had trying to start the caboose. When I hitched my horses to it they nearly ran away, and then seemed unable to pull at all, only jumped about with excitement. I had to get a man with a stronger team of horses to come and pull it.

In the Caboose, Nevis.

Jan. 26, 1913.—I still feel doubtful about the whole experiment. The whole thing is a little elaborate, and while the difficulties—as I have so far proved—are not insurmountable, they are very great. I feel it is all a little too fussy. After all I am here to preach Christianity, and though I feel so much in the dark as to how it should be done yet I do not feel fussiness helps. More and more I am feeling the almost terrible responsibility of a parson's work. It is so easy to obscure the whole purpose of it all—that of being Christ's witness—under a mass of schemes and plans and shows. And here Christ's witness has to be borne in solitude.

To be real—that is the main thing. I don't think it much matters what one says or does, so long as it is real. I think people are suffering from a religion that is not real. I have been trying to get at one or two people's reasons for standing apart from it all and I feel that at the back of their minds this is the reason. At home we often accept religion as we find it and don't ask any questions. Out here people do.

To his sister Gemma—

Bashaw.

March 3, 1913.—You say my last letter was depressed. Well, after Christmas I was terribly depressed for a while. It passed off in the caboose, however, and has not come on again since. It is really only Alix that has this effect upon me. For the last week or two I have been here at

The Church at Mirror and the Caboose, 1913.

Bashaw, on and off, and it is unadulterated pleasure being here. Young Bickersteth joined us at the end of our time at Mirror, and was with us on the move up here. I told him we would have a royal welcome, and so we did. There is nothing the ladies will not do. There are about five who are always sending us cakes, fruit, bread, milk, etc., and we are thoroughly spoiled. It certainly is nice being welcomed for a change. There is lots of work here—scouts being started, confirmation classes to be started, lantern and radiopticon shows, a church to be built and much visiting. I went a voyage of exploration last week, and found another town fourteen miles away, with some six Church families and only an untrained Methodist student on alternate Sundays. Also another little place, where a Scotch storekeeper said they were just waiting for a minister to come in, and had promised to support the first who came. My churchwarden at Alix says I am trying to do too much, and very much resents the idea of my closing down on alternate Sundays there. So you see I am pretty busy. It is sad how heathen people grow up here. Two little boys came in the other night and I asked them if they said their prayers, and one (about twelve years old) looked at me and said, "Prayers, what is that?" But even as I write this, it sets me thinking. Even if a little boy did know something about prayer, would that make him much better? I think I feel more and more that no religion is better than some. I don't know if that is quite right. St. Paul thought that as long as Christ was preached, the way did not so much signify. But I think what we suffer from, more than lack of so-called religion, is unreal religion. People are not opposed to religion—only bored. If it were real, they would not be bored. And it is terrible how unreal so much of it is. I try very hard only to say what I really feel. But it is difficult to keep away from catchwords. And how terribly unreal prayer is! I wish I could feel a little clearer about prayer. In some ways I feel it is the most important of all things. Our best work is done by means of prayer. Prayer is work, but we are always in danger of saying that work is prayer. I mean that one prays in one's work. Surely the object of prayer is to give God a chance. Is it too credulous to believe that He will really do the work we ask Him to do, and that if He will not, we had better not try without Him? You

know Luther's much quoted remark, "I have so much to do that I must find three hours for prayer." And yet I have been irritated by pious people who pray much but do little. Inge also troubled me a little. To the mystic, he says, prayer is not even intercession, but solely the effort of the soul to enter into union with God. I wonder whether I like the mystic. When he has attained his end—*cui bono?* I see much mystic fervour among some clergy. But it so often goes with a general kind of slackness and incompetence and futility that I wonder if it is really very desirable. But if prayer is work and is (despite Inge) intercession, and if we work and God works and we talk over all the work with Him and let Him direct it and do the major share, then it is different.

The Mission House, Edmonton.

April 3, 1913.—I have taken a week of absolute but I hope not unprofitable laze. I have written nothing and read little, but talked incessantly, discussing with the men here. There has been such a lot to talk about.

We started with a Quiet Day taken by Morris of Regina. He finished with a very strong appeal for our tackling the question of unity, for which I was very glad, and Boyd asked me to lead the prayer-meeting we always finish up with, for this purpose, which I gladly did. I do feel that, while no one has any definite proposals to make, the desire for unity is growing tremendously, and must some day lead, if not to any organic unity, at any rate to a removal of the hindrances which disunity put in the way.

They turned me out of the Mission at the Chapter Meeting. They are quite right. I cannot any longer claim a vote at the Chapter, when I am working quite independently of the Mission. Instead I am an Associate, and can make free use of the Mission House.

Alix.

April 26, 1913.—I feel I must have it absolutely definite that I am back for Christmas 1914, and the reason is this. The longer I stay here, the more I begin to feel myself getting rooted in this country. The longer one stays away from home, the easier it is to get reconciled to the fact of being cut off from it. I don't know if you will understand me. It is not that one's home affections grow any weaker. But this country and my work here are very absorbing and increasingly so, and the tendency is for

home to become more and more of a memory and less and less an essential part of my present life. I think this is what happens to most Englishmen, especially to young men. Each year they spend here makes their desire to return less. But I am quite clear in my mind that this is wrong. I do not intend to let myself get absorbed in this country yet. What I am driving at is, that I feel that in any eventuality I must return home next year, not just for a holiday, but as a free man, to decide when I get back, and not till I do, where my permanent work is to be.

Alix.

May 19, 1913.—The burning, passionate love of God is what one longs to find somewhere, and one looks in vain. I have been thinking so much of this lately. When I preach on love of our neighbour, I nearly always feel I am preaching to sympathetic ears. The practical, moral, neighbourly side of Christianity has a strong appeal, and people are prepared to make much sacrifice in response to it. But how hard it seems for us to go on to the First Commandment. Yesterday was Trinity Sunday, and I always feel the necessity of trying to make God more of a reality at this time. Isaiah in the Temple seeing the Lord high and lifted up; a corrupt, official, traditional Temple; but still the place of revelation to a man who loved his fellow-men.

Alix.

June 13, 1913.—You very cleverly managed to send me a letter on my birthday. It was a singularly uneventful day. Thirty seems to be getting rather old. I believe a man is supposed to begin to be at about his best then. But I do not think I am as old as most people at thirty. I do not feel I have found myself at all yet, and feel no ground for self-satisfaction in any direction. Somehow when I begin to look inside everything seems wrong. But I believe little good comes from self-examination. One must plod on and try and do a little better and not worry. There are so many things to correct that I do not know where to begin. I cannot get away from myself in anything I do.

Alix.

June 22, 1913.—You say the Second Commandment must come first in practice. This is a question that often puzzles

me. For most people, yes. "If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen?" But people have said to me that it is only because they are trying to love God that they force themselves to love their uncongenial brother. Perhaps it would be right to say that the love of God is the motive, but the love of one's neighbour the method. We love God by loving our neighbour. I have just been reading 1 Peter over. How singularly beautiful it is! What a beautiful conception of life! I had been talking to a bank boy on ambition, the greatly prized virtue of a progressive age. But as generally understood it has a terribly killing effect. We sacrifice everything on the altar of progress. But the reason for it all, I cannot help thinking, is that such a negative Christianity is preached. The bank boy said to me, "If a man does nothing he is called good." A great deal of truth underlies that. We have moral reform leagues, temperance societies, etc., which say, "Do not." Man craves to live and to have something to live for, and popular Christianity gives him merely a negation. And then you turn to St. Peter and see how life was such a tremendously positive thing to him. "Above all things being *fervent* in your love." "Seek peace and *pursue* it," etc. To turn this great value set on ambition to ambition in the service of others seems the great task of the Church.

Alix.

June 27, 1913.—Dickson [1] stayed the night on Monday and on Tuesday morning we had a Celebration together. Then I set to and scrubbed the floor of the parish-room [2] to which I devoted the whole day. I was joined later by a man, and then a woman, and we stained and oiled the floor, cleaned the windows and stained the woodwork. Wednesday I rode to Mirror and met Pym, and went over to our camping-ground with some of the Mirror boys and a load of stuff, which we made into furniture on arrival. We have got a simply splendid camping-ground, right on a beautiful beach of Buffalo Lake.

July 5, 1913.—I have just come back from the first week of the scout camp. Every time I have another of

[1] A layman who was teaching Mr. Parlby's son, and helping Oswin in his work.

[2] This had just been built on to the shack.

these camps, I feel the same things—there is nothing I enjoy more and there is nothing that seems more worth while. It seems possible in two weeks' time almost to alter a boy's character utterly. You can watch them change. It is rather like watching the flowers come out here in the summer. Then I gain more experience each camp, and I trust, greater wisdom. It is really beautiful there on Buffalo Lake, right away from everywhere and everybody. I love the flat lake and flat country and the great expanse of constantly changing sky, and the lush green and flowers everywhere. I have been most fortunate in having Pym to help me. I could not have had a better assistant. We have worked hard and got through a lot, and the boys feel they have really been learning something, and all my enthusiasm and faith in scouting has been aroused again.

Calgary.

July 21, 1913.—Synod is over and I am staying on a few days in Calgary by way of a little holiday. A Synod arouses my enthusiasm greatly. It seems to me the ideal form of Church Government. It was most interesting to see the keenness of the laity. They by no means left things to the clergy, and they largely outnumbered them. We all dispersed, feeling that quite a lot had been achieved and interest aroused. I am amusing myself by calling on various people. Yesterday I had a busy day. In the evening I preached at the Cathedral. I did enjoy preaching to a large congregation, and I think I managed all right; so many men. It is quite a holiday being in a city.

Alix.

Aug. 8, 1913.—I found at Bashaw that we had now over 500 dollars in the bank, the sum we had decided we must have before starting to build. So we had a little meeting and decided to build a church costing 800 dollars. I at once set to and drew up plans, which I have now worked out, and have been getting various estimates. I am hoping we may succeed in having a really pretty and yet cheap little church. It is amusing me a good deal getting the plans out. It is to have a little apse and a vestry with a gable roof, a porch and a belfry, so as to relieve the barn-like appearance, and will be plastered inside for warmth. The plasterer has even suggested moulding two Corinthian

pillars on either side of the chancel. The Bournemouth G.F.S. have offered to make hangings and frontals.

Alix.

Aug. 26, 1913.—I went and had a long talk with Archdeacon Dewdney. He thinks I ought to join a preaching order, and wonders if my vocation is to be a regular parish priest. But I have always felt it to be a great danger to become a "preacher," and if one cannot be a parish priest, the whole purpose of a parson's life surely must end. I must say I do enormously enjoy preaching, or as I would rather call it, teaching. That is what I so much miss here. There seems no chance of classes of any kind.

I had to make a second trip to Bashaw last week, taking the mason up with me and getting him started on the foundations. I worked myself all the afternoon, and felt I should like to be a builder.

I am much looking forward to Gregory's [1] arrival, which I expect next week.

Sept. 7, 1913.—Gregory arrived on Thursday afternoon. I had the horses harnessed and drove him off about two hours after his arrival, and we only returned last night. He is now engaged in making apple tarts while I am writing.

Alix.

Sept. 16, 1913.—I have been largely occupied in taking Gregory round and superintending building operations. On Tuesday I stayed round Alix while we made furniture for the parish room. On Friday morning we both worked at the stable at Mirror. On Saturday morning I went to Mrs. Whitworth and got her to cook me some fruit for jam. I prepared the fruit and we made about sixty pounds. In the afternoon I had a gathering of about fifteen boys. We played French and English on horseback, my favourite game, in the moonlight, and very exciting it was. I gave them all tea in the parish room, on a beautiful large trestle table Gregory had made, and we played Up Jenkins and sang songs, and six boys spent the night in the barn.

Alix.

Sept. 22, 1913.—The Archdeacon has turned me on to write a paper on "methods of teaching religious truths,"

[1] A grandson of the late Dean of St. Paul's, who had just left Oxford and was coming to help Oswin for a year

and I have been struggling with it all this morning. It is a pretty vast subject. I begin by saying that we are not so much concerned with religious truths as with the truth as a whole, and that what we have got to do is to make the fact of a living ever-present Christ a reality. If this is so, the question is whether building churches and organising services which do not supply any felt need is the best method.

I took Gregory off with me on Wednesday. We made a great tour of his district. I left him after Sunday service at Clive. I am planning to fit up the vestry there for him, and to let him work the whole district on his own. I believe a person ought to be as independent as possible and to work out his own ideas. I always vowed that when I had anyone to work for me I would let him go on his own lines.

Bashaw.

Oct. 14, 1913.—I am at Bashaw struggling to get the church ready for dedication next Sunday. I worked hard as plasterer's assistant last Thursday, holding a confirmation class in the middle. On Sunday, after morning service at Alix we had our harvest thanksgiving at Mirror, where the church for a change was crowded. I spoke very straight to the people and said how they neglected their church, which had been built nineteen years ago by the old-timers, and now with a town growing round it was almost disused. I hope I did not say too much, but I felt I must say something when I saw so many of our churchpeople there, who had barely entered the church during the last year.

Alix.

Oct. 21.—On Saturday the Bishop arrived. I drove him direct to Bashaw, where we had a little evening reception for him. Next morning an early Celebration, and at eleven Mattins, Dedication and Confirmation. The Bishop was delighted with the church. There was a large congregation; the service altogether was most beautiful.

Alix.

Oct. 29, 1913.—Wednesday last week I went to Bashaw and emptied out the caboose, fitted up a little vestry there with a bed and a stove; then I took another bed and various other belongings and fixed up the vestry at Mirror. As we have built a stable there I shall be able to

stay there when I like. So now I have three homes, and am going to spend my time equally between the three. Gregory's arrival has made all this possible; the Clive district was so detached from the rest.

I have been enjoying life. Everything to do with the church at Bashaw has been so delightful, and it is such a nice little church.

Alix.

Nov. 5, 1913.—I was immensely interested in *The Inside of the Cup*. Not for anything it said, I felt myself continually in disagreement. It professes to deal with religion, but really touches only the outer edge. But there is an evident desire for truth and a hatred for untruth. And he does show, what I have always felt, that so many people who stand apart from religion do so because the religion they see professed is not the truth or inspired by a desire for truth. At any rate it has done this for me—it has made me more and more determined to try and preach truth and truth only, and to try and live in conformity with it, a desire which I hope I always had, but which has been encouraged. I do not know that there are many people who want truth; but even if they are few, they are the people who count. I think it is this desire for truth which promises to lead the way to unity. There cannot be unity without truth, and if there is truth there must be unity.

Alix.

Nov. 26, 1913.—It is no use disguising the matter, but I am feeling very worried. At last I have got to the root of the matter as far as Alix is concerned. When finally the X——s, the staunchest supporters in town gave up coming to church, I decided to go and tackle him direct. At last I got it. I am tactless (the old failing, which has made me enemies all through life and which I find it so hard to cure, as I am so little aware of it). I try and force people instead of leading them. There is no question of my zeal for the Church and thoroughness of my work; there is rather too much of this. But as far as I could make out it really comes to this—they do not like me.

I have written and told everything to the Archdeacon. I am quite content to go on and face it out till my time is up. Tactlessness is, I know, a disastrous failing, but it surely is only a superficial one. I have never succeeded

in making friends of the Alix people. I seem to have such a lot of failings to fight against, and the ones which cost me the greatest effort are not the ones which in the eyes of others injure the work I do. I suppose some people after two successive experiences like this would chuck the whole thing up. But that would to me be utterly impossible. My whole heart is in the Church and in nothing else, and even if I fail till the end, will continue to be. Meanwhile it is as well to have one's eyes opened to one's failings. The only danger is of losing entire confidence in oneself. And yet perhaps that is a good thing to do. I often feel that God sends all these things for a direct purpose. Some of us have our natures all wrong, and just because He loves us, He sends us pretty severe chastisement to help us get right. As far as I am concerned myself, I will try and profit by all such things. But the thing I feel most concerned about is lest the Church should suffer wrong by my failings. However, it is a comfort having the Archdeacon so near, and being able to refer everything to him and having such confidence in his judgment.

It is not all dark. At Bashaw I think things are still encouraging. At Mirror things have begun to pick up a little. So I expect there will be enough left for me to do to keep me pegging away another year. Of course, the above remarks, so far as I know, refer only to the Alix townpeople.

Mirror.

Jan. 5, 1914.—I like the children in this country more and more. They are not demonstrative, like London children. They do not take one's hand or anything of that sort, but they are tremendously alive and interested in things, and are more intelligent, I should think. I have had various talks with boys on the moral question lately. Several things I had heard made me afraid that boys out here were pretty bad. Now I feel convinced that I am right in saying that as a general rule the boys out here are moral. I talked exceedingly plainly to them. Most seemed quite ignorant of sexual things, and, what is more, supremely uninterested in them. They said they were glad I told them what I did, but such things worried them very little.

I have started this year a plan of monthly vestry

meetings at Alix, Mirror and Bashaw. I had the first at Alix on Tuesday at four o'clock. Every single member of the vestry except one was there, to my great surprise—seven altogether—and we had a very delightful meeting, and I gave them tea. They all felt that the mere fact of getting together and discussing things was so useful.

Mirror.

Jan. 10, 1914.—I have been preparing a sermon on the Epiphany. When the Magi had completed their long and toilsome journey and found in the house merely the young Child and His Mother, they opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts. This to me is Catholicism as opposed to Protestantism. The Catholic feels it his highest privilege to give, the Protestant to get. Perhaps the R. C.s have over-emphasised giving, but it is the better of the two to over-emphasise. I see no room for it in Protestantism. I always feel that it is here we are divided, not on Episcopacy. Personally if only I could feel that Protestants emphasised as a first Christian duty to fall down and worship and open their treasures and give, the other things would sink into insignificance. This attitude seems to me to be what lies behind our whole Prayer Book idea of worship, "Here we offer and present unto Thee," etc. I never see this side of the question tackled in reunion meetings. It is always the external side.

Bashaw.

Jan. 27, 1914.—As the weather was so cold I did not go to Clive on Sunday morning, as Gregory would be there. So, in the spirit of Kikuyu, I attended the Presbyterian Church at Alix in the morning instead. I was the sole congregation. The minister is going back to missionary work in S. America, where he came from. He feels he can do more good there; the West is hopeless. I thought of Kikuyu face to face with a solid united Islam. Are we not in exactly the same position? Substitute a selfish materialism for Islam. It is just as united and formidable. We shall never make spiritual things real till we unite. We had a little service together, and I suggested to him a scheme of possibly some united midweek meetings during Lent. One feels loth in a way to do anything out of the ordinary. But he is leaving, and my time here is coming to an end, and we both feel we have done nothing. He jumped at it. He said he felt

it was up to our Church to make the move in anything of the sort. I feel I would like to try an experiment. It cannot do any harm or compromise any one as things are.

G. T. R. Train.

Jan. 30, 1914.—I have only been two nights at Edmonton, but have had a varied visit. I went to the Synod out of curiosity. I wanted to see one election before I went.[1]

In the evening I went to the theatre for one of my greatest treats since I have been to the West. It was *Tannhäuser:* a splendid opera company is touring the province. I treated Chris Selwyn. I simply revelled in it. I know every note now. It was an utterly unexpected treat for me.

To his brother Cuthbert—

Alix.

Feb. 16, 1914.—The controversy the world is engaged in, and which has been brought to an issue by Kikuyu, is what is the real place of the Church. I believe thinking people have at last come to see the real beauty and perfection of the Christian character. In the Middle Ages it was possible to have the Church without this. Now we emphasise Christian character to the exclusion of the Church, and the world is especially emphasising the need for progress. We must be alive and think independently. We must each live our own life and hand on our own contribution. Your artist friend finds he can do this without the Church, and we all know and love and admire many like him. Only they forget, I think, that there are many people in the world, and that the vast majority have not reached their stage of enlightenment. True growth and enlightenment will only come when all are taking their part. Christian character is far from being the universal character. The Church has both to remove rubbish and to lay foundations and to build. It must both make people desire truth and bind them together in its search.

The practical point is, Would the world be better off without the Church? I am inclined to think it would not miss much by the removal of the Church as we know it, where there so seldom seems to be faith—witness our formality and divisions and unreality. But the Church

[1] Archdeacon Gray was elected first Bishop of Edmonton.

does seem to be a permanent necessity. It gives people the opportunity of preaching the law of love. It stimulates faith by its history and sacraments. If it was only true absolutely, men like your friend would love it above all things.

Stettler.

Feb. 23, 1914.—I have been rushing about as usual. I expect this will be my last time away till Easter. But I promised to take the lantern anywhere when wanted in the Deanery. I am feeling that, as this is my last year in Canada, I am going to see all I can.

I have settled with the Presbyterian Minister about the series of mildly Kikuyu meetings we are going to have in the Presbyterian Church on Wednesdays during Lent. I am curious to see how they will turn out. Saturday was bitterly cold, with a biting wind. I had thirty miles to drive back to Clive, and read *The Idiot* all the way. It's a weird book. I don't quite know if I like it, though it certainly is remarkable.

Bashaw.

March 2, 1914.—When I feel things are going badly and there is no headway, I feel I perhaps ought to stay for that very reason. I should have no qualms if everything was flourishing, and I was thoroughly enjoying my work. As the time for leaving draws closer, I feel more and more like running away from a difficult job. But what am I doing for the future? Everything is dominated by Methodism, which seems perfectly to satisfy the majority; why not leave it to them? They stir up all the enthusiasm. I feel I could easily become like C. at ——, and just stay on and become perfectly hardened and callous about the lack of response, and become a die-hard, because nothing can shake me in my feeling for my Church, and it certainly is a pretty severe test. I don't wonder that so many have failed.

I am very happy here at Bashaw and would like to be here all the time. There is plenty to do.

Alix.

April 14, 1914.—Alix, I think, is improving. There was a splendid congregation on Easter Day with thirty communicants, the largest I had seen before being eighteen. There were eighteen communicants at Mirror. We have had some lovely green velvet hangings put up, and

with a little window cut in the chancel it is greatly improved—a full church at Bashaw, quantities of men.

This evening I started on my garden and worked in it till dark.

Bashaw.

May 12, 1914.—The Professor wrote to me that he felt a little misgiving about the desire to have everything clear-cut and definite. I feel somehow that most people are more or less befogged, and that some think it necessary to become more clear and definite, and when they do, their solutions do not seem to the majority to be really satisfactory or helpful. I suppose it is that we are passing through a time of very rapid change and growth, and that what people are most interested in is the growth itself, and not any particular solution that may be found. I do not feel much is gained by making up one's mind definitely simply for the sake of doing so. I think we are suffering from an inherited idea of the necessity of being definite about a lot of things about which we are not in a position to be definite. This is where the whole missionary problem seems to affect the Church so vitally. The Church (of England) was framed as an institution to fit the Anglo-Saxon race. Now that race has spread all over the world, and absorbed all kinds of new ideas, and is brought face to face with new problems. It has outgrown the Church, and the Church will have to grow wide enough to embrace the new situations. And yet it cannot move till the way is clearer. Kikuyu seems only to show the danger of a hasty move, though the time may come before long when it will seem to have been a very mild step. I find that my sermons are becoming more and more of a mystical nature; and yet I have a kind of instinctive feeling that they are not what people want. They want something practical, this-worldly, not other-worldly. Should the Church go on emphasising the religion of other-worldliness when it seems to have no appeal? The only solution I can see is a personal one, that one must live *in* the world and yet strive to be not *of* the world.

Alix.

June 4, 1914.—There seems to be such a miserable lot of controversy going on now, all arising from Kikuyu. I hate these controversies within the Church. What we

have to fight for is religion of any kind, it seems to me. Surely miracles are an almost utterly unimportant point. The supreme question is, do we believe in a living Christ, who once lived on the earth, but is now ascended into the spiritual and only real world? *How* He was born, or *how* He rose seem to me to matter not a jot. The difficulty is that as a rule people who attack orthodox teaching on these points, are people who are not strong in their spiritual life.

Alix (at the outbreak of the war).

Aug. 5, 1914.—Life is, as you may well understand, exceedingly trying just now. It is so horrid being so far away. People have no regard for truth over here, and the newspapers seem only anxious to sell and make capital out of the war. Meanwhile it seems impossible to think of anything else or take any interest in one's work, and under the circumstances I feel inclined to hurry my return. Please tell me if you think I am wrong in wishing to return under the circumstances. Of course something may still happen and peace may be restored. I expect it may sound foolish my wishing to get back so much. There is nothing I could do, I suppose; but England is my home, and I just feel I want to be there.

Alix.

Aug. 10, 1914.—The first feeling of panic of any kind (never much) has subsided, and we don't bother much to rush for news now. It is wonderful how loyal every one out here is, even the Americans: huge demonstrations and processions in the city: crowds of young men are longing to enlist. There is no doubt England has made herself exceedingly popular. They feel she is democracy's and liberty's great champion in Europe. I had special services at Alix and Mirror yesterday with crowded churches.

Alix.

Aug. 12, 1914.—The news which reaches us every day seems to eclipse everything else. Distance seems not to count. Everything, I suppose, may pass over. But till the cloud has passed, it seems impossible to think or write of anything else. I have been sitting all morning studying Christ's apocalyptical discourses and anything I could read on them. People will love to talk rubbish about the end of the world. "The end is not yet," He says, and

also, "See that ye be not troubled, for these things must needs come to pass." Surely that is true. We are just reaping the inevitable result of all the war scares and raising of immense armaments of past years.

Alix.

Aug. 18, 1914.—The end of last week I worked as plasterer's assistant on the Church at Bashaw, and now it is finished and paid for. People are saying all kinds of nice things now I am going away. But I think they will like Holdom.[1] I have been telling him I am fairly good at laying foundations, but no good at building on them, and that is what he will have to do. I like him very much and feel so pleased he is coming.

I cannot leave here till the end of September. What had I better do? I hate these last weeks. Everything seems so unsettled. It seems so utterly impossible to prophesy the future. There are no precedents. People are very excited here and crowds are longing to volunteer. I suppose they think fighting exciting compared to the dull routine of work. Well, I hope I shall get home all right some day.

I wonder whether there will be any way I could be of use when I get back. Some of the clergy, one or two of the Edmonton Mission, are volunteering as chaplains. But I thought I would wait till I got home and found out what was wanted.

Bashaw.

Sept. 14, 1914.—Everything is terribly uncertain and anxious. It has made the thought of going home so different. If it were not for seeing you and the rest of the family I do not feel that I wish personally to go back just now, unless there were anything special to be done. However, it is a comfort to have had a settled plan in my mind for so long, and it will be such a joy to see you and the rest again.

There will be no difficulty in getting recruits from Canada. Every one seems ready to go, even married farmers with families.

People are being exceedingly nice to me and apparently really sorry I am going. The work here seems so very personal. I feel so absolutely unworthy of all the nice things they are saying and doing. They seem to like me

[1] Rev. M. W. Holdom had been appointed his successor.

rather than the Church. I wish it were the other way. Yesterday we had our harvest thanksgiving for my last services. There were crowded congregations despite the bad weather. I could not manage farewell sermons. I hear of presentations to be made; I wish they would not do it as people are really very badly off. Two little boys at Alix (very poor) saved their money and gave me a brush and comb case. I had the scouts in on Saturday, and they gave me a collar-box and a pocket-knife. I am being inundated with invitations, which I am having to refuse. I don't like the business of departure, and shall feel saying good-bye very much.

Red Deer.

Sept. 20, 1914.—Events have been moving very rapidly with me since last I wrote, and I have hardly had time to review things. I feel in a state of flux—cast adrift. A new chapter has begun and the future is perfectly uncertain. I did not realise how rooted I had become in this country till I had plucked up the roots and had turned my face east again. And then to be turning my face to England at this time makes everything feel all the more uncertain.

On Monday I had a tremendous send-off from Bashaw. The ladies served a most sumptuous supper. About a hundred people sat down, practically the whole town of any account. Farmers drove in from the country round, all denominations; then much speechifying on the Empire, etc. Finally, speeches about me, when the leading Methodist called me " the children's friend," and my " wonderful earnestness and devotion to my work " was dwelt upon. Then a purse with thirty dollars was presented. Finally the other leading Methodist rose to suggest we should join hands and sing " Auld Lang Syne," and ladies wept and there were many farewells. It was specially nice owing to its general character. I felt that I had succeeded in making the little church play its part in the town's life. Next day I bade many farewells and drove off to Alix, where I met Holdom, and drove him back to Mirror. Here the farewell was of a very different nature, just the vestry and their wives. I was presented with 23 dollars. Next morning we made preparations to get a vestry built. That night a farewell at Alix in the parish room—about forty altogether. We had a very friendly, sociable little evening, with games and dancing and refreshments and a

cheque for 27 dollars, to which many people had subscribed a strictly limited amount. Next day I went to the W. Parlbys for the night and the following morning to the E. Parlbys. It was a heavenly day, with all the trees turning. I felt a heavy feeling, and could hardly eat any dinner when I got back. People were all so nice. I went round town and said good-bye to every one. A little group of men and boys were at the station to say good-bye, and I came off here to spend a peaceful Sunday with Harris. I have much appreciated the rest and peace of a Sunday with no sermons.

I have decided to go home by New York. I had felt that I did not want to do any sightseeing, but I feel now it is such an opportunity that I will do a little. I would like to know what Americans feel about things, and I want badly to see Walter.[1]

I am leaving many friends behind. I did not realise how many till I came to leave. Every one says I shall be back here again, and I have had heaps of requests for letters.

Well, it has been a great experience, thoroughly justified so far as I am concerned.

C. P. R. Train.

Sept. 25, 1914.—Here I am on my way home at last. I left Calgary last night. I had a very nice time there. I saw Bennet, the M.P. for Calgary, and told him I would join the next contingent if they wanted a chaplain, when it got to England. But I doubt if any of us go. The W. Parlbys went down on the same train with me, and in the evening I dined with them and they took me off to the theatre, where we saw quite an amusing play. It seemed a frivolous thing to do, but I was glad of it, as I had been feeling very depressed all day, and could think of nothing but the war, and the terrible strain at home. Next day I said good-bye to the Bishop and the Dean and did more business, winding up all my parochial affairs, and leaving my parishes, I am glad to say, in a very good condition financially. I said good-bye to the Archdeacon and supped with the Worsleys and went off and said good-bye to the W. Parlbys. They really seemed quite cut up about my going, and it was very difficult saying good-bye. Then I went off to the station, where dear old

[1] His brother, then in New York.

Shore came down to see me off. I felt such a sinking feeling; I hated leaving, and I seemed to be going into such a disturbed world, and everything seemed so uncertain.

I can think of nothing but the war. I almost dread reading the newspapers. Shore and I agreed that the hardest part was to feel that others are bearing the brunt of fighting for their country, while we live comfortably here. The more one thinks, the more utterly futile the whole war seems. What has any one to gain? Why cannot it all be stopped? To what purpose is this waste? But after all it has nothing to do with eternal life, which alone matters.

Oswin left behind him many warm friends at Alix and in the neighbourhood. What some of those who knew his work there thought of him is shown by the following extracts from letters received after his death.

"I have lost a personal friend and a man whom I much respected. My work here rests upon foundations laid by him with tirelessness and unselfishness." (M. W. Holdom, Rector of Mirror, his successor.)

"We both looked on him as the best and finest clergyman we had ever known." (Walter Parlby.)

"I have missed him so much since he left us that I can hardly miss him more, except in the knowledge that he will not return to us. He was always an inspiration to me, his ideas were so original, his energy so untiring and his devotion so sincere. In his work out here he was a builder of foundations, his successor realises that he is using those foundations. As a friend, his affection was always certain, even when I had felt compelled to lecture him for uncontrolled zeal, which at times was apt to make him, in his lovable boyishness, speak without a due measurement of the interpretation which some would place on his words. Yet such was his self-evident sincerity and absolute selflessness, that I almost always found that my fear for him in this connexion was groundless, and when he left us only friends remained to regret his departure." (Archdeacon Dewdney.)

Oswin Creighton, 1915.

CHAPTER VII

CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES IN ENGLAND AND GALLIPOLI

Oswin got back to England in October, and offered himself at once as Chaplain to the Forces, receiving his appointment early in November. He was sent first to the New Army to the camp near Folkestone.

To his sister Beatrice, in India—

Hampton Court Palace.

Oct. 21, 1914.—My instinctive desire when war broke out was to go home at once. Of course it was very foolish: there was nothing to be done. But many people felt like that. I managed to keep calm, and only went a week or two earlier than I had intended. I found England rather terrible at first. The sense of strain is very strong. The darkened London streets and Belgian refugees everywhere added to the gloom. But it was wonderful to get home and see mother and Mary. As the days go on one thinks less and less of oneself and feels a wonderful sense of unity. Of course some people are violent and bitter, but on the whole there is a calm sense of determination and readiness for any sacrifice, which is very beautiful. It seems impossible to be selfish, and one feels the greatness of England and all that she stands for. So one is filled with hope, and tries to look forward with calm courage. The future is absolutely uncertain, but I don't feel England can go under.

Sandgate.

Nov. 17, 1914.—Oliver is very keen to train the men sent to him, and is exceedingly nice and painstaking in explaining things. Griffin leaves for the front to-morrow. I gather I am to take his place. But I do not bother much about what I am to do. I am content to watch and pick up things. Oliver is absolutely determined that

in all the work and the clubs the spiritual side shall come first.

Sandgate.

Nov. 18, 1914.—I am trying to see where work will be most practicable. The men all say we must each find out our own methods and not feel bound to follow Oliver's ways. However, I am quite prepared to lie low for a week or two and feel my way. I think, in a sense, it is the most violent change I have ever made, and it is delightful being able to make it under such easy circumstances.

Sandgate.

Nov. 21, 1914.—It certainly becomes exceedingly interesting work. I don't think I can say there is any wonderful religious feeling. But the men are all very delightful and so perfectly natural. I spent a long time this afternoon visiting the lines. I found a sergeant, who went with me most of the time. He would open the door of a hut and shout out "'Shun!" whereupon every man sprang to his feet. I told them to sit down again, and they would often all gather round for a talk. As far as I can make out none of the other chaplains do this. They are always fussing about clubs, which I do not feel are really nearly such good places to meet the men in, as their own huts.

Sandling.

Nov. 23, 1914.—I have just made a move and come up to Sandling, where two brigades are stationed, and am one of three chaplains with three clubs. This will be a very interesting job.

To his sister Beatrice, in India—

Sandling.

Dec. 12, 1914.—It is very difficult getting hold of the men. I go round the camp and visit them in their huts a good deal. The mud is simply indescribable, and there has been almost incessant rain. The huts have been thrown up anyhow and all leak, and there are no roads, so you may imagine what it is like. However, the men are wonderfully cheerful and fit despite it all. The Church is to the front, for a wonder, with seventeen clubs in working order scattered all round. It is very interesting to see this new army being formed, drawn from every walk

in life. It still seems all like a dream, and it is so strange to come back to an England which is an armed camp.

Sandling.

Dec. 14, 1914.—Sunday was so wet that the church parades had to be cancelled. However, I had a very busy day. Celebration at seven, two voluntary services in camp in place of the parades, which seemed quite a new idea. At two o'clock I baptized two soldiers in Saltwood Church, two officers acting as godfathers. Then I had a Bible class here with six men, five of whom walked down with me to Hythe afterwards to hear the Chaplain-General. In the evening I held a service in the Parish Institute at Saltwood, crowded with soldiers, and then back here in the absolute pitch dark. This afternoon I take three men to Hythe to be confirmed by the Archbishop.

Dec. 20, 1914.—When I got back on Saturday it was to find that the whole brigade had been suddenly ordered off into billets, owing to the unspeakable weather and nature of the huts and the ground. There has been an awful rush. It is rather fun that my particular battalion, the Buffs, are being quartered in three little villages inland, and I am to be with them, staying at the Rectory with three other officers.

The Rectory, Lyminge.

Dec. 24, 1914.—This must be my solitary Christmas greeting. I had another tremendous rushing day yesterday, packing, arranging about parades and clubs. The R. C. Chaplain arrived after lunch looking for a place for Mass, so I carried him off and lent him the club. Then I walked with him to Sandling; he is a nice friendly little Jesuit and told me much that is interesting.

For the last four years I have been looking forward to Christmas at home this year, but it is not to be. However, I think it is best to be hard at work.

Jan. 8, 1915.—The parades on Sunday were very impressive. The church here was crowded out; and all the officers came. I made a very big appeal on behalf of the S.C.U.,[1] and said how the R. C. Chaplain was doing the same at the same moment at Mass in our Institute. I found him afterwards and brought him in to lunch and

[1] The Soldiers' Christian Union, which he formed to get the men to study in small groups together fixed passages of the Bible.

then took him to Elham, where we held a delightful little meeting, to which about a dozen men came, and we expounded the idea of the Union, and they are going to think it over. It's very interesting when they begin to get over their shyness and talk more freely. Father Devas spoke very nicely about prayer. Then we came back and had a meeting here of a dozen or more men, four of whom turned out to be R. C.s. We had a most interesting meeting and ended up by saying the Collect and the Lord's Prayer together, Father Devas joining, and then studying our passage with us, while he granted a dispensation to his men to use our Testaments, as he had not got his there. It was very delightful to find that the two boys I baptized had formed a group on their own, the third being a R. C. The Father said to me afterwards how much he had enjoyed his afternoon.

One of the neighbouring clergy, who saw much of Oswin during his time at Sandling, wrote of it: "I shall never forget his thoroughness, his tremendous devotion to his men. I have hardly met any priest with such a strong sense of vocation, and he inspired me much. A small point remains fixed in my memory. Another chaplain thought it his duty to drink with the officers; your son let them know quite clearly that the King's commissioned chaplain should follow the King's example."

Oswin had been looking forward to going to France with the new army when he received a telegram ordering him to join the 29th Division, then quartered in Leamington and the neighbourhood. The 29th Division had just returned from India; it was composed of well-seasoned Regular Troops.

Nuneaton.

Jan. 29, 1915.—I can see how my work will both be easier and harder. It will run much more smoothly, but there will be a great barrier of tradition and set forms to surmount. I can only say how thankful I am that I do not come to them utterly green. I do know a little military terminology now, and understand my way about a little.

The full account of his experiences with the 29th Division is given in his diaries, which he published in 1916.[1] Here only enough will be told to connect this part of his life with what came before and after. From the end of January till the middle of March he was with his brigade first at Nuneaton, and then at Coventry. He was delighted with the friendliness shown him, and threw himself with his usual energy into work of every kind, arranging services, and

[1] *With the 29th Division in Gallipoli*, Rev. O. Creighton, C.F. Longmans.

providing entertainments for the men, sharing route marches, enjoying going into the local schools to teach the children, finding time to promote the organisation of women patrols and clubs for girls, above all trying to get to know men and officers, and making friends with people of every kind. The destination of the division was uncertain for some time, and it was only a few days before the actual start that he knew they were bound for Gallipoli. On March 7 he paid a last hurried visit home, knowing that they would shortly be off somewhere, but still uncertain where, hoping it might be the Dardanelles, and clear that it was time they should be off somewhere. He spoke much of how wonderful it would be to be there when the English troops entered Constantinople, and St. Sophia became again a Christian Church.

March 15, 1915.—What a varied life I have had since my return from Canada; and now what a strange wild adventure I seem to be in for. I only hope I may be of a little use to some of these men. It is a great responsibility and requires the greatest tact and consideration, qualities, I fear, I am rather deficient in. Up till now I have had such an exceedingly pleasant time, I find it difficult to realise I shall soon be in the horrid business of war.

He left Avonmouth on a Cunarder with his own two special regiments, the Royals and the Lancashires, on March 16, the only chaplain on board.

Malta.

March 23, 1915.—It has been a perfectly delightful voyage, like a pleasure cruise, as far as I have been concerned. Life proceeds very calmly and smoothly on a troopship. The men are just like children. The officers are all delightful. I find it absolutely impossible to imagine we are on our way to fight. Up till now the whole proceeding seems so strangely pacific.

They reached Alexandria on March 28. The week spent at the camp at Mex, five miles out of Alexandria, was for Oswin one of his most wonderful experiences as far as his work as Chaplain was concerned. He exerted himself to the full to provide both for the physical and the spiritual needs of the men, and met with much response. The great tent which he had erected as a canteen proved an immense boon.

April 7, 1915.—Each day we have sold in about two hours an average of 2000 oranges, 200 dozen cakes, and quantities of cigarettes, minerals, etc. Our average takings were £25 to £30 in about two and a half hours. After

having paid for the hire of the tent and all expenses, we should have a profit of about £20, which will be very useful the next time I want to start. In the evenings it has been a seething mass of men. I had piles of papers and magazines sent me and bought a lot of games. The two R. C. Chaplains did not take much interest. They said they did not go in for social work. They spend most of their time hearing confessions. However, we used the tent for services. By the beginning of this week I had got the tent into such good order I could leave it, which was a comfort. Then, of course, there has been all my own proper work. I have had some wonderful services. On Good Friday the tent was packed at 6.30. For Easter Day, I fixed up a nice altar in the tent with flowers. One of the Majors, a charming man, said he could not help having his sense of humour tickled when he came to think of it afterwards, when I solemnly presented the alms in a woodbine cigarette box, while two broken beer bottles served as vases, and the Altar was made of coke boxes. At the parades on Easter Day I gave out that I would like names for Confirmation, and after the evening service took them down. I was amazed at the number, forty-six altogether there, and more coming in all the time.

About the future I may say nothing, only it looks as though there must be big loss of life, and that the men I am with will have to bear the brunt of it. The officers talk perfectly candidly and openly about it. Even the Major, when I was paying my mess bill said, "Don't give me too much, because candidly we may none of us be alive next week." Of course no definite information is given. I feel the only way is to take everything as it comes as calmly as possible. We can all only do our best, and in itself death is such a small thing. Foolish weak men are becoming serious and setting to work to strengthen their characters. That is the real victory. Men are turning in absolutely simple faith and confidence to God, and the sense of His Presence has been wonderfully close all the time. I do think we are a Christian army; that is the great comfort.

April 13, 1915.—I cannot tell where we are now and what we are doing beyond the fact that we have not heard a shot or seen an enemy, and are continuing our delightful cruise. Everybody is very fit and very happy, life is quite delightful and full of every kind of interest.

I go on seeing men and talking to them and learning how soldiers spend their lives. It is all pretty sordid. Last night I had a long talk with the adjutant, a particularly charming fellow. He had been an acolyte in a spiky church for six years, and at the time believed everything and found the greatest comfort in the Church. Now he finds he cannot honestly believe anything he was taught. Such a common story—the almost inevitable result of spikery when a man goes out into the world and becomes himself. I am becoming terribly unorthodox. There is a rooted idea among officers and men alike that religion is concerned almost solely with the next world, and that men give up women and wine only from fear of hell or desire for heaven. All evangelical teaching, which is rife in the army, seems to have gone in this direction. I don't think I have mentioned heaven in a sermon, and some of the men have noticed the fact and been surprised. When they talk to me about heaven I am afraid I get impatient, and say I am not in the least interested in heaven or hell, and don't care a bit where any one is going, and that the sole concern of religion is the bettering of this sordid world, and that they must hurry up and create heaven here. They all tell me this is contrary to all the the teaching of the Church. I reply I don't know anything about that, but I know it is Christ's teaching, Who came preaching that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. I really don't know which does more absolutely to stultify all true religion, spikery or evangelicism. None of the best of the officers or men care for either. We have suffered enough from both in the Church; they must be slain if the Church is to have any meaning for the majority of thoughtful, natural men. I have long felt this, but am now convinced.

I am afraid that when I next write, it will in all probability be a letter giving rather different experiences. There is a tremendously tough time ahead, of that there can be no doubt. Most of the officers seem to take it for granted that they are going to be killed. However, they are quite cheerful about it. I am afraid it is going to be pretty desperate, but it will be extraordinarily exciting.

April 29, 1915.—I have no idea when letters will go, but feel I must have something ready written to send when possible. I am keeping my diary carefully written up, but must not send it yet. You probably know a great

deal more in England of what is happening than we do here. The fighting started on Sunday morning and has been raging ever since. We have been watching it three miles out to sea for four days now, and have had practically no news, beyond the apparently only too certain fact that my two particular regiments have been absolutely cut to pieces, which they very largely expected, and I have not been there. I feel I ought to have insisted on staying in the other boat, but I had very definite orders to rejoin my R.A.M.C. We lie here and watch through glasses all day, and try to make out what is happening, but no one comes near us or gives us any news, though the whole place is a mass of shipping. It is too terrible to think of the regiments. What a sacrifice of such magnificent material! But we know nothing for certain, and I hope that a good many may have been taken off to hospital ships, and that I shall see them again some day. As far as it is possible to judge from this distance, the feat they performed seems an almost impossible one. There has evidently been terrible fighting. Meanwhile we live here in comfort and ease and know nothing. But it is useless worrying. The only thing is to be perfectly philosophical about it all. Some day we shall know, and some day you will get this letter, which tells you nothing because there is nothing to tell.

May 5, 1915.—At last on Sunday evening I managed to land. . . . The strange thing, I find, is that I am really extremely happy. There is more goodness and true unselfishness and seriousness about on this Peninsula than there is at a race meeting, for instance, and that seems the only thing after all that matters. It is no excuse for war, but it makes it quite possible to be happy in it.

I think if I might perhaps make a suggestion to everybody who cannot take a direct part in war, it is that there is really no reason to feel miserable about it. Of course, everybody hates and loathes it here, and only longs for it to finish, but I think the real reason is that they feel it is such an utter misuse of their lives. What I really mean to say is that sin and evil alone should make us feel miserable, and I have never felt their absence as much as since I landed here. If people lose those they love, may they not have at least the supreme consolation that the vast majority of them have died better men than they were before?

"W" BEACH SOME DAYS AFTER LANDING OF LANCASHIRE FUSILIERS, LATER KNOWN AS LANCASHIRE LANDING.

May 14, 1915.—I am exceedingly flourishing, the weather is delightful, there are lovely flowers, and many birds, heaps of food and plenty to do, and it would all be very jolly if it were not for the war.

Yesterday the Turks seem to have got hold of some new high explosive shells and a larger gun, and are shelling our beach, which is our main base. So you see life is quite exciting even when not in the firing line. One day a spent bullet hit my horse and several have whistled close over my head. Chaplin had four men wounded while taking Church Parade on the beach yesterday (Ascension Day). But one takes these little things very calmly after a time, and while taking due precautions takes one's chance with the rest. The poor 29th Division is getting good and well-deserved rest, and I have been with them the last three nights, and on Ascension Day had a Celebration, and a service the night before. We had two violent attacks on Thursday (6th) and Sunday (9th) and I saw my fill of wounded, especially the latter night. It really was terrible, they were carried in in an unending stream and everything was filled up with them. I was sometimes at the field dressing station, sometimes at the casualty clearing station on the beach, but it is exceedingly difficult to do anything. If they are slightly wounded, they limp off and go to sleep, if badly, they are given opium. It is terribly depressing, as they are all so uncomfortable and unwashed. Fortunately they are carried off to ships as soon as possible. Personally I feel I can be of most use in trying to cheer up the well, but perhaps that is because they help to cheer me up.

To his sister Gemma—

89th Field Ambulance.

June 14, 1915.—I have had most delightful letters from various of my family, which have cheered me a lot. Each of them said they did not know what to write about, as they felt everything must seem so trivial. I assure you the little things that happen quietly at home seem so much more important than these wretched bullets, which are far smaller and more trivial. It is all so utterly futile. We are just recovering from a very terrible battle about which I must say nothing. I have lost practically all my few remaining special friends, and the battle was

accompanied by many of the worst features of war. So it was trying. My personal comfort is that I have such an absolute conviction of the reality of eternity that the worst sufferings pale before it. Besides I feel that the war is absolutely the result of the machinations of the devil, and let him wreak his fury on our bodies and hopes here; it will only help us to realise our true citizenship in heaven. I don't think the war makes people more religious at once. But it makes them a great deal more serious and unselfish. I get very miserable at times and sometimes rather terrified (we are all of us continually under range of fire and usually of rifle fire). There is really nothing much to worry about. The men who are killed I feel absolutely sure must have many sins forgiven. The people at home who are left to mourn them have a special blessing promised them, of which I thought much at Whitsuntide. The future of the world and of England does not seem to matter very much. Of course the experiences one passes through cannot be pleasant. One gets singularly callous. Yes, we are always praying for those at home. I never take a service or a funeral without doing so. But I want them to feel that "Blessed are they that mourn." Do write often.

To his brother Cuthbert—

89th Field Ambulance.

June 14, 1915.—I think we learn a good deal about eternity here, though people don't think much about it. They are all so extraordinarily loth to die, and would rather be badly wounded. I would rather like to be killed instantaneously. I feel so curious about the next world. You cannot think what a stupid war this is. I don't think I have seen a single sign of administrative cleverness. We are neither a perfect machine, like Germany, nor have we any genius. Everything is laboriously done according to the book, and then very badly. The casualty lists are being very big, and will be bigger. So many of these young officers have been killed the day or so after landing, without seeing anything of it, in some mad, bungled charge. To see the poor old *Majestic* anchored just off the beach all night, where the *Triumph* has already been sunk, simply asking, "Do come and torpedo me," was almost inconceivable.

89th Field Ambulance.

June 22, 1915.—I fear it must be very difficult for people at home. Every one now is beginning to lose their relations and friends, not just the military caste as at first. I do hope they will be able to counteract this gas. We hear it is to be used here, and I have a respirator hanging in my dug-out. Life is singularly precarious, as there is no spot in the Peninsula out of range. I am still with the advanced dressing station, only about 500 yards from the firing line, in a little narrow gully leading out into the big gully. It would seem to be an absolutely safe place, but one of the men was wounded last night, and my servant picked up a bullet at the foot of my bed this morning.

I am sitting in my little dug-out and it is fairly quiet this morning, though guns are always firing somewhere. However, one gets quite used to them. We had twenty cases in, last night, six of them Ghurkas. Except when there is a battle on there is not a large crowd of wounded.

I think this life is a most tremendous testing of one's religious life. It is so easy to take a negative attitude to churchiness and be afraid of being anything; and yet churchiness does not mean anything much to me. One of the chaplains here, for instance, blesses the troops in his brigade as they go up to the firing line. He says the men seem to appreciate it so much. I once said a prayer with the R. F.s before they went up, and I suppose I could easily do so again. But just to stand and give the blessing seems a little difficult to me—almost as though it were a little charm. And yet it seems so unsatisfactory just to be negative about these things. I am delighted that he can do so perfectly sincerely and honestly. I hope it is not wrong of me not to do the same. I have been preaching a lot about the Kingdom, and trying to help men to understand something of what it means and what its relation is to our experience here. I want to help men to look beyond this world, the affairs of which seem just now to be absorbing all our thoughts and conversation and energy. We seem to regard the war as if it were of eternal significance. I want to regard it simply as part of the experience and discipline of life. I think that is the way in which the whole of the Bible regards all the turmoil without. I feel that is the special function of the Church—to bear its consistent witness to the Kingdom.

It is so easy to get perturbed by the things that go on, to think it such an awful thing to be blown up by a shell, or hit by a bullet, or have half your face blown off, or be asphyxiated by gas. I shall strongly object if any of these things happen to me, and they would be a very sore and heavy trial. But surely all these things are really very trivial. They cannot affect anything that matters, anything that is eternal. This is simply a platitude, the difficulty is to make it a reality. But the war brings one very close to the struggles of the early Church.

July 3, 1915.—It is difficult to write. There is always so much to be done, and life is not arranged for letter-writing. We have had more terrible fighting, and these battles become a great strain. It is so terrible seeing these young fellows go into action, so healthy and full of life, and then hear they have been killed in swarms in some great charge. And then the wounded. We had over 500 through our station in twenty-four hours. And one is so powerless to help them. And you cannot get away from it all. Everywhere shells are bursting, so there is absolutely nothing to take one away from war. (I have just had a message asking me to take a funeral, my horse is gone off and I shall have to walk, and so be unable to finish this letter.)

July 5, 1915.—I start again. We have been having another terrific battle. An almost incredible amount of shells have been passing over our little gully ever since 3.45 a.m. They cannot reach us, but have been bursting around all morning. The Turks seem to have enormous supplies of ammunition and blaze off shells all over every inch of the few miles we possess. I had no idea that war was so utterly devastating. There is no one left among the officers I started with. The officers always are killed. Another regiment started full strength and had only one officer left. In fact, human life seems of absolutely no value. After a battle I get very down. The sight of the masses of wounded is very terrible. I don't mind the dead. They have got away from it all. I live more and more with my Field Ambulance. It has the advantage of being a permanent unit. We have had no one killed yet and no officer wounded. It gives one a sense of stability. I am getting pretty cunning at avoiding shells, though this morning they were dropping Black Marias all around us. However, I find I get quite indifferent to them.

In fact it is utterly useless worrying—though it is exceedingly difficult not to. Again to-day I have been called away three times for funerals. I love your letters and all letters from home. I quite agree about being optimistic if possible, as long as we do not pretend we are having successes when we are not. Do let us keep calm, and all will be well.

Aberdeen Gully.

July 9, 1915.—We do not seem to be having any battles this week, and consequently things have been very quiet since Monday, which is a great relief. Also a delightful mail arrived yesterday, which cheered me much. The arrival of the mail seems to be quite the most important event. It is the chief topic of conversation. "Is there a mail in?" is what everybody asks in the trenches. We are getting some splendid reinforcements; and I am now looking forward to a few days off the Peninsula, along with the remnants of my poor regiments. The heat is becoming very trying and the flies are terrible. They seem to increase day by day. Mercifully there are no mosquitoes. There is usually a nice breeze blowing, but it makes the dust very thick and it does not penetrate much into our little gully, which gets like an oven sometimes. However the nights are pleasant. I left "U" Beach some weeks ago and live permanently in Aberdeen Gully, where I am very handy for my regiments and can see all the wounded. I have fixed up a new shelter covered with two pieces of corrugated iron, where I think neither friend nor foe can reach me, right against the side of the gully. I sleep on a stretcher. Really I am living at present in great luxury. I have more or less taken over the cooking arrangements so as to get a variety and wholesomeness, and we feed very well. This morning young Lister came in to breakfast. We had as usual porridge with "Ideal Milk" and treacle, bacon, toast, jam and marmalade and tea. Yesterday for lunch we had fried steak and onions, cold tongue, cornflour and treacle, tea and bull's-eyes. The soups you sent have been tremendously appreciated, especially by people upset inside. Sometimes I make a *pilaf* with soup, rice and onions. I even made *kedgeree* with some tinned fish and rice, and thickened it with cornflour in the evening and fried it up in fish cakes. This all sounds very greedy, but you asked for information,

and I am sure you would like to know that even in this Peninsula we can be fairly comfortable. It would be quite a pleasant life if it were not for the battles. I even have a bath every morning and have trained a servant to look after me very carefully. I shave every other morning and keep very clean. My servant washes my clothes every week and cleans my boots and gaiters every morning. It is such a strange life. One moment you are sitting down with a young fellow full of life and planning his future, saying what he is going to do when the war is over. Next day he goes out on an attack and is heard of no more. Meanwhile one goes on just the same with one's own life, plans the next meal and makes oneself comfortable for the night. We are all just the same. In a way it will be exceedingly interesting if one manages to survive this campaign. I want to go through it if possible, and not to go away sick or wounded.

I wish I could get clear about discipline. It is clearly necessary in the army, but must not be confounded with want of thought. To do as you are told does not absolve you from the need of thinking how best to do it, or, when advisable, pointing out that there might be a better course. In every attack we have made, something has gone wrong which need not have done so. It is impossible to know where the fault lies. No one has a right to ask questions. One knows the same thing will happen again. Life is—every one knows it—continually unnecessarily squandered, and nothing can be done or said. This is the worst of war, not the necessary deaths, but the unnecessary, owing usually to some faulty order or bit of staff work.

July 19, 1915.—We are actually away resting on the island which I have written about before, but whose name I must not mention.[1] I have joined the old regiment again. The Field Ambulance does not seem to be going to have a rest. It is wonderfully peaceful. Fancy not hearing the sound of a bullet or a shell again, and being able to wander about quite freely. Fortunately we are really allowed to rest, and lie and sleep most of the day. Our headquarters consist of a lovely figtree with great leaves, and our table is made by digging two trenches in the ground for our feet to go into.

I have only recently discovered that an officer named Jenkinson, who was attached to the regiment shortly

[1] It was Lemnos.

before the June 4th battle, was an exceedingly distinguished Oxford don, who in his particular subject stood absolutely alone in Europe. Why do they send such people out here to make an attack which anybody else could do?

I am asking Kimbory to finish this letter for me. I am afraid I had to go into hospital yesterday. I don't exactly know what is the matter, but my head is aching too badly for me to write. However I expect I shall be all right in a day or two.

Aug. 1, 1915.—I am now really convalescent,[1] but the doctor absolutely insists on a long convalescence. Diphtheria seems to affect the heart. He will hardly let me move about now. I have just crawled into a deck-chair, where I am sitting overlooking the harbour and the ships. The only effect of my illness which remains now is a temporary paralysis of the soft palate. It makes me talk like a man without a roof to his mouth. Yesterday was the hottest day we have had. I lay on a stretcher on the ground with all the flaps of the tent up. A very nice chaplain comes and sees me daily, and several of the 89th doctors who have been resting here, have been in to see me. My doctor will not hear of my moving or exerting myself in any way or taking any risks. I protest, and say this is war-time and everybody must take risks. He says I am taking my full measure of risks by having the sickness at all. The moment I am able, I must get back to work. I am so exceedingly fortunate in having got over it so easily. I have heard of no other cases.

To his sister Beatrice, in India—

Lemnos.

Aug. 5, 1915.—I think the main result of my three months' experience of war and of the appalling slaughter I have seen, is to feel what an insignificant thing death is. It ceased to have much horror for me. It all seemed so utterly senseless. Mad charges against machine-guns and whole regiments mown down. There have been three complete new sets of officers in each of my regiments. I have seen batches of officers come out and in a fortnight

[1] His illness had turned out to be diphtheria. The doctor did not at first discover what was wrong with him, and delay in giving him the right treatment made his complete recovery unnecessarily slow.

practically not one left. Two hundred came in one batch—university men, professional men of all kinds, practically all gone now. Of course many are wounded; but how many killed? These were mostly men absorbed in all kinds of work and full of all kinds of plans—not empty-headed wasters. When I bury them and write to their relations, how can I feel that the chance Turkish bullet that killed them can have any real effect on their work and their plans? No, I am no longer sorry for them. Their one simple act of sacrifice is going to help them to achieve all that was best in their plans and their work under far happier conditions. For their relations it is different. And yet one remembers all the time, "Blessed are they that mourn."

Aug. 7, 1915. At last I am declared free from infection, and really believe I shall be off in a ship for Alexandria in a day or two. The doctor absolutely insists upon my not doing any work for a month. I expect I shall find something of a mild nature to do wherever I go. I was out yesterday for the first time and much enjoyed doddering round with a stick.

I am already meditating schemes to employ me in Alexandria. There are many hospitals here and all kinds of odd units about, but as far as I know no form of rest room or decent canteen. The doctors say it is desperately needed. People get fearfully bored after a time. The patients, who are mostly mild cases, need cheering up with concerts, etc. So I will see if anything can be organised from Alexandria.

To his brother Cuthbert—

Aug. 9, 1915.—It is so difficult to know how to take this appalling loss of life. One feels at times the simplest thing to do is to go and get shot down with the rest. I envy the people who are killed. And then there comes a long lull and one forgets, and hope revives and life gets quite sweet again—till the next attack. How to keep perfectly calm and cheerful through it all is the great problem. I can see nothing ahead but simply limitless slaughter out here.

I am sorry this letter sounds a little dismal. It would have been quite cheerful yesterday. I suppose some time the world will be cheerful again. What helps me is that

I have never for a moment doubted that it is all so good for the world. It will help us to a truer sense of values—to care more about things that matter. So few people did; I think they will more after this.

Hospital Ship, "Sicilian."

Aug. 10, 1915.—I am off to Alexandria, where I expect to be for three weeks or so. I feel an absolute fraud, feeling so well in myself. But I still totter about like an old man.

You will know long before this letter reaches you that far the most terrific battle has just taken place. I feel a beast at having been away, but it would have been another terrible experience and I get no better at facing them. However I get more and more clear that we must all be as cheerful as possible, and I have had much time to think while being sick. There are some good things, and one of the best I know is a hospital ship like this. Here we are steaming quietly along over the usual perfectly calm sea, with the most delicious air—the best imaginable tonic—no flies or sand, perfect quiet and comfort. I feel such a villain, living in ease and comfort like this. It is so funny having nurses about—the first Englishwomen I have seen since April.

CHAPTER VIII

MUDROS

On reaching Cairo Oswin was sent to the Anglo-American Hospital.

Cairo.

Aug. 19, 1915.—I am feeling wonderfully recovered, and am doing a little sight-seeing while here and enjoying it. I really think the best thing is to put away the horrors of war as much as possible. One has plenty of them and will have plenty more. I really am as well as ever, and shall be glad to get to some work.

From a diary letter.

Alexandria.

Aug. 17–30, 1915.—I much enjoyed my days at Cairo and became a regular tourist. It seemed the best thing to do. I may never be there again.

At Alexandria I went to the Windsor Hotel. Seeing a chaplain sitting alone at a table, I sat down beside him, and from that moment during the week I was there we were hardly separate. He turned out to be Andrews, of the Dubbo Bush Brotherhood. I went and saw Hordern [1] in the evening and told him of my Lemnos scheme. He had already moved in that direction and jumped at my suggestion, and said I was to organise the whole scheme for him. I was in a fix. I felt I ought, and wanted, to go back to my brigade, but that I probably could do this job with my knowledge of conditions on the Peninsula, at Lemnos and Alexandria, and, as Hordern asked me so definitely, it seemed clear I should do it. I was exactly a week at Alexandria, during which things worked very quickly and unexpectedly. The scheme to start recreation rooms at Lemnos was all very well, but where were the funds to come from? Hordern gave introductory

[1] The Senior Chaplain.

letters, and I rushed round to see people. Everything pointed to my going to Lemnos first, seeing heads of departments there, finding out exact needs, what the Y.M.C.A. were doing, and getting proper authorisation. I bought two gramophones for a start. Hordern meanwhile had set me on to one of the hospitals, three miles out. I found there was much to be done when I had a chance of running up there. On one visit we took up one of the gramophones—and did not the patients love it! Another evening we went to one of the camps to speak about our Gallipoli experiences. The huge tent was packed long before we got there. I have had a recurrence of my trouble with my soft palate, and it made me very uncomfortable, as I used to pride myself on my clear voice. Very often with strangers I had to get Andrews to speak for me.

After my preliminary investigations He had agreed I had better go to Lemnos as soon as possible. Hordern received a telegram from the General at Lemnos, saying there was urgent need for recreation rooms for nine hospitals and a reinforcement camp of 3000. So I rushed back to the Red Cross with the telegram and was taken to see Sir Courtauld Thomson. An alliance was formed which rejoiced my heart, between the Church and the Red Cross. The Red Cross was to supply all the means and the Church would organise it. At our final interview Sir Courtauld said "This has given me more pleasure than anything we have managed to do." What pleased me was that at last there was a chance of the Church doing something, and doing it on such delightful terms. From that moment all ways were made smooth. I flourished the General's telegram in one hand and the Red Cross cheque-book in another. "I cannot possibly let you have any tents," said one official. "I don't want any tents," I answered, "they are not for myself; the General at Lemnos has telegraphed for them. Shall I go and tell him you cannot let me have any?" Then he quite changed, and I eventually got the tents. We had to work tremendously hard all Friday and Saturday. Andrews was a brick and helped me tremendously. On Saturday I discovered that a hospital ship was sailing at dawn on Sunday, and I decided to go by it and collect what I could. So the Red Cross offices were turned upside down. I was tearing about in motors all day long,

seeing about tents, making plans with Sir Courtauld for wooden huts to be built, buying pianos, etc. Andrews stayed behind to await my frantic telegrams and come on with the next supply. So now I am writing from the hospital ship (Aug. 30). I am taking it very quietly, hoping to rest my throat. Does it seem cold-blooded and callous, but I refuse to dwell on the horrors of war! I have been flying round at Alexandria and Cairo, sight-seeing, eating ice-creams, and generally playing the fool. At any rate Andrews did nothing but go off into hysterics in each shop we went into, at the way I behaved and tried to make myself understood. I hope if the recreation rooms get properly started, they can be places where the men can go and forget the war.

Mudros.

Sept. 5, 1915.—I have just come back from a vist to a large base camp near here. They have nothing to do and no form of recreation, and the C.O. is very anxious that we should do something. It seems to me things should be done on a large scale. The winter is coming on. Hordern has been asked to do it by the General, and has set me on to the job. The Red Cross, who are backing the hospital recreation rooms, cannot touch reinforcement camps. There may be anything up to 10,000 men to provide for during the winter. The only thing I can think of is to write at once to Hordern and suggest his cabling to the Bishop of London for £1000 at least, to be cabled out at once. We want this to be the definite work of the Army Chaplains. Besides the money, we must have a really large supply of literature, games of all kinds, violins, concertinas, anything in the musical line. Pianos are rather bulky, but are badly needed. We cannot have too many of these things. Of course every one will say Y.M.C.A. But the chaplains have been asked to do this, and I cannot help feeling it is part of our job. We shall have to build huts, provide light, heat and furniture. We want to supply light refreshments, tea, cocoa, biscuits, etc., which we would pay for in time; also, of course, cigarettes, writing-paper, etc.

Sept. 17, 1915.—On Sept. 1 we came into the inner harbour and anchored close to the *Aragon*. I went on board and reported. There was a little consultation of generals and other staff officers, who all seemed delighted

at the move being made. I was to have every facility. Transport was found from somewhere. I returned to the *Sicilian*, and a tug came alongside and all my things were put on board, and finally I was lowered on a crane myself, and off we went to the pier on West Mudros. There was no one there to unload the goods, so we went off to the Egyptian Labour Camp. It was their dinner hour, but about twenty were got together and marched off, and to the accompaniment of a lot of chatting, shouting and cursing the things were unloaded. The A.D.M.S. said recreation tents were just what they wanted. He took me off to the hospitals, six of which lie in a line along a barren spit of wind-swept, stony land. I soon saw that each hospital must have its own tent. I found the C.O. and chaplain at each hospital and introduced myself and explained the scheme, and had a warm welcome everywhere. In a few days the hospitals had all made a start; —that is, they had recreation tents well lit with lamps. The piano I gave to the Convalescent Camp. I have been incessantly on the rush, seeing all kinds of officials and trying to get a working scheme. I soon began to see that what I had brought was a mere drop in the ocean. Enormous supplies were needed. Further, West Mudros was rapidly developing into one vast camp. There are to be ten hospitals in huts. Besides these holding a total of about 7000 men, there was a reinforcement camp, now about 5000 men, soon to be considerably enlarged. Then a rest camp was to be at once formed for the Australians; I believe there is to be still another rest camp. There may be a total of 25,000 men. West Mudros is a confusing name. Mudros is really a little town on the east side of the large harbour. We had our hospitals first on the east side, but everything is gradually being moved across, and I saw I must concentrate on the west. I was kept on the rush all day long, discussing plans, working out schemes of all kinds. I got much sympathy, but little practical help, and I soon saw I must take the matter into my own hands, even at the risk of seeming bumptious and bossing. The chaplains have been splendid and most keen. One of them kept saying to me, " You came just in the nick of time, I don't know what we should have done without you. You cannot think the difference the tent has made." Of course, it is just a job I love, and I don't mind how large the work becomes. The hospitals are all to move into

huts, which are slowly being started. A recreation hut is, I hope, to be put up by the Red Cross in each. Then there was the enormous problem of the Rest Camps. I discovered a large Y.M.C.A. marquee lying by a pier. No Y.M.C.A. man had arrived. So I got the C.C.'s leave to borrow it, and had it carted over to the Australian rest camp and put up there. They have been so short of tents that they have had to use it for sleeping in. It was pitiable to see them coming in from the trenches utterly worn out, with no spirit in them, toiling along the road, falling out by the way. Then there was no furniture. Not a plank to be had. I heard there were chairs to be got at Castra, the capital of the island. So I decided to go and see. I got the R. C. and Methodist chaplains to go with me. We started at 9.30 one morning on ponies hired from a neighbouring village, and had to go over the mountain, a very picturesque ride. We got there in a little over two hours, and I succeeded in buying about 160 chairs and some lumber to make tables, to be taken round to Mudros by sea.

Monday, Sept. 13, was, I think, our first rain. It came down in torrents. At the details' camp there were 18,000 men sleeping in the open, or rather walking about so as not to be washed away.

Well, I got a recreation tent going in each of six hospitals at West Mudros. I had telegraphed for more supplies to Alexandria and at last they arrived. I had a great time unpacking eleven cases in my tent and dividing the contents. Who should I find to be the Colonel there but the Brigade-Major whom months before I had spoken to as he lay on a stretcher on W. beach? I had done everything possible with the supplies I had, and had thoroughly mastered the situation on the island. I had a long talk with two Colonels, sent out specially from England to investigate and report on the health of the troops, about what was best to be done. It is very hard to stand silent and see such needless waste of life and endless muddle, and this awful winter with the rains coming on, and so little preparation. Next morning I went out on a motor boat to the *Aragon* and saw General Altham and reported what had been done, and asked for a letter to take to Alexandria. He sat down and wrote three whole sheets of an open letter I could take round. When I had got my business done, I was given a motor-

boat to get to a hospital ship, the *Nevasa*, just off to Alexandria.

I have moments of terror that I am trying to do too much and butting in too much; but I have had nothing but encouragement from every one, and every possible support. In fact, I am given an entirely free hand and seem to have unlimited powers. So I must try to be very careful and discreet and keep calm.

S.S. "Kingstonian."

Sept. 28, 1915.—I have had a very busy week at Alexandria; I found Andrews at the Institute and arranged to get him to Lemnos to help. Hordern is appointing me definitely to this job. Meanwhile I was collecting large stores of all kinds and buying all sorts of things. I arranged for people to buy for me in the future and had endless interviews. Every one seemed very keen. I shall probably get all kinds of gifts for distribution. I met all kinds of people, many officers and men I knew. I flew about in motors that were lent me. In fact, it was a pretty strenuous week altogether.

Oct. 2, 1915.—We took four days getting to Lemnos. We made a very tortuous course through the islands to escape submarines. At about 4 p.m. we ran into a bank of fog only about ten miles off the entrance to the harbour. Our last escort had been a kind of passenger boat armed with two guns. Just before we got into the fog she signalled "All Clear." We never saw her again. We lay in the fog all night. It became very dense and we could see nothing. We were plunged into darkness at 8 p.m. and told to make no noise. However, the foghorn kept going at intervals and we made a tremendous noise letting off steam. All the ships' bells kept ringing all through the night. It was decidedly uncomfortable to say the least. We all felt a little jumpy. I suppose the submarines found it difficult to find us. We certainly made it clear enough where we were. We all slept with our clothes on. Next morning the fog began to lift about noon, it kept rolling by, lifting at intervals, and dropping again. At last we sighted the lighthouse and ran in just before sunset. We moored inside the harbour just as it was getting dusk. The relief was so great that we celebrated the occasion by drinking champagne at supper, and I provided cigars and we drank each other's healths, and

said nice things about each other. The New Zealanders had a band on board which played all the evening. It was an exceedingly good band, with a splendid bandmaster, and we thoroughly enjoyed it. They played selections from Gilbert and Sullivan, and it really was most delightful. Why have they not had military bands all the time?

2nd Australian Stationary Hospital.

Oct. 11, 1915.—I have just succeeded in establishing a recreation depôt here. I cannot quite understand why people at home don't do a little more for this expedition. Every one who comes from France says that things are overdone there. Here there is nothing. It seems almost useless doing the little I am trying to do. There are such thousands of men. They are not being properly fed. Nothing but bully and biscuits for most of them. I am preparing to open a little coffee bar, but all I have will go in no time. If only I could get the £1000 [1] I have asked for I could do something. Curiously enough I have met various of my old Smyrna boys out, who are contracting and will help me; this is a great thing. There is a base detail camp of 10,000 men that I dare not even touch at present. It is a great thing having my Depôt to form a centre and distributing point. Is not there any one with a private yacht who would fill it with provisions and brave the submarines and come out here? Men would pay almost anything for little extras. I could do with endless gramophones.

My diphtheria has left me in a curious condition. First my soft pallet was paralysed and I could not speak distinctly; now that is all right and my legs are semi-paralysed, and I hobble about like a gouty old man, and feel very foolish.

Oct. 19, 1915.—I was bitterly disappointed to find nothing for me on the *Aquitania*. I am going in for a very big thing now, practically providing refreshments for the whole army here. I did hope to have heard something from home by now. The Bishop of London writes that prompt action is being taken. But what? We see nothing come and hear of nothing. What is the trouble?

[1] Though he never got this, other smaller sums were sent him, and somehow he went on. Captain Band said of him, "He began trading with a capital of 1*s.* 7*d.* and ended with a profit of £1600."

Do people realise there are to be 40,000 men on this barren island alone and absolutely nothing for them? Do they think that, because we are so far away, we need nothing? that this large number of men can get on without anything to read, any music to listen to, paper to write on, refreshments to supplement the barest necessaries of life, and still keep cheerful and fit? I believe people must have thought I was exaggerating. I wish they would come out here. I was counting on the *Aquitania* and am much dashed. No pianos, no literature! Well, I suppose it will come some day.

Oct. 27, 1915.—I work from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day, and only have a little rest on Sunday. It is impossible even to write. We sold £70 worth of goods to-day alone, so you can imagine the rush we have. I bought £40 worth of apples off a Greek yesterday, and they are nearly all gone already. I am trying to get things through to the beaches as well. The diphtheria has now got into my hands and makes them very numb. It is a mysterious complaint. Otherwise I am well, but I don't know what would happen if I were to fall sick. We are building a large stone building, which means a lot of extra work. We are having howling gales now, which makes work rather a difficulty. There is a constant flow of chaplains and officers at the Depôt, asking for all kinds of things, and as a rule we are able to supply them. We give away all kinds of things, games, stationery, books, cigarettes, etc., as well as run the coffee bar. The work is tremendous and quite ceaseless, and we are only touching a fringe of it at present. I look after a lot of small units on Sunday and hold various services.

2nd Australian Stationary Hospital.

Oct. 31, 1915.—Three marquees did arrive with a hundred chairs on the *Aquitania*. They were addressed to me, but not a word with them saying where from or anything about them. I was in one last night and found "Church Army" written large upon it. Why don't they write and tell me when things are coming? However, I was delighted to get the tents. This one had only just been erected, and was packed with men—convalescents—mostly sitting on the floor, because chairs are so scarce. So it is of great value.

Meanwhile my Depôt is becoming a kind of centre for

the Island. I had three Generals in there yesterday —rather too many. The I.G.C. marched in and questioned my prices, and said my accounts must be audited by a committee of officers. At present I have the entire running of the place on my own hands. Andrews is in hospital. However, I am hoping to get a sergeant and the place will run itself. The building is getting on well and looks like old Roman remains.

Surely at a time like this the seniority business must be put aside. Why have so many dug-outs when there are so many first-class younger men? And why not use some of these Colonials? It seems to me we might have made so much better use of them. I have unbounded admiration for them. What makes Englishmen so stupid? As I sit at my coffee bar and chat with some of the men in the endless line that passes, I always find the Colonial so far quicker and more intelligent—much more of a man. I cannot say I am impressed with the intelligence of Englishmen. Brains are the want out here from top to bottom, ordinary average brains and common sense; and the Colonials have them, but they are not used. The only intelligent Englishmen I find are the Cockneys. That is why I love the Royal Fusiliers. My servant is one and is a perfect jewel. He thinks.

2nd Australian Stationary Hospital.

Nov. 6, 1915.—Kinloch has arrived as Senior Chaplain. We had a little informal meeting of chaplains yesterday to try and regularise the whole scheme. The Depôt now is to be called the Army Chaplain's Recreation Depôt. I am to be secretary. Everything is to pass through the Depôt. I have been given two sergeants and a staff of ten men. One sergeant is an accountant and has taken charge of all books which are to be audited; everything is to be very business-like.

The Depôt is intended to serve for all organisations. Centralisation is necessary here.

I hope England is not going to pieces. I do so feel that if we all rouse ourselves, and do our utmost, all will be well; and that we will come out all the stronger and better for the trials we are passing through. But we must learn to manage our affairs more wisely and carefully, and to pull together. I keep wondering what makes us so stupid. The Colonials are so much more intelligent.

My servant, a very remarkable fellow, is very wise on the subject. He says the policy of the Army has always been to crush individuality. A man is gradually drilled into being a kind of machine and going through everything like an automaton. If we are to pull through, we must use our brains, and think and plan and use initiative. We must not be afraid of responsibility. The whole result of army discipline seems that every one is terrified of personal responsibility. You are *always* referred to some one else than the person you are approaching. Every one, including the authorities, is groaning about this, and I believe that here lies the root of all our trouble. Give men more and more responsibility and make them feel that they will be judged by the extent to which they *use* it, not by the extent to which they shirk it and refer everything to some one else. They must be *given* the responsibility though. We are not really a nation of fools, but we are treated and trained as though we were. I have seen it so clearly: young officers full of keenness, enthusiasm and ideas—old staff officers terrified to do anything—the result of *discipline;* and exactly the same with the men.

We shall not win till the young men who have not been crushed are given an opportunity to use their natural genius. We have it, and it is that, and not the discipline which kills it, which will win. All, or almost all, great triumphs have been achieved by young men. Perhaps the ideal would be a fusion of the experience of age and the impulse of genius, only the latter must be guided, not shackled.

Well, I have unburdened myself. There is so much to be done here, such wonderful opportunities. Kinloch is a great help. He is fifty, and much more anxious to help than check, and consequently I am always anxious to consult him. My stone building is getting on well. I want to put up more.

2nd Australian Stationary Hospital.

Nov. 14, 1915.—I seem to have been causing a good deal of commotion one way and another by the many appeals I have been sending out, but now at last things are beginning to pour in—and are not they needed? The Depôt is increasing daily. You should see the enormous line of men waiting, it is really pathetic. I have now opened another sub-depôt, and we have a tremendous time trying

to supply it. I am becoming a kind of universal provider to the M.E.F., and buy up everything I can lay my hands upon. I have no capital and it is all a venture of faith. But it has practically been forced upon me by sheer necessity. Fortunately I have a large number of keen supporters. Did I tell you about Captain Band, of the *Cairngowan*, a collier, who has been supplying me with goods and whom I have appointed my agent? He is a perfectly delightful person, one of the most interesting men I have met, with a charming manner and untiring energy. He goes round the harbour buying everything he can lay his hands on, and always scheming things. The Navy have been so splendid. There is a little naval camp here, and they have all helped me so much, lending me their motor-boat. Finally, the Admiral sent for me and Kinloch to lunch with him, and made plans by which we can get a weekly shipment from Malta, all handled by the Navy. On the *Europa*, the flagship, every one seemed so alive and eager to take responsibility and get things done. "How can we help?" seemed the attitude, not "How can we refer you to some one else?" Everything is sold almost as quickly as we get it. We have received one or two cases of Cadbury's chocolate. We sell them in about an hour. We serve the men in the front, and in the back there is a continual stream of officers and nurses. They give us no peace, and it is almost impossible to get meals. I have to fly about seeing after every imaginable kind of thing, getting up shipments, arranging transports, seeing the contractor, arranging for extensions. We are going to have a splendid building at the Depôt, eighteen-inch stone walls, cement floor, able to resist all weather. I am arranging for a kitchen, so as to try and cook meals. Besides all this, we have an enormous number of gifts of all kinds to distribute. I shall have a proper office in the building, and will lead a more ordered life.

2nd Australian Stationary Hospital.

Nov. 21, 1915.—Much has happened since last week. Hordern has been here, and has been interviewing the authorities, and a very satisfactory conclusion has been arrived at, whereby the Government will take over the whole affair: a committee of three chaplains and three officers, with myself as secretary, being appointed to run

the whole show. I shall not feel it is such a one-horse show any longer. I shall no longer have anything to do with the hospitals, the Red Cross will look after them; the Y.M.C.A. and the Church Army will be allotted definite areas, so as to cover the whole ground. The Government will supply the plant, but nothing more, no money. So I shall need more and more of the things I keep asking for, as this place only grows bigger. It is so important that the men should not grow stale and weary of life this winter, and the prospects of weather are not encouraging.

Our hall is to be opened to-morrow; it is really a fine building, and I feel very proud of it. We are going to have a rather formal opening. I have been having large consignments of stores coming in lately and am terrified at the huge financial responsibility involved. We must be taking about £1000 a week altogether at the two places. On Monday I open a third place. Until now I have had the whole responsibility. I have had to fight a good deal, and now feel very satisfied with the result.

Garrison Recreation Depôt.

Nov. 29, 1915.—You say my letter was full of complaints and reproaches. I think if you were to spend a single night on the island you would understand. I have never known such winds, with nothing to break their fury. Yesterday was the worst day of all. It was a bitterly cold wind, with a little rain and snow at intervals, and this morning there was ice about. The wind was so strong it was difficult to stand up against it. And we all live in tents, with no chance of getting warm. The wind stops all work. The Egyptian labourers simply shrivel up. I saw one lying dead by the roadside this morning. I think, despite the discomfort, it is probably healthier for the white people. At any rate the flies also shrivel up. The only warm place on the island almost is this Depôt. I have a kind of brazier in the hall in which I burn logs, the smoke going out through a skylight above. It is crowded all day long, and we do ceaseless business. We were getting in supplies at four piers all Saturday, and then the rain came on and it turned so pitch dark and the transport could not work, that eighty cases had to be left out all night, and, of course, a good deal was stolen. I have a staff of twenty-four men now, and they always have to be looked after. We have had £2400 pass through

our books in takings in eighteen days. We could have taken double the amount had we had the supplies. It is a big responsibility. Remember it is all on "tick," and I have had no capital and it all lies on my shoulders.

Of course, I cannot understand why we are having to face a winter under these conditions. It does not matter for healthy people, but why so many hospitals still in tents? And so much might have been done and might still be done to prepare for winter. If it had not been for old Captain Band and the help given by the Navy, I could have done nothing. But now this is an established affair and full of official recognition. The I.G.C. had tea in the Office the other day and was so pleased with the rock-cakes [1] that he took some back for the Commander-in-Chief.

Garrison Recreation Depôt.

Dec. 5, 1915.—I wonder if people at home at all realise what we went through last week-end, not here so much as on the Peninsula. There was the most terrific storm, which seems to have filled the trenches with water and swept away piers, and caused an enormous number of frostbites. It is exactly what I have been dreading all along. Though we talked of it all summer, no proper preparation seems to have been made for winter.

To-day has been a calm, mild day, quite possible to hold open-air services. I announced one for 7 p.m. to-night, and came down to find a huge crowd collected singing hymns. I had two good lights. One of my staff is a Church Army boy, and he was conducting things. We had a delightful service; I always feel I have so much to preach about. This time we are passing through is such an opportunity for altering our standards, and for teaching men what life really means, and to what purpose we must put it, and where we have made our mistakes, for which I feel more and more the war is our punishment. Perhaps I am in danger of over-emphasising the need for strong character. It is general feebleness, weakness, indecision, thoughtlessness that are our enemies—flabbiness, as Captain Band calls it. Most vice proceeds from flabbiness. We need more backbone, more decision, more definition; one meets an Englishman on the road

[1] One man was kept busy making rock-cakes all day. They were so popular that there had to be a rule that no soldier might buy more than one a day.

and asks him a question; the usual answer, if he hears or takes in the question, is that he does not know. You meet an Australian, and you invariably get an intelligent answer and feel inclined to stop for a chat. What is the matter with our life at home that we do not seem able to develop people's minds? I am contrasting Kitchener's Army with the Australians, both containing a similar mixed type, but how different! English officers come here to buy things and say they cannot get anything elsewhere. I ask them why they do not go out to the ships. They say they cannot get boats, etc. When I go out I always find the ships swarming with Australians, never Englishmen. They call it lack of discipline, I call it initiative and enterprise. We were great in the days when we possessed these qualities as a nation. We seem to have lost them, and now must look to our Colonies for the old spirit. They have many faults, but they have character. They are men, every one of them. They annoy one intensely at times. But bumptiousness and self-assertion are not so bad as flabbiness. The Australian is set to do a fatigue job. He may refuse to do it if he is badgered. He may choose his own time and way. But if he decides to do it, he does it. The Englishman will only do it if he is badgered. This is a generalisation, of course, with many exceptions. Also it is easy to see how the difference arises. The conditions of a new country are so different. But is not the war giving us an opportunity to alter our conditions at home? We must be more virile.

With luck this may reach you at Christmas. I am writing to no one else except you, as I am too busy, but I never forget any one at home. The plan of mentioning every single member of the family every day in prayer —nephews and nieces and "in-laws" as well—is the great bond.

Hospital Ship "Somali," nr. Malta.

Dec. 29, 1915.—I have been placed in an awkward position. I took sick with jaundice on Dec. 13 and tried to conceal myself, but was carried off to hospital. I thought I would only be there a day or two, not knowing what was the matter, but found I was being watched by the doctors, and that friends who came to see me were being sent away, and, in fact, I was supposed to be having a breakdown through overwork! This, as a matter of

fact, was nonsense. However, the jaundice settled well on me. One day the Colonel came and told me I was to be sent home that week on the *Aquitania*. I protested violently and said I would soon be perfectly well, and wanted to get back to work. However, they insisted. Another chaplain, West, had taken charge of the Depôt, everything was in good order and I was to go home for a rest. My protests were unavailing, so I settled down to the inevitable and soon got reconciled to the idea. I settled up everything with regard to the Depôt with West and Kinloch, and temporarily burnt my boats behind me. On Christmas Eve we were to be ready for the *Aquitania* at 2 p.m. I got up and dressed for the first time and hung about till 8 p.m., when we were told it was all off. All Christmas Day we were kept waiting about and again nothing happened. On Sunday morning we were again told to be ready. The *Aquitania* steamed out of harbour, but we were taken off later to the *Somali*. When we got on board we found she was going only to Malta. Now I have not the least idea what will happen. No instructions were sent on board this boat with us. We may be hung up at Malta. I did not at all want to go at first, but now that I have made everything over and am on my way back, you can well imagine how my own personal feelings make me long to return and see you all again.

Hamrun Hospital, Malta.

Jan. 11, 1916.—I have been here a fortnight, and while it has been a complete rest, I have not particularly enjoyed it. Now the entire Peninsula is evacuated, and presumably Mudros will be evacuated next. I have no unit to return to: my place has long ago been filled up in the 29th Division.

What I would love to do next is to go out to one of the remoter campaigns, the Persian Gulf or German E. Africa, with recreation things of all kinds. I cannot bear this present hanging round.

Finally Oswin reached London on January 26. He had to return to Mudros so as to get on to the *Aquitania* in order to get home. He was ordered by the doctor to have at least a month's rest, which he employed in preparing his Gallipoli diaries for publication. He wished to record the glorious doings of the 29th Division, thinking that they were sometimes overlooked in the attention paid to the Australians and New Zealanders. In March he was appointed chaplain to the Remount Depôt at Romsey.

Two of the chaplains who saw Oswin's work in Mudros write of it as follows:

"It was entirely through his initiative that our men had such comforts as they had at Mudros. No difficulty ever mastered him, his pluck held him through all. Many a time did I implore him to spare himself and go into hospital, but he stuck it, even when I have known him fall in walking through the weakness of his legs. The thousands of men who came to his coffee bar will remember him with love and admiration as I do." (C. H. Winter, C.F.)

"He transformed conditions from chaos to cheerful orderliness in regard to the social welfare of the troops, and with that brought an atmosphere which helped them to see higher. One of our naval division officers said to me: 'Did you know Creighton, padre? He is the most Christ-like man I've ever met.' Yes, and I know others also who valued and were helped by him, though I think he little realised how abiding was his influence, and how helpful his presence." (C. W. A. Moore, C.F.)

The Rev. H. M. Hordern, the Principal Chaplain, wrote that he had been able to provide Church huts for all denominations up and down Egypt out of the funds which were the result of his work at Mudros.

Lieutenant H. E. Rowley, who worked devotedly with him during the whole undertaking, writes: "He was the one of all my acquaintances who most clearly followed the Master."

Captain Band, to whom Oswin always said the success of his work at Mudros was mostly due, said of him: "He was the finest Christian gentleman I have ever met. He gained my love and esteem by his example, his unselfishness and willingness to put up with any hardships always for others." He speaks also of his unfailing cheerfulness and of how many loved him.

CHAPTER IX

ROMSEY

Remount Depôt, Romsey.

March 27, 1916.—I have managed to keep quite busy lately. After tea I spend about three hours in the huts with the men. There are a number of civilian boys here employed looking after sick horses. I am trying to start a little library for them and the band boys.

I have just had several long Canadian letters. The Clive debt is actually nearly paid off. It is very nice feeling that something of a more or less permanent nature has resulted from my three years there.

I have written to Hordern to ask if he cannot get me out to the M.E.F., and perhaps send me to Mesopotamia. Things seem so bad there. I could quite enjoy myself here, but it does not seem right.

Romsey.

April 2, 1916.—I have been rather letting myself go this morning, and telling the men that Englishmen have the best hearts in the world, and are the most reliable and trustworthy of men, but that their brains and wills are flabby. I said I heard nothing but complaints against the Government, but that they had no right to complain as they had never used their brains to exercise their citizenship intelligently, but elected people to do the thinking for them, and then blamed them for doing it wrong. I said their one idea of life was to do their work, and then *pass* the rest of their time in picture shows and enjoyments, leaving their minds utterly dormant, and that this was their one idea of liberty. There was no sense of responsibility; we were flabby sheep without independence or initiative. It is utterly impossible to build up religion without the mind; " to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding and with all the strength," etc. I said I had held three Celebrations on as many Sundays,

and not one out of the 2000 had come, simply because they did not think or ask themselves what such things mean, and try to find out, but just drift along, muddle through. They seemed quite amused.

Romsey.

April 13, 1916.—I have really had enough to do this week for a change. I have tried to visit every squadron and distribute papers. I have no expectations, as I am not at all sure that anything abnormal does permanent good. But after all it is Holy Week, and we are at war, and there seems special cause.

April 16, 1916.—I did not preach on Sunday morning, but merely explained about the services this week. I put a copy of the list of services in each officer's letter-box, and spoke to several about them, but none came. A few men —about twenty-five—came. I think we had a nice little service. I think the more one tries, the more one feels how little the Church means to the vast majority of churchmen. I don't feel anything can be gained by blaming them and talking of indifference; we must just patiently go on and try to make the Church more alive and real.

Romsey.

May 4, 1916.—On Tuesday night I had a little meeting of about ten soldiers and four civilians to discuss "What can the Laity do to rescue the Church?" They really spoke very well. Then I went to the Vicarage and discussed the Church and life till nearly midnight. I want to understand the really nice, humble, sincere Catholic point of view. But as I walked back I felt the terrible danger one gets into of anticipating the Judgment Day and separating sheep from goats. I think I feel more and more the vital necessity of loving as best one can every single person one meets, and absolutely refusing to label them as indifferent, slack, etc., etc. Labelling them can do no good and may do much harm, as it is so easy to put a wrong label on. X. has such a rooted idea that we can never expect Christianity to be popular, that there will always be only the few who will really accept it, and that the only real good one can do is by intensifying the good in the few. But I think it is death if one's concentration on the few should in any way cut one off from the mass. If a man petitions against you, or shuts the door in your face

you have no right to label him and leave him. It is simply a devil to be driven out, a miracle calling out to be worked with a little patience and humour. I think the danger is that people who care very much for religion let themselves get separated from those who appear not to, and then justify themselves by saying that religion never will, never can be popular, that the Cross was a failure. (Really such a dangerous doctrine if pressed—only an apparent failure—and such a universal act done in the presence of the world.) Religion is not to be found in the Church or in the faithful, but in the effort to identify oneself with humanity as a whole.

Last night I took a few men over the Abbey Church, and then gave a lecture, with the Major in the chair, on the Dardanelles. I am always surprised how interested people are in this lecture. To-night I lecture again at the Baptist Church.

Romsey.

May 7, 1918.—I am making friends with the corporals in rather a questionable way. The last two nights I have visited their special rooms in the wet canteen. I have had an uproarious welcome each time, my health drunk, three cheers, and was made a member of a cork club, the sole point of which is that you are given a cork which you must produce at any moment when asked by any other member, or forfeit a penny. They are pretty beery fellows—not drunk, of course, but fairly full. I feel my going may be interpreted as my countenancing this wretched beer-swilling. They offer me beer, but I refuse, saying I dislike it. However, I am only carrying out my own ideas that a parson must go everywhere, and mix with everybody, and try and understand their point of view.

Romsey.

June 30, 1916.—I spoke to, I think, the most thoughtful, intelligent and keen man here, who has lived all his life in the wilds of the Argentine, but is the most consistent religious man here, and told him I thought the National Mission was really beginning to stir things up. He is really keen to see a revival and horrified to find things as they are in England. I told him, for one thing, there probably would be a re-arrangement of services. At once he impatiently tossed the idea aside, as an absolutely side issue, a detail which would be settled afterwards. He in

his heart was trying to solve the far more fundamental problem of why men have such feeble wills, and are so influenced by others and public opinion. He is very popular and respected in his squadron. I felt as he spoke that he had hit the right nail on the head. We have to get far deeper down.

I feel as if I was stuck here till the end of time. This continued life of ease and comfort and security with very little to do will make me become perfectly degenerate.

Romsey.

July 24, 1916.—I much enjoyed my time at Swanwick,[1] and only wish it could have been longer. I hear from the Chaplain-General that he does not propose to send me out to the Front just yet, but will get me an exchange soon. Then came Bishop Bury's letter,[2] but I gather the way is not open yet to sending any one to Germany.

I took Captain Band and the boys to the Coliseum, and we had a good laugh. Do write and tell me about the rest of Swanwick. I liked some of the men I met so much. But when I read the casualty lists and accounts of the violent fighting going on, I feel that we all ought to be in it, and really envy the men who are having the worst times. They have no problems. But I suppose problems will continue after death, and the efforts we make now for their solution will not be utterly in vain.

Romsey.

Aug. 4, 1916.—I have had word that I am to go to Witley Camp to join the Manchesters on Tuesday. I am hoping that it may prove to be a Division mobilising to go overseas, but it looks a little doubtful.

We are having a big Commemoration and Memorial Service in the Abbey on Sunday night, at which I am to preach.

Romsey.

Aug. 6, 1916.—I do hope they will find some one who will be able to come here and really get on with these officers. I cannot tell you how much I blame myself. I have never really mixed at any time of my life with men of this type, and I am afraid I simply don't understand them. I have

[1] At the Conference of the Student Christian Movement.

[2] Oswin had offered to go and be interned in one of the Camps in Germany if permission could be obtained.

never hunted nor been to a race-meeting. There are good fellows, I know, among them. I would give anything to know what they really think about things—to be able to get near them. But after nearly five months I simply feel I am leaving a lot of strangers behind me. I feel entirely outside them. They have been preparing for weeks for a gymkhana to-morrow, and have talked of little else. N.C.'s were outside the Church Hut this morning preparing for it. Two men came to the Holy Communion. This is the Sunday we are keeping as the anniversary of the war and the memorial of the fallen. The Church Parades were cancelled, as we are going to have this big voluntary service to-night. I cannot dismiss all these men and feel they have no religion. I know they have finer feelings. As far as I know only two are even coming to the service to-night. What is the National Mission going to say about a situation like this? I must say I simply feel bewildered. It cannot be all my fault. They don't even go to the Abbey. They do their work splendidly and untiringly. It is difficult to see how they could do it better. The general tone is high. But they simply have no apparent feeling for religion as I have learnt it. Have I learnt it wrong, or is the way I have learnt it one and theirs another?

Witley Camp.

Aug. 10, 1916.—I had such a warm welcome here. The officers are so friendly. No one knew I was coming, but they made me at home at once. They are all young fellows with very strong Manchester accents, analytical chemists and such like. Several of them were out at Gallipoli. One remembers me at the Depôt. We talk a great deal about Gallipoli.

Later.—I am with the 5th Lancashire Fusiliers now. It is a quaint sort of job, but I am getting into the way of looking at all these jobs from an explorer's point of view. Almost nothing of a religious nature seems to have been attempted among the men here, and there is the usual sense of the utter estrangement of the Church from them.

Witley Camp.

Sept. 5, 1916.—The main excitement for me lately has been that heaps more Canadians have come in, and among them two Alberta Battalions, one of them from Edmonton and one from Calgary. Who should turn out to be chaplain

of the Calgary one but my dear friend Shore! Many other officers and men I know; one battalion has four of my old scouts in it; it makes it very interesting. I am expecting to take 100 of them to London to-morrow, put them up at a Y.M.C.A., and show them the sights on Friday and Saturday.

Southport.

Oct. 19, 1916.—We came here yesterday, and are very comfortable in billets, a very pleasant change from tents and mud, so the men are happy. There will not be much to do as the men will spend all their spare time in the streets and picture shows.

Oct. 23, 1916.—My job is gradually dwindling away to nothing. I went to various churches yesterday. At one the Vicar preached—it seemed to order—on the Atonement, there was no life or interest in it whatever. I don't know, but the whole contrast seems so strange to me. The pious, narrow, self-satisfied, exclusive, moral world within—the weak, kindly, happy, loose-moralled, generous, spontaneous, tolerant world without. Which is better? Can the National Mission break down the barrier? Perhaps it will stimulate a few pioneers to go out and prepare a way of union. Theirs will have to be a long, difficult, and apparently unsuccessful job. But it is the one most needed.

The beautiful Abbey Church of Romsey was a constant delight to Oswin during his time at the Remount Camp, and he made great friends with the Vicar, who wrote of him: "My wife and I were so very fond of Oswin, and we saw much of him during the time he was chaplain to the Remount Camp. We grew to love his brightness, his sweet temper and delightfully unconventional ways, and he was always so charming to our children."

CHAPTER X

FRANCE

Towards the end of October Oswin received orders to go to France, and he left London on November 1.

In the Train.

Nov. 4, 1916.—The morning after arriving we reported to the D.C.G. (whose identity you can guess). They were most charming to us. The Bishop's one idea seemed to be to consult our wishes. He asked me if I would like to go up the line. I said certainly, and if possible to my old division. He said that was full. I asked if I could go to Neville Talbot's Army Corps, and further, if Andrews could go with me. Eventually this is what was arranged.

We have both been posted to the 3rd Division. I am to look after the Artillery, which will be a delightful job. I rather gather we go pretty well to the heart of the fighting.

Nov. 6, 1916.—I must make an effort to start my diary. It was about 4 p.m. by the time we eventually got to our destination. It turned out to be a muddy swamp with one or two huts and a few tents. A sergeant-major came down the train shouting out, " Any one for the 3rd Division? " and took our kit out and we reported to the R.T.O. There we discovered it would be nearer to our destination to go on to the next station and walk out from there, so we started off again and went about four miles in the train in two hours, and set off at once to walk to our H.Q. The moon was so brilliant we could easily see. It was extraordinarily interesting getting up into the zone of war for the first time out here. I had never been able to picture conditions before. I think I am most surprised by the number of villages with huge farm buildings, all just alike, swarming with troops of every possible kind, who are billeted there. The villages are linked together by wide

roads, very bumpy and rough, along which in both directions runs a stream of enormous motor lorries, old motor buses, wagons, motors, bicycles, horses and men walking. At every cross road is a traffic director—a soldier—in a little sentry-box, who waves a lantern. If you ask him the way he usually knows where the next village is, but never knows where any unit you may be looking for is. I used to complain of the ignorance in Gallipoli, here it is worse. In a village no one knows who is there or where, except the Town Major. How any of the men could give away information of value to the enemy beats me. They certainly can give none to a friend. Often they don't know what Division they belong to themselves. At last, after about four and a half miles, we came to our divisional H.Q.[1] in a most mighty and gorgeous château. We had a most cordial welcome from one of the staff, who said they had been telegraphing about for us. A car was ordered for us. First, we went back and got our kit, and then to Andrews's transport lines. When he was disposed of, I had to start back again in a different direction. I stumbled into a billet and was given an orderly, who took me about quarter of a mile out of the village to a mud swamp, in the middle of which were one or two bell tents, in one of which I found the Adjutant and doctor. They gave me a great welcome and said they had been expecting me for a day or two, but had given me up.

Tuesday, Nov. 7–19.—There is so much to describe that it is difficult to know where to begin. I am chaplain to the whole of the 3rd Division Artillery. This means a General and Head Quarters, and three Brigades; in each Brigade are three or four batteries, in each battery four to six guns. Each Brigade has its wagon lines about five miles behind where most of the men are, whose job it is to bring up ammunition to the guns. Then there is the Divisional Ammunition Column, to which I am attached.

Nov. 7.—Tuesday was a pouring wet day with a driving wind and bitterly cold. I rode out to visit the H.Q.'s of the Brigades. I found the 40th Brigade H.Q. in a little village which I will call A. The line here has not changed for two years, and the village is well within range but little bothered by the Huns (they are never called Germans). I left my horse at H.Q. and walked for three-quarters of an hour through terrible mud to the batteries. It was all

[1] These were at Bus on the Serre front.

absorbingly interesting, as my first introduction to the Western Front. The country here is absolutely open and undulating. It was a good day to go to the batteries, as the rain was so blinding that firing was almost impossible. It is wonderful how comfortable they make their dug-outs, regular little rooms with fires for both officers and men. It is perfectly amazing the quantities of guns of every conceivable kind we have everywhere here. It is a perfect maze of gun-pits. They were all exceedingly friendly, and asked me to meals. I had tea at H.Q., and it rained harder than ever when I started to ride back again. I felt so sorry for the miserable bedraggled men about everywhere. I go most mornings for a little quiet to the church in the village before starting out. Next morning I rode direct to a village, B., about half-a-mile nearer the firing line than A., where the two other Brigades have their H.Q.'s. It is shelled a good deal at times, and most of it is destroyed. There are no civilians left there. At the batteries we found a gunner had been killed by a whiz-bang at the entrance of the officers' mess, and I arranged to bury him next day. The rain had made several of the pits fall in. I usually talk to different people along the road. There is one continuous stream of traffic of all kinds, and there is always much to see. One can never be dull. We played bridge, and sat up talking till late at night. S. and the doctor are very human, and we are a very happy party.

Thursday I started off early, and went first to a chaplains' meeting and then to the batteries. There had been difficulty about arranging the funeral at the time proposed, so I lunched with the Major and went up with him afterwards to his O.P. (Observation Post); this was a little dug-out with a loophole, where he had a telescope. Through it I could see every strand of wire in front of the Hun trenches. He stopped his battery fire to let me get back. I got back to the cemetery at five. It was just turning dark and a gorgeous full moon was up. It was a most weird funeral overlooking the battle lines, with huge guns blazing all round us.

Saturday, Nov. 11.—I don't suppose any harm can be done by saying that we are on the eve of a tremendous battle, for which preparation has been going on for a long time, but which has been postponed owing to the weather. I was told that owing to the battle it was pretty impossible

to arrange anything for Sunday. But I secured the use of the village school for a Celebration, and managed afterwards a little parade service for some details which were being left behind. Afterwards I got on a lorry and came up here, which is close to the main village in these parts, only about three miles from the firing line, well within range of shells. It is not quite so muddy here, and of course I have not nearly so far to go to my batteries. I had a telegram saying there was a man at the batteries to be buried, so I went up there and buried him in a cemetery much too close to the line I thought, as it might be ploughed up by shells. I then went on to a battery and actually found it was not firing. So I went and saw the men, and eventually suggested a little service in one of the gun-pits. It was getting dark, the front of the pit was towards the enemy. The only light came from a brazier of burning wood, round which the men gathered. A sergeant told the other sections, and the men began to file in till the pit was crammed. We had a delightful little service, and the men sang so heartily.

Of course every one knew the battle was to begin on Monday morning.[1] Until then life had been pleasant, but how can life be pleasant when a battle is on? Everything for days had been a scene of bustle and preparation. We were awakened by the bombardment, but as there is an incessant bombardment it only sounded as though they were getting a little more angry than usual. The infantry went over early. All I can say is that we—that is, our Division—did not succeed. Of course, the casualties have been terrible, that is a foregone conclusion. I think that before a battle, every one's eyes are opened to what is likely to happen. The infantry know perfectly well. There is no excitement or enthusiasm, simply a kind of dogged attitude, which seems to say, "We don't like it and we don't expect to get out alive, but it can't be helped, and here goes." But I don't know much about the infantry. I find it quite enough to concentrate on the artillery. I feel the only hope is to stick to one's own job and let everything else go by. But on Monday the horror of war seemed to settle on me. It was one of those days when life seems almost intolerable. War seems to undermine everything mundane. The whole world looks ugly and distorted. There is no interest in all the amazing mechanism of war. You

[1] This was the attack on the Serre made on November 13.

cease to take interest in heavy guns, tanks, aeroplanes, etc. You see the crowds of wounded in the most piteous condition of bedraggled mud and blood. Fortunately they are cleared away wonderfully quickly. You hear horrible accounts of men held up by mud and wire. Then batches of prisoners are marched past, looking, I must say, quite happy and fairly clean. All the time the ceaseless roar of a thousand guns goes on; you get wonderfully used to them. Our Division had had an almost hopeless job; there are better accounts from other parts of the line. It was all rather futile and tedious and depressing. Our village, A., was shelled that evening, and men were killed in it, whom I subsequently buried. Old women and old men went on driving their cows in and out of it, as though nothing were happening.

On Wednesday I had an early funeral of three R.E.s; it was a bitter, cold morning, I could hardly write the particulars down. I then went on to the guns and had a good day visiting the officers and men of three batteries. As each battery has six guns, and each detachment lives in a separate dug-out with the officers, that means seven calls at one battery. They were mostly very warm in their dug-outs. It is difficult to have much conversation. Firing is going on all the time. I cannot think how the men sleep in them as the firing goes on all night. Sometimes they sleep in the gun-pits right under the guns. I find that I am still rather stupid; as I go round I am often speculating on the possibility of a shell coming as I walk from one pit to another, or as I sit in a rather insecure dug-out. I must try and get over this and cultivate the spirit of complete unconcern shown by the men.

On Friday I spent the whole day, after doing some writing, house-building. We built a mess out of empty shell boxes and lined it with tar-paper outside. The roof is a tarpaulin stretched over a wagon pole. It makes a nice little mess, but it is extraordinarily difficult to keep the draught out; the wind howls through every chink. It simply poured through Saturday, and the country is once more in an indescribable state. I had a little voluntary service and Celebration on Sunday in the only possible tent, the orderly room, and then walked over to the batteries and held four services in the different gun-pits. I always enjoy little services best, just those come who feel inclined. I don't feel I quite understand these men yet; they are

from all parts of England, and it is difficult to get any grasp of them. They are all thoroughly bored with the war. I am always asked two questions: (1) When do you think the war will be over? (2) Is there any truth in the rumour that the original expeditionary force will be sent home?

From a diary letter.

Diary, Nov. 22–29.—Our little mess is really wonderfully snug now. We have had it banked up with sods half the height outside, and have a little stove with empty tins for a chimney. One row of boxes has the lids off and so makes pigeon-holes, and we have plenty of places to keep things. We are a very cheery little party. The universal friendly feeling is a great thing in war-time.

I find my alarm has almost gone, and I feel perfectly at ease as I walk about the batteries, which is a comfort. It was a perfectly lovely day yesterday, and it seemed strange to be standing in an orchard basking in the sun and to see the trees all torn, the houses shattered and the ground all ploughed up.

On Friday I met Andrews, and went with him to see his regiment in the trenches. After I had seen my batteries fire so long over the trenches, I wanted to see what they were like. Eventually we got to his H.Q., where I saw my first deep dug-out. It was a strange place. First we went down one flight of steps into the bowels of the earth, and got into a pitch-dark little room. We groped our way across, and then down another flight of steps, where we found several little rooms, one of them, the mess. I returned rather pleased to find the trenches were not nearly as bad as I had imagined.

On Saturday there were deluges of rain all day, and the mud was perfectly appalling. I decided to make an effort to get a service on Sunday, and trudged round twelve battery wagon lines; they are very scattered and all in seas of mud. It deluged that night and blew hard. Sunday was so bad I did not see how any one could go to church, but about sixty men came. I went up to the batteries later, and had two delightful little services in gun-pits.

Tuesday evening I went down to the Y.M.C.A. I talked a good deal to some of the infantry who have been in the recent attack. It was all rather harrowing. They asked me anxiously whether it was true a peace conference

was sitting. When I said no, they said in a weary sort of way, "No, we will have to go on with it."

Dec. 3–16, 1916.—On Monday I went to the town (Amiens) where the Chaplains' Conference was to be held, twenty miles away. There must have been about sixty chaplains altogether. Neville Talbot was boss. At our first meeting he gave a simply admirable address about the message of the National Mission as applied to our conditions. He became quite inspired trying to explain what he meant by the Kingdom of God. In the evening the Professor[1] arrived, and he addressed us next morning. He was in his very best form. As Neville said, he was a perfect angel. He quite delighted every one, and cheered us all up enormously. The D.C.G. wound up and told us a lot of what had been said to him by different Generals about their appreciation and the importance of the chaplain's work—really very striking. It is certainly encouraging to find that most of our chief men are really religious. We all felt stirred up generally to try and carry on the work of the Mission out here.

On Friday I visited the batteries in their new positions. I say nothing about the mud, but behind all my descriptions there must be a continual unbroken background of seas of mud—roads full of appalling holes all dropping to pieces. I returned to find that everything had been moved into our winter quarters.

On Sunday my first service was at ten in the school. I insist on everything being voluntary. The C.O. of the cyclists said it was funny, but when a parade was arranged, the men enjoyed it and wrote home saying they had been to a service at last; when it was voluntary they wrote home and said there were no services, and did not attend. Surely this is all wrong. Has everything, religion, morals, as well as military duties, to be arranged for the men? Are they to do nothing on their own initiative except gratify their own appetites? There was a good congregation, and the majority stayed to Communion. In the afternoon and evening I had services in the different barns where the men are billeted. At seven the service was in a very chilly barn, where two officers and a number of men from their section collected. I let myself go, and soon left the service and switched off into a National Mission little push and talked till nearly eight, but they did not seem to mind.

[1] Canon B. K. Cunningham.

In fact, it was wonderful how they listened. How terribly important preaching is, even though one feels that worship is the only thing worth while.

On Tuesday I went to the new battery, which has only just come out. It was an appalling day, driving sleet. I found them in the most miserable condition. They had only just started digging their position, and were temporarily occupying an old French one. I went into a gun-pit, where I found the men scooping up the vilest, sloppiest pea-soup mud into a tub. The water dripped through the roof, and the wind blew right through it. They had to live and sleep there. They were drenched through and covered with mud and shivering with cold. I did feel sorry for them. I went into the officers' mess and found them all huddled up in a dripping little dug-out, with no fire and the mud up to my ankles. They were mostly pretty gloomy. It was far the worst place I have seen.

On Friday I rode across country to the village F., close to which two of our batteries have moved. The gun position is just the opposite to the one I have last described. It is right on a road in a little orchard. You walk straight into the dug-outs from the road. They are cut under a bank. They have salved all kinds of things from the village, doors, chairs, tables, in one case a large handsome mirror. They were all warm and dry, though rather infested with rats.

Dec. 17, 1916, *to Jan.* 5, 1917.—On Sunday I had a long walk to the wagon lines. The Germans started sending shells in my direction—a long way off, as a matter of fact—but it was a hot spot, and they sounded as though coming directly at me. I fear I ran. It is a strange feeling being all alone.

On Christmas Day I had secured a barn near A. for a service. It is usually prohibited for any one to use it as it is very visible, and an important place for certain reasons. However, they allowed an exception for Christmas Day. We had a most delightful and most reverent service, as they all knelt in the hay. Then I motored back to lunch. I don't think I had realised before how much the ordinary man simply regards Christmas as a time of eating and drinking. I am afraid I became a little sarcastic about the way they talk of keeping Christmas. Some batteries say they are going to keep their Christmas when they go out to rest; in other words, they are going to have their

gorge. There was a good deal of drinking going on. We had no Christmas truce this year, and the guns were firing a good deal both nights. I talked a good deal with the Frenchwoman who owns the house. Her husband was home on leave from near Verdun, and her two boys were on holiday from school. "Il faut prier," she said to me, but there were not many Catholics in the place. When I asked what they were, she shrugged her shoulders and said, "Rien." At seven the guests arrived for Christmas dinner. There were fourteen of us crowded in the little mess room. Everything was most carefully arranged and we ate the approved Christmas dinner. Conversation flagged at the beginning. It is difficult to feel very hilarious at Christmas out here; we worked up a good deal of rather forced and unnatural hilarity after dinner. The tables were cleared, and we sang and danced and played the gramophone and got rather exhausted. I was rather bored all evening.

On Thursday evening I had a most interesting gathering. B. wanted to discuss various matters in the dining-hall with the section, and when he had finished I asked those men who were interested in my side of things to come up to one end of the hall. I started off by a general talk about the situation of the Church and religion as a whole, and said we were all rather in a fog and needed help from the men and to get their ideas. I spoke about the need of preparing for peace. I so often talk about the lack of intelligence among the men, that it is only fair to say I was surprised at the way they spoke up, and the questions they asked. They all seemed quite clear that man alone and not God was responsible for the war. One man held forth on free will. One asked a question about the Lord's Prayer. He said there was a petition he did not hold with. Another said, "I know what you mean, Bill, 'Lead us not into temptation.'" I hope I dealt with the difficulty. A ruffianly old sergeant held forth too, and said we ought to have many more such discussions.

I have decided I must move to C. to be near the canteens and the wagon lines, so I am going to build a lean-to on to the canteen. I am getting the canteens put on a proper footing, and hope, now they are started, to have less and less to do with the running of them. They are quite new in principle in this Division—first, as being brigade canteens instead of battery ones, and secondly, in combining recreation, library, etc., with shop. I spent a lot of time

this evening in the men's huts, having much talk, and again being impressed with the intelligence of some. Some of them are thinking in a way about the time after the war. I love being as busy as I am, and feel I am really getting closer to the men. They are all pretty sick and weary of the war. So many have been out the whole time and have had only one leave. I think it becomes very hard when war becomes a permanent occupation.

On Wednesday evening I rode over and had my pow-wow with No. 4 section, "How can we bring religion into the national life?" I had better combine my description of the result with two I have since had on the same subject and another on "How we can pull together in the Church." I think the more I get to see the men at their ease away from horses, harness, ammunition, mud and sergeant-majors, the more I find that they are not quite so stupid as one usually supposes them. They can think independently to a certain extent when allowed to. The first discussion aroused considerable interest. Every kind of man joined in—an old cook who clasped me by the hand afterwards, and said his uncle was a vicar, and he had vowed never to shake another parson by the hand—a wild Scotsman, who could not get over the fact that General Booth when visiting Edinburgh had stayed with Sir John Dewar, etc. Last night we had a most interesting discussion; they mostly abused the clergy: (1) They did no work, especially in villages, and never visited or knew their people; (2) they were not simple enough, and spoke an unintelligible language. They seem to have such a set feeling that the parson has never really troubled to try and know them or understand them. But I am much interested to find there are few if any prigs among them. The trouble is they all feel they are too bad to attempt to be religious. They all seem so keen about religion, but say they are fed up with the Church. Of course it nearly all revolves round the sermon, though some spoke up strongly about the need for prayer. Last night I rounded on them at the end, and said I was always hearing criticisms of the parson, but it was about time they helped him a little more and criticised a little less. I asked them what they wanted in the way of services, and what they wanted me to preach about. Of course they will not come to the Holy Communion because they have a rooted feeling they must be very good first, and that it is impossible to be very good

in the Army. They think me rather profane when I suggest that only people who feel they are bad should go. The general feeling I get after pow-wows is how delightful the men are—perfectly natural, good-humoured, open-hearted, genuine and friendly—and how impossible it is to invent any system to supply their needs—how out of place anything formal really seems. After all, Christ was not formal, and why should we hold formal services? I don't see any escape from them yet, but are they really necessary or valuable? They certainly have their place, but I don't quite know what it is.

The canteen is doing bigger and bigger business, and is thronged with men all day long. It is a splendid opportunity for seeing them, but means a lot of work about which I have said little here. It really has been a boon to the men, and is a more or less decently civilised place where they forget to swear and behave very well. It is a curious life. I am perfectly content just living among these fellows and running these little places, and would not change for anything.

To his brother Cuthbert—

Jan. 15, 1917.—It is strange how much more contented one becomes when really busy. My trouble, as a rule, is having too little to do. When I have plenty I am content. I suppose it is a snare, and that real mastery of character can only be attained by knowing how to live with no very definite occupation. I have been living since Christmas right in the middle of the men and away from the officers' messes. I see the men from morning to night. I feed them, as far as possible, with what they want, and entertain them in every variety of way in the evening. They crowd to everything, except services, which they seem to take for granted must be a bore because a duty. This is what has ruined them. I refuse to have parades, and everything is voluntary. This is regarded as a peculiar idiosyncrasy on my part. The sergeant-majors take it as an opportunity for getting work done, and the men as an excuse for not going. The officers say with an air of superiority that voluntary services are an impossibility, and that the men will not go unless marched. However, I stick to my point, and refuse to have parades as long as I can hold out. Of course, some men do come in a spasmodic way to voluntary services. Meanwhile we have

debates to try and discover what they think about things. They air their opinions readily enough, but we don't seem to get much further.

Religion in itself has no difficulties for me, but the formal method of its presentation becomes no clearer. At times I think it would be better to give up, and then one has a service and it seems to have something in it and to supply some need, and one feels one must go on again.

We go to rest in a day or two now. Something, I fancy, will happen before the end of next month; possibly a violent German offensive. If so the sooner the better. We may be able to go on and make peace afterwards. The trouble is, the longer it goes on, the less one cares about the greatness of the cause for which we are fighting. The only thing that becomes more clear is the folly of war. I don't think it brings out men's best qualities. They tend to get bored and sodden, and to lack all independence and initiative. But I suppose these are very temporary effects on character. After all, there is all eternity for its development, a fact which to my mind solves many difficulties.

From a diary letter.

Jan. 15, 1917.—I spent most of the day at the canteen. We had another debate that night on "How to promote the brotherhood of man," and several of the men had a good deal to say. On the religious side it is strange to find how few men know anything of, or take any interest in, the Church of England.

I was very busy about the move, had to secure a wagon, call in library books, get things packed and generally hustle my staff.

Jan. 17.—We actually moved at last. It was rather a cold journey. It had been snowing all night, and there was about three inches of slushy snow on the ground. I thought the wagon would never get through. We got in soon after four. The French people here seem very hospitable, cooked for the men and looked after them, which was nice. I managed to get hold of an empty shop, which makes an ideal place for a small canteen.

Jan. 18.—I heard they had a divisional canteen at a place four miles away, where I could buy stores, so I sent the wagon over this afternoon and bought heavily. We got back as all the batteries were coming in, and were

just able to open shop to-night. There will be a big rush on the place, as it is the only one anywhere near.

Jan. 25.—I don't see any point in writing a daily account while in rest. I have been very busy, but all my little doings are of no general interest. The weather has turned very cold, gorgeous weather really, if only we were better equipped for cold. Mud has entirely vanished. I am afraid the men's billets are often very cold, and the nights are pretty severe for them. I have been largely absorbed in getting three brigade canteens going. I have only been able to get small places, and they are packed out in the evenings with endless streams of men. We make and sell quantities of tea. I have got small rooms where they can sit and write and read and play games. It has been very sad that we have not been able to get a really big place here. Fuel is a tremendous difficulty. There is neither coal or wood. We have to buy growing trees from neighbouring forests. However, by great luck I have managed to buy eighty sacks of sugar. I wish Captain Band were here to help. I find the French people very kind, especially the women. They do many little acts of kindness and make us comfortable in every possible way, even sharing their last bit of coal with us.

3rd D.A.C.

Jan. 27, 1917.—I have been rushing about more than ever since coming down here. I have got three canteens going now, and there is a tremendous run on them. But I get times of feeling they are all wrong work for me. I enjoy them, because I love to feel competent and see results —both extremely bad reasons. I think a chaplain's work seems so vague and apparently pointless, that he loves to do something practical. Also the men seem to have little time to think of anything except warmth, food and distraction. I was talking to S., and mildly chaffing him about not having been to church last Sunday. He said, "Oh, I go when the Spirit moves me." I said, "How would it do if I took the same line?" He answered, "Oh, but it is your profession." Is it really right that it should be any one man's profession and another's inclination? I often wonder if we can get right about these things until we abolish a professional ministry. One has the continual feeling of being so alone.

Why does not the Bishop of —— come out here for three

or four months as an ordinary 4th Class Chaplain? I am sure it would do him or any other bishop a world of good. We must take radical measures to stir them up, or we shall die of stagnation. I am feeling rather at a deadlock myself now. One does not know where to turn for support, or sympathy, or interest. But one learns to do without these things, though it tends to make one a little cynical at times.

Jan. 29, 1917.—We had confidently expected a long stay and real rest, and no one was expecting the sudden order to move which came yesterday. It came, therefore, rather as a blow, and upset many little plans. The 23rd Brigade was to leave us owing to new plans, and I shall now only have two Brigades, for which I am in a way glad, though I shall be sorry to lose the 23rd. I have had a very heavy Sunday, with seven different services. On Monday (29th) we started on our trek, which has lasted four days. The D.A.C. (Divisional Ammunition Column) moves last. It is a tremendous business moving a whole R.A., but goes wonderfully smoothly. The roads have to be kept clear. The whole column stretches miles. The animals and wagons and harness looked wonderfully improved by the week's rest. On the 30th the doctor and I started off soon after 9 o'clock, about an hour ahead of the column. We had to cross a high plateau, and it was bitterly cold, till at last we dropped into a valley where was a little town where we found a very good hotel. The dining-room was beautifully warm, and we had an excellent dinner. The route after this lay along a valley. We got into our village about 3 o'clock, and found ourselves billeted in an estaminet. Billets were a little scarce, especially for officers. However, I made friends with our hostess, and she produced two extra bedrooms, and we all slept in rooms and beds of our own with sheets, and were very comfortable. The French people were very friendly, especially in our estaminet, where they could not do too much for us. The French *femme*, as a rule, is an extremely kindly, unselfish person, with much capacity and sense. The men are very different, incapable, garrulous and argumentative—ready to go off into a whirl of words at any moment. We usually do business with madame.

Thursday, Feb. 1.—We resumed our trek. The roads had not been improved by the snow, and turned out to be appalling—frightfully slippery. The doctor and I

started off early with my man, and chose our route. I love these expeditions in the snow and this brilliant, frosty weather. The road was very solitary most of the way; we hardly met a soldier and felt quite away from the war, except for the far distant boom of the guns, which we have never got quite away from. But the roads became so slippery that we had to get off and walk most of the way. We lunched in a hotel in a town on the way. Reduced meals have not come into force yet, food seems very plentiful. We got into our village at 3.30 and found ourselves billeted in a so-called château, a large and bare and cold farmhouse. The men's billets were not very good. 120 were to sleep in a huge Y.M.C.A. marquee, pretty bad considering the bitter cold. I made friends with mademoiselle, and she made us delicious coffee. We wondered what had happened to the column. The first news we got was that it had got stuck on a hill about fourteen miles away. I had been out with some of the men, who had come in advance, scattering straw on a very slippery hill leading to the village. The doctor and I did not know what to do. We waited up till 9·30, but made up our minds the column could not get in that night, and would stay somewhere on the way. So we went to bed feeling very sleepy.

Friday, Feb. 2.—We woke to find the column had been coming in during the night, and was still coming in. They had had an awful time on the slippery roads. The mules had been falling down again and again, and all the corks on their shoes were worn out. The Colonel had come in at 11.30, and was rather sore that we had not had something ready for them, but they had all the food with them, and we ourselves had gone supperless to bed. Every one was pretty exhausted, but they have quite recovered. It was a bad trek. I spent the morning in covering the other side of the hill with straw and watching the wagons being pulled in. We are staying here a week. Our Irish vet. returned from leave, and we got out my gramophone and danced most of the evening.

Sunday, Feb. 10.—As it seemed likely this would be our last Sunday in rest, I asked for a compulsory parade all round. I gave it them rather hot and strong. I said I had been three months with the 3rd D.A.C., and had been bitterly disappointed. I had only asked for voluntary services. They were one of the first seven divisions, and

many of the R.A. men had been out all the time; but as we were starting a new year of the war, with all the tremendous strain involved and the uncertainty as to the future, men seemed to get more and more sodden and dead—and as for religion it was kicked aside. The General picked me up in his car after the first parade, and took me on to the second, a very big one. I had particularly asked for as many officers and men as possible. So we had the General, Colonel and most Battery Commanders. I told them I was disgusted with the 42nd Brigade; the previous Sunday I had arranged two services, and only three men had turned up. Every one was rushing down the street asking for the canteen, as they had been paid out. I had not started the canteen as a substitute for church; food, distraction, peace, victory were not the things which we were taught to put first, but the Kingdom of God; we had reversed the order, and how could we hope to be ready or deserving of either victory or peace; every man had a glimmer of faith in him, and a far nobler side than he often expressed, as the war showed, but we must try and bring it out. I have never had a single comment on anything I have said since I joined this division, I don't think; so I have no idea what any one thinks. I feel singularly isolated. I know there are many really good fellows about, but the Army and the tedium of war seem to overwhelm them. I get so overwhelmed by the sort of blind and bungling struggle one makes. However, I am going back to my old voluntary services. They are nothing like the strain. In the evening I had arranged a service in the school for another section which turned out a fiasco. I went off to try to find out what had happened, and found the canteen full, and finally suggested a service there. They said they had only been told at the last moment. So we had another service, which seemed to go much better, and I got in late to dinner after a pretty severe day. I told the men I felt like the captain of a football team who got onto the field and found the opposing side all ready, but none of the team turned up. I said all Christ had concentrated on was forming a team who had to play against the world, the flesh, and the devil, but that combination was necessary to achievement. I wish I could understand the apparent distaste to any form of service both among officers and men. To see them deliberately slope off when a service is about to begin is something I cannot

understand. I cannot comprehend the attitude of mind of——, for instance. He is a great friend of mine, a most kind, unselfish man, very keen on his work, with very nice ideas, but he has, as it were, deliberately set himself against any form of corporate religion. "I have my own religion," is all he says. And there are so many like him. The result seems to be that those who would be of most help stand aside, and those who profess to be keen and ready to help have not the same standard. I am saying all this not because I feel depressed and discouraged, but simply appalled by the difficulty of knowing where to begin, how to act about things, what to do, who to turn to. It is the same old difficulty of the parson being left to run the Church and the others waiting to be moved by the Spirit. I believe the only way out of the difficulty is for all clergy to give up their professional capacity and to be honorary or volunteers, and work for their living. I find otherwise the same *impasse* wherever I go. Also you must have a body of people together, and they must do the work. This solitary business is impossible.

Thursday, Feb. 7.—On the trek again. We had not very far to go this time. I started early and got in at 11 o'clock, and rode on to another village, where the 42nd Brigade was to be, and found an estaminet for the canteen. I managed to secure a very central one with some very friendly Frenchpeople. The old lady smacked me on the back and took my arm and was very affable.

3rd D.A.C.

Feb. 18, 1917.—I wish I understood what W. meant by realising the war. Of course I am writing from rest. We only fight at intervals. An actual attack is one of the most horrible of things. It all seems to me such a weird form of life. A comparatively small number are in dangerous places. The rest have a monotonous, often uncomfortable and fatiguing existence behind the lines, which gives them a kind of stupor. The prevailing feeling is one of boredom. When the horrors do come they seem to be all heaped up together. I suppose we shall have a bad dose, perhaps the worst, soon. Meanwhile one just goes on.

I feel all I want to do is to find out the people who care about things and bind them closer together. The main trouble about the Church is that it has gathered together

too often the rather feeble people who look at religion from a personal point of view. The Church must be a society of people who care about the same things, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the world as a whole. What I think I want so much is not results, but a feeling of companionship. I suppose the want of it is one of the great lessons of life. I don't want to lead, but to work with others. What always seems to me so unaccountable in life is that people one respects in so many ways should be so strangely unapproachable, except superficially. Everyone seems hedged round with stone walls, and one beats one's head against them in vain. It does seem so strange living on such close and intimate terms with people all the week and then their way of isolating themselves from one on Sunday. I always find it difficult coming in after a hard day to have dinner with men who have simply cut themselves off from all that one cares most about. If they were careless, worldly men, I should not notice it. How are we to get men to look at the Church as a society? How has it become this extraordinary institution run by a peculiar caste?

Well, it is late on Sunday evening, and I am feeling a little weary. I think a parson should spend his Sunday evenings with people who have been to church.

3rd D.A.C.

Feb. 26, 1917.—I feel that when the war is over the men who have been out here must be the ones to decide what is to be done with regard to all religious, social, moral, and economic problems. They will need all the counsel and wisdom of their elders, but they must be the ones to initiate and decide.

You say that I do not sound, from my letters, as if I were feeling very happy in my work. I simply do not understand how you get this idea. Please remove it at once. I cannot remember four months in my life I have enjoyed more than the last four. Sometimes I feel it is unwise to write letters without carefully weighing every sentence one writes and keeping them a week, so as to be quite sure to give no false impressions. I simply write down what is in my mind at the moment. I practically always modify my impressions in the course of a day or two, especially when they come from some recent occurrence. Very few of us know our minds, and

are able to express them clearly. What religion—apart from ordinary life—is, and how to set about it, are questions I am unable to answer, and the difficulty of getting at any conclusion is so great that I often feel utterly bewildered and at sea. But it does not mean, by any means, that I am unhappy in my work, so please put that idea out of the way.

The only purpose of a parade, as far as I can see, is to talk absolutely plainly to the men. It must be done in charity and wisdom. I certainly can see a slight improvement, and they do take more interest in their voluntary parades. I feel I can only try to teach or help men if they come freely. I have now settled to my own satisfaction the question of compulsory services. There are many things to be said in their favour, probably more than are to be said against them, but there is only one thing I really care about, and that is independence of character, and that outweighs all else. I do not want immediate results at the cost of independence. Wherever I go, I make, quite unintentionally, many enemies and some friends, because I hate the conventional attitude and mind, the herd idea of life, and I tackle it, I know only too well, in what is called a tactless way, which is very unfortunate. I know it and would gladly cure it if I could. The only lasting success I may achieve in life is that, despite all, I have stirred up a few to think. You say men are such sheep. That is exactly my argument against compulsory parades. I would not mind them if men had independence of mind. No sheep can properly appreciate love, joy, or peace. The animal nature must be changed first. You cannot find God without seeking, and sheep do not seek, but follow. I don't mind your taking these opinions and tearing them to pieces, because they are not passing moods but settled ideas.

I wish I could write about our new part of the line, but even I feel I must be cautious. I must try and write about it in my diary because it is the most interesting part I have seen. I had better write separately descriptions of the actual fighting part of my time and keep them.

CHAPTER XI

ARRAS

3rd D.A.C.

March 9, 1917.—Life has been very full of interest, but I cannot very well tell you about what is happening at the Front.[1] Certainly war is more picturesque, clean and comfortable than I have known it. I went the whole length of our front line trenches yesterday, and when I came out my boots were hardly muddy. But it was freezing at the time. Winter campaigning has a curious effect. There are practically no casualties, very exceptional if there are. You have a period of rest and trekking about. You want change and recreation. Messing becomes the most important thing. Gramophones, whisky, and bridge all help. If inclined that way, and if opportunity arises, moral restraints largely disappear. Men are very friendly and hospitable. No one reads, except a novel or a newspaper. There is not an appalling amount of work. Of course the trouble is that I enjoy it all, rushing round and seeing all kinds of people, and talking about all kinds of things. I seem to be getting to know the men very intimately, and we talk freely about anything. Veils are torn away. It somehow seems as though all one's training and preconceptions were swept aside, and one started life again as a primitive man. And yet, of course, the past remains always as a background. Three of us chaplains meet every morning and say Mattins and have Celebrations, and talk. We all say we have utterly deteriorated since war began. Our ideals are largely vanishing. Just because we like and know the men so well, we unconsciously adopt their standpoint. We want to identify ourselves with them and not be a caste by ourselves. And yet all this, I think, has had no effect on faith. We still believe all we believed. Nothing can affect the Christian faith.

[1] On Feb. 17 the 3rd Division had come into line on the Arras Front.

But how interpret it? What really matters? It becomes enormously difficult to pray alone—except from habit. Corporate prayer is always pleasant, because we like each other so much. And yet, I believe we would, above all things, love to find some true and living religion. But we feel utterly incapable of defining it and disinclined to take past definitions. I do not see any way for supernatural religion to prevail or arise out of war, unless we are able to leave it entirely to God to direct its course. I believe if we—especially religious people—could empty ourselves far more than we have done, and say we know nothing and are really utterly futile and incapable, and at the same time be a little less self-conscious, and tremendously and genuinely interested in and fond of—not from a superior or benevolent point of view, but in absolute equality and poverty of spirit—every one we meet, God might find Himself able to do something. Hitherto we have done our best to obstruct Him.

Please remember what I said before, and don't take these remarks too literally or seriously. They are written "hot pen."

March 25, 1917.—I am always plunged in problems. Take a thing like estimating by results. I have gradually learnt to see how treacherous this is. And yet the problem remains; where do results come in? How can one learn from them? When should one expect them? I meditate on the problem—should I go on absolutely impervious to results like the spike who says, "The Church is bound to be a failure; it is my business to go on with my spikery at all costs"? Or, am I to learn from results that I was on the wrong track? I only give this as an illustration. I seldom see my way clearly. I do not at all at present. I love discussing problems and elucidating truth as a result. Never mind if wild statements are made now and then. There are times of depression when life is dark and contrary and the way difficult to see. There are times of elation and light-heartedness, when a gleam of light has shone in the darkness. No truer book was ever written than the *Pilgrim's Progress*. One must press on, or try to, very stumblingly and helplessly at times, and in such terrible isolation. To be friendly and sociable you must entirely alter your whole standard of values and adopt the other person's outlook. You must act. The one thing that matters most to oneself is debarred, ruled out, or

spoken of with a shrug of the shoulders. And yet the trouble is I feel my fellow-men to be so superior to myself in so many ways. Despite their lack of intelligence and apparent vices, I see them doing things which I don't believe I could do. Their gospel is one entirely of action, not of thought. "Do the square thing," as a Canadian said at a pow-wow. I do not think they want to think of spiritual values or realities; perhaps mutely they think the spiritual world—at any rate, as they conceive it—has played them utterly false and is entirely discredited. As a result there is, I should say, an almost universal extreme agnosticism. They say it is the padre's duty to keep alive the belief in a world and life other than the war. Every one believes in that, but solely in a material pre-war way. "The one thing I want," says the average officer, "is the war to end and to get back to my grouse-moor, motor-car, good dinners," or whatever else it may be. "This is a very good world, I don't know why you worry about another. The war is a damned nuisance. I don't mind telling you I am fed up and terrified. Oh yes, I know half my friends have been killed. That was their luck. No use moping about it." With this gospel—at any rate the only one he gives any outward expression to—he goes quite cynically and cheerfully to be blown to pieces by a shell. And, upon my word, as I look on, I admire him. Most of the Christianity I have met is a flabby thing beside it. His actions so often belie his words. He is a generous, unselfish fellow. His selfishness is more in his talk than his acts. (It is so often *vice versa* with the average Christian.) He is so bored with preaching and speechifying that he constantly, as it were, caricatures it in his own conversation. The preacher deliberately claims the knowledge of a revelation and an uplifting truth. He equally deliberately caricatures this with a gospel of wine, women, motors, and grouse-moors. In between stands the average working man, *e. g.* my Canadian, with his gospel of doing the square thing, which he does not say much about, but on the whole practises. The former man also caricatures all forms of idealism. He covers the mess with pictures of semi-nude women or flappers' legs, and claims that they are artistic and judges them on artistic grounds only. He has a gramophone with records of the modern revues, in which the songs are not only bad but sung by people who cannot sing. In

this atmosphere idealism is being tested as by fire. It is by no means extinct. One never knows how much is hidden or when one will stumble across it. But outwardly the common ground is one of caricature.

I am unable to be dogmatic. The finest officer in the R.A. who comes out of kindness to church, when I asked him point-blank, said he thought perhaps it would be better if all churches were shut up. He used to think they were good for ignorant people, but now he had given that idea up. "They take too much for granted. They know too much." He couldn't believe in the Incarnation. Well, I find myself telling men—whenever I have an opportunity—that it does not really matter whether they believe in the Incarnation or not. Christ did not demand of any one that they should believe in Him as God. He left it to them to find out if they could. Yet He said, "Follow Me," not as God but as Man—Son of Man. A human Christ is what the world needs now more than anything else. The emphasis on Sacraments simply alienates the man who can see no further than the human Christ. Those of us who have learned to see further—through no merit of our own—must make our further knowledge the basis of a surer faith. But we shall do no good by dogmatising.

This letter will never stop unless I stop it at once. I don't expect I have succeeded in making anything clear.

3rd D.A.C.

April 4, 1917.—None of us ignore the importance of the work done at home. Every one out here feels that those at home have much the hardest time. They are always saying so. I think the future almost entirely depends on those at home. When we return we shall be entirely empty, and will drift unless you are ready to show us the way. I don't know what will happen to these men unless their wives and mothers are learning wisdom in their absence.

I do not feel I can go on with these abstract questions. We are on the verge of one of the greatest battles of the war. I have given so little personal news because it is difficult to do so discreetly.

April 24, 1917.—These are harassing days. We are in the middle of very terrible battles,[1] and the outcome seems most uncertain. Fortunately my own men have not had as

[1] These were the battles round Arras.

bad a time as they might. My beloved Major Robinson has died of his wounds, and we have just had a very nice young officer killed. The weather fortunately has changed at last, and we have had five days' sunshine without rain, which does a little mitigate the horrors of fighting. Life is always a little exciting. Shells fly about at intervals, pretty well everywhere, especially at night. We have been in action a long while now, and there seems little prospect of our coming out. War has a horribly deadening effect. I find it very difficult not to be mastered by it.

From a diary letter describing the 3rd Division in the Battle of Arras.

Feb. 11 *to April* 23.—It is obviously impossible for me to send this home till some time after the events narrated. We are on the verge of big things, and it would be difficult to write anything of interest without giving away valuable information. So the best thing I can do is to describe everything, and only send it off when the information will be valueless, but I hope interesting.

After trekking round the country we eventually landed at a little place called Etrée-Wamin, on the main road from Frevent to Arras, which was about twenty-eight kilomètres away. About Feb. 11 we sent up some working parties to prepare positions for the guns in Arras. On the 18th I came up to Wanquetin, a village eleven kilomètres from Arras, where the battery wagon lines were to be. I think it must have been on Feb. 20 I first went up to Arras. I went on a series of motors, and got up pretty quickly. Arras is extraordinarily interesting. It is a magnificent town, very well built and laid out, with a peace population of about 27,000. It is difficult to know what has happened there since the war began. Apparently the Germans got in early on, but were driven out by the French. They then dug themselves in about a mile from the centre of the town, curving round it towards the south, so that it lies in a kind of salient. We took it over from the French early last year. I gather the civilians fled at first, but when it was retaken a number returned, and various shops and estaminets were opened and a fairly normal life resumed. Only parts of the town have been destroyed. Most of it is quite untouched. There are all kinds of most stringent regulations. Looting is tremendously severely dealt with when discovered. The French

authorities have been into every house and sealed up a number of rooms where furniture is stored. There are all kinds of rules about moving about the streets in daylight. But as a rule most people seem to go where they like. On fine days of course aeroplanes are up all the time. As soon as a German goes over, whistles are blown by the scouts, and every one is supposed to stand still. They are terrified of gas. Several thousand gas shells were fired into the town at Christmas-time, and the gas hung round billets, and when it warmed up next morning exuded from walls and places, and a number of men were gassed. We have all been issued with a new pattern gas-helmet of an approved type. Every one must always wear a tin hat. There are gas alarm posts all over the town. After dark every one may go out as they like, and it becomes quite busy. I believe there are six divisions there now. We have been preparing positions as close as 1300 yards from the front line.

It is most extraordinary seeing the civilians. They seem to go where and when they like. I found a man selling the *Daily Mail* to the gunners at the guns by the railway. An estaminet lies just behind. Well-dressed women walk about the streets picking up their skirts and showing the latest Parisian boots, and holding little boys by their hands, mostly in deep mourning.

On my second visit to the town I went straight to the Citadel. Thompson, a boy of twenty-two, is O.C., he was going up to the O.P. and I asked him to take me. It was most interesting. We crossed the railway by a bridge in front of our gun positions, an illegal thing to do, as the bridge is in view of the Boches, and one is liable to be sniped and shelled; then up a long street into a shelled and ruined house; in the middle of which the R.E.'s had built a sort of lighthouse erection of bricks and concrete, very solid. You have no idea it is there from the outside. You go up inside by a ladder. There are two floors with a little gallery running round, and you look through slits onto the Boche line. I was on the floor below, while Thompson directed his battery fire from above. He showed me two Huns walking along an avenue, but the light was not good. The O.P. was only about 1000 yards from the line.

On Tuesday (27th) I was up at the batteries for a burial. The trench mortar working party was out and a shell fell

among them, killing two men and wounding six. I am very pally with this battery of heavy trench mortars. They have three very young officers, who form a little unit of their own, and are very friendly with their men. So they felt this very much. The whole battery turned out, and we escorted the bodies to the grave. I talked a little about the meaning of death. But I never quite know if it helps people to realise the meaning of life and its persistence. There are few people who definitely wish to deny it. But men generally take up such an extreme agnostic position with regard to it, largely as an escape from the sloppy sentimentalism of hymns and Christmas cards, that they stand by the grave of their friends and merely shrug their shoulders. I think it is rather a splendid attitude. As Gibbon, I believe, said, the Turks fought with the fanaticism born of an overwhelming conviction of the joys of Paradise, and the Christians fought equally courageously though they had no such certainty. I suppose the finest character springs from those who see nothing beyond the present. And yet the future seems so increasingly clear and certain to me. Death is absolutely nothing to me now, except rather a violent shock, which one's peaceful and timid nature shrinks from. The gloomy articles in *The Nation*, for instance, which see nothing but the horror of Europe soaked in blood, and all the flower of youth being cut off, say very little to me. The horror of war is the light it throws on all the evil, ignorance, materialism, bigotry, and sectional interests in human nature. Surely death is not the horror of war, but the causes which contribute to war. The Cross is beautiful—the forces which lead up to it are damnable. It really does not in the least matter how many people are killed, who wins, whether we starve or anything else of a transitory nature, provided that in the process human nature is transformed in some way or another. I am not nearly so much depressed by death, or even by the thought of the success of the U-boat campaign or a revolution in Ireland, as by the absolute stone walls of ignorance, prejudice and apathy one finds oneself face to face with everywhere. Of course they can be routed, and when they are, I feel more elated than when the Boches are routed, though that elates another, a very human and temporary, though still real, part of me. Ideals are indestructible, because man who conceives them is indestructible. Their

vitality is being tested—that is all. As one wages one's incessant war against ignorance, prejudice and falsehood, one would see no point in it unless one knew so clearly that it would have to continue after death. Souls in prison have to be preached to just as much as souls here. Where Christ preached for three days, He always preaches, only He uses human material now. As the Word, His sphere is the mind, and knowledge and truth will have to be pursued by all. They cannot be banished now, but there is all eternity for it to be done in. Heaven will only be reached when ignorance is finally dispersed and all Truth —which is God—is found.

Curiously enough, another incident happened immediately after the funeral. I was in the mess, taking down particulars, when we heard the sound of machine-gun fire. We rushed out and found an aeroplane battle on. Some Boche planes had come right over the town and were swooping down on our observer. No anti-aircraft guns were firing at them. The Hun planes are tremendously fast. A plane just above us caught fire and dropped a flaming mass to the ground just behind the convent. Instinctively we all rushed round. I thought possibly one might be able to do something. There lay a smouldering mass of wreckage. They dragged it away, and there lay two charred, black, smouldering lumps, which a few minutes before had been active, fearless men. It was not a pleasant sight to one's refined and delicate feelings. I felt rather staggered, and it loomed before me all day and night. But after all what did it signify?—the utter futility of violence and force. Ignorance again.

The Colonel wanted a canteen started, and that same day I found a place for one behind the guns. It was the house belonging to a doctor, an eye specialist, sumptuously built, heated with hot water, with a nice garden at the back. We soon got the canteen going there. The men patronise it all the time. It is really extraordinary the part played by the stomach in life. It simply rules the world, and affects all our outlook on life. We are paralysed, absorbed, hypnotised by it. The chief topic of conversation is rations with the men, and food and wine with the officers. Men pour into my canteens and buy everything up. For four Sundays I have been up to Arras to hold evening service. Twice I arranged it at the canteen. The men filed out when it began, and were back again for cocoa when it

ARRAS, 1917.

was over. (I have just stopped writing this to eat a piece of cake.) I felt rather furious last time. What is the use of feeding men if they deliberately set themselves against any attempt to teach or help them see the truth? I preached at all services one Sunday on "Man shall not live by bread alone," and said that while that was the first truth laid down by Christ, it was the last that man could understand. We have no need to worry about the U-boat campaign, but we must worry over the absolute famine of words proceeding from the mouth of God. What is Government doing now, but hurling invective and living in suppressed strife? How can there be a united nation without the passion for truth above all else? We are hypnotised by an unscrupulous press. We are always being taught to hate the Germans, and to refuse to think or speak of peace. We are told about our glorious cause, till it simply stinks in the nostrils of the average man. We all know we have got to fight as long as we wear the uniform, and have thereby committed ourselves to slaughter as many Germans as possible. But I, for one, and I tell the men exactly the same, utterly refuse to hate the Kaiser or any of them, or to believe that I am fighting for a glorious cause, or anything that the papers tell me. But if man learns to live a little more on the words coming out of God's, and not Northcliffe's, ecclesiastics', politicians', or any one else's mouths—the war does not really matter. We can sit and jibe at U-boats, starvation, death and all the rest of the awful bugbears which we are always taught to regard as the chief evils in the world. Evils they are and to be avoided. But we must pray "Thy Kingdom come" before we ask for our daily bread. Meanwhile I seem to be reversing the process with the canteens. Men do not want to think or learn. They are weary, sodden, patient, hungry, cheerful, good-natured animals.

One day (April 5) I took a walk with W. round the town. We went to the big square where the magnificent Hôtel de Ville once stood. The whole place is a mass of ruin now. It has been more shelled than any other part of the town. Only a wall of the Hôtel de Ville stands, a beautiful fragment. Behind the square is the shell of the Cathedral, now mostly a huge avalanche of stone about fifty feet high. There had been a raid that morning by the Gordons, and we found them just after their return, all ranged up in the street. We asked a sergeant how they had got on. "A

cake walk," was the answer. They had got into the German trenches and taken twenty-one prisoners, with only four casualties to themselves. The men were lined up, a splendid set of Scotchmen in kilts, simply quivering with excitement after their success. They are splendid fighters, and I found myself almost getting warlike as I looked at them and heard their account.

Some days after, P. took me round the trenches. It had been snowing and was cold, but the trenches were wonderfully dry. I went along the entire front line, at present held by one division. From one point I could see the whole German line to the north in the neighbourhood of Vimy Ridge. On Monday, March 10, I went with B. of the H.T.M. to see his positions. We went up by the tunnel. At present it is all a deadly secret. The tunnel starts just by the station and goes up and under no-man's land. It has mainly been done by a New Zealand tunnelling company, and connects up a number of caves supposed to have been made by the French at the time of the Spanish occupation. A light railway track runs along, and it is to be lit by electric light. Eventually we came to a little hole in the roof, which we squeezed through, and found ourselves in a commodious dug-out. Thence we got into the trenches, which are very muddy and falling in with the wet. We wandered all round, and then returned *via* the tunnel. It is a wonderfully safe feeling place, but rather monotonous and lengthy.

Sunday, March 18.—I got a car and started by going to some of the battery positions and holding services for any men who wished. The 130 are in a large pig-stye, and we sat in it for the service. Then on to the 6th battery, their position is along the hedge of a garden with snowdrops growing in it. I held the service in an empty room of the house. Major E. came over and arranged it all, and then disappeared and sent an orderly afterwards to ask me to tea. So I asked him why he had run away. He answered because he felt the men preferred it, and it was easier for me to talk to the men alone, there was not the feeling of constraint; he meant this, for he is a pious little man. And we call ourselves a democratic country! We apologise for our class separations because people feel uncomfortable if we attempt to break them down! And missionaries tell us of the necessity of destroying caste in India! Then I rushed to the H.T.M., and

found all three officers as usual. Then to the canteen, where the congregation reduced itself to three. I think my experiences of that Sunday finally decided me to hold no more services in action—even the ones at the guns, though I am not clear here, as I have often heard them appreciated; certainly nothing else. R. came because he thought the men liked it, though he did not; E. did not come because he thought they did not, though he would have liked it; the men come because a particular sergeant goes round, and there is nothing particular to do. Remove it to another building, and try and make it an act of worship to satisfy man's spiritual yearnings, and nothing happens; simply because he has none. All they want to do is to pass the time away, and church-going is sometimes useful for this purpose. No, I think I will drop services on which any kind of pressure, compulsory, moral, or infectious can be put, and merely content myself with going round as much as possible. As a rule I think they are quite glad to see me. But I really think it is rather beside the mark to talk about helping the men to realise another world, etc. They do not feel any need or wish. They only wish to get back to a world they know, and to homes they feel they never appreciated before as they ought. I stayed with the 42nd Brigade H.Q. that night. They have given me a bedroom at the top of the house. It is a curious feeling lying in bed wondering what chance there is of a shell hitting your particular house. But the chances are small, and one soon turns over and goes to sleep.

Tuesday, March 27.—I had tea with the 40th H.Q., and just as we finished there suddenly came a whiz and a crash; we all involuntarily ducked and the Colonel said we had better make for the cellar. All the men were coming down from upstairs, and were ordered into the cellar. No other shells arrived, so some of us went to the door and looked out. The shell had gone into the top floor of the house immediately opposite. Screams were coming from it, and so I said to the doctor I would go with him. They had got a man down in an awful condition. The doctor put all the bandages on him he had got, and I produced mine. He had both legs and one arm smashed, and could not live, but was yelling horribly. Another man was hit in the neck, but not very badly, and we bandaged him up. Then one of the men rushed in and said more men were

lying upstairs. So I went up and found two bodies lying among a mass of *débris*, all covered with dust and plaster. One man was still breathing, and they carried him down, but nothing could be done. The other man was dead. Twelve men had been sitting in the room when suddenly the shell arrived. It is a wonder they were not all killed. It was a horrible experience altogether. They were R.F.'s of some sort. I went and saw them later on, it is wonderful how calmly they take these things.

Arras has had a lot of shelling lately. I found everybody retiring to cellars, so I decided the canteen must move into the cellar as well. I get ridiculously nervous at night, and keep wondering where the next shell will land, till I get off to sleep.

So much has happened since I last wrote that I cannot keep a record of it all. I have been a good deal in Arras. One time I spent three consecutive nights with the 42nd. The noise was terrific, and the house shook to the foundations. Holy Week I spent mostly at Wanquetex, though I came up here most days for funerals or something else. Easter was a gorgeous day; I had four Celebrations in the church, with a good many communicants from all sorts of units.

Well, of course we knew the battle was to start on Easter Monday, April 9. An R. C. padre, B., has been attached to the D.A.C., and I went up with him and Beaumont in the morning. It had started by raining, but cleared up later, and there was a strong drying wind. We left Beaumont at the walking wounded station on the Bastion. Hundreds were coming in, a piteous sight. Then we made our way up to the batteries. There was a terrific explosion on the way, one of our dumps having been set on fire. We found the guns still in action. I found there were a good many cigarettes left in the canteen, so B. and I took them round to the officers and men and gave them each a present. It had turned very fine and wonderfully clear again. We went right over the open where our trenches had been, and found all the cavalry going up, a wonderfully picturesque sight, though rather a disastrous move, as it afterwards turned out. I could not help waving to the officers as they went by. We decided we must follow and see what was happening. So we crossed no-man's land and found ourselves eventually on Telegraph Hill, to the right of the harp, a tremendously strong German position. The place

was strewn with tanks, also with the bodies of our men, though there were not really as many as I had expected. On the top of Telegraph Hill I found two of our forward observation officers, and went forward with one of them till I saw a German shell burst, and thought it unwise to go farther purely for curiosity. The wounded seemed all to have been cleared away. We had seen huge batches of prisoners brought into Arras. On the top of Telegraph Hill was a very strong cement machine-gun emplacement, which had held up our men a little and accounted for a good many casualties. The whole place was simply ploughed up as a result of our terrific bombardment. The wire was cut to shreds all round. There were many tracks of tanks, though most of them had got stuck. I was rather excited that day. It seemed we were winning a big victory, and all sorts of rumours about Germans being on the run were coming in.

Tuesday, April 10.—I had canteen business to attend to which delayed me, but at 11.30 rode off with the doctor. We first hunted for the wagon lines, and we left our horses there. The weather had changed to a drizzling rain, and later hailstorms, which covered us with white. However, there were fine intervals. We met all kinds of people connected with the R.A., all very exhausted, without any sleep since the battle. We made our way past the Bois des Bœufs to inspect one of the captured guns. It stood outside its gun-pit. In the pit were the infantry who had captured it, and outside lay the German officer's corpse. They had captured the detachment, but the officer had refused to surrender, and they had shot him. We walked back along the Cambrai Road, one ceaseless stream of traffic of all kinds. It is wonderful to find a *pavée* road going right across no-man's land into the German lines, all ready for our transport.

Wednesday, April 11.—The D.A.C. moved up to Arras. I got a billet in a large house with most of the windows gone and almost empty. I went off in the afternoon in search of the wagon lines, and found a burial party at work burying our men, and buried five of them and then returned. The cavalry are just coming back. I am afraid they did nothing. But it is extraordinarily difficult to get any proper information. We have to wait for the papers. The attack seemed regularly held up. Infantry cannot do the impossible when exhausted. That night put a finish

on everything. The snow came down absolutely pitilessly, and it was bitterly cold. I have never seen such weather. It seems always against us.

Thursday, April 12.—I went up to the guns, which had moved right up in front of Tilley. The ground was terrible to walk over. I found the 40th Brigade a long way forward on the Cambrai road in a little deep German dug-out. L. and the Colonel had had practically no sleep and little to eat. I gave them soup squares and sardines and chocolate. I found the guns had managed to get hold of some German dug-outs. They are most wonderfully constructed places, with great flights of steps going into the bowels of the earth. The men all seemed wonderfully cheerful, they have had practically no casualties.

Friday, April 13.—I rode up immediately after lunch to the guns. Who should I find going up but the 29th Division? I found the R.F.'s on the road, and one or two men I knew, but no officers. In the middle of Tilley, in a wonderful deep German dug-out, I found the 89th Field Ambulance. They still have four of the same officers and half the original men. It was very nice seeing them, and they were most friendly and gave me tea. I love renewing old acquaintances.

Sunday, April 15.—I had service in a much-shelled convent, and later rode up to the guns in the drizzling rain for a Celebration. It was a very reverent little service in a muddy German gun-pit, with the men kneeling all round.

I get times of so hating the war and everything to do with it that it becomes very difficult to write. For the whole week, April 16–23, we merely marked time preparing for a fresh attack. The weather was vile. For about two days we had no shells in Arras, but now they shell us spasmodically and indiscriminatingly, day and night, but especially night. I sleep at the top of the house with the doctor. There is so much noise that I often lie awake and hear the shells coming, and wonder where they are going to land.

To his brother Cuthbert—

April 25, 1917.—Your letter has stimulated me to thought again. I feel the war is having a disastrous effect on me. I am deteriorating in all directions, and not very

much caring whether I do or not. As for religion, it generally resolves itself under pressure of war to a gospel of general friendliness and sociability. I think that is all we judge men by out here. And, of course, capacity, intelligence, humour, count as well. As a general rule we like each other, and get on pretty well. But if any one was to ask what result war has on religion apart from the above, I should say entirely negative. People still talk about prayer. But I doubt if any one practises it except mechanically. Personally, I feel simply in the attitude of Thomas, who could not cut himself off from the rest with whom he had identified himself, but could see nothing plainly and had no programme. What are we left with? (1) A wonderful story of a life which interprets and sums up most things. (2) Our fellow-men, who are so extraordinarily human and full of possibilities. Why have we always been taught to differentiate between sheep and goats? Men are not good and bad. But I think they are wise and foolish. I want to go back to Wisdom. Where is the place of understanding? That is the fundamental question. Men must think. Mind must rule, and yet mind must interpret heart. Heart must prompt and stimulate. Otherwise you get Prussianism. Prussianism, as far as I can see it, is the abnormal development of mind accompanied by the deadening of heart. It is so easy to get a sense of intellectual superiority, and to let mind mock heart. So they say: "We will sink every hospital ship." Mind approves this as a wise and far-seeing policy, helping them to win in the end. We make a supreme intellectual effort, and with awful language announce a policy of reprisals, and a few bombs are dropped on a town. However, meanwhile we rescue German prisoners from the hospital ships they sink. The very man who says he would shoot every one of them is the first to offer a Boche prisoner a cigarette. No, the Englishman hates to own it, but he has a genial, kindly nature. He is rather ashamed of it, and so talks very loud the other way. He sees the marvellous development of Prussian intelligence, and he openly admires it. What is the lesson of all this? We must keep our hearts warm, but we *must* develop our intelligence. The Church must do something. It must be intelligent, and appeal to intelligence in others.

May 1, 1917.—I have moved up to the forward wagon

lines so as to be nearer the guns and to have the canteen up here. We are having very furious fighting all these days, ever since Easter Monday. The guns are never silent. There is a battery of heavy guns close here which shakes the whole ground when it fires. The worst of this furious fighting is that it seems very unlikely we will ever get any rest again. It becomes rather a strain on the men at the guns, and especially the officers. I went up to bury a man this afternoon, but had to postpone the funeral an hour, as they were shelling round the cemetery such a lot. What a deadening effect the war has on us all. We all carry on quite cheerfully, but it is so difficult to care about anything. I am filled with admiration for the bravery of all the men, and their readiness to carry on almost indefinitely. It seems so funny to be sitting in a comfortable little mess made of ammunition boxes with a tarpaulin roof, having just had a four-course dinner with the roar (and it has been a roar) of battle all round; a lovely still night and nothing but land absolutely ploughed up by our shells and barbed wire lying all round.

May 6, 1917.—It is singularly difficult to write letters. All one does is to carry on as cheerfully and lightheartedly as possible, and to worry about nothing. Life is too unnatural and false to have any ideas of any value. Mitchell, quite one of our best padres, was killed three nights ago. We all met at his funeral, and carried the body to the grave on Friday.[1] He was a splendid fellow, very quiet and unobtrusive, a real saint, absolutely idolised by his Colonel, Major, and whole regiment. But death is too common now-a-days to pay much attention to it. This all sounds a little gloomy, but you would be surprised to find how lively and lighthearted people are, and how genial and generally sociable. Only we none of us feel we are winning the war.

May 10, 1917.—We have now had a month's solid fighting without any pause. The Germans have long-range guns and shell all over the place with them, and you never know where the next may come. The R. C. padre's first

[1] Of this Rev. J. Martin Andrews wrote after Oswin's death: "All the Chaplains of the Division were gathered together looking very miserable, when suddenly Oswin arrived and said, 'Please don't look so miserable, Mitchell is much better off than we are. He is away now from this terrible war. He is the last man that would have us weep about his death. Let us show these men that we can laugh at death, it is nothing to be miserable about.'"

experience of war was the day of our first big advance, when I took him up with me. He was a little timid and bewildered naturally, but now he feels just the opposite. He is always trying to get jobs which will take him right into the fighting, and says he gets quite exhilarated when under shell fire. He says he would quite like to be killed, and cannot see why people are so alarmed of death. I must say I rather agree with him, because war simply makes death rather absurd, and one cannot see why it should be taken seriously when it is so prevalent. But I don't feel that one's philosophy makes one any braver. I have been building and enlarging the canteen all day so as to make it suitable for service for the R. C. padre and myself as well as for a canteen.

I cannot help feeling that we are being taught in war-time that the first thing we must do, and the only foundation we can build on, is to have increasing knowledge of and confidence in each other.

May 17, 1917.—Life is not particularly varied now. Lately it has been largely a series of funerals, visits to batteries and running of canteens. I think some of my last letters must have sounded a little harassed. However, now I seem to have settled down to the life and things are quite a matter of course. One thing is, one never has time to feel bored. The country is getting wonderfully green. The swallows pleased me yesterday. Right among the guns they seemed to be tamer than ever, and almost flew into me.

3rd D.A.C.

May 22, 1917.—We have had a bad time lately. On Saturday one shell killed four of our officers in one mess—the whole of the officers up with that battery—and another killed a Major and two sergeants of another battery. The Major was one of our very best, Rogers—a young fellow of twenty-seven. I had an unbounded admiration for him, and his death is a bitter blow. Our two best battery commanders have now been killed. I am afraid I cannot help envying them. You certainly can and must make the best of life, but these days it is rather a poor thing to make the best of.

May 29, 1917.—When I went to Gallipoli war was new and its experiences had a certain amount of excitement; now it has become an occupation, and it has a deadening,

coarsening effect, and one seems to lose interest in most things. More and more the world seems to have lost its charm and to offer little worth living for. Often I have thought that the simplest solution to its many insoluble problems would be to be blown to pieces. But after all, that is really too simple—and also cowardly. I don't think we are quite normal in these days, and I can only hope we shall be forgiven for our many failings. Now we are at last having a quieter time, and the change has its effect on one's mind, and I begin to feel a little more normal again.

I am rather interested in *Letters from Picardy*. I think the chapter of Gordon's contrasting R. C. methods with ours interested me most. It never seems to me that the R. C.'s really offer any solution for the mess the world is in. To turn R. C. for one's own sake is surely to begin one's religion at the wrong end. Religion must not primarily be something to give oneself consolation, but something which is going to transform society. And I fail to see how a man really can ever succeed in transforming society by finding that which satisfies his own intellect or emotions.

Meanwhile the world is in a bad mess. Every one is going on leave at present. Practically all the officers have three days in Paris. It somehow seems a sort of retort to God: "You put me into this wonderful, delightful world of Yours, without consulting my wishes. You then allowed me to do what I liked in it. I saw that following Your directions would probably make mostly for my own and the world's welfare, but then You have allowed the world to become an impossible place—a mass of contradictions. You have stood aside while we have been plunged into this war, which we none of us wanted. We have had the most terrifying experiences. How can You blame us if as an antidote to them we avail ourselves, when opportunity arises, to the utmost of the pleasures the world can give us? And don't say they are not pleasures, because we have tried them and know they are. And don't say the best men are not the same, because the best men we know, the finest and bravest and most capable soldiers are the same. Look at So-and-so. His men worshipped him. There was not a finer gentleman or a nobler soldier. And he knew how to enjoy himself. Oh yes, So-and-so is quite proper, but he has not the spunk. He is a mug—no man of the world. No, I have made up my mind, if I have got

to put up with so many changes and discomforts, I am going to get all the pleasure I can, and blow the consequences. I have my own standards. I don't intend to do any one a dirty trick. I know how to behave myself. I intend to do my duty under the most trying circumstances, and to do the square thing by my fellow-men. Let the rest rip. This is my gospel, and it is good enough for me, and I am quite prepared to take the consequences. If I am spared I shall probably settle down, marry, and live a respectable life." There seems to me to be really no answer, except simply to say that there is another idea of life, and that some people feel they must do their best to uphold it, even at the risk of being classed as mugs. The wheat and the tares grow side by side, and their roots are inextricably involved. War teaches us to discriminate between them very clearly; but it does not show us how to pull up the one without pulling up the other. And the best soil always produces the healthiest weeds. You can often get a fairly clean but very stunted crop from light sandy soil; neither the wheat nor the weeds like it much.

Well, you asked for news, and I weary you with problems. I think *Papers from Picardy* has the advantage of facing the problems and stating them fairly. I don't think anything in the nature of a solution is possible at present. The R. C.'s and the men of the world must each be allowed to go their own way unfettered, and we must stand helplessly and confusedly in between, bewildered and companionless; above all things judging neither the one nor the other, but trusting simply to the law of charity and the guidance of the Spirit, Who surely will guide us into all Truth if we only care enough and judge less.

To his sister Gemma—

May 29, 1917.—I own and confess I have been bad about writing. My only explanation is that we have been fighting hard and have all been feeling a little shattered. The result is a sort of apathy and lack of interest in things in general. Then we feel a sense of unreality about you at home. No more about you than about anything else. Everything, and to a certain extent everybody, is unreal. This is an unreal world. Everybody is engaged in doing things they take little or no interest in, and filling in the spare time with any kind of occupation that will help to

pass the time. The newspapers and people in general discuss causes and problems which always seem to me singularly unreal. How can I really be interested in the future of Russia, England, or any other mundane convention, when the next moment a shell may come and blow me to blazes?—or if not me, how can I discuss the same questions with some one else, knowing that there are quite large odds on such a fate awaiting him? When you see a lot of people being killed you seem to lose interest in the world. Their part in it is finished, and it seems selfish—to say the least—to be absorbed in it when they are out of it all. Of course, people at home must think more of what is going to happen after the war, as that is likely to involve themselves; and most people out here talk about it too. But when you bury them the next day it robs a good deal of speculation of any sense of reality. I feel the only reality remains with those who have been killed. And yet, of course, this is also false, because life is a unity and, presumably, the problems we have to face here are the problems we shall still find unsolved hereafter, unless we continually press for a solution.

As for classes, the sooner they are ignored the better. I think it rather unreal to separate those who have been to the war and those who have not, into two classes. There is really only one line of division, that between people who are content to be themselves and those who submit to external labels.

It is curious the love of gardens. We are living on no-man's land, a mass of shell craters and barbed wire, mazes of trenches and dug-outs. The soil is barren and chalky. I went over to see an Irish labour company near by, and found the officers contemplating a little dusty flower-bed in which they had planted a few seeds, and quite excited to see some of them beginning to show. If we all had gardens or farms and worked in them ourselves, the world would be a better place. The man who sows wild oats, so often sows sweet peas and keeps puppies, and appreciates them just as much if not more.

Some day I may come home on leave, and the King's Mound will be very delightful. I simply long to play on a piano with heaps of music. I will also do much in the garden, and play long with the children. What a delightful existence!

CHAPTER XII

THE LAST YEAR

June 5, 1917.—I am busy at present trying to form a concert troupe out of the R.F.A. men, so that we can entertain batteries when at rest, and I have open-air concerts every evening of varying quality.

I often wonder if it would not be better if all the men were R. C.'s. For men who don't think and have no initiative, what can you have but a dogmatic, authoritative, externally imposed religion? And even the men who do think are often quite prepared to submit to authority and accept unquestioningly the dogmas for the sake of the unity and strength that are gained. I am always absorbed in insoluble problems, the R. C.'s have none. Everything of immediate importance is settled. I believe that is what makes most R. C. padres so unfailingly cheerful, often boisterous. And yet how on earth is the world going to progress unless men are taught they must think? Somehow one feels one would rather remain absolutely isolated and solitary than submit to a purely dogmatic religion—than feel one no longer leads what must often be the solitary, lonely responsibility of facing and attempting to solve insoluble problems. For the sake of peace we might all submit to German Kultur domination. But what then about liberty? When all is said and done, the good a man can hope to do in the world must be done through his own personality and his relationship with individuals.

Paris.

June 11, 1917.—I have just arrived here for seventy-two hours' leave with L. He is a charming fellow and makes a good companion. He does not have any desire to be a man of the world, I am glad to say. We are in one of the most sumptuous and luxurious of Paris hotels. It is rather amusing being in Paris, but I expect three days will be quite enough.

3rd D.A.C.

June 19, 1917.—I got back from Paris on Saturday. I quite enjoyed my time. L. made a good companion. We did most of the orthodox things, hired a luxurious car for the day and motored to Versailles. We went twice to the Opera. The enthusiasm of some Australian officers there was very refreshing. These colonials are not at all *blasé*. I go to St. Omer next week for a week in the school for chaplains and shall see the Professor.

St. Omer.

June 30, 1917.—I am enjoying again reading a little—I turned the men on last night to discuss the sex question. We are beginning to be a good deal franker, but not so frank as we should yet. What to do with a really passionate nature is a question which never seems to have been properly solved. The teaching of mere self-suppression is in most cases mischievous. You do not have a nature given you simply to suppress it. It must be elevated, guided, directed, brought into harmony with the rest of life. The more I see of all this endless prostitution and men surrendering themselves to what they feel is unavoidable and necessary, simply because we have not really mastered the problem or shown them the true lines of development, but instead have given them a negative direction to suppress their natures, the more I am filled with dismay, and the desire to investigate further. However, this is by the way. The only observation I should like to make is this, that I wish nice, wise, good girls would leave their sheltered homes (if they are still there, which I suppose they are not) and mix among soldiers wherever possible and be really nice to them. Several men have told me of girls whom they were courting and to whom they made an indecent suggestion, who for reply smacked them in the face. I asked them what their feelings were: "Why, to make me think ten times better of her, and now she is my wife," or "I intend to marry her if I get back"; always "When I marry I intend to marry a clean girl." Very selfish, I know, but the girls have such tremendous power in their hands. We men deserve no excuses for our weakness; but it would be really splendid if the women would take us in hand.

It is curious getting away from war again. One begins to live and think once more. I was very tired when I

got here first, and lay on my bed and slept and read. Now I feel refreshed and able to think more.

July 9, 1917.—I returned on Wednesday. They had moved in my absence, and we are in a very different part of the world now.[1] A change is always interesting, but it means a lot of work. It means finding new places for canteens, collecting material, etc., etc. Now that we have a concert troupe that means much more work as well. We are now building theatres in different places and preparing for shows.

July 11, 1917.—I am still very busy building three stages, and arranging shows, and visiting the guns, which are scattered at long intervals. We are having a very good time of it here, very little fighting and absolute freedom; no civilians or corps; we can ride where we like. It is great fun running our concert troupe, and they really are getting rather good. The news seems a good deal better. I wonder what the Germans are thinking. The way they have wrecked and destroyed this country, cutting down fruit trees, blowing up churches, opening graves in vaults, is enough to make one cease to be a pacifist.

July 16, 1917.—The guns are so scattered here. One day I rode seven miles in search of two of them, and eventually found them in the middle of a huge wood, quite isolated from every one else. Just one officer and thirteen men were living there in the middle of a lovely wood full of campanulas and raspberries. It was most amusing lying among lovely flowers, with a great wood behind us and a view of the German trenches in front, in the blazing sunshine, eating raspberries, and watching shells burst about two hundred yards away, knowing we were in perfect safety and that probably there was no one where the shells were bursting.

I am afraid I have to return to compulsory parades. It is awful the way I keep changing; but men with horses have so many duties (and now the horses are sent out grazing nearly all day) that a voluntary service is practically impossible. I sometimes feel a parade is a good opportunity to collect as many men as possible and at least try to give them something to think about and talk about. That is almost all one can hope to do. I fancy that the main result of war is to make men feel that such

[1] They were in the line east of Bethune.

a thing as religious experience resulting in any way from religious worship is out of the question. I sometimes feel inclined to wonder why God hides Himself so inscrutably from our experience. Or is it that the Church has taught us for so long to look for Him in the wrong places?

I shall put in for leave at the end of this month.

Aug. 17, 1917.—I found everything just the same as when I left, and it is likely to continue so. It was very nice in a way getting back, as every one is so friendly and we all know each other so well. It really is a wonderfully pleasant life under the circumstances.

I did so enjoy my leave and loved seeing you all. It could not have been a nicer one.

Aug. 24, 1917.—The other evening we gave our opening show in the covered-in theatre I have built for the D.A.C. It is a wonderful place. The framework and seats are all made of massive timber, collected from the villages round, and the whole covered by three gigantic tarpaulins. The men have fixed up a wonderful little dressing-room behind the stage and are very comfortable. They gave an excellent show to a packed and enthusiastic house. The Church Army have given us a most magnificent marquee, and I have had it erected on one of the wagon lines and built a stage in it and put the canteen in as well.

We lead a strange life these days, sports, concerts, games of all kinds going on every day.

To his sister Gemma—

Aug. 28, 1917.—I think I am a little tired of talking, discussing, raising problems. I believe we most of us feel that out here, and perhaps that makes a little cleavage between us and you. I don't see there is much advantage in either judging the other. I believe we are really complementary. No one out here thinks at all, but they rub along and learn a lot about human nature and lose a great deal that is false in their judgments and standards. They learn how rotten conventions are and what a lot of bunkum we have allowed ourselves to swallow. Devils are being driven out and the places are left swept and garnished. It is as though we had been violently seasick and were getting to the stage of feeling very empty and ravenously hungry. We are mighty empty now, but on the whole we understand one another. Now at home you are all trying very hard to understand us. At home

I was always being asked what do the men feel about this and that. I was always being asked for generalisations, for which there was an insatiable demand. You will say I am making them myself, which I admit is perfectly true. I think the main thing you at home have to realise is that the effects of this war are almost entirely negative. We are strangely disillusioned. I get quite alarmed at the extent of my own disillusionment. I don't quite know where I find things that stand the test. I am no longer shocked at things—only rather bored. I see singularly little efficacy in any of the religion I have tried to practise as a performance. And I cannot find any one else who does, except in their blind, unquestioning way the R. C.'s. In my own case it is not a difficulty of belief but of expression, and I fancy that is a pretty general attitude. Well, how are we going to fill these empty stomachs with the food that will really satisfy? The Creeds, ministry of women, Prayer Book reform, *Life and Liberty*, the whole caboodle have all gone overboard as far as we are concerned. We don't really care about any of them. "Well, you are a beastly, destructive, negative lot." Granted. "You don't care about anything." No; false, quite false. We are sick—this is my point—sick to death of *abstractions*. We are learning that it is only human beings that count, and that if the Christian religion is to prosper on earth, it can *only* be by Christians understanding and serving their fellow-men. Discussions, conferences, inquiries, etc., simply do not interest or move us. But if a soldier hears the vicar has been looking after his wife and children in his absence—if the wife hears from the chaplain when her husband has been killed—if there is any touch of human friendship and understanding, then we get near the foundation of all things, the heart of man. I cannot help seeing a picture of you all—great and wise and the best of people—gathered together and discussing us and our utter absence of religion.[1] And somehow I feel it is all so remote. There really is not much to discuss. The only thing to do is to go out among the ordinary, ignorant, entirely unenlightened, struggling mass of human nature and try and leaven the lump. As a parson himself remarked, "Parsons are like manure—when scattered over the land they fertilise it, when collected in one place they become a public nuisance." I

[1] He refers to the Y.M.C.A. inquiry on "the Army and Religion."

think far more of an elderly parson I found on the roof of a C.A. hut, repairing it in a forward place out here, who was running the hut with another parson and no orderlies, having to do absolutely everything themselves, than of whom shall I say—X.—will all his profound intellectualism. Perhaps we are quite wrong. It is difficult to see things in their proper proportion out here.

Aug. 31, 1917.—You would be amused to see where I am writing from. Try and picture a very cosy little room about 14 by 8, and 7 ft. high. The floor is wooden, the walls covered with canvas, the roof tin, supported by wooden pillars. On one side, facing away from the enemy is a door and a window with a sliding shutter to it. On the other side is a wonderful open fireplace. The room is built into the side of a steep bank and the chimney has been cut right through the earth. Little wooden shelves have been fixed above the fireplace, and together with the rest of the woodwork, painted green. Logs are burning practically all day because the weather is chilly and damp. In the middle of the room is a beautiful table with folding leaves and rush-bottomed chairs round it. At one end of the room is a blanket hung up. You lift the blanket aside and find yourself in a long, very narrow, winding passage, which has walls of sandbags and leads to a vaulted chamber, quite long, all covered with massive iron-ribbed arches, with huge wooden timbers down the centre. This is the bedroom. There are beds made of wooden framework and covered with wire netting. The other side of the bedroom is another wider passage leading to the open. This has a shelf along it, and is the washing place, with basins and an indiarubber bath. All along outside is a long path of duckboards connecting up all the various dug-outs. Two guns are close by, two further off. When the near one fires, the acetylene lamp goes out, and has to be relit every time. But life is very peaceful and there is very little firing. I have been here three nights and am stopping one more. Of course, battery positions are not usually like this. This is the height of luxury and comfort. The first day I was up, the troupe came up to a neighbouring village, and we gave a show at Brigade H.Q.

Sept. 14, 1917.—I have had rather a curious little experience which I hope may result in good. The brigades were resting on Sunday, and we had planned two large

services in which every one was taking a good deal of interest. Then, as so often happens at the last moment, a General decided to inspect them, and in one brigade the service had to be cancelled. So I had a voluntary evening service and not a soul came. I felt so disgusted that I sat down at once and wrote a letter to the Colonel. My main point was the entire lack of interest shown by the senior N.C.O.'s. They are regulars and have the old regular prejudice to any form of religion. They *never* attend any service if they can help it, and their influence is very great. I feel it is an impenetrable wall, though I am, I hope, on the best of terms with them all. So I told the Colonel the only thing I could suggest was that I might be allowed to speak to them all, alone, if he would call them together. I have never had an opportunity to do so all this year, and I have always wanted to. So this morning I had them all in the canteen for half an hour, and talked to them, I hope kindly. I said I could do nothing without their help; their influence was very great. In this fourth year of war we needed to do all in our power to reconstruct things, and not let everything drift; we must get away from old prejudices. All I want them to do is to remove this kind of unconscious opposition. I don't think I said anything they could mind, and I was very careful not to appear to be getting at them, but to appeal for their help.

Sept. 19, 1917.—It is very difficult writing after a move. But I don't suppose I am doing anything wrong by telling you that we are in Flanders now [1]—an entirely new part to me, like another country. I was surprised to find how rich and luxuriant the country here is. We travelled by train through the night, arriving just before dawn. We are now scattered in groups about eight miles apart. I am writing from D.A.C. H.Q., miles back, in a very peaceful and picturesque spot, with farms all round, cows, children, pigs, regular civilised rural life. I had my nearest shell the other day, about two yards off, just outside a little shelter I was sitting in. Such a nice boy was badly wounded while I was there. I went into the dressing station with him, as he recognised me. He was very shocked and shouted all the time for his mother. But at intervals he would talk. At one moment he called

[1] The 3rd Division was now in the line west of Ypres.

out: "Forgive our enemies." Poor boy, I fear he has no chance.

Oct. 1, 1917.—When one stops for a moment to think of all the sorrow there must be, it is almost more than one can bear; I can see no hope but almost indefinite slaughter. No one seems in the least inclined to give in, and people only get more bloodthirsty and determined to exterminate each other. Meanwhile all I seem to be learning is to have a profound contempt of death, and consequently of life, as far as this world is concerned. I have been three days at the guns, coming down for the week-ends. Our battles seem to have been quite successful and every one is optimistic. We are having the most gorgeous weather, which helps to make things better. I have never seen such gorgeous moonlight nights. The result is endless bombing raids. The night before last was the worst. I had come down to the wagon lines for the week-end. They bombed us almost incessantly from 8 p.m. till 3 a.m. Hundreds of bombs were dropt all over the place, and it was pretty alarming. We are all barricading our tents with sandbags. One dropped about fifty yards off me, and pieces rattled round the place. I lay quaking in a small hole I had had dug in my little tent and felt such a fool. The horses are the worst off, as they cannot be protected. It is a wonderful sight when the searchlights pick up one of the aeroplanes. They look like huge moths, with streams of light playing on them from all directions, and luminous bullets rushing up along the lights at them, and shells bursting in little points of light all round them—a regular Brock's Benefit. I think I feel safer at the guns. I made a very secure little dug-out and had the consolation of feeling that if it was hit, I should probably know nothing about it.

I was interested last night in seeing a result of my talk to the N.C.O.'s, when a little voluntary evening congregation consisted almost entirely of sergeants. I talked to them about the books I have been reading lately and discussed the remark one is always coming across, that Christianity has been tried and failed, and they seemed quite interested. Men seem quite to enjoy it when they do come to voluntary services, but the difficulty is to get them there.

Oct. 11, 1917.—We have been fighting furiously, and it has been difficult to think of anything else. At this

moment I am horribly distressed. The good luck we have had lately has changed, as it was bound to do, and the last two days have been black with a number of casualties. And just now I have got word that the young Captain I went to Paris with has been killed. I was with him an hour before. We have had nearly four weeks now of the most tremendously hard fighting I have yet seen. Things have been so bad that I have not been living at the guns. I thought my room would be preferable to my presence. I have been up there at least every other day. I cannot tell you how I admire our officers and men; the strain on them has been terrible, but there seems absolutely no limit to their gallantry and endurance. I only hope people at home realise this; it simply cannot be exaggerated. The bravery, cheerfulness and capacity, especially of the young battery officers, are things I could never forget. The artillery have to keep at it all the time, and have more and more put on them. The whole place is a mass of corpses, death and destruction. I suppose some day we shall come out, and the winter will set in, and fighting will stop for a time. Meanwhile we just have to stick it. Surely the noble heroism of these men cannot be in vain. They show at their very best on these occasions, and perhaps a war like this is necessary to bring out the best in human nature. I feel the best is so much better than the worst is bad. I hope when I write again it will be more cheerfully. Despite it all, I would far rather be here than out of it all. I really don't think it is as bad for us as for those who have to stay at home and wait. The good is greater than the evil.

To his sister Gemma—

Oct. 14, 1917.—We have been having a pretty bad time of it. I think the weather has been the worst of all. Nothing can exaggerate the mud and misery of it all. I have been ploughing through the most appalling mud to get to the guns almost every day; walking for miles. One feels peculiarly helpless on these occasions. I bury the dead and write letters to their relations and run a canteen with a roaring fire, where the drivers can go and dry themselves when they come in soaked at night.

We are simply longing for the day when we can get out.

At first the fighting seemed to go well, but lately it has been very miserable; ghastly casualties and the wounded lying out in this terrible weather. A battlefield is a ghastly sight. One gets kind of callous and hardened, and it becomes difficult to care about anything. The unending wonder is the way the men carry on. There is practically no sign of fear.

Oct. 20, 1917.—I am glad to say we are at last out of it again [1] and about to move off. At the moment I am writing from a billet where we are living in comparative comfort and complete peace. The country is rather nice and the weather fine. We have had a very harassing time of it. Why more were not killed I cannot understand. The day I was last up I had to run for it and was shelled all along the track. It is wonderful how near shells can burst to one and do no damage, and how one can get knocked out by a splinter from one which bursts far away.

Nov. 8, 1917.—We are leading a wonderfully settled, civilised and comfortable life now. The rapid change from the utter desolation of real war to this is strange. At one moment we live a life of utter misery and despair; the world seems given up to destruction and suffering; then we come out to comfort and comparative peace, and settle down to a regular routine. Every one goes off on leave and forgets their worries as rapidly as possible. But I cannot help thinking of the people who have had to take our place, and the awful time they must be having. I often wonder what people mean by "luck," and if it is really a good thing in itself to be "lucky." The ordinary expression is "So-and-so was very unlucky" because he was killed, or "lucky" because he got out safe or slightly wounded. If we attribute all good fortune to "luck," what is luck? People say chance or fate, which does not take you much further. It always seems to me such a desolate gospel to believe that your good fortune depends upon a perfectly arbitrary and unreasoning luck. I fear I only make people angry when I suggest that possibly they are quite wrong and the lucky ones are those who are killed. But people seem to me to be born fatalists. I regard it as a mere matter of chance and possibly a comparatively unimportant thing whether one

[1] On October 17 the 3rd Division took over the line, north-east of Bapaume.

comes out safe or not. The only way I can carry on cheerfully is feeling that it is really a very secondary and trivial matter whether one remains alive in this world or not; but what does matter is what we are succeeding in making of ourselves. I feel more and more that the whole war is so unreal. It has nothing whatever to do with God. He did not cause it or wish it. He never created nations, which are merely man-made. I become more and more an individualist. I don't feel that God can be interested in the war or in the nations taking part in it, or in the righteous causes involved, but solely in each of the individuals engaged. He looks at it all from their point of view. How are they going to take it? What will they make of it?

I have been out exactly a year now and only had one leave. I shall not feel guilty in taking another immediately after Christmas if possible.

Nov. 25, 1917.[1]—Why this horrible line of cleavage between the clergy and the laity? This horrible classification is what I hate. And, further, why should the laity bother to understand the clergy? Here am I a miner, say, or a mill-hand. I go out and work hard all day and return to my family and public-house, etc., for the evening. Why should I bother to understand the clergy? But if clergy exist it is their business—the reason why they exist—to understand me, my life problems, etc. The clergy exist solely for the sake of the laity, to help them to understand themselves. The whole trouble is that the clergy, acting independently of all except ecclesiastical laity, have spent centuries in framing and fashioning a system on their own. If the laity don't want our system—and they don't—for Heaven's sake let us drop it. Let us be bold and drop our whole organisation, I say, and let those who are really interested in these things see that the foundation for them must rest on their "knowing what is in man" before they bother to create a system which is supposed to tell man about God. Everything is a matter of man's relation to his fellow-men. Is he not constantly in danger of wasting time and energy on things independent of them? Even his acts of worship are regarded as having the object of doing himself good. My standard of sin is simply that which in any way mitigates one's usefulness to others. If

[1] In answer to a report of some discussions in England.

you seek your own satisfaction at another's expense, or, in seeking it, harm yourself and so destroy your usefulness, it is wrong. Here I find my sole avenue to prayer. It is and must be disinterested. My confession must not have myself in view, but others. I have injured them by sinning. My intercession must be very real and very individual and personal and constant. My attitude towards God will be almost completely agnostic in so far as He is an Almighty Being. I am not almighty, nor are other people, and it is entirely outside my reach, so I leave that severely alone. But in so far as He is human and has shown Himself to me as such, I can understand Him and find Him again in my fellow-men. I know He is behind all and above all, and though I cannot know Him, I would be a fool not to believe in Him as exceedingly active in all that I am active in. I refuse to dogmatise about Him. Creeds bore me, dogmatically, not historically. The Russians are right, the one question is "Do you believe in God"? Either you do, and base your life on the belief, or you do not. The facts you believe about God are of no importance; and the fewer the better. If you have too many facts about Him, you lose Him for them. Hence ecclesiastical people so often become less believing than the profane.

Why do I bore you with all this? I know you want to know what I am doing, which I am afraid does not interest me, so I bore you with other things. I selfishly like to clear up my thoughts at times. Only do not pin me too close to my statements. They are not general conclusions arrived at after a discussion.

The one conclusion I have reached during the war, and I come back to it again and again, is that the great cloud that overwhelms us is the cloud of ignorance. I got back to it again last night at a little voluntary evening service in a sergeants' mess. No working man ever denies it. As soon as he begins to think at all he realises it. The real root division in this world is not between class and class, rich and poor, but between educated and ignorant. I had far rather be a wise, poor man than a rich or aristocratic fool. That is a platitude. The only thing we can do is to try and stir up a longing for understanding. The real problem we have to face is first to open men's eyes to their own ignorance and conventionality, and then to stimulate in them a desire to think. No nation

peopled by individuals would ever desire to fight. And the Church has been such a foe to independent minds, with its fettering creeds and formulas.

Well, I really must stop.

Dec. 10, 1917.—I hope I shall get my leave to go home about the last day of the year.

I wish people would act on Lansdowne's letter and hurry up and discuss peace. The whole war is really too impossible. We cannot hope to destroy Germany without destroying ourselves, and why go on destroying each other? I don't so much mind people being killed as the fact that the survivors will have gone back so much. Think of the mental stagnation of the last three and a half years: no one reading or studying or thinking; people giving their minds solely to destruction and no thought of construction. Perhaps our ideas were all wrong and needed all to be destroyed before we could start constructing. I think that is my only hope. That is why I can take no interest in any schemes of reform or reconstruction; I have got into the habit of destruction along with every one else. I want to destroy everything that is not obviously and positively of value—nations—governments—churches.

Dec. 12, 1917.—I am sitting in a most wonderful place waiting to have dinner—the Corps Officers' Club. It really is the last word in the refinement of war; beautiful armchairs and furniture, a bar where you can buy most things, a billiard-room, baths, a barber, grounds beautifully laid out, the whole place lit with electric light. Next door is a huge cinema where my troupe has just been giving a very successful show to a crowded and enthusiastic audience. This is all in a devastated country very much within sound of the guns. As you say, war has become an occupation, and while we fight one day, we try to live a normal, civilised life the next.

You ask if officers and men are animated by hatred for the Germans. I wish people at home realised that people out here do not go through any elaborate process that can be called thought. We are intensely conservative, unimaginative, unoriginal, docile people. "Theirs not to reason why," etc., exactly expresses the attitude of the ordinary officers who, though capable, refuse to think independently. You can only get at the men's attitude

by careful observation. They love arguing and will take any side in argument, but are really much the same despite their arguments. Hatred is a very difficult thing to keep up. In the heat of battle you will kill perhaps ferociously. You will certainly say every one should be shot who disagrees with the official attitude.

Jan. 1918.—I got back to the D.A.C. just as they were finishing breakfast. I found them just the same.[1] I felt it a little dreary and was glad I had arranged to go up to the guns.

Sunday I took six services in the wagon lines and tried to see as many of the men as possible. I felt it my duty to give them a little New Year talk, partly about what I had noticed in England, and partly about Lloyd George's and Wilson's speeches. I don't like doing it, nor do I think it necessary, but I rather took the opportunity of pointing out that we were being asked to stick to it, not for grabbing and dominating reasons, but for the good of the world in general and their own children in particular. Personally I do not think there is any fear whatever of any of these men losing heart. They are not made like that. When it comes to the point, however much they may grouse at other times, they will all do their job.

Jan. 26, 1918.—At present what I am trying to do is to get hold of one or two definite ideas and put them in as simple and picturesque a manner as possible, and go on working at each for a week—first on Sunday at services at the wagon lines, and then in the week at occasional little services in the gun-pits. Last week I took the subject "Why does not God stop the war?" I said nothing about the war, but simply asked the men to consider the nature of God, and man's relation to Him. I read the parable of the Prodigal Son. I asked them to think of the father's relation to the son. Why did he not stop him leaving home? Simply because he was his father and not his boss. He wanted him, but he could not stop him and remain his father. No father can thwart his son and retain his love. The son going down the road confidently, excitedly to see the world and to join the crowd, is the symbol of nearly all mankind. The trouble with the world is

[1] This was on his return from his last leave. During this leave it was his delight to provide treats for as many people as possible. He took sisters and cousins to the play, saying that for the first time in his life he had plenty of money to spend.

its thoughtlessness and heedlessness. The prodigal son wasted his substance as the world has wasted its civilisation. Did his father forget him because he had gone? He never ceased watching till he should see him coming back. So God waits for man's return from a life, not so much of evil, but of purposelessness, emptiness, riotous living without anything lasting to show, to his true home of beauty, truth, justice, honour and love—and above all of merry-making. The world is in want and pain, but as it returns in penitence, only beauty, the robe, and real merry-making await it. So though God cannot stop the war because He is our Father, He waits and longs for our return from a life without Him, which makes war possible, to a life with Him, when war will be impossible.

Feb. 5, 1918.—This has been quite the best winter the army has had in France. Every one is extraordinarily well. The men do not know what to grumble about now. But life seems emptier and more futile than ever. No one is doing anything worth doing. I certainly feel it more futile than ever, and long for peace, not so much at the moment as an end of the horrors of war, but as an opportunity of returning to peaceful reconstruction.

Leaves are very frequent now and I expect I could get home again about April if I wished.

Feb. 13, 1918.—Here we are at rest, a complete and absolute change. I am living at the D.A.C. H.Q. in an enormous empty château. It has been in constant use during the war, and now stands empty, with only a caretaker looking after it. It is a huge, vast, ugly place, and you cannot imagine the filth and shabbiness inside. There are only three of us with our servants living in it. The mess is a huge salon with a parquet floor absolutely filthy, with a number of luxurious shabby arm-chairs and sofas.

Feb. 18, 1918.—After years of war the soul gets emptier and emptier. The word of the Lord is precious. The world can only live again through the men who, whether they know God or not, put themselves into the receptive attitude that God may speak to them, and they may communicate to others.

It is not merely the R. C.'s who stand between men and God. All Churches do. They monopolise God's word—or claim to be the exponents of it. Even the Bible may come between us and God, though throughout it teaches consistently the fact that God speaks direct without the

help of Churches (surely this is the whole lesson of the Prophets).

Feb. 23, 1918.—I want to talk about the Kingdom of God to-morrow, but every time I try I always feel that I fail hopelessly, and become vague and incoherent. What does it really mean to a clog in a machine? Something purely internal and personal? Does he need to think consciously about it? Because if so there really seem so few people who are capable of following up a line of thought. I had a memorandum from *Life and Liberty*, which I answered in a hurry, and I fear I merely expressed some of my exaggerated views which are familiar to you. If the Church is to be self-governed, I do not want the governors to be the ecclesiastically minded, or necessarily the kind of people who are capable of thinking out things. Not because thought is not essential, but the thinking man is not the ordinary, practical man. He must be there to supply the thought, but I don't think I want him to govern. As I have learnt it, Christianity is something that requires thought; and yet the majority of people do not think, but they still have character and influence. But I digress from the Kingdom. What can it mean to the ordinary, unthinking man?

I got so far on Saturday, and now it is Monday, and I cannot continue in this strain. I spoke four times yesterday, and tried to show that the Kingdom was not remote—something following death—but at hand, and that we have gone wrong in teaching children to sing " Above the bright blue sky," etc. The war, instead of alienating men from the Kingdom, should only determine them to care more about it. The entrance to it is penitence, a complete change of direction for every one.

To his sister Gemma—

Feb. 28, 1918.—Life is strangely empty and futile. We live in comfort, ease and luxury, a life of perfect uselessness and purposelessness. Last night was very wild, the wind howled and the rain poured and I lay in bed reading *Sinister Street* till after one, and then lay thinking what a futile empty life I was leading. I feel I shall utterly degenerate if I do not get some hard work soon. I am certain we are all degenerating. Manliness, courage, sacrifice are not the only virtues. If the mind rusts, the whole machinery goes out of order.

I am buried in *Sinister Street* and much absorbed by it, and in some ways like it immensely. Nearly all the more psychological books I have read lately, *The Loom of Youth* and *Dead Yesterday* are fundamentally pessimistic. In all, life seems to be strangely purposeless and disillusioned. These are the books about people who think. Is it really better not to think, and then you can remain optimistic and believe that if only the war ends, life will become a lucid story again? I think we have got into the way of believing that. Peace Day will serve as a talisman for all ills. I read such a profoundly true sermon of Robertson's on " Purity " yesterday, " To the pure all things are pure." Do you know it? We are the creators of the world. The world has no real objective existence apart from ourselves. What we see is what we help to create. To blame the external for our emptiness is false; we are to blame. Is this true of war? Is it our own fault if it looks ugly, stupid, wasteful? I suppose we ought to be able to look calmly at it and see only the beautiful side, which, after all exists. What right have we to think that peace will make any real change?

March 1, 1918.—We leave our huge château to-morrow and join the Brigade, for which I shall in many ways be glad; I feel quite anxious to be with the batteries again. It is tantalising in a way leaving just as spring is coming on. The daffodils have been out in the woods for some days now. The woods smell of spring, and I have been wandering in them occasionally. I found three of the men in a valley yesterday, sitting on a log, and took them off for a walk up a little wooded valley I had discovered. They were quite enchanted and it was nice to see the men in a different light: "Like England " one said.

March 6, 1918.—We have moved and are fighting now. This is the time of year when every one is full of anticipation. After the peaceful indolent time we had at rest, every one is head over ears in work. I had almost got into the way of forgetting war was on. For three months I have not had to fill in a burial return. Now we are beginning war in earnest. For the first time this year I was back among the shells again yesterday.

March 16, 1918.—It has been splendid weather for getting about, and I have been up to the guns a good deal. Life is quite extraordinarily quiet up there. One day I went up and found the men sitting outside their dug-outs having a

series of little picnic teas. A little later I found a series of old shell holes with a man in each having a bathe. Never a shell comes over.

We had rather an amusing afternoon yesterday. I invited a party of American Engineers over from a neighbouring camp to see a performance by our concert troupe. Several of their officers came over and a number of ours, besides a hundred or so men. The troupe has tremendously improved, and we have fixed up quite a good theatre. They were an enthusiastic audience. There is a tremendous competition over here in troupes, as practically every division has its own—without something of the sort what would the men do out here? They give the men new tunes to sing, and a little relief from the endless monotony of their lives.

March 20, 1918.—Personally I am enjoying life. We have had no casualties this year. The men are all very comfortable. The weather has been simply wonderful until yesterday when the rain started, and has been going on ever since. . . .

March 25, 1918.—I got as far as this, meaning to finish next morning, but that, as you know, was the day war began again.[1] I could not tell you anything even if I knew. We really had no news beyond our immediate front, until we got our newspapers yesterday. Meanwhile we live on rumours, which are most unsatisfactory. Somehow one always imagines the worst. I try to be philosophical and feel it is really better that something should happen likely to lead to the end of the war. The stagnation we were getting into was most unhealthy. As you will have seen in the papers, our Division has covered itself with glory. It is a great thing these days being with such a first-class division. As usual, the gunners are surpassing themselves and full of zest. These young majors thoroughly enjoy it and go night after night without sleep.

March 31, 1918.—I have hardly written lately owing to the general sense of uncertainty and suspense. You must have read something about the Division and the splendid work it did at the beginning of the German offensive, but that was nothing to the way it broke a far more terrible and persistent attack last Thursday. It was really quite wonderful, considering the long time it had been in the

[1] The great German spring offensive.

line. I don't know how much one ought to say at present, but no division has a better name in France to-day. The gunners have been quite wonderful, and I am full of admiration for them; and mercifully they have never had so few casualties—not a single officer. It is a tremendous comfort to have been in a part of the battle where the Germans have failed so signally.[1] It would have been terrible to have been further south. Of the rest of the battle we know no more than you. I think I only feel all the more the utter stupidity and imbecility of it all—the way so many men have to put all their energy and strength into such terribly futile things. After all what can war decide? How hateful it all is!

To his sister Mary—

April 3, 1918.—At last there is a good opportunity for writing. We are for the moment as far out of the war as it is possible to be. We arrived at this little village yesterday afternoon. It is the birthplace of a Saint. Consequently there are pilgrimages here, a huge church, a field full of little shrines, and a nunnery where one of the sections has its Officers' Mess. The whole place simply exudes Roman Catholicism. At every corner there is a shrine or a crucifix. Every room in every house I have seen is hung with sacerdotal pictures—ladies exposing their hearts—hearts all by themselves—tables with a rosary wound round—every face gaunt and haggard as they strain after the unattainable. The nuns are fat, cheery, bustling, ready to sell a rosary, or a picture of the Saint; quite different to their pictures. The one or two shops are full of the same things. We are living in a quaint old house, with actually a flower garden—the first I have seen here. The books downstairs are a series of lives of Saints, Catechisms, Meditations, etc. I am sitting in my bedroom looking out over the garden. The only blemish is a nasty little white china saint in a niche in the side of a little mound, with a nice umbrella tree on the top of it. My bed is in an alcove in the wall, beside it is a picture of a woman tearing her dress aside and exposing her bust with a large heart in the middle of it. There is another cross on the chest of drawers, and a small picture of a saint. The church bell rings every half hour or so.

[1] The 3rd Division were in the line south of Arras.

I went into one and found a vested priest in the sanctuary, kneeling and shooting his head forward and back like a Chinese mandarin, only faster and more violently. He never stopped as I wandered round the church, but whenever I looked up I caught, in the corner of my eye, the sight of that head shooting out and back. All rather a contrast to the great war and the great offensive. Surely the whole world needs to be shaken up and awakened to realities, to living things, to life itself. We seem to live under such a ghastly nightmare of bogies and falsehoods. The chief religion one meets is either this, or the belief in bogies, that haunts ninety-nine per cent. of Englishmen. The average officer absolutely refuses to have three candles alight in the room, or to light three cigarettes with one match (a superstition said to have been invented by Bryant and May's in the days when matches were plentiful). We nearly had thirteen for our Christmas dinner, and much trouble had to be taken to find a fourteenth. The adjutant dropped the salt the other day. "Damn," he said, and turned very pink and took two pinches of salt and threw them over his shoulder. "Touch wood" is a daily injunction.

The Division has covered itself with glory. The artillery came out practically as it went in. It had phenomenal good luck—if escaping death these days means good luck. It did extraordinarily good work. Battery commanders for almost the first time could see their targets. They watched their shells destroying Germans. They fired with open sights at them coming over ridges. They broke up attacks. Several have said to me: "You know I am enjoying this," or "I have never had such sport in my life," or "This has been the best week of the war." These are the sort of sentiments the newspapers love to get hold of, which make our hearts thrill with pride for our brave soldiers. Meanwhile the infantry sit in badly made trenches and are blown to pieces by German shells. I spent one afternoon and evening in the absolutely drenching rain, helping to pack them into ambulances—every one a shell wound. Probably the majority of the wounded were never got back. Then I get a memorandum from *Life and Liberty* asking what the men are thinking about the self-government of the Church. People meet in committees and conferences in London and the Provinces, and discuss those things, and wonder we do not thrill with

excitement over their audacious proposals. They get wildly excited because they have heard of a brothel kept for soldiers in some small place, and think that by shutting it they will save our pure-minded young men from temptation.

Why do I jump from point to point like this? Simply because, as one gropes about among all these riddles, the old truth comes back that at whatever cost one must, regardless of all else, cling to truth, beauty, and, if possible, friendship. The war itself is only incidental. What is the advantage of peace unless it is going to build up these things? Sometimes I feel one gets nearer these things in the heat of war, and that peace will only drag us back further and deeper into ugliness, selfishness and falseness.

Well, I am hoping for a leave in about three weeks' time with any luck.

April 3, 1918.—We are in the most singularly peaceful spot and the day is before us with nothing to do. It is real April weather and everything is looking beautifully fresh.

We are moving almost daily now. We spent Easter Day in a village, and I held three Celebrations, to which a number of officers came, but practically no men. The war is really breaking no barriers down. The hardest line ever drawn in human society is that between officers and men. Do what you will you cannot destroy or even lessen it. I know of no officer who shares the thoughts of his men. He thinks that looking after them and making them comfortable is all that is necessary. But they live in two different worlds, and the chaplain lives in the officers' world. I don't think it can be avoided; it is part of the price of war, I suppose. But I don't think that the Americans are the same. Also I think that probably the Y.M.C.A. method is the only really human one. There only the men attend services and Celebrations and the officers never. It must be either the one or the other.

The second place we stopped at I enjoyed much. It had been badly shelled and bombed and most of its inhabitants had fled. But there was an estaminet there, with a delightful set of people. Madame was a wonderful woman and so plucky. She stuck on though there were two enormous shell holes close to the house. She slaved

and toiled all day and would do anything for us. Then there were other women and various children. Every house was full of refugees. I made great friends with the children, who were quite charming, not at all shy and very intelligent. Little Jules spent most of the day with me and we went about buying eggs, butter and milk, climbing trees, looking at shell holes and drawing pictures.

We are out of the war altogether.[1] Compliments from the King downwards are being poured on the Division, which has fought magnificently. The Generals and Staff are in extraordinarily good temper.

Meanwhile we know less about the war than you at home do. Some say the Germans have won this last battle; some that they have lost tremendously. Who knows? Probably the real truth is the same as about all other battles here. Another draw, another proof of the ultimate impossibility of violence to settle anything, and a realisation that peace will only come when people decide to have it.

April 9, 1918.—We are once more leading a life of disgraceful comfort and ease in the very centre of civilisation. I am sitting in my bedroom where I am sleeping in sheets in a very comfortable bed and have a bath every morning. Round us are nothing but mines, and the place reminds me more of a Durham mining district than anything else. The people are all most extraordinarily kind and hospitable, and cannot do too much for us. I have got hold of a large hall, with a fine stage for concerts.

I had a tremendous day on Sunday. The brigades are a long way off. I began with a large service in the hall. Then I started to walk and jump on lorries with a pack on my back and a bag in my hand. I had ten miles to go and had to walk nearly half way for a service for the Trench Mortars. Then at two o'clock I went to a neighbouring village and had a memorial service in a battery for some men who had recently been killed. Then at 6.30 I finished up with a splendid service in the Y.M.C.A. at yet another large village. I enjoyed preaching to them so much.[2] I finished at 7.30, and started off a little later

[1] The Division was in Rest Billets west of Bethunes.

[2] Of this, one who was present writes: "I entered while he was preaching. His subject was evidently the joy of religion. His face was aglow with interest, and his whole soul seemed to be in his theme. He presented a very striking appearance which I shall never

on a ten-mile walk back without any supper, getting in at 10.15. It was a gorgeous night fortunately, and I was not really tired when I got in.

To his sister Gemma—

April 9, 1918.—The war goes on, and I really am beginning to think something will happen soon. I mean something decisive. I don't know what. But Germany is out for a decision, and there will be no respite till she has done all she can. I feel one must prepare oneself for anything. But it is useless worrying. After all, the war is to decide for all time whether the superman idea or the democratic is the stronger. I keep wondering whether we have not possibly taken democracy rather for granted. I see the Germans say in one of their papers that the success of the late offensive was due *not* to superior numbers, but to superior brains. What I learned from the late offensive was that where properly led, with the backing of really capable staff work, our men can fight as well as any one. It all comes back to the brains behind, to organisation, foresight, grasp of a situation, coolness, judgment, etc. This is where we fail, and our failure here is due to our failure in training people in peace-time. We have been far too easy-going, indolent, generally decadent and incompetent. The Germans could not possibly beat us if we were properly organised and directed. The great argument in favour of democracy is that every one is supposed to have brains and so ultimately there is no necessity for leaders. I still have hope in America, because I think the Americans have brains. The German army is entirely controlled by people with brains. If they have not got them they are soon got rid of. If they win, it will mean that, as far as this world is concerned, the superman triumphs. Democracy has degenerated into multitudinous meetings, conferences, pow-wows of every possible kind—talk, talk, talk. The superman will have won because while others have been talking, he has been working.

Meanwhile what about Christianity? Personally I

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forget. Especially when he emphasised the words, 'Then were the disciples *glad* when they saw the Lord.' Very beautifully he showed how the source of our joy is to be found in the companionship of Jesus Christ."

always feel it has nothing to do with it. The Kaiser never mentions Christ, nor does the King. Royal messages always talk about God and faith in God's support. The word God means practically nothing beyond a vague, supreme power who ultimately overrules all things. This brings one no further at all. The Christian has Christ for God and does not trouble to make any distinction. Christ is God, and in learning from Him we learn from God. Now this is such an elementary fact that it seems to escape people's notice. Or we have a dualistic religion—a faith in Christ mystical and personal, and a faith in God of the royal kind—a kind of war God and disposer of the destinies of the world. Well, personally that religion I leave to kings and generals. If I have a God, He is Christ and Christ *only*. I know nothing about any other God, so I am not going to worry about a supreme disposer of the destinies of the world. At Easter-time I always feel the personal note of Christianity. "This day shalt *thou* be with Me," "Mary," "Follow thou Me." And the corporate side is simply the conglomeration of personal followers. "Ye shall be My witnesses." "Even so send I you," etc., etc. "My Kingdom is not of this world." Christ—God—takes us away even now from the world. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Well, we are getting that all right. And yet we are always praying to be delivered from it. We are always planning and scheming for a world devoid of tribulation. I suppose it would come if we were all to be Christians.

I tried to express some of my thoughts on Sunday night, when I had a Celebration in a Y.M.C.A. hut, with a delightful mixed congregation, and I believe helped at any rate one man there. "Peace be with you." The disciples behind closed doors, and the raging world outside. It is symbolical of all time, only they must not remain behind the doors. "Even so send I you." We need to-day the religion of Christ and His peace brought to all men.

Immediately after this last letter was written, the enemy attacked the line in front and the division was rushed out to meet the attack. Mr. Andrews asked a gunner if he had seen Oswin, and was told: "You have just missed him, he is dashing about in the same cheery

manner as ever, as if nothing unusual were happening." This was in the midst of the heaviest shelling ever experienced by the Division. There was much difficulty in the general confusion in arranging to see after the burying of the many men who had been killed during the attack and whose bodies lay scattered everywhere. Oswin volunteered to undertake the organisation of the burying of the men for the whole front. He did not live to carry out this task. He had gone up to a battery position, and had just greeted the men in his usual cheery way, and was preparing to enter the hut when a shell burst, killing instantaneously him and the three men with whom he was talking.

As one who knew him well said: "One feels so sure he would have rejoiced in his death. He was so absolutely without fear of it, so absolutely ready for it, and must have met it with a smile. It is impossible to imagine him as other than alive or to suppose he was wrong in thinking that he would find another life which he could use and enjoy."

The Colonel of the Division wrote: "He had been with us over eighteen months, and all ranks were much attached to him. With his strong personality, courage, and good spirits, he was an example for us all. He worked indefatigably for the men, and no day was too long, or trouble too great, when their comfort was concerned. His charm of manner was very great, and he was a man of deeds not words. He was fearless of death, and I am sure the death was such as he would have chosen."

His desire had been to be always amongst his men, and he was buried as he would have wished between two of them in the little military cemetery at Choques. "Many officers of various units gathered for his burial," wrote one who was there, "which told what men thought of him, and how they admired his fearless character."

I add some remarks made by those who had watched his work.

"It is no exaggeration to say that no one had the welfare of the gunners and drivers more at heart than he had. The canteens—which were entirely originated and kept going by his efforts—and the dramatic troupe were only some of the things he did for the men. He just got things done,

he never cared two straws how much he might possibly offend the powers that be by his innovations; he went straight ahead. He worked hard *for others*. He had the right ideas and the right ideals."

"His men spoke of him with the greatest admiration; he was devoted to them, and no shells ever kept him away from his work."

"The work which he did in this Division with the gunners was splendid, and his untiring energy was simply exemplary. I shall personally miss him very much, and I know no one will be able to fill his post in such an energetic and original way. He knew his men so well."

"Three months ago, when I joined the division as Wesleyan Chaplain, your son showed me much kindness. His long experience and knowledge of the army I found most helpful, and he freely gave me whatever assistance I needed. I greatly enjoyed our fellowship together. I shall not soon forget the experience of last Good Friday. We were unable to have a parade service, as the guns were in action, but your son and I in his little tent read the service together and kept the day with prayer and thanksgiving. In the afternoon he and I visited the men at the guns. He pushed on ahead with that resistless energy which characterised him. He was deeply concerned about some poor fellow who had been killed the day before, and on our way to the guns we read the Burial Service over these dear fellows who had been hastily buried without any service. His amazing energy and splendid physique enabled him to accomplish an extraordinary amount of work. He was the most unselfish man I have met, never thinking for one moment of his own needs. I shall never forget how insistently he emphasised the life of service. "I want to do something for the men," he used to say again and again. At his own suggestion, we arranged to have parade services at which Church of England and Nonconformists should be united for worship, and these services we took alternately."

In his letters much of Oswin's inner self is revealed. A few remarks made by those who knew him will perhaps help to show the impression he made upon others.

"His energy and activity struck everybody. Whilst others were wondering how to do a job, he would accomplish what was necessary while they were still considering." Yet with this energy was combined a good deal of the artistic temperament. He could dream and potter over trifles and be at times strangely untidy and unbusiness-like. He loved music, and though unwilling to learn the piano as a boy, he taught himself as a young man to play with a good deal of ease and execution. To go to the opera was one of his keenest pleasures. He loved sketching and would spend happy hours attempting boldly the most impossible subjects. Flowers, country, above all English country, were a constant delight to him, and his enjoyment was always loudly expressed. He was a keen and enthusiastic traveller. During a brief tour in Italy his companion wrote: "There is no restraining him; his tastes are very universal; after sightseeing all day he insists on going to cinemas in the evening." But though his interests were so keen, his curiosity so alive, he was in no sense a student, except in so far as he was a student of life and of men. And it was the exuberance of the life in him which made the strongest impression upon those who came in contact with him. "The spirit of life in Oswin was the first thing which struck me. I cannot remember any one who had his kind of vitality in the same way. He had physical energy, of course, and energy of will, and an ardour of faith which never failed him; but there was a life in him which seemed almost too candid and spontaneous to be described exactly, and I think of it as a spirit or impulse rather than as anything more deliberate. It seemed to pass into everything that interested him and colour it; and it was extraordinarily fresh and receptive, without being indiscriminate. He was attracted by anything that was alive, and had a very quick eye for what was not vivid or genuine."

"Never have I met a soul at once so simple and so life-giving. It was as if one were in direct contact with him, without any outer shell to break through—complete abnegation of self, while being all the time somehow intensely himself. He had that perfect harmony of the spiritual and the human which one generally sees only in children, but lodged in so virile a character that it would have seemed quite natural to lean on him."

He struck people as very young for his years, and he

himself always maintained that he had developed very late. There were those who called him "naïve." "What was his 'naïveté' like? He was astonishingly young—ten years younger than his age one might have thought. He had not been in the least overgrown with the prudences and hesitations which most of us go in for. Perhaps one reason why he seemed so young was because he made as straight as a child for what interested him and did not pretend to be amused by what did not. He would not be put off by conventional estimates, but was always ready for a new view, and he tested things by their truth to life. As everything, and every person, was something fresh and new to him, he was instantly sympathetic to children and simple people."

"He had that quick, understanding way with him, almost like a woman's, which made him such a very pleasant companion."

With his eager desire to see things accomplished, which must have made him sometimes seem too managing, and as he said himself too "inclined to boss," and though he was often impatient and critical of the ineffectiveness of others, he was yet "essentially modest." Some, no doubt, thought him "intolerably cocksure and aggressive. He was blessedly unconventional in going straight to the point, and his ideas probably formed very quickly, and became part of himself which he could not help expressing. But if you produced a correction which really was a correction, he took it humbly and he always wanted to learn."

His brother-in-law, Cyril Bailey, thus describes his first impression of him in 1915: "I felt him from the first a very marked personality. There was no interval of getting to know one another; torrents of talk, often rather irrelevant, sometimes tedious, sometimes I felt with only half a grip on the point at issue, but yet with a curious intuition, which might at any moment go to the heart of things in a flash. In action, too, he showed the same feverish energy and the habit of total immersion in the thing of the moment, all eagerness to try any experiment, and yet there, too, the unconscious revelation that he was sure of the ultimate purpose. His work in establishing the canteens in Alexandria and Mudros was not, I think, organisation in the ordinary sense of the word, but much more the intuition for what was needed at the

moment, and the will to bring it into being. His energy was spasmodic and opportunist in one sense, yet all the time he knew almost unconsciously what he was after.

"He had a keen sense of humour, especially perhaps of the humour in persons, which must often have helped him in difficult times and was a large element in the charm of his companionship.

"I should not say that he had the philosophical mind. The 'thinking' which he believed to be the first need of the present time and which he practised so 'furiously' himself, was concrete, not abstract. And this was perhaps the reason why he was so perfectly fearless in attacking the biggest questions and worrying them like a terrier."

It was probably this quality which made many find him so stimulating. "His point of view was commonly so original that he gave constant food for thought and stirred men from their lethargy."

Others dwell on his unfailing sympathy. "How much he helped me—and I am just one of many—he may never know, but his readiness to help every man, his utter unselfishness and unfailing cheerfulness made him beloved by all who knew him. He was as true as steel."

Dr. Burge (the present Bishop of Oxford), as Chairman of the Council of the Western Canada Fund, took a special interest in Oswin, and wrote: "I was very much drawn to Oswin from the first, and the few talks we had together revealed to me the beauty of his character; he seemed to be so entirely sincere and naturally loyal, so thoughtful and real."

The letters show what was the foundation of Oswin's religious faith. He cared little for the problems of theology. "It was really unique in him that he could combine an almost restless uprooting of thoughts and beliefs with a wonderful fundamental faith." "He was willing to pull up almost every custom or tradition by the roots, and, if necessary, fling it on the rubbish heap, yet his faith in Christ never wavered for an instant."

His beloved "Professor" (Canon B. K. Cunningham) wrote of him: "When I think of Oswin's burning indignation against all that he thought to be false or unjust, his hunger and thirst for what was true and righteous, and the eagerness of his love, I do not think that numbers of years could have added anything to their completeness, the years could only have disciplined them."

I close with the words of one who knew him well—

"His simple, unswerving, unquestioning faith will always be an immense inspiration to me. It always seemed the great fact about him, that he showed how obvious and inevitable a complete faith in God was to him, something so instinctive and unwavering that it shone above all the terrible times he had in the war. It is not a common thing to meet and must have inspired so many."

APPENDIX

Oswin's Answer to the Questions sent out by the Committee of Inquiry on "The Army and Religion."

Of this paper Mr. J. H. Oldham said that more than any other of the answers it seemed to go to the heart of the situation.

"It is exceedingly difficult at the present moment to be able to judge at all satisfactorily of the state of religion among the men. In many ways they seem wonderfully little changed by the war, and any observations made might apply equally well to pre-war conditions. And yet the war is bound to have its effect. Again, war conditions are unnatural and artificial. Men are away from their homes and from the society of women. I suppose in few countries does home stand for more than in England, especially among those who have to work for their living. The men realise this quite clearly. I have often been told, when I have asked the question, 'Do you think the war has made you better or worse?' 'Better, because it has made me appreciate home more.' The sheaves of letters men write show this. A photograph is always in every man's pocket-book, which he never tires of showing. His one desire is that the war may be over, so that he may get home. The only time, as a rule, when his wrath is stirred against the enemy is when he hears of an air-raid on English homes. If this is so, how can you see a man as he really is away from home? You must see him in a false, unnatural light.

"Then, again, army conditions are of necessity artificial owing to necessities of military discipline. As a rule, there is the best of relationships between all ranks. But an officer cannot and may not associate with a man under natural conditions. It is almost impossible even for a chaplain, however much he may try. The men cannot forget that they stand in a special relation to officers and

N.C.O.'s. Officers get to know each other intimately, so do sergeants, and so do the men. If the chaplain tries to be on intimate terms with all, he is very liable to fall foul of one or the other. He may do all kinds of things for the men, but must not speak freely to them, unless he uses the most continual discretion. But all this must be obvious; it is only stated to show how difficult it is to arrive at conclusions and how cautiously they must be taken.

"Generally speaking, and here I find every one agrees with me, the men are *not* thinking at all. They are just carrying on. Much material for thought no doubt is being subconsciously hoarded up. I should like to make a few observations at the risk of appearing dogmatic and exaggerated, because I believe they lie at the root of the inquiry.

"Englishmen—as contrasted probably with Frenchmen, Russians, possibly even Germans—do not think, and never have thought. They have not either been helped or expected to. (1) Education has been merely imposition—the learning of lessons, not the stimulus to think. Education stops at fourteen for the vast bulk, at an age when a boy has not, as a rule, the capacity for independent thought. Public School and University education have too often sacrificed thought to good form. (2) Industrial conditions, trade unionism, etc., seem to have entirely militated against independent thought. A man must industrially do as he is told, and politically and socially follow leaders who do the thinking for him. The only men out here who, as a class, have the capacity for independent thought are the Colonials. Their constant observation about Englishmen is that they have no initiative, which, of course, can only spring from independent thought. (3) Religion has been in practically all denominations simply dogmatic, whether negatively or positively. What denomination has, for instance, adopted as its first tenet 'Seek and ye shall find,' or 'When the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth'? I asked an officer of very saintly and deeply religious character, perhaps rather Evangelical by upbringing, and a corporal, also deeply religious and very Catholic in training: 'Can you really be a Christian without thinking? Is, for instance, the simple, good old woman, pious and kindly, really a Christian, except in

germ?' They both said 'No.' You must think and be stimulated to think, to be a real follower of the Logos —the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

"The Churches—once the pioneers and champions of independent thought—have sacrificed it to orthodoxy, dogmatism, formality, emotionalism, etc. The cry is still the same: 'Where is the place of understanding?' All this has been said so often that it is perhaps hardly worth repeating. But it is almost useless asking what are the men *thinking* about things when they are not thinking at all. I have proved and tested this in many ways. I have had many debates and discussions, formal and informal, among the men, and they have always admitted this. Eventually we decided the next debate must be on 'The Causes of, and the Remedy for Ignorance,' which led to much fruitful discussion.

"Most things really come from this cause; for instance, men are usually immoral from ignorance or thoughtlessness or want of understanding what morality means. They drink because they are ignorant of intellectual stimulus. They swear—and this is the perpetual excuse —without meaning it. They cannot even use language which has any meaning. Their letters are appalling, absolutely failing in originality or interest. Their conversation is the merest drivel. They spend hours in playing a game like house, because it requires no thought. A great deal of this thoughtlessness is due to war conditions. Men may have had independent interests before the war, and other opportunities for stimulating thought, which are impossible now. Hence both officers and men take the line of least resistance and follow the crowd.

"The officers practically universally decorate their mess with rude and suggestive pictures, talk incessant filth, and make it an almost universal practice either to have sexual intercourse on leave, or to say they have, because it is the right thing. Hardly an officer out here has enough to do to occupy his time except during really stringent fighting. There are no regular hours. They go to bed and get up when they like, if not actually on duty. At his post the average British Officer is one of the noblest of men, nothing that can be said about him is too much. But in mess or on leave they seem to degenerate at once. I consider that the root of the whole matter lies in the mind, and that certain chapters—vii., viii., and ix.—of

that much-neglected book of Proverbs throw more light on the subject than anything else. If wisdom is neglected, the inevitable result is what we find to-day. The Church, which should be the place of understanding and the ground of truth, the dwelling-place of the Logos, has degenerated either into emotional ritual, or hymn-singing, or secluded and entrenched piety. It has gone into its trenches for safety and let the world pass by. It neither understands the world nor touches it at any point. Men are heartily tired of it in any form. For Heaven's sake do not let the Y.M.C.A. think that a sloppy, emotional, vague hymn-singing, teetotal, purity religion is going to be of any value whatever. Its clear and only course is to build up a society, straining after truth, holding wisdom, as Job did, as above the price of all else.

"I could go on indefinitely elaborating this point. The obvious criticism will be that most of what I have said is negative, and I have painted an unnecessarily black and very one-sided picture of the men's character. With practically everything I have read or heard said in their favour I entirely agree. I am increasingly and incessantly astounded at their qualities. How men can go on as many of my men have now done, for three years, with often only four days at home during that time, under the conditions we have to face out here, and yet remain so unchangeably cheerful and ready to do and face anything, is something one could never have imagined in peace time. The wheat and the tares grow together, and the wheat is what counts. It is a wonderfully strong growth, but so are the tares. And either they grow much more vigorously or we are more able to see the growth in war-time than in peace.

"But there is one positive statement I should like to make. Almost all men enjoy thinking if they are helped to think. The most valuable work a chaplain can do is to stimulate thought by good conversation in messes or bivouacs. He must not come with a programme or a bias. Let him chaff, provoke, challenge, draw out, direct, stimulate—but never assert, impose, or dogmatise, unless he is absolutely clear. Let him love the men. Their hearts are open wide. That is the most wonderful part of the war. If it empties already empty minds, it warms and opens what before were very confined and reserved hearts. The door is open. But it will be rapidly closed

against any mere programme of services and pi-jaws. The men do not understand themselves and their own nature. What is the primary and essential qualification of a Christian worker or teacher if not to know 'what is in man' like their Master? Here is the failure of practically all parsons, ministers, church or Y.M.C.A. workers. I am only at the age of thirty-four beginning to have a little knowledge of my fellowmen. If the Christian Church is composed of men who both love and know, it will challenge the world. But love without knowledge, and knowledge without love, will do nothing. I am always surprised to find how the men with whom I absolutely fail to do anything on the old orthodox lines of services, etc., respond to a really good discussion, or love a stimulating talk. The difficulty is to drag oneself away. 'When are you coming again to finish that argument?' 'What a relief it is to talk about something different! We have been discussing that point ever since.' These are the kind of remarks so often made. Of course, men's talk can degenerate into so much air. It must always have action and the moulding of character or the directing of movements as its ultimate goal.

"To sum up. The war reveals that the Englishman is the best-hearted, most enduring, and most ignorant and least original man in the world. The work of the Church is to help him to build up what he has not got on the basis of what he has. An understanding Church is our great need."

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