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Lies!



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BY THE REV.

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"ROUGH RHYMES OF A PADRE," "ROUGH TALES OF A PADRE"

"MORE ROUGH RHYMES OF A PADRE," "THE HARDEST PART"

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Dedication

TO ALL THOSE WHO FEEL THAT THE TITLE IS
AN EXACT DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENTS,
THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED IN
THE HOPE THAT A SECOND READING MAY
LEAD THEM TO THINK OTHERWISE.

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INTRODUCTION

It is an unsatisfactory business this book. I feel rather like a man driven desperate by midges on a summer's day. This post-war world is black with lies—biting and buzzing round everything. This wretched thing is too small to do much damage, and it must be spoiled by all the biting I have suffered as I wrote it. The only way to write pure truth in these days would be to write nothing but prayers. But people are so bitten with lies that they have lost the taste for pure prayers. If one gets near enough to God, lies don't matter, they are harmless; but it is the getting to God. There are so many poor unfortunate beggars that cannot see any God for this cloud of lies. We must get out of it and get to God or—— Well, I do not know what is coming, but it is going to be something awful. There's a bad smell about—a very bad smell; it is like the smell of the Dead—it is the smell of dead souls. I can

smell hell. If only men could smell once more the lilies that grew by the Empty Tomb! They must—they are there. In the future there must be, not death, but Resurrection. Get to work and bury the Dead—bury the dead, and make room for the living. There are too many lies. I only know one sure and certain refuge. I find it on my knees. But that is selfish—or is it? Perhaps one ought to pray and not write. But I must write. Why don't people pray? That is the only real weapon. There are a lot of prayers worked into this. It may do some good. God grant it does no harm. If you think it will, pray that it may not, and then write and curse me. It may help.

G. A. STUDDERT KENNEDY.

ST. PAUL'S VICARAGE,
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THE BOOK OF BROKEN DREAMS

THE Bible is in one way the saddest book in the world. Its supremest beauty is the beauty of its broken dreams. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and say unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The words thrill one down the ages with their beauty of courage and hope; but it is a heart-rending beauty when one compares the dream with the reality of history. Peace, Prosperity, and Comfort were always coming to the Holy City, but they never came. There is only one Bible prophecy about Jerusalem that ever found literal fulfilment, and that was uttered by One greater than the prophets, in a voice all choked with tears:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, even as a hen

gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. If thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy Peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground ; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another ; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

That was the end of the prophet's dream, a dreary ruin and a silence only broken by the wailing of his people outside their shattered walls. The dream was broken on the rocks of History. So it is with all the Bible's fairest dreams, when one faces facts. Hundreds of books have been written to show how prophecy has been fulfilled ; very ingenious books which juggle about with figures, and play with arbitrary rules to prove that the writer of the Book of Daniel knew about Napoleon. They all seem to me to be a jumble of pathetic nonsense. The truth about Bible prophecy is that it has never yet come true. It remains to be fulfilled. God's golden age lies on

ahead. I wish some one, instead of being content with playing with figures and the number of the Beast, could make it come to pass that "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." When? When is it coming True? Is it ever coming True? Hope springs eternal in the human breast—and a good thing too, or history would have killed it centuries ago. But history cannot kill hope. That is the wonderful part of it. We have just been through another Hell, and we are at it again, dreaming dreams and seeing visions, a new Britain, a new Europe, a new World, and Peace, lasting Peace.

The air is full of dreams. Will they ever come true?

Peace we were pledged, yet blood is ever flowing :

Where on the earth has ever Peace been found?

Men do but reap the harvest of their sowing,

Sadly the songs of human reapers sound.

Sad as the wind that sweeps across the ocean,

Telling to earth the sorrow of the sea,

Vain is my strife, just empty idle motion,

All that has been is all there is to be.

So on the earth the time-waves beat and thunder,
 Bearing wrecked hopes upon their heaving breasts,
Bits of dead dreams and true hearts torn asunder,
 Flecked with red foam upon their crimson crests.

Will history repeat itself, and bring our dreams to ruin on the rocks of time? History is so utterly merciless about War. We in Britain were accustomed to think of the nineteenth century as a time of progress, prosperity, and peace. That was a comfortable lie. The facts turn me sick. The real nineteenth century was just a shambles. There was War in the world regularly every four years. I carried the facts—the dry facts of history—out to France in 1915. I was always interested in military history. Yes, that's the word, interested. I was just interested because I knew nothing. Battles were just the movements on the chess-board of the world to me. I was as innocent, as fatuously, idiotically innocent as most young men of my generation. I carried the interesting facts into my first battle, and there they came to life, they roared and thundered, they dripped with blood, they cursed, mocked, blasphemed, and cried like a child

for mercy. They stood up before me like obscene spectres, beckoning with bloody hands, laughing like fiends at my little parochial religion, and my silly parochial God. I can remember running over an open space under shell-fire trying madly to fit in the dates, and every shrieking shell kept yelling at me with foul oaths: Now do you understand, you miserable little parson with your petty shibboleths, this is W—A—R—War, and History is War—and this is what History means. How about gentle Jesus, God the Father, and the Peace of God—how about it? I saw the face of Christ in His agony, and remembered some Sunday School children singing in shrill childish voices:

Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.

Then I found the man I was looking for, and stopped thinking. But as I think again of the nineteenth-century Wars it all comes back to me. It isn't this War, it is History in the light of this War that we Christians have to face. Here is the case in a nutshell. Does God will War? Is it part of His

mysterious plan? Are the Militarist historians right? I answer: "If God wills War, then I am morally mad, and I don't know good from evil." War is the most obviously wicked thing I know. If God wills War then I am not an atheist, I am an anti-theist. I am against God. I hate Him. Does God hate War? Does He will its abolition? Does He will Peace on earth? Does God will that the Bible's broken dreams come true? That to me is an obvious Truth—the first one. Why doesn't He make them come True then? Because He can't without our willing co-operation—that is to me another obvious Truth, the second one. Whatever God does for us must be done through us. It is no use asking God to make Peace for us over our heads. It must be made by us with God's help. Do you think that this is the business of the League of Nations? Are you trusting to President Wilson to utter a magic Peace be still, and hush the storms of Europe into calm? I tell you God Almighty can't make Peace without your help, never mind President Wilson or Lloyd George. There is only one

Power that can make Peace, and that is the Power of God at work in the hearts and minds of the great mass of the human race—the Power of God at work in Public Opinion. This is the power that can change the world, God in Public Opinion. For centuries the people have been driven into Wars like sheep, because there was no Public Opinion. The people did not think these matters concerned them. They were not allowed to think. The great new power that the progress, the weary, blood-stained progress, of the years has brought to birth is the power of Public Opinion, and every man, woman, and child in the world has a duty to perform in creating, fostering, and supporting it. That is the real meaning of Democracy for which we have been fighting. There is a lot of sickening cant and clap-trap talked about Democracy. To most men it means anything or nothing. Our politicians at election times teach us that it means getting each his private heaven by voting for it. Except ye vote for Mr. Snooks and the Coalition ye cannot see the Kingdom of God. We are spoon-fed on

splendid platitudes like "Government of the people, for the people, by the people." Which means exactly God knows what. The first meaning of Democracy is duty, universal duty. It means that every man and woman bears a responsibility, and has a duty to perform for their country, for Europe, and the world. Actual executive government must always be carried on by the few for the many. Public Opinion must always be created as a power by the many for the few. In that work of creation we all must and do bear a part. The individual mind is the drop out of which, when it is multiplied by millions, Public Opinion is formed. The call of Democracy is to every man and woman: "What think ye? Do you think at all, or do you merely drift?" The greatest enemy of Democracy is drift. Drift means death, death of heart and mind and soul, and Democracy demands life. If that demand is to be satisfied, it means that every man and woman needs to have above all things principles. A man without principles is a man inevitably adrift, as useless as a broken plank upon a stormy sea. What are your

principles, your real principles? Have you any? Are you a Christian? How much are you prepared to bet that Christ is right? Would you bet me £5 that Christian principles can be applied to industrial and international affairs, or would you rather bet me £50 that the man or nation which applied them would go to the dogs? I believe there is only one way in which the Bible's broken dreams can be made true, and the world secure its lasting Peace for which our bravest and our best have died, and that is by creating a Public Opinion which is prepared to bet its life, its liberty, and its bottom dollar that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; a Public Opinion which demands insistently that the principles of Christ shall be applied to individual, national, and international problems for their solution. What are the essential principles of Christ, and how do they apply to the hundred and one practical problems bound up with the dream of Peace? That is the first great question which I believe every patriotic Christian ought to ask himself to-day, and to which he ought with single-hearted

perseverance to seek an answer. That is our first duty as members of a great Democracy. What I'm out to do in this book is to try and help in a small way to answer that great question. By all the concentrated horror of these four ghastly years, by the broken hearts of widows and their lonely, loveless lives, by the agony of England, and by her bloody sweat God calls us all to honest, fearless thought. I believe we shall respond. I believe the Bible's broken dreams are only broken to be formed anew, and become still more glorious. I believe that eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those that Love Him—Love Him, with a living, reckless Love of heart and mind and soul. Only we must Love Him, and we must know Him Whom we Love. We must think.

THE PLAGUE OF LIES

DURING the last great British advance I was serving with the 5th and 6th Manchesters, as fine soldiers, and as good pals, as any man could wish to serve with. They had an American doctor, and I had chats (if you don't know what they are, ask your brother or your son). I had them bad. One day I was standing outside the Aid Post just behind the line, trying to scratch my back against the door of the dug-out, and saying, "God bless the Prince of Wales," and the American doctor said, "Padre, I guess you're uneasy." I said, scratching hard, "Yes, I'm uneasy all right. There's a race between the black 'uns and the red 'uns going on down my spine, and there are crowds and crowds of eager spectators jumping up to see them run, and I don't get a chance. Can't you give me something for 'em, Doc?" He said, "Have a bath." I said, "I have had two trench

baths, but that makes no odds. My chats are amphibious wonders, they take to water like young ducks." He said, "Have your clothes ironed." I looked at him more in sorrow than in anger, and said, "That only kills 'em for a little while, they do a resurrection stunt in an hour or two, and hop out of their graves." There was an old 1914 soldier standing by, and he said, "Look 'ere, sir, what I don't know about chats aren't worth knowing. I've fed, nourished, cherished, and looked after them little creatures now for four long years, and if tha' takes my tip, sir, it's a straight 'un. When they gets too 'ot there's nobbut one thing as tha' can do, kill 'em, kill 'em one by one."

That was real good advice. It's the only, only way. And chats are not the only things that must be dealt with in that way. It's the only way to deal with lice, and it's the only way to deal with lies. Lies in the world are like lice on the body. They make the world uneasy, and it starts to scratch. When the lies get very bad, the world goes mad, and tears itself to pieces. When the

world goes mad with lies it stops at nothing. Everything goes down together—child-bearing mothers, and tender, pretty maids, treasures of art and architecture, and all the beauty God and man have made, it all goes down together in a muddy, bloody muddle of mad misery when the world goes mad with lies. We have just been through a time like that. The world went mad and scratched itself until the blood ran down in rivers, and part of its body is left blistered, broken, battered, and bleeding like some kind of festered sore. Go see Bailleul and walk from there to Armentières, that is what lies have done. There was an obscene wilderness of evil hidden in the mind and heart of Prussia before it came to light and murdered France. There is nought evil in this world, but thinking makes it so. The desolated area is the desert of lies.

All chats which plague the soldier's body must have been bred originally from one big chat, or two, Adam and Eve in the garden of chats, and then Satan came and drove them out to feed for ever on the flesh of the Sons of Men. So with lies. They

are bred from parent lies, and multiply exceedingly on the earth. As lice suck the blood of men, so lies suck the blood of Truth. Every successful lie must feed upon a Truth.

I think it is possible to capture and examine the Parent lie, the Adam of lies, from which this plague of lies was bred to drive our modern Europe mad.

The Lie is the very common idea that men are merely animals, scratch a man and you will find a monkey. Essentially men are only animals. That is the great lie. It feeds on a great Truth. The Truth is that man has an animal nature. He has a body that must be fed, and hungry appetites demanding satisfaction. Religions and religious enthusiasts often neglect this truth, and try to deal with men as if they were all soul and no body. They have given men prayers in the past when they needed pence, and worship when they wanted wine or even water, and there has been trouble.

“An army moves on its belly” is a soldier’s saying; and it’s true, not only of an army but of the race. Poets write

poetry, artists paint pictures, musicians lift our souls into the world where beauty reigns supreme, and they all do it on beefsteaks. Gray's "Elegy" and Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" were probably born from a steak and kidney pie. The body is the basis of all man's manifold activities. It is a Truth that man has an animal nature. It is a lie that man is essentially an animal. It is this lie that breeds tyranny, militarism, commercialism, war, social unrest, strikes and poverty, and all the million sorrows that follow in their train. The lie that man is an animal leads to the belief that the same laws which govern animal life govern human life. It leads to the hen-run philosophy of life. You have watched hens in a run scratching for worms. One gets a whopper, a big fat fellow; another sees it, and you can see her saying, "My best beak and Sunday feathers, look what she's got." Off she goes in pursuit. There's a blood and fire fight, they lose half the worm, and get each a bit of the other half. If that fat-headed feathered fowl had had the sense to spend the time scratching poor old Mother Earth that she

spent scratching sister hen, she might have had six fat worms instead of a quarter of one, dusty and full of grit. That is the view of human life that this lie breeds, and it has made men like hens, and history piteously like the hen-run. That is the lie on which barbarism was founded. Men lived by preying on their neighbours, fighting, stealing, and murdering. Then some one cleverer than the others had an idea. He and his family turned from hunting and robbing their neighbours to tilling Mother Earth. They grew rich, because they combined to work. The tribe grew up and grew rich by working together to till the earth. When the neighbouring tribes came to rob and steal, they took away more than corn and cattle from that tribe, they took away an idea, the idea of co-operation to work. When that idea was born civilisation was born. It is the Truth of Civilisation that kills the lie of Savagery.

Co-operation is the law of human life by which it is lifted up above the animal life. Man may be descended from monkeys, but men are not monkeys. There is as much

difference between a man and a monkey as there is between a monkey and a vegetable marrow, as much and more. Men can speak, write, read, build cities, invent machines, write poetry, paint pictures, communicate with one another in all sorts of subtle and ingenious ways, linking the world into a unity so close that Tokio is nearer to London to-day than York was 200 years ago. Man has changed the face of the earth, and made the powers of Nature servants of his will. Still the monkeys climb and chatter in their old primaeval forest haunts, unchanging and unchanged, while man proceeds from marvel on to marvel in each succeeding age. The power that lies behind all this advance is the power won by co-operation. With man the law of love is the law of life. If I were to say to an audience of cockney soldiers (the best fellows God ever made), "I tell you, Boys, the great Truth is that 'God is Love,'" they would say to themselves: "Gaw blime, 'e's on the sloppy religious stunt, you never can trust these parsons, once they turns their collars wrong way round they can't 'elp it," and they would give me up as

a bad job. If I were to say it to an officers' mess they would smile a kindly superior smile and say: "Why drag religion into it, Padre? These are matters of fact." So deep is the universal assumption that religion and sloppy thinking go together. But it is not the religious man who is a sloppy thinker, it is the man who tries to think without it. You don't drag religion in. You can't go any distance and keep it out. Common sense that excludes God is much too common, but it is not sense. That God is Love is the supreme Truth, and the only Truth that can save the world from muddle, murder, and misery. Its terms are hackneyed and misunderstood. Love is a bad word. It means anything from lust to loyalty, from utter filth to faithful sacrifice. It ought not to be corrupted, but it is. "God" means to many men God knows what, anything or nothing. Put the Truth in other words. The Supreme power in the world is co-operation. There you have an intelligible statement which is at once a Truth and a challenge, as all Truth is. It is a Truth which demands either enthusiastic assent or fierce opposition. It has always met with both, and

that is the secret of history. History is the tale of how the Truth of Co-operation has fought the falsehood of strife and competition all down the ages, and how slowly and painfully co-operation has won its way, dragging civilisation behind it. It has always won, and must always win, because human competition is self-destructive. The only good that wars have ever done is to drive men into closer unity. The German Empire is the classic instance of this law. It is commonly said that she was made by the Wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870, but what these Wars did for her was to give her unity and co-operation, and from that unity her power sprang. So it is all through history. God makes even the wrath of man to serve Him. Competition destroys itself and gives birth to wider co-operation. Competition never causes real progress, it only destroys itself. But the old barbaric lie of life on the animal plane has been hard to kill. In the nineteenth century it took on a new lease of life, and assumed a new and horrible form. It armed itself with all the powers man had won by co-operation. Europe became more and more like an armed

continent of savages, with great nations for tribes, big guns for bows, and shells for arrows. We drifted into the period of scientific savagery. In 1914 it all flared up, and made the furnace for its own destruction. The period of scientific savagery centres round two great figures, one in the world of action and another in the world of thought, two men so utterly different that only a universe could connect them. One was Bismarck the statesman, and the other Darwin the naturalist. Bismarck was one of the greatest geniuses and most primitive savages that have ever lived in one man's skin. He combined the intellect of a Caesar with the soul of a cannibal. To him men were animals, the laws of human life were the laws of animal life, states were organised herds, and God was Blood and Iron. He was by nature intended to be King of the Cannibal Islands, but was born in modern Prussia. He largely made Germany the Empire of savage science, and Germany largely made the scientifically savage world. More than we perceived during the process, world politics tended to centre round Prussia, and the shadow of scientific savagery fell across

mankind. The other figure was his unconscious and unwilling ally, Charles Darwin. Darwin's *Origin of Species* has had more influence on human life than any other book written since the Bible. It opened out a new world. It turned all men's eyes round, and put them in the backs of their heads. The whole world began to progress by looking where it was coming from, instead of where it was going to. He threw such a searchlight of Truth upon the origin of things that men could see nothing else. The whole world became concentrated on the new Book of Genesis, and never got any farther. It was natural, almost inevitable. Darwin's searchlight laid bare the long trail of strife and struggle down which the animal world had made its progress, and the revelation was blinding; it fascinated men's minds. Every one began looking for the explanation of the present in the past. They began to explain man in the light of the monkey. They talked about immutable natural laws, the inevitable struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest, the power of natural selection. This provided the scientific basis of thought for the great period of commercial and political

barbarism. Monkey law reigned supreme in business and in politics. Every one explained how progress, by the laws of Nature, was due to free unfettered competition, and the natural elimination of the unfit peoples and unfit businesses. They all turned back to the beginning of the world to find its meaning, looked back to the egg to explain the chicken, which is such manifest nonsense and absurdity that the only explanation is the blinding power of sudden light. It is obvious nonsense, when one thinks quietly, to try and explain the end of a thing by its beginning, whether the thing be man, a motor car, or a universe. A heap of separate parts can't explain a motor or a pile of stones explain a church. It is the motor that explains the parts and the church the pile of stones. An acorn does not explain an oak—it's the oak explains the acorn. A baby does not explain a man, the man explains the baby. Science can't explain history, it is history that explains science. You must look at a progress in the light of its farthest point. You must look where you are going to and not where you are coming from, or you will fall into a shell-hole and break your neck. Now

history fairly yells at you that you are going towards co-operation and coming from competition in every department of life, and we must look on in front, and stop this crab-like method of progression that has landed us into a world-wide sea of misery. We have prevented the lie of monkey law and the hen-run philosophy of life from ruining the fabric of civilisation, but it is not dead yet, and it must be killed by Truth, Truth at work in the minds of men. The Truth to which we must cling, for which we must be prepared to suffer, and on which we must recklessly bet our bottom dollar and our last shirt, is the Truth that the supreme power in the world is Co-operation. In other words, with precisely the same meaning, we must have faith in God, for God is Love.

THE LIE IN THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

THERE are powders which will kill black beetles but they won't kill lice. That is one of the great discoveries of the War for me. Krupp guns kill men but they won't kill lies, that is another. Neither the powders nor the guns go to the root of the matter, so they fail. There is only one cure for lies, and that is Truth. Truth never fails, but it is very hard to obtain, because there are so many cheap imitations, and the real thing is expensive, and can only be bought with Sacrifice paid cash down. All the world wants cheap Truth, but it cannot be found. We keep on trying cheap imitations, and in the end they cost us a hideous price, and do no good. We shrink from the Sacrifice which alone can buy the Truth, and in the end pay more for worthless lies. We have paid the price of broken bodies, broken fortunes, and broken hearts for a lie in this War, and we look like paying more in

the same coin, unless we hurry up and buy the Truth. We have been trying to run the world on the lie that men are animals, and that the law of animal life is the law of human life. We have been acting on the assumption that the world is one vast hen-run and men are the hens. There is only a certain amount of food, wealth, pleasure, and power in the run, and life is a struggle to get as much of it as we can. The more we get, the less there must be for other people. The more other people get, the less there must be for us. Our neighbour's loss must be our gain. We have been like hens fascinated by the fat worm wriggling in our neighbour's mouth, and bent on winning it from him by War, when all the time beneath our feet a million worms lay buried, and only waiting to be worked for. We have pinned our faith to force as the final power (just like hens, and I'll back a hen against all creation for blank stupidity), and have believed in War, and in fierce unfettered competition, which is War with a borrowed cloak of Peace to hide its ugliness. We have tried to build a world on this lie, and it has burst into flames and perished self-destroyed.

Now we have to build a new world, and every one is full of plans for Reconstruction. All our plans will perish unless we find true principles on which to build them up, and the first step is to destroy the old false principles, to kill the lies.

The body of our modern world was born of science and steam. They are our parents after the flesh. Science and steam have gone out to the ends of the earth, they have made a path across the desert, pierced the armour of the mountains, swept the surface of the sea, and made a million forces faithful servants of man's will. The body of the older world was born in the fields beneath the open sky ; the body that we wear to-day, wounded and bleeding, was born in a factory 'mid the roar of many wheels. Shut your eyes and look at Europe as it grows in the nineteenth century, and everywhere you see men and women crowding in from the fields into the factories in a never-ending stream. The great, gaunt, ugly building with its towering chimney and clouds of smoke is the nursery of the modern world.

In its essence the new world is an advance

on the old one, and the movement from the fields is a movement in the right direction, because it is a movement towards closer co-operation. Men and women leave their lonely labour and their isolated tasks, and crowd together for work, and of course new wealth and power are the result, because co-operation is the source of power. In its essence the Industrial Revolution was a co-operative movement, and it would have been an almost unmixed blessing if, at the beginning, men had grasped its true meaning. But they did not. The old lie was at work. The factory appeared as a hen-run. The employer was one hen, and his labourers the other. They had found new tools to grub for worms. The new tools unearthed an enormous number of worms, but each hen kept half his attention fixed on the other to see that he did not get away with more than his share. The great War between Capital and Labour began. The employer was at first much the bigger and the stronger hen. He chased and scurried the labourers around, and only let them have the measliest and most scraggy worms, and not too many of them. The labour hen was so

starved it could not grub as fast as it was made to do, and died early. Chickens were brought in and made to grub as fast as hens, they worked long hours under dreadful conditions. The labour hens were driven to unite for their own protection, to save their chickens and their lives. From that first shameful struggle in the hen-run, the modern world has grown. Without that background the present situation cannot be understood. Once and for all, let us remember that whatever the rights and wrongs of the present day may be, the burden of shame for its evils must be shouldered by the Employers of the nineteenth century, many of whom were as greedy and as brutally stupid as barn-door fowls. The Employer sowed the wind in those early days, and his children reap the whirlwind now. That is just simple history.

As you look back over the last hundred years you can see, everywhere in Europe, the two great Industrial Armies growing up—the armies of Capital and Labour. They grew more and more united among themselves, and more utterly opposed to one another. More and more the life of Europe

was revealed as really War, even in times of Peace. Bitterness and misunderstanding increased as the relations between employers and employed ceased to be human relations, and the old touch between master and man disappeared. Limited liability companies killed what conscience the employer had. Business became more and more mere business, which meant that it became more and more inhuman, mechanical, and murderous. Employers, being really human and not animal as they tried to be, built huge hospitals, and founded charities to patch up the paupers, physical wrecks, and madmen which their business produced. So they soothed their consciences, and made Christian charity stink in the nostrils of honest men. They gave their goods to feed the poor (the goods they didn't want), and their charity crucified Christ, because it was not true. The very wells of human kindness were poisoned for the world in the days that damned men's souls to build a Church.

Time was on the side of labour. Their army grew every day more strong and more

united. The bitterness bred of their early struggles became a tradition in the army, a tradition fed and fostered by those who only saw salvation in a fight. Both armies lived on the lie of the hen-roost. Free unfettered competition was the war-cry of the capitalist, class War was the slogan of the labourer. So it has been in every country in Europe. The third party in the contest was always the Government. At first the Government was always on the side of the bigger hen. All efforts of the weaker hens to unite were fought tooth and nail, and put down by force, and often force that knew no mercy. The result was what history drives one always to expect. Might is helpless in the end against the power of Right. There was the Power of Right behind this rising of the people, and all the strength of their oppressors has proved powerless to oppose it. But the pity of it is that the heart of the workers has been poisoned by the class War, and they have learned to put their faith in force. Tyranny begets tyranny, and labour stands now able and ready to take what it can by force. It has not outgrown the

philosophy of the hen-run ; it has copied the masters and become the big hen.

The most awful results can be seen in Russia. There you have the lie worked out to its logical conclusion in Industry. Russia came last into the Industrial Revolution ; but it came. The factory grew up. The struggle in the hen-run was played through. Labour was pitifully weak. The Government, which was the most crassly stupid, corrupt, and cruel bureaucracy in the world, was all on the side of capital. Every effort of the people to unite was suppressed with cynical violence. Prisons were filled, thousands were exiled, and many put to death. As late as April 17, 1912, five hundred killed and wounded were left on the banks of the River Lena in Siberia, because they dared to ask their employers and the local government for better conditions (vide *Russia and the Great War*, by Gregor Alexinsky, ex-Deputy to the Duma). That is just a last instance of a consistent Government policy. Russia was ruled and governed by the lie. The first Russian revolution was the work of the best people in Russia. All thoughtful,

conscientious people wanted to overthrow the autocracy, and secure a reasonable measure of popular self-government, and the first Revolution would have secured it; but the power of the lie ruined their work. The long years of brutal tyranny had made their mark. The people had been treated as animals, ruled as animals, and they behaved as such. They were poisoned by the lie. Red Revolution and the great class War were the only hopes that their blind eyes could see, and they took them with both hands, and now no one dare put in print the naked truth about Russia; it would turn a strong man sick. The results of War between nations are loathsome, but the results of War between classes are more loathsome still. The effort of every man who has read the history of Revolution, and knows what it means, must be concentrated on saving his country from that last horror. We must put an end to this class War which is the root of Revolution and its miseries. We have the root in England. The bitterness, the mistrust, the mutual suspicion between the classes which prevents all plans for real

co-operation, they are all there, and it must be our task, our first task, to tear them out of the nation's heart. We must grasp and hold the Truth which these years of sorrow should have taught us, that the appeal to force is fundamentally wrong, it is worse than a crime, it is a blunder. It is futile waste of time. Bolshevism is just this faith in force worked out to its logical issue in national politics, as Prussianism is this faith worked out to its logical conclusion in International politics. We cannot construct anything on a basis of hatred. No War can ever do any positive good. There is a lot of sloppy sentiment talked about the good this War has done to us as a nation. It is supposed to have purified, uplifted, sanctified, and strengthened our national character. I confess I do not see any signs of it. I am not surprised. I do not see anything in War that could do all those wonders. War gives men a chance to display certain very splendid primitive virtues, providing they already possess them, but it creates nothing. There is one great good thing that it may do for us if we will learn its lesson. It may destroy itself in

our hearts and minds ; it may open our eyes to the Truth that all War is futile waste, and drive us to the task of national co-operation for good. If it does that we shall take a new lease of life and go forward to great things ; if it does not, and we continue our class Wars, our bitterness, our mutual suspicion, and our faith in force, then the day may come when no one will dare to put in print the naked Truth about Britain. The real root of all our national misery is the War between the classes ; that has been the real enemy all along. In the name of our dead comrades, can we not kill that enemy now ? Can we not wipe out the past with all its evils and its wrongs, and get down together to constructive work ? We must do it sooner or later, and why not now ? Why suffer more ? Why be blind any longer ? Has not the light of the last four years been strong enough ? I have seen it in the ruined villages, in dead men's faces and their staring eyes ; I have read it in the misery of that weird wasted land of wire and lonely graves beside the Somme—the Truth. No good can come of any War except the end of War.

They drank "The Day" !
To the roofless ruined cottage,
With its door-post dripping red,
To the Mother disembowelled,
And her babe without a head.

We drink "The Day" !
To the proud deep-bosomed Mother
With her Baby at her breast,
To the cottage in the shadows,
Where the workman comes to rest.

STREET CORNER LIES

THERE was in my Parish a very pious old lady, as good and as gentle an old creature as you could wish your grandmother to be. She had been in the habit all her life of making her confession to her Parish priest at regular intervals. When I went on leave she used to come to me. Once she came, but said that before she made her confession she would like to ask a question. "A few weeks ago," she said, "I read in the paper about some German officers who laughed at some of our men who were gassed and gasping for breath in agony, and as I read I felt that I would like to take those officers and strangle the life out of them with these old hands, squeeze them until they died. Now, was that feeling wrong, and ought I to include it in my confession?" I thought for a moment, and then said, "Madame, if you had not felt like that, and had no desire

to punish those men, it would have been a serious sin of omission, and ought to be included in your confession."

The twinkle in the old lady's eye answered the twinkle in mine: she understood. The man or woman who has no power of moral indignation needs no hell hereafter; he is damned already, if he has a soul to damn.

There is one class of people who make me feel as that old lady felt, and that is the class who meet all plans to abolish poverty with a superior smile, and the words, "Impossible," "Human Nature," and, finally, "The poor shall always be with you." There is more real blasphemy in those words than in the most lurid Sergeant's speech that ever turned the air of Flanders blue. It is sheer blank atheism. It would make Christ blaze at its dishonest stupidity, as it makes the ordinary man in the street swear. Here lies the great secret power of the demagogue. It is commonly assumed that the demagogue or agitator wins his way by his appeal to the base and selfish instincts of his audience. He is supposed to influence men purely by offering them something for nothing. If that were

true the demagogue would not be really dangerous, because the good sense and better nature of the people would defeat him in the end. But he plays on finer chords than that. He appeals to men's better selves.

“Who earns all the wealth of the world?” he cries. “Who swells the swollen coffers of the rich? Who makes this the Richest country in the world? You, the men who labour with your hands; you who earn your bread with the sweat of your brow; you whose hands are hard and dirty with toil; you who work all day for just enough to keep you working, and then stagger back to your hovels to sleep that you may work again; you whose children go ill-shod, ill-fed, to be badly educated at cheap schools; you whose wives bring up a family in two rooms, working their lives out, with horror of destitution always shadowing their homes—you earn the wealth. All wealth is earned by labour, for without labour there could be no wealth. You earn it—who spends it? The rich man with his mansion, and his motor, his man-servants, maids, and flunkeys; his wife decked out with diamonds, who

dances through life as though it were a ball-room, with as little as possible on her body and nothing at all in her head, too refined to nurse her own children, too careful often to bear them. The Rich—the idle rich—they spend the wealth and squander on their luxuries the life-blood of the poor; the rich, who feast in the midst of famine, and steal your children's bread. How long will you stand it? How long will you submit to a tyranny which starves and stunts your children's souls and bodies? When will you unite and take what is rightly yours? When will you realise your power and act like men? You have been bottom dog for years; when are you going to show your teeth, take hold, and grip for your children's sake? You have the power now; use it now, and no child need cry for bread."

Now, when I heard a speech like that, and believed it wholly true, I wanted to start at once. I looked round for a brick or a bomb to shy at the first man I saw in a motor or top hat. The dirty dogs, I thought, bricks are too good for them. It was not the greed of gold, the thirst for beer, or the love of

idleness that made me look for bombs, bricks, red flags, and revolutions—it was the children. They did the trick. I knew that those main facts were true. I knew that children were underfed and badly housed. I had seen it with my own eyes. That knowledge made me mad. I believe a hungry child would make Christ mad. I believe that hungry children and child-waste make God Almighty mad. I knew, too, that the other side was true; that men and women did live in silly, soul-destroying luxury, lived like fools, and filled divorce courts because they had no work to do, too much to eat and drink, and too much to spend. The solution seemed simple and easy. Destroy the inequalities and level incomes down. Fairer distribution; that was all that was required. Mr. Sydney Webb put the thing into words for me exactly when he said, “There is a growing consensus of opinion that the inevitable outcome of Democracy is the control of the main instruments of production by the people themselves, and the consequent recovery of what John Stuart Mill calls ‘the enormous share’ which the possessors of industry are able to take of

the total produce." There was the problem and its solution in a nutshell. I used to roll that off at meetings, and John Stuart Mill made it so intellectually respectable. But alas! facts are cruel things, and care nought for respectability, intellectual or otherwise. I investigated and I am doubtful about that "enormous" share. I am afraid it is not big enough to solve the problem of poverty in any country in the world. We forget so easily a simple thing that makes all the difference—there are so many poor and so few very rich. I find that there are only 1,500 people in Great Britain with an income of over £20,000. If the people were to recover their "enormous share," it would give them about fourpence a week extra. Now I don't mind revolting to secure the millennium, but I refuse to revolt for four packets of woodbines. It is not good enough. I know of course that statistics are the devil. There are three kinds of liars—liars, damned liars, and statisticians—but it is not necessary to insist on the minute accuracy of statistics to prove the main proposition true. It is enough if the sheets and sheets of

information reproduced from official sources in books like Grey and Turner's *Eclipse and Empire* or Mallock's *Limits of Pure Democracy*—it is enough if they be roughly true, and that they certainly are.

The real situation is not so simple, and does not admit of such simple solution. It is really like this. Suppose a battalion 700 strong were going short of bread, going ten to a loaf. Suppose that these hungry men found out that their Head Quarters Mess, consisting of ten people, were eating one loaf each. In their rage at this injustice suppose they went to Head Quarters, killed the Colonel, jumped on the Padre, smothered the Doctor, and bayoneted the rest, and went away in triumph bearing ten loaves of bread to distribute among seven hundred men. Think of the speech the Sergeant-Major might make. "Men, we have got our rights, we have killed the tyrants, and I have for every man one-seventieth of a loaf extra. Be careful it does not blow away, and go to bed content. This battalion is ruled by the people." That is exactly the position in the Russian Revolution, where the poor deluded

peasants, mesmerised by the apparent wealth of the rich, are demanding wages amounting to hundreds of pounds a year when the total income of the country could not give them £15 a head. That more or less is the situation everywhere. It is the hen-run over again ; men are fascinated by the big worm in their neighbour's beak, and forsake their grubbing in Mother Earth to chase him.

The Demagogue, even when he is sincere, too often tells lies. That speech of his is full of lies. *It would not solve the problem of poverty if the people rose to take from the rich to give to the poor. The "enormous" share is not enormous enough.*

Wealth is badly distributed. It is wickedly distributed, but the problem is not solely a problem of distribution, it is also a problem of production. It is important to improve the method of distribution, but the main thing is to get wealth to distribute. Karl Marx, who is the father of that lie, was either wilfully or ignorantly blind to the part that exceptional brain and exceptional ability played in the great Industrial Revolution, and the inevitable part that they must play

in modern production.¹ It is fatal to kill the Colonel when you ought to kick the Quartermaster or strafe the A.S.C. You cannot distribute short rations so as to feed a Battalion however fairly you do it. Our great need at the present minute is an enormous output. We must increase our production. What stands in the way? The old enemy—War. War between employers and employed. Let us get that fixed. Our great enemy, greater than Prussia ever was, is the Class War. Modern production demands closer and closer co-operation between the brain and the hand of the nation.

It is a lie to say that all wealth is produced by labour if by labour you mean manual work. Once more we must face facts. The real root of modern wealth is the application of Science and Scientific Knowledge to

¹ Marx is accurate in his analysis of the factors of production, if the analysis is applied to production previous to the Industrial Revolution proper. It is true that, up to then, production was in the main the result of manual labour, and such simple organisation and invention as manual labourers could carry out themselves. But as an analysis of modern production by highly complicated machinery combined with scientific organisation, the Marxian analysis is absurd. It leaves out *the* great factor—the brain work of the exceptional few.

Industry. The increase in wealth in these days as compared with the Middle Ages is due to very complex machinery and scientific organisation. That is, it is due to brain work and not to hand work. It is quite true that without manual work there would be no wealth at all, but it is equally true that without expert brain work, that is, without the work of the exceptional few, there would be just enough to mock our miseries as we starved, with our present population. Manual labour without the assistance of expert brains could not keep our population alive. The quarrel between the brain of the people and its hands is ruinous, and if it continues will land us into miseries we cannot now conceive. The quarrel has actually caused most of the poverty there is, and will cause more unless it cease. Men are not rational when they quarrel. Men and masters have not been rational. Masters have restricted wages, and men have restricted output,¹ and both restrictions breed poverty. Low wages mean that millions of people cannot demand goods beyond the

¹ It seems likely that masters have restricted output too in order to keep up prices. There is evidence for it.

barest necessities of life, and so there is a smaller market and a less demand.

Restricted output and keeping down production to the rate of the slowest workman spells poverty in so many letters. Moreover, the quarrel has made the men suspect machinery, which always causes temporary unemployment and poverty, though it is the main source of ultimate wealth. The history of sabotage and the destruction of machinery is a melancholy result of the lie of War in the Industrial World. So long as men continue to believe that all the profits of their added work will go to make the rich richer, and all the profits of better machinery go to the same bottomless pit, so long will they put limits to their output and refuse machinery, both of which actions produce poverty. We must kill the lie that any good can come of this or any other War, and recognise the Truth that our very existence demands that we co-operate.

It is vain to ruin masters if we still starve men, and that is all the quarrel can ever do. If men, seeing only that they have the power in their hands to demand more and more, go

on blindfold, striking to demand, the result is certain ruin. If masters still continue to adopt the fighting attitude and resist reasonable and unreasonable demands alike ; if they go on disguising dividends and watering capital, playing the vile old game of War, the ruin is sure to come.

There is only one thing that can save us—Truth. The nation is a co-operative society, and must be recognised as such. Its labours of hand and brain have one purpose and one end in view, the creation and maintenance of a happy, healthy, honest people, pure women, strong men, and jolly children. That purpose and that end in view must become part and parcel of the national conscience and the national will. The nation is one in God's eyes ; we must make it one in our own. If we continue to work on clap-trap and lies we shall perish. Once more I say the Truth is the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus, who was the most practical business man that ever lived—God is Love.

LIES AND LIBERTY

“MAN is born free and is everywhere in chains.” That is the way the Father of the French Revolution begins his greatest book. It is a perfectly topping sentence, but I am not sure what it means. It rouses indignation and pity, and paints a wonderful picture. Everywhere you see the masses of men groaning in slavery under the tyrant’s hand ; while overhead there shines the vision of their rightful heritage of freedom, leisure, and ease towards which they stretch out helpless hands, finding it always so near and yet so far away.

It is a grand sentence for a revolutionary because it rouses up men’s passions and puts their thought to sleep. That is what a revolutionary always wants to do. Revolutions depend on passion for their power—not on thought. But let us think. What does it mean ?

“Man is born free.” That must mean free babies, since every man is born a baby.

Now I cannot imagine a free baby being a success, if freedom means the power to do precisely what one likes, and to order one's actions without interference from any one outside. A free baby would only succeed in giving its mother forty fits, and then solemnly starving itself to death.

Nor does freedom come to the growing child. In the home and in the school he finds himself, and must find himself, guided and governed by people from outside, constantly obliged to obey commands. When the boy becomes a man and passes from the school world into the wider world of life, with nine men out of every ten it is the same story—our actions are constantly guided and governed by other people.

We have to work ; and to only a few men does the chance come to be absolutely supreme in any work. To only a few can it ever come in any state of society. The vast majority of men, if they are to keep body and soul together, will always have to obey orders ; and the man who is supreme over his own work is very often the most closely tied and confined man of all.

So it appears that not only is man not born free and completely self-determined, but that most men never become free or completely self-determined if they are to do any work in the world at all. And there lies the danger of this great sentence. It holds before men an impossible prospect which no state of society could ever really give them, and it sets them hankering after and longing for a will-o'-the-wisp or a dream—and not a very healthy dream at that.

There is something wrong with this sentence. What is it? It uses a very large word without in any way defining its meaning. Liberty is one of the biggest words in the English language, and is therefore very hard to define. Does it, then, only stand for a dream? Or does it stand for reality? It stands for the greatest of all realities, and therefore the reality which is the hardest to define. First let us recognise this great fact, that if men are to unite in order to work there must be discipline. Discipline is an absolute necessity in any co-operative effort. That is, there must be in every co-operative effort those who command and those who

obey, those who direct and those who carry out their directions.

But there are very different kinds of discipline. There is the discipline that a man imposes upon a stupid beast like an ox, which can only be made to obey by the infliction of pain. There is the discipline which a man imposes on a horse which, if he be a good horseman, is a mixture of driving and leading, punishment and coaxing. There is the discipline which a man imposes on a child which has, or ought to have, in it less driving and more leading, less punishment and more coaxing. There is the discipline which a man imposes on a growing boy or girl in which, as it grows, there ought to be less and less of driving and more and more of leading, less and less of the appeal to pain, and more and more of the appeals to reason and to love. Finally, there is the discipline which a man imposes on a man, and there it ought to be possible to dispense with driving altogether and rely entirely upon leading. And this ought to be the ideal of all who have to deal with men.

But men are all more or less children still,

and it is impossible as human nature is to-day to dispense entirely with compulsion. It asks too much of the leaders, and it asks too much of the led. You see this in the Army. You know the two kinds of officers—the leader and the tyrant. The man who treats his men like children and like fools, and drives and nags and batters them into work—he never gets the best, he misses the key to the real power-box in his men. The fine leader makes his men work with him by example, by persuasion, by reason, by love and respect. But the finest leader in the world, in charge of any large number of men, will find some who do not respond, and with whom he has to fall back on force.

Yet the ideal remains, the ideal of a discipline which relies upon love and reason and not on penalties. Growth in freedom means passing from the lower discipline to the higher. And that is the history of the world. The history of the world is the history of man's slow and painful passage from the discipline of compulsion to the discipline of free-will ; the passing of man from the conscript to the volunteer. The only real

freedom is willing service. The free man is a servant always, and yet is not a slave.

Up to the present the vast majority of the world's army of workers have been conscripts, enlisted under the natural compulsion of starvation. Men have had to work, and work hard, or starve, and if they wanted to attain wealth and independence, they have had to work harder still or else steal and scheme and lie. Because this system has meant so much hardship, so much tyranny of the strong over the weak, and so much waste of human life, so much lying and scheming; because the struggle for existence in the industrial world has tended inevitably to become more sordid, soulless, and brutal, men everywhere desire to see drastic reformation, if not revolution, in the system. But the fact we must face—the great hard rock of fact against which our industrial Utopias go to pieces, is the necessity of discipline. If we take away the discipline of starvation, and the incentive of self-interest, which up to now has kept the army of this world's workers going strong, we must put something in their place. The world cannot live in time of Peace without

discipline, any more than an army can fight in time of War without it. If a man is honest he will acknowledge that in time of War there were two great forces which kept him fighting—one was his desire to serve the cause, to do his best, and to stand well with his comrades ; the other was discipline, the knowledge that there was death behind as well as in front, that one stood between the Devil and the Deep Sea. Death with honour and death in disgrace—but death anyhow.

So in the industrial world men have stood between the devil of hard work and the deep sea of starvation. They have often been paid much less than they produced, sometimes exactly what they did produce, but their masters have seen that they were not paid a penny more than they produced. Now we feel that this harsh natural discipline must be made lighter ; men claim the right to live, and live in decent conditions, and the conscience of mankind approves the claim. But if we take away or interfere with the discipline of the struggle for existence, what is to take its place ? What is going to keep us, not merely working, but working hard enough,

producing enough, to make decent conditions possible for all? Penal settlements and punishments might deal with the absolute slacker and wastrel, but he does not really matter; he does not count for much in the great mass of men. What is going to keep us, not merely working—we would probably work a little anyhow—but working hard? for we must work hard if we are to live as men claim the right to live to-day. If a man can muddle along fairly comfortably on what he gets for three days' work a week, what is going to keep him working six? If he can exist on wages which he earns by slack and easy work, what is going to make him do his best? Production and the motive of production are two of the great problems that we have to solve.

It simply is not true that we can pay proper wages all round on our present production. If we are all to live as we want to live, we must work not only as hard, but much harder than we worked before. What is going to keep us at it? We cannot continue to spend more than we produce. If we remove the natural penalties of starvation and struggle,

if we do away with compulsion which arises out of competition, what discipline is to take its place? If men are not to be driven to work, they must be led. Who is going to lead them, and on what motives are they going to rely? I am not charging all men with being slackers and wastrels, I am only charging them with being men; and men have all to face the temptation to slack, to shrink from great strain, not to be altogether idle, but to work easy. That Temptation has to be met. It can only be met by discipline—and that discipline must either be the discipline of compulsion or the discipline of a driving sense of duty. If the worker is not a conscript of starvation, then he must be a volunteer from a sense of duty.

Here you have the key to the real meaning of Democracy. Democracy is not any known form of government that has ever been tried upon earth. It is an ideal, an aspiration, and a hope. It is the ideal of a society in which every member shall be a worker—not a conscript worker, but a volunteer. This ideal is the most powerful and life-giving force acting on the world to-day. The true

democrat is the man who refuses to abandon it as an ideal, no matter what difficulties and what dangers stand in the way.

The truly democratic statesman is the man who fearlessly faces the colossal task of universal education—the educating of every citizen to such a stage of intelligence and understanding that he will become, not a grasping self-seeker, but a willing servant of the State. The truly democratic leader of industry is the man who sets before him as an ideal the education of every man in his factory to the point when he becomes, not a conscript wage-earner driven by force of starvation to do his part, but an intelligent and willing partner in a great enterprise. That is the ideal of Democracy for those who lead. But they are, and will always be, the smaller number of the human race.

The great majority of men will always have to be led, and Democracy means for them the effort to educate themselves and train themselves to a complete devotion to their duty. Democracy is impossible without a driving sense of duty. You cannot make a Democracy out of people who are for ever thinking

of their rights and never of their responsibilities. This is the danger of clap-trap, shining visions, and dazzling hopes of wealth and ease and leisure, without duty and without labour—a dream which would really be a nightmare if it ever came true.

Democracy has two great enemies—the irresponsible demagogue and the cynic—the demagogue, who inflames men's passions and leads them to suppose that heaven on earth is close at hand if only they have the courage to knock down a policeman ; and the cynic, who believes that there never can be, and never will be, any heaven on earth at all. The one stirs men to frantic efforts based on passion without thought ; the other cripples all effort, and bids men fold their hands and never try to change the world at all—or worse than that, bids men seek salvation not in service but in selfishness, which is the ancient lie.

There is a great phrase in the Prayer Book which contains the deepest truth : “ O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in Knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom.” There are some strange things in the Prayer

Book, but that sentence is the best bit of concentrated truth that I know in the English language. It is a proper Prayer Book pill of Truth, worth a guinea a box. It ought to be pasted up and placarded over every city in the country, and men ought to be taught to take it as the motto of Democracy. God, the Supreme Power, is the source of peace and unity. In the knowledge of that Spirit of peace and unity—that is, in the growing knowledge of the Spirit of Co-operation—lies the eternal power of progress. And as we grow to know and understand it better, as we learn how to work one with another in the service of the highest good, our service passes more and more into perfect freedom.

A man may work impossible hours at impossible tasks, but if his heart is in his work, if he sees the reason of it and loves the master whom he serves, that man is free. This freedom which is willing service is the freedom toward which the world is growing—painfully, blindly, blunderingly growing. It is the part of every man who wants to play a man's part in the world to foster that growth by every effort of his hand and brain.

It is the part of every State to set itself with all its might to this colossal task of universal education in the highest sense of that word. Education, which will give to men not merely knowledge but a motive for continued learning, not merely a means of life but a motive for living, not merely ability to work but the enthusiastic desire to work hard. Only so can Democracy be anything more than the grandest of our dead dreams—only so can we be set free.

LIES AND EQUALITY

WHEN one starts talking about co-operation one inevitably gets mixed up with the false doctrine that all men are equal. People picture a co-operative society as one in which all members play an equal part, and have equal influence. The doctrine of human equality is an absurd lie which no one could believe for an instant if it were not for the big Truth in which it is always hidden. Men are so manifestly unequal. One man is six foot four in his stockings, and another is four foot six in his boots. One man is astoundingly clever, and another abysmally stupid. One man can produce music that would bring tears to the eyes of an ostrich, and another doesn't know the difference between "God Save the King" and "Pop goes the Weasel." I have got a fist like a baby, and my brother has one like a leg of mutton. It is absurd. Men and women are the most unequal things God ever made. That is just the fun of them.

It takes all sorts to make a world. Yet this is a very popular lie, and is at the bottom of a great deal of clap-trap which is talked about Democracy. The essence of political Democracy, according to one definition of it, is "that every man shall have an equal voice in the affairs of the common country, and that he shall have this equal voice by virtue of his manhood alone."

Now that sounds all right, but unless it means that we shall have got the essence of Democracy as soon as we can obtain "one man one vote," it means nothing but absurdity. If an equal voice means not merely the vote but equal influence, it is nonsense. It would mean that because Mr. Lloyd George is a man, and Mr. Billy Bungnose, chief pillar of the Peg and Whistle, Pump Street, is also a man, that Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bungnose should have an equal influence in the affairs of the common country. In which case, God help the common country! It would also mean that because I am a man, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a man, that I and the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have an equal influence on the finances

of the British Empire. In which case, God help British credit! I doubt if He would. God does not help fools to further folly. The truth is that in practice the many must always be ruled by the few. There never has been, and there never will be, any state of society in which this is not so. The man of many talents, armed with eloquence of speech, may only cast one vote, but how many votes does he turn to his side. The Editor of a great newspaper may forget to vote at all, but what does that matter when half a million people take their opinions from his paper. The brilliant leader will carry a million Bung-noses with him to the poll. Oligarchy—or the rule of the few over the many—is a practical necessity in all democracies. Oligarchy is the soul of trades unionism, which is supposed to be the quintessence of Democracy. When the oligarchy of trades unions fails, unionism fails and you get chaos. It is the same in industry. Practically the few must rule the many. The vision of a modern industry in which every one had an equal voice or influence by virtue of his manhood alone is the vision of an impossibility. Modern industries make

wealth by applying scientific knowledge to manufacture, and the process often involves exact and detailed knowledge of such things as Chemistry, Mathematics, and Mechanics. The larger portion of the enormous increase of Wealth in modern times is due to scientific organisation and complicated machinery and not to manual labour.

Imagine Jim Betts the stoker being called in to exercise his equal influence in a matter involving obscure chemical reactions. All he would say would be, "Garn, you and your chemistry, my fire's going out;" and quite right too. Every man to his job. You may say that this is only a temporary state of things due to bad education, and that the time will come when Jim Betts will know as much about Mathematics, Chemistry, Mechanics, Economics, and Foreign Markets as his master. I believe in the future of Jim Betts, but I also believe that you may educate until you are blue in the face and you will never get every one expert at everything, nor even get every one expert at any one thing that involves long and concentrated mental effort. I believe that inequalities of ability

are as much part and parcel of human nature as differences in appearance, and that there must always be men of exceptional ability who must guide and govern the ordinary man. Oligarchy is a necessity.

Is Democracy then all a dream? Is it only a castle in the air which can never stand on earth? Of course it is not merely a dream; it is the goal of human development; it is the state toward which all progress moves. But Democracy is not based upon the false doctrine that all men are equal. So far as it is a living man-moving reality it is based on the Truth, which is so often used to cloak the lie of equality; the Truth for which Christ chiefly stood, "That all men are of equal value in the sight of God." That is the idea that lies at the root of true Democracy. Jim Betts the stoker may not be equal to the manager in ability, but he is ultimately of equal value. He may not, and probably does not, produce nearly as much as the manager; but his life must not be stunted or starved for the sake of the manager or the class of managers. He has an absolute right to the fullest life of which he is capable, and a true

Democracy will see that he gets it. This Truth rules our lives now in many ways, but not in all ways as it must.

We recognise that the child of the cobbler has as much right to the best medical advice as the child of the King. We would blame a doctor who did not treat his poor patients as he did the rich, because all men have an equal right to life. For the same reason we hang the man who murders Mr. Brown the bargeman as we would hang the man who murdered Mr. Balfour. Both have an equal right to life. True Democracy develops this Truth and recognises that all men have an equal right to sunshine, sanitation, healthy homes, good education, and all the culture of which they are capable. Every human life which is dwarfed and crippled through lack of opportunity to develop is a disgrace to a Democracy, and must be recognised as a disgrace by truly democratic people. Our slums are a disgrace to us all ; they ought to fill every one with shame, because they are full of crippled lives, every one of which is of infinite value.

But if this great Truth is to be worked into

our lives as members of a democratic State it must be combined with another Truth for which Christ stood—the Truth that the Secret of Life is Service. That is the Truth that shows us the real meaning of human inequalities. Mr. Balfour is beyond doubt superior in ability, and in many other respects, to Mr. Brown. Then Mr. Balfour must use his superior talents to serve Mr. Brown, to help him to a full and worthy life.

If the man of superior abilities is not a public servant he is a parasite, and more unworthy of his manhood than an ignorant and drunken pauper. If he uses his ability to serve himself at the expense of his fellow-men, to get on and get over them, his success is the measure of his failure. He is like those enormous bloated flies that buzz round the dead on a battlefield. Filthy things, clothed in gorgeous colours, their bright green wings flashing in the sun as they seek the choicest morsels of the swollen and disfigured dead. That is exactly what a superior man is like who is not out to serve.

A Democracy must be filled through every member of it with the idea of service. Every

man must do his bit, and every woman too. You cannot found a Democracy on the spirit of self-seeking and faith in force. The attempt will only end in tyranny under a democratic disguise. History is full of so-called democratic Governments that have out-tyrannised the tyrants and conducted reigns of terror in the sacred name of liberty. Our progress towards real Democracy can be measured by the growth amongst us of the true spirit of service—and it is growing. The coming of Democracy is not really to be found in the unrest, the upheaval, and the strike; they are the froth and foam of the great sea of the true spirit that under God is steadily rolling in. What power will abolish slums and sweating and exploitation? The spirit of service, which will make men shudder at these things and feel them to be an intolerable disgrace. That power is abolishing them. The real strength of the Labour Movement lies in its appeal to the two great Truths—the equal value of all men ultimately, and the spirit of service. The Truth behind the lie that all wealth is due to labour is the Truth that life is service, and that the man who does not

serve has no right to live. The lie that all wealth is created by manual labour will die, and is dying fast. The Truth that service is the soul of Democracy will live, and work its will.

When the Labour Movement relies on its power it relies on its weakness ; when it relies on its Truth it relies on its irresistible strength. When the Miners tell us they will starve us if we do not pay, we prepare for battle ; when they point to ten people living in one room outside a monster pleasure palace, we drop our rifles and shout " Kamerad." We cannot stand that. So it is always. The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and His weakness is stronger than our strength. Truth is always putting down the mighty from their seats, and exalting the humble and meek. The appeal to force which for years the capitalist made has been perfectly futile, it has only led to an appeal equally futile on the other side. The two lies will destroy one another, and out of the chaos will come a truly democratic order, based on the two truths, that all lives are of equal value, and that the secret of life is service.

There is hope that the hell-fire we have just been through will purge our minds of falsehoods, and let the Truth come in. We have been fighting the barbaric and anti-democratic idea of a state which refuses to recognise the value of the individual life, and looks upon men as made for states, and not states as made for men. We have been fighting for the root truth of Democracy that all men are of equal value in God's sight, and that no men are to be counted as cannon fodder to feed the idol of political power based on force.

It ought to have cleared our hearts and minds and made us eager to recognise the Truth that Britain is for the British, not in the narrow and exclusive sense which would keep out foreign friend and foe alike, but in the deeper sense that Great Britain can never be truly great until every British life is lived as fully and as freely as it has power to live. It ought to have made us certain of the equal value in God's sight of every Britisher.

Moreover, we should have won through our suffering a new idea of service and its meaning. There has been, and there could be, no pretences during the War that all men were

equal. Our cry was for leaders, for men and women of ability. We wanted outstanding brains, initiative, skill, and learning, and we called them to service. We wanted, too, the ordinary brain, the ordinary initiative, skill, and learning, and the ordinary pluck, and we called them to service.

They both responded to the call, and cooperated for a common end, and their cooperative response to the call of service is the cause of our success. And despite all the misery and mourning of the war our hearts have been happy and our lives glad because we have been consciously serving. The lady has scrubbed floors and waited on the sweep, the sweep has killed Bosches and suffered for the lady, and both have been glad because they knew they served. Service transforms work. We have been learning the joy of service, and have delighted in honouring it, and recognising it as the only real title to honour. If we have really learned that lesson true Democracy is dawning, and now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The danger is lest we forget, and the War just fizzles out.

That is the best expression for the lost feeling of the demobilised I ever heard. A soldier in a bowler hat said to me: "This 'ere war is just fizzling out." The demobilised man has lost something. There is something he is feeling round for, like a man who has lost his cigarette-case and hasn't a fag in the world. What is it? It is his sense of service. He left it in the pocket of his khaki clothes. That is the danger. We cannot get Democracy until we recognise that the man who digs our country's coal is as much in the service as the man who kills our country's foes, and the man who drives the British trains as much in the service as the man who trains the British guns. We must recognise that, and they must recognise it. We must recognise it and honour labour accordingly. Half the trouble is that we do not honour the workman as we honoured the soldier. We pretend to, but we don't. We honour the working man in theory, and avoid him in practice. The clerk still imagines himself superior to the mechanic. One great cause of social unrest is snobbishness. There were some fools in the army who thought they were better men

than privates because they were captains. There were some—but very few. Men were honoured for their manhood out there. The soldier misses that here. The seed of Democracy is that sense of service and the pride of being a serving man which the demobilised soldier is groping after. We must give it back to him—that is the problem. The soil is good, the best soil in the world, for the soil of Democracy is the heart of the British people. Some one wrote to me the other day, and said: “Come right home. The boys out there are all right. Here at home people are soulless and self-worshippers. On Saturday the Guards carried their glorious colours through the London streets, not a head was bowed, not a cap removed.” That makes me laugh, it is so blankly and blindly pessimistic. I saw the Guards march down the Strand, wedged in among the crowd. It was the most intensely British performance I ever saw. A military pageant is always a joke to a Britisher, and not even the shadow of those dreadful days could kill the humour of it now. The men marched steady as a rock with a twinkle in one eye—the people cheered (*pace* my

correspondent), but there was laughter in their cheers, and when the demobilised men in caps and civies came along, they and the crowd just laughed at one another. It was British, and I loved it. I am not pessimistic. These people are the same people that I knew out there—the same bone, blood, and temper—and in their incorrigible humour, their instinct of honesty, and their love of fair-play, there is the soil for true Democracy. They need leaders, teachers, and rulers, filled with the love of service, to show them how to serve, and to tell them the Truth. If they are well led and well taught they will prove to be in Peace what they have proved to be in War—the best human material in the world.

THE LIE OF LUST

I KNOW that appearances are against me, and yet I stoutly maintain that I am not a monkey. I cannot help my face. I had to take the one that was served out to me; but I can help my soul, my innermost "me," to a certain extent, and when my face stands up to my soul and claims it for a monkey soul, there is a tremendous force arises in me to defy my face. If ever that force fails me I shall be damned. That is the story of my life in a nutshell. It is the fight between my face and me. And I am a very ordinary man, and so my story is man's story. Of course most people are better off in the way of faces. But the main fact remains. The story of men and women is the story of the fight between the monkey and the man within their souls. We are not animals, we are infinitely more than animals, and yet we had an animal origin, and that origin is the root cause of our sin. You see when the animal in man comes out

and gets the mastery, it does not appear as simple animal nature, but always as something hideous and diabolic which is obscene because it is unnatural. Lust in an animal is natural, and even beautiful, it is just the life force born of God making for more life. But lust in a man is obscene and filthy because it is unnatural. It becomes cruel and debased. It does not proceed to the making of children naturally and cleanly; it descends to unmentionable and disgusting things. The report on the German atrocities in Belgium provides a kind of horror-chamber in which we can see what lust can bring men to. As one reads that awful document a kind of hot shame comes over one, and makes one sweat for sorrow over sin. The sting of that shame lies in the fact that one is dreadfully conscious that the root of that disgusting horror is there in one's own soul. Have you never felt a ghastly doubt rising up in your mind when you read such things? Now what am I reading this for? Is it purely because I want to hate it? Isn't there some force at the back of me that embraces it, and would go out to it, even the worst of it, if another

force within me were to fail? Write a book about the cruelties and debaucheries of a Nero or a Rasputin, and it will sell. There is an appeal in it which thousands, nay, which all men feel, which all men would answer, if the other force within them failed. But the horror of it, the shame for it, is, thank God, as real, more real, than the appeal. There is human history: the war between the appeal and the repulsion of sin: the war between the monkey and the man. There are thousands of writers, artists, playwrights, musicians, who are making their fortunes out of the appeal to the animal in man. It is the best paying business in the world. Yet, if there is anything that human experience makes certain, it is that there is no end to the journey a man makes in answer to that appeal except damnation, the utter loss of all that makes life good. Lust cannot satisfy a man, because he needs Love. Lust is unnatural in man, it leaves one side of his nature out, and sooner or later that neglected side has its revenge, and turns life's sweetness bitter to his taste. Then in his despair he will descend in search of new sensations to

things which men cannot mention, or even think of without shame. That is the way of it with all men if the great force fail that leads them upward from the animal to the human and divine.

One of the queer human reasons why the regulation of vice by the State has been a practical failure in every country in the world, and why the attempt to confine the prostitute to the brothel or licensed house is never a success, is that men are human and not animal, even in their vice, and they are really seeking Love, and not Lust. They unconsciously seek not merely a concubine but a comrade ; their real need is not a harlot but a home. They do not want to pay their money down and get physical satisfaction ; they want a friendship, a human personal relationship, a romance.

The hosts of men and women who go out to the streets of a great city at night and look in one another's faces as they pass beneath the lamps are love-seekers deceived and deluded by lust. You can never solve the problem by regulating the deception. You cannot regulate romance without killing it ;

regulated vice is not what even a debased man wants. That, too, is the reason of the bewildering hatred which can grow up in the hearts of a man and a woman who married mistaking lust for love. They will murder one another because each means to the other the failure of the human quest of Love. It is the commonest tragedy in the world, and it springs from the same old lie that men are animals. Once more the lie stands between us and our dreams. Democracy demands co-operation between men and women. Each has a part to play, and either they must enter paradise hand in hand, or find themselves forever barred from entry by the Angel with the flaming sword of Truth. The story of man and woman as they journey down the ages is one of the most tragic and terrible of all the stories that go to make up human history.

Thrown together always by an irresistible force which drives them on to propagate their race, they come to their bodily union with a separation in their souls, and a longing for a deeper union which they cannot understand. Before our dreams can come true that deeper union must be realised, and love must

conquer lust. To-day the whole world is being called to war with the plague of venereal disease. The scourge must be destroyed. Many of our best brains are interested in the problem, the best forces of our intellect are being concentrated on it, and rightly so. All that Medical Science can do is needed, but at bottom it is a human problem. You cannot cure men of venereal disease as you could cure dogs of mange. You must do all you can along those lines, but the root of the matter is the lie of lust, and that can only be met by Truth, the Truth of Love. Men and women are not, and can never be just concubines, they are made to be comrades. There is the irresistible force driving us to propagate the race, but there is another force more subtle, and in the end more strong, driving us, leading us, pleading with us in a thousand piteous ways to find the deeper union and the Truth. Even if medical science could deliver us from venereal disease, and all it means, lust would still lie heavy as a curse upon our civilisation, as a dead weight to crush our dreams, because it prevents the comradeship and full co-operation between men and women

which true Democracy demands. Behind the ghastly grinning figure of War, with its death's head and its dripping hands; behind the Moloch of commercialism with its brutal claws upon the fluttering wings of life; behind all the cruelty of man to man, and of man to woman, stands lust, clothed as a woman in gorgeous robes, with bare breasts and an evil smile beckoning men to follow her. Men fight for riches, toil for fame, degrade their souls, and slay their brothers to lay their trophies at her feet, and obtain her burning kiss as their reward—only to find the kiss a curse that leaves an empty hungering behind. It is absolutely essential that we recognise as a radical cause of all our miseries, war, disease, poverty, and brutality—the corruption that is in the world through lust. Teaching which does not recognise it is mere trifling. If you want to find the cause of human miseries “*cherchez la femme*” is the truth; but she is not really woman when we find her, she is the travesty of woman's truth that lust creates to lure men on. The True woman is much more beautiful, much more alluring, to those who see her face, but there is that

in her eyes, and in the stately carriage of her little head, that lust dare not approach. She calls men on not to War but to Peace, not to destruction but creation, not to slaughter but to service. She speaks of home and children, of art and music, of play and laughter.

She is tender, clean, and smiling with the springtime in her eyes,
And the gaiety of goodness, God's true youth that never dies.

When her voice takes anxious tones she speaks of sacrifice, the great sacrifice of life for life, she calls men to high adventure, adventure like her own, when she stakes her world to win a child. She is the great emotional force which must inspire the new Democracy.

When man shall live for women, and women live for men, and both have learned to live their lives for God, she will inspire men to bear their burdens and bear her burden too. She will be man's comrade. She will bring her own contribution to art, music, literature, education, and true com-

merce, and take her proper place at her man's side. Such is the new woman, and the true woman that the years bring to her birth.

It is this woman that the monkey man, the lower man, hates and fears. She challenges his superiority in strength, defies his appeal to brute force, claims his reverence and respect, laughs at his conceit, wonders at his stupidity, and calls him to awake out of sleep. Lust knows well that womanhood will one day bring it to its death as a power in the world.

It is this new woman, this true woman, that the lie of lust is suffered every day to kill. In her Christ is ever crucified afresh. She lives in every harlot, crucified and crying for her life, and calling men to save her from herself. She lives in every woman in the world, lives and waits her time. We need her, we must have her. Democracy demands her, the future is all dark without her. We must have her if we are to escape War and Poverty and Ignorance, if we are to build the Britain of our dreams. This is the real curse of lust—it kills the true woman that the world so sorely needs.

We underestimate altogether the power of

the lie if we only reckon that it brings to us the plague of filthy disease. If there were no such consequence at all, and lust was free of its present penalty, it still would be the cursed thing, because it dwarfs the growth of the woman soul, and the woman mind for which the world of the future is crying, and without which our dreams can never come true. If man is to march to his destiny he must march hand in hand with his mate; a true mate, honoured, respected, and revered. Adam can never enter Paradise alone. Together they must come to make God's Angel sheath his flaming sword. Lust is unnatural. It is a lie on Love. Let us get down to a real fight, not with the result of it but with the thing itself. Our destiny demands it, our women are crying for it; we must do it. We want the woman of the future, and she lives prisoned in the woman of the present—if only we can kill the lie and let her out.

The prayer of the world that Christ might rise,
Our longing for love that never dies,
The sobbing of Eve before Paradise
Is in your eyes,
Your kind brown eyes.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN SIN

WHERE does evil come from? What is its origin? I suppose men have been asking that ever since they asked anything. I can remember sitting up until two in the morning in the days of my youth trying to thrash the question out, and always ending up where I began—which was nowhere. I don't know anything about it. Nobody knows anything about it. Talking about it is waste of breath and waste of energy, except that, perhaps, it provides good mental gymnastics. Perhaps the beastly thing has not got an origin. Perhaps, when we reach the final Truth and the shadows roll away, we shall see that it was a nightmare, and there is no good discussing the origin of nightmares.

I don't know anything about the origin of sin. I only know that it is there. The Garden of Eden does not help me a scrap. It does not help anybody. It does not solve the problem; it only states a fact. It states

it very picturesquely, and in a way that sticks. But Satan comes into the Garden as evil comes into the world—from God knows where. And perhaps He doesn't ; for perhaps even Omniscience does not know the origin of nightmares. The story of the Fallen Angels and Paradise Lost does not get one anywhere either. It only shifts the question farther back. Because, where did Satan get it from ? The truth is that neither the Bible nor human philosophy has anything to say about it at all.

There are only two things certain. First of all, that it is there. That's dead certain. And secondly, that it has got to be destroyed before our dreams can all come true. Any attempt to found the true Democracy on human nature as it is, is doomed to failure. It can't be done. That is the Truth which the builders of Democracy have got to face and not blink. You cannot found Democracy on enlightened or unenlightened self-interest. It is just as impossible to found it on the principles of Bentham as it is to found it on the principles of Bolshevism. There is nothing to choose between the Manchester School of

Economics and the modern syndicalist in point of lunacy. Both are just howls of discontent with a rotten past which has bred a rotten present; and neither of them is an intelligent effort to construct a decent future.

All theories of the redemption of politics and industry from the sordid and the base are equally futile which do not include, and largely depend upon, a strenuous effort to redeem man from sin. So long as selfishness, greed, envy, lust, and laziness persist in human nature, so long will all our finest theories and our most perfect dreams be shattered into pieces on the rocks of practical politics. The fatal flaw in the reason of many of our most earnest and courageous reformers is that they do not allow for the presence and the power of sin in themselves, and in the human material out of which they must build the perfect State. If our myriad Oppositions—Socialist, Syndicalist, Collectivist, Communist, etc.—were to cease to be Oppositions and become Governments, they would either bust the show to bits or become sadder and wiser men. I do not believe that John Burns is a coward or a traitor, or really

an old and tired man, but that he is a man who, like M. Briand in France, and Signor Labriola in Italy, learned late in life the difference between theory and practice, and the power of human sin. All their efforts to form the perfect State out of sinful and imperfect man by short cuts which do not make him any less sinful or any less imperfect in himself, can only end in destroying what freedom we have got, and landing us back into some form of ghastly tyranny. If there is a lesson that is written in letters of blood and flame over the whole history of man, it is that you cannot make silken purses out of sows' ears, or build the New Jerusalem out of sinners unredeemed.

Man can only advance towards the real Democracy as man advances in his conquest of evil and his victory over himself.

It is perhaps because I am a modern man, or perhaps because I am a modernist—although I'm blest if I really know what that means—that I find the most helpful way of thinking about evil is the modern way of looking upon it as the remains of the monkey in me. I don't pretend that it is an adequate

account of the origin of evil ; but, then, there isn't one. It's just as good an explanation as the Fall—better, because if it is not true, it is founded on facts and not fables. I have said before that I am not a monkey, although I know that appearances are against me, and that my face demands the presence of a tail. I am not a monkey, but there is a monkey in me, and a tiger, and a snake, in fact a whole blessed menagerie, and that is what I have to kill. The mistake that those who hold this idea have made is to think that because sin is the remains of the beast in man, that therefore it need not be killed ; that it is not positively evil but is only natural, and therefore inevitable. Now that is wrong. Because the monkey in me is something much lower than any decent monkey that climbs trees and eats nuts. It is a beastly thing that uses the higher powers that I possess to serve its own bestial purposes. Lust in a monkey is perfectly natural and clean, and goes forward in a decent fashion to the propagation of its species. Lust in me is an unclean and unnatural thing, which invents things to secure pleasure without pain, and to hinder the

propagation of my species. It fills the world with rotten diseases, and keeps to minister to its needs a host of syphilitic slaves. Anger, which in a noble beast is just the instinct of self-protection, becomes in me a scheming, envious, jealous frame of mind which uses all my higher powers to work my fellow's ill. In fact, the beast in me is not a beast but a bestial abortion, and has got to be destroyed. The truth is that a monkey with a monkey's brain is a tolerable thing in the world, but a monkey with a man's brain is the devil himself, and has got to be scotched. And the bigger the brain the bigger the devil. Sin is not natural to man. It is the vermiform appendix of human nature, and has got to be cut out.

All true democrats ought to remember this, that if it is true that you cannot form an AI State physically out of a C3 population, it is also true that you cannot form an AI State at all out of a population that is suffering from moral appendicitis. Sin has got to be cured. It is often stated that if you alter and amend men's environment, if you regulate marriage on eugenic principles, if you abolish

the capitalist system of industry—in fact, if you make a new world, you will thereby cure sin and make new men. The truth is that only new men, or men that are becoming new, can make this new world. Only new men can make a new environment; only new men could stand marriage regulated on eugenic principles—(I am not sure that they will ever become as new as that; if they ever do, thank God I will be dead); only new men—and this is very important—could possibly work any other system but the capitalist system of industry. So long as industry is worked entirely on motives of self-interest, it is the only system that has ever existed or could ever exist with any hope of success. No one wants to see it destroyed more than I do, but I have not the slightest faith in its being destroyed, except to land us in something far worse, unless its destruction is carried out by new men.

Man as he is, with the beast still in him, cannot make a world fit for real men to dwell in. He must be changed, and as he is changed so can he change the world. This idea that man can be redeemed by Act of

Parliament, by organisations and committees, is a dangerous falsehood, and all true democrats must beware of it. Human nature is not all right as it is, and it is ruinous to act as if it were. It only means in the end that, after a long journey of change and revolution, we will find, as travellers in the desert do, that we have been walking in a circle, and have come back to where we started from, which is the exploitation of the weak by the strong, of the stupid by the clever, and, finally, of the poor by the rich. The roots of our inequalities lie in human nature itself.

The idea that human nature is all right, and that sin does not matter, is a reaction from the opposite falsehood that human nature is hopelessly and inevitably corrupt, and that all the sin and sorrow in the world is due to man's wilful misuse of the powers that God has given him. For this error the Christian Church, with its teaching on the Fall of Man, is largely responsible, because, although it taught that man could be redeemed from sin, it shifted his redemption into a future world, and taught that the Cross of Calvary saved men, not so much

from the power of sin in this life as from the pains of Hell in the next. It taught men, as it were, to abandon earth as a bad job and prepare their souls for Heaven.

The Nineteenth Century thinkers and reformers revolted from this. They perceived the enormous influence of heredity and environment upon human character, and they refused to accept this burden of the full responsibility which Christian theology seemed to lay upon the shoulders of men. Their rebellion was very largely justified, because there is no doubt that the doctrine of human depravity was for many years a curse to education and a bar to human progress. It was in a very real sense a blasphemy against God, a failure of faith in His power, and a failure of faith in His love. Man is not, and cannot by any stretch of imagination be supposed to be, entirely free. Freedom of will is not a thing which he fully possesses, but which he is, under the guidance of God, growing to possess. The doctrine of Original Sin did of course limit free will, but instead of drawing attention to the effect of environment and the hope of improving human

nature by altering the environment, it crippled effort by teaching man's total depravity and had an evil effect on education, penal codes and the treatment of criminals, and all efforts at social reform.

Shall I be born of a mother pure
Or born of a slut in a filthy sewer ?
Shall I be fed at a healthy breast
Or doped with gin at " The Traveller's Rest " ?
Mother comes in our every choice,
And father speaks in the still small voice.
The scales are weighted for us at birth.
No man starts free for his race on earth !
I cannot choose what my land shall be—
India, Britain, or Germany.
The set traditions of my own race
All have in my choosing soul their place.
Forgotten sinners around me stand
To guide and govern my choosing hand.
Even your Bible accepts all that,
For it blurts it out, and tells us flat
It is the rule of the jealous God
To visit and punish with iron rod
The sons—for the sins their fathers sinned.
So when this freedom of choice is skinned
There's not much left—it's an unfair choice,
So very small is the still small voice.

That is the Truth. We must reckon, in

thinking of sin, on the enormous power of heredity and environment to mould and fashion human character. It is true that a man's ancestors are part of himself, that we are the children of the ages. It is true to a limited extent, physically, so far as our bodies are concerned. It is true to an enormous extent, spiritually, as far as our souls are concerned—not that we inherit spiritual ideas, not that there is any inheritance of acquired characteristics, but that we are, whether we like it or not, born into a world which has a spiritual history, born into a world that has a past which has enormously contributed to the making of the present. We are born into a world of social traditions, social conventions, and stereotyped systems, and that world has a tremendous and inevitable power to make or mar our characters. There is a power of heredity, and if environment be interpreted in its wide and proper meaning of our whole environment, including our spiritual surroundings, the books we read, the teachers we sit under, the companions we live with, the power of environment is more evident and more inevitable still.

It is obviously false to lay upon the individual man the whole burden of responsibility for the suffering and misery that he endures.¹ Man is right, as Job was right, in refusing to abandon altogether his own integrity. Every one should read Mr. H. G. Wells's great new book, *The Undying Fire*. It puts this truth in the finest and most inspiring language. Man has rightly rejected the wretched comforters who consoled him when he was in Hell with the bland assurance that it was his own fault. To say that a man is fully and completely responsible for his actions is to say far too much; but if you go off on the other tack and proclaim that men are the helpless products of heredity and environment, the mere tools of forces greater than themselves, you strike a blow at the deepest and most noble of man's instincts—that is, his instinct of freedom, the feeling that when he acts it is he that acts, and that he is responsible in

¹ The Catholic Church has of course never done this formally, as she has always taught the doctrine of Original Sin, but the effect of that doctrine was largely neutralised by—

1. Her tendency to postpone redemption to the next world.
2. The degradation of the doctrine of Original Sin into the doctrine of human depravity.

some measure for his actions. If you preached that doctrine, and convinced all men of it—(which, thank God, you could not do)—you would kill God, shatter the stars, and put an end to the universe. You would, in fact, quench the unquenchable fire.

The fire from which action proceeds is our faith in our partial freedom. When the Christian beats his breast and cries, "I have sinned against Thee by my fault, my own fault, my own most grievous fault," he is repeating the Magna Charta of the universe. Sin is there, and sin is sin—that is, it is absolutely evil, utterly wrong, and has got to be destroyed. And it can be destroyed. The seed of freedom is there. That is our most precious instinct. And freedom can be made perfect. That is the faith by which alone we can live. Destroy that faith and you destroy us. But even as we stand and confess our faith in the coming of perfect freedom there is a universal instinct in us almost as strong as the instinct of freedom itself—that we need another power, not ourselves, a power that transcends and lies beyond us, if we are to attain to perfect

freedom. And that instinct, too, is necessary to life. Kill it, and you kill man. For man needs that power. He must have it. He must have God.

LIES AND THE LOVE OF GOD

WE don't like calling ourselves miserable sinners in these days. Men feel that this continual moaning about themselves is unmanly. Very often it is sheer hypocrisy, and when it is sincere it is bad for morale, it's depressing. If we can't be saintly, for God's sake let's be cheerful. What's the good of chanting long Litanies that end up with "have mercy upon us miserable sinners"? It only gives one the hump, and God knows there is enough in life to give a man the hump without adding to it and harping on it. It's a depressing business, and depression means the death of effort and the dimming of hope and courage. There is some truth in that. But it is not the whole truth. You see this continual repentance has its brave and honest side. At its best it means that men are so sure that joy can be obtained that they are not afraid to acknowledge their sorrow. They are so certain of Christ's remedy

for sin that they can look sin in the face. They are so convinced that life is eternal that they can continually remember death and never be cast down. In fact, they are so sure of God that they can defy the devil. The modern "O let us be joyful," "Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag and smile, smile, smile" attitude is not really a happy one. Your tail must be well down before you need to be told to keep it up! You don't tell happy people to keep up their spirits. The real objection to a lot of our modern gaiety is that it is not gay. We are not really gay because we are not good. We do not dare to live, we run away from life. We dare not remember, so we school ourselves to forget. We try to believe that the world's all right. Let's have plenty of innocent amusement, and less grousing about ourselves. Let's have more Jazz dances, and less of the songs of New Jerusalem and the

O Paradise, O Paradise,
'Tis weary waiting here

touch. If we must have a religion, let's have a cheery religion. Let's have parsons that

are more like human beings and less like lugubrious black-beetles. Let's sing brave battle-songs of hope and not these cowardly misereres made up by mediaeval women-haters with a bee in their bonnets, and disordered livers.

The battle of life is a matter of morale, like the Battle of Ypres. What we have to do is to keep up the spirits of the troops. This continual grovelling and grouching is *no bon* for the troops. It spells defeat, when what we want is defiance.

Well, cheeriness is a great thing. Christ saw that. He was always saying Cheer-i-o. It runs like a melody through the music of His life. Guido's *Ecce Homo* is not the whole Christ. I doubt if ever man's eyes looked upon that face. It may have been the face that in the moonlight shone ghastly white in the garden of His agony, it may have been the face that even the sun was veiled from seeing as it was lifted in prayer from the Cross—but it was not the face of Him who cried, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins

are forgiven thee." Christ, the Man of many sorrows, was the Man of one abiding joy. Joy was the dynamic by which His sorrows were born without breaking. There are two sides to every crucifix: "Go see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow," and "Go see if there be any joy like unto His joy, which bears the burden of such sorrow unbroken to the end." Cheeriness is a great thing, but it is not everything. It all depends what it is based on.

It is a good thing to be a cheery man, but it is a bad thing to be a cheerful ostrich, that buries its head in the sand and smiles with its back feathers. Cheeriness based on Truth is good. Cheeriness based on lies is bad.

It is deceptive this comparison of the battle of life to the Battle of the Somme. You see you can't fight the two on the same methods. It's no use taking off your coat to the devil, because the dirty dog doesn't stop to be hit. You can't destroy Prussianism by cheerfully killing Prussians, or sin by beating sinners with a grin. That is one of the oldest lies in the world—belief in

Force. Force is futile when you come to deal with realities. You can't cure rabies by killing mad dogs, no matter how cheerfully you do it. Mad dogs when they get loose must be kicked or shot or destroyed somehow, and it requires grit and gumption to kill them. But to cure rabies demands grit and gumption of another sort. That battle must be fought out in a laboratory by men armed with patience and scientific knowledge, and not in the public street by men armed with ammunition boots and rifles. Trying to kill sin by force is as futile as hunting influenza bugs with a blunderbuss. What we did during the War was to kill mad dogs. What we have to do now is to cure rabies. Both tasks are matters of morale, everything is a matter of morale, but of very different kinds of morale. The first need of a fighting soldier is to forget, the first need of a working scientist is to remember. A soldier must forget facts if he is to fight, a scientist must remember them if he is to succeed. I know something of the methods used to keep up fighting morale. They consisted very largely in help-

ing men to forget, in distracting their thoughts, in amusing, deluding, and drugging them. Our horror was, Lest we remember—lest we remember. They were necessary methods; these things had to be. I did my share of it, singing comic songs when I had just taken a hundred funerals, talking nonsense with a dead pal huddled up beside me with a lump of shrapnel in his stomach and wild agony in his still wide-open eyes, going over the top on a rum ration and the hope of a blighty. It had to be. I don't cry out against any of it, not even the rum ration; I've had it myself. We had to stop mad dogs that ran amuck. It was necessary, then, this drugging of ourselves. It was necessary then, but it is fatal now. We cannot live on drugs. That was not life, it was bedlam—the world was mad. We stood at the altar of death with the wine cup in our hands and cried to our comrades in hell: "The world is mad and meaningless, and all the Gods are dead; your brothers lie around you crying in their agony, but heaven does not heed; your duty is to kill and kill, to carry flaming death and dire destruction

with you as you go, to wipe your bloody bayonet clean, then make it red again; kindness is cruelty, and mercy is madness; drink—drink—drink deep—lest ye remember that you are still men, and so your strong hands falter and your great hearts fail.”

That was very largely the Gospel of military morale—it had to be—and will have to be so long as War continues. But it is no gospel for life. At the altar of life stands another figure with a chalice in His hands, and He cries across the world—“Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.” We are up against realities now, and we must remember and not forget.

For purposes of fighting morale it was assumed, and had to be assumed, that all Prussians were devils and all Britons saints. “Our cause was just,” and a man was only bad as he failed the Cause and did not fight. A man might be a lustful, greedy, selfish brute, but if he were a good soldier, no saint who in that time of terror sheltered behind his sacrifice could throw a single stone, no saint wanted to.

But it is different now. We can make no great assumptions. We must face the facts. Military morale is not civil morale. A man may be a good soldier and a rotten citizen. It is easier to kill devils than to build democracies. During the War we deliberately bamboozled ourselves about ourselves. Now we must deliberately refuse to be bamboozled about ourselves or anything else. We have signed a Peace Treaty, but we have not made a Peace. That remains to be done. The Peace Treaty, and the League of Nations which it sets up, are by themselves and in themselves about as much protection against War as a wall of tissue paper against a mad bull. Prussianism is not really peculiar to Prussia ; it lives in Britain too, it lives in our own souls, and there it must be killed before we can make the world safe for Democracy, or Democracy safe for the world. I do not want to revive the droning misereres of the mediaeval Church, but we must face the facts for which the miserere stood—the two great facts—that man is sinful, and that man needs God to save him from his sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are a pack of blind

deluded fools, and have got right off the tracks—we deceive ourselves, but no one else, and are strangers to the Truth. If we confess our sins—drag them out to light and look them in the face—it is the eternal law of life laid down by Him who made it, that He should break the power of sin and give us strength to rise. It is this double fact of God and our need of God that popular religion ignores and popular politics deny. Popular politics seek to build a perfect world by Act of Parliament or by means of the universal strike. Popular religion seeks the solution in a Goodwill that is not God's Will, because it has no God. God, as a practical proposition and a working power, does not enter into the popular programme at all.

The man in the street says frankly: "I don't profess to be religious. I don't know much about it. It's a queer business. My religion is to do to others as I would be done by. It doesn't matter what a man believes so long as he does what's right. I'm not an atheist, mind you. I believe in the Supreme Being, but I can't see what difference religion makes. There's a lot of hypocrisy about it.

I've known chaps go to Church on Sunday and do you down for twopence on Monday morning." Now what all that amounts to is this, "Do your duty to your neighbour, and your duty to God will take care of itself." The popular version of the two great commandments would turn Christ's version upside down and say: "The first and great commandment is, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and the second is like unto it: 'If you are inclined that way, and want to be religious, thou shalt love the Lord thy God more or less—and it's safer less than more, because too much religion drives men potty, and makes them cranks.'"

To a large extent this popular "Christianity" is a revolt from the deeper and more blatant blasphemy which bade men love God—go to Church—support religion—sing hymns and say prayers, and their duty to their neighbours would look after itself. It is a revolt from the religion which damned souls to build churches, sweated work-people to endow charities, and manufactured prostitutes by low wages to build rescue homes for fallen women and buy a peerage. It is the rejection

by the people of the religion of the classes who patronised God as the best of all policemen, the power that kept poor people in their places by threats of hell and promises of heaven. People felt that it was better to have no God at all than to worship a policeman, and I entirely agree. But it is only by contrast with this caricature of Christianity that popular religion can be called Christian. It is only because we have had so much of the Gospel of Jeremy Bentham, "Each man for himself and God for us all, as the elephant said when it danced among the chickens," that we can still regard the Gospel of Godless goodwill as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Any religion which does not put God first—far and away first—has no real claim to be Christian. You cannot change the order of the two Commandments and retain the Truth. It is shallow nonsense to say that it does not matter what a man believes so long as he does what's right. A man cannot act right unless he believes right, because men always act according to their belief. A man may not act according to the belief he professes, but he will always act according to the belief he really holds—he cannot help it. All men

have a God or Gods, even if they are only idols. A man's God is what he believes in and lives for. The oldest religion, and the most popular religion still, is the worship of many Gods. Man is a natural polytheist. The heathen idols do not die, although their images be broken and all the temples be cast down. Venus, Mars, and Bacchus still live to challenge Christ. We are fools if we suppose the heathen ever bows him down to wood and stone. Men have always worshipped the powers and passions which they felt to be greater than themselves. Venus stood for that life force which vanquishes our reason and drives us on to propagate new life—the force that brings Nirvana in a beloved woman's arms. Mars stood for the tremendous passion that sweeps like a storm through a people, and calls them out to War. Greater than love of wife or child, greater than conscience, apparently greater than God, this power of passion still remains to turn men into beasts. Bacchus stood for the power of intoxication and ecstasy that drink possesses. He bade men drink and drown their troubles, their weakness, and their fear in the magic cup that held laughter, strength, and courage to

their lips. Who that knows our modern world can say the ancient Gods are dead. It still is a battle between the one God and the many, between the high and holy passion for purity, justice, and truth, and the gusts of lower passions that sweep away our manhood and make us lower than the beasts. It is battle between the passion which includes and inspires reason and these many passions that destroy it. A man must always act upon his neighbour according to his master-passion—his real belief.

He must always love his neighbour as he loves his God. That your love of your neighbour depends for its force on the love of your God is not a Christian dogma but a law of social life, as the law of gravity is of natural life, just as universal and just as inevitable. You must love yourself as you love your God, and your neighbour as yourself—that is the law of life. Jesus of Nazareth did not make it. It was made when man was made. You see it in action everywhere. A man who worships drink gives his neighbour beer; the man who worships lust gives his neighbour food for lust to feed on; the man who worships money

gives his neighbour not money, but the love of it.

You must spread your master-passion, and your master-passion is your God. If you have no passions of any sort, then you have no life to live and none to give away. You are not a man but just a bit of drift-wood on the sea of life, tossed this way and that, without a guide because you are in truth without a God. You can give your neighbour nothing but your own futility. If you are a full-blooded animal man with many passions you will spread them all inevitably, but most of all you will spread your master-passion, the one you really live for—the one that is your God.

Into this maelstrom of conflicting passions Christ comes, not bringing a new law, but a new passion—a new God. Over against the multitude of Gods that men have always worshipped, the multitude of many passions and desires by which they have been swayed this way and that, He dares to set a new passion, which He declares must master all the rest and make them willing slaves if the world is to be saved, and that passion is the passion for Himself. He claims to be, not the servant

or the prophet or the preacher of God, but to be God—the very image and the perfect revelation to men in human terms of man's true God, who claims the passionate devotion of the human race by right of the eternal Truth.

That is the Christian religion—the master passion for Jesus Christ. Without that master passion for the perfect man who showed us God, our love of our neighbour is a thing of little worth. Goodwill that is not fired by it is not strong enough to meet and conquer the beast that lives in the heart of the world. Goodwill cannot raise us, inspire us, drive us on to sacrifice and suffering for right, and that is what we need to build the better world. Codes of laws and moral teaching will not do it. Put cold codes of morals between me and a master passion, and I will smash the miserable code to pieces and get me to my God. Put a law between me and my love, and love will laugh your law to scorn, and cast me into the arms of my God. Laws and moral teachings are not strong enough for men. St. Paul knew that. Laws and codes, however perfect in themselves, are no good for men—

they have no power of life ; trying to hold men with laws is like driving mad horses with silk threads. If there had been a law given which could have produced life, then, of course, righteousness would have come by the law. Moral codes and beautiful philosophies are futile, you can only fight the old gods in the power of the new God. You can only fight the idols in the power of the Christ. Are moral teachings going to battle with the lust for women and the love of gold ? Are they going to conquer hatred, envy, jealousy ? How white-livered and cold a man must be to suppose they could.

Just for a night I loved her,
Lost in her laughing eyes ;
God, can a man go hungry,
Hungry for paradise ?

When Venus calls us as the shadows fall to easy heaven and certain peace, when the hoarse and blood-choked voice of Mars rings out across the world and calls the nations out to war, when Bacchus stands and offers us the red wine of forgetfulness—what can save us ? What can save the ordinary man from damning his soul and destroying his

world? The piping of professors? The books of the philosophers? The knowledge of the scientists? Vague goodwill and good-nature? You cold-blooded saints of the study, have you ever walked in the streets? Have you ever lived? Only a passion can conquer a passion—we must have God.

LIES, AND THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

THE Christian religion is, and always has been, the simplest thing in all the world—a passionate devotion to Jesus Christ. A passionate devotion to Jesus Christ as a person, not of the past but of the present, not among the dead but among the living; to Jesus Christ as an ever-present Comrade, Captain, Guide, and God: as a Comrade, clinging closer than a brother; as a Captain, calling men out to lives of service and self-sacrifice; as a Guide, the one thing certain in a world of vast uncertainties; and as a God, the supreme expression of the final truth—"the very Image of the Father"—"through whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that has been made."

All sects and all ages of real Christians, however much their theologies have differed, have really been at one in this, their love of and their devotion to the ever-present Christ.

It was the fire in the heart of Thomas à Kempis which wrote *The Imitation*; it was the fire in the heart of John Bunyan which wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It has been the motive power that has driven all Christian saints to live and write. The Christian religion is a thing so simple that a child can understand it, and often does understand it, far better than the most learned men and women. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings has God ordained praise." It is a thing that can become the treasure of the most ignorant pauper and of the wisest of princes. It is independent of clime, class, nationality, sex, or age. It is the most utterly democratic thing in the whole world. It is high as heaven, it is deeper than hell, as high as man's highest hopes and deeper than his deepest sins, and a great deal wider than the world.

The Christian religion is simple—and always has been. Christian theology is complex and difficult and full of mysteries—and always has been. There always have been a large number of souls in the world to whom Christian theology meant nothing, while the Christian religion meant everything. There are still a

large number who could no more follow an argument than they could go to bed without saying their prayers, and they are the salt of the earth. You can count among their number some of the choicest souls in the world—brave men and tender women. Many of our mothers, more of our grandmothers, whom we rightly judge to be the source of much that is best and finest in us, belonged to that number. Many soldiers—officers and men—in whom one has seen at the front “the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,” belong to that number. In their religion there were no problems, only a deep and abiding trust in Christ as God: God for the present and God for the future, in whose hands all difficulties could be safely left until He saw fit to clear the clouds away. These people are God’s own people, whom to know is to love. But they are, if they belong to this generation, almost always queer people. They are peculiar, possessed of peculiar powers and peculiar faculties and a great gift. They have existed in all ages, and probably will continue to exist through all time.

But it is inevitable that the number of people with this peculiar faculty of serene and untroubled power to penetrate the darkness, and find God, should grow less and less, in proportion to the whole, as the process of universal education advances. We have in these last years, for good or ill, embarked upon the colossal task of teaching the world to think, which means that for more and more of the human race, problems and perplexities must creep in to mar the serenity of a childlike faith. And that is why in these days Christian theology is bound to play a larger and larger part in bringing men to God or keeping them from Him.

The Christian religion is the love of Jesus Christ. Christian theology is the interpretation of the universe and of human life in terms of Jesus Christ. That is what Christian theology always has been, the effort of thinking men to express the stars and the stones, the winds and the waves, the laughter and the tears, the pain and the peace of the world in terms of Jesus Christ. That is the real task of the Christian theologian, and it is a tremendous one and enormously complicated. It

is a task which men have been always doing and have never done.

We must not on our peril get confused in our minds between theology and religion. There is the faith once and for all delivered to the saints, which never changes ; but there is no such thing, and there can be no such thing, as a theology once and for all delivered to the saints, which never changes, unless God were to cease from educating men, and the light which lighteth every man were to cease from coming into the world. Theology can no more stand still than any other branch of thought. It has always been changing, and within the last half-century has changed so rapidly that the minds of many thinking Christians are troubled and confused. But if you will cling fast to this, that the religion is always simple and always the same—which is the love of Jesus—you can face the task of grasping a complex and ever-changing theology without fear. Theology does not interest me, and it does not really interest anybody, unless it be as a hobby, except so far as it helps or hinders religion. Theological questions do not really matter until they become religious questions.

But the number of people who must be more or less theological if they are going to be religious, and to whom some sort of theology is an absolute necessity, is growing rapidly ; so rapidly that we must now face the fact that a muddled and confused theology—in which the falsehoods of the past and the half-truths of the present unite to obscure the real truth as it is being revealed to us—a popular theology which is taught in schools, preached from pulpits, talked in the street, and which forms the background of people's minds—is keeping thousands of men from the religion of Jesus Christ. To say that God is keeping men from Christ would be nearer the truth than many paradoxes are.

There is no doubt that we clergy are enormously responsible for this. We may have preached the truth but we have not preached the whole truth, and our mental reservations have often made the truth we preached a lie to those who listened. We have been afraid of upsetting people's convictions, and many a golden-hearted parson has shrunk from saying what he really thought of Christ out of respect for dear old

Mrs. Brown or Mr. Smith, both of whom clung with equal tenacity to the religion and the theology that they learnt at their mother's knee, their mother having been born and partially educated before there was such a person known as Charles Darwin, and when Bishop Usher was the highest authority on the antiquity of the human race. We have tried to brazen the matter out with the scientific revolution of thought, and assured people that it made no difference to our outlook upon the world, and did not necessitate any re-interpretation of the truth as it is in Jesus. As a matter of fact it caused something like a real revolution in theology to which we have been trying hard, and expending extraordinary ingenuity in trying, to blind our people's eyes. Our religion has not been strong enough to face the theological education which the providence of God has given us, and we have continually dressed up old lies in modern clothes in order that their ugliness might not shock the children of our generation. The real rulers of our theological seminaries have been Mrs. Brown and Mr. Smith. This would be all very well

if we were not really sacrificing hundreds of young souls on the altar of love for these two old ones. Education, poor and limited as it is, has now brought us to the time when we must speak the truth and the whole truth, and risk Mrs. Brown and Mr. Smith. We have got to take up the task of re-interpreting the world as we now see it, in the full blaze of our modern light, in terms of Jesus Christ.

We cannot, I am afraid, accomplish that task of reconstruction without doing a great deal of destruction first. We must pull down a good many time-honoured but tottering ruins before we can build a new temple worthy of the Prince of Peace. The task of destruction is not, and never ought to be, a happy one. It is never pleasant tearing clinging ivy from old walls and breaking down the homes where many noble people have lived and died content, because time has rendered them not fit for habitation. The man who delights in destruction, who loves tearing down for the sake of tearing down, who delights in shocking, hurting, and paining people, is a bad man in whom Christ

does not dwell. But the man who will not tear down what truth itself condemns is a coward and a traitor to the God he serves.

For me and for a good many others this work of destruction was finally accomplished during the past four years in a brutal, cruel, and merciless fashion. To a sensitive spirit these years of War have been a perpetual torture chamber in which he has often had to have his half-beliefs, which were like parts of his body, torn away from him without even being allowed at the time to utter a cry of pain.

The War has not led to any great religious revival. I am not surprised at that. I cannot see anything in War to produce a religious revival. I believe it to be an utter and dangerous falsehood to believe that War of itself uplifts, purges, or sanctifies men's souls. That is a lie which only Treitschke or the devil could believe. It is the heart of that mock-heroic sentimentalism upon which militarism is morally, or rather immorally, founded. People stay at home by the fire, or sit in studies and write books, and imagine War to mean dashing over the

parapet in defence of liberty and right, and giving one's life in one supreme act of self-sacrifice for the great cause. War can be made into that by very exceptional souls, but in itself it bears no resemblance to it whatever. You don't go out to give your life; you go out to take the other fellow's. You don't go out to save, you go out to kill; and if you don't, you are no good as a soldier. If non-combatants hide behind the sentimental conception of War they hide behind a lie, and a peculiarly cruel lie, and I think thousands of us have been doing just that.

Once and for all let me state here my conviction that War is pure undiluted, filthy sin. I don't believe that it has ever redeemed a single soul—or ever will. Exceptional souls have found their glory in it and have let it shine before men; but the war only brought it to light; it did not make it. The only power that war possesses is the only power that any evil thing possesses, which is the power to destroy itself. If this world-wide War has done us any good it is because in its flames a certain number of old and soul-killing lies have perished self-destroyed. In

the blood, the mud, and the stench of the battlefield they worked themselves out to their final absurdity, while the guns roared laughter from behind. Often and often the 9-inch guns have seemed to me to yell out above the rattle of a barrage, "You fools, you fools!" From the bottom of my heart I believe that this work of destruction, however painful it may be, must be accomplished to the bitter end, to lead the children of our generation to the worship of the true God.

"What is God like?"—what is He like? What do you mean when you say He is Almighty? What does the first of the Thirty-nine Articles mean when it says that "There is one God without body, parts or passions, of infinite wisdom and power"? What do all those wonderful pictures in the Revelation mean—of God sitting on a throne with Christ at His right hand, while millions of angels throng around Him singing gorgeous songs, and bending low in humble worship, singing praises of the triumph and the victory of God—while a German soldier spears a Belgian baby, rapes its mother, and

keeps her alive to see the father shot? In God's name, what is the Almighty God like?

That is the question which has been torturing the minds of millions during this war; making some blaspheme and curse the very name of God; making others turn from the very thought of Him in bitterness and despair; making others still dully and dimly indifferent to religion and all it means; and shutting all alike into a darkness which the love of God has proved powerless to penetrate. To answer them merely as Job's comforters answered the splendid impatience of patient Job with the cry of agnosticism: "It is higher than heaven; what canst thou do? It is deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" is to produce the same effect upon them as the comforters produced on Job, namely, to make them irritated, sad, and miserable, and to put God farther away and not draw Him nearer.

If a man had come to me on the battle-field and told me that God knew best, and that I must leave it all to Him, he would have made me blaspheme; and the man who comes to me to-day with the same pious

platitude upon his lips makes me want to blaspheme more bitterly still. Because, although the horror of the battlefield has faded from my mind, thought and meditation have produced in my soul a dead and settled loathing of it as an evil, and not merely a very painful thing. Thought and meditation have convinced me that War is not only torture but that it is filthy. To tell me that War is evil, and that the problem of evil is insoluble, is, indeed, finally the truth; but it is not enough. I will not be able to understand altogether; I know I cannot; I know, however much I learn and however much I think, there will be mysteries still. But I must know how God looks at it; I must determine what God's attitude towards it is, or else down comes the darkness and Christ is not merely crucified, He is dead.

My brethren, the ways of God
No man can understand,
We can but wait in awe and watch
The wonders of His hand.
He dwells in Majesty sublime
Beyond the starry height,

His Wisdom is ineffable,
His Love is Infinite.
Before Him all created things
Do bow them and obey,
The million stars that night by night
Wheel down the milky way.
The shrieking storm obeys His Will,
The wild waves hear His call,
The mountain and the midge's wing,
God made and governs all.
'Tis not for us to question Him,
To ask or reason why,
'Tis ours to love and worship Him
And serve Him till we die.
O weeping Mother torn with grief,
Poor stricken heart that cries,
And rocks a cradle empty now,
'Tis by God's will he dies.
His strong young body blown to bits,
His raw flesh quivering still,
His comrades' groans of agony,
These are God's Holy Will.
He measures out our Peace and War
As seemeth to Him best,
His judgments are unknowable,
Remember that—and rest.
For what are we poor worms of earth,
Whose life is for a day,
Our finite minds that Satan blinds,
My brethren, what are they ?

We are but little children weak
Who cling to God's right hand,
Just think how wonderful He is,
And bow to His command.
He has some hidden purpose sure
For all this blood and tears,
It is His Will—be still—be still,
He is the Lord of years.
He bids us love our enemies
And live in Christian Peace,
'Tis only He can order Wars
And woes that never cease.
Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,
Beware ! Thou shalt not kill,
Behold the bloody fields of France,
They are God's Holy Will.
That is what makes Him wonderful
To our poor human sight ;
He only can work miracles
And turn Wrong into Right.
So bow you down and worship Him,
Kneel humbly and adore
This Infinitely Loving God
Who is the Lord of War.
Lift up your hands in ceaseless prayer
That He will spare your lives,
And let His loving judgments fall
On other people's wives.
He is a God who answers prayer
And alters His decrees

If only we persistently
 Beseech Him on our knees.
If only we would pray enough,
 My brethren, for our sons,
Then He would save their lives for us,
 And spike the German guns.
Our shrieks of pain go up in vain,
 The wide world's miseries
Must still persist until we learn
 To pray upon our knees.
Upon our knees, my friends, I said,
 And mark well what I say,
God wants to see us on our knees,
 The proper place to pray.
Nought is impossible to God
 In answer to such prayers,
If only we are meek enough,
 He is a God who spares.
Whenever people seek to know
 And ask the reason why
Their sons are swallowed up by wars
 And called to fight and die,
There is one thing I ask, dear friends,
 One thing I always say,
I ask them straight, I'm not afraid,
 I ask them, " Did you pray ?
Did you pray humbly on your knees
 That it might be God's Will
To spare his life and bring him back,
 To spare, and not to kill ? "

Then if they still can answer yes,
And think to baffle me,
I simply answer, " Bow your head,
His death was God's decree."
And who are we to question it,
Who crawl upon the earth
As insects in His Holy sight,
Vile things of little worth ?
Remember, rather, all your sins,
And bow to God's decrees.
Seek not to know the plans of God,
But pray upon your knees,
That you may love with all your heart,
With all your soul and mind,
This perfect God you cannot know,
Whose face you cannot find.
You have no notion what He's like,
You cannot know His Will,
He's wrapped in darkest mystery,
But you must love Him still.
And love Him all the more because
He is the unknown God
Who leads you blindfold down the path
That martyred Saints have trod.
That is the Gospel of the Christ.
Submit whate'er betides.
You cannot make the wrong world right,
'Tis God alone decides.

* * * * *

*O by Thy Cross and Passion, Lord,
By broken hearts that pant
For comfort and for Love of Thee,
Deliver us from cant.*

There is no power nor virtue in this travesty of faith, which makes it mean the taking of all things on trust, the folding of the hands and the bowing of the head, the spiritless submission to the lie that whatever is is right. Faith does not mean that we cease from asking questions ; it means that we ask and keep on asking until the answer comes ; that we seek and keep on seeking until the truth is found ; that we knock and keep on knocking until the door is opened and we enter into the palace of God's truth.

It becomes more and more important as years pass by and men's minds grow that we should prove all things, while holding fast to that which is true. Christ calls us to that courage which bids us give up the snug little homes which sloth and prejudice have built for our minds, our pet infallibilities, in which we could rest and cease to think wrapt in perfect peace ; He calls us

to give them up as He called us to give up the peace and quiet of our own fireside for the mud and misery of France and Flanders, for the sake of truth and of our children yet unborn. We are afraid—of course we are afraid. “If that is not true,” we say, “where am I? How can I be sure of anything? If the Bible is not literally true, word for word, if the picture of God which my forefathers had is a false picture, where am I? What is there settled? Where can I live? There is nothing before me but the open sea where I must journey helpless and exposed to every wind that blows.”

And that is true! The world is out on the open sea exposed to every wind. And I am out on the open sea with it, but I do not care because there is One walks beside me and before me and behind me, and God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, has shined into my heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We are called upon, the Church is called upon, to go out on to the open sea with Christ, leaving behind the snug homes of patent infallibilities which the

guns have battered into dust, and follow Him until we find the truth.

We are not in complete darkness. We are not without a Guide. Theology changes, but religion remains. To fold your hands and say, "God knows best," to take refuge in unreal platitudes, is to cower away from the light that God, through the prayers of the saints, through the courage of the scientists, through the cunning of inventors, and through the tireless patience of the thinkers, has been giving down the ages. The task of the Church and of her children, which is peculiarly her task and peculiarly theirs, is to gather up from every corner of the world all the light that can be found, and set it blazing on this great problem of evil, in order to find the best partial solution for the children of our day, and the one which will provide the surest foundation for the complete solution which the passage of the ages, under God, will bring to light. We must seek for light in every corner of God's universe, never forgetting it is God's universe, and that in it we can find revelation of Himself. We must go down to life's dirtiest

and dingiest depths, and up to its fairest and most fearful heights; we must face all the facts—the facts that make us shudder and the facts that make us laugh, the beauty that makes us gasp with wonder and the ugliness that makes us shrink in horror, the good that makes us want to worship and the evil that makes us bow our heads in shame; we must look at them all, face them all, asking always, “What is God like”—the God who is Creator and Ruler of a universe like this? We must not do what we have done, invent a God and then make life to fit Him, blinding our eyes to what does not suit our purpose; creating an absolute by the negative process of subtracting all human limitations from the human being, and choosing what we want to consider limitations, and what we do not. An imaginary God may be very beautiful, but He will not stand the tears and terror, and the fires that are not quenched. We must have Truth.

LIES AND NATURE

“I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.” That is the first clause of our shortest creed which contains the kernel of our faith. “I believe.” Do you believe? Do you really know what it means? Can you find God in nature? At first it seems the easiest thing in the world. Nature seems to speak of God. Go, stand out on a summer night and look upwards to the sky where the million stars go sailing through that great wide sea of blue like silent ships that pass in the night, or like a mighty army with flickering torches in their hands marching ever onwards from dawn to darkness and from darkness on to dawn. Go, walk in the woods on a day in April and watch the beauty of nature repeating the eternal resurrection, and rising from the grave of winter to the splendour of the spring. Go, stand and watch the daylight die, and all the west grow wonderful with a

thousand colours past the power of human artists to express. Look at a mountain towering up to kiss the sky, pluck the tiniest flower that grows upon its side, and if you are a healthy man or a healthy woman there will be something that will call you—call you to the worship of the Maker and Creator of it all, and to the love of the Great Artist in whose mind the ever-changing picture that the world presents was born.

There is something in nature which calls with a call that cannot be ignored to the soul of the ordinary son of man. Old Mother Earth has a power with us, and something makes us feel that she is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, one with us in the unity of Him who made us both.

The oldest religion in the world is the worship of nature. All religion is based upon it, and no religion can be a true or an adequate religion which leaves it out. It all seems simple at first ; it seems as if the strongest proof of the goodness and the love of God was the wonderful world in which we live. And for years men pointed to the world with unwavering conviction as positive

proof of the Wisdom, the Power, and the Love of God.

But when we come to face all the facts it is not so simple as it looks. Nature is amazingly beautiful, but she is amazingly cruel too. We have to look not only at the flaming sunset and the flowery fields, not only at the silvery stars and the silent sea beneath an August moon; we have to look at the avalanche that will thunder down, and in its fall destroy a hundred homesteads and a thousand hopes; we have to think of the flood, like the floods of the Yellow River in China, that will obliterate a township in a day; we have to think of earthquakes, like the earthquake near San Francisco killing its thousands and rendering thousands more homeless; we have to think of the famine, when the pitiless sun beats down from a cloudless sky and the windows of heaven are shut, and men starve by thousands, and beasts die of thirst; we have to think of the pestilences and plagues that will rage over a land, slaying more than guns or swords could ever slay. We have to think of the whole meaning of disease,

which we find everywhere in nature among both animals and men, and which will put to death a little child, not swiftly and mercifully, but by slow lingering torture. I have often gone into a sick child's room and looked at its pinched and pain-racked face, and from that to the glory of golden daffodils in a vase by the side of its bed, and in my heart have asked the question: "Great God of nature, of tenderness and terror, of beauty and ugliness, of life and death, what art Thou like?" Beside the dove that coos in the dovecote on a summer day we have to put the man-eating tiger, tearing its victim limb from limb; beside the nightingale singing its love-song to the stars we have to put the snake that strikes to kill. It is not so simple after all. Look all the facts in the face, and your soul cries out in doubt: "What is God like?"

Moreover, in these last years men have studied nature more closely still, and the knowledge they have won for us, at first sight, seems to make the cloud of doubt so thick that no light could pierce it. For centuries our fathers were content with the

wonderful picture of creation in the great poem of the first chapter of Genesis. To them it was poetry and accurate science, too. There we see the great God waving as it were a magic wand, moving as a wind on the face of the waters, and in the six days of evening and morning making a world complete with all its wonders. With this picture of magic creation by an omnipotent force our fathers were content. But the scientific research of the nineteenth century destroyed it, and put a much more wonderful, but much more complicated and difficult picture in its place. Instead of the 6,000 years which our fathers believed to be the age of the human race, the scientists opened out before us a vista of unending years, stretching back and back into darkness and displaying to us a picture of a world slowly, painfully, and most strangely moving under the impulse of some mysterious power, towards some mysterious end. Instead of the well-contented Creator looking down from his Sabbath rest upon all that He had made and declaring it to be very good, instead of the picture of a complete, rounded, and

finished nature, they showed us a world in perpetual motion. Moreover, they showed us that this strangely moving thing moved in accordance with certain unbroken and unbreakable laws, the laws of what they called "natural evolution."

The greatest of these was the law of the "survival of the fittest" in the "great struggle for existence." They showed us how some species of plants survived and succeeded while others failed and died and became extinct; how whole races of animals failed in the battle of life and died out, while other races proceeded and progressed. This made the picture still more difficult to those who sought to find in it a God of Love, a spirit like the spirit of Jesus Christ, and this difficulty was increased by the terms in which this scientific knowledge was expressed. Unconsciously men read into the life of animals and plants human passions, human powers, and human pains. The phrase "The struggle for existence" called up before men's eyes the vision of a battle of animals locked in deadly strife fighting to the death. "The survival of the fittest"

made them see the picture of a victor licking bloody chops and looking down upon his vanquished foe. More and more nature grew in the light of science to look like a battlefield. This is only partly true. It is true that beast preys on beast, fish on fish, and bird on bird; but it is not true that the life of animals is one perpetual war. There is no war in the human sense in nature. You do not get battalions of cabbages fighting with battalions of cauliflowers to find out which is the fittest to survive. As Sir Ray Lankester has observed, "You do not see fir trees advancing against beech trees, bears against wolves, vultures against eagles, in big well-trained battalions and brigades." The races of animals that have become extinct did not die on a battlefield, but peacefully in their own beds. They were not suited to their surroundings, and so did not breed, and thus gradually died off. War, as a matter of fact, is contrary to the whole principle of the survival of the fittest. It is the best method of securing the survival of the unfittest people, for we send our fittest out to fight and

leave our weaklings at home to breed, which secures the survival of the unfit in the race. This was a fact which the great scientist, Charles Darwin, himself perceived and stated.

Moreover, we must beware how we read into the struggles of animals, bloody as they appear to be, the passion and pain of human beings. A closer observation of the picture which science reveals to us makes it much less cruel, and much less like a battlefield, than these crude and barbarous misinterpretations of scientific truth would lead us to suppose. There is very little scientific foundation for the teaching of the German Haeckel in his *Riddle of the Universe*, which sold by thousands and was translated into five European languages, in which he talks "of the cruel and pitiless struggle for existence which rages through living nature and must for ever rage" as being the central fact that scientific learning had disclosed. The struggle is there, but it is sentimental and not scientific, to call it "pitiless" and "cruel" in the human sense. There is undoubtedly a great problem of animal

suffering, but we must beware of bestowing upon animals the power of enduring human agony and human grief.

But although the new picture of nature is not so crude or brutal as we at first supposed, it is strangely and wonderfully different from the picture in which our fathers unquestionably believed. Science has not indeed done away with the necessity of believing in a creator. For some time many thinking people were blinded by the new light, and allowed to pass unchallenged the statement that the world was made by "evolution," or that it was made by "natural law." These statements are not so much untrue as nonsensical. To say that the world was made by evolution is very much as if a child, being asked how much forty cows would cost at £20 : 14 : 8 each, were to reply, "Oh, that is easy; it is done by simple practice," and were then to fold his hands and close his eyes and wait for simple practice to solve the sum. He would have to wait until Gabriel blew the trump of doom, for a method cannot solve a sum without a mind to work it. The laws of

nature and evolution are different names for the method by which the world was made, but they do not say a word about the power that made it. Science has not answered and cannot answer a single final question. It leaves us still staring at the world, and still with the old dilemma, "Is it an accident or is it a design; did it just happen to grow like this, or is there some one behind it?"

When I am asked to believe that the world as it is, is the result of an accident or a series of accidents happening over thousands of years, I get a severe attack of mental indigestion. I am willing to admit that Christianity is hard to believe, but I find materialism much harder. On the other hand, when I am asked to believe that nature is perfect, the work of an absolutely Almighty, All-wise, and All-Loving Being, Who has a place for everything and everything in its place; when I am asked to see in nature the high and mighty Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the only Ruler of princes, to Whom all things in Heaven and earth do bow and

obey, my brain begins to reel. How can I believe in an absolutely perfect nature when a large portion of the labour of practical men is expended on improving her, on battling with her cruelties, and destroying her power to hurt and injure the sons of men? Why the avalanche? Why the volcano? Why the earthquake? Why the tiger and the snake? Why the madman and the child with the foul disease? What is God's will about these things?

In the old days when a pestilence swept across the land the priests would call the people to their knees to beseech the Almighty Monarch to remove the plague that He had sent. The Hebrew prophets pictured God as armed with plague, pestilence, famine, and flood—weapons which He used to drive men to obedience; and even now in books of devotion you will find exhortations to submit to cancer and other foul diseases as the will of God. The modern man of science repudiates this idea. He is convinced that he must fight against the pestilence by every means in his power; that he must investigate its origin, probe into the method

whereby it is spread, and kill it at its birth. He bids us go down on our knees, not so much to say our prayers as to examine the drains; he carries on his warfare with a plague, not in church but in a laboratory. The engineer goes out, and by artificial irrigation, by carefully constructed dams, and by increasing rapidity of transport, abolishes the powers of the famine to hurt and starve. The modern mind is perfectly sure that it is right in fighting physical evil. The mind of our forefathers regarded physical evils as visitations of God, and as supreme exhibitions of His power. Which is right? From the bottom of my heart I believe that the instinct of the modern mind is right, and that it is our duty, and that we are doing the will of God, when we fight plague, pestilence, famine, flood, and every form of cruelty in Nature. The man who died trying to find a cure for cancer was as true a martyr as St. Stephen. Greater love hath no man than this, that he give his life for his friends.

We have done immeasurable harm to the cause of true religion by trying to make men, whose whole days were spent in fighting

the evils that beset us, believe that these very evils were sent by the God that they were called upon to worship. That is why you will find so many splendid scientists and practical reformers outside the pale of the Christian Church. I believe that further knowledge will more and more disclose to us the larger part that spiritual forces have to play in the great battle to which God calls us against disease, and all the other evils of nature. I am sure that we are only beginners in the science of Prayer as the secret of health, and as a power to heal disease, and that the material Scientist is wrong if he looks only to material Science for healing, but I am sure he is right in believing that the will of God is that all these evils should be destroyed.

What then is God like? I see no evidence anywhere in nature of the Almighty Potentate Who guides and governs all things with His rod, and knows no failure and no thwarting of His Will.

The strange and awful process by which the worlds were made does not look a bit like the work of an absolute and unlimited

power of Love Who has but to speak and His Will is done. Nevertheless there is something or some one behind it, and I feel sure that it is some one and not something. I must judge the process in the light of its highest product—that is just common sense. The meaning of every movement must be sought in the direction in which it moves. An upward process must be looked at from its highest point. The highest point of nature's upward process is Man—a person, a being who Wills, and Loves, and Plans. I must judge nature in the light of man. I cannot separate myself and my fellows from the great process. Life is one, from the single cell to the Saviour in the flesh. I cannot separate Swine from Shakespeare or Jellyfish from Jesus of Nazareth; they all are products of the process. So behind the process there must be a Spirit which is like the Spirit of man.

So through the thunder comes a human voice,
Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here for thee;
I see My hands fashioned, see it in Myself;
Thou hast no power, nor canst conceive of mine;
But Love I gave thee, with Myself to love,
And thou must love Me Who have died for thee."

I must look for the meaning of nature in Man, and then I must look for the meaning of man in the Spirit of Jesus Christ—the perfect man—who is man's God because He is the highest that has ever lived in Flesh. So, finally, I come to look for the meaning of nature in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. I cannot help it. Soul and intellect together drive me to it. Moreover, when I go to nature, seeking not the Almighty Potentate but the suffering, Loving, labouring Christ, I am not disappointed. I do find evidence of a spirit like to His—a Spirit of Beauty, Order, and Benevolence striving to express itself in nature. I see this Spirit crucified on Nature's Calvary. I see it thwarted, hindered, baffled in its task, but never stayed or stopped; always it begins again, always it persists. It suffers like Christ, and it rises again like Christ. It is no mere metaphor but the nearest expression of final Truth to which I can attain and express, when I say that I see all nature signed with the sign of the Cross and bright with the glory of Easter Day. I see the whole creation groaning and travailing in

pain together until now, and the meaning of the travail—I can find in Christ.

I can only understand nature by looking back at it through Christ. I can only understand God's labour and God's suffering in nature as I look at it through His labour and His suffering in Christ. God suffered in Christ on Calvary because His effort to express Himself through man was hindered and thwarted by man's free will misused (that is by sin), and also by man's ignorance and imperfection. If we go back from man we find that free will has grown, as everything that is human has grown, from roots which are buried in nature. Free will like everything is the result of the great process. Animals have a will of their own, not so fully grown as man's will, but still there. Every horseman knows that, and knows too that in training that will force is only of use up to a certain point. You must not break the spirit of a horse or a dog any more than you must break the spirit of a man. Go back to plants, and they too have a kind of independence, a will of their own, which cannot be altogether killed

without killing the plant. Every gardener knows that. Go back to stones, and the sculptor knows that they have a nature of their own which cannot be destroyed without destroying the stone. The nature of the material is a limitation to which the most skilful worker must submit. Here is the only light we have upon the mystery. When God in His Love willed to begin the great process, He had to submit to limitations due to the necessary nature of matter itself.

These limitations are not eternal or final. God is overcoming them, nature is not finished yet, it is being finished through man. Every effort that man makes to overcome the evils due to matter is made by the power of the striving God that works within him. As he learns to conquer space and time by mechanical invention and scientific discovery, as he lays the railroad, sinks the cable, builds the flying-machine, he is perfecting the Body of God, through which His Truth can at last express itself in the perfect Brotherhood of man. That is the meaning of material progress—it is the building of God's Body.

Railroads are the hands of God stretching out to draw man nearer man, the great ships are His fingers that gather up the sea, the cables are His vocal chords to ring the world round with His Love; so as men toil God's Body grows to the fullness of the final Incarnation, when God shall be all in all.

When through sloth or cowardice we cease to strive with nature, cease to war against disease, prevent epidemics, control floods, and fight famines we sin against the Spirit. When through greed and malice we misuse our mastery of nature, and use our powers of brain and hand to destroy and not create, we crucify God afresh. That is the Tragedy of War. It is not mere destruction, it is perversion, it is treachery against God. It is the Spirit of the eternal Love that sends the reckless flying-boy to mount above the clouds. When I saw in the twilight of a summer dawn one such gallant lad shot down in a sheet of flame, I saw again the Cross of Christ, not in Metaphor but in reality. And I thanked God who made the boy immortal, and gave us Easter

Day so that death meant only resurrection and a flight more glorious still. God was crucified in him, but only to rise again and again in others like him until the great new link of flight 'twixt land and land at last is made complete. So the Christ in nature calls us onward to more and greater efforts—calls us not to submission but to deathless aspiration—calls us not to rest but to more toil. So it is that the song of the great machines that thunder as they roll out this world's wealth is one with the song of mating birds in spring, the base and treble blend together in the passion song of God.

See! from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and Love flow mingling down ;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown ?

The God of Nature is the God of Calvary—
the God revealed in Christ.

LIES AND HISTORY

WE stand to-day on the mountain top of a hard-won Peace and we look back over the road of history through clouds of battle smoke which have hardly had time to clear away, but the terrible thing is that the battle smoke of earth's war has never really had time to clear away all down history. The history of man up to now is the history of War, strife, bloodshed, and barbarity which have accompanied man in his journey down the ages. Whatever there may be in the future, there certainly never has been in the past anything like "Peace on earth" or "Goodwill to men." The history of Europe, or of the world, is full of battle-cries and blood, and these are real battles, a real struggle, not the comparatively peaceful struggle which we find in nature and in animal life. Human warfare has always meant lust and cruelty, broken homes and broken hearts. We in our little Island home,

with the barrier of silver sea, had, before the Great War, come to think of the nineteenth century as a time of peace; we believed that War was a thing of the past, a great many of us; we believed that it would not pay in the modern world, and we pinned our faith to the peace of Dives and were convinced that what God Himself could not give us stockbrokers and gamblers on the Exchanges of the world would easily achieve. It was a pathetic business; we were like children playing on the edge of a volcano and thinking it was the Yorkshire Wolds. In August 1914 our fool's paradise was blown into fragments and became a kind of blistering hell—it was all a fallacy.

Of all the many barbarous and bloody centuries through which man has made his way, the nineteenth was perhaps the most bloody and the most barbarous. Just think of these dates—from 1789 to 1815, the Napoleonic Wars; in 1820, war in Greece, Russia and France intervened; 1830, Russia fights to enslave Poland; 1848, the whole of Europe in a blaze of war; 1853 to 1856,

Britain, France, and Turkey at war with Russia in the Crimea; 1857, the Indian Mutiny; 1859, France at war with Austria; 1860 to 1870, continual war in Italy; 1863 to 1866, Civil War in America; 1864, Prussia and Denmark; 1866, Prussia and Austria; 1870, Prussia and France; 1877, Russia and Turkey; 1879, Zulu War; 1881, British and Boers; 1882 to 1884, British war in Egypt; 1894, China and Japan; 1898, British war in Egypt; 1899 to 1902, British and the Boers; 1904, Russia and Japan; 1908, Italy and Turkey; 1912, the first Balkan War; 1913, second Balkan War; 1914 to 1918, the Great War.¹

Such is the record of the nineteenth century. What is one to make of it? It seems to make the Angels' song of Christmas a mockery—War every four years; and you can go back and back and back again, and it is always the same; as it was in the beginning—War, as it is now—War. Don't let us forget that there is a khaki line that stands between us and barbarism, near

¹ This leaves out the Spanish-American War and the endless border wars in India.

Archangel. As it was in the beginning, is now, and are we to add "ever shall be"? That is the question. If we are to add it, if War is to go on for ever, then I am in the dark, and I can find no meaning and no God in history, at least no God that I can love or respect.

There is no denying that the picture of man's progress is, in many ways, a hideous one. How can we interpret it? What is the power that lies behind it? The great Prussian historians had no doubt in their minds at all. There is a God behind it, they said, the Almighty God of Force, and this strife and struggle are His will. You will never abolish War, they said; it is the law of life, and the only cause of progress. Right up from the protoplasm to the Kaiser, struggle and strife is the law of progress, and the dream of perpetual peace is an idle one, fit only for old women and fools. It is a dream which will never be realised; War is God's appointed medicine for the purging and cleansing of the nations. Man is a fighting animal; always has been, and always will be, and that is the naked truth. They had no

doubt about it; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be—War. It is the will of the everlasting God.

Now against that conclusion my soul first of all cries out and rebels. If War is good, then I am morally mad, and I know no difference between good and evil. I can see no good in it; it does not cleanse, and it does not purify, and it does not uplift the nations; it kills the noble and the strong, it leaves the weak and vicious to breed their kind; it is wasteful, cruel, and inhuman; it is vile; and yet, although my soul cries out against the conclusion, the evidence of history is almost powerful enough at first sight to convince my intellect that it is true.

The interpretation of the history of the world by the militarists seems at first sight to be the only rational one. When we look at the story of the past, what hope can we have of the future? It all seems dark. But it isn't. This interpretation of history is not only bad morals, it is sloppy thinking; it is based upon a false scientific theory. The history of man is the history of a movement. We are always moving towards some-

thing. The militarist historians teach us to find the meaning of this movement by constantly looking backwards to where it started from; they bid us always and ever look back to the animals and to the savages from whom we were born, and find in animal life and in savage life the real meaning of civilisation. They found their great argument for perpetual War on the struggle for existence revealed in Nature and among animals as the method of their progress.

We saw in a previous chapter that there was no War in a human sense in Nature, and that the struggle for existence was not really like the struggle of a battlefield. But that is not the real falsehood which this philosophy of history contains: the real falsehood is that it bids us move forward looking backwards, bids us take a walk in the dark, straining our eyes to see where we are coming from. Now that is not philosophy, it is lunacy; if we do that we shall break our necks, which is exactly what Europe has done in the last four years, and its heart as well. You must look, not where you are coming from, but where you are going to.

There is only one real movement in history, and that movement begins when an animal stands bleeding and dim-eyed with death but fighting still, not for itself but for a little bundle in the thicket behind it—its child. That is the first union, the mother and child against the world; then comes in the father and you get a family, and then the union of families makes the clan, the union of clans the nation, and the union of nations the empire of nations; and there we stand to-day and look, not back, but forward to the day when the free empires shall be leagued and the world shall find its peace. We look forward, and we have a rational right to look forward to that day; we are much more rational in looking forward than they in looking back.

Now, I think, light begins to dawn, and the clouds begin to clear away. God is love. He is the Author of Peace and the Lover of Concord. He is the Creator of co-operation, and history fairly yells at you that as men co-operate, as they learn to love and work together, so, and only so, do they progress. War has never, and can never,

produce anything of itself ; all it ever does and can ever do is to destroy itself and clear the way for a wider co-operation.

The truth is that history proclaims that all progress is caused by co-operation, is caused by love, is caused by God, but not an Almighty God, not a God who can do everything He wishes at a word. Co-operation is at work, Love is at work in the world, and always has been ; you can trace its work down the ages, but it is not a work done by magic and with ease : it is a work of struggle and strife, of victory wrung from defeat, of failure at issues with success. In fact we come to this : the God revealed to us in history is the God revealed to us upon the Cross, suffering, sorrowing, s^riving, but unbroken, crucified to rise again.

I do not understand how man can fail to see in the history of the world the vision of the suffering God. I do not see how man can ever see in it the vision of a Supreme powerful and easily triumphant God. I do not understand, I say, how any man with an open mind can fail to see the spirit of love, which is the Spirit of God revealed

in Christ, struggling and striving to express itself down the ages—that is the very meaning of civilisation. Civilisation means a world in which men live as citizens of one city, leading a life founded, not upon force, but upon mutual good faith, honour, honesty, and truth, and that is the world towards which we are moving, and have been clearly moving all through history; and it is that perfect city, wide as the world and fair as a bride adorned for her husband, which explains the dark and dreary journey along roads all stained with blood which man has been called upon to make. That city is the explanation, and the only explanation; you must explain a journey by the end it has in view—it is madness, I say, madness to explain a journey towards the light by the darkness in which it started—it is always the end that explains the beginning, and not the beginning that explains the end. That is the very first law of thought, and on that we take our stand.

On rational grounds I assert with all the power in my being that the interpretation of history as a progress towards the new

Jerusalem of God is the only interpretation which is really possible. The Christian philosophy of history is the only real philosophy which exists. The militarist philosophy is not a philosophy, but a cry of despair, and a denial of all philosophies; it has no end in view; it represents life as a struggle to get to nowhere in particular, and a strife without any reward.

Man is a fighting animal, and, please God, always will be, but the fighting instinct, like all other instincts, grows, and, as it grows, changes. In the noble animal the fighting instinct is simply the instinct of self-preservation; it is flaming rage which is the strongest weapon of the beast towards securing its perfection. When Nature makes her great leap from the animal to the human, the instinct remains, but something is added to it. The lowest kind of man will fight, not merely for his preservation, but for what he calls his rights; he will fight, not only from instinct of lust to live, but because he feels that he has what he calls "a right to live." As the man develops he will fight, not merely for his rights, but

for Right, a wider, larger conception which carries him into a world outside himself ; he will not only fight for Right, but he will lose sight of his own rights, even of his elementary right to live, and will give his life for what is right, and so the instinct of self-preservation passes into the instinct of self-sacrifice, and that instinct lies at the heart of civilisation.

As with man so with nations. The herd of animals will fight savagely for its life ; they will join together to protect one another like a pack of wolves, or to seek a common prey, and when the battle is over they will eat their own wounded. The savage tribe will fight like animals, united for attack or defence, and when the battle is over they will eat their prisoners. As the tribe grows into a nation, and they go to fight not for robbery but for national rights, the idea of universal justice comes in ; they learn to respect the persons of their prisoners. The more civilised nation will only be roused to arms by the call to fight for right. They will treat their prisoners often generously. War is becoming horrible

to them ; they feel the shame of blood upon their hands. Under the banner of right, of universal justice, they will crave a union which will abolish fighting altogether. So down the road of Calvary comes the Prince of Peace with bleeding hands and feet, crucified but conquering, from Palestine to Paris, where, over the Council tables, the battle between the old and the new, between the animal and the God in man, is fought. Is it to be a final victory? That is the question. How great will His army be? The root of the matter is in the British people. I say with pride they are the most incurably civilised people in the world ; the Spirit of Christ is in them, the spirit that will fight for Right, the spirit that transforms animal pugnacity into Christian self-sacrifice. I have seen the evidence of it on a hundred battlefields. Have we killed prisoners? Yes, because the animal remains in us still, and the passions of battle are terribly strong. Have we suffered for prisoners ; have we risked our lives to save them, and have we shared our food with them ; have we shared our fags with them ; have we felt the touch

of Nature, or is it the touch of Christ, that makes the whole world kin? Yes, we have; because, after all, Christ is stronger than the strongest passion, and clings to us more closely than our oldest sins. Christ crucified is in the world revealing God to us, the crucified and suffering God. He was crucified at times in the best men in France, for we are not perfect yet; animal passion, barbaric cruelty, wait just outside the door of our souls, ready to break in. There is never more between civilisation and barbarism than the wall partition which is the love of God, but that wall becomes stronger as the years pass by, and will at the last be strong as iron, for the weakness of God is stronger than man, and it is that weak God with bleeding, pleading, outstretched hands who calls us to give ourselves for Him, armed with the weakness of His strength.

The fighting instinct of the British race, behind which tender women and little children have sheltered now for years, will, when it answers to the trumpet call of Christ, be the power which will lead and lift us into the City of our God.

LIES AND THE BIBLE

SOMEBODY—I don't know who it was—said somewhere—I don't know where it is—that every preacher of a new truth had to go through three stages of opposition. First of all, people said it was nonsense. Secondly, they said that it was contrary to the Bible. And thirdly, that everybody had always believed it. Of course the last of these stages is much the most deadly, because nobody cares twopence about what everybody believes. But the second one has, in modern times, come to be regarded as of less and less importance. The Bible has not got the authority that it used to have. People don't read it as they used to do. I wonder why? If anything can bring us to the God we need, to the God who must be both the foundation and the coping-stone of that perfect state we seek to build—if anything can bring us to Him, and show Him to us so that we can see Him, not through

a glass darkly, but face to face, surely it ought to be the inspired writings, the Word of God.

And yet it is not so easy to find God in the Bible. A person sitting down to read the Bible as he would read William McDougal's big book on *Body and Mind*, i.e. with the object of getting out of it a great idea, would, after he had begun at Genesis and ended at Revelation, probably finish up with a mind like a jumble sale. Just like a jumble sale! For the essence of a jumble sale is that good things and bad things are all lumped in together, and you may get anything from an antediluvian umbrella to a priceless print. So it is with the Bible. It does not contain one idea of God, one picture of God, but many ideas, many pictures—good, bad, and indifferent.

I can hear somebody indignantly saying, "Don't you believe then that the Bible is inspired?" To be perfectly honest, I don't. What do you mean by inspired? The ordinary meaning of the verb "inspire" is to put spirit into people. You talk about officers inspiring their men upon the field of

battle to deeds of gallantry, or a political leader inspiring his followers with enthusiasm. But it is always into people that the spirit is put, into men and women. You can only inspire people ; you cannot inspire things. Now the Bible is a thing. It is a book ; it is a bundle of paper covered over with hieroglyphics. It is a queer mixture of rags and printers' ink ; and you cannot inspire rags and printers' ink any more than you can inspire brass bands or barrel-organs. An inspired barrel-organ is a terrible thought. You may inspire a man to play a piano, but to talk about inspiring a piano is pure nonsense. And with all due respect to the ancients, the talk about the inspiration of the Bible is pure nonsense too. The question is not, " Is the Bible inspired ? "—that is a nonsense question ; just as much nonsense as asking : " Are cabbages conceited ? "

The question is, Was the Bible written by inspired men ? And in answer to that question, I would answer that I am quite sure it was. What do you mean by an inspired man ? I mean a man who, by prayer, by pure and holy living, by deep

and earnest thought, and by the exercise of those powers of communion with the Unseen which all men in varying degrees possess, has come into contact with the Spirit who works in and beyond this wondrous universe of ours. Was the Bible written by such men? I say "Yes." Well, then, does that not guarantee that it is true, all true, and every part of it equally true? My good gracious, no! I said men, inspired men, not machines, or clerks taking down dictation. (There is a clerk taking down this dictation. For the time being he is not a man, and he is certainly not inspired, because I believe he is falling asleep. If he were to become a man he would almost certainly start to argue, and the writing of this chapter would end either in an endless argument, a free fight, or in something very different from what it is going to be, because it would not be my chapter but *ours*—his and mine.)

The point is that the Bible was not written by shorthand writers or by clerks, but by men. It is God's word, written not merely by men, but through men, and men exercising all the powers of men and suffering

from all human weaknesses. Man is now, and always has been, both sinful and stupid, and so the Bible was written by sinful and stupid people inspired by God. Is that not very disrespectful? Can a sinful and stupid person be inspired? If they cannot, then there can be no such thing as inspiration, because those are the only people that God has, or has ever had, to inspire. The honest fact is that it is very often the tremendous consciousness in the writers of the Bible of both their sin and their stupidity that makes us feel that they are inspired.

I suppose that no religious person would doubt that the author of Psalm 51 was inspired, and it is the writer's utter self-abasement that makes us sure that he has seen the vision of the Highest. "Woe is me," cries one of the greatest of the prophets, "for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." His inspiration made him see his own stupidity and sin, and feel the pressure of the stupidity and sin—the imperfect knowledge and the wilful wickedness—of the

people among whom he dwelt, and whose thoughts he could not help but share in part.

In thinking about the Bible we must get the ground clear on this first, that inspiration does not do away with either human sin or human limitations. Part of men's discontent with the Bible, like their discontent with the universe, is due to the fact that they have at the back of their minds the ancient misconception of an absolutely almighty being who can do anything he chooses. They think that just as God spoke the word and the stars came out, spoke yet again and the flowers grew, waved His wand and made a universe, as Cinderella's Fairy Godmother made coaches out of pumpkins, so this Almighty God has nothing else to do but touch men's lips and from their mouths perfect truth in perfect words will flow like golden rivers. That idea is as impossible and absurd with regard to the Bible as it is with regard to the universe—which includes it. There is as little trace of this unlimited and supreme Being in the Bible as there is in history or in Nature.

The Bible, indeed, is part—and a very important part—of that larger Bible, including all Science and all History, which tells the story of how God has revealed Himself to man and has made him fit to understand the revelation. It shows us how God had to overcome, first of all, man's ignorance and imperfection, and, secondly, his wilful rebellion and refusal to learn; and how that process—like every other process of which we know anything in the universe—is a slow and painful one, marred by many failures, delayed by many defeats, a “*via dolorosa*,” wet with the blood and the tears of man and God. The God of the Bible spoke through the prophet Isaiah and cried: “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”

The God of the Bible spoke through the lips of Jesus Christ and cried: “O sinful and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?” The God behind the Bible is the God on the

Cross, the Cross of His own love, expressing itself in creation, which limits, thwarts, tortures, but never overcomes Him. God's message through the Bible in order to reach my soul has to overcome first of all the sins and the limitations of the man in far-off days whom the Spirit moved to write; and then it has to overcome the sin and stupidity of the reader in these present days whom the Spirit moves to read. And if that reader is me, that is going to be a job; and if that reader is you, gentle reader, do you imagine that it is going to be a sinecure?

When one sits down to read the Bible one destroys time and space, not by any supernatural or magic means, but by this wondrous gift that God, in the course of the years, bestowed upon the minds of men—the gift of written speech. One destroys time and space, and stands in their own land, and in their own time, before a long line of Jewish peasants, princes, poets, prophets, and philosophers, and each in the language of his time and in the language of his land (which is made more obscure to us by having been translated) tries to tell us what God means

to him and to the people of his time. It is impossible that these old friends of ours should have escaped altogether from the limitations of knowledge in their time or from the sins and moral stupidities of their time. The light that comes to men from God comes not like the lightning-flash, but like the dawn—first the darkness, then the long twilight, and then the blood-red beauty of the dawn that ushers in the glory of the day.

And in the time of darkness and of the dim twilight dreadful deeds were done and dreadful thoughts were thought—thoughts and deeds that must have wrung the soul of God with pain. God spoke, but men did not fully understand His speech, often did not understand it at all, but followed blindly their own lusts and desires, giving them His name. There are some dreadful stories in the Bible and dreadful ideas of God. “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I have marked that which Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him in the way when he came up out of Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they

have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." It is difficult to distinguish that particular "Lord of Hosts" from either the Kaiser or the Devil. Either might have given such orders. That God should have given them is beyond belief.

That is by no means the only time that God appears in the Old Testament in the garb of an Eastern Sultan. As Mr. Harold Anson remarks in his *Essay on Prayer as Understanding*, if we were suddenly asked to say under what circumstances it was that a God was represented in the Old Testament to have killed indiscriminately thirty thousand persons, good and bad, men women and children alike, we would probably find it difficult for the moment to remember whether it was because they wanted a different kind of food, and asked for it, or because they grumbled at His having swallowed up by an earthquake Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, or because they stopped the Ark from falling off an ox-cart, or mocked a prophet who had a bald head.

I remember a sergeant of Engineers saying,

in a debate on this subject which we held in a ruined barn, that Prussianism was taught broadcast in the Old Testament, and that in his belief the Old Testament teaching had a great deal to do with the creation of it. And when one remembers the horrid piety of some of the creators of modern Prussia, one cannot help feeling that if the remark is not true it certainly contains truth.

Just a few lines, my dear Augusta,
To let you know we've had a buster.
Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below—
Praise God from whom all blessings flow !

There is no doubt that cruelty and injustice have been often clothed with the robes of strength and righteousness by an appeal to the Old Testament, and the indiscriminate reading in church of badly-chosen passages from it without explanation must have a bad effect on the minds of both young and old. I have used the Revised Lectionary, and it has only made me feel that the revision wants revising. But no revised Lectionary would be of any use unless we could make people understand what the Bible really is, unless we can make them

see through it all the struggle of the God revealed in Christ to reveal Himself to men. In the light of that knowledge one can read even the most dreadful passages with some profit.

There are in the Bible the three periods—the darkness, the twilight, and the dawn. The darkness was the darkness of the universal worship of many gods. The Hebrews, like all the other peoples round them, regarded the doctrine of the one God as a strange and awful novelty. To us the Commandment “Thou shalt have none other gods but Me” seems out of date. Men now believe either in one God or in no God at all. To the world in which the earliest Bible writers wrote, both these beliefs would have appeared equally nonsensical. The worship of many gods was as natural, and as strongly secured in the trenches of tradition and ancient system, as the worship of the one God is now. These many gods were all made in man’s image, they shared his weaknesses and his sins. They were unjust, cruel, licentious, and capricious—in fact, to put it bluntly, they were as blackguardy

as their worshippers. And what they demanded of their worshippers was what a blackguard demands of another blackguard—food and drink and servile obedience with plenty of flattery. These gods were like debauched oriental princelings. Each tribe had its own god who went out to war with the tribe, and when the tribe was defeated the god was defeated. The people of those days never doubted the existence of the gods of other tribes, and would often offer sacrifices to them as a kind of bribe before a battle. This popular belief is the background of the whole of the early Old Testament teaching. It was all along the belief of the masses of the people.

And the Bible is the history of the evolution, through struggle for its existence, of the majestic belief in one God, governing the whole world, and demanding of all men not gifts but goodness, not flattery but loyal obedience, not servility but love. The struggle divides itself into three roughly-marked periods—the period before the Exile, the period between the Exile and the coming of Christ, and the Christian period.

In the first period we see the twilight struggling with the darkness, we see the teachers calling the people to the worship of one God, and of one God only, not denying the existence of other gods, but insisting that Israel had but one God, who was the most powerful and the most worthy of worship of all gods, and bound to conquer, and trample under foot all other gods in the end, and bound to do this for a strange reason, namely, that he was a good God, a God who demanded justice and mercy. You hear the teachers calling the people, and the people making futile and spasmodic efforts to respond, but always falling back to the worship of the Baalim, the native gods of the lands into which they had come. It is an intensely human struggle—this call of the prophets to the people of their day seemed a strange and novel one, and the call of the Baalim, with their little shrines on the side of every green hill, their joyous feasts and sensual worship, seemed so natural, so homely, and so certainly true. After all it is very like the struggle of a child to come to Sunday School for the love of God, and not with

the thought of the Sunday School treat. "First that which is natural and afterwards that which is spiritual." To the prophet their backslidings and rebellions seemed pure wickedness and disloyalty, but to the great God they must have been pitiful, for there must always have been a Voice that cried within the heart of God, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

We do not understand this early struggle unless we see in it the beginning of that age-long strife between the flesh and the spirit, and unless we see behind it the form of One Who is as the Son of Man hanging upon a Cross. That is the first stage of the age-long crucifixion of Christ which is not finished yet.

Think ye the ancient gods are dead ?

They live, and work their will.

Before their shrines the sons of men

Bow down and grovel still.

Still Venus stands with swelling breasts,

And side-long glancing eyes,

And lures lust-drunken devotees

To trust her when she lies,—

The ancient lie that lust is love,
And passion what it seems,
A lotus land where men may find
The heaven of their dreams.

The old, eternal, cruel smile
That lulls men's souls to sleep,
And wraps them in a paradise,
That they may wake—and weep.

She smiles—and counts her victims up
Young wife and little child,
The festering filth of bodies,
By the lure of lust defiled.

Blind babies, crying for the light,
Strong men with open sores—
The never-ceasing sacrifice
Throngs through her temple doors.

And, last of all her triumph,
There comes to keep His tryst,
The God, with bleeding hands and feet,
Still crucified—the Christ.

She still can take and nail Him
To the torture of the Cross,
She still can drive into His soul
The iron of His loss.

She still can mock and lead Him
To the ever-open grave

Of the souls He loves and suffers
All His agony to save.

Dear God! That loose lascivious face
That leers in my own soul.
Canst Thou not smash it with Thy Cross,
And make me clean and whole?

The battle of the Old Testament in its first stage is spiritually the primitive battle that every full-blooded, lusty youngster fights in the crowded streets of the city at night when the gods of the flesh are calling and the still small voice is dim. And to the great God both are infinitely painful and infinitely piteous.

The ancient Baalim were coarser, grosser, but scarcely less powerful gods than our modern ones, calling ever to the flesh against the spirit, to the natural and obvious against the supernatural and the unseen. The ancient temples all are broken and heathen shrines lie in the dust, but the heathen gods were human passions deified, and their power is not dead. You can see their victims in every city street.

Even over the minds of the teachers who

felt rather than saw the dawn within their hearts, these gods had a powerful influence, and the one good God to whom they called was good with a very limited goodness. He demanded justice from His own people to His own people; He demanded even kindness and mercy; but to the outside world He was as cruel, as fierce, as implacable as any tyrant could be. It was this God of limited goodness who gave the dreadful battle orders to the judges and commanders of the Chosen Race. He still demands bloody sacrifice and propitiation. Those early preachers taught the people that sacrifice alone would not satisfy their God, but they still taught that He demanded sacrifice. God only succeeded in getting part of the truth through the barrier of their ignorance and sin. That is the period of the twilight.

The dawn came during the Exile. The God of the ancient prophets was pledged to protect His people because they were His people. He was pledged to lead them to victory, and pledged to protect their Holy City, and to make it in the end queen of all the earth. But this pledge was not fulfilled.

The people saw their land swept by the rival armies of the enormous empires that lay to the north and south. Again and again they stood on the walls of Jerusalem, pale and wan with hunger, and looked out into the darkness, only lit by the glare of burning villages. They saw their women dishonoured and their children murdered; in fact, they saw War, and the most awful of all things, defeat in War, and at last they were carried away exiles to a foreign land, leaving behind them a broken city, and a wretched remnant that starved within its shattered walls. There by the waters of Babylon they sat down and wept when they remembered Sion, and hung up their harps upon the trees because they could not sing the Lord's song in a strange land. But that tribulation ended the battle between the one God and the many as a form of belief. Those of them in whom the call of their teachers had found response found another teacher in Ezekiel, who lifted them up to a higher and nobler conception of God, a God who was the only real God, to whom the idols were but bits of wood and stone, and who ruled with

absolute justice and absolute righteousness over the whole world. They were told that the exile and the bitter suffering it entailed were the judgments and punishments visited by God upon His people for their many sins. But they were told that the day would come when the people, purged and purified by suffering, should march back in joy and build once more their home—the New Jerusalem, which would indeed be the City of God. And this was what actually came to pass. About the year 549 B.C. a new prophetic voice is heard crying to the people, and his message is a message of hope which thrills us still with the glorious promise which remains to be fulfilled: “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and say unto her that her warfare is accomplished, and that her iniquity is pardoned. For she hath received of the Lord’s hands double for all her sins. . . . Behold, the Lord will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the

lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

The fulfilment of this promise was the return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel as king and Joshua as high priest in the times of Cyrus of the remnant of the people who, during their exile, had not forgotten the Holy City or the little hill of Hermon, had not forgotten the call of the spirit in the land of the flesh, and had been exiles indeed; who, having walked in the twilight of the dawn, refused to go back to the darkness, to the worship of the idols of the flesh. In this New Jerusalem there was no question of the worship of many gods—the worship of the one God was established. But the city was built by men and women starved in body, and only buoyed up by a tremendous enthusiasm. Its foundations were dug by men who laid down their swords beside them while they used their spades. The New Jerusalem gave but feeble promise of becoming in reality the queen of all the earth. Her people were persecuted, beset by enemies on all sides. Again and again

they fell under tyrannies and were ruled by foreigners. They saw their temple defiled and the abomination of desolation set up in the holy place. And now the great puzzle of the problem of evil, and of why God permits it, begins to come up before men's minds. God to them was still "He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." He was the almighty sultan of the Universe, "Who measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with a span, weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance," and He was bound to do right.

Why didn't He do it? You hear the cry of that question in the pages of the book of Job, in Psalms like the 73rd Psalm: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world. Then set I to understand this, but it was too hard for me." The only answer that came to their questions was that suffering was the punishment of sin, that the almighty tyrant, armed with pestilence,

plague, famine, war, and disease, was driving them to His will. But there were gleams of a higher truth. The 53rd chapter of Isaiah is the highest point to which the Old Testament attains. The prophet sees the truth, that a man may suffer, not because he is too bad, but because he is too good; that he may suffer, not for his own sins, but for the sins of other people; and that a nation may suffer, not for its own wrongdoing, but for the wrong-doings of other nations; that the sufferer may be the friend and not the victim of the great, good God. He sees the vision of the Great Deliverer, who was "a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men," upon whom God had "laid the iniquity of us all." He grasped that truth by the light of a fire that burned up in the flames of affliction all Israel's earthly hopes and dreams, the truth that the greatest redemptive power of the world was the power of redemptive suffering.

But it still remains a mystery. Still God remains enthroned, sending His plagues upon the just and the unjust alike. The

only solution which they could come to was the solution of immortal life, of a world where all wrongs would be righted, and the innocent at last should come to their own, and Jerusalem be crowned queen of all the world. This was, and is still, a solution of the problem from man's side, and a truth to which we must cling. But it still leaves God in the shadows, the veiled Being Whom we cannot know. Then comes Christ. He comes bearing the form of the Great Deliverer whom the prophet saw. He comes as a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. He comes with no pageantry of power, no robes of royalty, no crown of gold. He comes as a peasant, not a prince, with hands hard with manual labour, a face tanned by the sun, a Man among men. And He comes with an amazing message. He says not "I am the prophet of God, or the servant of God," but "I am God Himself." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." He plays out the wonderful drama of the perfect life, suffering, striving, dying at last in torture upon the Cross. He stamps on the heart of the world three great memories—

the memory of His suffering, the memory of His love, and the memory of His resurrection. And arising out of those three one that includes them all—the memory of His divinity. The outstanding miracle of history is His power to make Himself the God of the world that has grown up since He died.

His was an absolutely revolutionary doctrine, miles beyond the people of His time, outside the circle of their ideas, and largely outside the circle of ours to-day. He taught that power was love, and that love was the only power. He taught that God Himself was a servant, and was divine because He served. He overturned all earthly thrones and broke to pieces all the crowns of gold. He set up one throne above the world, the Cross of suffering, and made one crown the only crown, the crown of pointed thorns. It was, and is, a turning of the world completely upside down. And that is why to the people of His day He could not make His message plain, and why all the ages of the past have not made it plain yet.

Men could not abandon at once their old conceptions of what God was like. They

could only hold them and Christ together, and try and reconcile the two ideas of the sultan on his throne and the Saviour on the Cross, by combining them; and there grew up from the combination the extraordinary series of doctrines about the sacrifice of Christ. The Church has never been clear about the Person to whom the sacrifice was offered. All sorts of theories have prevailed, and do prevail to-day. Sometimes the ransom was represented as paid to the devil, sometimes to the Father, sometimes to a moral law which demanded that the sinner should be punished before he was forgiven, and sometimes to some one or something unknown. But in every case the doctrines leave one dizzy and unsatisfied. This whole cycle of doctrines of the Atonement arises from the struggle to reconcile the sultanic God of power with the suffering God of love, and to hold them both together as revelations of the truth. That arises from the failure to perceive the revolution that the mind of Christ was destined to work in the world. Men took Christ, and gave Him up in heaven what He refused to take on earth—

a kingly throne, a royal crown, and a white-robed band of courtiers to sing His praises.

The Saviour suffered and rose again
To cleanse and hallow the sons of men.
His Work is ended. The Father waits,
And slowly the everlasting gates
Swing open to let the Saviour in,
Bearing the ransom of man from sin.
He takes His seat at the King's right hand,
While glistening angels round Him stand.
Then, like the sound of a thousand seas
Their song swells out as they bend their knees,
To sing the praise of the King who died,
The song of the Saviour glorified.

His suffering is represented as being finished with, the sacrifice as complete and ended on Calvary. Christ was God, and therefore Christ must be a King. It is the combination of the old with the startlingly new, and in various forms that doctrine has been preached and is preached to-day. But it cannot be true. The work of Christ and the suffering of Christ cannot be ended. There is no real evidence for, or trace of, this absolutely omnipotent King. The figure that appears from the pages of the Bible,

growing clearer and clearer in outline as the darkness gives place to the dawn, is the figure that appears out of nature and out of history, the figure of the Christ as the final truth, revealing to us the suffering God who rules, and always has ruled, this world of ours, striving to express Himself through men and things. When we look on that Figure we see all that men can see of what God is. The final truth of the Bible is the simple fact that God is like Christ.

It is that God revealed to us in Christ crucified, and speaking to us in the language of Calvary, that we must have if we are to build the perfect state. He speaks to us not of something done for us long years ago, but of something to be done in us now. He calls to us not for passive obedience and resignation, but for active loyalty and consecrated adventure. He calls to the whole community and to every member of it to take up their cross and follow Him, on to the city of God, the perfect state in whose light the meaning of this strange and awful struggle becomes clear. The great sultan of the world has been dethroned, and in His

place there stands a God, who rules because He serves, who is supreme because He suffers, who is strong because He is weak. The Bible tells the story of how that usurper was cast down, and the True King of Calvary took His place. That King of Calvary must be the God of the world that is to be.

LIES AND DRUGS

It was a common enough scene in those days, an advanced collecting post for wounded in the Ypres Salient, on the evening of June 15, 1917. Twenty men all smashed up and crammed together in a little concrete shelter which would have been full with ten in it. Outside the German barrage banging down all round us. The one guttering candle on the edge of a broken wire-bed going out every five minutes when a salvo of 5·9's from Pilkom Ridge shook the place to its foundations. A boy with a badly shattered thigh in a corner moaning and yelling by turns for "Somefing to stop the pain." So it had been for an hour or more. Between this Black Hole of Calcutta and Battalion H.Q. Death and Hell to go through. Hell inside and hell out, and the moaning of the boy in the corner like the moaning of a damned soul. "The pain—the pain—my Gawd—the pain. For Gawd's sake gimme somefing to stop the pain."

There was no morphia. That was the horror. Some one must go for it. I went. I went because the hell outside was less awful than the hell in. I didn't go to do an heroic deed or perform a Christian service; I went because I couldn't bear that moaning any longer. I ran, and as I ran, and cowered down in shell-holes waiting for a chance to run again, I thought—thought like lightning—whole trains of thought came tearing through my mind like non-stop expresses to God knows where. I thought: Poor devil, I couldn't have stood that a minute longer. I wasn't doing any good either. If I get through and bring the morphia back, it will be like bringing back heaven to him. That is the only heaven he wants just now, dead-drunk sleep. If I bring it back, I will be to him a saviour from hell. I'd like that. It's worth while. I'm glad I thought of that. I can't pretend that it was that I came for. It wasn't. Still I'm glad. He wants to forget, to forget and sleep. Poor old chap. Heaven in a morphia pill. Funny things drugs are. It's mysterious their power. Fancy putting Heaven in a pill-box, and

keeping it by your bedside. Beastly dangerous. How can men resist when things get bad beyond bearing. It is so simple, so easy, so damnably easy. Raving mad one minute, swallow a pill, and then comes the delicious fading death of all sensation—when aches and pains seem far away and only Peace seems real, and then sleep. How do men resist, and women? Don't we all want to forget? I came out here to forget. I came out because I was too much of a coward to stand that moaning any longer. This mad business is a drug to me. I wanted to forget. All men want to more or less. Drugs—the world is full of Drugs.

Christ wouldn't have His. Turned His head away. He hated it. I can understand that too. There is something disgraceful about drugs. They are shameful. It's a kind of running away. It means surrender. It's so beastly easy. There is the other instinct. The instinct to defy the Devil. The instinct to live, to think, to see it through, however much it costs. That is the Life force, I suppose. Come to think of it—that's God. God is Life, and Drugs are

death, and it's a fight between the two. All life is a matter of Life and Death. Death sleep—forgetting—drugs—they are the Devil, the very Devil—the great adversary of God. “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” I never thought of that before. That is the whole meaning of Science and History—a scrap between God and the Devil. The Spirit of Life and the Spirit of Death. The struggle for existence. God is Life—God is Life in plants, animals, and men. He has to struggle for existence in them all, but it is harder the higher He goes, and hardest in man. He is all-powerful in the end. He gets there. You can't drug God. You couldn't drug Christ. He wouldn't have it. In Him was Life. I understand. It's fatal to forget when you ought to remember—it's wrong to run when you ought to stand. Drugs are God's mercy, a last resort. You must not presume on it or it will turn to poison. We must not forget. It's suicide. I must not forget.

I suppose that is the meaning of the Sacrament. Do this in Remembrance of Me—Eat, Drink, and Remember. God calls

us to drink and Remember—Satan to drink and forget. God bids us drink and remember the Cross—His Burden of Love that a man should share—share with God and not shirk. Drugs are the Sacraments of Satan, the means of damnation. You must take up the Cross or die. You cannot stand outside the struggle for existence and live. It's an eternal law, and the Cross is the revelation of what it means to God, and ought to mean to us.

How clear it all is. All narcotics are the devil. All narcotics. What a lot there are in the world when you come to think of it. It isn't only drink—though that is a big drug. Half the civilised world is doped with drink. The Czar of Russia has ruled for centuries by the power of Vodka, and even Britain sleeps on beer. Drink is a great drug. Then lust—the service of the flesh. The everlasting pleasure hunt. Luxury. All drugs,—all putting the life of the soul to sleep—calling men to forget their manhood. They all act in the same way. There is the period of Peace when pain and worry seem to fade away; then the awakening and the pain again—either that or death. Just like

morphia. There is the craving too for more—the craving that grows and will not be satisfied. That is the way with lust. It sweeps you up to heaven—no need for effort, no need for struggle; you are in the world and out of it—and heaven is a woman's arms into which you sink and sleep. But there comes the awakening. What's that in Browning's "Pippa Passes"? I always remember that. "Wipe off that paint. I hate you!" It does not last. It lifts you up to heaven, and bumps you back again to hell.

That's the way with pleasure-hunting too. Does for a while, but won't last. You get fed-up—bored. A bed of roses is mostly thorns, and too many lilies have a sickly smell. It's the same with business, work, position-hunting, and ambition. They have no bottom and no top. You wake up and find that you have been breaking your neck with hurry to get nowhere in particular. Energy without an eternal object is a drug that puts one's real self to sleep.

Furious action is a strong drug. It drowns thought. This business would drug

me if I'd let it. But I won't. I'm a coward, but I hate being a coward. I hate drugs. I want to live. I want to live, and think, and face things out. I won't go to sleep. God, my God, I want to live with you—give me strength. I want to turn my head away. There is this craving to forget, to sleep. It gets you all roads. There is only one way to meet it. God—God growing in one's insides—God struggling for existence in my mind, and refusing to be drugged. Christ in me the hope of glory. The only one. That's it—Religion—the passion for God. A man must have it. The world must have it, or die—Religion.

But men can turn religion into a narcotic too. They have done it. A lot of religion is just opium—going to church and singing sentimental hymns, and listening to beautiful sermons, praying finely-worded prayers. It's opium. It lifts you up to heaven on Sunday and drops you down on a cold leg of mutton on Monday.

A lot of what passes for religion is just Fatalism. What 'as to be, 'as to be—it's Gawd's will. Fold your hands and close

your eyes and rest. God is just the cause of everything. He is the unknown and unknowable, inscrutable Supreme Being whose will is Fate. He is the beginning and the end—the Almighty. He maps out one's life, and sends peace, war, health and disease, poverty or wealth, joy or sorrow as He wills

Choose Thou my friend for me,
My sickness or my health.
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Why struggle—why strive—why seek to alter things? What is to be, is to be. Thy will be done. Safe in the arms of Jesus. Peace, perfect peace. Good night—sleep, sweet sleep. A lot of religion is just that, and that is the devil—the very devil. That's queer, isn't it? It's queer that people should mix up Life and Death—God and the Devil. Yet I suppose that's just it. The Devil is the great liar—the final lie—and he must live on Truth. He must imitate God or perish.

Anyhow, this drug religion is the devil. That's settled. It's a wrong idea of God. It's a lie—an idol. It's sacrilege on the

Sacrament. It turns the Chalice into a hypodermic squirt. It turns the Cup of Remembrance into an opium pipe. It is loathsome, like all drugs. God is not the unknowable and inscrutable Fate that does good and evil alike to serve His ends. God is this force of life and love and thought and creative energy that wrestles with death in all the world, and wrestles with it in me. Faith in that, love of that, communion with that, is religion. Real religion is not a drug; it's a stimulant. It is not opium; it is rum—the only real rum there is. The world wants a real rum ration. We must not forget. We must not sleep. Drugs won't do. We must have Life. We must not forget. If we ever do, it will come again. That is certain. Can we forget it? We have forgotten before. There are so many drugs. It will come back again, the old life. Satan will call us by every lie he knows to forget. I wonder will the people fall asleep again? Shall we go back to the old ways—the old struggle for narcotics to put our souls to sleep? Shall we forget? Shall we drug ourselves and fall asleep, and allow it all to

fester underneath the skin of life until it bursts again into an open bleeding sore—like this? God forbid! It must not be. It shall not be. I've done with drugs. I want to live. God—Great God of Life—teach me to remember; teach us to remember—we must not forget.

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It's two years or more since I thought those thoughts, but time has not made them any less vivid in my mind. I am thinking again now. It is very peaceful. There is a bowl of roses on my study table. My child is playing on the patch of garden outside. I can hear my wife calling him, and his gleeful little voice chuckling as he runs away to hide. I have just had tea. It is peace. I can feel the old life creeping round me, calling me. The past seems like an impossible dream—a nightmare. Life is just the same. I am back in July 1914. There is the daily paper on my table, with its account of the daily strike. In its pages the poor blame the idle rich, and the rich blame the idle poor, and everybody blames Lloyd George. Everybody says that the country

is going to ruin, and nobody believes it. Everybody says that the Peace is a patched-up Peace, and everybody believes that it is as safe as the Bank of England, and that of course is a great deal safer than God. The great British Democracy is falling back into its old groove. The War is over. We are very tired and very irritable, and we want to get back to business as usual, beer as usual, pleasure as usual, sleep as usual, and wake up in hell as usual. You can see it coming. The great mass of people are calling out for the common drugs—women, beer, and business, and the social reformers are drinking deep of the drug of furious action based on no principle and no purpose. The one side want to change nothing, and the other to change everything, but God alone knows what they want to change it for. Every one is really clamouring for more drugs to dope themselves with. The memory of the dreadful years is growing dim. We are falling back on the old lies. Mutual distrust and suspicion, class-war fostered and fomented from abroad, selfish greed and personal ambition for power, are putting all

industry more and more on a war basis. Talk about the great moral ideals for which we fought is hackneyed now, and platitudinous. Everybody tends to take all that for granted, which means that they do not take it at all.

Democracy—that great word which was worth a war to keep in the dictionary—is being degraded as usual into a name for free drug stores, free pleasure, free leisure, free comfort, free everything. Get all and pay nothing. Why doesn't the Government do it?

Democracy, which ought to be a trumpet call, is being taken as a lullaby. We want to sleep again. If we do, it can have but one end—the death of Democracy—a painful death in the flames of a furnace heated seven times hotter than 1914. Democracy is a national vocation. It is the call of God to develop every scrap of human material to the highest possible perfection. “If anything ever profoundly surprised me,” says Mazzini, speaking of Democracy, “it is that so many persons have hitherto been blind to the eminently religious character of the

movement." Democracy cannot exist in any real sense apart from true religion. The whole essence of it is the enormous weight of responsibility it throws upon the average man. It is, as Carlyle said, "the huge inevitable product of the destinies," because it is the inevitable result of man's growth, his growth towards complete manhood, that is, towards complete responsibility for his actions. The true democrat is the man who claims for himself and for all his fellows the right to bear responsibility. But the man who claims the burden of responsibility without training himself to bear it is not a democrat but a fool. *Corruptio optimi pessima*. The best thing is the worst thing if the thing goes bad. The corruption of Democracy is national damnation, and a Democracy must go bad unless Demos has a God—a real living God—who counts in the public life. We must have God; we must have a red religion which burns and blazes and calls men—calls them to service, renunciation, and sacrifice.

When men have seen the true vision of God there will be on earth a true Democracy.

The ancient conception of God as an absolute monarch sitting on a throne, crowned with a jewelled crown, with the sceptre in His hand, could not be the God of Democracy. We do not honour kings as kings any more. We cannot believe any longer that there can be such a thing as the divine right to rule; we can only recognise the divine right to serve. Christ has so far come into His own that He has cast down from their thrones all kings and princes, except those who have been content to resign all pretence to absolute power and have taken upon themselves the form of a servant, founding their kingdoms on their peoples' gratitude and respect for honest service done.

It has been a long time coming, and it is not yet fully come, but the doom of all Kaisers, Czars, snobs, and autocrats is recognised as inevitable, and with them must go the old God. The Sultan of the universe has been slain. Most of the sorrows of the present time are caused by the interregnum. The old God is dead, and the new one has not yet been crowned. The king is dead, but the peoples have not shouted God save

the king. But the coronation day is drawing near, when Christ shall be crowned with His crown of thorns, and throned once more upon His cross, and men will draw near to worship the Suffering Lover of the human race Who is their real God.

When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Every man then will be proud to call himself a minister—a servant of the people, and proud to suffer and to labour for the human race, because he will have seen Jesus washing weary pilgrims' feet.

That passion for service in the name of Christ is the only motive which can be made powerful enough to get the world's work done without compulsion, powerful enough to keep us working at our hardest, dealing honestly with our neighbour, denying ourselves the profits of corruption, scheming, and lying; powerful enough to ensure the universal rule of Right over Might, and of Justice over Greed. We shall not dare to wake unless He wakes us; we cannot come to ourselves unless we come through Him. If Democracy is to come, we must throw

aside our false gods and come to Him and let Him come to us. We are bound to forget unless we drink the Cup of Remembrance and learn to worship the Suffering Servant of the human race—to love Him with our whole heart, mind and soul, and follow Him at all costs. He stands now at a thousand altars and pleads with us by the sorrow of our suffering world, by the piles of broken bodies and ruins of lost homes, by the barren years of widows and the cry of fatherless children, by all the dreary waste of War. He pleads with us “To drink and remember” what it means to Him. He stands there with the Cup of Remembrance in His hands. Are we able to drink of the cup that He drinks of, and to be baptized with the baptism that He is baptized with? We are able—we must be able or perish. Human nature cries :

Let me forget ! Let me forget !
I am weary of remembrance,
And my face is ever wet
With the tears of my remembrance,
With the tears and bloody sweat.
Let me forget.

God answers :

If ye forget—if ye forget,
Then your children must remember,
And their face be ever wet
With the tears of their remembrance,
With the tears and bloody sweat,
If ye forget.

LIES AND THE LIFE ETERNAL

IF I am a monkey I am a dismally discontented monkey. Monkeys want but little here below, nor want that little long ; I want a lot and want it all for ever. Of course, mind you, I never had a heart-to-heart talk with the inmates of the Zoo, and they may have aspirations, dreams, and fond desires that I know nothing of, but if they have these do not seem to trouble them. They seem to be content. I'm not. I sometimes meet a man who is, or seems to be, and he is either a fool or else he is fat and forty, and even then I'm not sure about him. I suspect even him of having his bad days when this world seems too small, and life too narrow, when his soul hears the call of the eternal, and he takes a third whiskey and soda.

Men are queer things. You never know, you know. A pawnbroker may be a secret poet, and a pork butcher, as he wends his way to kill his daily pigs, may be troubled

by the rustling of a thousand angels' wings ;
even as he sharpens his knife to do the dirty
deed he may be feeling what he cannot say.

I cannot chain my soul, it will not rest
In its clay prison ; this most narrow sphere,
It has strange powers, and feelings, and desires,
Which I cannot account for or explain
But which I stifle not, being bound to trust
All feelings equally—to hear all sides :
Yet I cannot indulge them, and they live
Referring to some state or life unknown. . . .

I read of a pork butcher once who went as
usual to slay his pigs, but suddenly decided
to cut his own throat instead. The jury said
he was mad, of course, and he may have been ;
but he was a mad man not a mad monkey.
There is no record of suicide among chim-
panzees. Suicide is a sin, perhaps it is the
greatest of all sins, but it is for that very
reason human. It is a fall, but it is always
a fall of man. It is a fall upstairs from the
animal, and down from the divine. Suicide
is the tragic climax of our peculiarly human
discontent. The hall-mark of humanity is
discontent. This world is not enough to
satisfy a full-grown man. The man who was

asked what he would do if he had as much beer as he liked and answered, "There isn't as much," may not have been a "Pussy-foot," but he was a person, a fully human person, with a human thirst, and was speaking literal truth.

Even the longest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea,

and even the longest drinker lays down the pot at last, and if he be a fully human drinker, lays it down with his desire still unsatisfied and his thirst unquenched. There isn't as much beer or anything else as is needed to satisfy a human soul. Man cannot live by beer alone, but by every word of wonder that comes from the mouth of God. Beer is just a substitute for the grace of God. There are millions of other cheap substitutes, and they are none of them satisfactory. They don't last. Nothing in this world lasts. This world's goods are made to sell, but they don't wear. Every one of them is stamped with the sign of death.

'Twere heaven enough to fill my heart
If only one would stay,

Just one of all the million joys
God gives to take away.
If I could catch one golden dawn,
The splendour of one star,
The silver glint of yon bird's wing
That flashes from afar ;
If I could take the least of things
That make me catch my breath
To gasp with wonder at God's world
And hold it back from death,
It were enough ; but death forbids.
The sunset flames to fade,
The velvet petals of this rose
Fall withered—brown—decayed.
O death, where is thy victory ?
O grave, where is thy sting ?
Thy victory is everywhere,
Thy sting's in everything.

If the human soul lingers over-long by any joy this world supplies, Death comes like a policeman and bids the soul move on. It's all very well saying that a thing of beauty is a joy for ever, but it isn't. Either the thing outlasts the joy or the joy outlasts the thing. Either the thing outlasts the joy, and you get, in popular, which is generally the most expressive, language, " fed up to the back teeth with the beastly thing," or else

the joy outlasts the thing and you lose it. You cannot keep the joy and the thing for ever. If you could you would have found a short cut to heaven, and there are not any short cuts to heaven—they all lead down to hell, the land of the “might-have-been.”

This world cannot finally satisfy a man. There is deep-seated in the make-up of the ordinary man a craving for flowers that do not fade and pleasures that do not pass away. He stands before God like *Oliver Twist* and asks for more—and more—and more.

His selfishness is satiated not,
It wears him like a flame ;
His hunger for all pleasure,
Howe'er minute, is pain.

It is worse than useless railing at this discontent, and calling it hard names—it is the very essence of humanity, and behind it there is the great life force that we call God. It grows with our growth, grows with the growth of our peculiarly human powers of memory, reason, and imagination. The more completely man is man, the more the fire burns within his soul. The only way to

quench the fire would be to stunt our growth, and you can only do that for a time. Sooner or later the force of life will break your little barriers down and make an outlet for itself. You cannot fight against God.

It is this driving discontent which sooner or later is bound to tear all false and superficial civilisations into pieces. The essence of a false and superficial civilisation is its attempt to find complete satisfaction in the present, to create an environment which will render men content here and now. It is an effort to satisfy men with monkey nuts, and to organise humanity on the monkey plane. It won't work. It can't work. There is that in man which will not be satisfied with the things this world can give. The effort leads inevitably to a desperate scramble. Life becomes a struggle of pigs round a trough, a terrible struggle because the pigs are eternally hungry pigs with human brains. The more they have the more they want, and they can devise terrible methods of getting what they want. If their hunger has no food but that which this world gives, and they have no vision of another, when the

inevitable happens and common pleasures start to pall, men turn downwards for satisfaction, they invent unnatural and unmentionable pleasures. Strange and obscene vices become common. Men driven mad by their eternal hunger go seeking satisfaction into filthy places, and disease attacks the peoples from within. Before the disease has time to run its course men turn and rend the sham to pieces, and return to naked barbarism to try and build again.

It is when you have to a great extent succeeded in organising monkeydom, when you have made pleasure cheap to most men, when food, and wine, and women have become easy of access to all or to the great majority—and only the small minority remain unfed—the minority of the very weak that must remain unfed even in the most perfect of organised monkeydoms—it is in the times of our wealth as they seem to be, that we must expect squalls. When men have tasted this world's pleasures and found them sweet upon their tongues but bitter in their bellies, they will be most ready to tear their world in pieces because their souls are

still unsatisfied. Then it is that there comes down on men the cloud of pessimism, the great depression, that heralds suicide on a large scale. The great discontent gathers force behind the barriers of law and order, it frets like a sea against the rocks, and then on a sudden, as it seems to us, it breaks through and rolls out into war or bloody revolution, tearing, crushing, rending its own creations in disgust at their futility, and leaping over the feeble barriers of law with a savage joy in its own power.

This is what we have just been through. The divine discontent found no outlet in the highly organised monkeydom of Prussia. You had the outbreak of vice and mad luxury and moral depravity—and then the inevitable surging out of the awful sea that swept the world into its waves—when the craving for a place in the sun followed the inevitable law of its growth, apart from God, and became a perverted craving for every place under the sun.

Had the war been averted by artificial means the force would have found its outlet in some other way, probably through

revolution. But it was inevitable that it should find an outlet, and it always will be inevitable. What has been the history of the past must be the history of the future—there must always be these outbreaks of barbarism, unless the nations find their God and grow up to the vision of eternal life. The hunger must be fed. This law is a law of the human spirit as fixed and firm in its operation, as universal and as inevitable as the law of gravity, and, indeed, one with it, as all life is one. If this law were to cease from operation then the stars would falter in their courses, and the hills would crumble into dust, because God Himself would be dead.

These periodic outbreaks of public lunacy are just the operation in the multitude of a law which we can observe every day in operation in individuals. It is called by the psychologists in their peculiar jargon "the law of the buried complex." A complex is a group of hopes and fears, of aspirations and desires centred round one idea in a human mind. A buried complex is a group of hopes and fears, aspirations and desires which find no outlet in life—but remain buried within.

A great deal of the irritability, malice, envy, bad temper, vice and cruelty, and the unaccountable outbursts of passionate anger in normally quiet people is due to the poison of a buried complex. Have you got a maiden aunt who amazes you sometimes with a bitter speech or cruel action? Do you find malice and bitterness coming out under her normal gentleness? Be very tender to your maiden aunt. You see the complex of sex—the longing for human love and motherhood has been buried in her, and her spirit is poisoned by it. There are glorious exceptions to this law of maiden aunts, but they will be generally due to the complex having found some other outlet. Sex is a very common buried complex and a very terrible one, but it is not the only one. An artist may, under force of circumstances, become a bricklayer and beat his wife because he can't paint pictures. An explorer may drift into an office, and while his spirit seeks to walk in unknown forests amid strange scenes, his body may be fastened to a stool, he may become an anarchist. A man with a buried complex is a square peg in a round hole. And

that is what all humanity is if you try to fit it into a material world. Men develop an extraordinary ferocity under the pressure of this unnatural attempt, and to make it on a large scale is to court stupendous disaster. The inevitable outcome of universal materialism would be universal lunacy. Of course under God the one is as impossible as the other.

But this post-war world of ours is much more seriously threatened by disaster due to the operation of this law than its leaders either recognise or are willing to acknowledge to themselves. We are in earnest, more or less, about securing what we call better conditions for everybody. That is, we are as much in earnest as our intense preoccupation with our own monkey nuts will allow us time to be. We find that our own pleasure is spoiled by the clamour of those without as many nuts as ourselves, and we want to get plenty all round, and are more or less in earnest about it.

We want a new world, better houses, more wages, more leisure, and more pleasure for everybody. All this is very good, provided

we recognise fully that all these things are the foundations of a proper human life, but are not and cannot be the life itself. If we fail to recognise that—if we make these things ends in themselves and not means to an end, then we are building on sand, and not merely building on sand but storing up for ourselves the storm and the flood that sooner or later will overwhelm all our building, leaving only ruins to mark where it has been. If we fail to recognise the hunger for the eternal and to feed it with its proper food, we shall have another hundred years of futility that will end in another hell.

Our present-day politics still fail to recognise this craving for the eternal as a factor in the situation, and still seek to satisfy it with monkey nuts. Our politicians still encourage us to reckon wealth in wages, and prosperity in pounds and pence. It is true that they teach us to believe in Education. There is a strong popular demand for Education. It is the popular substitute for Religion. But in this very demand, unless the fact of man's eternal hunger is clearly recognised, lies the greatest danger of all.

We have seen the hunger for the eternal is peculiarly human, and grows with the growth of our peculiarly human powers of memory, reason, and imagination. Now it is these very powers that education develops. All education tends to strengthen in us the powers of memory, reason, and imagination, and therefore strengthens the craving in man's soul for real pleasures and for lasting joy. If we educate efficiently on a system in which there is no place for faith in God, and the vision of eternal life, we strengthen the force of infinite desire, and make more certain the destruction of our false and superficial civilisation.

In the great outbreaks and upheavals of the future it will inevitably be the most highly educated and efficient peoples that will take the lead, if education and efficiency exclude God and Faith in Eternal Life. Education only feeds the cancer of the buried complex unless it supplies an outlet for it through faith in a life beyond the power of death, and a destiny of greater glory than this world can ever give. The popular notion that belief in Immortality is an

ancient superstition that is dying out is a topsy-turvy notion historically. History shows that man's belief in a fuller life beyond the grave is not an ancient belief that is dying, but a new belief that is fighting for its life. The ancients had but a vague and shadowy conception of another life, where they had any conception at all ; that world was a world of ghosts where phantoms lived and mourned. The conception of life's golden age as lying out beyond the grave came to man as his peculiarly human powers grew and he became more fully conscious of himself as an individual. As we develop the individual and make him more fully man, we force him more and more to face the great dilemma—either immortality or despair. If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.

Our present-day politics and politicians are largely futile because they have a false perspective, and drive men on to the horns of that dilemma. If Christ became a member of Parliament He would at first be popular and then puzzling, and finally He would be persecuted. His genius would at first carry

all before it. All men would wonder at His knowledge of human nature, His wisdom, and His utter disinterestedness. But sooner or later He would seem as mad to all parties as all parties would seem mad to Him. In the end one paper would denounce Him as a demagogue, another would declare that He was no true friend of the people—a time-server and a visionary, and a third would discover that He had a German origin. He would seem to our generation both puzzling and perverse, because He could not help being profound. The vision of eternal life alters all your distances, and changes your perspective. To Christ many of our great questions would be small, and many things which have not become questions yet would to Him be monstrous evils. He would weary us who pride ourselves on our practicality with His insistence on the supreme value of the soul, and the spiritual issues that lie behind all material questions. He would be keener on our hearts than our houses, and yet keener than most on our houses. He would talk more of our minds than our millions, and yet would be intensely interested

in millions. He could not help seeing things against an infinite background. It is precisely that infinite background which we must have if civilisation is to be saved; a firm faith in life eternal is a necessity of real human progress.

How is that faith to be developed?

Christ never set out to give what are called evidences of eternal life. He never set out to prove it as men prove a mathematical or a scientific proposition. He did not apply the scientific method to this question, because the scientific method is not applicable. You cannot prove that life is eternal any more than you can prove that grass is green or lemons yellow. A man either knows that through his vision, or does not know it because he is blind, or half knows it because he is defective. You cannot alter the grass to suit the vision, you must alter the vision to suit the grass. It is an elemental primary fact, and incapable of proof. On another plane this is so with eternal life. You either know that life is eternal through your spiritual vision, or don't know it because you are blind, or know it dimly because you

are defective. You cannot alter the fact to suit your spiritual vision, you must develop your spiritual vision to grasp the fact. It is this development of the spiritual vision that Christ is always pleading for with men. Pleading with them to pray continually, to commune with God, to worship God. To Him these things are necessities for all men, not luxuries for a few. It is impossible to regard Christ as merely a teacher of morals; you cannot, without tearing His character to pieces and entirely altering the emphasis of His teaching, disregard His continual insistence upon prayer, worship, and constant communion with God as vital necessities of a fully human life. He is always calling men to put God first, to train their eyes that they may see, and their ears that they may hear the hidden things of God. It is by following His example and advice and developing our powers of prayer and spiritual communion that we attain to the real living conviction of eternal life which we need. Moral lectures, ethical exhortations, and instruction in that mysterious subject called "civics" are equally futile for this purpose. You

need spiritual exercise to develop the spiritual sense—and the spiritual sense is as necessary as sight or hearing for a fully human life.

Spiritualistic séances and the investigations of the Society for Psychic Research are also futile as substitutes for religious devotion. I do not want to deny that the study of psychic phenomena is a perfectly legitimate study, and the evidence accumulated by research on these lines perfectly legitimate evidence for the survival of the human personality after death. If, after the evidence so obtained has been carefully sifted, fraud carefully guarded against and unintentional errors eliminated, it seems to justify a conclusion, that conclusion would be as valid as any other scientific conclusion. But the demonstration of the fact of human survival, and the possibility of communication, would not in itself give to men the conviction of eternal life. The study of this evidence seems as a matter of fact to unbalance some people's minds, and when it does not do that, it leads to a peculiarly debased and degraded form of that "other-

worldliness" with which Christianity has from time to time been justly charged. It occupies men's minds and concentrates their attention upon another world and upon attempts to communicate with it, when their attention ought to be fixed on living in this world and loving their fellow-men. Other-worldliness is always essentially wrong. Giving up earth as a bad job, and endeavouring to reach beyond with a jump is a subtle species of blasphemy. All other-worldliness is wrong; but I would much rather have mediaeval and monastic other-worldliness than the modern spiritualist version of it. I would rather repeat continual offices than turn continual tables, and keep nightly vigils than hold nightly séances. I would much rather have a monk than a medium. The point is that it is not "other-worldliness" we need, but wider-worldliness—and that wider-worldliness is what conviction of eternal life brings to a man. This world does not fade away, it grows wider and is included in eternity. Eternal life is not hereafter only, it is here and now. The vision of eternal life makes men see life as one. They only

know one world, and that the eternal world ; they only have one life, and that eternal life. Behind the material they discern the spiritual. All the earth becomes a sacrament. Every hill-top speaks of heaven, and every flower flames with God. Men with the vision are not indifferent to this world, but are keen to make it perfect with a keenness that no worldly man could ever know. They detest slums because they poison eternal spirits ; they loathe all waste of human life because all human life is of infinite and eternal worth. They are the true democrats, who cannot help seeing all men as in the true sense equal, because they see all men as eternal.

The men of the vision cannot think of privilege except as another name for responsibility ; wealth to them means work for others, and position a chance of wider service. The man-made barriers 'twixt man and man that split us into sections they look at with far-seeing eyes, and find to be absurd. When you think of men as sons of God, you do not mind much whether they are princes or porters, publicans or prime ministers, the

only thing that matters is that they are men. These men neither envy the rich nor patronise the poor, and they do not waste their time on hatred. To them a snob is, not so much a sinner, as a fool who is not really living, but playing blind man's buff—groping round the world and missing half his friends because he cannot see a man behind a suit of clothes.

The men of the vision are the only sort that can build the great Democracy where there shall be no waste of human souls ; they see the Truth, that men are one, one family, and every child of equal value in God's sight. They have the Truth in them and they can make it felt. By the power of that vision, and in the light of that Truth, all lies can be destroyed and Truth can have its way. Apart from that vision I see no hope—only a repetition of the dreary vicious circles of the past. In the light of the eternal life I can see the New London, the New Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds, coming down from heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Without that light I listen only to a roaring like the roaring of


the sea—and when I look unto the land I behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

THE END



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