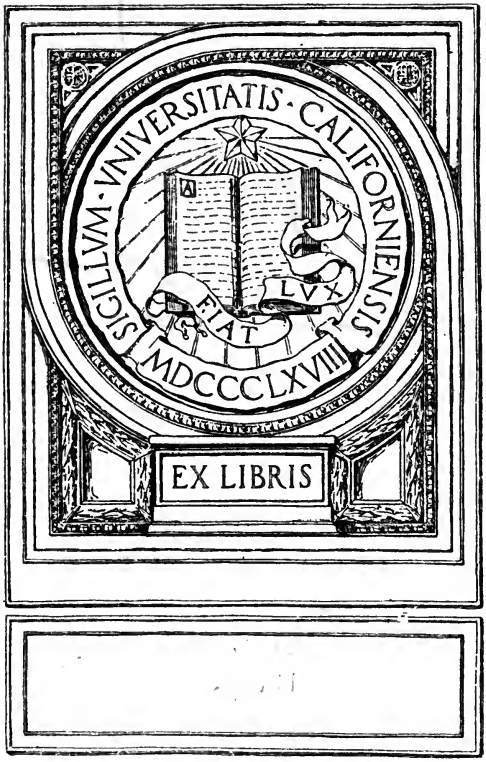
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# A SCHOOLMASTER'S APOLOGY

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BY

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LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS
1914

*CONIUGI DILECTISSIMAE*
*DECENNII PRIMITIAS*

# PREFACE

When I was travelling in America in 1897 with the present Bishop of Oxford,[1] I remember that when we started on a bicycling expedition he usually mounted the sidewalk on his machine and incontinently fell off. As I picked him up and inquired into the cause he would always say cheerily that he did it to propitiate τὸ φθονερόν, the jealous power which in Herodotus has such influence on our undertakings.

The object of a Preface must be similar, but I have no sacrifice to bring, and must content myself with the confession, needless perhaps in view of what follows, that I have only myself to blame for this book. Various friends will recognise traces of their handiwork: they know that my gratitude is theirs already, and that my apologies are to be had for the asking.

"Fool, said my Muse, look in thy heart and

[1] But he was not a Bishop then: merely a Canon of Westminster, to be described in the unforgettable phrases which seasoned the boundless hospitality we met with as "Canon Gore of Westminster, England:—a very homely man, unhandsome, lean to gauntness."

write." I cannot remember the previous conversation between the parties, so that I am not sure how the epithet was earned: but I have taken the advice, so that I cannot fairly shrink from the condemnation.

# A SCHOOLMASTER'S APOLOGY

## I

THE idea of writing a book is one with which almost everyone who has read for Honours either at Oxford or Cambridge has probably at some time toyed. But the mere desire, in the abstract, to write a book is rather like (should we say ?) the mere desire, in the abstract, to get married. It may be that sociologists will some day be able to establish that the latter desire is the explanation of most of the unhappy marriages that we see : it is improbable that the former accounts for our enormous output of unreadable literature. For between the idea of a book and its realisation lie many serious obstacles, of which the first and greatest is the solution of the question—what sort of a book is it to be ? And here let me say at once that there is one kind of book that I have never had the least desire to write, and that is the kind of book which only specialists can write and only specialists can read. For specialists as such I have a respectful aversion which (even had other things been as equal as they assuredly are not) would have stifled in me

any desire to join their body. Throughout my life I have suffered from the unwillingness of those who have addressed me to believe that I really could not understand what they were saying. Lecturers who assume that one is acquainted with the cardinal facts of the History of Gothic Architecture or has a firm grasp on the elements of Political Economy: veterinary surgeons who assume that one can tell without thinking which is a horse's off hind leg—all through my life I have suffered from those who would not begin at the beginning. I believe my situation is far from uncommon. The most glaring instance is probably to be found in the services of the Church of England, where it is almost demonstrably true that prayers, lessons, and sermons fail largely of their effect from their assumption of a knowledge which the average congregation does not possess.

In any case my respect for, and my dislike of, specialists would have been enough to keep me from joining their numbers, even without the worthier motive which must keep many a good book unwritten. There must be many who feel, with Browning's Pictor Ignotus, that to let the casual reviewer criticise the work of their life-time is indeed to let the merchant traffic in their heart, and prefer to

"know their knowledge to the world unknown."

There is no sadder reading than the pathetic little letters in which authors, while thanking the reviewer "for his appreciative notice," venture to draw attention to the great treasures "he has missed."

Again, perhaps because I am an Oxford man, I confess to a certain uneasiness (as Mr. Benson would say) when I see it stated that a book or its author betrays an exhaustive knowledge of a subject. It is not (Heaven forbid!) that I doubt it, but only that it seems to me just a little profane. I think that if I had been at Cambridge I might have felt differently, for reasons which, as Herodotus says, I will speak of in another place.

All this, it may truly be said, is a very long explanation of my reasons for not writing a book of a kind which no one (to the best of my knowledge) has ever wished me to write: let me turn to the question of the sort of book the writing of which I could imagine to be real pleasure. I leave out, for obvious reasons, all the higher kinds of creative work: no Milton nowadays is likely to be mute, nor, I think, inglorious. I do not want, either, to write a book of sermons—partly because almost all headmasters do, and do it much better than I could, and partly because I am almost the only person whom I ever find reading them.

But there *is* a type of book which I can imagine writing joyfully. I am quite sure that Mr. Pepys enjoyed composing his *Diary* when he had once mastered his system of shorthand: I am quite sure that Dean Beeching enjoyed composing his *Pages from a Private Diary*. I imagine, further, that Mr. Jemmy Glover must have enjoyed creating a book the outside of which I admire on railway bookstalls, called *Jemmy Glover His Book*. I have no idea what it contains, and I am afraid that it must be largely frivolous; the title page alone is enough evidence for me.

What all these books have in common is the fact that they express the author's own views in his own way: that they deal with subjects which he himself chooses, and have to conform to no recognised rules of art. It is possible, of course, that one of their attractions lies in their anonymity, though Mr. Glover is no doubt an exception, but I am not convinced that that is an essential.

It is true again that it is usually regarded as one of the blessed privileges of age to publish a rambling book, with no special pattern on which it is woven, and I should be the last to wish to usurp it. But is it inevitable that to publish one's views on things in general should be the last stage in a literary career? A junior author

can at least plead Braddock's immortal excuse that he "means to do better another time," and need not sink into the grave conscious that his last act has been that which was least worthy of him.

This then is my ambition. I cannot claim that the following pages will contain much deep thinking, because I should not be sure that any of my thought was deep: I cannot claim to have enjoyed any "special advantages" for forming such opinions as I hold, nor therefore any strong presumption that they are true: I can only claim that they will be honest, and hope that they may interest a few of the friends who are likely to be their only readers.

## II

Ever since I began (this morning) to entertain the idea of writing this book, and still more since I began (this afternoon) to write it, I need not say that the difficulties of it have loomed large before me. First of course comes the almost intolerable practical difficulty of having to be prepared to spend so much time pen in hand. Anyone who has ever endured a long examination will recall the horrible feeling of the paper under his hand towards the end, say, of the first week: and I still remember with joy the moment at which I finished the last long examination paper which anyone was ever likely to have the right to ask of me. "I suppose you've finished your examinations now, and I know I should be uncommonly glad: but I dare say you're sorry," wrote an uncle to me on this occasion: he had always despised me on large general grounds, and I expect with justice, but on this occasion he was in error. The typewriter would seem an obvious solution, but I have to confess to the pitiful fact that whenever I try to dictate any long discourse I sink unconsciously into a style which is not only not my

own but is one which I particularly dislike. I have always had a sneaking admiration for Mr. Guy Boothby, not only because he writes so many books, but because he invents such splendid titles for them—(The Beautiful White Devil, for instance ; or did Webster anticipate him there ?) —but perhaps my feeling is chiefly based on a no doubt apocryphal anecdote that he is able to dictate his masterpieces smoking a cigar and with his feet on the mantelpiece. Such gifts are not for all, and it is the pen for me, not the stenographer :

" Beggars can hardly be choosers, but O the pity, the pity ! "

as Browning truly says.

But of course it is the immensity, or the impudence, of the undertaking which weighs heaviest on my conscience. A distinguished connection of mine wrote a book called *The Condition of England*, which I believe is flippantly alluded to by some of his colleagues in the Cabinet as The Condition of Masterman. I am unable to imagine any greater compliment than this, as showing how completely an author may become one with his subject and allow it to interpret him. I should like to quote the parallel reference to Bunsen's *God in History* as Bunsen in der Geschichte, but I am not so sure that that was intended to be complimentary.

But after all my scope is not so wide as Mr. Masterman's: there are only two or three subjects on which I can claim to have formed opinions at first hand: still even they are large and controversial enough to give the boldest pause, for they include Religion, Education, and Literature. I cannot promise that I know much about any of them, or that I may not discuss subjects of which I know even less, but I can truly say that the reader on whom these topics have already long since palled can suffer no loss if we part company here.

There are of course such things as digressions. I do not profess to know if the digressive mind is of a high or low type, but I have sometimes comforted myself, when detected in irrelevance, by remembering that St. Paul was apparently unable to resist the seduction of a verbal parallel. It has often seemed to me that many of the complications which puzzled, no doubt, his shorthand writers as much as they puzzle his modern commentators, are explained if we remember his great powers of verbal memory, trained as of course they were to the highest pitch, and postulate that human weakness which some of us share for recalling and quoting irrelevant but favourite passages on the strength of a verbal parallel. "What is the shortest way to Athlone?" asked the traveller of the Irishman.

"Sure, if I was going to Athlone I'd not be starting from here," was the answer, itself a masterpiece in the theory and practice of digression: and I cannot promise that I shall be able, or anxious, to follow the shortest track. After all there are several distinguished writers, since Apostolic times, who have consecrated the practice. Few readers of Sir Francis Doyle's Lectures on Poetry—and I wish there were more of them—would be willing to omit that celebrated digression of his which concludes with the dictum that Wordsworth's standard of intoxication must have been miserably low: or the still more famous description of the Union debate after which "Mr. Gladstone came to supper with me: a feat that might have been accomplished with equal success by a person of greatly inferior ability."

And then there is the question of publishing—and there sound in my ears the mournful lines of Lewis Carroll:

> "The old man smiled upon his knee
> To see the eager lad;
> But when he thought of publishing
> His face grew stern and sad."

I quote from memory, and therefore very possibly wrong, and the thought leads me, as it led Calverley in his great poem on Beer, to a digression at once. It is the first and, I hope and

trust, the worst of mine—so bad in fact that I should relegate it to a footnote were I sure that all readers, like myself, read footnotes and prefaces with a zeal denied to the mere printed page. The great Samuel Butler (whom as a loyal Salopian *honoris causa nomino*) delighted in deliberate misquotations: "*E pur si non muove*, as Galileo said of the egg," is perhaps the best. One in particular occurs in Alps and Sanctuaries, where he writes: "As the late Poet Laureate says (I quote from memory):

> 'There lives more doubt in honest faith,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds,'

or words to that effect." It was once my happiness to get from the London Library a copy of the book in which a careful reader had written by the side "No," and had given in pencil the correct reference to *In Memoriam*. If the Erewhon Society is right in chronicling, as it does, Samuel Butler's continued existence, I hope that they will find space to record the pleasure which this little incident must have caused him.

But beyond all these difficulties of pens and publishers looms the supreme and final difficulty of being honest in what one writes. It is so hard to be natural, as countless interrupted diaries prove: and after all, Mr. Pepys and Dr. Beeching *were* both anonymous. Writing what

is to be read is very different from and much more misleading than conversation. I have just been reading that great detective story, *The Moonstone*, and there is no denying that the mannerisms of Mr. Betteredge and Miss Clack savour of the stage. But still they weren't themselves, or rather Mr. Wilkie Collins wasn't them. I can take refuge in the proud lines written by an Eton pupil of mine in parody of Mr. F. W. H. Myers :

> "I who am I, and no one can deny it,
> I who am I, and who shall say me nay?"

Let me hope that I shall not have to add the gloomy line with which his verse concludes :

> "I have forgotten what I meant to say."

## III

"THERE's nothing like a little judicious levity," as Michael Finsbury remarks in the greatest of humorous romances, but the transition is painful when one has to relapse into sober sense, and particularly when the particular subject is that of Public School Education. I know of one, and only one, bathos in literature to compare with it. I have in my possession a copy of a letter written by one of the earliest of American Bishops in the eighteenth century to his flock. It begins, and reaches its apparent conclusion, in the style of a Pauline epistle: and then concludes with this amazing sentence:

"Dearly beloved, believe me to be, with all sentiments of respect and fidelity, yours very faithfully,

SAMUEL PETERS."

Secure in this precedent, I will proceed with my self-appointed task. It would not be so hard if one wanted only to criticise it: that can be easily and brilliantly done—but to pose as, on the whole, its convinced and ardent defender is a task to appal the bravest. To do so is to confess oneself at once the plainest of plain men, and

it is strange but true that while almost everyone in conversation is anxious to pose as a plain man, there is no rôle which is more unpopular on paper or in print. No one wishes to err with Cato who has a chance of going wrong with Cæsar, but after all they lived in exceptional times, and conservatives have not invariably been in the wrong. Mr. Bonar Law reminded some of his followers the other day that if they had to have all the stupid people on their side, the other party had to find room for all the cranks. Scylla could roar, if I remember right, while Charybdis could only yawn; so that they may be taken with some justice as the types of two eternally opposed temperaments.

But that is not the end of my difficulties. The ordinary stupid man may say in his smoking-room that he doesn't see much the matter with the public schools, and it may be dismissed as the sort of ordinary stupid thing that he *does* say; but when anyone with a direct interest in the subject takes up the cudgels he is naturally suspect from the start. I am afraid that that can't be helped. I should certainly be glad if I had a stable income apart from my profession; but with all its faults it is one to which I am proud to belong, and I am glad, even at the certain risk of misrepresentation, to say a little on its behalf.

It is no good my saying that public schools are not perfect, for in the first place no one thinks they are (least of all those who control them), and in the second none of our critics will ever believe that we think anything else. I shall therefore take no pains to avoid being misunderstood, and shall only state my conviction that an English public school is the best instrument yet devised for making a decent citizen out of the average English boy.[1] I would go further, and maintain that, so far as my very limited knowledge goes, I do not see any signs that any other nation, from Germany to the United States, has solved its own particular problem any better. I remember a pamphlet published some years ago by Mr. Geoffrey Drage, in which he said, if I remember right, that the best type of English public school boy goes through Europe like a Spartan through Greece in its degenerate days, and those who see him say, "Good heavens, why are not our boys like that?"

I don't suppose they really say that (though I think that some of them not unreasonably might),

[1] The problem is well described by Clough, or rather his uncle, in the Epilogue to Dipsychus. "What is the true purpose of education? Simply to make plain to the young understanding the laws of the life they will have to enter. For example—that lying won't do, thieving still less; that idleness will get punished; that if they are cowards, the whole world will be against them; that if they will have their own way, they must fight for it."

and I don't suppose that Mr. Drage does either, but there is a sound instinct underlying his rather exuberant phrase, and I hope that he would not be ashamed of that.

"*Numquamne reponam?*" said Juvenal, and I confess to something of that feeling when I read the criticisms on my profession. Knowing as I do the devoted lives which many of our public schoolmasters lead, the generosity with which they often spend on their pupils the slender salaries which they get, I cannot deny that to hear the profession abused as it not infrequently is rouses in me a good deal of indignation. There are, of course, some critics who are just. Mr. Jack, in a brilliant study called "That sort of Thing," hits off our slipshod methods to perfection, but his story ends with an unexpected blessing: the incompetent and ill-taught schoolboy becomes after all a rather competent barber in Canada. And I do not myself believe it to be true that the average public school boy is found unwilling to work or unready to obey—while it is quite certain that he is very often found competent to command. He has the faults of his nation, which are probably also the faults of his father and mother; but I neither believe that those national faults are as gross as pessimists declare, nor that a public school can fairly be expected to eradicate them.

If I had to carry the attack into the enemy's country, I should be tempted to maintain that the English public school system is certainly the most original, and on the whole the most successful, of our national institutions.

I think that I have now exposed a sufficiently large flank to attack, and as I have at least partially recovered my temper I can go on to discuss a few questions of detail.

## IV

THE fundamental fallacy which underlies most criticism of the public schools is the belief that they are profoundly conservative and unchanging institutions. It is generally supposed that they were invented by Arnold, and that since his day things have in essentials remained the same. It would, on the contrary, be truer to maintain that there is no institution which has changed so much in the past half century, with the possible exception of the Church of England. I appeal to the experience of any parent who was himself a public school boy whether the school to which he takes his son has not changed enormously in the short period since he left it himself. And of course the changes which he sees are mainly external—differences in food, in housing, in equipment: the changes which he cannot see are far greater still.

The whole attitude of boys to masters, and of masters to boys, has changed or is changing faster than the outside world has any idea. *The Times* some years ago collected and published a series of Essays under the title of "The Public Schools

from Within,"[1] in one of which I expressed this view. I hold it still more firmly now.

I well remember being soundly castigated by the Warden of All Souls, who reviewed the volume in *The Times*, for suggesting that anything could alter such eternal relationships.

There is no one who has a better right to chastise me than the Warden,[2] and I hope that I received it with meekness, but it is compara-

[1] I have a special reason for remembering the series, for in the essay which I contributed I quoted Mr. Newbolt's lines:

> "There's a breathless hush in the close to-night,
> Ten to make and the match to win."

The printer put "tea" for "ten" in the last line—a suggestion which will appeal to any Etonian who has played in Upper Club.

It is curious, by the way, that headmasters seem specially the victims of printers' errors. The late Headmaster of Harrow, Dr. Welldon, in a preface to a book of Patriotic Song, was made to say, "A nation, like an admiral, cannot live on bread alone," when he meant "individual"; and the present Headmaster of Eton is on record as declaring that the Eton Mission has benefited the school since boys were allowed to visit it: "this, however, can of course not be tolerated." Readers can correct the error as their charity suggests. Mr. Arthur Benson also avers that when Truro Cathedral was consecrated his father received a telegram from the Master of Trinity (another headmaster), which instead of Fiat, fiat Butler, read Flint, lint, Butter;—but, as he has just taken to writing fiction again, I am not sure that I ought not to leave that story to him.

[2] I have left this sentence as it was written, for he would have forgiven the irreverence and known that the compliment was sincere. No Head of a College can ever have earned, and won, more love and loyalty than he.

tively easy to be meek when one is sure that one is in the right. I don't of course mean that all boys regard all masters as their friends, or that to love even a headmaster is necessarily a liberal education, but I do feel sure that at almost every school now the average boy has a chance of finding a friend in a master in a way that was not common twenty years ago. No doubt we have lost something by our greater approachability. I think with envy of the days when Dr. Kennedy could expel members of his Sixth Form with some regularity, sure both that they would shortly return and that his dignity would be unimpaired; but I have no doubt on which side the balance of gain lies.

I personally believe that the strength of our public schools lies precisely in this opportunity of close personal touch, nowhere realised so fully as in the relationship of tutor and pupil at Eton. It is probably the obstinate plainness of my mind which makes me feel more anxious that a boy should have to deal, and know that he is dealing, with gentlemen than that he should be taught the best subjects by the best methods. [It is perhaps as well to add I no more mean that no gentleman can be a man of method than that no gentleman can teach Greek (which I take to be the best of subjects).]

I can imagine no better form of education for

a boy than a friendship of his own choosing with a master whom he respects and likes. I like to think that it was a Salopian, Fulke Greville, who paid the handsomest tribute to friendship ever written when he caused to be engraved on his tombstone, as last and greatest of all his distinctions,

FRIEND TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY,

and the friendship of a boy and a master can be, and often is, as real and enduring as that of these two schoolfellows.

## V

The attacks on public schools, or rather on all our English educational system, have recently found a philosophic basis in what is called the Montessori System. As I shall have to express considerable disagreement with this system, I ought perhaps to begin by saying that for the authoress of it and her work in Rome I have the profoundest admiration. She seems to me to be the best, or most recent, exemplification of the fact which her method is used by her followers to disprove, namely the paramount importance of personality in the work of teaching. I do not propose merely to say that it is absurd to try and revolutionise the education of ordinary English boys on the strength of some experiments which have been tried with amazing success on half-witted Italian children, and with distinctly less success, so far, on any other class. I wish rather to suggest a few simple thoughts on the ideas put forward under the shelter of the system and its name.

It is obvious that in all education there are two factors to be considered—the child and the teacher; or, to put it in another way, the extent

to which a child should be driven and the extent to which it should be left free. Either factor can be over-emphasized, and progress, no doubt, comes in this as in other matters by the swing of the pendulum. The Montessori System lays all the emphasis on the child and its inclinations; these inclinations must be studied and humoured: the teacher must so far as possible efface himself, and the child when its nature is only sufficiently trusted will learn what is psychologically learnable by it.

There is no doubt much truth in all this, and it is equally certain that it is not the whole truth. It may be the side on which emphasis needs at the moment to be laid, though I fancy that, so far as public schools are concerned, it comes a little late in the day. The average boy nowadays has a far larger choice offered him than he ever had before, and there are grave reasons to doubt whether the varied diet which we now supply for him, in deference to public and parental demand, is not proving too complicated for his intellectual digestion.

But let us assume that our new professors have their way: let us imagine a generation brought up on their methods: and can anyone doubt that at the end of the period we shall have the teacher produced from his cupboard once more, and have it proclaimed as the newest

educational discovery that a boy has the right to be guided and the privilege of being coerced?

The theory when stated in its fullness seems to me mistaken practically, psychologically, and morally. Practically it seems to me that there must always remain many branches of learning to which it is ludicrously inapplicable. A child, for instance, which when left to itself *preferred* to spell in our present fashion, would seem to me unfit to be trusted in any larger matter of choice; and though this illustration is ludicrous, others will occur to anyone who thinks.

Psychologically the mistake is that the psychology of the teacher (not yet entirely in his cupboard) is forgotten. The problem is not so simple as it appears at first sight; it is rather like one of those algebraical exercises, which I confess I have always thought fundamentally unfair, in which not only the value of $x$ but also the value of $y$ has to be discovered by the student. It is just as important that the teacher should do what he is psychologically fitted to do as that the pupil should learn what he is psychologically fitted to learn; in fact, if I had to make the choice, I should certainly prefer to see a teacher giving to his class teaching which he was psychologically fit to give and they psychologically unfit to receive, than to see the same class receiving instruction which they were

psychologically fit to receive but he psychologically unfitted to impart.

I dare say this is professional pride, but it feels to me like common sense.

But it is on moral grounds that I have my most serious quarrel with the extreme Montessorians. It seems to me worse than nonsense, in fact disastrous folly, to suggest that what is most needed by the average modern child is encouragement to follow its own inclinations. Enough encouragement of that kind is provided by the conditions of modern society, and a school which makes a child do what is uncongenial from a sense of duty is, at the moment, playing a more valuable part. I even prefer the despised "mental gymnastic" of dates, multiplication tables and grammar, learnt in faith and much affliction, to the primrose path which the porter in *Macbeth* imagined (when he was drunk) to lead to the everlasting bonfire.

It is all very well to say that the suggestion applies to intellectual pursuits and not to morals. *Abeunt studia in mores* is a sound doctrine, and even apart from that the system is often defended on a view of human nature which no Christian can safely accept. Mr. Holmes, a distinguished exponent of the system, like many clever critics of Christianity, believes the doctrine of Original Sin to imply that all a child's instincts are evil.

No sane Christian holds that view; but we do believe that, explain it as we may, the instincts of all human beings are very diverse in value: that a child has a right to the experience of centuries, and that it is disloyalty to a trust if we shelter ourselves behind a shallow optimism and leave it altogether to itself.[1]

[1] Single instances are of course slight evidence, and are often misleading; but I was interested in reading, just after I had finished this section, the account of Archbishop Temple's early education. "His mother taught arithmetic, with very little knowledge of arithmetic herself, by steady repetition. She had a key to the sums in the arithmetic book, giving the answers. If a sum was brought to her and the answer was wrong, she drew her pencil through it and made no further remark. It had to be done again till it was done right. The sum of to-day was repeated to-morrow, and so on until perfect accuracy was obtained.

"When it was time for my brothers to begin Latin the same system was adopted. She could not pronounce it, but Frederick had to learn a few lines each day, always repeating the old until seven or ten pages had been learnt. Then the first four or five pages would be left, and a further advance made. This went on day by day and year by year until he was twelve years old; and he went to school knowing his grammar perfectly, as no other boy knew it. He was unable to pronounce it, and was therefore put to the bottom of the school; but he soon picked up the pronunciation and rose rapidly. Euclid was the same. She did not understand a word. He began to do so as he advanced in the subject, and could substitute one expression for another, or change the order of letters. She interposed and corrected him. He would reply impatiently, 'It was all the same.' 'Say it,' she ordered, 'precisely as it is here,' touching the book.

"Algebra he learned by himself, but I do not know how far he understood it. It was learned in the same accurate way, repeating each portion of the book."

## VI

THERE are two criticisms of public schools on grounds other than their notorious intellectual deficiencies of which I should like to say a preliminary word—their alleged snobbishness and their undoubted worship of athletics.

A rather bitter critic the other day spoke of "the increasing gulf that exists between public school boys and the so-called lower classes," and it is on record that a peer not long ago removed his son from Eton to escape the atmosphere of undue adulation—though it is admitted that his experience was peculiar.

I do not believe that the gulf is increasing; that it is there at all is a fault of English life which public schools naturally and inevitably reproduce: but to say that the average boy learns at school to despise, or does normally despise, persons of lower social station seems to me quite untrue. The few who have this quality bring it ready-made from home, and such intercourse with other classes as is possible in the conditions of public school life certainly diminishes it.

Of course such intercourse is rare, and, I think,

inevitably so. I do not believe that the way in which the great public schools can help education is to take selected boys from lower-grade schools, even (which is very unlikely) if they were willing to come. The risk of failure would be too great from their parents' point of view, and the public schools are, for good and evil, too individual an institution to be fitted in as a rung of that educational ladder of which we hear so much.

It may be granted that localities have often lost educational benefits intended for them, and this is greatly to be regretted, however much the localities have benefited in more prosaic ways; but the intentions of benefactors are notoriously difficult to follow with exactness, and the panaceas of one generation are often the bugbears of the next. Our fathers in their wisdom abolished most of those local qualifications for scholarships which we are now struggling to re-establish; and at Oxford those Prize Fellowships which were the pet scheme of the last generation of reformers have long been a Scandal to all Right Thinking Men.[1]

But in any case the objection, such as it is, to the admission of boys of another class does not

[1] I use the capital letter to indicate a truism with which (as in private duty bound) I disagree: it is my fervent hope, for instance, that the College of All Souls may be the fruitful mother of yet more happy children.

come from boys themselves. I have no doubt that were the experiment found desirable they would accept it readily and bring it, so far as they were concerned, to a successful issue.

And I must add a word of one institution which provides in its degree an effectual answer to the charge of snobbishness — I mean the School Mission—especially when that Mission deals, as all School Missions should, especially with work among boys.

There is some inevitable unreality in a mission which works a parish ; boys cannot be expected to feel direct enthusiasm in the provision of church privileges for their elders : but when a Mission works among other boys, the readiness with which they will accept opportunities of sharing in games and camps and club life shows them singularly free from class pride and prejudice. Much more of course might be done in this direction, and it will not be the boys who will be the obstacle.

To return to the general question, I think that at an earlier age there is much to be said for the common education of children of different classes where circumstances admit : at a later age the difficulties are far less ; but the public school age seems to be an ideally bad moment for the experiment.

## VII

The charge of excessive interest in games must be treated differently, except in so far as it is true here also that schools only reproduce, with some inevitable exaggeration, the attitude of the average home. "Our climate and our brave blood precipitate the greater number of our young aristocrats upon the hunting-field, to do the public service of heading the chase of the fox, with benefit to their constitutions," and their less fortunate compatriots emulate them so far as their circumstances allow.

The evil is great and palpable, and I have no desire to deny it. That there are some compensating advantages I have as little desire to deny; but the praise of games as schools of character needs some qualification. Cricket is, and must remain, fundamentally a selfish game, and in these days of averages and analyses he is a rare boy who can think primarily of his side. The game has lost much of its enjoyment by over-specialisation, and I am not sure that the best games I have ever played were not with a paper ball in a schoolroom and in momentary

expectation of discovery. To be continually attempting to win a colour or a place in a team is a demoralising experience as well as an exhausting one.

Football has fewer disadvantages, and (the Rugby game perhaps in particular) is a real school of character; while rowing, though possibly not a game at all, certainly provides a most valuable discipline for a boy with any tendency to softness: but for games as such it can only be claimed that they undoubtedly promote health and bring out real and useful qualities in the boys who have to direct them.

In this connection I should like to add a line of protest against two demands recently made of us. The experts in Swedish Drill have much to say for themselves: they have done much, and will do more, to strengthen the weakling and to make chest measurements increase; but when it is claimed that they should be allowed time during school hours to teach ordinary boys how to breathe, I feel inclined to denounce them and all their works.

It is surely ridiculous to say that the average public school boy does not get enough opportunities and encouragement, both at home and at school, for physical development. If his games develop him on wrong lines they ought to be adapted or curtailed, but to say that our

school hours, which are none too long, should be shortened for physical exercises seems to me to be exalting the mere duty of survival into a place which it by no means deserves.

The other claim is less insistent; but when *The Times* lends its support to the theory that public schools are not doing their duty to the nation because they do not train Olympic winners, it is worth while to emphasize the fact that athletic sports are open to all the objections which lie against games in general with none of the compensating advantages. They are blatantly self-seeking; they admit of no leadership and organisation; and whether Waterloo was or was not won on the playing fields of Eton, Armageddon will certainly not be decided on the cinder track.

## VIII

ANOTHER section, but it shall be the shortest in the book, must be devoted to "the moral question." This exists in all schools, and some doctors would say that the present generation feels its dangers more keenly than the last. But in all decent schools there is a public opinion among the bigger boys which does more than anything else to solve it, and I am myself content to leave it there.

I think that there is far too much talk about the need of warning and the right to be warned. Any sensible parent will give the warning which he thinks his son can understand, and should tell his boy's master what he has been able to say. But in most cases warnings even of the most elaborate kind will not settle the question. That will be done by the atmosphere of the home and school; the boy who has been taught by example and precept to refuse what is evil and choose what is good will survive temptations from which the warnings of a self-indulgent parent will be unable to save his son. Theory is good, but a

boy accepts it with a grain of salt; and if the salt provided for him has had no savour, all the sermons of all the headmasters in England will not avail to season it.

## IX

It is with relief that I quit these exalted fields of theory and descend to the equally controversial topic of the subjects which a public school boy should learn. The controversy is equal and the decision as difficult, but there is, or perhaps ought to be, less loss of temper involved in the question whether a boy should learn Algebra or Greek than in those which touch the ultimate value of human nature. But before I leave the problem let me quote a few words which have remained in my mind ever since I heard them from that great instructor of youth, my Greats tutor. "Thus the natural man, the φυσικὸς ἄνθρωπος, is, according to Aristotle, neither good nor bad. Contrast with this the doctrine of Calvin, 'man is naturally bad,' and the doctrine of Rousseau, 'man is naturally good, but has been corrupted by prophets, priests, and kings.'"

It is useless to pretend that the classics have no failings, when Sir Willoughby Patterne, that acute judge, could be led to say, "I forsook the classics for science, and thereby escaped the

vice of domineering self-sufficiency peculiar to classical men"; and in any case it is obvious that the ordinary public school curriculum is grossly overcrowded. Some lines written at Eton a few years ago give a view of the situation which was not exaggerated then, and is probably not exaggerated now:

(*Air—The Heavy Dragoon*)

"If you want a recipe for that popular mystery
Known to the world as the Curricu*lum*,
Take Latin and Science, French, German and History,
Set them all down as the terms of a sum:
Driver's Divinity, German geography,
Rules for the use of indefinite ἄν:
Music, Mechanics and pure Palæography,
Topical talks on the growth of Japan:
Happy half-hours with the early crustacean,
Learned discussions of metres Horatian,
Physical drill for the weedy and weak,
Eton for ever and German for Greek.
Yes, yes, yes, yes!
Take of these subjects as much as is teachable,
Labour at all with a zeal unimpeachable,
Cancel them out, and the residuum
Gives an idea of the Curricu*lum!*"

The reason is not far to seek. There has been a continual demand for the inclusion of new subjects, and the schoolmasters—those unbending Conservatives, or rather those Liberal laths painted to look like good Tory iron—have uniformly yielded to the demand. The result is a

congestion which everyone deplores, and from which no one has yet arisen to save us.

The favourite solution offered is the abolition of Greek, except for boys of special intelligence. I shall return to this point later on, but will at the moment only say that this type of solution seems to me to approach the problem on quite wrong lines. It is merely another piece of tinkering, and has no constructive virtues about it. There is no doubt a great deal to be said against Greek for very many boys, and there are very few subjects which, isolated in this way, do not admit of a very great deal of objection. Subject for subject, is it possible to doubt that the position of Algebra, for instance, as a subject of universal study, is far weaker than that of Greek? There are very many people who would deny that they have received any benefit from the Greek they learnt; but they would, in most cases, be able to suggest some of the reasons which made their teachers so anxious to impart it. From Algebra, on the other hand, I, and countless others like me, have not only derived no benefit, but I have not even the shadow of a notion what benefit I was ever expected to derive. Was it the hope of my teachers that I should ever become a mathematician and study the subject for its own sake? They would be the first to disclaim any such preposterous hallucination.

Was it merely that I might acquire accuracy? They knew that such accuracy as I could get I was acquiring much better from arithmetic, and that if I, *ex hypothesi* a worse mathematician than classic, was not learning logic from Latin Prose, it was the wildest optimism to think that Algebra could teach it me. They never even suggested that it could have, for me, any practical value; and if it has, as I can believe it may have, its own spiritual consolations, they are obviously reserved for the elect.

I don't dislike Algebra more than I dislike any subject on which I have been compelled to waste much useful time; but I do dislike it enough to maintain that to abolish Greek for the weak classic and to retain Algebra for the weak mathematician is a proposal justified neither by logic nor by common sense.

It is fairly plain, I suppose, that we have to deal with two types of mind, the literary and the scientific, and that their training ought to be different. No doubt there are other types, but after all, as Bishop Creighton said to me (and no doubt to other young and ardent schoolmasters), a public school is only a cross between a barrack and a workhouse, and you must not expect perfection from it.

There is, for instance, the great class of the stupid; who will have to be classified somewhere.

Hitherto, and I think with some reason, they have been classed rather as literary; I mean by that that the "classical masters" have had to look after them. The scientists have refused, with a wisdom which does credit to their heads if not to their hearts, to have anything much to do with the great class of the unteachable: and I repeat that I think they are probably right. All the same, it ought not to be forgotten that while the scientific teaching of most public schools is carried on with small and select classes, and with fairly adequate apparatus, it is the classical master who has had to teach larger and more heterogeneous bodies with that Spartan lack of apparatus and equipment which (apparently) made our forefathers great. Some at least of the many and grievous failures of a classical education may be thus explained if not condoned.

But this is after all a detail. Hard cases make bad law, and stupid boys make bad education. *Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda, e passa;* but let the look be one of pity, not only for them but for their teachers.

## X

If it be once agreed that our two types of education are to be literary and scientific, I should like to give the scientists a fairly free hand in deciding what their line is to be. I do not imagine that they will settle it without controversy, but, holding the views I do, it would be absurd for me to do more than look on with sympathy and to make a few suggestions which they will not, I hope, regard as impertinent. I think it will clearly be a great pity if they elect to make the divorce with literature too complete : I shall be sorry if we are not to do our best to give scientific boys some love of the best literature for its own sake, and they obviously need to be taught how to express themselves with facility. The scientists may perhaps be willing to entrust this side of the matter to us who claim some literary experience, if we promise quite faithfully to teach them no composition and as little grammar as possible. How little that will be I could not promise beforehand, but I can see no reason for wanting to teach either that, or composition in foreign languages, to a scientific boy for its own

sake. He will be getting all the accuracy he needs from his own work, and probably getting it under stricter sanctions than any we could hope to enforce. I still remember the Eton boy who after a discreditable career at Greek, in which he was abominably careless, got leave to do carpentry instead. He was back with me within a week with his arm in a sling. The wheels of the classics may grind slowly, but the wheels of the carpenter's shop had, in this case at least, ground exceeding sharp.

When we turn to the literary side of the question we have to discuss the two problems of subject and of method. The latter is the easier, and shall be taken first.

There was much wisdom in a pamphlet issued recently at Oxford with the title, To save Greek, abolish Latin Prose. I am as ready as anyone to concede that our classical methods need change; at least I will make that concession to anyone who will concede to me that the change has already begun and gone a long way. A classical lesson now is by no means the dry grammatical affair it often tended to become in old days. We may not all be able to emulate the brilliant achievements of Dr. Rouse, but the fire which he kindles gives at least a little warmth in places where his name is not heard and his special methods untried. Much more remains to be

done before a classical lesson becomes all that it might be, but the process has begun, and there are few classical masters who do not, according to their lights, try and make their lessons a vehicle for such instruction on things in general as they are fitted to give and their boys to receive. A boy who goes out of school rejoicing that his master has got interested in some side issue and forgotten to hear the rest of the lesson, has not infrequently learnt more than he knows.

It is clear that we still teach too much composition to rather incapable boys. Latin Prose up to a point is an admirable training for everyone in accuracy, and at its best is probably the finest intellectual discipline known : Latin Verse has been to many people (of whom I am one) the first means of instilling a real appreciation of poetry. But these facts, true as they are, have been too much remembered, and the time wasted by weaker brethren too much forgotten. A classical teaching which distinguishes more clearly and earlier between scholars and the rest would be better able to meet its enemies in the gate.

I personally regret that when it meets them it has now to employ the " new " pronunciation of Latin. It is not that I deny that it makes it easier to converse with foreign scholars ; it is only that I don't want to, and (except the late Professor Robinson Ellis) never met anyone who

did. It is not that I think it difficult to acquire; on the contrary, I have had to change my own pronunciation ten times and found it as easy, though less profitable, than Laban did to change Jacob's wages. It is not that I don't like the sound of it; I certainly think that the Italian vowel sounds are indisputably the best.

My reasons for objecting to it are twofold: in the first place, I dislike the rather doctrinaire method in which it has been imposed on us as much (and I hope as legitimately) as its authors dislike our illogical opposition. I do not believe it to be the case that foreign nations pronounce Latin in one consistent way; and even if they do, what is right for them need not be right for us, because it is obviously so very much harder.

For, and this is my second and real objection, it does seem to me undeniable that for backward boys, or even for average boys, to have to cope with unfamiliar sounds at the start is to have to face a new and needless obstacle. They have to do it in French, and we know how badly they succeed; is it not plain almost to demonstration that a similar and yet very different pronunciation of Latin will be, if not a lion in the path at least a very perceptible animal? And can we afford it? I must say that I think that with Mr. Benson marching at least seven times a day

round our walls and blowing his most musical and seductive trumpet in our ears, we cannot afford to put any obstacle, however slight, in the way of the student whose inclinations now decide the day.

And then even when we have done it we have failed to please. The Poet Laureate pours contempt on all our efforts, and says that we have not yet mastered the elements of the problem. I wish I understood what he *does* want; not because I am sure that I should do it, but for the same reason that I wish I liked George Meredith[1]—because I hate failing to understand. But I freely confess that his tract on English Pronunciation completely baffled me. It was some relief to find from his reference to the "Anglicised scholastic mind" that he hoped for nothing better and expected nothing less.

After all, another Poet Laureate thought he appreciated Virgil though he used a pronunciation which is thought to make appreciation hopeless; and the statesmen, from Mr. Gladstone backwards, who have loved Horace were blind to his cacophony—and I have read somewhere of a man who recited Homer according to the

[1] I must except the Egoist—perhaps the greatest of modern novels; but if I own to a liking for Evan Harrington, the true Meredithian will see how very far gone I am from the righteousness of originality.

accentuation, and yet preserved and glorified the rhythm. Great indeed is the transforming power of the human intellect! And the moral is, I suppose, that I ought to try and read Mr. Robert Bridges' essay again.

## XI

WHAT then are to be the subjects of our literary education? I will postpone English for the present, and will deal only with the four languages, Greek, Latin, German, and French.

It is so universally assumed that Latin is to be our foundation that it may seem needless to discuss it; but it is perhaps worth while to compare it for a few moments with Greek. It has no doubt a decided commercial superiority, of a kind rather difficult to estimate, in smoothing the path to Italian and Spanish and in promoting the easy reading of French. It is difficult to estimate its precise practical value, or rather to estimate what the loss would be in this direction if Latin were generally dropped and French as generally retained and more thoroughly taught.

This is an experiment unlikely to be tried, but the suggestion is necessary before we can fairly compare the value of Greek and Latin; for if either is to be dropped the resulting situation ought to be honestly faced. If we put aside the commercial or practical advantages and compare the two languages as instruments of literary education, there is hardly a scholar who would

hesitate which to prefer. The plain fact is that in classical Latin the number of authors who can be read by the average intelligent boy with interest and profit is remarkably limited; every schoolmaster knows how hard it is to choose a Latin author whom he and his form can reasonably hope to enjoy. There is no Latin drama in the first rank: Terence and Plautus have their merits, but their limitations and their disadvantages are still more pronounced. There is no lyrical poetry except Horace, who is more akin to the eighteenth century than to our own; and Catullus who, great as he is, cannot provide much reading for the many. Virgil and Lucretius postulate real literary ability in those who are to understand their merits, and the elegiac writers are all, except Propertius, hopelessly handicapped by their intolerable metre. Among the prose writers I can sympathise with those who do not share my love for Cicero, and who do share Dr. Arnold's aversion from Livy. Tacitus remains, but to appreciate him is, as with Virgil and Lucretius, the reward of the few; and most of the students' bones will be found bleaching on the road through Nepos and Ovid.

While as for Greek—of course it is absurd to speak in praise and as absurd to be silent; but if the belief of the scholars of all ages is to count for anything, we shall think more than once

before we do anything to bar the access for a clever boy to the origins, and in many cases the supreme achievements, of drama, lyrical poetry, philosophy and history.

I know it is said that the road for him will not be barred, and I know it is said honestly; but I am unable to believe it. If Greek is dropped at the Entrance Examinations of Oxford and Cambridge (for literary boys, be it remembered) it will inevitably disappear altogether from many of the smaller and weaker schools of the country. I am not a democrat—I often wish I were, for it seems to allow great laxity of thought and guarantee a clear conscience—but I am democratic enough to believe that to rob the clever boy of the poorer classes of the chance of learning Greek just when we are trying to expand his intellectual horizon is to dash away, or at least to spill, with one hand the cup which we are offering with the other.

Mr. Benson[1] believes that French will do as

[1] I seem to be mentioning Mr. Benson rather often in these pages, and often with disagreement; so I should like to take this opportunity of putting on record, if he will let me, an affection which survives much disagreement. It is true that he pilloried me in the Upton Letters as a preacher who drove him from the Gospel to Omar Khayyám: but I can never forget much kindness and encouragement shown in Eton days, and I wish I could remember better a few of his great humorous poems of that era. Does *Beni cuiusdam filius* remember a certain copy of Remove Verses?

well, or better, for the average boy. It is a great comfort to me that all my opponents seem to me to disprove their own doctrines in their own persons, for it enables me, in the most approved fashion, to hate the sin and yet to love the sinner. I can only say that he seems to me an admirable example of the wise tolerance and the delightful taste which no studies but the classics have as yet securely brought. When he produced his charming book, *The Leaves of the Tree*, containing reminiscences of many great divines and scholars, as great and good in many cases as they were learned, I felt more than ever the immensity of the assumption which he asks us to make when he proclaims that he and they would have flourished as happily on a very different soil. I never had much of the spirit of the gambler in me—anyhow not enough to encourage me to run the risk.

When the present Headmaster of Eton entered on his post he did me the honour to invite some advice. I told him that if he had any moral courage he ought certainly to abolish French. His answer was, " Now it's a most amazing fact, but I was told that by a really clever man only yesterday." I pass over his unconscious insult for the value of the testimony. I am not myself very sanguine as to the results of English teaching of French as at present conducted : we are not

clear enough whether we are trying to teach people to speak intelligibly or to read intelligently, and fall rather between two stools—and we certainly do not give enough continuous time to it. I should myself be glad to see it removed from the early stages of a curriculum and taught for about ten hours a week in a boy's last year. I believe the results would be infinitely better than those we now achieve, for his interest in the subject would then be keener and his hostility less pronounced.

From German I do not think that the average boy shrinks with the same instinctive alarm : he has a well-grounded belief that the noises he makes in German are not in themselves worse noises than those which the native utters ; and he is quite sure that this is not the case in French. I wish that I could feel that stronger claims could be made for German as a language of literature pure and simple ; for any expert it is of course indispensable, but I can as little consider Goethe and Schiller to counterbalance the literature of France as I can believe the Romans worthy of comparison with their teachers, the Greeks.

So then our average literary boys must all learn Latin : they must all learn Greek, but they need do little composition of the advanced kind in either : and if in their later years at

school they can acquire a real knowledge of, or interest in, French or German, I should myself consider that they had as good a start as I could give them on the road of literature.

I don't think I should try to teach them all both French and German, but by that time it is to be hoped that they will have given up mathematics, and room might be found for the second language then.

They won't be perfect, I know, and it will always be possible for the critic to say how little they learnt at school, but if they know something of three languages besides their own and have learnt to appreciate and enjoy something in each of them, I should feel more confident than I do now of seeing a diminution in the sale of the threepenny magazine.

## XII

I SUPPOSE that it is useless at this period of English educational history to put in a plea for Italian, and yet, if it is primarily great literature that we are seeking, there is at least the possibility of making out a case. I do not want to do so at the expense of any other language, for it is always wiser and certainly pleasanter to thank the authors whom one does like than to criticise those whom one does not. If therefore I say, for instance, that Schiller does not seem to me great literature, and that I can hardly imagine reading Racine and Corneille for pleasure, I am only stating a personal fact and not forgetting that many better judges disagree with me. But when I say that, with the exception of Shakespeare, Dante is the poet of all modern poets who is best worth reading, and incomparably the greatest writer of any modern language except English, I believe myself to be saying what is fundamentally true.

If so, it will be worth making some slight effort to try and bring him within the reach of literary boys; nor do I think that the task, with boys

brought up on Latin, will be particularly difficult. I have tried the experiment both at Eton and at Shrewsbury, and have believed it to succeed, and I should like to disclaim at the outset any profound knowledge of Italian. The large edition of Vernon at one end and the small edition of the Temple Classics at the other are enough apparatus to begin with.

And, leaving aside for the moment the question of his greatness as a poet, Dante has special qualities which make him eminently "teachable." To begin with, he has that definite and intelligible "story" which we decided to be so valuable for teaching purposes; again, he has that possibility of illustration with a map which lends an indefinable attraction to all stories from *Treasure Island* downwards. Once more, there never was a better field for the digressive teacher, who will find himself quoting Browning or explaining the Holy Roman Empire or denouncing Ultramontane religion with equal appropriateness according to his frame of mind.

There is only one caution to be given, but it is an important one, because it is so often forgotten. The *Inferno*, though perhaps a necessary preliminary, is a preliminary only, and must never be regarded as a complete poem; it is curious how many casual readers of Dante regard him merely as the "inexorable Florentine,"

and forget, if they ever knew, that he is the supreme poet of victorious Love. Nothing else can explain Horace Walpole's comparison of Dante to "a Methodist parson in Bedlam," and, lest the error should seem merely insular, we may remember that Voltaire talks of his "feats of imagination" as "stupidly extravagant and barbarous." It is a real danger, and not least real with boys whose concrete, and rather crude, minds fasten readily on horrors which admit of easy visualisation. The glories of the *Paradiso* may be beyond their full appreciation, as they are indeed beyond that of any mind less inspired than Dante's own; but the amazing opening of the *Purgatorio*, with its change to the calm radiance of the mountain foot from the horrors and the darkness of the pit, is within the reach of anyone who cares for literature at all.

Translations fail, I think, as inevitably as they fail with any of the greatest literature,[1] and perhaps even more inevitably with him than with any other great poet, because his strangenesses of expression and thought involve an English as strange as themselves; but I know of

[1] I cannot help quoting, for its own intrinsic interest, a dictum of Professor Raleigh, with which I profoundly disagree. "The purest lyrical utterances do not depend for their beauty on the arrangement of accents and the counting of syllables; translate them into any language, and they still run straight into song." But in any case this saying does not apply to Dante.

no "little knowledge" which goes so far as the slight knowledge of Italian which enables him to be attempted.

And if we are seriously to consider the possibility of teaching the language we can remember that we have other rewards to offer: Petrarch, both as man and as poet, will well repay our labours, and there is good authority for ranking Carducci among the great writers of the last century. English literature, it is now beginning to be realised, has twice at least owed its renaissance to Italy; there is certainly no other country to which, as mere literature, it owes any comparable debt: and to trace it is at least a pious act.

And finally, any of those who have seen and understood, either in themselves or others, the truly marvellous transformation in the attitude towards art and literature and life which Italy for some mysterious reason has the power to effect, almost on a first visit, on the average intelligent undergraduate, will be glad to have any share in a work so glorious. The call which Clough sounded fifty years ago is worth our hearing still—

"Over the great windy waters, and over the clear crested summits,
Unto the sun and the sky, and unto the perfecter earth,
Come, let us go,—to a land wherein Gods of the old time wandered,
Where every breath even now changes to ether divine."

## XIII

The importance now given to the study of history is one of our great differences from the schools of the last generation. The "History Specialist" is now a common phenomenon among the bigger boys at school: sometimes a graceful idler, sometimes a coward who has feared the sterner discipline of the classics, but more often a boy who is owing to that study his first real interest in intellectual things. For the boy who clearly will never make a scholar, a year's history before he leaves school is an admirable prescription; he will gain from that a widened horizon which the classics fail to give him, and there is something too in the relaxation of form routine which "specialising" implies that helps a reasonable boy to grow up. Some of course will waste their time, and will become

> "Drones, the envy of compulsory bees,"

to use a phrase of Lowell's, but the risk is worth taking, and I should like to see it more widely taken.

All lovers of history will remember the moment when they were first allowed to leave the more

conventional paths and stray into fields where Rudolph and Maximilian were common names, and the Holy Roman Empire breathed in its very title the mystery of high romance. To me the realisation first came through the pages of Robertson's *Charles V;* it is as dreary a book in point of style as I can well conceive, for all the sentences, to the best of my recollection, begin with past participles, in a manner surely shared only by Dr. Maclear.[1] But for me the new day had dawned, and no criticism can lessen my gratitude to Robertson.

And here let me join my humbler testimony to that of Mr. George Trevelyan, who in his essay *Clio, a Muse,* has nobly waved the banner of artistic history. I have one advantage for the task which he has not, for filial modesty perhaps prevented him from saying that the very best example that can be produced in all historical writing of how to make the past alive is to be found in the writings of his father. I do not refer, though I might have done so, to the *Early History of Charles James Fox*—a work so brilliant that I have always counted it one of the worst results of the American Revolution to have interrupted it—but to an essay entitled "A

[1] I cannot refrain from quoting Dr. Maclear's immortal description of Noah's treatment of his undutiful son. "Justly incensed by Ham's unfilial conduct, the aged patriarch broke into prophetic *blessings and cursings.*"

Holiday Among some Old Friends," to be found in the precious volume, *Horace at Athens*. There the ancient Greeks live once more in their "peppery little states," and no one who has ever read it can forget the picture of the trials of the average Athenian citizen under the glorious régime of Pericles—the length of my quotation will I hope be forgiven, testifying as it does to the admiration which I feel :

"Nor was the Athenian, who habitually resided in town, without cares and trials of his own. Some winter evening, perhaps, as he was hurrying out to a dinner-party, curled, and oiled, and in his best tunic—conning over the riddles and the impromptu puns wherewith he intended to astonish the company—he would see a crowd gathered round some bills posted on a statue at a street corner ; and then he would turn to the slave who trotted behind him with his napkin, and spoon, and box of scents, and send the boy off to learn what the matter was : and the young varlet would return, with a grin on his face, to say that the Theban foragers were abroad, and that the generals had put up a notice designating the burghers who were to turn out and watch the passes, and that his master's name stood third upon the list. And the poor fellow would send off an excuse to his host, and run home to fill his knapsack with bread, and onions,

and dried fish; and his wife would stuff wool under his cuirass to keep the cold from his bones; and then he would go, ankle-deep in slush, forth into the misty night—lucky if his rear-rank man were not some irrepressible metaphysician who would entertain him during the march out with a disquisition on the Pre-existence of the Soul, or the difference between Sense and Sensation.

"And it might be that some fine morning, or, what was worse, on some morning that was anything but fine—he would find himself in the thick of a naval fight off some reef notorious for shipwrecks. There he would sit on his leather pad, seasick, sore, and terrified; the blade of his oar hitting now against a shattered spar, and now across a floating corpse, as he vainly tried to put on an effective spurt; the man in front of him catching a crab, and the man behind him hitting him in the small of the back at every stroke; the boatswain's flute out of tune, and the whole crew out of time; his attention distracted by observing a hostile galley dashing through the surge with her beak exactly opposite the bench on which he was posted."

This is the kind of history which for boys (and of course I speak as a child) is worth volumes of scientific history: it carries out the ambition so well stated by Mr. Fletcher in the preface to

his history of enabling a boy to hear the clatter of Rupert's horsemen down his village street, and picture the good monks catching baskets-full of trout in the stream wherein he is failing to get a rise.

Froude and Macaulay are often wrong, but their pictures live, and their works are read: history as well as poetry is faced by the peril of becoming the private possession of the learned instead of being what it ought to be, the inheritance and inspiration of us all.

## XIV

I SAID just now that I would postpone the question of the teaching of English : I wish I could have felt that in approaching it we were entering a less controversial atmosphere. We are doing so to the extent that no one nowadays questions the need for teaching it, but the agreement ceases as soon as we approach the details. Moreover, we have anxiously to remember what a great English teacher is reported to have said :

" The teaching of English perpetually trembles on the brink of absurdity—not that the teaching of English literature is intrinsically more absurd than the teaching of any other literature, but the absurdity is more easily detected."

The teaching of English is recommended by almost as many axioms as that of Geography : there are none of them that we are able to question, and it is our poverty and not our will that forbids us to obey them all. " See your own country first," cries common sense and the G.W.R. : it is palpably absurd that a boy should not know the commonest facts about the land in which he lives. " Geography is the hand-

maid of science," say others; and Bishop Creighton is known to have laid it down that all human knowledge could be grouped under the two heads of History and Geography. "Past Geography is present History," cry parodists of Professor Seeley, and commercial Geography advances claims less venerable but as undoubted. To all which the only possible answer is that the day is twenty-four hours long, and likely to remain so, and that we have to neglect some claims which we cannot, and do not wish to, deny. Personally I sympathise a little with the old-fashioned methods though I admire the new ones from afar: and when the other day I wished to discover whether a certain county was in North Wales or South, it annoyed me to find in the first maps which I consulted so much information about watersheds, rainfalls, and commerce that the bald facts of the situation seemed in danger of being overlooked.

Similarly there is no one who doubts that English ought to be taught: that a boy must learn to read and write and spell and express himself intelligently: that he must have a working acquaintance with the works of most famous authors and some coherent view of their history: that he must know the names and authors of very many books which neither he nor his family are very likely to read: and lastly, that he must

have, or be given, a real taste for good English literature.

Who is sufficient for these things? Not, I humbly venture to think, the average private schoolmaster, of whom the demand is first made. I hope it is not insolent to suggest that one of the first results of the demand has been to provide some extra employment for the master primarily in charge of the games. He is known not to be a sound classic (though I personally believe in his teaching of grammar), and there have always been some qualms about letting him teach Mathematics—but English! his own language! that is a subject we may fairly give him. And so the poor man is confronted with what is without exception the hardest piece of work in the whole teaching profession: the Latin Grammar hour goes, never to be retrieved in later years, and he is left with a Poetry Reader in his hand, and in his honest heart a feeling of lamentation and mourning and woe.

For it *is* the hardest thing to teach. I do not of course mean to senior boys: "any fool can teach a Sixth Form" is a true maxim, to which it has been bitterly added, "and very many of them do." But, if my experience goes for anything, the task of interesting little boys in English lessons is the hardest a teacher can undertake. The reason perhaps is that if he does not

interest them all is lost. A sense of decency prevents him (except in the case of Chaucer) from spending much time over details of grammar: he would feel as if he were botanising on his grandmother's grave. What sort of book is he to choose? If it is to be poetry it must have a story, and let my readers try and enumerate the good poems containing a story which they know: the list will not be long. If it is to be prose the choice is wider, but the difficulty greater; the points for comment are fewer and less obvious, and he will increasingly feel that he, the so-called teacher, would be better away.

And then behind all lies the great and difficult question of conscience: is he consciously to applaud the second-rate? When a boy tells him that he thinks Longfellow or Mrs. Hemans to be a great writer, what is his attitude to be? Is he to point onward to a higher dispensation or to acquiesce hypocritically in the lower? There lie before him also, but in deadlier form, all the dangers which beset the ordinary critic, and he is likely to end, as Mr. Birrell has been said to do (in the days when he tried to convince audiences less stony-hearted than the Commons), by saying "This I admire; I prithee admire it with me: if you don't, I've a mighty poor opinion of your understanding."

No one can successfully teach English unless

he loves it: that is the sorrowful axiom with which I would confront the axioms of our critics; "and some not even then," would be the addition which many of us would have to make.

There are only two or three results of experience which I would venture to adduce. The first is that the only people to whom I have, I think, succeeded in giving any liking for English literature were those whom I have encouraged to sit in my room and range over my books—not unaided by tea. That, I am afraid, is a characteristically pragmatist suggestion.

Secondly, the best way of teaching about a writer seems to me to begin with his life, and to hang one's criticisms on that. I have found it possible with the help of Lockhart's *Life of Scott* to keep a large Form at bay for many hours, and to illustrate his life from what he wrote.

That is of course a specially favourable instance. Dickens was less successful; and it is a rather depressing fact that the lives of authors, like the lives of most men of genius, are seldom edifying for the young. Still I am inclined to stick to the biographical method; with the help of the English Men of Letters series a case can be made out for most of them: and even when a life is least adventurous a poem gains in interest by being connected with some change in the

author's surroundings, be it only a migration from the blue room to the brown.

Lastly, I am quite sure that the power of writing in metre and in rhyme is latent in many boys, and only needs encouragement to be developed. It will do for many boys what Latin verse does admirably for a few, and will teach a power of appreciation which no amount of lectures can impart. But the Muse of Poetry scorns to be brought in as a final suggestion, and demands a fresh sheet of paper to herself.

## XV

I was reading the other day a very interesting account of some experiments in the teaching of English to lower Forms which have been carried out at Rugby. Amid much that was valuable I was rather distressed to find one master saying of *Marmion*, "They soon saw through this fustian." Leaving aside the question whether fustian is not essentially opaque, I certainly think it a great pity that any small boys should "see through" *Marmion*. I prefer the generous ardour of old Sir Francis Doyle, who confessed that, having learnt and loved it as a boy, he felt no desire to leave it in his age. "It was during my childhood that Scott rose to the height of his renown; and I make it my business to hold up, through good report and evil report, the poetical banner under which I enlisted as a boy. I knew the battle in *Marmion* by heart almost before I could read, and I cannot raze out—I do not wish to raze out—of my soul all that filled and coloured it in days gone by."

Scott, in fact, seems to me to provide the best solution of the problem of conscience which I

propounded a little while ago. Much of him, of course, is cheap and tawdry, but then he never claimed that it was anything else, so that a reader need feel no disloyalty in his qualms; and on the other hand, when he rises to his best it is not only good in itself, but of the sort of goodness which a boy will naturally like. It bears the traces of having been composed on horseback as unmistakably as much of Wordsworth bears the traces of unmitigated pedestrianism.

The poetry which boys are to like must be, first and foremost, strongly marked in metre. If a boy's ear is to be trained, it is of the highest importance that he should from his earliest days learn by heart poetry whose metre is unmistakable and appeals to him at once. For this purpose—I mean the purpose of awakening the metrical sense—I should frankly desert the mild serious poems which are too often studied, and plunge into that great inheritance of admirable nonsense which our age has provided for us. A boy who does not appreciate the rhythm of *Ingoldsby*, Edward Lear, or W. S. Gilbert (especially with a little musical aid), may indeed be dismissed as hopeless, but there will not be many in that case. It seldom pays to try and do two things at once in education. Interesting history had better be kept for one hour, or one part of

an hour, and dates severely for the rest. In the same way, though there are of course great poems which train the mind and ear at once, they are few in number, and I should myself think it wiser to do one thing at a time.

For after all, it is true that the last fifty years have seen the growth of a humorous literature to which no century that I know can show a parallel, and it is a great waste not to use it. I can join hands with Madame Montessori here, for I am sure the boys will like it; and even Mr. Holmes and I can forget our differences about original sin, over the Pobble who has no toes, or the Modern Major-General, or Smuggler Bill.

Parody, again, is an invaluable, though perhaps a two-edged, weapon. Most people know more about Browning when they have read J. K. S.'s.

> "Birthdays? Yes, in a general way,
> For the most if not for the best of men,"

and they certainly know more if they go on to read "A Parodist's Apology." I am not sure that they will learn so much from Calverley, who presents Browning only from the outside; but Calverley ought to have been mentioned earlier in the list, for he is assuredly one of the great metrical teachers of the young. No education should be considered complete which

does not include the "Organ Grinder" and the "Ode on the Distant Prospect of making a Fortune."

And our own day has its own supporters of the tradition. Those who do not know

> "So bluff Sir Leolin gave the bride away,
> And when they married her the little church
> Had seldom seen a costlier ritual,"

have yet much to learn about Tennyson and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Him Oxford has lost, but she still retains Mr. Godley and Mr. Knox, to prove that Humour, that most capricious of Goddesses, dwells alike with the Ulsterman and the Ultramontane. It is a great source of regret to me that Mr. Seaman's finest parody is not linked to a more deathless name than that of Mr. Alfred Austin.

I should like to see a school poetry book compiled which would, for once, omit "The Revenge" and "The Battle of the Baltic," omit even "The Private of the Buffs"; which would neither trade on the (assumed) militarism of boys nor stimulate their patriotism; which would make, in short, no appeal to the higher feelings which they have, nor any attempt to encourage those which they have not, but would simply and solely devote itself to cultivating their metrical sense. It would have a large field to draw on,

and its examples would come largely, I fancy, from our older seats of learning. I wonder if Cardinal Newman would have allowed the faculty of composing humorous verse to have an essential place in the Idea of a University ?

## XVI

I MENTIONED Mr. Gilbert just now among our metrists, and it is true that his place among them is deservedly high, but his claims in this direction are eclipsed by his pre-eminence among the humorous dramatists of modern days. I wish that it were more generally recognised of what a Renaissance of British humour he has been the prophet. It cannot be claimed that he is strictly original, but that is of the essence of a Renaissance, and his claims to be the Aristophanes of the nineteenth century are as indisputable as those of Mr. Anstey to be its Menander.

America has, of course, a humour of its own, of which a word may be said later on ; it is no disgrace to us that we have gone back to the original springs and sat at the feet of the greatest masters.

The essence of Gilbertian and Aristophanic humour lies in the perfect logical development of an absurd situation. When the nurse has once made her mistake and apprenticed the boy to a Pirate by mistake for a Pilot, everything is done :

all that remains is to develop the plot with pitiless logic. When the bumboat woman has confessed that she mixed the children up (however could she do it ?), no doubt remains in the mind of any of her hearers what the conclusion is to be. Ralph must at once become the captain, and the captain a fore-mast hand,

> "For I was the captain of the *Pinafore*,
> And a right good captain too,
> And though before my fall I was captain of you all,
> I'm a member of the crew,"

and it is this pitiless logic which is responsible for what is best in the *Gondoliers* or the *Mikado*.

Do we not recognise in this the logic which starved out the Gods when the Birds became supreme, by intercepting the steam of the incense, and which crowned the Sausage seller king because of his unchallenged incapacity ?

Add to this that Gilbert re-discovered and utilised the essential absurdity of the chorus—the inevitable unanimity of a group of soldiers, pirates, or policemen—and you have traced his secrets to their classic fount.

It is interesting to observe the part played by logic in humour. The American type, to which I alluded just now, consists in applying it almost solely to purposes of exaggeration. The man who was kissing his wife from the cars at parting

and, owing to the speed of the Express, found himself kissing the station-master at the next station, has in him the seed from which most American humorists have produced their lavish crop. Again, in a very different field, it is by pitiless logic in the use of words that Lewis Carroll (clarum et venerabile nomen) produces his greatest effects. "'Would you be good enough,' Alice panted out, 'to stop a minute?' 'I'm good enough,' the King said, 'only I'm not strong enough: you see a minute goes by so fearfully quick: you might as well try to stop a Bandersnatch.'" Here is logic unanswerable, as it is again in the famous passages which disputes in the true Socratic manner whether Nobody went faster than the March Hare, or the March Hare than Nobody.

Mr. Anstey's object is as different as possible. With whatever justice the question was asked whether it was Menander or life which had imitated the other, the same question can assuredly be put to the author of *Voces Populi*. Who has not recognised himself in the intelligent tourist, or the incompetent billiard player? Who has not smiled with the old ice-sweeper when "Frankie, my son," "the ornamental skyter," played havoc on the ice?

The Hyde Park orator, speaking with all 'istry vivid to 'is reckerlection, and asserting that

"the present Government Har. The most Abandoned! The most Degraded! The most Cowardly! The most Debased! The most Ber-lud-thirsty! Set. Of Sneakin' Ruffians. That hever disgraced the Title. Of so-called Yumanity!" deserved the cries of "good old Hatkins," which he received, but he deserves also the applause of all who can recognise the goddess of Truth unveiled. It seems so easy when Mr. Anstey does it: how hard it really is can only be discovered by a study of his imitators.

Our humour may not be as robust as that of our forefathers; many of Leech's jokes seem to us very elementary, and we have lost the power which appears to have enabled the seventeenth century to laugh at Milton's humour: but, at any rate, we have developed a verbal humour of our own of which there is no cause to be ashamed.

The later nineteenth century has come in for its share of abuse, and it is true that its contributions to great literature are comparatively slight; but if Teufelsdröckh was right in placing the gift of laughter high among human accomplishments it may claim to have taught us something.

A Savoy opera draws at Oxford and Cambridge more than even the worst musical comedy or

the most problematic play; and the laughter which greets it is certainly more akin to "the neighing of all Tattersall's" than to that "whiffling husky cachinnation as of one laughing through wool," which Carlyle so strongly denounced.

## XVII

But after all it is not of humour, but of metre that I am trying to speak, and among modern metrists I should give a very high place to Mr. Kipling ; certainly many of his poems would find a place in the volume I have suggested, and he would suffer less than many by our exclusion of what is directly didactic and patriotic.

I cannot profess to say how many metrical effects he has himself invented : the stanza of *The last Chanty* is to me a new and valuable possession : but he certainly has tried very many experiments, and most of them with great success. The seventeenth century lyrists might seem as alien to his genius as any poets that we could suggest, but when he imitates them the result is one of his most charming poems—

> "Cities and Thrones and Powers
> Stand in Time's eye
> Almost as long as Flowers
> Which daily die."

Surely that has the true ring of Herrick ?

It would infringe the laws of copyright if I tried to illustrate my point as it deserves, and I

will only mention at random the Smugglers' Song in *Puck*, the Camel's in the *Just So Stories*, and the Dirge of Dead Sisters from *The Seven Seas*. But there is one special achievement of his for which I personally feel most grateful, and that is his revival of triple rhymes. He has used them to express very varying moods; there is the almost unbearable pathos of

> "But far, oh very far behind,
> So far she cannot call to him,
> Comes Tegumai alone to find
> The daughter that was all to him."

There is the breezy defiance of

> "Here come I to my own again,
> Fed, forgiven, and known again,
> Claimed by bone of my bone again,
> And sib to flesh of my flesh!"

And the mysterious suggestion of

> "'What's yon that follows at my side?'
> *The foe that ye must fight, my lord.*
> 'That hirples swift as I can ride?'
> *The shadow of the night, my lord.*"

Both of these latter pieces, coming originally from *Kim* and *The Light that Failed*, are well worth studying in their amplified and altered form in *Songs from Books*.

Mr. Kipling has had a curious fate in his relations with schools. I am inclined myself to believe that no one living understands schools

and schoolmasters better. He seems to me to have applied to us his perfectly uncanny power of understanding the technical details of a profession, and using them to lay bare its inner life; the same power which enables him to describe with equal and obvious truth the inner feelings of a steam-engine in "·007," or of a cod-fisher in "Captains Courageous." But it is, roughly speaking, true that boys, great as is their admiration for him, will not accept him as their exponent. Stalky's school is too remote from average experience; and boys who, though by no means prosaic, are yet amazingly concrete in their tastes, cannot make the necessary transitions in thought.

I have mentioned what seems to me Mr. Kipling's greatest power, but even in doing so I hesitate, for the most striking thing about him is to me his astounding versatility. He cannot, perhaps, write a novel, though I am a little doubtful about that, and don't profess to understand the reason; but I should feel it hard to settle if I had to decide on which of four or five very different books his reputation would most securely rest. Is it to be *Kim*, of which an Indian bishop said to me that it brought back the smell of the Indian dust into his nostrils whenever he shut his eyes? Is it to be the Jungle Books, which surely are a revelation of a

new field never to be more wisely trodden again? I suppose it must not be the *Just So Stories*, though they are perfect in their way; but is it to be the Indian stories as a whole, with their growing infallibility as to the right person to praise and their clear presentment of so many types of life? Or is it to be, as I should I think myself decide, "Puck of Pook's Hill," and "Rewards and Fairies," which reveal a power unsuspected before of living in past centuries and making them live again? I do not know any historical achievement since Macaulay which has done so much to make the past real.

Of course Mr. Kipling is not, and never has been, faultless. I think myself that he is overpowered a little by the modern passion for machinery, and find his motor experts a poor substitute for his soldiers; he has described unpleasant people with needless particularity and brutalities with needless gusto, but I cannot remember any instance in which he has deliberately praised the wrong thing: and the author of "His Private Honour," "Only a Subaltern," and "The Tomb of his Ancestors," can afford to laugh at those who sneer at his doctrine of the British character.

## XVIII

These digressions began, I think, from the suggestion that more boys might with advantage be encouraged to cultivate their metrical sense, with a view to writing English verse. I have no doubt that this is the case, but it is a fact naturally difficult to establish without producing a mass of evidence which would inevitably be tedious and at best inconclusive. Some of my Eton pupils published a volume of poems called *Poets in Pupil Room*, in which my paternal eye detected more merits, perhaps, than a wider public was willing to allow; it certainly showed rather remarkable facility of versification. But they were, in the main, Eton Collegers, and therefore the experiment was tried in circumstances that may be thought unduly favourable. I will therefore, but with due regard for the patience of my readers, take my present illustrations from a different sphere—a Form at Shrewsbury with which I have personally had nothing to do, and one containing no boys who are technically scholars. It is far from being claimed that any of the specimens given are perfect, though I can't

help thinking that one or two of them might have found a not unworthy place in the *Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*. It is, I think, Professor Quiller-Couch's democratic sympathies which make him a much more lenient judge of his own day than of earlier times; when I read Joseph Skipsey's contribution to the later book, I sigh for the editor of the *Golden Pomp!*

There are one or two obvious rules that can be laid down. Boys must not be encouraged, hardly even allowed, to write blank verse: it is neither fair on them nor on their teachers. Scott's couplet, or the Popian couplet, are the obvious gambits. I trace much of my interest in metres to an alphabet written by my father and myself a good many years ago (as cricketers will realise), and beginning:

"A was the famous Australian eleven,
B with Bannerman, Boyle, Bonnor, Blackham, and seven
Who Beat the Bold Britons from Scotland to Devon.
C the Counties they Crushed and the Clubs that they wrecked
(A Career, by the way, which at Cambridge was Checked)."

I have run on to that couplet for the pleasure of reminding a stiffening hero or two of that glorious occasion!

But Scott and Pope will not last for long, and the sooner some variety can be introduced the

better ; but let the rhyme rules be kept as strict and difficult as possible, or the worst tragedies of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* may soon be re-enacted. Long lines are obviously difficult for the short wind of beginners, and the sooner they can tackle the Spenserian stanza the better—beginning if possible with the last line.

The subject set is immaterial, and will probably suggest itself. I have sometimes tried suggesting an initial couplet to be continued, and received the other day in a scholarship examination a really remarkable response to the suggestion of

> "I think I know what I would be
> If they would leave the choice to me."

But it is time to pass from theory to practice.

The particular metre on which the education of this Form has been primarily based was the stanza of Gray's "Elegy." Only when they had attained to some proficiency in it were they at all encouraged to attempt further experiments. What I mean by reasonable proficiency will be best seen from two or three examples.

The first comes from a poem on the Severn, in which the author observes a floating leaf :

> "Ah, little leaf, would that I knew, as thou,
> From what clear spring this strong, sure flood is thrown,
> Beyond yon sweeping curve I may not know—
> Oh cruel curve, that hides the great unknown!"

The next two are taken from a poem written in

an examination, the subject given being the Fourth Eclogue, which the Form had recently read in school:

"The mystic Muse is telling yet again
The story told to shepherds long ago,
Still, still my ears do hear the magic strain,
The age will come, the age that knows no woe."

Another poet treats the subject differently, and hears a prophetic voice telling of the Golden Age:

"She sang of days when heaven was to come,
Content to dwell in earth, and man to save,
And all the wrong in all the world be dumb,
Except enough to glorify the brave."

Another classical subject, Medea, produced perhaps the best specimens of this metre. I quote the last verse of one:

"High above all thy fellows thou dost tower,
Thy smallest thoughts reach far beyond our ken;
Yet, as we learn thy genius and thy power,
We thank the gods we are but little men."

A course of this metre at least serves to eradicate that faulty metrical sense which produces lines at first by mere numbering of syllables, and gives (as it gave in this Form at first) results like

"How peacefully flows the Severn river."

There are, of course, other defects, like the insertion of needless periphrases ("do hear," &c.), which have been snares to all poets, and nothing

but greater experience can teach boys to draw the line (if one exists in truth and Wordsworth was mistaken) between the language of poetry and prose. Till then they will use phrases like "pride of ownership" in poetry, and no power on earth can make them know it to be wrong.

But, these preliminary stages once passed, a wider field opens to view; and I hope the patience of my readers will allow me a few instances of the way in which the license has been used. Those who have had enough can readily omit the rest of this section; those who care for more (if such there be!) will find further evidence in an Appendix.

Let me begin with the first stanza of a poem on the monument to Strasburg in Paris:

> "A monument in France's city
> Doth make the passer pause again;
> The statue mourns with patient pity
> For Alsace dead, and lost Lorraine."

Merits are here as obvious as faults.

I must add three lines from another poet showing the excellence of the subject; and it is incontestable, by the way, that subjects for poetry are far easier to find than subjects for youthful and ignorant essayists:

> "A phantom yet in Paris doth remain,
> Reminding France how much the foe she loathes,
> A memory—a ghost of old Lorraine."

The Fourth Eclogue provides yet another instance :

"Now to the Muses sing; come, sing, for this cycle has ended,
Never again shall woe nor misery ever be present.
Brambles shall smile on the hills, and the fruit shall ripen untended,
Never again shall the plough be steered by the hand of the peasant."

A poem on the Lighthouse is worth quoting in full. Mr. Kipling would not, I hope, despise his spiritual grandchild :

"O 'tis three thrown back on the mainland,
And three on the open sea,
And two to the east and two to the west,
And never a word for me!
It matters not whether the Summer
Blisters my paint with her heat,
Or the driving gales of winter
Batter me with their sleet:
'Tis everlasting turning
On the same old creaky wheels,
While the engine pants with measured breath,
And the syren feebly squeals.
While ships go east and ships go west,
'Tis always the same for me—
Three thrown back on the mainland,
And three on the open sea!"

The death of Molière, whose *Malade Imaginaire* the Form had recently seen, certainly inspired

some ideas. I will first give two fragments, a beginning and an end :

"The thick rank air was heavy with sin,
For the Powers of Ill held council within ;
Then there spoke out one whom devils obey,
Whose name is worse than a man may say."

And the last two lines of another :

"Nature seems sorrowing too, and the flowers shed their tears in the meadow,
For the actor has played his last part, and Molière's curtain is down."

Another is worth quoting in full for the originality of its self-chosen metre :

"Ring down the curtain, his last part is played ;
Old Molière lies sick, his life is done,
His honours won,
And glory made.

'Crève, crève, crève,' O doleful words to say,
He hated doctors ; doctors, let him die,
Heed not his cry,
He goes his way.

No more shall he amuse the Frankish crowd :
His words remain, but he returns to earth,
Midst banished mirth,
And wailings loud.

The ring is empty, and the stage is bare ;
The dance is stopped ; the piper duly paid ;
At rest is laid
Great Molière.

Mourn him, the actor, nations far and near:
O mourn him when the solemn death-bells toll,
And raise a prayer,
For his great soul."

I must bring the catalogue to a close, or I shall have overproved my point—a fatal error, as all preachers need to learn.

The Phœnix is celebrated in a metre that recalls Ebenezer Elliott:

"Alone I live my appointed time;
Alone I live thro' my life's long prime;
Alone I watch man's evil and crime.

For five hundred years, and all alone,
I watch the world from my lonely throne,
And no one know, and by no one known.

Alone five hundreds of years I live;
Alone I take, and alone I give,
As the sands of time slip thro' their sieve.

From fire I came, and to fire I go;
Tho' the age be long and the time be slow
An end will be to my life of woe.

Alone I walk, and alone I fly;
Alone I sleep, and alone I lie;
Alone I live, and alone I die."

There is surely some real merit in the following, which also illustrates the sound rule enforced on their attention that to visualise a single point is easier and more effective than to attempt the

general description of a scene. The fallacy of tracing the Trojan war from the twin egg was not extinguished by Horace's criticism.

"Fairer than the lilies,
Purer than the dew;
Coral pink her lips are,
Her eyes the ocean's blue.
Persephone!

Though lovely are her maidens
As earth to heaven they seem.
Her golden hair in clusters
Hangs round her like a dream.
Persephone!"

My last illustration shall come from a boy who had ploughed along steadily for two terms at the prescribed routine, to break into something like real poetry at the end :

"Fair blossoms of the fruitful earth
Bright daylight that I love,
Dear sun that shines above:
Must I then leave you for the gloom
Where the lost souls for ever roam
And silent move?

What, was I born to be
A few short hours delight,
And so to bid good night
To you, dear mother? Then to glide
Through darkness, to be Pluto's bride,
And lose you quite?

Oh, listen how he calls to me!
No man himself may save
From death, though ne'er so brave:
But many times I'm doomed to drink
The cup of death, and sink
Into the grave."

It only remains to add that the poems given all come from the work of one Form in two terms, and are quoted in all cases without alteration: that the Form is a Lower Fifth, and the average age of its members about seventeen.

## XIX

It may not perhaps be impertinent, in the classical sense, for me to mention a few of the subjects which have seemed to me successful or the reverse in the teaching of English literature.

I should give a very high place, higher no doubt than he intrinsically deserves, to Marlowe. The reason is that his merits and defects are both so great and so manifest that a very unliterary boy can profitably realise them. He will understand the mightiness of his line even while he sees its monotony: he will appreciate some, at least, of the episodes in *Tamburlaine*, even while he sees that there is nothing else there: and he will love the magnificence of his language though he may with reason suspect it to be bombast. After all it was the phrase "sea-shouldring whales" which first attracted Keats to Spenser, and Wordsworth himself has confessed without shame the attraction which fine writing had for him as a boy. And when all qualifications have been made, what magnificent stuff it is! Leave aside, if you like, the amazing end of Dr. Faustus, the glorious catalogues of the jewels of the Jew

of Malta, and the great achievement of Edward II; leave out all the stock passages which are so often quoted from *Tamburlaine*, and you will still have lines left like these of the cruel king to the supplicating virgins:

"*Tamb.* Behold my sword; what see you at the point?
*First Vir.* Nothing but fear and fatal steel, my lord.
*Tamb.* Your fearful minds are thick and misty, then,
For there sits Death; there sits imperious Death,
Keeping his circuit by the slicing edge.
But I am pleas'd you shall not see him there;
He now is seated on my horsemen's spears,
And on their points his fleshless body feeds."

My own attempts to teach Wordsworth may be said to have resulted in subjective success but objective failure. I mean that while my own admiration has steadily deepened, I cannot flatter myself that the result on my pupils has been in any way similar. They have acquiesced in my raptures, but I do not think they have shared them; and while they have enjoyed some of the admirable criticism for which he has given material to Professors Raleigh and Bradley, they have never felt much interest in his theories or their justification. The Prelude has a "story," it is true; but it hardly goes fast enough, and as soon as his education was over and he had reached London, they were willing to desist from the pursuit.

Milton at Shrewsbury has hardly a fair chance, for it must be confessed that it is the practice that he should be the author whose works are transcribed as punishments.[1] I do not altogether defend the practice, but I am not so ready to abolish it as my veneration for Milton would naturally suggest. For great as is my debt to him as a humble student of literature, I have always felt that I have a very serious grievance against him as a clergyman. It seems to me that he more than anyone else is responsible for a conception of the Deity which has done more harm to English religious life than can easily be estimated. It is a minor grievance that he is chiefly responsible for the doctrine of "special creation" from which we are only slowly recovering. The lines,

> "The grassy clods now calved: now first appeared
> The tawny lion pawing to get free
> His hinder parts,"

foolish as they are, would have done little harm and left little trace had they not come from one who claimed to have special insight into the ways of Providence; and had Milton not professed that he was going to justify the ways of

[1] The fact has led to one amusing incident. When Lord Tennyson died a Shrewsbury master mentioned the fact to a boy as a matter of public interest. The boy paused for a moment and then said, with a sigh, "I wish it had been that old Milton"!

God to man, it would have been easier to forgive, and to pity, him for expressing an idea of those ways which is so entirely out of keeping with all that is most characteristic of the religion of Christ.

## XX

But when all our attempts to " teach literature " have been made, it will remain the humiliating truth that nothing can teach a boy so fast as the mere society of good books. It is a humiliating confession for a teacher, and there is enough of the schoolmaster in all of us for the public to sympathise with the shame, but I think it is the fact. It is curious how often the early chapters of the lives of literary people reveal the child browsing unchecked in the paternal library as the foundation of it all.

And so one of the first things we can try and ensure is that a boy has access to a library.

What is in the library is certainly of less importance, for the very backs of books have an instructive power, and they create an atmosphere more quickly than the most brilliant lecturer. And then, again, the effect of possessing books of one's own must not be underrated; the small foundations of a collection mean more than would be believed, and money spent on assisting it may prove an unexpectedly brilliant investment. " Let me buy a boy's books, and I care

not who teaches him to read them," might be an aphorism to console a parent for seeing so much of his son's development taken out of his direct control.

It may perhaps be questioned whether either of these forces has retained its full power since our amazing multiplication of books took place. It may be only age which makes one look in vain for a boy's author who should replace for a new generation the Ballantyne or Henty or Kingston of one's youth, or it may be that the field of choice is now so wide that limitation is needless. Anyhow it is true that there seems to be no supremely favourite author as there once was, and that boys either take their fiction more seriously than we did or, too frequently, seek the titillation of the short story in the Magazine. Far be it from me to say a word which could offend the lightly slumbering spirit of Mr. Sherlock Holmes; but he is dead (at any rate for the present), and we live metaphorically in a world of Watsons. The "story habit" easily becomes fatal to real reading: stories recall by analogy those cigarettes of which the boy on the top of the bus said, in a phrase which all true smokers should honour, "As for cigarettes, sir, it's like offering ices to a starvin' man!"

It is possible that what should have been our wealth may be to some extent an occasion of

falling; but if the weaker brethren fall by the way the chances for the strong are indefinitely greater, and it is a very pleasant thought how easy it now is for a very humble reader to possess the wisdom of the world.

I said a word about novels just now, and should like to end with a suggestion which might do something to ease the present distress. It is that all novelists should be compelled to register their works as having some definite purpose—to amuse, to edify, to widen the reader's horizon, and so on. The task of deciding under which heading to come would at any rate tend to delay publication, and might be a healthy exercise, while it might be hoped that some sense of shame would restrain the large number who would be compelled to define themselves as writing for the sake of Art. From this to the establishment of a censor would be a short step, and if he had the power to remove a book, as he often might, from the instructive class to the merely humorous, and so on, it might prove as effective as more drastic penalties.

The novel which, without any ray of purpose, depicts a squalid scene of the present day could be given the proud title of Frank Realism, and ordered to be sold in a binding of honour at a prohibitive price; while all authors who, like Mr. Hope in *The Prisoner of Zenda*, or the late

Mr. Harland in *The Cardinal's Snuff-box*, can take us into another world and send us back the better for it, should be entertained daily at the public expense, with an official trumpeter to escort them to and fro. In Mr. Harland's too few stories the sun is always shining, the country is usually Italy, the company young, rich, and incredibly brilliant: who would exchange this for the neurotic women of the problem novel, with its emancipated men who behave so much worse than the average stupid Christian? Mr. Anthony Hope has never, in my judgment, proved himself again a wizard, except when he returned to Ruritania: I can still thrill over the decision which poor Rudolph was making when that foul bullet laid him low, and no amount of clever modern novels can ever extinguish the memory of those breathless evenings twenty years ago when the half dozen inhabitants of an Oxford College in the vacation sat up till the small hours on successive nights to read the thrilling story of his love for Flavia.

## XXI

I HAVE quoted, or shall quote, so often from the poet Clough that I feel I ought to say a word to justify my appreciation of him. It seems to me a true verdict that he represents the academic side, at least, of the nineteenth century, with much more truth than any other writer. He is, for instance, far more representative than Matthew Arnold, who personifies rather that aspect of the Universities which they wear to outsiders than their character as known from within.

In some respects, of course, he can only represent the struggles of his own day, and that day was one so individual that its marks are clearly seen ; but in the main it is the permanent struggle between the claims of faith and intellect which forms his theme, and that is a subject perennially characteristic of a modern University.

Sometimes he deals with the problem directly as in those two contrasted poems on Easter Day, with their respective burdens of " Christ is risen " and " Christ is not risen " ; sometimes he is playing round it as in Dipsychus : sometimes he

approaches a definite solution as in the two last stanzas of "Through a Glass Darkly":

> "Ah yet, when all is thought and said,
> The heart still overrules the head;
> Still what we hope we must believe,
> And what is given us receive.
>
> Must still believe, for still we hope
> That in a world of larger scope
> What here is faithfully begun
> Will be completed, not undone."

Or he may be merely satirising the hollowness of our semi-pagan morality in the modern Decalogue, with its terrible final couplet:

> "Thou shalt not covet: but tradition
> Approves all forms of competition:"

or in the refrain of the Spirit's Song:

> "How pleasant it is to have money; heigh-ho!
> How pleasant it is to have money!"

The problem for him is ever the same, and it runs through the ridiculous prosiness of "Amours de Voyage" as persistently as through the same ridiculous metre, more seriously employed, in the Bothie.

The beauty of his nature shines through all that he wrote, prose as well as poetry, for there is fine appreciation in his essay on Wordsworth, and infinite humour in the brief epilogue to Dipsychus. Nor can it have been of any ordinary

man that Lowell wrote his fine appreciation, too little known in England, even among lovers of Clough:

" He our passing guest,
Shy nature, too, and stung with life's unrest,
Whom we too briefly had but could not hold,
Who brought ripe Oxford's culture to our board,
The Past's incalculable hoard,
Mellowed by scutcheoned panes in cloisters old,
Seclusions ivy-hushed, and pavements sweet
With immemorial lisp of musing feet;
Young head time-tonsured smoother than a friar's,
Boy face, but grave with answerless desires,
Poet in all that poets have of best,
But foiled with riddles dark and cloudy aims,
Who now hath found sure rest,
Not by still Isis or historic Thames,
Nor by the Charles he tried to love with me,
But, not misplaced, by Arno's hallowed brim,
Nor scorned by Santa Croce's neighbouring fanes
Haply not mindless, wheresoe'er he be,
Of violets that to-day I scattered over him."

## XXII

The pleasure which I have felt in quoting these lines of Lowell invites me to seek for more from the same source; and it is perhaps worth while to do so, for he is of all American poets the one whom we in England can best appreciate.

He is not the greatest; that place must surely be reserved for Walt Whitman with his astonishing range of illustration and his rare bursts of melody. The Banner's call to the Child and the Father's attempt to blunt its meaning rival the effects of the Erl King:

> "Come up here, bard, bard,
> Come up here, soul, soul,
> Come up here, dear little child,
> To fly in the clouds and winds with us and play with the measureless light."

There is nothing as big as that in Lowell, and I do not wish to foreclose the question whether the comparative dearth of American poetry is not one of the wonders of the world. The predisposing conditions, one would say, exist: but the nation is one of contradictions, or what can it be that makes the busiest people in the world

write and read the longest and slowest-moving novels? It is not Europe that has taught Mr. Henry James to analyse character and to pause over a phrase, and the first fine rapture of Roderick Hudson and Daisy Miller was far from being careless.

Lowell is not the greatest of American poets; indeed, he is not a great poet at all, but it is impossible to spend half an hour either with his prose or his poetry without believing that he was one of the most lovable of men. This is by no means insular prejudice, for English pride receives some unkind blows in the *Biglow Papers:*

> "Who made the law that hurts, John,
> Heads I win, ditto tails?
> J. B. was on his shirts, John,
> Unless my mem'ry fails!"

but he came to know and love us better, and after all in the *Biglow Papers* we are not so often the target of his laughter as his own fellow-countrymen.

> "I du believe in Freedom's cause,
> Ez fur away ez Payris is;
> I love to see her stick her claws
> In them infarnal Phayrisees;
> Its wal enough agin a king
> To dror resolves an' triggers,
> But libbaty's a kind o' thing
> Thet don't agree with niggers."

This first verse hits insincerity in all countries, and so do the great aphorisms :

"A ginooine statesman should be on his guard
If he must hev beliefs not to b'lieve 'em tu hard,"

or

"No, niver say nothin' without you're compelled tu,
An' then don't say nothing thet you can be held tu."

John P. Robinson exists in all countries.

But the *Biglow Papers* are not all irony, whether bitter or merely amusing. They rise at times to real poetry, as in that greatest of them all, which begins :

"Dear Sir,—Your letter come to han'
Requestin' me to please be funny,"

and contains one of the finest commentaries on war that I know. I must not quote more than one verse :

"Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street
I hear the drummers makin' riot,
An' I set thinkin' o' the feet
Thet follered once an' now are quiet,—
White feet ez snowdrops innercent,
Thet never knowed the paths o' Satan,
Whose comin' step ther' 's ears thet won't,
No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'."

But the whole poem is really magnificent. He strikes the same note with more ambition, but less complete success, in his Harvard Ode ; and whatever we may think of his attitude to war in

general, his poems are a commentary indispensable to the study of that particular struggle. He will not tell us the whole truth: for the other side we must go to the lives of Lee and Stonewall Jackson, and to the memoir writers of the South: but the picture he gives is a noble and true one —no unworthy introduction to the greatest single poem which has yet come to us across the Atlantic:

"My captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
But the ship, the ship is anchored safe, its voyage closed and done:
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won!
Exult, O shores! and ring, O bells!
But I, with silent tread,
Walk the spot my captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead."

## XXIII

If there is any truth—and I believe that there is—in the theory that no one ever really appreciates a piece of poetry till he has learnt it by heart, it may well be asked why more is not done to insist on the learning of repetition. We no longer impose on our youth the gigantic tasks which an earlier generation performed with success, and it may well be that the verbal memories of our pupils suffer in proportion. There are, of course, dangers in the practice, though I always believe that a famous Oxford tutor exaggerated when he told me of a friend of his who could never forget the front page of the *Times*. "He has often said to me," so the story ran, "with tears in his eyes, 'Would to heaven that I could forget'!"

I fear that the reason for the neglect is simple and discreditable. No one who has never tried it can have any idea of the misery it is to listen to a number of boys stumbling through a piece of repetition, a misery great in proportion to the beauty of the piece set. The weakness that yields before this trial is lamentable, and the

resulting loss great. I always cherish the hope of an *entente cordiale* between literary and scientific schoolmasters, which will induce the latter to perfect a machine which would relieve their brethren of such irksome toil; till that happy day the weakness of the average boy's memory and the faultiness of his elocution are likely to prove too much for his weak, though well-intentioned, teacher.

It has often been asked whether nothing can be done to teach the average English youth to speak, and in an age when no one can hope to escape from the task of, at the lowest, seconding votes of thanks, it is devoutly to be wished that something in that direction could be accomplished. Our statisticians might calculate with advantage the amount of national time consumed in those speeches which no one wishes to hear, and the speaker is genuinely unwilling to deliver; and their length is almost entirely due to lack of practice and of the power of finding a phrase with which to conclude. Bishop Creighton's advice to Sir Edward Grey, "to have an ending definitely prepared": "to trust the inspiration of the moment how you get there, but when you have got there to say it clearly and sit down," is even more needed by bad orators than by good.

It is rather pathetic, perhaps, that no one will teach us to speak, for one of the pleasant illusions

which most of us cherish is the belief that we do already read aloud rather well. It is not a point on which we care to argue, and we should probably all deny it when pressed, but in secret we share with Mr. Wegg the profound conviction that you couldn't show us the piece of English print that we wouldn't be equal to collaring and throwing.

And I have little doubt that we feel the same about recitation. For my own part I confess that I have never forgiven the flagrant injustice which robbed me of a recitation prize at school —and I have no doubt that the dozen other unsuccessful candidates share my feeling with at least equal reason.

The practice of acting, no doubt, has a valuable effect, but there are many obvious difficulties in its being resorted to by boys—the most serious being the difficulty of finding plays in which the feminine element is not unduly prominent. School debating societies have their use, but the range of subjects is terribly limited, and bricks without straw satisfy neither the producer nor the consumer. Ghosts, Conscription, and Capital Punishment are as inevitable and as tedious as the Roman youth found the eternal question whether Hannibal ought to have advanced on Rome immediately after Cannæ.

After all we must perhaps accept the situation

that we are not a nation of orators, and find what consolation we can in the fact that good judges doubt whether the power of speech was an unmixed benefit to Greece. The worse reason is often enough, as it is, made to seem the better, and it seems questionable whether the power of expressing it oneself makes one a better critic of it when expressed by someone else.

The only branch of the Anglo-Saxon race which has taken kindly to rhetoric is, of course, the American. I remember a distinguished American preacher saying to me: "The *lues Americana* is a passion for making speeches and hearing other people make them." This passion has been responsible for great results—for the splendid and torrential eloquence of Phillips Brooks, and for the two great speeches of Abraham Lincoln, perhaps the greatest single platform utterances of the nineteenth century.

But it has also borne other and less valuable fruit, everlastingly typified for me in a sentence which I was fortunate enough to hear at the Nashville Centenary Exposition of 1897. It was Brooklyn Day, and crowds of visitors had poured in from Brooklyn by special train, and the Brooklyn poetess had sung the praises of her native city. Then arose the "Brooklyn orator," and in words which I can never forget eulogised the unexampled contribution of Brooklyn to the population of

the United States. "Our city, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "our city contains homes whose fecundity is the despair of the enemies of posterity." So abstract a conception can seldom in the whole history of oratory have been depicted in such glowing colours.

## XXIV

I was asked not long ago to write an article on the religious question in the Public Schools. I did so, but I never felt at all sure that I was earning my reward, for the whole point of my article was to prove that there is no such thing. I don't mean, of course, to repeat what is so often said, that religion is not taught at public schools, for I am quite sure that that is not true. The demand for "more definite" religious teaching there is very largely based on an obvious misunderstanding. The right of the parent who is comfortably off to settle the kind of religious teaching which his son should have has never been seriously questioned, although there has been, and is, a very natural desire among politicians on both sides to deny it to the children of the poor. That being the case, the duties of the public schoolmaster have clear limitations: except in schools definitely dedicated to a particular school of religious thought, he has to try and reproduce the catholicity of the Church of England. He may have his own preferences, and

he is under no obligation to conceal them, but he is debarred, and I am personally glad that he is debarred, from instilling too ardent a loyalty to any particular party in the Church.

This position is open to all the accusations which are commonly launched against the Church of England itself: and it is only those who feel them cogent as against that Church as a whole who need deplore their applicability to public schools. When I say that there is no religious question in the public schools, I merely mean that there is none in the public schools as such. There are few things more offensive to boys (or to any right thinking people) than to be treated as a class by themselves. I always rather resent the appeals which we now so frequently receive that the boys of England should support Antarctic Expeditions or Aeronautics or Public Schools in the Colonies. It will be time enough for them to choose what to support when they are older—and if the Boys of England have no special duties I certainly believe that they have no special religion, and therefore no special religious problem.

They share, of course, in their degree in all the problems of their time: if it is sometimes difficult to know what criticism of the Old Testament can be safely given them, it is a difficulty which any intelligent rector knows equally well;

if they have any difficulties about miracles, they are not unique; if they at times find it difficult to reconcile Christian principles with Christian practice, it is only perhaps because the years have not yet made them familiar with a world whose

> "Wife and daughters must have where to pray
> And whom to pray to, at the least one day
> In seven, and something sensible to say."

The whole attempt to invent and abuse or cater for a special type of the religious mind among boys is doomed to failure from the start, for the market does not exist.

It is this idea which is responsible for many sermons designed to be specially appropriate and ending by being ludicrously commonplace. If our preachers would sometimes forget that they are addressing boys, how far happier we (and the preachers too, poor fellows, to do them justice!) would assuredly be! It is responsible for the Public School Hymn Book, which breathes forth a spirit of cheery optimism in the face of life's problems which is at times oppressive. It was not for nothing that Pelagius was a Briton, and that the English Prayer Book inserted the word *always* in the translation of the Collect, which begins: "O God, who seest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers that by reason

of the frailty of our nature we cannot *always* stand upright. . . ."[1]

It cannot be denied that this spirit is reflected in public schools—but the point is that it *is* a reflection, and that the way to destroy a reflection is to remove the substance which causes it, and not to find fault with the looking-glass.

[1] I have a pleasant personal association with this Collect, for when I was in Florence at the time of the recent earthquake it was in constant use at the English Church: I hope it was a point which (to quote a celebrated Eton master) "a man of taste may be excused for smiling at."

## XXV

When it is once allowed that public school boys have no special religion, and therefore no special religious problem of their own, there is no objection to allowing that some of the permanent elements of religion do show themselves in very many boys in a rather pronounced form. I cannot put this better than has been done by the present Headmaster of Repton[1]: "My experience confirms the opinion of the psychologists, who tell us that most boys at the public school age have a strongly mystical tendency. This is to be expected, on account of the great emotional development which is characteristic of that period of life. But it is obscured by the fact that the boy is both unwilling and unable to give any verbal expression to this tendency. He is unwilling, because it is something very new and curious in his experience; he is often a little frightened of it, and he is exceedingly frightened of other people's contempt for it. And he is

[1] "Repton School Sermons," by W. Temple. [I fear he will be "the late Headmaster" before this book comes out, but I should like to keep him in the profession as long as I can.]

unable, because the words he is accustomed to use are valueless in this connection, and he feels priggish if he tries to use others. No one would try to talk about communion with God, or home affection, or any other sacred and intimate thing, if he could use no other term of approbation except "top-hole," and the like, without feeling a fool. But though unexpressed, the mystical tendency is there, and should be appealed to and developed.

"The most conspicuous good quality in boys is generosity. This usually operates within strictly confined limits, but it is there. And the ideal presented to them, therefore, should be the highest and the most exacting. Some would say, 'Do not demand too much at first; lead them up to things gradually.' That is just bad psychology. It is middle-age, not youth, which is likely to be alienated by a religion which demands big sacrifices."

It will be seen at once that this conception differs *toto cælo* from the rather business-like and competent religion which is usually considered specially appropriate to "the growing boy." Nothing has done more harm to religion than its presentment as a safe and profitable investment. A boy is not anxious to consider religion in the light of an investment at all, but if that point of view is forced upon him he is not slow to see the

weakness of the position. And if he is allowed to leave school with the investment theory still uppermost in his mind, it will not be long before he meets those who are able to demonstrate to him that his shares are in a gambling concern, and are, at best, very insecure. He has no objection to gambling in itself, but he feels a very natural resentment against those who have concealed from him the real nature of the transaction in which he has been engaged.

It is infinitely better that he should from the start have realised that the venture of faith *is* an adventure, and would lose all its meaning if it were not. I can imagine no better text for a sermon to a public school congregation than the brave words of St. Thomas: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

Thus presented, religion appeals to that hero worship which is latent in all normal humanity. It is no longer a case of holding up before him for admiration great, but imperfect, heroes like Wellington or Nelson; that has its place, but it is not the highest. It is rather the appeal to that mystical hero worship which can combine the personal with the ideal: which sees in Christ not only the great Captain to be followed, but also the Sufferer to be loved; which blends with its honour for all that is strong the chivalry which seeks to serve the weak, and desires no

definite reward except the consciousness of duty done.

"A man like Gordon," it has been finely said, "goes through the world like an express through a station; and all the bits of paper and orange peel on the line get up and try and hobble after it."

No boy resents the suggestion that this parable has for him; because, like all fundamentally honest people, he is much more moved by appeals to a weakness which he knows and feels than to a strength after which he only imperfectly aspires.[1]

[1] I have ventured to give in an Appendix a few illustrations of the way in which various other religious ideas may be presented to a school congregation.

## XXVI

The teaching of Divinity in schools is, of course, a different thing from the teaching of religion, but that is no excuse for the complete divorce which has occurred between the two subjects. I am not here criticising the subjects of Divinity lessons in themselves, but their lamentable and quite needless lack of connection with the Sunday services. Surely we have in school Divinity lessons, on whatever day of the week they come, an admirable opportunity for supplying just that teaching without which our Sunday services so often fail of their effect.

When the Reformers insisted on the frequent public reading of the Bible, they had a clear object in view, but few people would profess to be satisfied with the result. The "little chapters" of monastic services, consisting of only a verse or two at a time, were no doubt quite inadequate as a representation of the Bible, but it may be doubted whether they did not tend to as much edification as half the lessons which we hear read in Church. There is no piece of ritual which annoys me more

than the reading, let us say, of a chapter from a controversial epistle to a congregation who are ignorant of the context, unprovided with books in which to follow, and denied any guidance in its interpretation. The same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to very many passages from the prophets. And the evil does not stop there, for there are many passages which, far from being unintelligible, convey a meaning to the uninstructed which is lamentably false, because they seem to imply Divine approval for actions which are palpably wrong.

The difficulty, as I have said before, is far from peculiar to schools. The point in which they are peculiar is in having ready to hand the machinery for grappling with it. What could be more axiomatic than that the first duty of the teacher who has a Sunday lesson at all, or one which can be brought into relation with Sunday, is to make the services as intelligible as he can, to remove obvious grounds of misunderstanding, and to give those explanations which any intelligent hearer is bound to demand? As long as we persist in our plan of providing New Testament lessons for Sundays on the hypothesis that everyone has been to church twice on every week-day, so long there will be good work to be done in explaining the sequence of events or the progress of the argument, and there are few epistles at

any rate which would not gain by a word or two of commentary.

Boys like it, because they find that it makes the lessons worth attending to in chapel, and also gives them some reason to hope that any questions they may ask will receive some sort of answer; and I have not found that masters are unwilling to adopt the plan. The explanations which they give will vary, no doubt: all of them will not give forth the same sound when critical questions are concerned: but I frankly believe that the danger of a boy's learning heresies from a master is infinitely preferable to the certainty of his learning inattention unaided; and nothing is more valuable than that a boy's first introduction to difficulties should be given by a believer who has had to face them himself. The greatest kindness that we can do to an inquiring boy is not to silence all his difficulties, but to show him that they can be understood by intelligent people who are neither afraid to discuss them nor to own that the solution is not clear. I should think it clear gain that different masters should lay the emphasis on different points. I should like the master who is a classical expert to compare the Roman or Greek sacrifices with the Jewish: I should like the historian to compare the origins of Jewish history with those of the history of England: I should like the literary

expert to find his analogies and draw his comparisons.

Anything, to my mind, is better than the lack of interest; anything is better than that interest should be deemed to be necessarily and rightly confined to the clergy. They have their special opportunities, and will use, or abuse, them according to their power; but nothing can be worse either for their colleagues or for them, or still more for their common pupils, than that interest in the Bible and the services of the Church should ever seem to be the monopoly of a caste.

## XXVII

But the ideal just sketched is one seldom realised in practice. There are two Testaments and two Divinity hours in most schools, and the solid practical sense of the British nation, working hand in hand with the teaching of Arithmetic, has decided that the New Testament should be taught in one of them and the Old Testament in the other. The disastrous confusion of thought which is thus manifested has much responsibility for our religious difficulties to-day. Until we can get it more firmly into the heads of the average congregation (not only of the average boy) that they are Christian people, primarily and ultimately, because of the revelation of God given by Christ in the Gospels, this apparently simple axiom cannot be stated too often. On the other hand, so soon as this is firmly grasped, the attacks of many modern opponents of Christianity will have lost their sting, based as they are on the assumption that the Christian God is primarily the God of the Old Testament, with a character slightly modified by later discoveries.

Many Christians hold a view of the doctrine of the Atonement which is obviously arrived at by fitting the doctrine of Mercy into a framework

of Justice and Anger; and it is the undue exaltation of the Old Testament which has rendered this necessary. There is no need to talk, as Carlyle did, of an Exodus from Houndsditch; no one blames an acorn for not being an oak: but no one seeks for rest under its shadow nor for healing from its leaves.

Some years ago I remember being joint-author of a manifesto, circulated among the Eton staff, which maintained that the two great obstacles to Divinity teaching were the Old Testament and the Greek Testament; I still think that it expressed, with some necessary exaggeration, a true and salutary view. There are some teachers under whose hands a Greek Testament lesson can become the vehicle of the highest learning; it is probable that some of the best teaching ever done in public schools has been given in hours like these; but it is absurd to maintain that for the average master it is anything else than either a temptation or an excuse for a construing lesson. The horrid truth is revealed when Modern Sides are found (as they sometimes are) to be studying the Gospels in German or French. The French Testament has always had for me a subtle suggestion of impropriety,[1] and great as Luther's

[1] I have been told that the French for "the noble army" of martyrs is "la respectable société." I dare not verify the reference for fear of losing a cherished illusion.

translation is, it is impossible to argue that it makes it easier for an English boy to understand the message of the Gospel.

If time is saved by dropping the Greek Testament, except for the highest forms, it may well be used for studies in applied Christianity, such as the lives of great Saints or the practical problems of the Mission field. I do not myself think the study of the Prayer Book very suitable for the average form and the average master; and if I am accused of disloyalty to the Church in not providing for the continuous study of Church History, I can only say that I should prefer that a boy's faith should be firmly grounded in a knowledge of the central facts of Christianity in their bearing on his own life before he embarks on the systematic study of the history of Christianity, whether in these islands or in Europe generally.

Boccaccio's Jew "found religion" when he realised that Christianity had survived the iniquities of Rome. A well-known writer of our day is reported to have observed in conversation: "There is nothing in which I believe so firmly as the divinity of the Catholic Church; and the chief evidence for it is the knavish imbecility with which its affairs have been not infrequently conducted: no human institution would have survived it for a fortnight." But these arguments are not without their own danger,

and even those who would not go so far as that will feel that sympathetic (which does not mean dishonest) interpretation is often needed.

I distrust books which maintain that the Church has always been in the right, even more than I distrust the parallel crudities of Professor Bury. Few people and few institutions are the worse for unfair attacks ; it takes them a long time to recover from the moral damage inflicted by an unfair defence.

## XXVIII

" Now, Doctor So-and-so, what in your opinion is the best age for a boy to be confirmed ? "

The question is one which fills every Headmaster with sorrow, not because he denies its right to be asked, or even because he questions its grammatical form, but because he knows that his sorely needed reputation for infallibility cannot survive his inevitable answer. For what can he say, professional expert as he is, but that it depends on circumstances ? And how can such an answer either satisfy or impress the veriest stranger ?

And yet what else is the poor man to say ? The age at which boys are normally confirmed is open to every objection. The boy, it would seem, is no longer young enough to accept without question the doctrines propounded to him, nor yet old enough to state his difficulties and press for their solution. " A roundabout boy of fourteen, with his three meals a day inside him," to use Clough's immortal phrase, seems hardly the ideal recipient for earthly exhortation or for spiritual grace. It is no wonder that some parents

prefer to have their boys confirmed at their private school, nor that strict logicians are heard to grumble that a boy's last year at school is the earliest time when he ought to be asked to pledge himself.

Against these strong arguments the Headmaster knows that he would contend in vain; he is driven to practical platitudes, summed up in the great phrase, "It depends." Since Galileo used it in the Cathedral of Pisa, it has never been employed with greater justification. Boys differ in temperament and in pace of development; homes differ in atmosphere and in intelligence; the character of "the clergyman at home" is far from a stable quantity. The question cannot be answered apart from the individual.

But if the questioner goes on to ask the further question: Is it desirable that a boy should be confirmed at school? the Headmaster will at once be on his mettle. He will point out the advantage of a boy's being prepared by one who knows something of school life in general and the boy's difficulties in particular; he will remind you that for a boy to make his vows with, and before, his schoolfellows is the right course, since it is in their sight that he will have to fulfil them. He may add that if the Church is a Society to be joined, the act is best performed in a manifestly social environment.

It will be plain that I have often used these arguments myself, and, except in particular cases, I think that they are strong enough to deserve to prevail.

Preparation for confirmation at schools is not perfect, but it is better than it was, and better than our critics think. There are careless masters and indifferent boys; but it is, I think, commoner for a boy to feel, however briefly, a real sense of fellowship with those who come forward side by side with him than to think that he is being " turned off " as one of a batch. And as for the age question, the real, and, I think, sufficient justification for confirming boys at fifteen is that it does afford them time to form religious habits before they leave school: and it is these religious habits, indefinitely strengthened, as they may be, by the companionship of like-minded friends, which are a boy's greatest security when he goes out into the world.

There are disadvantages, no doubt, in school preparation for confirmation: it may tend to be treated too much as an occasion for " moralising," in every sense of the word; and a boy's duty to any class besides his own runs some risk of being forgotten—but if the parent refuses to be put off with generalities, and says, " But now really, Dr. Alington " (for one always gets one's complimentary Doctorate on these occasions),

"when would *you* yourself recommend me to have Jack confirmed?" I say, "Well, my dear Madam, let him be confirmed here at the usual age, and let us hope and pray that all may be for the best!"

## XXIX

The method which I have adopted in dealing with all these varied educational problems is far from scientific, but it has the advantage of enabling me to avoid those theoretical axioms, and those analogies of psychology and external nature which seem to me to have a fatal attraction for educational controversialists.

Theory is a candle round which the British moth helplessly flutters; it knows it to be intrinsically alien, and has more than a suspicion that it will be bad for it, but the attraction remains. The good man, who has never had any doubt on practical grounds which way to vote, finds himself unable to recognise the abstract doctrines of his party when he sees them in print; and it is not merely an accident of our own time, but an evidence of a true national characteristic, that the Liberals are now bent on forcing us to be good and the Conservatives primarily bent on conserving the freedom of the individual.

The only good reason that I know of for being a Conservative—and I think it is a very good one—is that that party is less the slave of theory, or rather is the slave of the eminently practical

theory, that we should make the best of what we have.[1]

I should be prepared to maintain that Mr. Gladstone did a disservice to Ireland when he exalted our responsibilities to the height of a moral obligation. The Conservatives were, in a rather shamefaced manner, prepared to make practical concessions which would have acknowledged the failure of the past, but when Mr. Gladstone made similar demands, as an acknowledgment of the Rights of one Nation, and an atonement for the sins of another, the average British mind conceived a distaste for the subject which it has retained to the present day.

The Suffragists showed a curious ignorance of masculine nature, and paid it an involuntary compliment, when they assumed that theory was ever likely to affect it radically. Their later, though not unnatural error, has been to deny that it is being really and (considering what the male mind is) rather rapidly affected by the practical argument of the competence of women's work.

But it is not only in politics that theory works havoc. Our religious controversialists are on firm ground when they appeal to the fruits of their teaching; but their theoretical bases of

[1] The only party to which I am prepared to swear allegiance is one which its adherents can occasionally, without dishonour, leave, and I confess that I do not know on which side of the House it is to be found.

controversy often crumble under examination. Protests against Sacerdotalism come strangely from those who exalt the importance of the sermon and allow the minister an unchecked license of extemporary prayer; and the bitter defence of our present use of the Athanasian Creed cannot long survive the discovery that it was the Reformation which, in defiance of Catholic usage, first forced it into our ordinary services.

Similarly in education I reverence theory, but am inclined to worship it from afar. Analogies are useful as illustrations but dangerous as arguments, if only because they admit of such indefinite multiplication. I await with terror the discovery, for instance, of the fact that nature insists on a child parting with the teeth with which it first attacks its food, and the promulgation of the obvious corollary, that whatever you first learn must be absolutely dropped if progress is to be made. The ambidextrous, who develop both sides of their brain, are said to perish in asylums, in defiance of the multiplication table, which proves that they must be twice as clever as the rest. We cannot argue, we are told, from the goose to the gander; it must be still more perilous, in spite of superficial analogies, to argue from the goose, the ape, or the donkey, to the problems of the Growing Child.

## XXX

It is a curious fatality which condemns the same individual to belong simultaneously to the two most criticised of the professions; but there is no doubt that the clerical schoolmaster must present four cheeks to the smiter, nor that the offer is very generally accepted.

Having endeavoured to offer a few pleas in mitigation of sentence in one capacity, I now have to attempt a similar task in the other, though I feel a sad certainty that the result will be to lose me any friends who may so far have tolerated my educational follies. Headmasters are only despised, but heretics are hated.

The complaints against the clergy are of long standing, and of monotonous tenor. "The Archbishop, because, as is usual with the clergy, he was pusillanimous and timorous," writes a chronicler of the Crusades, Richard of Devizes: "King Charles was both dishonest and cowardly; he would have been better suited for the life of a clergyman," writes a little schoolgirl of our own days—and it is hardly possible to doubt that so striking a coincidence has a basis in fact.

It is true that the view is not universal; if the West-end theatre persistently shows us the timid curate perched on the edge of his chair, doomed to be the facile victim of his more robust brethren of the laity, the theatres of the East-end have a very different story to tell. There he represents muscular and triumphant righteousness; in fact it is difficult to see how the average melodrama could reach its desired close but for his gallant if lawless intervention. I well remember a play which I saw in Sheffield, where the clergyman at his first meeting with the villain says, to soft music, "You are a wicked man; I can see it—in your face," and then exit (R) into the church which is just indicated in the wings.

It is not for an interested party to decide which conception is the truer; and in any case it would ill become him to plead the applause of one half of the world as a sufficient answer to the condemnation of the other.

There must be ground for complaint when a diocesan Bishop is known to have propounded recently as a topic, "Let us consider why the clergy are so unpopular"; and the inferior clergy may remember in their turn that St. Bernard thought it necessary to compose a *Tractatus de moribus Episcoporum*.

The assumption which a clergyman with any professional pride finds most irritating is that,

while he himself may perhaps hold reasonable views, these views are neither shared nor tolerated by the average Christian, but are due to some special idiosyncrasy of his own. I beg my readers to believe that the opinions which I am going to try and state are not put forward as novelties in the hope of winning converts, but as an attempt to state what I believe to be the opinions which an average educated Christian, whether clergyman or layman, may not unreasonably hold—and very often does.

It is of course true that everyone exaggerates the intrinsic reasonableness of his own position; but at any rate I have no axe to grind, but merely a desire to clear my own mind, and to justify, if only to myself, my position as a loyal and contented member of the Church of England.

And yet "contented" is the wrong word after all; wrong, at least, if it is to be taken as implying that I see no need for improvement either in myself or in the Church. But discontent and rebellion are a long way apart. One need not think the British Constitution perfect in order to be proud to live under it; and with all its weaknesses, the Church of England in our own day seems to me to be, both intellectually and morally, a body which any honest Christian may think it an honour to serve, and one from, and in, which he may find strength for service.

## XXXI

I AM old enough to be still thrilled by the idea of the *via media*, and still young enough to dream that it may yet prove the road, under God, by which the kings of the earth shall one day bring their glory into the golden city; but I am neither young enough nor old enough to have any excuse for giving at length the reasons for my beliefs and dreams.

I just know enough Aristotle to realise that he did not recommend the Mean as an ideal at which to aim, but as a test of a result; the applause of Horace is enough to condemn it in the eyes of any moralist, and it is palpably open to every sort of attack; but internal consistency, though no doubt it is indispensable for philosophers, and perhaps desirable for politicians, is a doubtful blessing for institutions: and even gold, though generally regarded as a precious metal, is only useful with an admixture of alloy.

Practical tests of vitality are more valuable than theoretical, and Galileo's adoption of the plain man's attitude has won him a place among the great. I can only say that the Church seems

to me to have satisfied in the last fifty years any tests of vitality which can reasonably be applied.

The greater storms through which the Church of England has passed have been those which have affected Christianity as a whole, and of them something must be said later, but it seems to me to have weathered its domestic cyclones as well, and to be producing nowadays more undeniable fruits than at any previous period of its history. It seems to me absurd to despair intellectually of a Church which in our own day can show the names of Temple, Lightfoot, Westcott, Creighton, Stubbs, and Gore among its bishops, and if neither in doctrine nor in practice it has reached a uniformity at which it has hardly aimed, it can at least claim that it has not been

> "Set with God's contempt apart
> With ghastly smooth life, dead at heart."

I am personally glad of the divergencies of ritual which it allows, though I wish there were more people like Father Dolling, who are willing to combine the divergencies in the same church. I am glad that Dean Henson, Dean Wace, and Lord Halifax can worship at a common altar, and that *Foundations* and *Some Loose Stones* can issue, neither unchallenged but neither proscribed, from the junior members of the same University—and that the same church has reason

to be proud of the work of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield and of the Oxford and Bermondsey mission.

The criticism is obvious that I like living in a menagerie, and that my family embraces very different elements. I am content to reply that I am not afraid of a criticism which could certainly be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Apostles, and that I do not myself aspire to a type of unity which was manifestly denied to them.

## XXXII

THE Church of England is not very like the Church to which St. Paul looked forward in the Epistle to the Ephesians, but I think that it need not fear comparison with any of the attempts to realise that ideal which have yet been made in history. Bavarian peasants, or Breton villagers, can no doubt show a religious life in which there is less to criticise, but it is hardly fair to compare a small community with a nation, and there are parishes in England living a similar life under difficulties which are perhaps greater. Or—as these large comparisons are necessarily vague ones also—may we make the question more definite by asking whether there is any period of the life of the Church of England in which a devout Christian might reasonably prefer to have lived? I, at least, can imagine none.

There is, at any rate, one great advantage which we have got, and are never likely to lose, and that is that the old accusation that Churchmen serve God for money can hardly in decency be used to-day. When we remember how constantly, and with what terrible justice, this charge has

been brought against the Church, ever since literature began to speak in England by the mouth of Chaucer, we shall feel that there are at least some compensations for the crying scandals of clerical poverty. "The fatal opulence of Bishops," though a good phrase, is not one which can long survive the publication of balance sheets, and it will soon be only the very ignorant or the wholly malicious who are left crying, "Doth Job serve God for naught?"[1]

It is often said that this is the reason for the falling off, if there is one, in the supply of candidates for Holy Orders. In so far as it may be true, it can be nothing but a cause for rejoicing, and it shows how far we have travelled from primitive Christianity that any other sentiment should be aroused by the suggestion.

In my experience the reasons—apart from intellectual difficulties—which prevent boys from taking Orders, are largely the nature of the particular duties which they think will be demanded of them in their clerical career. There is a great deal of organisation in the Church nowadays: some of it admirable, and some of it, no doubt, unnecessarily minute. A boy who is genuinely anxious to do something to spread the coming of

[1] I refer to those who ask it (as we say in the Latin grammar) "expecting the answer, No." It is devoutly to be wished that a few more Christians would ask it, "expecting the answer Yes." They would assuredly not be disappointed.

Christ's kingdom may not unnaturally regret the prospect of being absorbed into a parochial machine, and with the best will in the world will not look forward to having (as one of them recently put it) to "round up" people for confirmation.

More emphasis should be laid, by those who wish to commend Ordination, on the personal nature of the work to be undertaken, and boys should, whenever possible, be given a chance of seeing and realising for themselves the kind of personal life which alone makes all these necessary organisations possible and effective.

And then there is the great obstacle that a boy feels no call, and no desire to *preach*. On this subject I have already, in *The Commonwealth*, expressed my sense of the difficulty, and made a slight suggestion for its remedy. I cannot perhaps do better than reproduce the views which I then ventured to put forward.

## XXXIII

It is surely not by a mere accident that in a recent number of *The Commonwealth* a note headed, "A Plea for Preaching Qualifications," was followed by one with the title, "The Curse of Overtime." It is notoriously easier to write a long sermon than a short one, and throughout this wide dominion it is, I think, the general opinion that the average sermon is both long and bad. Of the nature of the disease and its severity there can be no reasonable doubt. It is when we come to discuss the remedy that doctors disagree, and I was allowed by the courtesy of the Editors to state my profound disbelief in the remedy which they proposed, and to suggest an alternative of my own. Their proposal was that a Bishop should demand that a candidate should "produce some reference to show that at least he has an elementary power of essay writing, and has had some practice in public speaking." I venture, on the contrary, to maintain that too much importance is already attached to the sermon, that the supply is greatly in excess of the demand, and that the cure is to be sought in the opposite direction.

It was certainly very kind of the Editors to allow me to denounce their views in their own pages, and I hope they forgave me for employing what Bishop Creighton used to call the (would-be) teacher's most effective weapons—exaggeration and paradox.

There can be no doubt that the clergy think too much of the sermon. There lives in my memory the recollection of a Ruri-Decanal Conference, at which a cousin of mine (who was himself a clergyman) proposed that one sermon a Sunday should be considered adequate. He was met by violent protests from his clerical brethren, who maintained that this was a curtailment of their privileges to which the laity would never consent. The laymen present, with one accord, begged that their interests might not be considered, but the clergy would have none of this altruism, and the resolution was finally rejected by a solid clerical vote. I have never yet met the layman who complained that he did not have two sermons a Sunday : I do not believe that he exists. If the *chimæra bombinans in vacuo* is a fiction of the schoolmen, the layman who wishes to form part of its audience is a fiction of the theological colleges.

Secondly, the congregation think too much of the sermon. I am aware that this statement seems at first sight to contradict those of the

last paragraph, but thinking too much of the sermons which you have is not the same as sighing for the sermons which you have not, and I think the first vice is as common as the latter is rare. I imagine that ever since the Reformation we have exalted the sermon at the expense of the more important parts of the service, and that it is time that we did something to restore the true proportion of things. There are few modern Godparents so stony-hearted as to contemplate with equanimity their duty of calling on their charges "to hear sermons"—or, at any rate, who would put that first among their responsibilities.

Thirdly—and this is by far the most important part of my thesis—I am quite certain that prospective or possible candidates for ordination think far too much of the sermon. Time after time, in my experience as a Schoolmaster, I have known boys who would, as far as one can tell, make admirable parish priests, deterred from that calling by the thought of the sermons they would have to preach. They say that they know they would preach badly, and they are probably right; but it seems to me monstrous and absurd that this part of the clerical duty should loom so large in their minds. The man who would visit his parishioners with zeal and sympathy, who would care for their joys and sorrows, and do his best

to console and to direct them, would have an inestimable value and a noble part to play in any parish, even if he never mounted the pulpit at all. I wish from the bottom of my heart that some of our bishops could see their way to creating in their dioceses a body of clergy who were pledged *not* to preach, or rather a body from whom nobody should have the right to demand a sermon for perhaps the space of five years after ordination. Of course it is likely, and I think it is probable, that before the five years were over most of them would feel the desire and the power to speak of the experience which they had gained; but I should like a man to be able to take Orders without the sickening consciousness that he is expected to perform a duty which he knows he cannot perform well.

I know that it will be said that it would be difficult to find incumbents who were willing to give a title. I do not think that I believe it, for the reasons which I have already given. If the hungry sheep insist on being fed, I can see no objection to returning to the ancient practice of allowing certain sermons to be read by one who is not their author. I have never heard it done, and I know that it is thought that the laity would not like it; but the layman who prefers that a timid and unwilling curate should deliver an address of his own composition to hearing

him read one, let us say, by Kingsley, or Newman, or Phillips Brooks, seems to me as deficient in intellect as he certainly is deficient in kindness of heart.

But this last suggestion may perhaps tend to obscure my main point, which I wish to try and make as clear as I can. The present situation seems to me palpably absurd. The Prayer Book only provides for one sermon, and provides for it in a place where very few people can really wish to have it. We have provided an indefinite number of other sermons which the laity often do not wish to hear, and the clergy are often unable to preach. Our glorification of the sermon was possibly mistaken in its origin, and is certainly disastrous in its results, for it is nothing short of a disaster that preaching should have assumed such importance that the lack of "pulpit eloquence" should debar a good man from the ministry. It does so already to an indefinite degree, and I have myself no doubt that the suggestions in *The Commonwealth* point in absolutely the wrong direction.

## XXXIV

But, it may naturally be said, these are comparatively small difficulties, and it is mere waste of time to discuss these while there are so much greater ones in the background. Has not the intellectual situation made the Christian faith increasingly difficult to hold in any form ? And has not the Bishop of Oxford just expressed the opinion that the Church of England in particular has " a dangerous time before it," and is in serious danger of disruption ?

These questions undoubtedly call for some answer, and I can only repeat what I have so often said before, that in attempting an answer I do so not with any desire to claim finality for my own view, but merely to clear my own conscience and to justify my own position.

To begin then with the intellectual question. It is perfectly true that the present atmosphere of thought tends to be mechanical, and to prefer mechanical explanations to any other. This is perhaps especially clear in schools where the absorption of boys in all kinds of machinery is a very real and new fact. It is difficult for the unmechanical to gauge the value or the influence of this habit of mind, but it is probably true that

it tends to discredit what is not definite and precise; the person who has been accustomed to the exact correspondence of means and end is to that extent less willing to acquiesce in explanations which confessedly leave much unexplained. Again to that same extent he is less interested in the whole question; for if literary instincts lead us naturally to an interest in personal and psychological problems, an absorption in machinery must tend in the opposite direction.

This is, I think, a real danger to religious interests, as it is to all literary education, and of course there is no one remedy to be applied.

It accounts, I think, for much of the lack of interest in religion which we find, but is not in itself a serious difficulty in accepting it. So far as this is true, it need not alarm, nor perhaps unduly distress us; we do not find that the earliest preachers of Christianity spent much time in trying to arouse the interest of the careless: their mission was rather to supply a want that was felt, and to bring a remedy that was needed.

Clough's words remain true, that the normal man does not feel any special need for the belief in God's existence.

> "Ordinary people too,
> Who scarce so much as doubt it,
> Think there is none when they are well,
> Or do not think about it."

But we may hope that his conclusion remains equally secure that

> "Almost everyone when age,
> Disease or sorrows strike him,
> Inclines to think there is a God,
> Or something very like him."

And for that time, or rather for the opportunities which those times may bring, we may be content to wait, doing our best in the meantime to satisfy those who have questions which they really want to ask. Some lack of interest there will always be, but so far from believing that interest in religion is decreasing at schools and universities, I believe the opposite to be the case.

## XXXV

Professor Bury's *History of Freedom of Thought* has annoyed me so much that I cannot deny him the satisfaction of showing it. When I add that I have not read the middle part of it (which is the history of persecutions for which Christians were responsible), I must present myself to him, should he happen to read these lines, as the very type of a clerical controversialist.

But I did not read them, because I think I do sufficiently know, though I am sure I cannot sufficiently regret, the story of those bad times; in any case I do not myself regard the facts as matters for controversy.

But I did read the beginning of the book, and the end, and I cannot help deeply regretting the spirit in which it seems to be written.

As for the persecutions which Christians endured, it is possible, or rather certain, that they have been exaggerated; but enough in all conscience remains to rouse, one would have hoped, a little sympathy in the self-appointed champion of Liberty of Thought.

But they get very little. "When anyone was

accused of Christianity, he was required, as a means of testing the truth of the charge, to offer incense to the gods or to the statues of deified emperors. His compliance at once exonerated him" ! The Professor seems strangely to ignore the fact that compliance meant the sacrifice of the only principle he was contending for.

But it is at the end that the cloven hoof (to borrow a frankly superstitious image) shows itself most clearly. Whatever the reasons, it is undeniable that Christian thought is freer now than it has ever been. I don't for a moment wish to claim credit for the fact, which has mainly been forced on us by circumstances, but merely to state it. What then is Professor Bury's attitude ? Does he welcome the returning prodigals to the fold and rejoice in the spread, even in these unlikely regions, of some of the light which he adores ? Not a bit of it : he receives his penitents with jeers and curses, and is not content to leave us time to repent of one old sin without chastising us for the rest.

Even a clerical controversialist who had helped to cure a thief of drunkenness would in common humanity rest a moment before delivering a lecture on stealing : but free thought knows no such charity.

I confess that I prefer the attitude adopted towards persecution, clerical and lay, by such

historians as Bishop Creighton and Dr. Figgis. The former, in his *Lectures on Persecution and Tolerance*, and the latter, in his *Churches and the Modern State*, make it abundantly plain that persecution has been, and is, primarily caused by political expediency, and has been justified on that ground from the days of the Republic of Plato to those of the Republic of M. Emile Combes; and I hope that I am as little influenced by clerical sympathies in agreeing with their views as I know that they were in stating them.

Those who wish to understand rather than abuse the persecuting spirit in the Church, cannot do better than read that wonderful chapter in Dostoieffsky's novel, *The Brothers*, when, after the grand Inquisitor has conclusively proved to Christ, a prisoner in his hand and doomed by him to the stake, that persecution is inevitable, and freedom of choice a cruel gift to stupid men, Christ instead of answering goes up to him and kisses him on the lips.

Let me set over against Professor Bury's accusations a story in which the chief actor was a man who sat loosely to many of the Christian dogmas, but, as it seems to me, knew what spirit he was of. There was a gathering of great men—scholars, philosophers. It so happened that one man who had lost his faith, congratulated his

fellows that superstition was dying out, that the day was at hand when Christianity would be an effete thing of the past. James Russell Lowell rose, the blood rushing to his cheeks, and quietly said: "Show me twelve square miles in the world in which I live where childhood is cared for, where womanhood is reverenced, where old age is protected, where life and property are absolutely safe, where it is possible for a decent man to live decently, where the Gospel of Christ has not gone before and made that life possible; and then I will listen to your revilings of my Master."

## XXXVI

It is generally believed that a boy who begins to read "Greats" at Oxford is in serious danger of losing the faith which he has brought with him from home and from school. I do not deny the risk, which, of course, attends any attempt at thinking for oneself: I can only put on record, for what it may be worth, a small piece of personal experience.

I went up to Oxford with a certain amount of orthodox belief, and perhaps rather more than the average amount of orthodox practice, but at bottom with a profound absence of interest in the question or of any knowledge of its bearing upon life. I well remember, for instance, the shock of surprise with which I heard the Senior Commoner of the college say at a college meeting about our mission, that we could never hope to solve the problems of the East End except by looking at them honestly and definitely in the light of the Incarnation. It was not an original utterance, though it was not of the kind usually made at college meetings in a thick atmosphere of tobacco smoke, but it seemed to me to be the

first suggestion of the kind that had ever reached me. I do not mean by that to imply that no one had ever said anything of the kind in the Marlborough pulpit, but merely that it had not reached my consciousness. Boys' memories of what they are, or are not, told at school are very vague and untrustworthy. I well remember two prominent members of my college declaring, at the meeting of a Church Society, that the reasons why they were not going to take Orders were respectively that they had never heard a sermon about it, and that they had never heard a sermon about anything else. No one believed either, and the humour of the situation was enhanced by the general knowledge that both would inevitably be ordained, and would have been whatever had, or had not, been said to them.

However, in my case, the first event which made me genuinely interested in religion was generally the beginning to read "Greats" and to study moral philosophy; and in particular the surprising discovery that Bishop Westcott, in his edition of the Gospel of St. John, and T. H. Green, in the third volume of his philosophical works, appeared to arrive from very different premisses at conclusions that were almost identical. I could not quote the passages to-day, and it is perfectly possible that I misunderstood them both, but the incident, for whatever it may

be worth, is a genuine piece of unrecorded history.

The youthful mind is, of course, vaguely startled at first when it realises the totally different outlook upon ultimate truth with which philosophy begins; and, equally of course, an undergraduate may be led by his studies to embrace a philosophy which is antagonistic to all theism, or at any rate to all revelation. He certainly lives in an age when many alternatives to faith are presented to him; and his faith, if he ultimately retains it, will be none the worse for knowing that it is not unchallenged from without. It is possible that, just as many people in past ages have believed entirely on trust, he may disbelieve for similar reasons:

> "It's been disproved by Spencer in one way,
> By Bradley better in a later day;
> It's been disproved a hundred ways at once
> By many a doctor plain to many a dunce,"

if I may quote Clough (with variations) once more.

All these results *may* happen, but they are very far from inevitable. The philosophy of our day seems to my ignorant eye very different and far less hostile than that of a generation or two ago; it will not make a man a Christian, but, in nine cases out of ten, it will do nothing to prevent his remaining one if he has, or has ever had, the root of the matter in him. After all, the philosophy

of most of us is not that by which we choose to live or die; and the average man is probably content, as I confess I am myself, to leave the philosophical defence of Christianity to the competent champions it possesses, secure that any really adequate philosophy will be bound to take account of the undoubted facts on which he knows his faith to rest.

## XXXVII

But for the average man the most pressing problems are not those of philosophy, but of criticism and science. Here, to an extent which we perhaps can hardly estimate, other men have suffered, and we have entered into the fruits of their sufferings. It would be good, both for our powers of sympathy and for the encouragement of our faith, if we endeavoured to realise more clearly the distresses of a past generation. On the other hand, so far as we are selfishly concerned, it is difficult not to be unfeignedly thankful.

Those divines who defend the use of the "cursing psalms," on the ground that it is good for us to see how far we have advanced, might with equal justice and more propriety organise every Lent a public recitation of the works of Paley and of his inferior supporters. We often hear that there has been "loss and gain": I wish it were more clearly understood on which side the balance of advantage rests.

We have lost a doctrine of special creation, alien, I believe, from the mind of the Fathers,

and first popularised by Milton; we have lost a mechanical conception of the world which was responsible for most of the mistakes of the eighteenth century: and we have gained an attitude towards Nature which allows us to look on it with open eyes. We have lost (perhaps) the Second Epistle of St. Peter, and we have gained an attitude towards the Bible which makes it a living book from end to end. We have lost an argument for prophecy which was based on mistranslations and misunderstandings, and have gained an attitude towards prophecy which allows us to see the Gentiles, even, feeling after God. It is difficult for the average instructed Christian of the present day to remember with sufficient clearness that a very few years ago it would have been hard for him to believe, and still harder for him to say, that Plato was as truly inspired as the author of the book of Chronicles, and certainly more fully than he; or to realise that Robert Elsmere was seriously shaken in the faith by discovering the late date of the book of Daniel.

For my own part I can only say that such criticism as I am competent to appreciate seems to me infinitely to have increased the value of the books I read. I honestly cannot think of any view that I have lost which I really desired to maintain, while the number of newer and clearer perceptions of books and their authors which I

have been brought to entertain is naturally great. No one is a secure judge of his own honesty, and it is open to anyone to say that this shows that I believe what I like. I can only answer that on the only two subjects on which I think myself capable of an opinion, the subjects of literature and history, the case for the Christian documents seems to me personally to be almost irresistibly strong. The case of St. John, no doubt, is difficult, though I myself believe the Gospel to have been written by the son of Zebedee; but to imagine the Gospels to be mainly late, the Acts to be other than the work of an eyewitness, or the Epistles of St. Paul to be largely unauthentic, seem to me the wildest freaks of literary criticism.

Similarly I am quite unable, with such historical power as I possess, to reconstruct the early history of the Apostles or the early history of the Church, on any other basis than that the facts on which they assumed themselves to be relying were true. I do not wish to rest on the argument that God would not have suffered the world to be deceived, but on the simpler view that, after a testing of evidence to which no similar period has been subjected, and a cross examination which would have discomfited almost any witnesses either before or since, the events to which the Gospels and the Acts bear witness do in fact appear to have occurred.

## XXXVIII

The Bishop of Oxford, I may truly say, has taught me almost all that I know of religion, and a great deal that I have forgotten, so that the issue of a considered statement by him on the position of the English Church must mean a great deal to me. That is my only excuse for venturing to say a few words on his recently published lament over the perilous position of the Church at large. I cannot exactly say that I feel like a fool rushing in where angels fear to tread; the angels have, in point of fact, rushed in so rapidly that the fool is a little bewildered by the beating of their wings, and in these days of Theology by Correspondence in the Public Press anything that one writes is out of date by the time that it reaches the printer. But I have at least one qualification for the task, for I am capable of disagreeing with Dr. Gore without losing my temper—and that is rapidly becoming a power so rare as to confer a kind of distinction in itself.

And so I will embark on my few suggestions without further apology; at worst I only want

to try and comfort him, so that my balms, however far from precious, are in no way likely to break his head. He sees, it will be remembered, a markedly disruptive tendency in the three sections of the Church; he feels that the Modernist faction are pushing their claims to liberty further than can be allowed: that the Evangelicals are deserting the historic basis of Church Order in their desire for Union with other Protestants: and that the High Churchmen have a similar, though less regrettable, tendency to be disloyal to their Ordination vows. There is no doubt, of course, that these tendencies exist, and have existed for some considerable time, but I cannot help thinking that the Bishop exaggerates the gravity of the danger or the urgency of the crisis, and I feel no confidence in the remedy which he suggests.

To begin with, the "Modernist" clergy are by no means so arrogant in their claims as he implies. No doubt there are extremists who are anxious for a fight, and no doubt the problem of what action must be taken in each individual case must be now, as always, an anxious one for those in authority, but the general tone of such modernist literature as I know is very far from provocative. It is primarily an honest and devout attempt to restate some of the great facts of Christianity in the terms of modern

thought; the process is necessarily slow, and it would be the worst possible thing were it to be arrested or interfered with at this stage by an unsympathetic episcopal pronouncement.

Bishop Gore's pamphlet contains evidence how long he has had to wait for the justification of some views which he has always held, by the pious opinions of his com-provincial bishops; a pathetic spectacle, as all must agree, but one which surely gives ground for believing that freedom *does*

> "broaden slowly down
> From precedent to precedent."

If any one thing is certain about the Creeds, it is that they have borne different meanings to different generations; this liberty of interpretation is very difficult of definition, and perhaps defies it, but it is very real, and we limit it at our own peril.

The Evangelical position again, as presented at Kikuyu, hardly justifies his alarm; no claim was there made to depart from the basis of Church order without sanction, and the other Protestant bodies did, as a matter of fact, show a tendency to accept terms which he says it would be absurd to offer them: but in any case it is surely true that a missionary conference is an indispensable preliminary to any episcopal pronouncement.

When he turns to the third body of criminals, he lays aside the scorpion and takes, it must be confessed, a rather ineffective whip: if Bishops could ever be compared to curates, he would remind me of the clergyman in *The Private Secretary*, who announced that, if further provoked, he would really have to give his opponents "a good hard knock."

There may be, and is, much to be said for many of the individual practices of the High Church clergy, though Milton was perhaps right when he warned us against the dangers of "supercilious tyranny," but the main accusation against them is not based on these. It is rather that they are deliberately endeavouring to revive in the Church of England a conception of the Mass which was definitely and deliberately set aside at the Reformation. I do not myself think the attempt illegitimate, though I neither hope nor expect that it will succeed; but it seems to me clear that where com-provincial Bishops are to carry such weight against Modernists, and individual Bishops against Protestants, the considered decision of the Church at a decisive period of its history ought to be allowed a little more weight against the protagonists of the Catholic league, and of that society of St. Peter and St.Paul, in which the latter seems increasingly relegated to the position of a sleeping partner.

## XXXIX

My own position with regard to these various parties admits not of definition but of illustration. With regard to the so-called Modernists (though I deprecate the name, which has a wealth of false suggestion), I find myself in substantial sympathy with their attitude and with many of their conclusions. At the same time I do not consider the particular controversies as crucial, from either point of view, as most of those engaged in them believe them to be. If one is once convinced, as I certainly am, that Incarnation is, so far as one can presume to say it, a natural if not an inevitable method of revelation, controversies as to the manner of its occurrence seem to me to fall into a strictly secondary place. If we have a right to any opinion as to probabilities in such a matter, of which I confess I am rather doubtful, the Virgin Birth seems to me far more probable *a priori ;* and the fact that I cannot comprehend the manner of it seems not only not disturbing, but very much what was to be expected.

Similarly the controversies as to the union of the Divine and human natures are, of course, inevitable ; but I have the deepest sympathy with

that much maligned document the Athanasian Creed, in its repeated refusals to define the Christian doctrine either about the Incarnation or the Trinity.

It is plain that no ancient philosophies were adequate to the task, and, while modern attempts at restatement seem to me appreciably nearer to the truth, I cannot for the life of me see how the existence of one who is perfect God, and perfect Man, can ever be completely brought within the compass of the human understanding. This will only be a distress to those who think that in the ordinary affairs of life they habitually, or often, attain to a complete understanding of the conditions of their own existence. I do not fear a charge of hostility to reason, or rather a hope for its future satisfaction, which is shared by Dante and Browning.[1] Johannes Agricola said many things in his meditation with which I am far from agreeing, but I sympathise, in part at least, with his disclaimer of the wish to understand completely the purposes of God; and on the other side Walt Whitman expressed a much needed truth when he cried: "Why, who makes much of a miracle? . . . As to me, I know of nothing else but miracles."

[1] *Cf.* "Lì si vedrà ciò che tenem per fede,
non dimostrato, ma fia per sè noto,
a guisa del ver primo che l'uom crede."

The evidence for the resurrection seems to me to be much best accounted for by accepting it as a literal fact; but I have sympathy with those who wish to inquire, at least, whether Our Lord's real and undoubted resurrection may not have been preceded by those same phenomena which will, we believe, precede our own. The evidence is, I think, strongly against them, but I doubt if the question is illegitimate.

With the Evangelicals and their schemes of Reunion I have great sympathy also; nor can I myself contemplate with any sort of equanimity the prospect of having to tell a convert in the Mission Field that he must abstain indefinitely from Communion rather than accept it from a body which is to him so very similar to our own. It may be, as the Bishop of Oxford says, a punishment for our (or the Pope's) lack of faith in the past; but it looks a little as if we were going to make Africa bear it. But this problem will, I hope and believe, become easier of solution as facts accumulate and knowledge grows.

The only suggestion which I would venture to make is, that at home we might occasionally unite with ministers of all denominations for a period of silent prayer, with or without a fixed subject of intercession. The practice could hardly accentuate our divisions, and it is at least conceivable that it might do something to heal them.

If I have rather less sympathy with the third or High Church party, it is, I hope, only because they seem to need it less. They, like the others, are trying experiments, and I believe that our Church is the place in which such experiments can best be tried. I wish that they would speak more respectfully of bishops who disagree with them; and I find it difficult to reconcile their attitude towards episcopal admonitions with the exalted position which they give to the Consecration service. I cannot imagine any easier sermon to preach, if I were an extreme ritualist, than one explaining that I surrendered some practice in deference to the wish of my bishop.

But my real doubt about them is not of their sincerity nor of their devotion—heaven forbid! It is whether they are not seeking for what they would call an "extension of the Incarnation" in a way other than that which our Lord Himself appointed. The emphasis on non-communicating attendance at Communion and on Reservation, and much of the language used of the Sacrament, seems to endeavour to prescribe and define another and less certain road.

All that we directly know of the Sacrament comes from St. Paul and the Gospels: at least this knowledge is on a different plane to any other: and it is a very large assumption that the second of the sentences, "Take and eat this,"

"This is my Body," can retain anything like its full meaning when it is divorced from the words which precede.

The assumption may be correct; I am far from denying that it can honestly be made. I am only concerned to point out that it is enormous.

The point is of such great importance that I should like to fortify myself by quotations from authorities who will command respect, and who put the position more clearly than I can hope to do.

Archbishop Temple wrote in 1852: "There seems [in St. Paul] to be an identification of three things—the Elements, the Congregation, the Lord. And if St. Paul had been asked whether the consecrated elements were, or contained, the Body of the Lord in *any* sense, he would have repudiated such an expression. In the bread *so* eaten and in the communicants *so* eating, there is the Body; but the elements themselves are 'nothing in the world.'"

His view will not commend itself to those who disagree with him any more now than it did then: on the other hand the Bishop of Oxford has clear claims on their respect, and his language is even less ambiguous: "The only secure argument is that the gift [in the Eucharist] was given for a certain purpose, and so long as that purpose

is observed we have absolute reason to trust that His promise will not fail us." And again: "This institution of an external shrine of the Divine presence amongst Christians, with its subtle but profound influence on Christian thought and language and devotion, is, I repeat, a tremendously bold development in view of Christ's institution; it cannot but raise in many minds the question whether, where the purpose of the sacramental presence is so vitally changed, we have the right to feel secure of the permanence of the presence itself." [1]

The arguments on which the "Mass for Communion" rests are in need of much restatement before they justify the "Mass for Worship."

[1] *The Body of Christ*, pp. 132–9.

## XL

I TURN from these high topics to some practical questions of interest to Churchmen at the present day. I will say nothing of Prayer Book reform, except that I hope that those who think we must wait for a time of greater unity—should we say, one like that in which the Prayer Book was originally compiled?—will not oppose the much needed reform of the lectionary, and that when it is made the Sunday congregation will no longer be assumed to be identical with that which has attended Matins and Evensong on week-days.

Nor will I deal with the Athanasian Creed, because I think we are nearer to a practical agreement about that and its use than partisans are often willing to allow. I will only offer a few general remarks on the Sunday services as a whole, which form a topic as yet less embittered by controversy, and calling, as I think, for consideration.

It is fast becoming the normal practice in many of our churches to have a celebration at eight in the morning, with a brief and rather perfunctory Matins, followed by a High Celebration at eleven.

The reasons for this practice are obvious, and some of them are unanswerable; others rest, as I have ventured to suggest, on an assumption, and one at least is demonstrably untrue.

The undeniable reasons are that all Christians of every school of thought must wish to make the service which is of Divine institution the most important of the day, and that Matins is in a high degree unsuitable for the central service of any congregation.

With the more questionable assumption I have already tried to deal, and I need only say here that it seems to me plain that we cannot finally acquiesce in a system which takes the most devout Christians to communicate before breakfast, and then gives them precisely the same service a little later on. I do not deny that it can be made useful; of course it can, and is in the very highest degree, but the fact that some people can presumably profit by the constant repetition of the Lord's Prayer, or by the twofold Exhortations, Confessions, and Absolutions of Matins and Evensong, is not normally held to justify the authors of the Second Prayer Book. I only mean that, if a thanksgiving service is needed and desired, it should be specially provided, and that, whatever justifications may be found for our present practice, they are invented either to suit the case or to support a sacramental

theory which needs close examination, and has peculiar dangers of its own. At present the Tractarian insistence on frequent communions still bears great and increasing fruit; it remains to be seen whether a generation brought up to non-communicating attendance at Mass will preserve the practice on which our Church has always endeavoured to lay stress. The Reformers are unfairly blamed for the small attendances at Communion after the Reformation; the blame surely lies first with those who before the Reformation had allowed Communion to become so rare.

The false argument to which I have alluded is based on what I must call the fallacy of the midday meal. It seems to be deeply rooted in the British mind, no doubt a legacy from generations of "eleven o'clock Christians," that the service which is nearest in time to the midday meal is, by that very fact, the greatest of the day. What else but this underlies the argument that it is wrong not to have High Celebration at eleven, because otherwise "the great service of the day" will not have had due honour? The great service of the day is surely that on which most members of the congregation have drawn near to their Lord in Sacramental Communion; to talk as if the presence and absence of our music and our processions, good as they are in them-

selves, could affect the question is a strange mistake for those to whom the Presence means so much.

There is a tendency to denounce the ante-Communion service with which I cannot sympathise; it has very definite merits of its own, and I think that if we reverted, as many High Churchmen would like to do, to the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, we should find it frequently enjoined.

It is easy to abuse Matins, and indeed its faults are plain, but unless we are to give up altogether the hope of using one, at least, of our services as a vehicle for instruction, it is surely desirable and possible to amend it.

I think that if I had charge of a parish I should try the experiment of making this service frankly educational. I should encourage the congregation to bring and use their Bibles, and should endeavour to explain the services as I have suggested might be done in schools. The audience might be few—though I think that it might gradually become fitter—but I should, at any rate, feel more hopeful that I was accomplishing my duty than if I had to launch two hortatory discourses on Sunday at an uninstructed congregation. I am assuming that the framework of Matins is to remain unchanged; it would be easy for our liturgiologists to amend the service

so that it would lend itself more easily to instructional use.

Evensong, if its psalms and lessons could be chosen more rationally, will be found, I think, to have made a place for itself. There are many good people who cannot really feel religious except by artificial light—a variant of the law which makes the undergraduate unwilling to talk about his soul till the small hours of the morning—and this type, seeing that evening Communions are, no doubt for sound reasons, to be disallowed, will find satisfaction in the lights (so helpful and yet so legal) and hymns of Evensong.

Let the ritualist have his vestments and his lights and his incense, and let the early morning hours be his, for surely no time of the day can be so sacred either by nature or by usage. And let him on his great days exhaust his powers in the attempt to render to the great service the honour which is its due ; but let him not normally usurp those soberer hours which are better fitted for reflection than devotion, any more than he denies to the simpler evening congregation that milder diet which it craves.

And Evensong, it is to be hoped, will be accorded some license of extemporary prayer. It is a path full of pitfalls for the unwary and the didactic, and we cannot forget the sentence in the Southern minister's prayer, as full of history

as of warning: "When in Thine inscrutable providence it was decreed that the cause of the Confederacy must fail, it became necessary for Thee to remove Thy servant Stonewall Jackson."

But it has been truly said that as the clergy have now learned to preach extemporary sermons, they must learn to offer extemporary prayers: I wish that I could feel any reasoned hope that they would learn it from their bishops.

## XLI

But when we have justified our own intellectual position and tried to set our own house in order, there remain the problems of commending our religion to the world at large and of adjusting our attitude towards our brother Christians.

The former is obviously the subject for another, and very different, book; it can only be said here that we are known by our fruits, and that the fruit of righteousness is the only argument that converts.

It may be noted further that the world, which puts an inordinate value on the successful pursuit of wealth, puts a value, inordinate but not absurd, on the voluntary refusal of it. St. Francis might have converted birds by his sermons, but it was his poverty that won mankind.

But the fruit of righteousness must be peaceable, and that brings us to our second problem. It is in England to-day primarily a problem of our relation with Nonconformist bodies, so I will say nothing of the Church of Rome, except that the most demonstrably unchristian utterances aroused by the Kikuyu controversy seemed to me to emanate from Westminster Cathedral.

I do not enjoy the history of the relations between the Church and Dissent; but many good Unionists do not enjoy the history of our relations with Ireland, so that I hope there is nothing inconsistent with loyalty to Church principles in a hearty dislike of the use we have made of our privileged position in the past.

So far as modern English Church history is concerned, it must, I fear, be said that the intolerance which we are only slowly outgrowing is mainly due to Laud. Laud is one of the most pathetic figures in our history, and the pathos is intensified when we learn from Clarendon that he had no friend to save him from his blunders. The words said of the Duke of Buckingham might almost have been applied to him, "that he never made a worthy friendship with a man so near his equal that he would frankly advise him for his honour and true interest." He could have survived his unpopularity with the Calvinists "who, according to their useful maxim and practice, call every man they do not love Papist, and under this senseless appellation created him many troubles and vexations," and "after being transplanted out of his cold barren diocese of St. David's into a warmer climate," he might have proved as great as he was good at heart had he not believed that "innocence of heart, and integrity of manners was a guard strong enough to secure

any man in his voyage through this world, in what company soever he travelled, and through what ways soever he was to pass."

Of course he was by no means the first, even in post-Reformation times, to introduce religious coercion into England, but it is approximately true that he was the first Englishman to believe in it. We had had poor Queen Mary, but the inspiration and the driving power of her persecutions came from Spain; we had had the persecutions of the authors of the Second Prayer Book, but they were predominantly German or Dutch: and though Somerset is a good old English name, his failing was the good old English one of avarice rather than the new one of intolerance.

It was Laud first of modern ecclesiastics who welcomed that alliance with the state for coercive purposes which has borne, and is still bearing, such disastrous fruit. From his time the whole *damnosa hereditas* works itself out with pitiless accuracy. The Parliamentarians had learnt intolerance from the Cavaliers, and they showed themselves apt pupils. The Church party had every chance of learning a different lesson in the school of adversity, but they neglected their opportunities, and the Clarendon Code showed that they had not forgotten either.

When that great opportunity was lost, the

Church of England forfeited for two and a half centuries at least the right to speak to the nation in the name of Christianity. It may be thought that " poor, grey, old little Laud " is receiving as little justice here as he received in life: Lest it appear that I am being intentionally unfair to him, let me quote a few sentences from a historian whose prejudices tended in the other direction, and whose right to speak is undoubted —the much lamented Henry Wakeman. Laud, in his phrase, " might have triumphed in the end had the struggle been fought out simply on religious lines, but he had deliberately identified the cause of the Church with the cause of the king." It naturally followed that members of the Church of England a little later on " were in Cromwell's eyes too deeply committed to wrong principles of religion and politics ever to become good and peaceable citizens." He had to punish them just as Elizabeth had to punish Roman Catholics, though both of them would have preferred tolerance. Inevitably again at the Restoration " the argument of Cromwell was turned with all its force against his own friends," and the doctrine of passive obedience really amounted to identifying Church and State policy once more. The passive resistance of the seven Bishops showed the way to a sounder relationship between the two, but after the Revolution

Broad Churchmen became Whigs and High Churchmen Tories. The latter "loved Church and country, and refused to dissociate the one from the other." Hence the Whigs when they in turn came to power disliked the High Churchmen and distrusted them as Jacobites—not unnaturally when they remembered Atterbury. "Wherever earnestness appeared, Jacobitism was suspected," and so the wretched story goes on. Let us hope two centuries are enough to have shown the falsity of the principle.

## XLII

Sixty years ago Archbishop Temple could claim for the Church that she was the most tolerant of all denominations, but he had reason for adding that she owed this character to her bondage. The strongest argument that I know against Disestablishment is the fear that the lesson is not yet completely learnt.

It is at any rate something that an Archbishop of Canterbury should have wished his last public words to be an appeal "on behalf of those who, while not belonging to our Church, are as much entitled to their religious convictions as any of ourselves, any of your Lordships, any of those who are sending their children to a Church school being themselves Churchmen; and I beg that every possible endeavour may be made by us, who are responsible in those schools, for removing difficulties whenever that can possibly be done."[1]

There has, in truth, never been a time since Dissent first arose when our official attitude towards it has been so friendly or so understanding.

[1] Frederick Temple, p. lxv.

To a great extent this is the result of the pressure of external circumstances for which we can claim no credit, but the progress is there, and a schoolmaster should be the last to deprecate compulsion as an instrument of progress.

I do not mean that we are owning our contentions to be wrong: I see little sign of that: but we are willing to own that we were, in origin at least, as much to blame for our unhappy divisions as those whom an earlier generation branded as schismatics, and that we do genuinely welcome any chances of co-operation. It is a great thing that Christians should be, as they undoubtedly are, drawing near to one another; the attraction exerts its force in different directions, and, strongly as we may deprecate some of them, it is a clear gain that Christendom should realise more of the tragedy of disunion.

It is in the mission field that we have learnt it most clearly; and it is there that our greatest hope lies. What we frequently say of a parish is true of a Church—that its home life flourishes when it cares for those who serve abroad. Of all the changes which have come to the Church in our generation none is so great nor so full of hope as the change in our attitude towards missions. Missionary literature has changed out of all recognition. Instead of pious stories of benighted heathen, we now find, in such papers

as *The East and the West*, a real effort to understand and appreciate the lower religions which we come to supplant: and if Dickens were to write of Mrs. Jellyby to-day, he would be foolish as well as a little malicious.

It may be that the mission field will repay our rather tardy enthusiasm by an unexpected vindication of our Church Order; for Bishops have a value in India as a barrier against caste churches which we have forgotten at home.

The Church of England may have troublous days before it, but persecution never hurt a good cause for long, and perhaps in the Providence of God it may be destined to lose its life at home and find it again beyond the seas.

# EPILOGUE

As I bring this undertaking to an end, I am more than ever conscious that it may well seem both scrappy and superficial. I do not think that any good purpose would be served by trying to sum up what I have endeavoured to say, except that it might save a jaded reviewer a few minutes' work. But I have become rather weary of hearing institutions in which I believe abused, as I think, without reason. I have tried to show that I believe them to be fundamentally sound, or at any rate that there is no reason for that vague feeling of pessimism which makes men and women nowadays so ready to despair of the republic. The Public Schools of England and the Church of England seem to me incontestably in a better state than they have ever been in before, and that is enough for me—enough, I mean, to enable me to go about my work in good heart and in good hope.

But still I am quite conscious that this work might be described in a phrase, which I regret to say I read in *The Times* the other day, as "a symposium of special messages."

It is no excuse to say that it has been written, with some trifling exceptions, within a week; the only interest of that fact lies in the proof it affords that the book does give, for what it is worth, a true picture of the ideas co-existing in a certain mind for a certain period of hours.

I leave it to the psychologists to say whether that establishes any essential bond between them, and shall not complain if they elect to say that it is "merely corroborative detail, intended to give verisimilitude to a bald and unconvincing narrative."

At any rate it has enabled me to make my own beliefs clearer to myself, and in days when we are inclined to take our doubts on trust, as readily as we formerly took our faith, that is at least something gained. In that hope I offer this small volume, though with some trepidation, to those who have assisted in the process of forming my ideas, and in particular to those who have the clearest right to criticise me severely—those who have taught me, and those whom I have tried to teach.

# APPENDIX I

THE three following Addresses of mine have all been delivered at various times in Shrewsbury Chapel. They have been printed in *The Salopian* "by request," but I think I ought no longer to conceal the fact that the request came from me.

## A FABLE

(*Confirmation Sunday evening*, 1912)

THERE was a bitter dispute going on in the Grate; the Paper, the Wood, and the Coal were all quarrelling, for each maintained that he was the most important part of the fire.

"There cannot really be much doubt about it," said the Paper; "they would not have put me outside if they hadn't known I was the best looking, and besides that, I have connections with high intellectual circles. Why, a brother of mine was a Novel only the other day, and I have several cousins who are quite respectable Poems." The Paper was really a bit of newspaper; and that, no doubt, accounted for its arrogance.

"How absurd it is to hear you talk!" said the Wood, "as if a flimsy thing like Paper could really be of any value, and as for respectable connections—well, I may not be much to look at now, but if you had seen my home in the forest before we came down in the world, you'd know what beauty was. And I suppose even you have heard of the wooden walls of Old England. Why, we were the backbone of the country."

"How out of date you are!" said the Coal;

"everybody knows nowadays that the strength of the nation depends on its coal, and if you knew the trouble people take to get me, living underground for years, you'd have some idea what was meant by value. Besides, I'm older than you, and must know better."

"Oh, do be quiet," said the Grate, which had heard this sort of thing very often before. "None of you could get on without the other; besides, you aren't even a fire yet." "Not a fire!" cried the other three indignantly; "what on earth can you mean?" "Wait and see," said the Grate. And sure enough, just at that moment, the housemaid put a match to the Paper.

"Well, at any rate there's no doubt about it now," said the Paper, as it flared up triumphantly. "Don't you see what a tremendous compliment I have had paid me?" "What's it like?" said the Wood, which was a little interested in spite of itself; "doesn't it hurt rather?" "Oh no," said the Paper; "or well, just a little," it added honestly, "but it's worth it all the same!" it cried as it leapt up the chimney in fire.

"Well, thank goodness, we shan't have any more bother with that Paper," said the Wood. "Don't be so certain," said the Grate; and sure enough, at that moment the Wood began to feel some curious sensations. It began to crackle and glow. "Why, I'm on fire too," it said, with something of dismay in its voice. "That comes of keeping such shocking company," said the Coal; "now if you were a really solid and re-

spectable person like me"—"I'm on fire, I'm on fire!" cried the Wood, and it followed the Paper exultingly up the chimney.

"Do you know," said the Coal to the Grate, "I'm really beginning to feel a little uncomfortable myself; what do you think can be the matter with me?" "Why, you have caught at last," said the Grate. "I really believe I have," said the Coal, "and I'm not sure that it's so unpleasant after all."

There was silence for a few minutes while the Coal began to glow and slowly pass into a blaze. "Do you know what is the use of it all?" asked the Coal. "I am not quite sure that I do," said the Grate, "but sometimes somebody comes and warms himself at the fire, and it is he who not only made the fire but made me as well: and somehow, though I cannot explain it, when he is pleased, I feel as if we had all done what we were meant to do. I made a little song about it the other day: I don't know if you would care to hear it?" But the Coal was too much occupied to pay any attention, so the Grate had to sing its song to itself. And this was the song which it sang:

Thou that hast made us all, Paper and Coal and Wood,
Lo, we have heard thy call; lo, we have understood.
Paper that flares and goes, Wood that crackles in flame,
Coal that abides and glows, surely their end is the same.
All that we have we give, giving we know not why,
Not for ourselves we live, and not to ourselves we die.
Not to ourselves we die, fulfilling our Lord's desire;
Coal, Wood, Paper, and I, we have made our Master's fire.

## A DREAM

(*End of Summer Term*, 1913)

In the early hours of this morning I had rather a curious dream, of which I will try to tell you as much as I can remember.

My mind must have been running on Examinations, for I found myself in a very large Hall in which there were a great number of single desks with someone writing busily at each. It was rather a shock to me to discover that the writers were Angels, for one does not associate Angels with Examinations. But I soon saw that the Examination was not of an ordinary kind. Each of the Angels was engaged in copying entries into a book from a very mixed lot of material at his side. There were old Exercises, and Cricket Scores, and Boating Cards, and notes of conversations taken by a kind of silent gramophone, and all the entries were being busily made up in a large book. I had the curiosity to count the numbers in the room, and when I found it was 380, I had no longer any doubt that I was in the presence of the Guardian Angels of this School, making up their books for the term.

I noticed that one of them seemed to have finished his work, so I went up to ask him to

explain what was going on. "It is really quite simple," he said; "we are only making up the term's records." "But what do you put in the books?" said I. "Oh, everything," he said; "the things they do, and the things they say: but what really takes up most of the time is putting down the things they think. That's why I have got so little to do just now," he added, "for my young gentleman hardly thinks at all just yet." And he showed me the name on the outside of his book. "I suppose you put the good on one side and the bad on the other," I said, "and balance up at the end of the term?" "No," he said, "it is really not quite so simple as that; we aren't allowed to balance up the accounts ourselves, and it's only at the end of their time that it is really settled up; when they come for their Journey Money, you know." "Journey Money?" said I; "but where are they going to? And how do they get there?" "What an absurd question," he said; "of course they're going home to God; doesn't one of the Hymns say something like that? But how far they go, and how fast they go, that of course depends on the amount of Journey Money they take away from here. But I see they are just getting ready to give it out, so you had better come and look."

And sure enough there was a movement at the far end of the Hall; about fifty of the Angels brought up all their books, and some of them had a very heavy load of volumes. The books were rapidly tested by some process that I could

not understand, and then their value was paid down to the Guardian Angel who stood waiting rather anxiously to see what his charge had earned.

Just at that moment when I looked at them I saw an Angel receiving a large pile of Copper in return for a great set of volumes that he had handed in. I noticed that he looked rather disappointed, and asked my friend the reason. "You get paid in Copper for all the things you've done to please yourself," he said. "I expect that would be one of those Athletes, or else one of the Scholars; they are as bad as one another," he went on, "always inclined to think about themselves." I had noticed that the boy in his charge is by no means distinguished in any way, so I was rather amused at his attitude towards the dangers of success.

"And who gets paid in Silver?" I asked. "Oh, those are the people who have done what they have done for the sake of the School; you'd be surprised to see what a lot of Silver money there is paid over every year. I am trying to get my young man to see the value of that, but it's rather slow work," he went on gloomily, "when the fellow won't think at all."

"And what about the Gold?" I asked, to change the subject. "Ah, the Gold," he said, and a change came over his voice as he spoke; "that's something worth getting. Of course we see a lot of Gold in Heaven, but somehow I think it's not so fine as this Gold you human beings get. We haven't got the same chances,

you know." And he hummed under his breath a line or two of a Hymn, and I thought I caught the words:

A song which even Angels can never never sing,
We know not Christ as Saviour, but worship Him as King.

"But can't they exchange their money?" said I. "Oh yes, you can exchange the Silver for Gold," he said, "but you can't do anything with the Copper. We're bimetallists up here," he went on with a smile. "But come and see the Luggage they have to take with them." And we passed into another room where the fifty Angels were busy packing up. Some had hardly any luggage at all. They had laid aside every weight, as my guide explained to me. But others had a very curious collection of things. There were some with childish toys, and old suits of clothes that their owners had long outgrown, but they would not part with them, and so they had all to be packed. And there was one poor Angel whom I noticed rather sadly filling a bag with mud, for the boy had got into the habit of making mud pies, and he could not be persuaded to leave the materials of his game behind him.

They were all nearly ready to start when rather a bustling Angel pushed his way through the crowd. I think he must have belonged to another school which had broken up early, for no one seemed quite to know him, though he was very ready with good advice. "Aren't you going to give them anything to read on the

journey ? " he said. " I always give my people a sermon or two to read on the way." " Our people have got their Coat of Arms and their Motto," said one of the Shrewsbury Angels, " and I think that's enough." " It doesn't sound much," said the stranger. " No," said the other, " but it carries you a good long way if you understand it properly ; for the lions will teach them to be brave, and the lilies will teach them to be clean, while the Motto has got the whole root of the matter in it." " Let me hear it," said the stranger. " It is *Intus si recte ne labora*," said the Angel, " and there are two translations of it given. The first is, ' Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' But there is another and rather freer translation which I think better myself, and that is, ' For them that love God all things work together for good.' "

# A CONVERSATION

(*Confirmation Sunday evening*, 1913)

I HAPPENED to be in Chapel this morning rather early, when I became conscious that though there was nobody else but me there, there was a conversation going on. You know how often when you are in an empty building you hear the seats creaking for no apparent reason, and how little it generally seems to mean. But this morning I was able to make out what they were saying, and I will give you the conversation as I heard it.

I had evidently broken in on the middle of a rather animated discussion, for the first thing I heard was the Seats in the Body of the Chapel saying: "Well, of course I quite see that it's not your fault; you are made of Pitch Pine, and it's quite right that you should make the best of it, but nothing will ever persuade me that a Pitch Pine seat is nearly as good as an Oak one. When all's said and done, it *is* a fine thing to come of a good family, and I am proud of being English; you can't help coming from Norway, but it is a disadvantage, and that's all there is to be said."

The Pitch Pine Seats had a rather mincing

way of talking—("It comes from all that over polish," I heard the Oak Seats mutter to themselves)—but they had no doubt about the goodness of their case. "We do the best we can," they said, "and that's all a seat can do. You don't suppose a *man* thinks more of himself because he happens to be born of an old family, do you?"

"Oh, don't they?" said the Oak Seats. "You ask the Organ; it has more to do with men than most of us, and knows more about them. *Do* men think more of themselves because they are well-born?"

"I'm afraid they very often do," said the Organ: "but they are quite wrong to do so," he added; but after all he had a Pitch Pine case himself, so he was naturally a little prejudiced.

"I was right, I told you so," said both the Pitch Pine Seats and the Oak Seats together.

"It is not so much a matter of the material you are made of," said the Choir Stalls, "as the use to which you are put. Some kinds of work are obviously higher than others; now when I was in Manchester Cathedral I used to see a Dean every day and a Bishop every now and then."

"Quite right," the Chair in the Chancel said; "and talking of Bishops, I wonder if you know what's going to happen to me to-day?"

"I don't see what that's got to do with it," said the Stalls at the Other End. "A Bishop is only a man after all, and to say a seat is made better because of the person who happens to

sit in it is like saying that one man is better than another because he happens to have a fortune left him. Good work's good work, and it doesn't much matter what work it is or how it's paid, so long as you do your best."

"Hear, hear," said a lot of small voices proceeding from the Hassocks, who seemed to represent the democratic part of the community.

"I don't think," said the Choir Stalls, "that you quite appreciate the difference between work that is strictly religious and ordinary work. Now in Manchester Cathedral——"

"Oh, stop talking about Manchester Cathedral," said the Stalls at the Other End. "I suppose you will tell me next that all clergymen are better than all laymen; ask the Organ what it thinks about *that*."

"Perhaps they ought to be," said the Organ, "but they very seldom are."

"My dear children," said the Screen, which had been listening with rather a patient smile to all the conversation, "when you have lived in the world as long as I have and in as many different places, you'll understand that it is rather absurd to talk of one kind of life being better than another. Of course there is such a thing as being beautiful; I don't know if you ever happened to observe my carving; that's the kind of thing which really does make a difference to one's life."

"I suppose you think," said the Bishop's Chair, which was rather sulky at having been

snubbed, "I suppose you think that a man with a handsome body is better than a man with a plain face? I should like to know what the Organ thinks about that."

"Beauty is a very delightful thing," said the Organ, which hoped some day to have a Screen of its own, "but of course it is not the only thing by any means," it went on hurriedly before its case had time to interrupt.

"What's that you're saying about beauty?" asked one of the Stained Glass Windows, which woke up suddenly as the light came through it: "Of course beauty is the thing that matters. Why, I was saying that only the other day to the plain glass on the other side of Chapel: 'Anybody could see through you,' I said."

"Yes, and what *I* said," said the Plain Glass, "was, It doesn't matter people seeing through you, provided they see nice things on the other side. Now, through me you see Nature, and that's better than all your artistic colours."

The Flowers had been silent all the time, for, after all, they were only visitors, but at this they could not help giving a little applause. "Yes, yes," they said, "Nature's better than Art after all." The Stained Glass Window blushed with anger. "I like your talking about Nature," it cried; "where would you be if you hadn't been cultivated?" Before the flowers had time to think of the right answer——

"Hush, hush," said the Pulpit, "I think the Chapel is going to say something."

And sure enough I heard a deep voice, though

I could not tell exactly where it came from, but it was evidently a voice to which the rest were bound to listen, and, as became its dignity, it spoke in metre :

"English Oak and Norway Pine,
Wrangle not before the Shrine,
Marring thus a work Divine.

Vile and common, rich and rare,
Yet they all one service share,
Seeing all God's creatures are.

Stones that live and flowers that die,
Are they not one company
Serving the one Lord on high?

Brick and wood and glass and stone
Serve their God, yet not alone,
For the Lord their God is one.

So may all that day by day
Gather in this House to pray
Serve together even as they!"

There was a silence when the Chapel had finished speaking, and then the Organ began very softly to play a chord or two. Everyone seemed to know the words : though the tune, at any rate, was familiar, the words were strange to me, and yet they all joined in, the Hassocks in a rather squeaky treble, though evidently very anxious not to be left out :

"Praise, praise, O world, the God of love,
Praise Him, ye sun and moon above,
Praise Him, all creatures upon earth,
Praise Him, ye things of little worth.

But most of all, ye sons of men,
Who come and go and come again,
Teach ye these walls to sound His praise,
And serve and love Him all your days."

As the chant died away I heard a cry from the Antechapel: "Look out," said the Door, "there's someone coming"; and everything had become quite quiet again when the first boy came in and knelt down to say his prayers.

# APPENDIX II

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I HAVE printed here a few complete poems done by the same Form. My reason for doing so is to meet the very natural criticism that any boy may produce three or four tolerable lines, and to show the kind of merits and defects which may be looked for in this kind of composition.

The first is at least another testimony to the interest aroused by its subject:

## THE PHŒNIX

O 'tis lonely, lonely living,
  A living life of death,
A life that longs for friendship
  With its last half-choking breath!
That cares not for the anguish
  And pain of the burning heat,
For to the friendless stranger
  Dread Death himself is sweet:
But sweeter yet than hoping
  For the time that is drawing nigh,
Is the hope of the answered question,
  The simple question—Why?
Why should I live like an outcast
  On this dull and dreary earth,
To serve, who knows? what purpose?
  And to be, who knows? what worth?

The second deals with a more hackneyed theme, but has some points of originality in thought and metre (as well as one bad rhyme):

SUNRISE

The first soft shimmering ray of white
Hung swinging in the sky,
Night called her softly whispering dreams,
Whose flickering shapes she round her streams,
Then kissing oft the cold star beams,
Slipped Westwards with a sigh.

The ray caught on a passing cloud,
And up shot a bold gilt bar,
Then pouring forth in merry song,
A many coloured happy throng,
Hymned the sun's advent loud and strong,
To the sadly paling star.

And in that sea of coloured light
They danced and sang for glee
Till came the fire bespeckled morn,
The great broad roaring rushing dawn,
And happy sparkling thoughts were born,
In all whose souls were free.

The third illustrates the value of the Spenserian stanza as a vehicle of instruction:

MISS MUFFET

Downe in the vale below the streame reeled by,
Whose banks were studded with the marigolde;
Up on the hille tway fir-trees towered highe,
The sole survivors of a wood of olde,
Now seeminge isolated stiffe and colde;

Above a distante mounde curl'd wreaths of smoke
And faint lowe "baa-baas" signified a folde.
Proud Chaunticlere the morninge hours awoke
And with his shrille loude notes arous'd the countrie folke.

A maid comes gently trippinge o'er the swarde,
And somethinge which she carries in her hande
An earnest pleasure seemeth to afforde
For to a smile her features fat expande
As by a tuffet now she takes her stande;
Then by emotion she is borne away,
Her burden with rounde, doting eyne she scann'd
And sat herselfe downe in the balmy hay
And then prepar'd herselfe to eat the curds and whey.

She was a maid as rounde as any quaile,
Hers was a very greedy appetite;
The curds and whey reposing in a paile
She had stolen from the pantry late last night,
And not without some outwarde show of frighte.
Now she sat downe to eat her ill-earn'd feaste
And glow'd with pleasure at its mere brent sighte,
But suddenlie her pleasure wholly ceas'd
By an appearance of a wild, bataillous beaste.

Farre from the scene Miss Muffet scoured in haste,
Leaving behinde a spider fierce and wilde
To eat the feaste which she had left to waste,
Thus showinge that she was a wastefulle childe;
And when he saw her flie the spider smil'd.
Miss Muffet never more has given in
To greed, nor by it ever been beguil'd.
With greed has gone that greedy, gloatinge grinne,
And lessen'd appetite has even made her thinne.

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
at Paul's Work, Edinburgh