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Ezekiel is less of a prophet than of an organizer when, like Tolstoi, he prescribes an equal division of the land. Our author can afford to be thus candid because he never loses sight of the fact that the value of the prophets does not consist in the specific remedies which they prescribed, but in the truth which all of them inculcated, and each in his measure sought to apply, that the one indispensable requisite for the solution of social problems is character. There are other elements, which vary from time to time; but if rich and poor, employer and employed, the landowner and the lacklands, were all to become good men, the way out of most of our distresses would soon appear. 'The first and last solution, the success or failure of which decides all the rest, is the good man, the self-controlled character, firm, pure, capable, reliable—the moral personality. If this is lacking, a gigantic structure of organized helpfulness, equipped with the finest appliances, may be devised and established; it will but prove a Colossus with feet of clay, which crumbles into ruin on its fragile base.'[1]

Perhaps it is scarcely worth mentioning that some of the critical conclusions on which the exposition depends are other than the ones generally received. We can all make the allowances for these which we deem requisite. And Englishmen who read this really valuable and stimulating book will correct for themselves the somewhat careless printing of the extract from Carlyle on p. 135.

JOHN TAYLOR.

Winchcombe Vicarage.

[1] P. 8.

The Pilgrim's Progress.

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Formalist and Hypocrisy.

THE next incident of the journey is the advent of Formalist and Hypocrisy, who came tumbling over the wall on the left hand of the narrow way. The figures have a connexion on the one hand with the Cross, and on the other hand with the Hill Difficulty. It is at these two points, more perhaps than at any other in the whole journey, that *reality* tells and is indispensable. (It is interesting to note that it was at the Valley of the Hypocrites, in Dante's *Inferno*, that the earthquake of Calvary had broken all the bridges.)

Formalist, the man of precedents, the stickler for correctness, or the lover of ritual, has many representatives in every generation and in every church. There are many varieties of him, from the artistic lover of beauty for its own sake, apart from truth, down to him whom Creech calls 'the person who adopts the forms and externals of religion to quiet a stupid conscience.' The point that all formalists have in common is this, that they prefer form to substance, the mere art of expression to that which is to be expressed, manner in general to matter. The modern types which are most in evidence are the religious people who practise this fashion in the extreme High Church on the one hand, and in the worship of dead orthodoxy on the other; in art it is represented by that extreme realism which exaggerates and abuses the excellent maxim, 'Art for art's sake.'

Hypocrisy is Formalism run into falsehood. When the form is there without any reality corresponding to it within, you have the hypocrite. The easiness of profession and the interestingness of outward show are apt to beguile men into this vice, apart from baser motives. The profession has so many points fitted to engage one's own attention, and to catch the eyes of others, that it is quite possible to live for it, engaged with the outside appearances of things, while all the time the inner life and character are decaying. This may happen consciously or unconsciously, and it has happened so frequently that by some persons the name of hypocrite is applied to any one who makes a clear religious profession. Duncan Mathieson is said to have asked a child in a Northern town whether there were any Christians there. The child replied with a prompt denial. The evangelist, nonplussed for a moment, remembered how things stood, and asked whether there were any hypocrites there. He was at once directed to the house of one of the truest saints he had ever known. Hypocrisy does not consist in

making a profession, but in making it when one has nothing to profess.

Bunyan's own Experience.

Even for this part of the allegory, Bunyan was able to draw from his own experience. It is very curious to think of him in the capacity of Formalist, yet here are his words. He is describing a time when he would 'go to church twice a day, and that, too, with the foremost.' 'I adored,' he says, 'and that with great devotion, even all things (both the high place, priests, clerk, vestment, service, and what else), belonging to the Church . . . had I but seen a priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life), I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him; yea, . . . I could have laid down at their feet, and have been trampled upon by them; their name, their garb, and work did so intoxicate me' (*Grace Abounding*).

Bunyan as a hypocrite is still more difficult to conceive, yet in the same book he tells us, 'for though, as yet, I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed I did all I did, either to be seen of, or to be well spoken of, by men; and thus I continued for about a twelvemonth or more.' This, however, we must take, like much else in the same strain, *cum grano salis*. This sin was peculiarly alien to his frank and truthful nature, and the following quotation seems better to express him. 'Even then' (*i.e.* at his worst time), 'if I had at any time seen wicked things by those who professed goodness, it would make my spirit tremble. As once above all the rest, when I was at the height of vanity, yet hearing one to swear, that was reckoned for a religious man, it had so great a stroke upon my spirit that it made my heart ache.' This natural abhorrence explains the singularly small attention given to Hypocrisy in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Dickens puts this vice into the forefront in his Chadband, Pecksniff, etc.; Carlyle seems always to be aware of a multitude of hypocrites in the background of his audience. Bunyan's outlook upon life is healthier, and hypocrisy is not interesting to him.

Incident and Conversation.

The two figures are closely connected, for they have much in common. Each flippantly lives on the surface of things, lightsome and fashionable, but heartless. The hypocrite is of course a formalist, and becomes only more so as he goes on. He may be in the fullest sense conscious of his hypocrisy, knowing his life to be a lie but counting upon other people not knowing it. But more frequently he deceives himself as well as others. Busy here and there upon the surface respectabilities of life and religion, he does not know that the soul of them has died out of them. Again, the formalist tends to become a conscious hypocrite. His natural delight in form inevitably tempts him to exaggerate or at least to touch up his experience and to pose as spiritual.

The Meeting.—'They made up apace,' for sham is always easier in one sense than reality. They are quite willing to make friends—in which, by the way, Formalist is not by any means like all his kind; the one-fingered handshake of the ritualist is a perpetual source of mingled pity and amusement to all human men. Their account of themselves is frank; they 'are going for praise to Mount Zion.' This is an old conventional phrase which means no more than 'doing a praiseworthy thing'; but even in Bunyan's use of it, some sarcasm is lurking. No doubt they hope to get praise as they go, as well as at the end of the journey. This is indeed the root of their offence. These are essentially theatrical religionists who play to the gallery, and can do nothing without having an audience in view. Christ in His own second temptation, in many of His words to Peter, and in still more to the Pharisees, condemned all such theatrizing. Indeed, common sense condemns it. These men expect praise for a life in which one fails to see anything specially praiseworthy. They wish to be saved; and yet, in the spirit of Little Jack Horner, they wish vast credit for what is, after all, an act of wisdom rather than of virtue.

Their Mode of Entrance.—They come tumbling over the wall. This is one of those short cuts to holiness and salvation which always prove in the end the longest way round. Dante, in the beginning of his journey, tried such a short cut up the steep mountain, but was driven back by the blessed intervention of the wild beasts, to that long and dismal journey which ended in the heights of heaven. These men plead, in defence of their entrance, the plea of custom. Their short cut is a right-of-way, justified by use and wont; nay, is it not often a 'church road' to boot?

In this there is, no doubt, a reference to the ritualistic habit of leaning back upon antiquity. There is a real and great value in authority, and he who despises the experience of the past proclaims, not his independence, but his ignorance of history. Yet it is often forgotten that all is not venerable which is old. In every generation there have been fools and knaves as well as worthy men; and an error after a thousand years, is an error still. The mere fact of authority and antiquity can set no man free from the responsibilities of individual judgment. But *custom* applies to the present as well as to the past. There are so many respectable people who have never entered in at any wicket gate, that to talk of 'one way' of entrance is to seem presumptuous. Nothing takes the edge off warnings so much as the comfortable feeling that we are lost in the crowd, and that 'the chances are I'll go where most men go.' It is this ignoring of the individual and solitary character of all religious experience that beguiles perhaps the majority of those who go astray.

The Answer to all this is the question whether it will stand a trial at law. The witness-box has nothing to do with custom, with vague feelings of hopefulness and a general sense of well-being. Law deals with evidence and facts, which are easily forgotten when a man is making out a case for himself, but come up with terrible awkwardness in cross-examination.

They meet this argument by hard fact, as they think,—'if we are in, we are in.' They are walking this stretch at least of the Christian road. It is an old fallacy which asks the question, At any given moment, suppose you were not a Christian, how many things would be different from those which as a Christian you are now doing and saying? Genuine Christianity is not a mere mass of detail. It is good works and profession springing from a relation with God. Christ is continually calling men's attention away from the questions of leaves and flowers to the essential matter of the root. The details may be imitated for other ends: they may even, as Dr. Dods expresses it, be 'done to keep Christ at a distance.' So that the answer of Christian refers men back to the Rule and the Master—great commanding facts which put all other reasonings out of court. The whole passage reminds us of Mr. Gifford's advice to John Bunyan: 'He would bid us take special heed that we took not up any truth upon trust; as from this or that, or any other man or men; but cry mightily to God, that He would convince us of the reality thereof, and set us down therein by His own Spirit in the holy word.'

Personalities.

For such men as these there is always the expedient of 'abusing the plaintiff's attorney.' They taunt Christian about the coat on his back—a sneer in which there is yet the recognition of a difference between him and them. There is something about a true Christian which the world recognizes. The worldling in his essential nakedness often sneers at the robe of righteousness, but in his heart he envies it, as the poor envy the well-clad rich. Sometimes, indeed, the worldling seems fashionably clad, but his is a stage dress at best, and not meant for rough weather. The Christian's coat may seem clumsy and ill-fitting, but it will wear and keep him warm.

So these men 'looked and laughed,' and went their separate way. It was the silliest thing to do, as silly as it was rude; but it served to take the edge off the rebuke, and soon 'they were released from the honest eyes of Christian.'

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF JEREMIAH.

JEREMIAH XXXVI. 22–24.

'Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month: and there was a fire in the brasier burning before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, that the king cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brasier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brasier. And they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.'—R.V.

EXPOSITION.

'The winter house.'—In common parlance the lower apartments are simply *el beit*—the house; the upper is the