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A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

What I Believe in and Why.

I.

I Believe in the Saint.

By the Saint I mean the Christian. But I prefer the name Saint. Christian is a nickname. It was given by the outsider, perhaps the enemy. 'The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.' Saints is the name they used of themselves. 'Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus.' 'Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.' 'All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar's household.'

I prefer the name Saint for another reason. It means something. We all claim to be Christians, or nearly all. This is a Christian country. So is Germany. It does not seem to mean anything. But we do not all claim to be Saints. How many of us do? We shrink from the name. We had rather not be called Saints. There was a merchant in Aberdeen at one time whose name was James Saint. One day a letter was sent to him but addressed by mistake to Edinburgh. When it reached the Post Office there the officials wrote on the envelope, 'No Saints in Edinburgh; try Aberdeen.' A letter came once to Ephesus. It was addressed 'To the saints which are at Ephesus.' It was claimed at once by those to whom it was addressed. How many are there now in Edinburgh or Aberdeen who would be ready to claim a letter addressed to 'the Saints'? If it were addressed to 'the Christians,' that would be different. But 'Saints' means something.

'Saints' means the people of God. 'Christians' means the people of Christ. The Saints are those who, through Christ, have been reconciled to God. They are God's own. They have been bought, with a price. A Christian may be no more than a follower of Christ in the way which John Stuart Mill recommended. But a Saint is dedicated to God, consecrated to God's service, a holy one. And that word 'holy'—all the Mills hate it. They are ready to be called Christians of a kind, but 'holy ones' is more than they can stand.

I believe in the Saint just because he has come through Christ to God. He is one with God in will. He is one in heart. He is (potentially at any rate) what God would have him to be, what

God intended that he should be when He brought him into the world. He is the highest, he is the best, on earth. There is no man who deserves to be called a man so unreservedly as the Saint. I believe in the Saint. And I will tell you why.

I.

I believe in the Saint *because I have seen an Infant.*

What have I seen in an Infant? I have seen a human BODY. It is the most wonderful piece of machinery that has ever been seen on earth. What an astonishing thing is the eye, the ear, the voice.

Have you ever held in your hand an infant's foot? Of course every mother has, and she has expressed her wonder in the way that is so natural to mothers, and so ridiculous to other people. There she is with the little foot in one hand and with the other she takes the toes one by one, 'This little pig went to market; this pig stayed at home'; and all the rest of it. But you? Have you ever held an infant's foot in your hand and felt the softness of it, the firmness of it, the warmth? Have you observed the perfect finish of every part of it, down to the last little pink toe-nail? And have you ever asked yourself what it is for? Have you ever considered that it is meant by God to be the foot of a Saint?

There is a series of books, once quite popular, called the 'Bridgewater Treatises.' One of them is known as *Bell on the Hand*. Bell was a great man in his day. Sir Charles Bell, K.G.H., F.R.S. (L. and E.), Professor in the Royal College of Surgeons and Member of the Council—that is his designation on the title-page. The language of the book is old-fashioned now and sounds somewhat stilted, but the meaning is plain enough. This is the very first sentence: 'If we select any object from the whole extent of animated nature, and contemplate it fully and in all its bearings, we shall certainly come to this conclusion: that there is design in the mechanical construction, benevolence in the endowments of the living properties,

and that good on the whole is the result? What Sir Charles Bell means is that the hand was made by God to be the hand of a Saint. And as to the 'good on the whole' that will depend upon how we use it. Do we use our own bodies, do we watch over the bodies of our infants, with this for ever in our minds, that they are intended by God to be the bodies of Saints? The Saint is the best man possible, and he needs the best possible body. I believe in the Saint because I have seen an Infant.

II.

I believe in the Saint *because I have seen a Child.*

What have I seen in a Child? I have seen a human MIND. I have seen the awakening of understanding, of intelligence. I have seen the beginning of knowledge, and of the desire for more knowledge. I have seen the first evidence of the ability to think.

Sometimes we remember this first evidence in our own life. Mary Howitt in her Autobiography says: 'I recollect a curious little epoch in my life, as we were returning one evening from a forest ramble with my father. It was the first evidence to my mind that I could think. I remember very well the new light, the gladness, the wealth of which I seemed suddenly possessed.' I have a similar recollection. I had found out how to tell the time of day. The school inspection came on. I was in the infant class. H.M. Inspector held out his watch. 'Who can tell me what o'clock it is?' There was a pause. I had learned to read a clock—but a watch? A classmate knew my accomplishment: 'He can,' with a pointed finger. And I succeeded. It was a day of triumph.

How does the opening of intelligence show itself? Chiefly as Curiosity or as Ambition. These we call instincts. We say we are born with them. And we have faculties to bring these instincts into exercise, so that the instincts do not remain mere instincts but are directed by intelligence. The faculty which curiosity uses is Observation. The faculty which ambition employs is Imagination. Both instincts are usually in evidence in the child, and both should have their opportunity. Observation should be directed and imagination should be cultivated. There is a school I know in which observation is encouraged by questions in the morning: How many buttons on your coat? How many persons whom you have seen before did you

pass on the way to school? And imagination is encouraged in the afternoon. An Old Testament tale is read, or a Greek myth, and the pupils are left to think.

When the instinct of curiosity is strong in a child he observes carefully, and he asks questions. Sometimes his questions are disconcerting, sometimes quite unanswerable, and his curiosity becomes troublesome. We lose patience. If we would remember that this instinct of curiosity is given him to make his mind the mind of a Saint, we might be more patient. If it is a strong instinct and is well trained, especially if the faculty of observation is wisely directed, he may become a great leader in science—a Newton, a Darwin, a Marconi. But he may always become a Saint.

The ambitious child builds castles in the air:

The bonnie, bonnie bairn, sits pokin' in the ase,
Glowerin' in the fire wi' his wee round face;
Lauchin' at the fuffin' lowe, what sees he there?
Ha! the young dreamer's biggin' castles in the
air.

Imagination is at work. Behind the things seen he sees something that to the observant eye is unseen:

He sees muckle castles towerin' to the moon!
He sees little sodgers pu'in' them a' doun!
Worlds whomlin' up and doun, bleezing wi' a
flare,—
See how he louns as they glimmer in the air.

When his faculty of imagination is strong, well developed, and given freedom, he may become a poet—a Homer, a Dante, a Shakespeare. But certainly he may become a Saint.

I want to put in a plea for the cultivation of the imagination. The faculty of observation is more likely to come to its own. It is developed more rapidly. It pays better. Curiosity may be troublesome in the child, but it makes the prosperous man of business. What good is likely to come by the free use of the imagination?

He'll glower at the fire and he'll keek at the
licht!
But mony sparklin' stars are swallowed up by
Nicht;
Aulder een than his are glamoured by a glare,
Hearts are broken, heads are turned, wi' castles
in the air.

That is the popular notion. It is not friendly to the imagination. It is afraid of it. But if the child's imagination is repressed, what will he do when he discovers that he is a mere machine for grinding out facts and has lost the power of appreciating poetry? We remember Darwin's bitter cry. And what will he do when he has to face the fact of God? They 'endured, as seeing him who is invisible.' How could they have endured otherwise? It seems to me that the failure of our appeal to men to have faith in God in these days is largely due to the atrophy of their imagination. They have been encouraged to act but not to think. They have been trained to see the things which are seen but not the things which are unseen. Now 'the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.' And 'what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'

I want to put in a plea for the exercise of the imagination, and that from the earliest days right on to the latest. I want you to encourage 'Make-believe.' The children play to-day as they played in Christ's day. They play at weddings, 'We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced'; they play at funerals, 'we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.' They play at 'make-believe' all the world over. Did you take note of that beautiful example among Muhammad's children which was quoted in this magazine two months ago? I want to put in a plea for the encouragement of 'make-believe' in the young and in the old. And I will give you an example:

It was an old, old, old, old lady,
And a boy who was half-past three;
And the way that they played together
Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go running and jumping,
And the boy no more could he,
For he was a thin little pale-faced fellow,
With a thin, little, twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow sunlight,
Out under the maple tree;
And the game that they played I'll tell you,
Just as it was told to me.

It was Hide-and-go-Seek they were playing,
Though you'd never have known it to be—
With an old, old, old, old lady,
And a boy with a twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down,
On his one little sound right knee;
And he'd guess where she was hiding,
In guesses One, Two, Three!

'You are in the china-closet!'
He would cry and laugh with glee—
It wasn't the china-closet;
But still he had Two and Three.

'You are in papa's big bedroom,
In the chest with the queer old key!'
And she said: 'You are warm, and warmer,
But you're not quite right,' said she.

'It can't be the little cupboard
Where Mamma's things used to be—
No, it must be the clothes-press, gran'ma!'
And he found her with his Three.

Then she covered her face with her fingers,
Which were wrinkled and white and wee,
And she guessed where the boy was hiding,
With a One and a Two and a Three.

And they never had stirred from their places
Right under the maple tree—
This old, old, old, old lady,
And the boy with the lame little knee.
This dear, dear, dear, old lady
And the boy who was half-past three.

I believe in the Saint because I have seen a
Child.

III.

I believe in the Saint *because I have seen a
Boy.*

What have I seen in a Boy? I have seen a human SOUL. I have seen the dawn of the moral sense, the recognition of right and wrong, the necessity of making a choice.

The discovery that there is right and wrong in the world, and that a decision has to be taken upon them, is made very early by some, later by others. But it is made by all. It approaches in the form of temptation. That is the way in which it approached Eve, and that is the way in which it approaches everybody.

Now temptation is not an evil in itself. It is simply a testing. 'Count it all joy,' says the

Apostle James, 'when ye fall into manifold temptations.' It is an opportunity to declare oneself, to rise above oneself, to begin to be something of the Saint God made one to be. Says Browning:

When a fight begins within himself,
A man's worth something.

And we may change the word 'man' into 'boy.' For temptation comes in boyhood and is as hard and as decisive then as at any after period of life. It has to be faced. And it is worth facing. Hear Browning again:

Was the trial sore?
Temptation sharp? 'Thank God a second time!
Why comes temptation but for man to meet
And master and make crouch beneath his foot,
And so be pedestaled in triumph?

There are three forms in which temptation meets us—three and no more. And they come, one to the body, and two to the mind. For we are not tempted on the unknown future; that would make temptation irresistible and therefore unjust. We are tempted only on the present. That is what Browning means when he says:

What,
And will you disbelieve in power to bid
Our spirit back to bounds, as though we chid
A child from scrutiny that's just and right
In manhood?

If we have used the body well, remembering that it is the body of a Saint, we shall meet the first temptation unhampered. The temptations of the mind are to its instincts. They come to the instinct of ambition or of curiosity. And again, if the faculties that guide these instincts have been well disciplined, the temptation is fairly and even hopefully encountered. The body, ambition, curiosity—they are all gifts of God; and as temptation comes only to God's gifts we may be sure that if we are faithful no temptation will take us but such as we are able to bear, for God will make also the way of escape so that we may be able to endure it. And then we shall be ready to sing with James, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love him.'

Temptation comes first to the body. It came so to Eve, 'When she saw that the tree was good

for food.' It came so to Christ. 'He hungered; and the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become bread.' It is the temptation to put the needs or the appetites of the body first. The boy has discovered good and evil; he has to make a choice; if he chooses *duty before pleasure*, he has won that battle.

Then temptation comes to the mind, and first to the instinct of ambition. It came so to Eve: 'and that it was pleasant to the eyes.' Eve had begun to build her castles in the air. It came so to Christ: 'And he led him up, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them.' It is the offer of *power without sacrifice*. Jesus will obtain the authority and the glory, but not without the sacrifice of the Cross. For there is no power worth having but the power that is built upon love. Eve might have had her highest ambition satisfied if she had sacrificed her selfishness for the love of God. And there is no stretch of imagination that can conceive the rewards which God has promised to them that love Him. But the love of God is only sacrificial love.

The last temptation is to the instinct of curiosity. It came so to Eve: 'And that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise.' It came so to Christ: 'And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence.' It is the pursuit of *knowledge without reverence*.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.

Eve obtained more knowledge than she had; it was 'a tree to make one wise.' But God was not with her as she passed into her new experience. Jesus was tempted to enter upon a new experience also—an experience into which the Father had not sent Him, and in which therefore the Father would not have been with Him. This is the temptation against which James warns us when he says, 'Each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed.' 'If you play with temptation,' said Mary Slessor, 'do not expect God will deliver you.'

What so false as truth is,
False to thee?
Where the serpent's tooth is,
Shun the tree—

Where the apple reddens
 Never pry—
 Lest we lose our Edens,
 Eve and I.

All through life the body has to be cared for as the body of a Saint. All through life the mind has to be educated as the mind of a Saint. And all through life temptation comes to the soul, and the soul has to meet it as the soul of a Saint. But it is in boyhood that the temptation comes first. I believe in the Saint because I have seen a Boy.

IV.

I believe in the Saint *because I have seen a Young Man.*

What have I seen in a Young Man? I have seen a human SPIRIT. I have seen a man face to face with God.

Speak to him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

We have seen the awakening of bodily life in infancy, of mental life in childhood, of moral life in boyhood; when does the awakening of the spiritual life take place? In early manhood nearly always. An American psychologist some time ago sent out inquiries to a large number of persons whose spiritual life was clearly awake, and asked them to say when the awakening took place. The answer of the great majority was, 'about the age of eighteen.'

And that is what we should expect. For it is often either human love or human sorrow that is the occasion of its birth. In the *Life and Letters of J. P. Struthers* there are many extracts from the diary of that very observant Scottish minister. This is one: 'I have had some very happy talks with my young communicants. One girl told me that the 45th Psalm impressed her at her sister's funeral some years ago. We had sung "Her fellow virgins following," etc. A lad, too, told me with tears that it was love to his sweetheart that brought him to Christ. I thought that very bonnie.'

It is the discovery of love as a power in life that leads to the discovery of God. And the first effect of the discovery is freedom. It is the release of

life from the restraints of tutors and governors. That is the first effect. It is still duty before pleasure, but duty is no longer a commandment uttered from without, it is a sense of personal responsibility felt within—responsibility, too, not to man but to God. What talents has a young man? As soon as his spirit awakens to God, his thought is that these talents are gifts of God, and that he has to render an account of the use of them. Is it the speaking talent? When they asked Daniel Webster what was the greatest thought that he ever had, he answered, 'My personal responsibility as a speaker to God.' Is it the talent of Song? Canon Scott Holland, in his book of 'Personal Studies,' speaks of Jenny Lind's 'intense conviction that her art was a gift of God, to be dedicated to His service.'

Where is the use of lip's red charm,
 The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,
 And the blood that blues the inside arm—

Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,
 The earthly gift to an end divine?
 'A lady of clay is as good, I trow.'

Or is the first thought the thought of Failure? If it is not first, it is pretty sure to be second, and a bitter thought it is. The boy has already had his moments of humiliation, even of remorse. But this is different. This is the sense of sin. The wrong choice has been made again and again, and it has been followed by sorrow and repentance and new effort. But now the thought of failure is the thought that 'against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.'

That is why we now see the possible Saint at the parting of the ways. His body is to be the body of a Saint—therefore did God make it so fearfully and wonderfully. His mind is to be the mind of a Saint—that also is the purpose of God, and the making of the mind of a Saint is more, as it seems to me, than the making of his body. And the soul is tested, day after day, and by all the temptations that are common to man, that he may be 'perfect and entire,' as James says, 'wanting nothing.' But it will all be in vain, and there will never be the Saint God gave body mind and soul for, unless the spirit, face to face with the fact of God, sees that there is forgiveness that He may be feared.

The forgiveness is in Christ. That is where

Christ comes in. He has been heard of before. Very likely He has been found altogether lovely before. But His mission on earth was to sinners, and it was to forgive them. We do not know Christ if we have never heard Him say, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee; Daughter, be of good cheer, thy faith hath made thee whole.

The last thought is of Purpose. When the—what do we call it?—when the conversion to God has taken place—(but it may take place in as many different ways as there are persons to be converted. We err here as often and as seriously as anywhere. We insist on our own conversion being after the pattern of some other Saint's conversion, perhaps after the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. But God deals with each of us differently, because we differ each from the other)—when the conversion has come to pass, though it may be nothing more than the awakened consciousness of love to Him who loved and gave Himself, with the relief that accompanies it, the last thought is, 'What wilt thou have me to do?'

And the doing is not to be a single act, or a single line of action, but readiness for every act and every possible line of action. It is the offering of the whole person for God's use. Do we call it surrender of the will? It is that. Do we call it consecration of head and heart, of hands and feet and voice? It is that also. It is what the Psalmist meant when he said, 'My times are in thy hand.' It is what the poet of our own day meant when he took the Psalmist for his text, and said:

So, take and use Thy work:

Amend what flaws may lurk,

What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!

My times be in Thy hand!

Perfect the cup as planned!

Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

It is the sense of responsibility with a new note. The new note is confidence, childlike confidence in God. He that has begun a good work in us will perfect it. And He will perfect every part of it. There will be no broken arcs. Livingstone is reported to have said, 'I am immortal till my work is done.' He could have said more. He could have said that every part of his work was immortal. Browning said it:

No work begun shall ever pause for death.

I believe in the Saint because I have seen a Young Man.

V.

I believe in the Saint because I have seen a Man in Middle Life.

What have I seen in a Man in Middle Life? I have seen a MAN. I speak no longer of any part of a man, body or mind or soul or spirit; I speak of a man. I speak of a man of character and influence, the outcome of faithfulness to God's purpose in infancy, childhood, boyhood, youth—the outcome under God of the well-developed body of an infant, the trained intelligence of a child, the self-mastery of a boy, the young man's touch with God and continued fellowship through Christ. I have seen a Man; it is but one step more and I can say that I have seen a Saint.

Now the first thing noticeable about a man in middle life is that he has discovered the Second Commandment. The First Commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.' The young man discovered that. It was his great momentous discovery. The Second Commandment is, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour.' That is the discovery of the man in middle life. He has a duty to society. He takes part in the public life of the place in which he dwells. He is a politician (arresting the process of degeneration to which that word seems so fatally liable). He is a patriot, recognizing that other races have just the same right as his own race to life and liberty. And he makes his character tell, he makes his influence felt.

First of all by his *Sympathy*. He understands. He has gained understanding partly, perhaps very largely, through the cultivation of his imagination. And, because he understands, his sympathy is intelligent and helpful. He understands at a distance, and his understanding bridges the distance. You never heard him say, 'But I don't believe in missions.' He even understands at that greater distance which is degradation. He also is come to seek and to save that which is lost.

When Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff was leaving Egypt, Nubar Pasha called. 'If you must go,' he said, 'see that you send a man of heart; mind not about his being a clever engineer; that is work easily got; but before all, send a man of heart.'

And he makes his influence felt by his *In-*

dividuality. He is himself. Referring everything first to God, his words are always, 'Lord, what wilt thou have *me* to do?' Individuality is not eccentricity. The eccentric man has become lopsided through uneven development. He is usually deficient in observation. Nor is it opinionativeness. The opinionative man is usually deficient in imagination. The true man is an all-round man, but he is himself and no copy of another. This is the man he is:

'Only to-day,' says Dr. G. H. Rendall, 'I had an invitation to join in a memorial to one who, to a memorable degree, earned the esteem and trust of all who knew him as a solicitor in a great city. And how did he attain it? I will quote. "Because his friends will remember him as one who never failed them; in whom the pressure of work, or the fatigue of work, made not the slightest difference to his immediate and whole-hearted response to any call for sympathy, encouragement, or counsel: and whose encouragement and counsel were always based on a swift and just perception of facts, and a confident assumption that only the best instincts and the most unselfish ends would be allowed the last word. He expected them to think and act like their best selves just as he expected that of himself." That is a true judgment, which his closest friends—and they made a large circle—would all endorse.'

That is what I mean by a Man. If he is not a Saint, he is well on the way. I believe in the Saint because I have seen a Man in Middle Life.

VI.

I believe in the Saint *because I have seen a Saint*. 'I saw a Saint'—this is Christina Rossetti; our most religious poet. It is a little difficult to listen to, but I will explain:

I saw a Saint.—How canst thou tell that he
Thou sawest was a Saint?—
I saw one like to Christ so luminously
By patient deeds of love, his mortal taint
Seemed made his groundwork for humility.

What is that? It is likeness to Christ—an unmistakable mark of a Saint. Christ was more than a Saint; He was a Saviour. But He was a

Saint. Body, mind, soul, spirit all were at their best and made the best Man, the Man and the only Man wholly after God's own heart. Likeness to Christ *luminously*. That is, in the full light of day, with all eyes on him, so that men see, and they cannot help seeing, that he is like to Christ. That is the first thing, like to Christ luminously. But there is another:

And when he marked me downcast utterly
Where foul I sat and faint,
Then more than ever Christ-like kindled he;
And welcomed me as I had been a saint,
Tenderly stooping low to comfort me.

The second thing, you see, is the faculty of discovering other saints.

Now that is a rather rare faculty. It is easy enough to discover sinners. We have but to cast our eyes round us, the sinners are on every hand, we cannot miss them, and we rarely do. But the faculty of discovering saints is rare. And it is very precious. For sometimes the saints are discovered among the sinners:

And when he marked me downcast utterly
Where foul I sat and faint.

Is it possible that to discover a saint in a sinner is only another way of turning a sinner into a saint? It is very likely. That is apparently what Christina Rossetti means. For the last verse of her poem is:

Christ bade him, 'Do thou likewise.' Where-
fore he
Waxed zealous to acquaint
His soul with sin and sorrow, if so be
He might retrieve some latent saint:—
'Lo, I, with the child God hath given to me!'

Some latent saint, you see. That is some saint whose sainthood is not quite visible yet. How is the latent saint turned into a luminous saint? By sympathy, by hope, and perseverance, and faith, by never doubting that there are saints round us as well as sinners, and that God has bade us—'Do thou likewise.'

I believe in the Saint because I have seen a Saint.