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In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

A Peep into the Future.[1]

'Lo, I am with you all the days.'—Mt 28^{20}.

Wasn't that a dreadfully exciting cricket match they had at Melbourne some months back? Fancy the Australians knocking up whole six hundred in one innings: and then Hobbs and Sutcliffe staying in all day for two hundred and eighty-three for none: and yet the next time they came out to carry on, away went Hobbs, clean bowled the second ball, and England pretty well collapsed. And so it went on, one exciting thing after another. Splendid, mustn't it have been, to watch! with one's heart in one's mouth all the time. But wasn't it funny that on the first day of the match we got the early scores long before the cricket began? The game was timed to start at eleven o'clock. And yet, when you came down to breakfast that day about eight, there it was in the papers already, Collins out for nine, and things going splendidly for England. Of course it wasn't really and truly before they began. But the Australians must think us dreadful slug-a-beds, for they are out and about and batting and bowling hours before we think of stopping snoring. Nine hours, isn't it, they are ahead? Don't go and put that down in an exam, for it's only a guess! Still, say it is nine hours. Then, of course, when, with them, it is twelve o'clock and they had been batting for an hour, with us it was still only three in the morning. And that's how the papers had the news so early. Pretty slick and clever of them, isn't it?

And yet we all can do things like that. When a fresh term starts, nobody knows what it will bring, or what is going to happen. We have to wait and see, so people always say. And yet, before it comes I can tell you heaps of things about it—that new term that hasn't started yet. For one thing there will be some wet Saturday afternoons, when it will be dreadfully hard not to be sulky and cross and peevish and bad tempered, not to whine that you are tired of all your toys and sick of all the games that any one can suggest: not to pout and grumble that you don't want this, and won't have that, nor to stand all cross and in a huff with your nose pressed quite flat against the window pane (you've no idea how funny you look from outside! If you had, even you would have to laugh a little). But you can't see that, of course, and there you stay, sulking and fretting, whimpering, 'It's a shame that Sundays, when you have to go to church, are always fine and dry; and Saturdays, when there are such heaps on heaps of lovely things that you could do, are always, always wet.' No, not always! But—— Oh yes! though it hasn't come yet, I can tell you this about the term beginning, there are going to be wet Saturdays in it for sure.

And there are going to be such exciting stories that will make you quite creepy and thrilly, when the hero is bound and ready to be tortured by the Red Indians, and with that there comes the crack of a rifle from the woods, and the chief pitches forward on his face, and then another shot that cuts the bonds that tie the hero, and away he leaps into the forest, free. That is good shooting. Don't you go trying to do that with baby as the hero, or you will make a mess of it. And if you do, don't you blame me! Yes, there are going to be such exciting stories, and it is certain to be very very hard to put them down, and turn to your French exercise, all about things like this—'No, the uncle of Jane's brother-in-law has no pens; but, the nephew of the brother of the gardener's stepson had a handkerchief.' Had! had! What has he gone and done with it? Lost it, the stupid fellow! It will be hard to put away the stories and stick into that! Yet sure as sure it will have to be done.

And there will be evenings, I know all about it though it hasn't come as yet, when bedtime will be there before you know, just when the games are at the loveliest bit of them; or just when Dad has begun telling wonderful tales in the firelight with the flames leaping up and down as excited over them as you are, and all the shadows on the wall coming crowding in, nearer and nearer, to hear too; or just when Mummy has taken you upon her knees, and you have snuggled close to her so comfy and happy. And off you have to go; and the long passage is so dark, and your heart goes flutter, flutter, pit-a-pat, and pat-a-pit, and it's all horrid. Oh, I can tell you lots of things about it, all before it has begun; am every bit as clever as the paper people.

There is one thing I know. I am quite, quite sure of this—that all the time, all through the term, you

[1] By the Reverend A. J. Gossip, M.A., Aberdeen.

are going to have the dearest Friend beside you, and that He will be always there to take care of you, and think of you and guard you and love you. I am quite certain about that. But how can you be, you ask, before it begins? Well, there have been other terms, you know; and He was always there in them, and He has given us His promise that He is going to be with you all through this one too. 'Lo! I am with you all the days.' That's a promise, isn't it? All the days—not just the sunny ones, but the wet ones too, when it is so hard not to be grumpy. He is going to be there to help you about that. And not only when you are out at play, and having a jolly time, but when you've got to bundle off to bed, or give up what you would so like to do, and it's so very difficult not to get cross. Whenever you are in a tight hole, He is going to be there to bring you through. And what a difference that makes! Some of you wee bodies were at a party lately. You were so happy and excited and eager before it came. But when you were really there you got so shy and scared! For every one was strange, and you felt far from home; were going to cry, I think, now weren't you? But then you caught sight of Mother. And that made everything all right at once. You weren't the least afraid with Mummy there, for of course she would take care of you. And, though you often keeked across your shoulder to make quite sure that she was still there, once you saw her you were just as happy and as merry as anybody in the room.

And whatever this new term is going to bring us, once we know that Jesus is to be beside us all the time, why, we can be quite happy, can't we? For of course He will take care of us. And He is certain to be always, always there. That's one thing sure about this new time coming. Though it hasn't begun yet I can tell you this, that Jesus will be with you all the days.

The Name and the Tower.[1]

'The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.'—Pr 18^{10}.

'How can a name be a tower?' Well, a tower is a place of refuge. Years ago when wild men used to come over from the Continent, to lay waste the country and kill the people, towers were built, into which the people could run, and be safe. 'But,' you will say, 'that does not answer the question. It only alters the word. How can a name be a *refuge*?'

I will tell you. Years ago when I was a boy, I was in a place where I ought not to have been (have you ever been there?), and suddenly I felt a heavy hand on my shoulder, and a gruff voice said, 'Now you young rascal I have caught you, and I am going to give you a good thrashing.' Now of course you boys would not do as I did. You are too brave, but I began to cry, and I said, 'If you thrash me I shall tell my father.' 'Who is your father?' said the voice. I mentioned his name. 'Oh, well, you run away and don't let me find you here again.' So I missed the whipping. How? By mentioning my father's name. My father's name was my *refuge*. So you see a name can be a refuge, and because a tower is a refuge, a name can be a tower. 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower.' If you need shelter and protection against the enemies of your soul, you must run into 'The name of the Lord.'

But a tower is more than a refuge. It is a *storehouse*. Great quantities of grain and other things were stored in the strong towers, in order that there might be plenty of food for the poor hunted people, and sometimes wells were sunk inside the towers that there might be a plentiful supply of water, if the tower were besieged.

Can a name be a storehouse? Yes, there is a sense in which a name may be a storehouse. In one town where I lived during a very hard winter, in which many people suffered through extreme poverty, I collected a lot of money, and then had cards printed with my name on one side, and the other side like this:

COAL
BREAD
MEAT
SUGAR
TEA.

When one of these suffering people came to me I would put down so much coal, and so much bread, etc., and this card was taken to the tradesmen concerned, and when they saw my name they would give the person the goods indicated. My name represented a storehouse.

The name of the Lord is a tower, because it is a *storehouse*. 'My God,' says the great teacher St. Paul, 'shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory, through Christ Jesus.' The name of Jesus is the magic Name. His Name represents the storehouse of God. If we need help, strength, comfort, peace, we may get any or all

[1] By the Reverend Albert J. Matthews, Rotherham.

of these by running into the Name of the Lord, which is 'a strong tower,' a refuge and a storehouse.

But a tower is even more than a refuge and a storehouse. It is a *shield*. A place of defence. A stronghold from behind which we fight, and win victories over all the enemies of our highest life.

Centuries ago, a Prince who had been banished from his home lived in the mountains of Austria. He had a strong band of men, and they each carried a big black shield, on which was the name of the Prince in big white letters. These men were the terror of the countryside, and the soldiers that were brought against them ran away when they saw the black shield with the white letters. The soldier might be a very tall, strong man, and the one who carried the shield a little man, but the soldier dare not face the shield with the dread Prince's name upon it. It was the name he feared, not the man. So you see that a name may be a shield. 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower,' because it is a shield and you can fight from behind it, put up a successful defence, and win a great victory against your enemies.

What though a thousand host engage,
A thousand worlds my soul to shake,
I have a shield to quell their rage,
And drive the alien armies back;
Portrayed it bears a bleeding Lamb;
I dare believe in Jesu's Name.

'The name of the Lord is a strong tower: *the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*'

We must run into it or it will be no good to us. How are we to run into it? This is a very important question. If you were going to run from here to —— you would have to use your legs, but you do not run into the name of the Lord with your legs, you run into it with your mind.

Hush! Be quite still! I am going away for a little while. I shall not be gone more than two minutes, but you must sit quite still while I am away. I am going to—to—London! I just close my eyes thus . . . I am now in London. I am at Charing Cross. I am now in Trafalgar Square. I can see the Lions, and St. Martin's Church, and the National Gallery. I am going down Whitehall, past the Life Guards. I am now on Westminster Bridge, and can see the Houses of Parliament. . . . Here I am back again at ——. I have not been long, have I? And yet I have really been to London. My body was so heavy, I had to leave it here, but my mind went, and had my body been light enough, my mind would have carried my body also to London, and then I should have been *all there*. You see, I simply thought I was in London, and I was there.

Now we run into the name of the Lord in the same fashion. We run into it with our minds. We think of it, and we are in it. Isn't it easy? And it is a *strong tower*, a refuge, a storehouse, and a shield. If we are pursued by difficulty, or temptation, or sorrow; if we are troubled at home, or school, or at business, we can run in a moment into the name of the Lord, and that name we shall find a refuge, a storehouse of strength and power and a defence, that no enemy can break down, for:

'The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.'

The Christian Year.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Be Children—Be Men.

'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'—Mt 18^{3}.

'When I became a man, I put away childish things.'—1 Co 13^{11}.

Proverbial philosophy does not lose its popularity, although it would be easy to arrange most of the wise saws of nations in parallel columns, each contradicting the other. These rival maxims sometimes only illustrate the danger of illustrations; sometimes they give us half the truth in a vivid form, and may fairly be said to balance without destroying each other—like the familiar sayings: 'Penny wise is pound foolish,' and 'Take care of the pence.' But when we turn to those aphorisms which deal not with the conduct of common life, but with the nature of man, his duties, and his destiny, we find contradictions which are more instructive, because less easily explained. We find principles which claim to be more than half-truths, and in which, nevertheless, the thesis is false if wholly divorced from its antithesis. Many of the verbal contradictions in which St. Paul (in particular) seems almost to revel, reach down to that fundamental antithesis which the philosophers from Heraclitus downwards have recognized, that antithesis which we diversely figure to ourselves as matter and spirit, the physical and the psychical,

time and eternity, the seen and the unseen, the inward and the outward—all inadequate metaphors of the double form in which reality is presented to us.

Whether or no we can accept this parallelism as an ultimate metaphysical principle, it seems to be valid as a working hypothesis, until we reach the deepest problems of the spiritual life. There, in the unplumbed depths of personality, lies the meeting-place of the two lines of our knowledge, in a region not to be mapped out by speculation or traversed by experience, but which the religious consciousness can never cease to press after, or despair of finding. Language was not framed to penetrate such mysteries. Our Lord speaks of eternal life now in the present and now in the future tense, and bids us at once to lose and to save our souls: St. Paul says, 'I, yet not I,' 'dying, yet behold, we live': and we are able in some measure to guess what these sublime contradictions mean, and to see as in a glass darkly truths which surpass human comprehension.

Even the simpler antitheses which do not touch directly on the profound problems referred to are well worth thinking out—such as 'Be children' and 'Be men.'

1. What characteristics of the childlife ought we to suppose that our Lord had chiefly in His mind when He told us that unless we receive the kingdom of God as little children, we shall not enter therein?

(1) Our generation has witnessed the growth of a quite new scientific interest in the human child. Not only have his mental processes been carefully studied, with the result that he is now beginning to be taught in a comparatively rational manner, in place of the incredibly stupid and brutal methods of one hundred years ago, but biology now bids us see in the little child an anticipation of the future of the human race. As the infant before birth recapitulates the whole process of evolution from the lowest forms of life, so, we are told, it rather overshoots the mark, and in its relatively enormous brain and puny limbs indicates in perhaps unwelcome fashion the future triumph of mind over matter. However this may be, science forbids us to regard the child-type as altogether inferior to that of the adult, and rather confirms the truth of a sentence from that charming mediæval mystical work, *The Revelations of Juliana of Norwich*—'To me was showed no higher stature than childhood.'

The hackneyed story of the words, 'You Greeks are always children,' spoken by an Egyptian—a member of a race which was never young—points perhaps to the real secret of the brilliant achievements won by the Greeks. They seem to have retained their freshness and receptiveness even to old age.

This receptiveness is the most salient attribute of the child-character. The man, then, who wishes to learn all that life can teach him will not be very ambitious to appear 'knowing' to himself or to others, and will be particularly careful not to *despise* other people and their opinions.

The words of the aged Ignatius on his way to execution, 'Now I am beginning to be a disciple,' should mark the limit of legitimate self-complacency, whatever we are trying to learn or to do. And we should try to be open to *all* the higher interests. If Spinoza and Marcus Aurelius were right in saying that 'our rank in the scale of being is determined entirely by the objects in which we are interested'; if the German mystics were right in saying, 'What we see, that we are'—then our very life must consist in freshness of interest, in quickness of eye and ear to see the finger of God everywhere, and hear His voice.

(2) Next, the tastes of the child are simple and unspoiled: his heart and imagination are pure. We fear there are many who, long before they have left school, have tested the truth of that terrible but most salutary aphorism of Horace:

> Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcumque infundis acescit.

If the vessel be not clean, whatever you pour into it turns sour. And if this has ever been so in our case, do not let us suppose that what is forgotten is necessarily forgiven. Absolution is not gained by lapse of time. We must make up our minds to suffer in retrieving any lost ground.

(3) Thirdly, childhood is a time of warm natural affection. Home has been to all of you a sanctuary of gentle and unselfish love. Let it remain so, until you have homes of your own. Let there be no interval of hardness and coldness, no loosening of ties which once were close and dear.

(4) Fourthly, no child ever doubted whether energy was in 'good form' or found his chief pleasure in vicarious athletics. The philosopher Locke, two hundred years ago, expresses a wish that young men could be 'weaned from that sauntering humour wherein some out of custom let a good part of their life run uselessly away without either business or

recreation.' And Mark Pattison notices the same tendency in one of his sermons.

(5) Lastly, let those who value the child-spirit and the promises made to it put far away from them the faithless disillusioned temper which says, 'There is nothing new and nothing true,' and adds, that 'it does not matter!' 'Nil admirari' is not, as Horace thought, the way to be happy; it is the way to be bored; and boredom is a dangerous state. It is the first symptom of the deadly sin of *acedia*, which you will find duly catalogued, in very bad company, in all the old Catholic books about morals. Among the sayings which tradition ascribes to our Lord is this: 'He who wonders shall reign, and he who reigns shall rest.'

2. We can only touch briefly on the other side of our antithesis—that which bids us 'put away childish things.' What are the childish things which we are to abolish? What is the meaning of τέλειος, 'perfect, full-grown,' which occurs so often as the characteristic attribute of the complete Christian character? What is the meaning of 'Ego sum cibus *grandium*,' which St. Augustine heard the Lord saying to him? Perhaps the answers may be briefly comprehended in one sentence—we are to aim at steady concentration of purpose, and we are not to allow ourselves, like children, to be carried hither and thither by every wind that blows.

When the resolve to be and to do something particular is once formed, there are many temptations which cease to trouble us. 'Do the first duty which comes to hand,' as Carlyle says, 'and the next will have already become clearer.' You will soon find your work; and through and by it God will lead you gradually up to the 'perfect man'—the full-grown, mature man who yet retains in him the sunny heart of the little child, which will not suffer the roseate hues of life's early dawn to fade into the light of common day, but will rather make your path a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.[1]

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Three 'Ours' in the Lord's Prayer.

'Our Father'—'our bread'—'our sins.'—Mt $6^{9.\ 11.\ 12}$.

We all know the Lord's Prayer. Just for this reason, it may be worth while for us to inquire whether we know the first word of it. That word is 'Our.' It is used three times: 'Our Father,' 'our bread,' 'our sins.'

1. *Our sins.*—Let us take them in the reverse order, and begin with the last—'our sins.' We are not going to speak now about our personal sins. Certainly a man's sin is—like everything else which is part of his experience—intensely personal. It is something he chooses in his own will, caresses in his own imagination, cherishes in his own heart, does in his own life. But that is not the aspect of sin on which we now touch. For sin—moral disease or moral degradation of any kind—is also a thing we share in common. The reason of this is, partly, what we call the solidarity of humanity, which is just a modern scientific way of saying what St. Paul and the older theologies called, in a pictorial way, the sin of the whole race in Adam. But the reason is also in the complexity of the structure of human society. Our lives are all interdependent, interlocked. This, of course, is true of good as well as evil. But as regards the element of evil or sin in people's lives, it means that, after all which may be said and, often, must be said in condemnation and even in punishment of the individual criminal or drunkard or prostitute or waster or unemployable, we must feel that all the responsibility and blame are not to be passed on to him. We must take our share of responsibility and of blame for sins and crimes which are traceable, in part at least, to social complications and injustices, between man and man, or class and class, or nation and nation, for in these we are all sharers. Such sins are 'our sins.' Indeed, how much of the whole social order in which we live and in which our consciences so easily acquiesce is but one vast sin against God and against man. That is the meaning of 'our sins.' We have no right to say the Lord's Prayer if we have no sense of it.

2. *Our bread.*—Perhaps we may, for our present purpose, express this better by saying 'money' instead of 'bread'; it denotes all that sustains and nourishes life, and money is the general term for the means of that.

Now there is nothing in which men can more easily forget and more distinctly deny their social responsibilities than in the making of money. Many people remember these responsibilities and seek to a greater or less degree to discharge them in their use of money which they have made, and may be even generous givers. But that is not the immediate point. This word 'ours,' in relation to

[1] W. R. Inge, *Faith and Knowledge*, 125.

money, applies to the making of it quite as much as —if not, indeed, more than—to the spending of it. When our Lord taught us to pray, 'Give us our bread,' it means that a man must realize that, in the making of money, he is a member of the human and the Christian brotherhood, and the more our industrial order expresses that, the more may it be called Christian. Plainly, a great deal in our present industrial life—not on one side of it only, but on all sides—is a flat contradiction of it. We need, we all need, the spirit of this 'our.' We do not for a moment say that this will solve our social and industrial problems; these must be worked out in the terms of political and economic facts, and no mere word—not even a word from the Lord's Prayer—will do that for us as by the wave of a magic wand. But this word names the spirit in which these problems are to be approached and in which they may be solved. It is this spirit for which we pray every time we say this prayer. Would that here, as everywhere, we lived—and devised legislation, and carried on business, and made money—'more nearly as we pray.'

3. *Our Father.* Now—and this brings us to the third of these 'ours,' which is the first in the Lord's Prayer itself—is all this too high for practical life? Can we expect people to feel this sense of a corporate moral responsibility which will say 'our sins,' or this community of interest which will say, in even so engrossing a thing as the making of money, 'our bread'? We are sometimes told that we must believe in human nature and its capacities of idealism. Well, as to that, we believe, with Pascal, that human nature is capable of great nobleness and also of great baseness. It is capable of high idealisms when it has a true and adequate inspiration towards them; but, without that, it can be a very pharisee as regards the sinful, and can be more ruthlessly selfish about money than about any other thing. What, then, is that which will inspire human nature to say, in the sense which has been so briefly indicated, 'our sins' and 'our bread'?

Human nature will never fully say, in relation to others' spiritual needs, 'our sins' and, in relation to their temporal needs, 'our bread,' till it says, first, 'our Father.' What all our humanitarian and altruistic ideals need ultimately is nothing other than the basis of religion—not the religion of mere theological dogma or ecclesiastical ceremony, but the religion of Him who Himself bore the sins of the world and who, though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, became poor.

There are no two things which more essentially belong to one another, although they are so often separated, than *religion* and *humanity*. Certainly Jesus Christ said so. He called men, in the first place and as no one else has ever called them, to begin a new relationship with God in their own hearts and lives; and no man obeys His voice who does not respond by saying, 'I will arise and go to my Father.' On the other hand, a religion which does not bear fruit in humanity—in humanity as contrasted with pharisaism and with selfishness and with callousness—is something which, as the parable of the Last Judgment shows, Jesus Christ simply does not and will not even recognize. The faith which prays 'Our Father,' with, flowing out of it, the brotherhood which prays and which lives 'our sins' and 'our bread'—that is Christianity, that is a gospel and a law alike for the individual and for society, that is what will save the world.[1]

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Nature Expectant: A Harvest Sermon.

'The eyes of all things wait upon thee.'—Ps 145^{15}.

'The earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth.'—Ro 8^{19}.

In these last days a hush has fallen upon Nature. The great factories of life and growth have uttered the warning note for stopping time in the world of vegetation. The bustle and clamour and movement of the great wheels of the seasons are dying down into a drowsy hum.

There is a wealth of meaning in this silence. It is not the hush of despair, but the hush of expectancy. It is not the hush of waiting for death, but the hush of waiting for God.

Should *we* not join with this ancient Hebrew singer and the great Apostle to read this message from the Autumn stillness to-day? For the unquenchable hope of Nature speaks to us of the steadfast and enduring constancy of God. How faltering our faith has been! Sometimes we shake our gloomy heads over the continued drought of summer, sometimes we grow fearful in the rainy weeks of a wet August; only to find at harvest-time that God has kept His word. 'Seedtime and harvest shall not fail.' God always keeps His word. It would indeed be a very mechanical and

[1] P. Carnegie Simpson, in *C.W.P.* cvii. 306.

indifferent proceeding if, year after year, God brought it about that each tiller of the soil should have the same invariable return. But, taking the world as a whole, the harvest is always sufficient, and more than sufficient, for the life on it. If there is failure in the distribution, that failure is man's, not God's.

And now what are the different elements in this air of expectancy that broods over Nature, and finds a voice for itself in man?

1. The first of them is *thankfulness*. The reaped fields of Autumn are full of memory—memory of a promise unfailingly fulfilled: the hush of Autumn's expectancy has in it the suggestion of that backward look of thankfulness. 'This hast thou done for us, O God; in the days to come nothing is too good for us to expect from thy hands.' And we may regard Nature's processes as God's splendid sacraments of omnipotent grace. As in Nature, so is it in the spiritual life. God has tried us often, but He has never done us any wrong. When all is said, we have nothing else to remember but His kindness. Let us look back and render trustful gratitude to God. The thankful heart is the religious heart. It is in gratitude that true Christianity begins. What is our faith as we kneel beneath the Cross of Christ? It is just gratitude, adoring gratitude to One who has given us what we longed to have, and what we could never procure for ourselves. But the thankful spirit, even for material blessings, is already a preparation of the way that leads to the deeper gratitudes of faith. The naturally grateful heart is an embryonic Christian. 'Give me a child with a heart disposed to thankfulness,' says a religious teacher, 'and I shall never have any fear about its giving itself in love to the forgiving God.'

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all His love.

2. A second element in this trustful expectancy of Creation is that of satisfied *patience*. For the waiting hush of Autumn is the hush of waiting for the Winter storms. '*Sat est vixisse*,' cries a brave old Roman poet, in the face of death—'it is enough to have lived.' 'Was it not a great thing,' he seems to say, 'that I should have received the gift of life? Why should I complain if death be the condition on which it was granted? This gift of life has satisfied me. O Death, I yield myself, content, to thee!' A noble attitude! But Autumn has a nobler message even than that.

For it is not really death that Autumn expects so patiently. It is only another travail-sleep, out of which will come a fresh birth of life. It is as though God has come to His handmaid, Nature, and announced a fresh conception; and she is bowing beneath His command to say, 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good to him.' So, when God calls us to go down into the darkness of sorrow, and endure its desolation and cold storm, let us accept it in a spirit of expectant patience. That will never be God's last word to us. Yea, even when we feel the autumn-time of life upon us—feel the vital fires dying down, the forces of our being creeping in and in, in preparation for the grave, let us remember that our long enjoyment of this warm, kind world is a promise graciously fulfilled, a promise which was denied to many a fair young life round which love wove fond hopes and dreams. Nay, neither for them nor for us is death life's natural consummation.

Whatever crazy Sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly longed for death.

'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant—
O life, not death for which we pant,
More life and fuller that we want.

Yes, and it is life we shall have. That very God-given yearning is a Divine pledge of its fulfilment. Not in mockery does God give men such a holy desire. We shall not die but live. There is life more abundant beyond.

3. Besides the note of thankfulness, and the note of confident patience, there is a sigh of *longing*. There is nothing contradictory in this. To be content with God is just the other side of being discontented with oneself. God is always the same. But His creation passes on from phase to phase. It is always changing, always restless, as if it never felt itself fit for abiding communion with Him. God seems to pass and repass through creation, and we catch glimpses of His glory, but He never seems to stay. And Nature seems to sigh and groan, longing to shake off the bondage of change and decay—to be transformed, made perfect for the Divine fellowship. The hush of expectancy that has fallen on the forest leaves is like the hush that

falls on a crowd waiting for the passing of a King. Nature seems to remember how she robed herself in the green mantle of Hope, in Spring, and waited for the passing of the Lord of Life. She spoke to Him a while, and told Him all her plans. But that day passed. . . . And she remembers also how, clad in the variegated glory of Summer fruitfulness, she waited for the passing of the Lord of Harvest. And He came. His golden train swept through the fields. And now the last of His retinue is passing. . . . And once more she waits in russet robe, where 'the Autumn fires die out along the lanes,' waits for the coming of her King that she may speak to Him of the transformation-sleep of Death, of which He is also Lord. So she sighs—her very changing is the speechless voice of her longing—for the robe of perfect fitness, that she may stand at last for ever in the Presence-chamber of God.

It is a parable of our changeful hearts. We know that Christ is here always ready to answer to our many moods—always passing and repassing along the dusty ways of our life. And though this should always fill us with a divine thankfulness and contentment, yet it should also fill us with a divine discontent—discontent with ourselves. We should wait with the groaning creation for the manifestation of the sons of God. For only when we reach the stature of that perfect manhood shall we cease merely to catch glimpses of our Lord passing on His pilgrimage down the centuries, shall we come and see where He abides, and behold His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.[1]

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Loyalty to Traditions.

'And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.'—Jer $35^{18. 19}$.

Jonadab the Rechabite (or 'son of Rechab') is the person whom we remember in the story of Jehu—whom Jehu passed as he was driving furiously on his mission of vengeance upon Jezebel, and invited to mount into his chariot and come with him to 'see his zeal for the Lord.' We are to think of him as one who more than others had been 'vexing his righteous soul' at the Baal worship and other attendant iniquities of Ahab's wicked house, and who would be welcomed by the avenger as a certain ally. Apparently he was not himself of the blood of Israel, but his tribe—the Kenites—had from early times been closely attached to the fortunes of the Chosen People. They had possibly become formally proselytes, but they had never given up the free desert life of their forefathers. They lived in tents in the wilderness of Judah and on the outskirts of the Holy Land. There is this feeling in Jonadab's charge to his descendants. He had himself, for a moment at least, tasted royal favour—had ridden with Jehu in his hour of triumph, and had earned, and probably received, the offer of high place in the new Court. But he had seen perhaps the hollowness and incompleteness of Jehu's reformation. He had seen the deep-seated, uncured vices of Samaria. And he laid on his sons and descendants the solemn charge to keep to their own simpler and purer and freer mode of life, to avoid the temptations of the life in towns, and the luxury, especially the luxury of strong drink, which he had seen to be a prime cause of its vices.

Three centuries had passed when the prophet Jeremiah found some descendants of Jonadab whom the stress of the Chaldean armies, in the last days of the Jewish monarchy, had driven for the moment to take refuge within the walls of Jerusalem.

Perhaps we hardly need many words to show that the story has some teaching for all time. It speaks to us of *the sacredness of good traditions*—of the dignity, the solidity, the worth in God's eyes, of any community which can preserve the feeling of this, which can bind generation to generation by common ideals and purposes and sacrifices. What is the history of civilization but the history of races and nations which have, to some extent at least, possessed this power of linking the present to the past, of holding fast what is good, of clinging to custom, to order, to discipline, till God shows them indisputably that the time for change has come?

The quality of loyalty to traditions is one which in theory is highly rated among us. It is the supposed basis of much of our national politics, one of the two great principles which we recognize as those by which communities live: to *preserve* and to *improve*, to reverence and cling to the *past*

[1] J. A. Robertson, in *Harvest Thanksgiving Sermons*, 161.

even as they trust and prepare for the *future*. It is our boast as English people that we think more than some other nations of the great legacies of bygone times, that we are more slow to trust novelties, to break with old habits, more patient of apparent limitations and inconveniences if they are part and parcel of a proud inheritance.

But our business now is not with politics in this restricted sense of matters of legislation and public administration. The public politics of a community, important and even sacred as they should be felt to be, are the outcome and expression of something larger and more vital still, of something in which all have part, even if they think they have no interest in political questions, of the ideals and purposes and habits of life which are prevalent in all classes among them.

It is here that the prophet meant the example of the faithful sons of Jonadab to tell on his Jewish hearers. It is here that his words of blessing and of warning may come home to ourselves. Is it true that good traditions are coming to have less hold among us, in our homes and in social life? Is it true that the claim for personal independence—natural and with a good side to it—is yet to a dangerous extent lessening the wholesome discipline of family life, the restraints of custom, the regard for inherited standards? Is everything coming to be felt, as it was not in the last generation, *an open question*, to be decided by individual taste and convenience—the observance of Sunday, church-going, the choice in the books to be read and topics to be discussed, the rules of social propriety, deference to elders, respect for authority?

The inestimable value of good traditions, the duty and the dignity of clinging to them—these are truths written very large for us in the Bible. In the Old Testament, from the blessing of Abraham, the 'father of the faithful,' and the reason given for it: 'I know him that he will command his *children* and his *household after him*; and they shall *keep the ways* of the Lord,' to the promise and the warning of the last of the prophets: 'Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.' And in the *New* Testament, what else is the very meaning of the institution of the Christian Church, the 'pillar and ground of the truth'? What is the meaning of those words that come so often in the Epistles, 'hold fast,' 'hold the traditions that ye have been taught,' of the praises of order, steadfastness, obedience, of following good example, of bringing up children in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord'?

There are two sides on which the exhortations and warnings appeal to us.

1. They speak to us of the *community*. They bid us *for the sake of the community* shrink from helping, by the example of our own families or by the freedom which we allow in ourselves, to lower in any way or degree the standard of good which it has inherited—the sober household religion, the modesty and dutifulness of tone, the respect for wholesome customs and traditional pieties to which English life and English character have owed, and owe, so much.

2. But they speak also of the *individual* life. They appeal to all of us, but especially to the young. It is to them most that the conflict which sometimes is felt between inherited instincts and habits on the one side, and the claims of fashion and the temptations of liberty on the other, brings practical difficulty and dangers.

Who would not say to them: 'Cherish—cling to—the good traditions of your home'? All that is best in life—religion and its hopes and protection, good feeling, the sense of honour, unselfish purpose, conscience itself—all these things come to us in a great measure by inheritance.

One home is not quite like another; one is a little stricter, holds a standard a little higher and more exacting in one point than another. What shall we do when we first realize that difference? What will wise and generous spirits do? Will they be ashamed of anything in their home teaching and usage which seems, in the light of that new knowledge, peculiar, which goes beyond the fashion of their neighbours? Will they carefully prune and pare away everything in the way of religious observance or of strictness as to speech or act which others about them have not been equally used to? *Or* will they cling, all the more closely, with a certain honourable pride, to home habits and traditions—not obtruding them, not necessarily expecting them of others, but content to go their own way as they have been taught, to deny themselves (if so it be) freedom which others take and think innocent, holding firmly and modestly their own ground, for *memory's* sake, for *affection's* sake,

for the love of those who taught them all they know of what is high and true and good?

Is not this to ask, in other words, whether they will be as were the faithless drifting *Israelites*, their tone lowering from generation to generation as they caught the taint of idolatry and immorality from each successive neighbour or visitor; or as the loyal sons of *Jonadab*, keeping from century to century, amid every temptation, in changing circumstances, the high and austere traditions of their race?[1]

[1] E. C. Wickham, *Words of Light and Life*, 190.

Recent Foreign Theology.

German Theology.

DEUTERONOMY again! Max Löhr, whose discussion of the so-called Priestly Document was previously noticed in these columns, has now entered the struggle which is raging round Deuteronomy, and in a brochure of forty-six pages,[1] has reached results as unlike as possible to those of Östreicher on the one hand, or Hölscher on the other. Starting from the assumption that the 'book of the law' referred to in 2 K 22 was a priestly law book for the guidance of the people, and that, if it can be recovered at all, it will most probably be found within the Book of Deuteronomy, he goes carefully over chs. 12–26 and 28 and finds in many of their sections much indubitably ancient material, which there is no substantial objection to regarding as the work of Moses. Though the religion of Moses was predominantly ethical, a cult, he argues, was indispensable, and the laws which regulate it are no product of the seventh century B.C., but go back in many cases to Moses himself, and are the real inspiration of the priestly reform movements which mark the reigns of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. The crucial law of centralization Löhr also regards as certainly originating with Moses—the cultic correlate to the monotheistic tendency of the Yahweh religion—and he reminds us that even scholars opposed to him are now beginning timidly to speak of the legislation in Exodus (cf. 34^{23}) as exhibiting the 'tendency to a relative centralization of the cult.' Political and other influences doubtless immensely affected the subsequent development, but the single official place of worship was the original demand and remained the ideal. Other altars, Löhr argues, of an unofficial character were also permissible, but these were either memorial altars, or emergency altars, improvised for special occasions.

In current discussions of Deuteronomy these three rival theories should be kept in mind: (i) that the book makes no demand for the centralization of the worship but only for its purity (Welch, Östreicher); (ii) that it does make such a demand, and that that demand is as old as Moses (Löhr); (iii) that that demand is a post-exilic demand, and the book which makes it is a post-exilic book (Hölscher).

[1] *Das Deuteronomium:* Untersuchungen zum Hexateuchproblem, II. (Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte m. b. H. Berlin W. 8; Geh. Mk. 3).

Hölscher's book on Ezekiel[2] reveals him once more as the uncompromising critic of current critical opinion. Ezekiel, he maintains, is one of the most misunderstood personalities of the Old Testament, and a true understanding of him can never be obtained until we realize that a very large proportion of his book—chs. 34–48 in their entirety, and large sections of 1–33—is due to the redactor, who belongs to the first half of the fifth century. The real Ezekiel is a prophet of the old type, akin in spirit to Jeremiah, 'standing with both feet on the soil of pre-exilic religion,' and a prophet of woe. The chief criterion of the distinction between Ezekiel and the redactor is that the former writes in verse and the latter in prose, though Hölscher has to admit that some of Ezekiel's own work (cf. 8 f.) is in prose. When we learn that the famous ch. 18 is 'clearly not from Ezekiel but from the redactor,' we begin to realize how radically Hölscher transforms current conceptions of the prophet. But the transformation is essentially a simplification; Ezekiel is no longer the tantalizingly complex figure he has been supposed to be—he is essentially prophet and poet, whose words are aglow with passion and imagination. While it is scarcely

[2] *Hesekiel, der Dichter und das Buch* (Töpelmann, Giessen; Geh. Mk. 10).