

really paying the price of growth. And, in all these instances, the good thing we secure is surely well worth the price we have to pay.

Since, too, we know from the Christian revelation that God is not outside all this suffering, but suffers with us and for us, we may say that the suffering borne by the Eternal Love through all the ages is the price which God pays for being Himself; for being that Perfect Love which could do no other than create the best possible kind of world; could do no other than create men and women in His own image, with that freedom of the will, the wrong use of which results in sin and pain. We thus have a theological basis for our assertion that the good things secured at the price of pain are worth their price; for God Himself thought it worth endless pain to make the world as He did.

The point which has been made about this earth being in an intermediate stage of development also leads back to another fundamental element in Christian teaching. For while this planet may support life for many centuries yet to come, it would appear to be no more of a permanent home for the race than for the individual. Lovely as it is, this earth is but one of the many mansions in the Father's house. A right adjustment then to our environment must include a recognition of this

impermanence. Paradox as it may sound, a man can only be really at home in this earth when he realizes that it is not his real home, and confesses, as all true citizens of the city of God have done, that he is a stranger and pilgrim on the earth.

Man's greatest mistake has been made just here. He has thought this world was all, and has planned his life as though he were here for ever. He has sought his treasures amongst things which are perishable, which moth and rust corrupt and into which thieves break through and steal.

Hence all his fears, his antagonisms, his rivalries, and his wars. Small wonder, then, that an earthquake so disturbs him, for it shakes the very foundations of those things in which he trusts. It may be necessary in the providence of God for that faith to be shaken, in order that man may see what the real foundations of life are, turn his heart to seek imperishable treasures and place his confidence where it cannot be shaken, in the eternal nature of God.

If an earthquake should do this for just a few, then we get at least a glimpse of one way in which, as the previous writer says, earthquakes may fulfil the purposes of the Creator.

LEONARD G. OAKY.

Rawdon.

Entre Nous.

An Intercession.

'O Thou Source of all true consolation, who when Thou risest to save all the meek of the earth wilt turn the wrath of man to Thy praise, bring out of Thine abundant mercy blessing and hope for those who suffer from the ravages of war. Lay Thy hand gently upon those who have lost loved ones. Succour the wounded and the dying; fill their hearts with the remembrance of Thy faithful word and the rich promises of Thy grace. Grant courage and good cheer to those who go in peril of their lives. Take into the secret of Thy presence all who spend their days in ceaseless anxiety and constant apprehension of sad tidings. Have mercy upon those who have lost their reason or their sight. Take to Thy loving care the little children who are rendered fatherless. Grant new resource to those whose livelihoods have been reduced or lost; provide for those who have been rendered homeless. Let no disaster shake our confidence in Christ. Save us from bitterness of spirit; from self-pity

and vindictiveness, and keep burning in our hearts a love for all men through Jesus Christ our Lord.'¹

A Creed.

'We believe that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom we are chief; that where two or three are gathered in His name there He is in the midst; that God is love, and that he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him; that the things which are impossible with man are possible with God; that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth; that it is more blessed to give than to receive; that we ought to obey God rather than men; that all things work together for good to them that love God; that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'²

¹ *Prayers of World Fellowship.*

² *Ibid.*

The Faith.

In his last book, *Memory Hold-the-Door*, John Buchan wrote: 'To-day the quality of our religion is being put to the test. The conflict is not only between the graces of civilization and the rawness of barbarism. More is being challenged than the system of ethics which we believe to be the basis of our laws and liberties. I am of Blake's view: "*Man must and will have some religion; if he has not the religion of Jesus he will have the religion of Satan, and will erect a synagogue of Satan.*"'

'There have been high civilizations in the past which have not been Christian, but in the world as we know it I believe that civilization must have a Christian basis, and must ultimately rest on the Christian Church. To-day the Faith is being attacked, and the attack is succeeding.

'Thirty years ago Europe was nominally a Christian continent. It is no longer so. In Europe, as in the era before Constantine, Christianity is in a minority. What Gladstone wrote seventy years ago, in a moment of depression, has become a shattering truth: "*I am convinced that the welfare of mankind does not now depend on the State and the world of politics; the real battle is being fought in the world of thought, where a deadly attack is made with great tenacity of purpose and over a wide field upon the greatest treasure of mankind, the belief in God and the Gospel of Christ.*"

'The Christian in name has in recent years been growing cold in his devotion. Our achievement in perfecting life's material apparatus has produced a mood of self-confidence and pride. Our peril has been indifference, and that is a grave peril, for rust will crumble a metal when hammer blows will only harden it. I believe—and this is my crowning optimism—that the challenge with which we are now faced may restore to us that manly humility which alone gives power. It may bring us back to God. In that case our victory is assured. The Faith is an anvil which has worn out many hammers.

'We are condemned to fumble in these times, for the mist is too thick to see far down the road. But in all our uncertainty we can have Cromwell's hope. "*To be a Seeker is to be of the best sect next to a Finder, and such an one shall every faithful, humble Seeker be at the end.*" So as a tail-piece to this book I would transcribe a sentence of Henry Adams: "*After all, man knows mighty little, and may some day learn enough of his own ignorance to fall down and pray.*" Dogmatism gives place to questioning, and questioning to prayer.'

Conscience.

'Preachers habitually speak well of conscience. They even call it the voice of God in the soul of man. . . . Yet one of the most difficult tasks in human life is to make conscience behave itself.

'As we face this problem, let us remember from the first the Christian witness. In checking conscience, nothing has helped some of us so much as the personality of the Master Himself. To carry our problems of right and wrong into His presence and try to see them as He would look at them is a swift, rough and ready, practical, efficient way of checking conscience. One of the finest testimonies I ever heard to any man's character was given by a New York layman to his minister when he said: "He has been our animated conscience." If Christ is not that to us, then our discipleship is a lame affair.'¹

Sunday Labour.

'It is no doubt wholesome for body and mind to have one day's rest in seven; and, quite apart from religion, the cessation of most kinds of work on Sunday is a thoroughly good thing. But you do not keep a day holy by being idle on it. Moreover, it was precisely this superstitious attitude to the Sabbath which led the Scribes and Pharisees to attack our Lord, who held that "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day."

'Normally it is good, and therefore our duty, to keep Sunday partly for worship and partly for rest. The obligation of worship always remains, and those who work hardest can always find time for it.

'The good of rest is that when refreshed by it we may work better. But when our duty to God and man demands that for a period we should go without the weekly rest, there ought not to be any hesitation on religious grounds. Such a claim is made on many folk to-day.

'They should have no qualms of conscience. Let them join in the worship of God at the time of day when their work allows, and let them work in the spirit of those who give to God all that He asks of them. "Pray and work" should be their rule.'²

¹ H. E. Fosdick, in *The Christian World*, July 18, 1940.

² The Archbishop of York, in the *York Diocesan Leaflet*.