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There was a silence for a few minutes, and afterwards, not unfriendly, the other two left us. I turned to my friend, and—naming him—said, 'It did me good to hear you say these things. I felt I could not say them. Had I said them, wearing this collar and these clothes, he might have said afterwards, "Oh, that is so much professional talk; that is his job"; but you saying them—it was all wonderful.' To which, putting his hand deprecatingly upon my knee, and looking as it seemed to me across the waters, he said with a tone of conviction touched with something that sounded like

sadness, but was not sadness, only a firmness and resoluteness of the soul, 'Well, Doctor, I'm in for Christianity!' It was as though he had said, 'The thing may be wrong. I don't know. But it is right for me. It is the thing that I would like to think is right. That is the kind of world I'd like to feel this world to be. That is the kind of world I'd like to help to make it. I'm in for Christianity!'

That is what an honest man means to-day who accepts Christ. He is in for Christianity; that is to say, he is out for it.

Entre Nous.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

Action.

1. A minister of the parish of Kinneff, in Kincardineshire, was anxious that his son should succeed him. The parishioners had the right of election, and the schoolmaster was induced to do a little canvassing. One farmer refused to vote for the son. 'What for no?' said the schoolmaster. 'Because he cannot preach.' 'He cannot preach? *He keeps a good sough going.* What more do you want?'

The farmer wanted more, and so did the majority of the parishioners. But the schoolmaster had a good argument. For did not Demosthenes mean something of that kind when he said that the first thing in oratory was *action*, the second thing *action*, and the third thing *action*?

We owe the anecdote to the *Lives of the Ten Orators*, which is ascribed to Plutarch. It is not to be found in the authentic *Life of Demosthenes*, by Plutarch, but the narrative there is worth quoting:

'Another time, when the assembly had refused to hear him, and he was going home with his head muffled up, taking it very heavily, they relate that Satyrus, the actor, followed him, and being his familiar acquaintance, entered into conversation with him. To whom, when Demosthenes be-moaned himself, that having been the most industrious of all the pleaders, and having almost spent the whole strength and vigour of his body in that employment, he could not yet find any accept-

ance with the people, that drunken sots, mariners, and illiterate fellows were heard, and had the hustings for their own, while he himself was despised. 'You say true, Demosthenes,' replied Satyrus, 'but I will quickly remedy the cause of all this, if you will repeat to me some passage out of Euripides or Sophocles.' Which, when Demosthenes had pronounced, Satyrus presently taking it up after him, gave the same passage, in his rendering of it, such a new form, by accompanying it with the proper mien and gesture, that to Demosthenes it seemed quite another thing. By this being convinced how much grace and ornament language acquires from action, he began to esteem it a small matter, and as good as nothing for a man to exercise himself in declining, if he neglected enunciation and delivery. Hereupon he built himself a place to study underground (which was still remaining in our time), and hither he would come constantly every day to form his action, and to exercise his voice; and here he would continue, oftentimes without intermission, two or three months together, shaving one-half of his head, that so for shame he might not go abroad, though he desired it ever so much.'

From this comes the story in the *Lives of the Ten Orators* that when some one asked him, What is the first thing in oratory? he said, 'Action'; what the second? 'Action'; what the third? 'Action.'

What did he mean by Action?

(1) J. G. Holyoake thinks that by action Demosthenes meant *practice*. 'Action,' he says, 'gives no

power, and Dr. Clair J. Grece must be right when contending that the answer of the great orator should be translated: "Practice, practice, practice," for there skill comes in. A man who wishes to speak well at a moment's notice should speak every night if he has an opportunity. Preachers and barristers speak better at will than other persons.'

(2) The meaning most usually assigned to the word is *gesture*. This is how Bacon understood it. In the introduction to his essay *Of Boldness*, he says: 'It is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration: A question was asked of Demosthenes, "What was the chief part of an orator?" he answered, "Action: What next? Action: What next again? Action." He said it that knew it best, and had by nature himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts, of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay, almost alone, as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain. There is in human nature generally more of the fool than of the wise; and therefore those faculties by which the foolish part of men's minds is taken are most potent.'

(3) But Bacon was thinking of the Latin translation *actio*, from which our English word comes. The word used by Demosthenes was *hypocrisis*, that is, 'acting,' not action. The point is that Satyrus, the actor, threw himself into the spirit of the passage. He identified himself for the moment with the person speaking. 'The speaker,' says Boyd Carpenter, 'is for the moment the living voice of the truth with which he is imbued. Just as the true actor is the man who lives his part, completely identifying himself with the character he assumes, so the forcible speaker is the man whose whole personality is enlisted in the subject. This is the true *hypocrisis* which is not the assumption of a part, but the identification of self with it. The man makes it his own, as we say. His own personality is one with his subject. The words are there, but the man is there too. We hear him; and his very heart-beats sound in his voice. Hypocrisy assumes the appearance of things which it does not feel; this is the bad sense: Demosthenes used the word in the good sense. He meant that power of really feeling, diving, and acting in the thoughts and words

spoken, which I call the power of self-identification with one's work.'¹

(4) Now it is when the preacher thus identifies himself with his theme that the sermon has vitality and 'go' in it. 'It is the live coal,' says Julius Hare, 'that kindles others, not the dead. Nay, the same principle applies to all oratory; and what made Demosthenes the greatest of orators, was that he appeared the most entirely possessed by the feelings he wished to inspire. The main use of his *hypocrisis* was, that it enabled him to remove the natural hindrances which checked and clogged the stream of those feelings, and to pour them forth with a free and mighty torrent that swept his audience along. The effect produced by Charles Fox, who by the exaggerations of party-spirit was often compared to Demosthenes, seems to have arisen wholly from this earnestness, which made up for the want of almost every grace, both of manner and style.'²

Was it not something like this that the Kinneff schoolmaster meant when he claimed that the young preacher 'kept a good sough going'?

'A sermon is never too long if it be alive from start to finish, but if the hearers become listless, it is a sure sign that the sermon has lost its vitality. In such a situation the closure should be applied promptly.'³

SOME TOPICS.

Discouragement.

'One of the rules for officers of the King's Navy reads: "No officer shall speak discouragingly to his mate, either on the watch or at mess, concerning the business on which he is or may be engaged." There is no other way of conducting the campaign of life.'⁴

A Magic Word.

'The East had its story of a magic word which had supernatural power. Whisper it before a barred door, and the door opened of its own accord! It is no mere story; it is the embodiment of an everlasting fact.

A simple ring with a single stone,

To the vulgar eye no stone of price:

Whisper the right word, that alone—

Forth starts a sprite, like fire from ice.

¹ W. Boyd Carpenter, *Lectures on Preaching*, 11.

² *Guesses at Truth*, 400.

³ A. Benvie, *The Minister at Work*, 119.

⁴ J. A. Hutton, *On Accepting Ourselves*, 39.

And lo, you are lord (says an Eastern scroll)
Of heaven and earth, lord whole and sole,
Through the power in a pearl.

'We are all strangers to one another, and at the depths it may be can never be anything but strangers; and yet let us utter the true word, the mystic word, the understanding word, the word which belongs to the mother-tongue of the race, the word which fell from heaven and created man—utter the right word, and the sun comes out and this world is no longer a harsh battlefield, but a place of dear human habitations.'¹

ANNUALS FOR 1920.

Who's Who.

Who's Who for 1920 (A. & C. Black; 42s.) comes too late for extended notice this month. Yet it must be noticed, for its indispensability grows with its growth, and no one can do without it even for a month. First there is its readability. For sheer interest it is as good as any—novel, we were about to say, but novels are down to the lowest depth of dullness—modern volume of sermons. Next there is its psychology. Why worry over manuals and text-books? Here are the materials for psychological study in rich variety and undeniable veracity. Then there is the information it contains. But that is the book and our space.

Hazell.

The New Hazell Annual and Almanack for 1920 (Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton; 6s. net) is probably the cheapest book this year will see published. Its 900 pages of double column and small type are packed with knowledge; and it is just such knowledge as every educated and half-educated person needs to know. As for its new features the editor says, and says truly, that in addition to the varied information which makes Hazell the most comprehensive and reliable book of reference published, there appear in the 1920 edition many interesting new articles—an exhaustive summary of the Peace Treaties with Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria, the full text of the Covenant of the League of Nations, Labour's Charter under the League of Nations. Attention may also be directed to the articles Socialism at Home and

¹ J. A. Hutton, *On Accepting Ourselves*, 102.

Abroad, the new Imperial Customs Tariff, with its preferential rates, and the exhaustive article on War Pensions and Allowances. Maps of the new Germany and the 'new Austria' will also be found in their appropriate places.

Church and University.

The Scottish Church and University Almanac (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace; 2s. 6d. net) is one of the most accurate of our annuals. It gives the information when the information is supplied; when it is not supplied it does not invent it. Thus none of the stipends are given for the Church of Scotland this year. The column is a blank, page after page.

The People's Year Book.

The People's Year Book (Co-operative Press Agency; 2s. net) is the annual of the Co-operative Societies. But it contains much matter of general interest in addition to all that it has to say to the co-operators. There is an article on Farming by Professor James Long, and one on the Coming Revolution in English Local Government by Mr. Sidney Webb.

Alexander Smellie.

In his book *The Outside of the Inside*, Dr. Fisher speaks of the Edinburgh University Debating Societies of his day, and says: 'By far the most brilliant man—the most original in mind and the weightiest in speech—was Alexander Smellie. He became and remains the minister of a small Original Secession Church. He bound himself by a vow to this service, and has nobly stood by his promised word. Otherwise, any career was open to him; he would have risen to distinction in any walk of life. Happily no promise prevented Smellie from contributing to literature. His book on *The Men of the Covenant* provides one of the most fascinating pictures that ever have been given of a romantic period of Scottish history.'²

Courtesy.

Mrs. 'Robb' was the wife of a coachman at a house I knew well. At that time among women it was only fashionable ladies and cinder-pickers who smoked, and it would have been thought

² R. H. Fisher, *The Outside of the Inside*.

somewhat shameful for a respectable woman to indulge herself so. But Mrs. Robb was known to have a pipe. The young men of the house took delight in going to the stables to join her in the surreptitious pleasure. When Mrs. Robb's husband died, I went to condole with her, and this was the dear old woman's confession: 'Ye ken I'm fond of a draw. Tam didna like it. But when it cam' to nine o'clock he would say, "Janet, ye'll be wanting your smoke," and he would gang out.'¹

NEW POETRY.

Francis Ledwidge.

Lord Dunsany had long been looking for a poet to arise from among the Irish peasants, as Burns sprang from the people of Scotland, when one day a manuscript arrived by post. He will not call Francis Ledwidge the Burns of Ireland, because every true poet is true, first of all, to himself: and if Burns sang of the daisy, Ledwidge sings of the blackbird:

Above me smokes the little town,
 With its whitewashed walls and roofs of brown,
 And its octagon spire toned smoothly down
 As the holy minds within.
 And wondrous, impudently sweet,
 Half of him passion, half conceit,
 The blackbird calls adown the street,
 Like the piper of Hamelin.

That is his poetry. He is the poet of natural things—"the world in which our bodies are." Says Lord Dunsany: "When they have read through the profounder poets, and seen the problem plays, and studied all the perplexities that puzzle man in the cities, the small circle of readers that I predict for him will turn to Ledwidge as to a mirror reflecting beautiful fields, as to a very still lake rather on a very cloudless evening."

Ledwidge took part in the great War and fell in it. Lord Dunsany now edits and issues *The Complete Poems of Francis Ledwidge* (Herbert Jenkins; 7s. 6d. net). In the Introduction he guides us to an understanding of the poet, and selects some of the poems for special attention. 'Quite perfect,' he says, 'if my judgment is of any value, is the little poem on page 175, "In the Mediterranean—Going to the War."' This is the poem:

¹ R. H. Fisher, *The Outside of the Inside*.

Lovely wings of gold and green
 Flit about the sounds I hear,
 On my window when I lean
 To the shadows cool and clear.

Roaming, I am listening still,
 Bending, listening overlong,
 In my soul a steadier will,
 In my heart a newer song.

Is not this poem on 'Home' quite as near perfection? It was written in Belgium, July 1917:

A burst of sudden wings at dawn,
 Faint voices in a dreamy noon,
 Evenings of mist and murmurings,
 And nights with rainbows of the moon.

And through these things a wood-way dim,
 And waters dim, and slow sheep seen
 On uphill paths that wind away
 Through summer sounds and harvest green.

This is a song a robin sang
 This morning on a broken tree,
 It was about the little fields
 That call across the world to me.

Helen Granville Barker.

Is heredity or environment the chief factor in making us what we are? Helen Granville Barker is much impressed, and puzzled, by the influence of heredity. Her new book is *Songs in Cities and Gardens* (Chatto & Windus; 5s. net). It is quotable (in the pulpit, on the platform, in the home—anywhere, everywhere) from first poem to last. The very last is a prayer which expresses the ideal of a life. But we shall quote:

THE TWO OLD GRANDFATHERS.

My two old grandfathers sat before New England
 houses
 And looked over the fields of grain and wheat,
 The apple-orchards, the pastures, the woods and
 copses,
 The swamp land where cattle-prints showed in a
 black ooze,
 The stony hillside where sheep nibbled,
 And my two old grandfathers thought their
 silent thoughts.

One, gentle, humble, patient, meditated
 On the love of God for men, his children ;
 On the peace of a certain eternity,
 The death of self, the brotherhood of man ;
 On pain as a teacher, and the beauty of holiness
 And meek submission to unquestioned creeds.

The other, keen, scoffing, courageous,
 Dared to defy the minds of those around him,
 Protested, not by words, but independent deeds
 Against the blind intolerance of fools,
 Read his Voltaire to sound of Sunday church-
 bells,

Smiled to himself, sitting alone, unasked for,
 At the disfavour of men—its weight and value.

Here am I—my hands full of the spoils of
 cities—

My brain puzzled by creeds and theories,
 Groping, bewildered, for truth and justice.
 I try to free myself; to rise above conditions,
 To think my own thoughts, careless and un-
 trammelled—

But the thoughts of those two old grandfathers
 (Sitting alone before New England houses),
 Sway, alternately, my inner vision.
 I am held and hampered by conflicting forces.

Beatrice Mayor.

There are poets and critics of poetry who refuse
 the name to that particular form of verse which
 Beatrice Mayor writes. This is the form :

THE GRASS.

I like the grass.
 It listens.
 It is kind.
 Above all it is calm.
 I can say to it all wildnesses,
 It will not stir, look up surprised, as friends do.
 It listens,
 Listens,
 Then silently,
 Gathers my frenzy to its great green peace,
 And I arise.

They say it is too easy to be poetry. Well, try it.
Have you tried it? And then it affects us. It
 actually makes the emotional impression upon us
 which true poetry makes. It gives us pleasure.
 Here is another example :

WHEN I LOOK OUT.

When I look out
 It is not fields I see,
 Nor is it hill,
 Nor garden,
 Nor gracious sky of cloud and peeping blue,

When I look out
 I see a wall,
 I watch
 Sunshine playing with poor weeds upon that wall.
 And I am filled
 Swiftly,
 Miraculously,
 With the great careless beauty that is earth's.

The title is *Poems* (Allen & Unwin; 2s. 6d. net).

Maitland Hardyman.

The photograph in khaki of Lieut.-Col. Maitland
 Hardyman, D.S.O., M.C., given as frontispiece to
A Challenge (Allen & Unwin), is that of a mere
 lad. And he was scarcely four-and-twenty when
 he was killed at Biefvillers on August 24, 1918.
 There is a Foreword by Norman Hugh Romanes,
 who says: 'I have never seen or heard of a man
 to whom not merely a lie, even a harmless one,
 but any kind of misrepresentation, was so abhor-
 rent.' And again, 'The brilliant record of his
 life at the front, first as adjutant, last as com-
 manding officer of a battalion in which all ranks
 paid him nothing less than homage, is sufficient
 of itself to prove his contention of the indomitable
 power of an entirely spiritual personality in the
 most rigorously practical conditions of life.'

This is a gathering of his poems. He was
 better than his poetry, but read :

AUSTRALIA'S PRAYER.

(Gallipoli evacuated, December 20th, 1915.)

Jehovah, Lord of all Gethsemanes,
 Of thorn-crowned Truth and broken Purposes,
 Our stricken motherhood, our tortured brain,
 Shrill with the piercing cry, 'Is it in vain?'

No dream of conquest, no mad lust for power,
 Found us at England's side in danger's hour,
 The Bays of Suvla and of Anzac prove
 The strong example of that Greater Love.

Gladly we gave the noblest of our youth
 To fight for England and, we thought, for Truth ;
 Now we are weaker, numbed with constant pain—
 Is it in vain, Lord God, is it in vain?

Out of the rending silence God replied :
 'You are the triumph I My Son denied,
 Have faith, poor soul. Is not all history
 Triumphant failure, empty victory?'

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