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The scientific and critical spirit of the age which has permeated all classes seems to have made men so cautious about the nature and person of Christ that they dare not confess a half of what they feel. They prefer the well-known paraphrases of such Psalms as the twenty-third, or the ninetieth, or the hundredth, to the definitely Christian hymns, because in them they do not commit themselves too far and they feel safer. Everywhere is needed an evangelical revival which shall give back to the mass of professing Christians their old heritage, the known and felt companionship of Christ. That once gained, there will be a return to the old fervour, and men will find their present attitude too straitened, their surrounding atmosphere too depressed, and their climate too chill. Through the power of the Spirit of Jesus, known and felt, they will seek for new expressions of devotion and affection, new avenues for their overfull emotions, and will again claim poetry and music as aids to help them in interpreting those strange thoughts that have come to them of all that Christ Jesus means to them.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Birthdays of Good Men and Women.

'A good man leaveth an inheritance.'—Pr 12^{22}.

A LONG time ago—it was the 6th of March 1474—there was joy in a home at Caprese in Italy because a little son had been born.

The father was not a wealthy man, but he belonged to a noble Italian family and was very proud. He had high ambitions for the future of his boy. One of these was that he should grow up to be a member of one of the learned professions. The baby was given a very grand name—Michael Angelo, after the Archangel Michael. His surname was a well-known and honoured Italian name. Like many other babies of the same class, little Michael was sent away up to the hill country to be nursed. His foster-mother was a stone-cutter's wife, and naturally he learned to love her. Long afterwards when Michael Angelo had become a great man, he used to say that he had got his sharp tongue from the hills and his love for the mallet and chisel from the stone-cutter's home.

He came back from his foster-mother's care, a child who seemed to have no desire to play or even to learn; he kept constantly wanting to handle a pencil and to draw all sorts of weird pictures. After a bit, his childish drawings were to be seen upstairs, downstairs, everywhere over the walls of the house. His father tried to induce him to take an interest in other and more natural amusements but failed. Then he whipped the boy; but Michael's love of drawing was a gift from God, nothing could kill it out. For a time his father was a very disappointed man indeed. To his mind Michael as an artist was a thought unworthy of the name he bore.

Michael had a companion named Francesco, who also loved Art. He had gone to study with a famous master, and used to bring his drawings to show them to Michael. What talks they had together then! Many things helped to make what in Michael seemed mere stubbornness into strength, and the proud spirit of the father was at last conquered; he reluctantly agreed to send his boy to be a pupil at the same studio as Francesco went to in Florence.

Michael, however, was not received exactly as a pupil. Ghirlandajo, the master, was a wise man and recognized his worth. He agreed to pay Michael a small but gradually rising salary for the first three years. If Ghirlandajo was a great artist, he was also a humble man. Yet it was but natural that he should feel irritated, when a pupil with such a sense of his own ability as Michael had, dared occasionally to do clever things that hurt. There came a day, however, when he could not help saying, 'This youth already knows more of art than I do myself.'

Michael Angelo grew up to be more than merely an artist. In those days, even boys and girls could not live in Italy without coming to know that nearly all the educated people thought about religion. They did not think of it as you boys and girls are taught to do. They cared for their souls—they believed in being pure in heart—but they counted knowledge the greatest thing in the

world. Now, even the youngest boy or girl here could tell me that there is a greater thing, and that is love. Michael Angelo made many notable friends among those who loved learning, and sought after truth. One was a distinguished member of a very wonderful Italian family. His name was Lorenzo, and Lorenzo loved art as well as books. He had collected in a garden a great many fine specimens of Greek and Roman sculpture, and students were allowed in to copy from his collection, just as they go to picture galleries to copy now. Among those who frequented Lorenzo's garden was our friend Michael. It is told that in copying the head of a Faun he restored it. The mouth of the Faun was almost worn away by the injuries of time, and Michael gave his copy a smile and a complete set of teeth. As Lorenzo walked round among the students he was greatly fascinated by the young sculptor Michael. In a bantering way he said to him, 'How have you given your Faun a complete set of teeth? Don't you know that such old fellows are sure to have lost some of them?' Michael, keen to profit by what was said to him, removed a few of the teeth with his chisel, and formed sockets to appear as if they had dropped out. On Lorenzo's next visit, he was so astonished and delighted that he found not only a higher position for Michael's father than he had formerly held, but a place at his own table for the young sculptor.

But in three years Lorenzo died. His son did not inherit his good qualities, and in course of time Michael left Florence.

He returned, however, in about a year, with his mind full of ideas. More than Lorenzo had begun to recognize his greatness, and commissions were being pressed upon him. One that he executed was a colossal statue of your Old Testament favourite, David. A rough and unshapely block of marble upon which some one else had been working was given to him. Michael Angelo had eyes that saw David with his sling inside it, and he set at work to release him, with the result that Michael Angelo's *David* is known over all the world.

He painted pictures as well as worked in marble. His ambition had been roused in this direction by seeing the wonderful works of older artists than himself—artists who put their thoughts about God into every picture they painted. From the wonderful frescoes that Michael Angelo painted on the roofs and walls of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, one could tell what sort of thoughts generally occupied his mind. There is not a picture among them that does not suggest some Bible story, and the whole atmosphere of the place somehow speaks of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men.

Michael Angelo, the greatest of Italian artists, was a deeply religious man, and his pictures are of the kind that influence people for good. But in his daily life he was masterful and stern: he would not have been so beloved as he is but for the beautiful story at the end of his life. It is like a tender sunset at the close of a glorious autumn day.

When he was over sixty he learned that *love* was the greatest thing in the world. It was through becoming acquainted with a good and noble lady, the widow of a Marquis. Her whole character makes one think of the 'Good Duchess of Gordon' who lived in Aberdeenshire during part of last century. The Italian lady was a devout Christian, as also was Elizabeth, last Duchess of Gordon. Her friendship with Michael Angelo did a great deal for him, for their talk was always about religion. Doubtless you could often have understood it, for they spoke of the same Jesus who is the friend of boys and girls.

When she died the great artist felt he had lost a friend who had been a great blessing to him. By her beautiful example she had

Pointed to brighter worlds and led the way.

As you think of Michael Angelo's wonderful life, and its beautiful close, does it not drive impure thoughts out of your minds? And does it not somehow turn your thoughts to the highest—to Jesus and His love?

The Ass that could not be Spared.

'Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.'—Mt 21^2.

This is a verse which has given a great deal of trouble to wise men who study the Bible. And why do you think it has worried them? Because two animals are mentioned in it instead of one! Mark, Luke, and John all tell the same story, but they mention only one beast—the ass's colt. Matthew speaks of two—the ass and the ass's colt.

Now these wise men have brought forward learned reasons why Matthew should differ from the others. But one man[1] had an idea of his own. He went to an old farmer who had a wide knowledge of the ways of animals, and he asked him if there was any reason why the ass should accompany the colt. And the wise old man replied, 'Certainly, an unbroken colt simply would not go at all—could not be *made* to go—unless its mother went along with it. It would be totally unmanageable and useless away from her.'

Christ rode only on a colt, so perhaps the other evangelists did not think it worth while mentioning the mother-ass, but Matthew did not forget her.

You can picture the ass and the colt that day when the disciples went to fetch them. They lived in Bethany, and they belonged to a man who was a friend of Jesus. (Perhaps that friend was Lazarus whom Christ raised from the dead.) Sometimes Jesus came to visit their master, and He never went away without giving a kindly clap to the ass and picking a bunch of nice juicy grass for the colt. And the master used to say, 'If you ever want the use of my ass or her foal be sure to send for them. I'll be delighted to lend them.'

So the day came when Jesus did have need of the colt. It was the day on which He was to ride into Jerusalem as the King of Peace. And He sent two of His disciples to fetch the beasts, with directions where they were to find them and what they were to say to the owner.

When the disciples reached the spot where the animals were tied, they unfastened the ass, and, putting a halter round her neck, led her away. The colt they did not attempt to lead. It went with its mother, trotting and cantering by her side.

But when they reached the highroad where Jesus was waiting a change took place. The halter was taken off the ass, and, insult of insults, was put upon the colt! He who had always run free had a halter placed round his neck! He who had never borne a saddle or carried a burden had garments laid upon him and was obliged to carry a human being! Trembling with fear and rage the colt refused to move, but just then he heard a soft little bray at his ear. It was his mother telling him that it was all right and to go on for she would be beside him. Then the Man on his back gave him a kindly clap and an encouraging word, and he recognized the kind voice of that Friend of his master who used to feed him with bunches of grass. He began to walk slowly down the road, and, as he went, his mother ran beside him encouraging him by her presence. By and by, as he gained confidence she stopped now and again to snatch a bite of grass by the roadside, but always she kept near him.

When the crowds gathered to hail Jesus as the Messiah and to lay branches in his path they pushed and jostled the ass. They thought she was only in the way. But the little trembling colt knew better, and the Lord of life Himself knew better. He could see into the heart of the creature and He knew that it needed its mother's presence.

Now, boys and girls, this story of the ass and the ass's colt teaches us a very beautiful lesson—the lesson that the things which seem unimportant cannot be done without. Christ rode upon the colt, but He needed the ass too. He could not have ridden to Jerusalem at all that day had the ass not come also.

Sometimes we want to do the big, grand things, the things that everybody will talk about, the things that will make a stir in the world. And we forget that if there were nobody to do the little things, the big ones would never be done. It was like that during the Great War, was it not? Our gallant soldiers and sailors and airmen faced the enemy for us; they went through terrible privations and dangers. They did the big, grand things. But they could not have done them had it not been for the people at home doing the little things. They could not have done them had it not been for the men and women who worked in munitions and aeroplane factories and in shipbuilding yards, had it not been for the mothers and wives and sisters and children who stayed at home to roll bandages and knit socks and pray.

I want to tell you of one boy who did his bit just by making coffee. His name was Dan Taylor, but they called him 'little Dan.' He was cabin-boy on board the trawler *Providence* of Brixham in Devon, and there was one thing he excelled in—nobody could make quite such good coffee as he. You shall hear how his gift was put to use.

On New Year's Day, 1915, the *Providence* was

[1] The idea for this sermon was derived from an article by the Rev. Rayner Winterbotham in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for May 1917.

out in the English Channel and making for home. A fierce storm was raging and the waves were running twenty feet high. About half-past eleven in the forenoon the third hand sighted a boat in the distance. It was a naval cutter packed with bluejackets and it seemed to be in distress. He reported the matter to the skipper, and the latter, with great difficulty and danger to himself, turned his vessel and went to the rescue of the cutter. The boat proved to contain sixty-eight survivors of H.M.S. *Formidable* which had been torpedoed by the Germans very early that morning.

At great risk to themselves the skipper, the mate, and the third hand managed to rescue the shivering men. Some of them were only half-clad, many were in a state of collapse, all of them were soaked to the skin, and none had had anything to eat or drink since seven o'clock the previous evening.

At first 'little Dan' helped to hold the end of a rope, but soon an idea struck him. He saw how cold and hungry and wet the men looked, and he thought that the very thing they needed was a cup of hot coffee. So he hustled down to the cabin and before a bluejacket was got on board he had the water boiling and a big jug of steaming coffee ready!

And how these men enjoyed it! It seemed to put new life into them and they declared it was the best coffee they had ever tasted. And the more they drank, the more they wanted. So 'little Dan' was kept busy brewing coffee until the *Providence* reached Brixham at eight o'clock in the evening.

You will be glad to hear that none of the bluejackets died, and that the doctors declared that 'little Dan' had helped to save many a life.

'Little Dan' was too small to rescue drowning men, but he was not too small to make coffee. He was too small to do the big thing, but he was not too small to do the little thing, and he did what he could do.

And, boys and girls, isn't 'little Dan's' position very much like yours? You can't go out to business yet and do the difficult work father does, you can't earn money to keep the family, but you *can* make his work lighter for him by being cheerful and obliging. You can't look after the household as mother does, but you *can* help her by running errands and being obedient and loving. And remember that these seemingly unimportant things count tremendously. They can't be done without.

The Heart of a Child.

'Jesus called a little child unto him.'—Mt 18^{2} (A.V.).

'And when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them.'—Mk 9^{36} (A.V.).

To-day's sermon is about a little boy whose name we don't know, but about whom we read twice in the Bible. We can make a guess at his name, however, for we rather think—although the Bible does not exactly tell us so—that his father's name was Simon, and in all probability the little fellow was named after his father. He lived in a town called Capernaum. His father was a fisherman, so was his uncle Andrew, who lived with them. He had a good mother too, and a kind Granny who knew just what small boys liked to eat and who often gave him goodies.

But besides these nice relatives he had a special Friend, a perfectly splendid Friend, who often came to stay in the house. When He arrived He was sometimes very tired because He had been so busy all day, but He was never so tired as not to be ready to speak to Simon. He was a wonderful man, this Friend. Father said He preached better than any of the learned Jewish Rabbis, and He could cure sick people too. When the doctors and everybody else had given up hope He could make a sick person well with a word. Simon himself had seen Him do it. It was only a little while ago that Granny was very ill. She had been tossing and moaning on her bed with fever, and mother had been terribly worried about her, and this marvellous Friend had merely touched her with His cool hand, and she had been quite well all in a minute. Why! she had risen and made an extra fine dinner for the whole household, just to prove how well she was, and how glad she was to be so.

Then the Friend knew exactly what children liked to play at. He was always ready to share in a game. He could do extraordinary things with his fingers too. With a knife and a piece of wood and a hammer and some nails He could make you such splendid toys. Granny said that was because He had been a carpenter. And after you had tired playing games with Him or watching Him make toys, He was always ready to take you

on His knee and tell you stories. And what stories they were! You simply held your breath and listened hard. Father was a fine man, and Uncle Andrew was a good sort, but there was nobody—nobody in all the world—to compare with the Friend.

When He came to the house little Simon hung around fascinated. He could not tear himself away. He was a quiet little fellow, so he was often allowed to stay in the room whilst the Friend talked to the men whom He usually had with Him. (Mother called them His disciples. Father was one, so was Uncle Andrew.) Simon could not understand all the Friend said, but it sounded very beautiful, and it made Simon long to be old enough to become a disciple too.

One day he remembered especially well. They had all come in from a long walk looking rather overheated and cross—all except the Friend!—He never was cross! The Friend had turned to them and said, 'What were you reasoning about on the way?' Simon thought that an extremely polite way of putting it, for the disciples looked as if they had been having a downright quarrel. When the Friend asked them this question, however, they had all looked rather caught and had got redder than before. Then the Friend had sat down, as all Rabbis did when they were going to teach their followers, and the disciples had gathered round in an ashamed bunch, for they knew that the Friend had guessed the secret of their quarrel. Then the Friend had turned round and smiled to little Simon, who was hanging about as usual in the background, and stretching out His hand towards him, had said, 'Come, Simon.' And Simon had run forward gladly at the call and had climbed up (he was such a wee chap, you know) on the Friend's knee, and the Friend had put an arm round him and had turned and said to Father and Uncle Andrew and all those great tall men, 'Friends, you were questioning as you came along which of you should have the first place in the Kingdom of Heaven. I tell you that you have to enter that Kingdom before you can talk of being first or last. And I tell you also that the only way to enter it is to become like little Simon here. You must love Me as he loves Me, you must trust Me, as he trusts Me, ere you can enter My Kingdom. The man who would be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven must have the heart of a little child.'

Of course, boys and girls, you have guessed long ago who little Simon was. He was the little son of Simon Peter. St. Matthew tells us about him and so does St. Mark. They tell us how Christ set him in the midst of these angry men and preached a sermon with his loving child's heart as the text.

And Christ is still preaching that sermon. He is still saying to older people, 'Love Me with the heart of a child.'

And what is He saying to the children? Is He not asking you to love Him as little Simon loved Him long ago? He knows that if you learn to love Him truly when you are young you will love Him all your days. He knows that the people who don't learn to love Him when they are children find it difficult to enter His Kingdom. They have to do what Christ said His disciples must do; they have to turn and become as little children before they can enter the door of the Kingdom. But the door of the Kingdom stands wide for the children, and though it is a lowly door it is high enough for each loving child.

Are you going to wait till you grow up and you find the entrance difficult? Or are you going to do as Simon did? Are you going to make Christ your special Friend while you are still a child? If so you will cross the threshold of the Kingdom almost without knowing it, and the Friend of little children will be *your* Friend for ever and ever, world without end.

The Christian Year.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

The Rich Ruler.

'But when he heard these things, he became exceeding sorrowful; for he was very rich.'—Lk 18^{23}.

The story is one of the most interesting and illuminative incidents in the Gospels. There is a charm and attractiveness about the young man that delights every reader. He was, undoubtedly, one who belonged to the best type of the earnest religious class of his day. He was a character very much after Jesus' own heart, for we are told that the Master loved him the moment He saw him. This means something more than His general love to every member of the human race. It denotes that special kinship of soul which is

the real basis of every genuine friendship. Let us see if we can discover the qualities in the young man that called forth this feeling.

1. *Curiosity.* — Many youths would approach the circle which always formed whenever Socrates talked or argued, from mere curiosity or as a resource to pass away an hour; and at first they would look with indifference or contempt on the mean and poorly dressed figure in the centre, but gradually their interest was aroused, their attention grew fixed, and then their hearts beat faster, their eyes swam with tears, and their very souls were touched and thrilled by the voice of the charmer. They came again and again to listen; and so by degrees that company of friends was formed whose devotion and affection to their master is the best testimony to the magic powers of his words.

2. *Idealism.*—The young man had a great and noble purpose, and could express it clearly. To him spiritual values seemed supreme. We are bound to say 'seemed,' for the sequel of the story shows he had not thought them out to their final issues. But, so far as he knew, he was prepared to do anything in his power to attain the highest ends. 'Good Teacher,' he cried, 'what am I to do to inherit life eternal?' His mind was open to the best thought of the day, and in terms of that thought he uttered his great desire.

There are few finer sights than to see a human soul prompted by the best and purest impulses. There is so much materialism always prevalent in life, that the 'dreamer of dreams' is a welcome variety. Besides, it is to them that the race owes all its progress. They are the really practical people, for they see first and proclaim the possibilities. They announce the goal which not they alone, but others also may reach. Like Arnold of Rugby, in his son's poem:

> There are some whom a thirst,
> Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
> Not with the crowd to be spent,
> Nor without aim to go round
> In an eddy of purposeless dust,
> Effort unmeaning and vain.

In our own day we have had one splendid and outstanding example of idealism in the service of truth in the person of President Wilson. He would neither permit himself nor his people to be frightened by threats or harried by self-interest into any line of action that was dictated by lower aims than those of the ideals he saw to be possible because they were true. He reminded the nation that a man 'lives upon a doctrine, upon a principle, upon an idea.' 'Do you love righteousness?' he said, 'is what each one of us ought to ask himself, and if you love righteousness, are you ready to translate righteousness into action and be ashamed and afraid before no man? It seems to me therefore that you are here as part of the assize of humanity, to remind yourselves of the things that are permanent and eternal which, if we do not translate into action, we have failed in the fundamental things of our lives.'

3. *Sincerity.*—When the young man was brought up against the challenge of the moral law he was able to say that he had obeyed its precepts. He was not one of those who deceived either himself or others. He was neither a hypocrite nor a prig. He knew how serious life was, and up to his lights he had endeavoured to order his life by the best standards. In our search for truth this is essential. Truth is a moral even more than an intellectual attainment, and we cannot reach our goal unless we are able to judge ourselves by the sternest principles. Self-deception is easy but disastrous, and the prayer of the Hebrew poet is always essential (Ps $139^{23.\ 24}$):

> Search me, O God, and know my heart:
> Try me, and know my thoughts:
> And see if there be any way of wickedness in me,
> And lead me in the way everlasting.

4. *Sacrifice.*—Truth always involves action. It is no merely mental process, however careful and thorough. It belongs to the whole being, and demands obedience to its own behests, which persistent discovery has only made more clear. The young man's wonderful progress entailed one further step. Jesus was not mocking him when He said, 'One thing thou lackest.' The further step was the crown of his career—was he prepared to take it? Here was the crucial test.

Truth has always had, and must ever have, her martyrs—Socrates, Buddha, Luther, Galileo, Dante, Columbus, and above all, Jesus Himself, have made this amply evident. Their lives are the story of this way of the Cross, which Truth lays upon its followers. Lowell has put it into memorable words:

> Then to side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
> Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
> Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
> Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
> And the multitudes make virtue of the faith they had denied.[1]

[1] *Life's Adventure*, 37.

PASSION SUNDAY.

The Ministry of the Silent Day.

'And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, He said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.'—Mt $26^{1.2}$.

The Gospels mark with distinctive mention the occasions of silence in the ministry of Jesus. But the most significant of all His times of silence was this silent day in Bethany. Matthew notes its time—'When Jesus had finished all these sayings.' He makes room for it in His numbering of the days—'After two days is the feast of the Passover.' The second of these days had its own events, which have been recorded. The first was the silent day of Jesus.

1. The ministry of any day depends partly on our need, partly on our desire, and partly on our use of its opportunities. But silence, and especially a chosen silence, has its own ministry to body and to mind and to spirit. One of its most gracious offices—the first in actual experience—is that of *recollectedness*, to use the old Puritan term. If ever it were true that the world is too much with us, it is true to-day. In our hurried, unresting, and even fevered lives, when too often our holidays and our recreations are as costly and wasteful as our toil, we need, and should desire, the ministry of silence. For, in all the haste and hustle of our lives, we not only grow weary, but we lose our sense of values. We fail in a due perspective of what life should be. We forget the high and the holy in our too constant dealing with the earthly and the secular. We need, therefore, to enter Christ's school of recollection and in quietness readjust the compass, and reorder the course of life.

2. A second and even higher ministry is one which all the mystics have proved and praised, and every man is a mystic in his heart. All these devout believers, as diverse in their minds and ideals as Bernard of Clairvaux and John Flavel, or Madame Guyon and Jonathan Edwards, have entered into that ministry of *vision*, which is never received except on a day of silence. John Flavel describes what befell him in such an experience. 'In all that day's journey he neither met, overtook, nor was overtaken by any. Thus going on his way his thoughts began to swell and rise higher and higher till at last they became an overwhelming flood. There was a heavenly serenity and sweet peace upon his spirit which continued long with him. Many years after he called that day one of the days of heaven, and professed that he understood more of the life of heaven by it than all the books he ever read, or discourses he ever entertained about it.' Few may rise to the heights of such an ecstasy in feeling, but all may gain something even better than the inflow of such a tide. The men who have given great service to humanity, and have been notable as men of fresh and inventive resource, have all known the day when they left the arena of the busy world, and betook them to some place of solitude, where the vision of the world's need and the vision of God's will were given to them, and they came back to create a new world after the pattern they had seen in the Mount.

3. Another office of this ministry of silence is one which meets a more universal need. It is its *power of renewal*. Every sincere man grows sick at heart with himself. He finds the times to be out of joint, and he finds himself to be almost despicable. Old evil habits cling to him like the shirt of Nessus. His hideous pride rebels against the humility which he knows to be the grace he resents. Beyond all, the mistakes and the errors and even the transgressions of his inner life smite him in conscience. He feels his need of being renewed, rebathed in the cleansing stream of Christ's forgiveness, quickened again with new life. Then he chooses a day of silence, and its ministry bestows its blessing upon him.

> The passive soul in waiting stands,
> To feel as flowers the sun and dew,
> The one true life its own renew.

4. But there is a deeper need, and a higher ministry of silence than recollectedness, or vision, or renewal. It is a *re-consecration*. To all men and women there comes the day when they must make, or seal, a decision. They are called upon to make a choice which will alter all their lives, imperil their future, and involve the well-being of their nearest and dearest. It may be the acceptance of a lot in which they will leave behind them all that has given their life its comfort and security. It may be the passing through an ordeal, in which heart and flesh faint and even fail. That is where Jesus stood at the close of His ministry. He had already accepted the cross. After the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration He had stead-

fastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. But no great step is ever taken in one single and final determination. We may come to a clear resolve that seems so fixed that the die has been cast, and the course has been chosen unalterably. But there come reasons and reasons. Barriers seem to be raised, counsels plead through the lips of those we love. Another course presents itself, as wise and dutiful, and we are at a pause. So Jesus faced again the ordeal of His cross. Its certainty became more certain as He taught in Jerusalem. He knew that Judas had already taken the price of treachery. 'The Son of man,' as Matthew writes in his brief mention, 'is betrayed to be crucified.' That was a word the disciples did not understand. As the horror and shame of the cross rose up before Him in a new vividness, as He saw Himself the victim on the world's high altar, as He remembered the men who had followed Him soon to be left scattered like sheep without a shepherd, He pondered again the will and the way of God. In this silent day He looked out on the path before Him. He looked up until God's purpose became as clear as though printed upon the heavens. Once more He resolved, and He came back to the homes of men with a quiet face but with shining eyes. He received re-consecration through the ministry of silence.[1]

PALM SUNDAY.

The Example.

'I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.'—Jn 13^{15}.

Three points deserve attention.

1. It is often urged against Christianity that it has hopelessly failed. After eighteen centuries men are not much happier or better than they were when Christ came. It may be so; but against that fact we place this other, that, in spite of failure and amid the ebb and flow of a fitful tide of effort and aspiration, the goal remains. Christian civilization has its vices, as pagan civilization had; at least they are branded as vices and driven into the shade. Christ has done this for us; He has fixed once for all the standard of Christian conduct. He is the ideal after which we are striving still.

2. But an ideal is not a rule which may be followed blindly and mechanically; nor is Christ. In earnest souls there is a disposition to ask: How would Jesus have acted under given conditions? and it is assumed that loyalty to Him implies imitation of Him. But that is impossible. The conditions under which the ideal was realized in history forbid it. Jesus never was a father, or an employer of labour, or the head of a state, nor can we say how, under such conditions, He would have acted. He belonged, moreover, to a particular age and community to which the complex problems that vex us were unknown. Finally, He had a mission, and loyally accepted the limits it imposed. In His teaching He gives no precepts but confines Himself to principles. In reverencing Him as the Christian ideal, we forgo the manifest convenience of an appeal to Him as the rule of life.

3. But then, and this is most important of all, the Christian ideal as thus identified with Him becomes a living force. St. Paul says: 'Let the mind that was in Christ be in you'; and again: 'If the Spirit that dwelt in Christ be in you, He that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies.' In these words this at least, if not this only, is implied, that, if the Spirit of Christ dwell in us, the mere framework, the conduct, of life will fashion itself according to an inward principle. Love, joy, and peace are fruits, not works; that is to say, they are not the laborious product of our own activity, but the expression of a new life. Originality and spontaneity are the marks of the Christian character; it is the creation of the Spirit. The pupil of a great master does not attempt to reproduce his work. He studies the master's methods, learns his secret, imbibes his spirit, and then applies them on lines often markedly his own. In Christian ethics we condemn the conventional and stereotyped. It has been urged of certain actions that, because neither Christ nor His apostles did them, they are wrong. And yet they may be right for us; and, even if they are not binding on us, it may yet be right to do them as a protest against the idea that they are wrong. The joyous freedom of the Christian character must never be lost.

I have the greatest respect for church-going and the time-honoured practices of the Christian life; I know their value; I fear the result of their neglect. Yet I will not, because I dare not, make them of the essence of the Christian life. Nothing makes a Christian, nothing goes to form a truly

[1] W. M. Clow, *The Idylls of Bethany*.

Christian character, but a free and loving surrender to the Spirit of Christ. Jesus was often misunderstood. St. Paul offended the Christianity of his day by a noble disregard of usage, in the interests of edification; we may have to do the same.[1]

Easter Sunday.

The Living Dead.

'And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.'—Jn 11[43].

Jesus lives. He lives to give life to others. See how while He was here on earth He gave life to Lazarus. 'Because I live, ye shall live also.'

Jesus called to Lazarus, and Lazarus responded to the call because, though he had passed through death, he himself was not dead at all, but alive. It is true Bethany was no longer his home. It is true he had disappeared from his old earthly haunts; but somewhere in the universe of God, and within reach of the voice of Jesus, Lazarus still lived.

1. And here we come across the first tremendous truth which is suggested vividly and powerfully by the words of Christ's call, *the dead are not dead at all, but alive.* And their life is a *conscious and personal life.* 'Lazarus, come forth,' said Jesus. On the other side, as on this, he was the same Lazarus still. He lived on as Lazarus. No doubt he had left behind the weaknesses and hindrances incident to this mortal life. But he had not become another and a different being. Personality endured. 'Lazarus,' said Jesus, 'come forth.' And our dead are not dead at all, but alive, and they are essentially the same people yonder as they were here. Death removes limitations and banishes weaknesses and sins, but it does not make those who pass through it into different persons. Intrinsically and essentially they remain the same. *They answer to the old names.*

I think there is nothing that bereaved hearts crave for more than to be sure of recognition. We get frightened sometimes lest death should have made such a change in our beloved as to make them quite unrecognizable. It is a needless and groundless fear. Heaven would not be heaven to us if we could not greet again our loved and lost and resume again (though in purified and exalted ways) the dear affections of this mortal life. But we need be in no distress or doubt upon this point. Lazarus was still Lazarus, and in the life on the other side of death.

Isn't there a pretty little story told about the mother of the great Thomas à Becket! Whether the story is truth or mere legend (as the more sober historians insist) matters little or nothing to me just now. According to the story, she was a Saracen maiden who fell in love with à Becket's father when he was campaigning with the Crusaders in Palestine. And when the Crusaders left, she, drawn by her great love, which was more to her than country or kindred, followed them in due course westward and found her way to London. And all she knew of England was the name of her beloved. So through London the strange maiden went, crying out, 'à Becket.' And in due course the beloved answered to his name.

2. The second great truth which we may learn from the text is that of *the authority of Christ.* He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth,' and he that was dead came forth. Lazarus was beyond the reach of the appeals and entreaties of his sisters, he was out of reach of all earth's sounds and voices; but, wherever he was, he was not beyond the reach of Christ's Will, and not beyond the summons of Christ's voice. Christ's commands run through the universe. He is the Lord of the unseen world as well as of this visible sphere.

Do you remember what the Psalmist says about the sun? 'There is nothing hid from the heat thereof.' There is more than a little of the poet's licence about such a statement. For there are tracts of our earth that are never visited by the sun. But what the Psalmist asserts of the sun, so far as this world is concerned, is true of Jesus without limitation or reservation. There is no sphere outside His authority. He is Lord, not of this world only, but of *all* worlds. He is Lord of the unseen as well as of the seen. He is Lord of death as well as life. That is what He said of Himself: 'I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, and I became dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.'

3. In the ancient Church this great miracle was treated, not simply as fact, but also as allegory and parable. As Christ raises those who are naturally dead, so He quickens those also who are dead in trespasses and sins. And this particular miracle was used as an illustration of the infinite reach of Christ's quickening power. There are three resurrection miracles recorded in the history of Jesus. And there are degrees in the wonderfulness of them. The first of these miracles was that of the raising of Jairus's daughter. The breath had scarcely left the body. The little maid had scarcely closed her eyes in death before Jesus' voice cried, 'Little maid, arise.' The second was that of the widow's son at Nain. He had been dead for hours, and was being taken out to burial. But the most wonderful of all was that of Lazarus, who had been in the grave four days and who had begun to see corruption. The miracles stand in an ascending scale. He raised Jairus's daughter

[1] J. R. Gillies, *The Ministry of Reconciliation.*

from the bed; He raised the widow's son *from the bier*; He raised Lazarus *from the grave*. And the old fathers used all this to illustrate the extent of Christ's saving power. He can raise not simply those who have just fallen away from truth and holiness, like the damsel who had just expired; He can save not only those who have been some time dead in sins, like the young man on his way to burial; but He can save the man who, like Lazarus, has been a long time dead, who is festering in his sins and shut up in them as in a tomb. There is no limit to the saving power of Christ. He can save to the very uttermost.[1]

[1] J. D. Jones, *The Lord of Life and Death*.

Notes on the Johannine Prologue.

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In his *Origin of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel* (Cambridge University Press), Dr. Rendel Harris essays to show, and, as I think, succeeds in showing, that the source of most of the phrases of which the Prologue consists is to be found in the Sapiential books; he also propounds the interesting theory that the Prologue existed as a Sophia-hymn before it became a Logos-hymn, and makes the attempt to restore it 'to something like its intermediate form,' giving in the margin of the page on which the reconstruction appears the passages from the Wisdom books which have inspired the various clauses of the hymn.[1]

The present paper records one or two thoughts suggested by Dr. Harris's pages.

The presence of the passing reference to the creative activity of the Logos in v.[3] of the Prologue has given rise to much discussion. One question that inevitably forces itself upon the student of the Prologue is this: Seeing that an allusion is actually made to the creative activity of the Logos in the Prologue, why is the Gospel itself utterly void of any expansion of the idea? We should have thought that it would have suited the purpose of the Evangelist to attribute to the Logos-Christ some references to His activity as God's agent in creation. Inge discovers the solution in the Evangelist's conception of God. 'It is true,' he remarks, 'to say that the Johannine God is not an absolutely transcendent Being who can only manifest Himself through an intermediary. In consequence of this, the *creative* function of the Logos loses its interest for St. John, and is not referred to again after the Prologue.'[2] It may well be that the perils inherent in incipient Gnosticism led our Evangelist to lay little emphasis upon the creative function of the Logos-Christ, for fear he might seem to be countenancing the conception of God which represents Him as keeping utterly aloof from the world. It is only necessary to remind ourselves of the words attributed to Jesus in 5^{17}—'My Father worketh even until now'—to see how far removed from this is the Johannine conception of God. All this, however, only brings the student face to face with the converse question: Why, then, is any allusion made at all to the creative activity of the Logos? Scott finds the answer to this question in the writer's desire to pay some deference to the prevailing thought; he remarks that in the Prologue 'the sequence of thought would still be complete although the brief allusion were omitted,' and adds: 'It is thrown out, apparently, by way of acknowledgment of the recognized theory. Some reference to the cosmic significance of the Logos was necessary if any link with previous speculation was to be preserved.'[3] The word 'apparently' betrays that Scott is not perfectly satisfied with this explanation. The Sophia-song hypothesis comes to our aid with a much more reasonable solution. It frees the Evangelist from responsibility for the presence in the Prologue of the brief allusion to the creative function of the Logos, and thereby relieves the student of the necessity of attempting to reconcile its presence in the Prologue with the

[1] *Origin of the Prologue*, p. 43. Several misprints have crept into the list of references.

[2] 'Cambridge Biblical Essays,' *The Theology of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 277.

[3] *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 157.