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people, their refusal to hear the Divine message, are the supreme obstacles to their conversion.

I would venture to suggest that in both the first and second Gospel a new translation may be found by altering the punctuation. A full stop should be put after the words 'their eyes they have closed' in St. Matthew, and after the words 'and not understand' in St. Mark. The sentence following should be taken as an independent question, the subjunctive being deliberative.

The passage in St. Matthew would then read as follows:

μή ποτε ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς  
καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν ἀκούσωσιν,  
καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ σύνωσιν καὶ ἐπιστρέψωσιν;  
καὶ ἰάσομαι αὐτούς:

'Is there a chance of their seeing at any time with their eyes, and hearing with their ears, and understanding with their heart, and turning to me? And I shall heal them.'

Similarly the last words in the passage of St. Mark would read as follows:

ἐκείνοις δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεταί  
ἵνα  
βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ μὴ ἴδωσιν  
καὶ ἀκούοντες ἀκούωσιν καὶ μὴ συνιώσιν·  
μή ποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῆ ἑαυτοῖς;

'But to those without, all things are done in parables in order that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand. Is there a chance of their turning to me at any time, and of their sins being forgiven?'

It seems to me that the new translations given above make the whole passage in accord with the character of the Master. In the first Gospel the contrast between the subjunctive and future indicative is emphasized by this new punctuation and rendering. 'Is there a chance of their ever . . . turning to me? And I will heal them. The certainty of Divine mercy is assured if once men turn to God. What is expressed in St. Matthew is implied in St. Mark. The Lord has compassion on the multitudes. Personal religion implies consciousness of ignorance, desire for knowledge, willingness to turn to the great teacher. These feelings Christ desires to awaken in men who have lost the power of direct response to Divine Truth. So Christ adapts His method of instruction to their capacity, and seeks, as I have tried to show, to awaken in them the sense of ignorance in familiar things. Why does He so deal with men?' *On the chance that they may turn to Him.* That is all that is needed; everything else will follow in due time.

## In the Study.

### Virginitus Puerisque.

'Follow me.'

'A little child shall lead them.'—Is 11<sup>6</sup>.

'Jesus said unto him, Follow me.'—Mt 8<sup>22</sup>.

A CARAVAN does not always mean a house on four wheels such as gypsies live in. Travelling in Africa one finds that out. There are parts of that continent quite without roads as we understand them, and you would find no use for a railway time-table. The only route to the interior is by what is called a 'trail,' a path no wider than the sheep tracks of the Scottish hills.

It is so narrow, and has such tall grasses on each side—sometimes they are as high as thirteen feet—that it gets blocked very easily. But the African has his own ways of managing long

journeys over those 'trails.' It is no uncommon thing to see as many as a hundred men, women, and children wriggling along under his guidance in Indian file. He has been heard to call his winding procession a 'crocodile,' but its proper name is a 'caravan.' I dare say you think that to be in a caravan like this would be great fun; but if some morning you had a chance of asking any of the white people how they liked it they would confess to feeling rather uncomfortable. The tall grass is covered with dew, and the travellers get drenched with it. What do you think the big black African does to make things more comfortable for them? He seizes upon some of the wee native boys who are perhaps not more than three feet high and pushes them on ahead to dry off the dew on their naked bodies.

The little 'dew-driers,' as they are called, don't object to their task. They take it as a matter of course; and the doing of it gives them a certain standing with their own folks. In their eyes they become budding heroes. One very diminutive specimen was seen to go straight up to his mother and give her a smack on the face. Instead of being very angry, she was quite proud, and, turning to her companions, said, with a smile, 'What a splendid warrior he'll make.'

We think and speak of such children as having no moral backbone, but in the little pioneer of the 'trail' there may be grit that children brought up in Christian homes might well envy.

Once a missionary tried to get a very tiny specimen to eat fish. The little fellow was very hungry, but according to the ceremonial laws of his tribe he dared not touch fish. He set his teeth firmly—they were his first ones—and defied all entreaties. Young as he was he knew the meaning of 'Thou shalt not,' and he could 'play the game.' If one day this little black child should become a Christian, he will be in earnest in trying to become like Jesus Christ, and he will never be afraid to confess Him. The negro knows a good man when he sees him. He likes to listen to preaching; but even when he is staring at the missionary, he may be wondering if he lives what he preaches. They are often disappointed. Once after a sermon telling them about the crucifixion of Christ, a negro stood up and said, 'You white men were a bad lot to go away and kill the Best One like that; we blacks only kill criminals, and then far from being ashamed of what you have done you come across the seas to tell us you did it.' When I read that, the little dew-drier—the pioneer of the trail—came into my mind. One day he, like many of his brothers, may become an elephant hunter. Elephant hunting will take him away into lonely and dangerous places. If he is a Christian he will think about God then, and come back to tell his old friends that he has seen Him.

One elephant hunter had a great story to tell. 'I came across a town, a village,—villages,' he said; 'there were men, women, and boys and girls. I let my elephants escape, and I stayed to tell them about my Great Friend.' That was being a true missionary. There was love in his heart and the spirit of the little child.

Another got a hold of the Gospel of John. He

read, but could not understand. One day, however, the words 'Follow me!' struck home; it came to him like a language he knew. Afterwards, when he told his experience, he said, 'I was startled to find that Christ could speak my language out of the printed page, and what he said was "Follow me."'

Perhaps he had once been a 'dew-drier'—a pioneer, and could understand what the 'trail' to the Heavenly Jerusalem meant.

#### Walking in White.

'They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy.'—Rev 3<sup>d</sup>.

Did you ever notice how often the word 'white' is mentioned in the Book of Revelation? If you take the trouble to count you will find it occurs no fewer than nineteen times. We read there of a white horse and white horses, and of a white cloud and a white stone. The head and hair of Christ are said to be white, and so is the great throne of judgment. Then over and over again we are told of white linen, white robes, or white raiment, and our own special text speaks of 'walking in white.'

I wonder what John was thinking of when he spoke of 'walking in white'? Well, perhaps he had a picture in his mind at the time, the picture of a Roman triumph. Some of you know what that was, and you too can make a picture of it in your mind. A triumph was the welcome home given to a victorious general by the people of old Rome. On that day the victor, crowned with laurel and seated in a chariot drawn by four horses, went in solemn procession through the city to the capitol. In front of him were the senate, the magistrates, the musicians, the spoils, and the fettered captives; and behind him followed the victorious army. It was a great day for him, and it was a great day for Rome. It was a general holiday, a day of rejoicing; and in honour of the occasion the citizens all wore the white toga, the white robe that was kept for religious ceremonies and special occasions. You see, white was not only, as we count it, the emblem of purity and innocence, it was also the emblem of victory and triumph.

And so John gave the few faithful Christians in the town of Sardis this message from Christ: that because they had been true to Him, because they had remained pure and holy amidst many

temptations to sin, they would walk with Him in white. They would share Christ's triumph. They would wear the white robes of heaven.

Now I wonder how we—you and I—may, like the faithful few in Sardis, become worthy to walk with Christ in white. Long ago—yes, and not so very long ago either!—some men imagined that in order to become worthy to walk with Christ in white they must keep themselves apart from the world; they must live a life of penance and prayer to God, shut away from all the world's sins and sorrows. They hoped by so doing to keep themselves pure and holy.

Now that is one way of trying to become worthy; but it seems to me a very foolish way; and I can tell you a better. How do I know it is better? I know it is better because it was the way of Jesus, and surely He was the purest and holiest that ever walked this earth. Yet all the years of His busy life He moved as a man among men. He shared men's sorrows and He rejoiced in their joys. He healed their sickness and He helped in their troubles. Where He was most needed, there He was found. He was not afraid to mix with those whom the proud Pharisees called 'sinners' or 'unclean.' He was not afraid to dine with the publicans or to touch the lepers. He ever went about doing good. And if we try hard to copy *His way*, then one day He will say of us too, 'Ye shall walk with me in white; for ye are worthy.'

Shall I tell you a story I heard the other day? Once upon a time a little pilgrim found herself on the road to heaven. She was given a fine white robe to walk in, and she knew that only if she kept it spotless would the gates of the golden city open to her. Very carefully she picked her steps, for the way was both rough and muddy. But as she went on she was horror-struck to find that not only was it rough and muddy, but it was actually built of pilgrims who had fallen in the march and who lay bleeding and unheeded in the mire. Presently one of these unhappy creatures cried to the little pilgrim 'Help! Help me up for Christ's sake!' The little pilgrim was about to stoop, when suddenly she remembered her white garment. 'No, no,' she exclaimed, 'I daren't. If I touched you I might be defiled.' And she passed on. But even as she passed on she was aghast to see that the edge of her white robe was stained with scarlet. At every step she took the stain spread till at last her whole garment

was scarlet. 'What have I done?' she cried. But there was no reply save the moans of the fallen pilgrims.

In despair she turned back, 'If I cannot keep my robe white,' she said, 'at least I can help a lost sister.' So she knelt down on the dreadful road and put her arms tenderly round the poor pilgrim who had craved her aid. By exerting all her strength she managed to pull the fallen one out of the mire; then hand in hand, with down-cast eyes, the two passed on together. At last, sad and ashamed, they reached the golden gates. No hope had they of entering, for the robe of the one was scarlet, and the robe of the other was filthy rags. But, just as they reached the gates, lo, a miracle!—the scarlet robe of the one and the filthy rags of the other turned in a moment to robes of dazzling white—white so dazzling that even the angels could not look. And the gates of heaven fell back.

## The Christian Year.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

### The Social Question.

'Bringing every thought into captivity to the mind of Christ.'—2 Co 10<sup>6</sup>.

From the Christian point of view, the social question is primarily one of the spirit, and not one of system. Whenever organized Christianity has forgotten this truth, and has sought to define the social question in terms of system, political, industrial, or social, it has failed and has brought discredit upon religion. The Church which identifies itself with any particular theory of political action is courting a new source of division, which can only serve to increase her difficulties. Such a Church will gradually be absorbed in a party organization, and become a mere political caucus. And so, from the Christian point of view, we say that the social question is a question in human relationships. In a word, viewed in the light of Christianity it is simply a man's answer to God's question to Cain: 'Where is thy brother?' It is man's response to the second commandment: 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' It is an effort to answer the Lord's Prayer: 'Thy kingdom come.' It is the application of the Golden Rule to all activities of life.

In view of these facts, what is the duty of the

Church toward the social question? We answer that it is fourfold.

1. *To give leadership to the thought of the social movement.* Let it not be forgotten that the social question is primarily one of social thought. It is a philosophy before it is an activity. The modern Socialists have seen this, and hence they have spent their lives in seeking to mould the thought life of men. They have been social teachers rather than social workers in all our great centres.

We cannot expect to have a society based on Christian principles so long as our social philosophy is made by anti-Christian philosophers and materialistic socialists. The times are appealing to the Church to capture the thought of the social movement, to proclaim that there is not a thought worth considering in philosophy, an ideal in ethics, a principle in sociology, or a program in practical reform, that is not found in Christianity. The most urgent appeal of the times to the Church is to 'bring every thought,' social, political, ethical, and religious, 'into captivity to Christ Jesus.' The industrial organization of society has attained, in the thought of our times, an importance which has never before attached to it. The urgent secular questions of the day are the questions of wealth and poverty, of luxury and want, of capital and labour, of peace and war. These all combine to create a strong demand for a social expression of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and this demand creates an obligation from which no Church bearing the name of Jesus Christ can consistently escape.

2. *To give leadership to the conscience of the social movement.* The most imperative need in the social awakening is to Christianize the conscience. It is evident that the development and application of the moral and religious ideas of our times have not kept pace with industrial and commercial progress. Conscience is aroused but perplexed, and the need exists for emphasizing in a more definite way the obligations of the different elements of society each to the other.

The Church needs to teach with stronger convictions that men cannot live to themselves alone, and that they must not pursue their own gain in disregard of the rights and the welfare of others. With clearness and without hesitation the Church must affirm as the principle of social practice the fundamental teaching of Jesus. 'Whatsoever ye

would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.'

The social awakening is asking for guidance on the ever enlarging questions of corporate and social duties. If the conscience of this movement can be made and kept Christian, the social movement will be kept Christian. The times are looking to the Church to provide standards that will make the conscience of the social movement Christian. The Christian standards for conscience are found, of course, in the New Testament. They must be interpreted and applied, and the Church is the appointed agent for this work. New moral questions are up to-day. Men are asking: 'Has Christianity moral standards for the corporate as well as for the personal life of men?' The standards of personal morality are fairly well fixed and accepted, but not so with public and social morality. President Hadley of Yale has said: 'The present evil from which society is suffering is not so much one of character as one of misunderstanding. We are suffering not so much from bad morals as from defective ethics.'

3. *To give leadership to the activities of the social movement.* Never before were so many people concerned with the amelioration of social conditions and social ideas; never before were there so many movements for human welfare. If these people and these movements are to be kept Christian, the Church must be ready and willing to lead them. The Church must not only teach and inspire; it must actually lead every movement which aims to make men like Christ, earth like heaven, and the kingdoms of this world the kingdom of Christ.

There is a grave danger just now that the Church may lose her place of leadership in social activities. Already we are hearing about 'scientific charity,' 'practical education,' 'moral reform,' and 'ethical revival.' The phrases in themselves are not necessarily antagonistic to the Church, but as used by many to-day they are. Many social workers discount the Church as an agency in social service, notwithstanding the fact that most of them belong to the Church.

Because the Church is in danger of losing her hold on these great human activities which legitimately come under her sphere of work, the Church should lead them. The primary function of the Church is to bring every individual and every department of human life into conformity with

the law of love, the law of God. Exactly what the Church must do at any particular time or any particular place may, of course, vary. It must depend upon what is most needed at the particular time and in the particular place, in order soonest to establish the kingdom of God.

4. *To give leadership to the spirit of the social movement.* No one will question that the nature and influence of this movement will be made by the spirit that dominates it. Society has a right to look to the Church for leadership of the spirit which animates the social awakening. The Church, more than any other organization, has been charged with the responsibility. The real issue of the day is one of spirit rather than one of system. Shall the social movement be Christianized or commercialized? Shall Christ lead it, or shall Antichrist? These are the most important questions confronting the modern world. The future character of civilization as well as the future influence of the Church is involved in these questions.

If the social movement is to be Christianized, if it is to be led by Christ, the Church must give leadership to the spirit of it. Christ's expectation for society can be realized only through the proclamation by the Church of the gospel which tells of His sacrifice for mankind, combined with the manifestation of the spirit of that sacrifice in the life of His disciples. The social movement can be made Christian only as it is filled with the spirit of the cross. The law of social service, 'Each for all, and all for each,' will be a dead letter unless reinforced by the love which the cross expresses. To fill the social movement with the cross, in the New Testament meaning of it, is to set in operation the mightiest force in the universe for the regeneration of sinful human nature and the redemption of sinful human society.<sup>1</sup>

#### SEXAGESIMA.

#### Incarnation and Imitation.

'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.'—  
1 Co II<sup>1</sup>.

The famous work of devotion entitled *On the Imitation of Christ* and the oft-repeated term 'the Christ-like life' suggest the possibility of making the Incarnation a practical method of life. While it is true that the Incarnation is a unique fact, it is also true that we are made in the likeness of

<sup>1</sup> J. McDowell, in *Record of Christian Work*, xxxix. 704.

God. There is therefore no presumption in striving to complete that likeness. The principle of the Incarnation is that there is an affinity between the Divine and the human, so that there is no suggestion of Christ's having achieved the impossible. What He did is not a contradiction in terms. St. Paul is the great champion of imitation: he claims it as his own method, and he recommends it to those whom he is persuading or has begun to persuade. 'This is my commandment,' says our Lord Himself, 'That ye love one another as I have loved you': this is a clear recommendation of imitation. Now the fundamental virtue of the Incarnation is the principle of love. 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son': Divinity combines with humanity in the spirit of love. 'We love,' says St. John, 'because he first loved us.' It has been shown that the Incarnation is the elevation of humanity nearer to God. Our aim, then, is to be that we may raise our humanity still nearer to God, so far as that is possible to human effort. To do this, we have first of all to form some conception of God. The first conception may be of His greatness, His superiority to us, His distance from us. If that conception is preserved, we may get the idea of worship, but we do not get Christianity. For Christianity is nothing, if it does not add the idea of God's immanence to the idea of God's transcendence. And that implies nearness. The first disciples did not spend so much time with their Master without possessing that idea of nearness. They asked Him questions, which is always a sign of the sense of accessibility. When the Word became flesh, the idea of accessibility was suggested. God had drawn nearer to man, therefore man might draw nearer to God. One incentive to imitation, then, is the feeling of God's accessibility and the practice of it.

1. One form of the practice is *prayer*. The word 'prayer' suggests request: we ask God to supply a need that we feel. But the value of prayer lies in its attitude and its process rather than in its definite result. Prayer is the attitude of man to God. Just as in the Incarnation humanity is drawn nearer to God, so in prayer the worshipper begins at least by putting himself in God's presence. He cannot expect to get all that he asks for, indeed he does not always know what is best for him, and he may even be inclined to ask for what he desires rather than what is for

his real good, but at least he shows that he believes in God's presence, which is the foundation of religious belief. The Word who became flesh constantly maintained this intercourse between God and man, for it was this that constituted His nature. We, in the practice of prayer, are imitating that intercourse, and we are encouraging our religious sense on the model set up by Christ. Thus prayer may be really used as another name for worship, of which the highest form is the Holy Communion, for in that service we combine thanksgiving with request, and make our offering to God in a form sanctioned by His own command. Here, even more explicitly, the human and the Divine are combined, the Divine presence and the human offering of self. Here God is accessible to us in a form of His own providing, here He gives us our daily bread.

2. Another point of imitation is *sacrifice*. To become man God yielded up certain manifestations of Divinity, without conceding one iota of the Divine essence. Becoming man, He subjected Himself to temptation, and even to the negation of Divine knowledge, to the cares and privations of human life, to the agony, spiritual and physical, of death. We, on the side of humanity, have our sacrifice to make. We have to learn by suffering. It is not easy for us to subject our will to God's, but in the light of the Incarnation we may learn to see our way clear. What we endure is not worthy to be compared with future glory, but it is worth while in view of that future glory. It is an imitation that falls infinitely short of the original, but it is a proof of sincerity, an assurance of reality. It contains obedience and love, both conspicuous in the original. If the Good Shepherd received also the name of the Lamb of God, it is fitting that He should guide His sheep in His own way of sacrifice.

3. Yet another point of imitation is *persistence*. All human efforts justify their beginning only by their continuance. There is no possibility of deserting a purpose that has been deliberately planned. Its preparation is the measure of its accomplishment. Wherefore we faint not (because of the manifestation of life which has been revealed to us), but, even if our outward man is being destroyed, yet our inward man is being renewed day by day. The Divine life predominates over the human, the spiritual over the material, the eternal over the temporal. The process advances as it is

maintained, and in the imitation of Christ the personality is preserved by deliberate loss.

4. The crowning point of imitation is *love*. God so loved the world, and Christ so expressed the love of God, that love is the only answer to the great act of love. It is an imitation of motive even more than of act. There are actions that confer good on others and actions that involve loss to oneself, which lose the good and waste the loss because they express no loving motive. They are of the letter, not of the spirit, they do not rank as Divine reflexions or satisfy even human standards of value. But, when we act up to the best that we know, contributing to it all the wealth of our nature and character and life, then we do as Christ did, we give because we love.<sup>1</sup>

#### SHROVE SUNDAY.

#### Righteousness and Love.

'In him was life.'—Jn 1<sup>4</sup>.

It has been said that the two fundamental notes in both the teaching and life of Jesus are righteousness and love. They are struck with equal clearness in His revelation of God and His revelation of the meaning of human life. They are also the two outstanding needs of the world in which we live.

1. Firstly, Righteousness. There is no more searching moral standard than that which Jesus taught. His demands do not spare men. Tender as He was in His dealings with those who failed, He never fell into that false tenderness which would lower the standards of life to suit the weakness of men. If He gave all, He claimed all. Think of His standard of purity and truth and sincerity, how He searched into heart and motive, and secret thought. His light permits no evasions or excuses: the heart of man is revealed before Him. He searches it and claims the uttermost from it. We must make that clear in our picture of Christ. No good can come of dwelling on His sympathy and tenderness and leaving out of sight His sternness. Love without righteousness will never build a new world. Character is the foundation of everything. The beauty of the spirit which shares with another must be backed by the strength which has the worthiest things to give. The world of to-day needs that note; the world of to-morrow will be no better than the world of yesterday without it. The sanctity of the home and the health

<sup>1</sup> H. A. Watson, *The Incarnation and Personality*.

of society depend upon purity in manhood and womanhood. Moral self-control is the fibre of the nation's strength. Nor can you deal adequately with the injustices of the social system until you strike at greed and avarice in the individual heart. One of the great things we need to recover is the sense of moral responsibility, that the first and finest offering a man has to make to God and his fellows is that of a clean, honest, upright life.

2. But if righteousness is the first note in the message, Love is the second, and these things are not two but one, for the whole conception of righteousness as Christ revealed it has love at its heart. Strength stoops down to aid weakness. Powers are bestowed to be given forth in ministering service. Blessings received are the equipment for blessings to be given. Distinctions and grades are not permitted to stand as factors of separation, they indicate responsibilities. The whole message of the incarnate life of our Lord is that moral station and spiritual exaltation are not prizes to be enjoyed, but gifts to be dispensed. Only so can the hard barriers of the world be cast down. It is those barriers which form such a large part of the problems of to-day. True, they are to some extent giving way before pressure, the balance of power is changing, but no exercise of force will solve the problem. The poor of to-day may be the rich of to-morrow; the weak of to-day may be the strong of to-morrow; that may mean benefit for some, but it will not save the world. What the world needs is that the barriers should be cast down, that a new spirit should take possession of man's effort, and love should build the commonwealth.

We must stretch out hands in co-operation where we have lately raised our hands to strike. The world problem is ultimately one, and fellowship is the only solution. Well may some men shrink before the greatness of the task, and the superficial speak in tones of mockery. If there be no great source of power and light to help us, the word impossible may be allowed. Everything depends on keeping in view the eternal background and resources.<sup>1</sup>

#### FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

##### Patience.

'Ye have need of patience.'—He 10<sup>36</sup>.

There are three separate grounds—at least they may be considered in turn—on which we are all

<sup>1</sup> Sidney M. Berry, *The Crucible of Experience*.

of us very ready to lose that fortitude of the soul which is patience, and to sink into lethargy and cynicism and low views of life, or into a mere shallow anger and querulousness. We have need of patience with ourselves; we have need of patience with other people, especially with that nearer circle of people, never very many, who have almost everything to do with our own personal life; and we have need of patience with God.

1. We have need of patience with ourselves. It is a great day for every one of us when it comes home to us that our one business in the world is that we become good men; that we are here to get the mastery over everything within us which we know to be perverse or mean or false or self-seeking. In the great speech of the Bible we are here 'to be made meet to become partakers of our inheritance with the saints in light.' There is, perhaps, no more honourable view of life, if you say it handsomely, than to say that we are here to prepare for the last journey and for what awaits us.

Now, this dealing strictly with ourselves, this daily bringing of ourselves before the holier idea of ourselves, this refusal to put up with ourselves on the lower plane, is apt to become very disheartening work. It is so very disheartening that many people, after a short trial, give it up, and begin to consent to a complacent opinion of themselves, to the flattery of their friends, and to the undisturbing requirement of their own particular set. They know that there is some sin which is their besetting sin; and, sometimes after a bad indulgence of it, they secretly determine that this whole business must be attended to. But after a little while their indignation at themselves cools down, and with another occasion there comes another lapse. And many a man is in secret broken-spirited and abject because of this dreary up-and-down-ness of his private life. Here is one of the matters on which we need to have patience—we need to have patience with ourselves.

We need to have patience with our own miserable disappointments with ourselves, yielding, as we do, pitifully to things which we had pledged ourselves never to indulge. We have need of patience; patience to rise again, even when we are bowed down with shame and anger at ourselves; patience not to give ourselves up entirely, or at all; patience to ask God for Christ's sake to be patient with us; patience to begin again, this



time with a humbler spirit, more deeply, leaning more upon God.

2. We have need of patience in our dealings with other people. It will help us to be patient with others, especially with those whose good we are seeking, to remember what trouble we are having with ourselves. And again, after all, we do not know what they have to contend with. We are all of us mysteries and secrets to one another. Often we do each other a great injustice.

A Scottish professor called upon a student to stand up and 'construe.' 'Hold your book in the other hand,' said the professor. The student went on reading, apparently paying no heed. 'Do you hear me, sir?' The student ceased reading, still holding the book as before, but now having his head cast down. 'Sir!' shouted the professor. Whereupon the student raised his other arm—from which the hand had been cut off! It is said that the professor did all that a man can do who has done an irreparable thing. He rushed from his desk, and going down on his knees before that maimed lad, in the sight of all the class, pleaded, 'Will you ever be able to forgive me?' We had better take the deep and holy view of our fellow-men.

3. Finally, we have need of patience with God. Let us try to think of the task which God has upon His hands. What is that task? It is to save all souls, and this without interfering with their personal freedom. Here are some words from Milton: 'Many there be that complain of

Divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues! When God gave him reason, He gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; else he had been a mere artificial Adam as he is in the motions (puppet shows). We ourselves esteem not that obedience or love, or gift which is of force. God, therefore, left him free, set before him a provoking object even almost in his eyes. Herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore did He create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these, rightly tempered, are the ingredients of virtue.'

For men like ourselves the darkness and tragedy of the world have no power to unsettle our ultimate confidence. Our faith in God does not rest upon the aspect of transitory things. Our faith is our loyalty to Jesus Christ. It is the acceptance by us not only of His moral rule, but also of His insight, of His report, of His interpretation and point of view. Our faith is our approach to His faith. And it was His faith that this world, though it was permitted to crush Him, was all the while God's world; and that, though men nailed Him to the Cross, and though there were found amongst them those who mocked Him in the agony of death, it was still our high calling to live greatly, to face and overcome the darkness in things in the power of His perfect confidence in the Heavenly Father's blameless will.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Hutton, *Discerning the Times*.

## The Quaker Faith.<sup>2</sup>

BY WILLIAM E. WILSON, B.D., WOODBROOKE, BIRMINGHAM:

WHAT is it that distinguishes Quakerism from other forms of Christianity? Principal Graham, in his important work, *The Faith of a Quaker*, suggests that it is the Quaker Meeting for Worship on a basis of silence. He says: 'This habit of worship is what a chemist would call the essential oil of Quakerism. Where it is abandoned the Quaker faith is abandoned too' (p. 241). Can it then be that the very essence of Quakerism, which has protested against all forms and ceremonies, is

<sup>2</sup> An essay by another Quaker suggested by Principal Graham's book, *The Faith of a Quaker*.

to be found in a form? Our author recognizes this difficulty, and goes on to show that silent worship is not a form—at any rate not an arbitrary form—but the natural outcome of the central Quaker conviction, that God's approach to His human children is within. Let me continue the quotation: 'It is a rash and dangerous thing to say that any external habit of religion is a sure test of the presence of its essential spirit, and the statement comes of a family of bad ecclesiastical dicta. Nevertheless it is true here. For contemplation, meditation, collectedness, inward purgation, are