

turning over the plans of some houses in our borough, and I came upon the plan of a house that I happened to live in. The plan was a bit old and worn, but I was extremely interested. I had lived in the house for some years, but I had never seen a plan. But there it was. It showed such and such an air space, windows in such a position, and so on. I thought a good deal more of the house afterwards because I had seen the plan, you know. I am in the Church of England, and I turn over the New Testament and the pages of early history, and I find the plan of the very building that I live in. I was in the building before I had seen the plan, but I was very much interested when I found the plan with Bishops, priests, and deacons, and the other features of the building drawn out by hands that were Divine. I believe in the building because it fits the plan and because the plan fits the building.

Another point. I am a Churchman because I believe in unity, and I find at bottom a greater amount of unity in the Church of England than in any other religious organization in England. Why? You say, 'You differ pretty freely, you chap.' Very likely, but at bottom, on the fundamentals, we are at one. I had the honour and pleasure of dining with your Bishop to-day. I do not know which I enjoyed most, the dinner or the lovely way in which it was laid. The flowers were so beautiful and the soft light upon the table and the fruit and that—it was very lovely. But I do not get the strength which enables me to speak to you from the beauty of the table. I get it from the food that I ate. If I had gone to the home of one of you workmen and you had invited me to dinner, and we had gone and sat down in the back kitchen together, and your wife had spread a clean tablecloth over the deal table and put down some bread and Devonshire butter and a cup of tea and a rasher of bacon, I should have enjoyed the dinner perhaps as much and got as much nutriment from it though it was simpler in the surroundings and the appointments. Of course I am only just a simple layman, but I may prefer a certain amount of surroundings and appointments in connection with a service. This is a matter of preference; the fundamental food is the prayer, the creed, the faith. I get that in the Church of England, and you cannot touch it. We depend upon the food, the prayers, the creeds, the sacraments. All those things about which we differ are simply the laying of the table, the non-essentials. The big part, the food that helps me to live a true, a pure life, are in the Church independently of the other things.

I am a Churchman because to me the Church is a unity. Remember that soon after the Dockers' Union was formed I had the honour of being President of a large branch of over three thousand men down by the Victoria Docks, and the question was raised that the dockers should have one executive and one simple fund. I opposed it and the men down our district opposed it. They thought it better to keep their own funds and just be a branch. One of the men, Tom, came down to see me in my dining-room. Tom held up to me an ideal of unity and showed what a real trade union might be where the strong could not trample down the weak. Because he was a brother member of his union he would stand by him, and he said that there would not be struggling and pushing and driving. It was a beautiful ideal of unity, and as Tom held up to me that ideal, I said, 'Tom, take your fund. Strike out my name from this branch. There must be unity if there is to be power.' As Tom's voice dies away I pause. I want to take you to another scene. I want to take you down the years that are gone. There in an upper room in Jerusalem are gathered a handful of men, men whose brows are knit, whose hearts are beating for fear, but they cannot tell why, and there is One kneeling in their midst. Listen to Him. It is

the Christ of God. Hear His prayer. 'Neither pray for these alone, but for those also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they may also be one in Us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them that they may be one, even as We are One.' Oh, the oneness of the oneness of Christ and God. It is indissoluble. And Christ wants me to be as near to Christ as He is. Turn from the upper chamber in Jerusalem and look out, and what do you see to-day? Christendom in fragments. I ask you, is that the ideal that Christ prayed for and yearned for? Too often there is competition. And do you not think that very often competition means adulteration? I mean this. I have noticed in some of the smaller chapels that the men whom they have to be satisfied with as their leaders, though they are good, earnest men, are essentially intellectually weak men. They are not the men who can give the biggest and the best thoughts to the poor man. I do not want to boast about the Church, but I do suggest that we put in the slum and the village men of high education and of high culture and of standing. We want to give the best to the poorest as well as the best to the richest. Then again, I belong to the Church because of its sufficiency to produce the highest form of spiritual life. Some of you men who have not looked at your Prayer books for a good long while, would you mind taking them down when you go home to-night? and if any of you have not got one ask the nearest Churchman to lend you his. He will be very glad to do so. I was talking to a man who had left the Church and joined the Salvation Army because, as he said, 'I can get an inspiration for a higher life.' I opened my Prayer-book and tied him down to the baptismal vow. 'There,' I said, you swear unto life's end you will fight the world, the flesh, and the devil, and be Christ's soldier.' Where can you get a higher consecration than that? And then your confirmation ratified what had been said. And there is your Holy Communion resolution. What are you saying every Sunday morning? How it inspires us. Now, you dear men who want to get to a higher spiritual life, listen to me. Do you know anything capable of producing a higher life than this—'We here present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls, and bodies to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice?' Did you ever stand before Dore's picture of 'The Martyr?' That was swift martyrdom. He is hurled into the arena. There is one weak cry of agony, and the martyr is dead. Ours is a living sacrifice, day in, day out; week in, week out; year in, year out; and we do not meet it with a pale and quivering and shrinking face, but we meet it with a smile for the glory that is set before us, the glory of sacrificing yourself for somebody else. Have you not caught that glory? Have not you done something for some poor shivering child, and the little one has gone away too quickly to thank you, to spend the money? You have talked to the drunkard and got him to be a sober man, and you have seen him going on day after day and month after month climbing back to the pedestal of dignity he stood upon before, and his wife has taken you by the hand, and said, 'Thank God for what you have done. You could not have given me money, but you have given me back the man I love.' Is not that one of the joys of self-sacrifice? I find all the inspiration for such deeds as those in my Church and my Church service.

Then I am a Churchman because I find that the liturgical form of service of the Church is free of the moods of the minister. Yes, there is a great deal in that. I remember going once with my father, who is a dissenter, to a chapel to hear a celebrated preacher whom my father very much wanted me to hear. It was about a

month after I had come home with my wife from my honeymoon. All life was bright and beautiful to me. I had just married the woman whom I had chosen out of all the realm of womanhood to be my wife. I had started in business, and life was stretching out before me very beautifully. I had lived on the mountain top for the last few weeks, and I went up to that chapel with my heart full of joy. I wanted to thank God. I wanted to sing. I wanted to rush to Him like a little child would go to his father, who had given him some present, and say, 'Thank you, father; I am so happy.' I went with my father to the chapel, and the minister came into the pulpit, poor man—straight from a bedroom where he had left his darling child dying—straight from the chamber of sickness and death. It was his only child. The music of his life seemed to be going out, and the whole service was sadness and gloom. The first opening prayer led us to Gethsemane, and all the while through the prayer, the hymn, the sermon, it was one deep wrestling to say 'Thy will be done.'

We were all dominated by the mood of the man, and I went back again and thought 'That is bad.' Here are men, busy all the week through, with little time to spare for quiet communion with God. The only quiet hour they get in the seven days is the one they get on the Sunday morning. It is an all-precious time. Soon they will be back again in the strife and storm of temptation, facing the sorrows and disappointments of life, and that is the one time they get for inspiration and hope, and it is an awful thing if the man up there is to dominate them by the mood that he happens to be in. So I say we are independent of the mood of the minister. I happened to go to church the Sunday morning after Kier Harhe was returned for our constituency in West Ham. The clergyman was in an awful temper. I would not have faced him for anything in the vestry alone that day. He began the service, and it went on. He could only pelt at us from the pulpit. That was all. We were independent of his anger. He could not touch the prayers—he could not touch the Psalms. He could not if he wanted to. He could not touch the Communion Service, with all its help and all its beauty, because with a liturgical service and the way in which our Church service is arranged we are independent of the mood of the man who has to minister to us.

Then I am a member of the Church of England because of its position. I believe it to be the greatest power—or rather, it has the capability of becoming the greatest power—for producing religious force in our land to-day. I feel that very strongly. I say that the Church has the power and capacity of becoming the productive and driving force of the religious life of to-day in a way that no other organization can be. All these social movements are going to be no good at all unless you can put them upon a real religious basis. We have our faults, very likely. A man came to my house to tune my piano the other day. It was awfully out of tune. The notes had run down all through, but when he came and tried the piano he did not say to it, 'You have a lot of faults, and I shall have nothing to do with you.' He tuned it up until it rang out beautiful music, and when I saw him at work I thought, 'That is what I have got to do. Here is a clergyman who is not doing his duty. Here is a layman not quite up to the mark. I want to try to tune them up so that they may bring out beautiful music.' You are frittering your time away when you might be doing better. This is the work that lies before us. Let us set to work and tune one another up until our lives ring out one great big psalm of music, inspiring and ennobling to us with whom we come into contact so that their lives may be better because we live."