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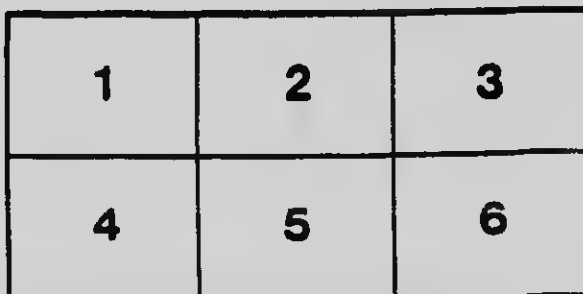
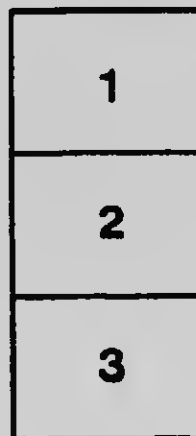
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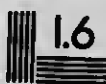
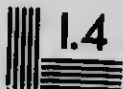
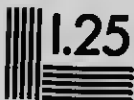
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THE ROYAL ARCH

A

ANANOTIA

I

Incarnation.

Life on Earth.

Cross and Passion.

Resurrection.

Redemption.

By the mystery of Thine holy Incarnation; by Thy holy Nativity and Circumcision;

By Thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation;
πειρασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου

By Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat; by Thy Cross and Passion; by Thy precious Death and Burial;

By Thy glorious Resurrection
" 'Tis the last stone
The rest there
Are nothing but

The Word was made flesh. Immanuel: God with us. God sent forth His Son. He took not of Him the nature of angels. Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Prince of Peace.

And dwelt among us. Who went about doing good. Never man spake like this Man. Hath not where to lay His head. A Man of sorrows. Despised and rejected of men.

His sweat was as great drops of blood. Betrayest the Son of man with a kiss? Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? Took up His corpse and laid it in a tomb. Sealing the stone and setting a watch.

Now is Christ risen from the dead. I know that He shall live. I am the Resurrection and the Life. I am He that live was dead. If Christ be raised, faith is vain. Paul the Apostle. Jesus the Son of God.

ARCH OF REDEMPTION.

THE HIGH PRIEST.

Resurrection.

Ascension & Pentecost.

Mediator.

Second Advent.

The Redeemer's

<p>by Thy glorious Resurrection <small>Tis the life stone makes The rest that were put Are nothing if this comes,</small></p>	<p>And Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost; the arch: to bind and shut."</p>	<p>In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our wealth; in the hour of death,</p>	<p>And in the Day of Judgment, Good Lord, deliver us.</p>
<p>How is Christ risen from the dead, know that Redeemer liveth. am the Resurrection and the Life. am He that liveth and was dead. Christ be raised, your faith is vain. and praise Jesus and the Resurrection.</p>	<p>A cloud received Him out of their sight. Sat down on the right hand of God. If I go away, I will send Him to you. Led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Cloven tongues like as of fire. That He may abide with you for ever.</p>	<p>We have an High Priest, passed into the heavens. One Mediator between God and man. Who ever liveth to make intercession for us. No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. Vials full of incense—prayers of saints.</p>	<p>This same Jesus shall so come in like manner. When the Son of man shall come in His glory. Behold, He cometh with clouds. Before Him shall be gathered all nations. Even so, come, Lord JESUS. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.</p>

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WHAT AILS THE CHURCH?

An Essay

ILLUSTRATED BY THE ROYAL ARCH
OF REDEMPTION

BY

REV. JOHN MAY, M.A.

"The Church of God is under eclipse among us. Where is our unity, for which Christ prayed? where our charity, which He enjoined? where the faith, once delivered, when each has his own doctrine? where our visibility, which was to be a light to the world? where that awful worship which struck fear into every soul? . . . We have, not one, but a hundred, gospels among ourselves, and each of them with its own hot defenders, till our very note and symbol is discord, and we wrangle and denounce and call it life; but peace we know not, nor faith, nor love. . . . When men discern truly the forlorn state in which the Spouse of Christ now lies, how can they have the heart to rejoice?"—NEWMAN.

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS

1903

BY APPOINTMENT

TO HIS MAJESTY

THE KING

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JOHN MAY,

In the Department of Agriculture.

TO THE READER.

MY sole aim in this Essay is to assist, however feebly, in the herculean task of bringing back a disfigured Christianity to its divine original. And the first step toward this end is a disturbance of that profound self-complacency which rests on the churches, each and all. It is a thankless duty, but not, therefore, the less imperative. For, that Christianity has clean left its ancient moorings, has floated far, far away from its primal type and its Author's mind, no candid observer will deny; nor will any who admit this ugly fact dispute the necessity of a restoration.

The single fact of its internecine state to-day is surely proof enough of its apostasy. The Pentecostal Church was *one*: the modern Church is *many*. These divisions, as disgraceful as they are baseless—the offspring, for the most part, of narrowness, self-will, perversity and politics—constitute the main hindrance to gospel conquest the world over. The heathen sit in darkness whilst these little lamps try to outblaze

each other at home. I will not call them *dark* lanterns, but I will say that not a single one of them shines with a full, pure, divine lustre. The complete, round, undistorted Gospel is not heard in them. (See Part II.) Each recites the Apostles' Creed, but does business on a special creed of its own manufacture. My aim is, exposure with a view to the cure of such maladies.

The reader, therefore, will not suppose I expect applause. What I do expect is a pretty general denunciation. I do not anticipate the plaudits of any sect, or church, or party. On the contrary, the chances are that a thousand chronically discordant voices will, for once, sing in a unison of disapproval. To me ecclesiastical partyism is an abomination. I am a Prayer-Book Churchman, and, consequently, neither "High" nor "Low" nor "Broad" nor *Narrow*. To what Anglican quarter, then, can I look for commendation? And the prospect outside that pale is not more promising. I am not writing for applause.

All I ask of the reader is a calm perusal and a candid verdict. And this I shall have unless he is one of that very large section of humanity who do their thinking by deputy. In the words of Locke, dear reader, "It is to your thoughts, if they really are your own, that I refer myself. But, if they are taken upon trust from others, it is no great matter what they are. It is not

worth while to be concerned what *he* says or thinks who says or thinks only as he is directed by another. If you judge for yourself, I know you will judge candidly, and then I shall not be harmed or offended, whatever be your censure."

It is not my purpose that infidelism should find any comfort in this Essay; I am an out-and-out believer in the religion of the New Testament, whatever my misgivings may be as to that of the twentieth century.

THE AUTHOR.



INTRODUCTION.

WHAT ails the Church? or, if you will, the churches? To this question some would answer—*Nothing*. Would the reply were as true as it is optimistic. Something is surely amiss—seriously amiss. The churches are the factories in which Christians are supposed to be made: what is the average sample like? Far below the New Testament standard. Witness the deterioration of the savage through contact with the Christian (so-called); and Capital with its heel on the neck of Labor—the Church looking on in silence. Has “the salt lost its savor”? Is the Church faithful to her trust?”

The central purpose of the religion Christ left with us was to transmute the human into the divine; to fit men for serving God in heaven by serving Him on earth. And this earthly service is of two quite distinct kinds—a fact lost sight of by the churches to their serious ailment. In their mouths “divine service” just means the Sunday devotions—nothing more. Religion has been divorced from the daily life; and what it

has thus lost no man may compute. Many ailments afflict the Church; among them perhaps this stands first. And it is chronic.

Sunday "exercises" are not the whole of "divine service," nor yet its chief part. The modelling of a man's life on that of the God-man—this is "divine service." WORK and WORSHIP are its warp and woof; or, rather, work *is* worship in operation. Church worship is but a means to an end, and that end not directly heaven, but mediately through the service of the life. The sanctuary is the preparative for the mart and the field. Its services fit us for a higher service, a solider devotion—a complete conformity to our Father's will in thought, word and deed. The closet fits for the sanctuary, the sanctuary for the life, the life for the beyond. On Sunday we replenish our lamps for a week's trudge through the dim lanes of existence; we whet our swords anew for its battle; we drink fresh draughts of the strength divine, bracing up afresh for the awful struggle. And this contest, well maintained, is the very sum and centre, the essence and solid substance of "divine service," or the service of God. Think you that your Sunday hymn is sweeter in God's ear than the silent hallelujah of a holy life?—by which I mean a life of duty done in love to God and man. "Divine service" is a tall, wide thing—too broad for church door, too high for church

dome. It begins at the cradle, and ends not at the grave. It includes the whole life, permeates the whole being, transmutes the whole man. The true hymn of praise, waxing sweeter and louder as the years roll by, is *duty done*—sternly, loyally, joyously done—in the home, the field, the forum, anywhere, just because you owe it to God, the world, and yourself. The Father of all so wills it, and to render this life-service of obedience to Him, and help to our fellow-creatures, and *suppression of self*—“*this is greater than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.*” The mother who can’t get to church for home duties, may worship God in washing dishes. So may the ploughman in turning an honest sod, and the politician in disdaining to lie. Such is the service of God—the true temple service, religion.

Is such the current conception of it? How many Christians regard their daily duties as having even any *connection* with religion or “divine service”?—not to say as forming its solid kernel. Is not religion, by common consent, a thing apart, a mere Sunday affair, too sacred for daily life? Is it not shut out from business and politics, lest, forsooth, it suffer pollution? These are notorious facts, fructiferous of skeptics. A religion divorced from the daily life—can this be the religion of Christ? Church-goings are necessary; but when church-going

celipses life-*doing* there is something rotten somewhere. "Frequent services" are, doubtless, good things, but would not *one long service* be better? a service without a break? a service outside church walls far more than within them? Psalms and posturings and pious bellowings can hardly be a substitute for relieving want and general helpfulness in His eyes, whose final judgment, He says, will pivot on *charity*, exhibited in acts of help to the distressed and the needy. England's Church is exercised over dogma and "the services": but how does this strife tend to feed the hungry and clothe the naked—the very heart of religion—let the organ storm and the incense rise and the priest posture how they will? In a word, the Sunday service is but a means to an end, and that end the sinking of self and the uplifting of others all through the week. This is the pattern Christ has set. What congregation of modern Christians strives to copy it? Oblivion of all this is a chronic and deadly ailment of the churches. Prayer and praise we cannot have too much of; but to work aright is the heart-felt prayer, and a godly life the grandest of anthems. "*Laborare est orare.*"

Then again, the churches, with one consent, have perniciously classed things here below under two heads, the *sacred* and the *secular*. Now, the true idea seems to be that there is

nothing in all the world that is *not* sacred except what ought not to be at all. But space forbids enlargement on this blunder, so fruitful of practical evil consequences; as, for instance, when the layman condemns in his pastor what he allows in himself. What is more common than this? and what more absurd? An act is right or wrong: if wrong, it is wrong for priest and people alike.

Finally, the main aim, end and purpose of religion seems to be perverted or confused, nay, altogether missed, or, in preaching and practice, overlooked in these days. What was that end? I answer boldly, *to fit man for earth, and so for heaven*. The main purpose of religion is to aid him in so living here that he is in some measure equipped for living *anywhere*; so using this world that it is the better for his being in it, and a loser when he migrates to another. In a word, religion is meant to be so intensely for earth as to render heaven secure. Is this the prevalent modern conception of it? Is it thus depicted in the extant pulpit? No. Religion, as dropped from the pulpit and picked up in the pew, is mainly a fire escape—a thing for death, not life: for another world, not this. Its animating principle is, after all, mere selfishness. It says, "Believe so-and-so" and you'll "go to heaven." Yes, its central idea is, *how to get into heaven, not how to grow fit for heaven*.

The questions it asks are these and the like: Are you saved? *Where* will you spend eternity? *Where* do you expect to go when you die? And solemn questions they are, too. And yet the truly awful question for every child of man is rather, WHAT are you? than WHITHER go you? A view of religion, miserably narrow, selfish and disastrous. Religion is not merely a thing to *die* by; it is first, last and always a thing to *live* by. Not so much a vehicle to transplant one in a better *place*, as a divine alembic to transmute him into a higher *nature*. In a word, the religion Christ left to us was meant to make us *like* Him; the religion we *have* is expected to take us *to* Him, whether like Him or not—an impossibility. I ask the candid reader this question: Is it the one grand, central, all-determined aim of the churches to make men like Christ? If it is not, they have clean missed their *raison d'être*: if it is, they fail wretchedly in their efforts.

Just think what it is to be like Him, and then cast your eye about you. Glance at your own neighborhood, let your eye sweep over the Christian nations. How many are at all like Him? How many try to grow like Him? Nay, how many have been made to realize the necessity of this divine likeness without which all else is nothing? What is it to be like Christ? TO BE ALL FOR OTHERS. Who stands

that test? The cardinal note of a pure Christianity is its *altruism*; the dominant characteristic of the current religionism is its dead opposite, *selfishness*.

Then the full Gospel is not fully preached, and least of all in quarters claiming to be specially evangelical. A continual harping on the *Church*, the *sacraments*, the *atonement*, or *conversion* is but a lame preaching of the Gospel at best. This is fully shown in Part II. of this little work.

Finally, it goes without saying that the extant rent and torn condition of Christendom is the disgrace of the age, and in itself sufficient demonstration of the charge that Christianity has slipped her cables and is at sea.



WHAT AILS THE CHURCH?

PART I.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

WITH all her defects the Church of England is Queen of the Reformed Churches. Her beauties and her blemishes are alike pronounced, yet over and above the excellencies common to all, several admirable features are peculiar to herself alone. Furthermore, these distinctive characteristics are of profound and far-reaching significance. Some of them are the following:

She is the only church that gives the laity a full share in her public services. She is the only church that *has guaranteed* a service of prayer of the very best quality. She is the only church that provides for and requires the public reading of the *whole* Bible once every year. She is the only church that, at least in theory, gives due prominence to each of the two great aspects of salvation—the *personal* and the *corporate*. Finally and above all, she is the

only church that has made provision for, and endeavored to secure, a full round preaching of the **WHOLE** Gospel year by year—invariably from the desk, presumably from the pulpit—Christ being the one grand theme of discourse, the almost sole object of contemplation, from Advent to Trinity Sunday at any rate.

Such are some of the marked characteristics of the Church of England. Are they not notable features? Only blind bigotry would attempt to minimize their importance. Cardinal excellencies peculiar to this grand old church, do they not make her among her sisters as “a city which is set on an hill”?

Then the Church of England has no *pet doctrine*. Other churches are prone to single out some favorite fact or feature of the faith, giving it a disproportionate prominence in desk and pulpit; she endeavors to preserve “the *proportion* of the faith” by assigning to each of its elements or factors its due position as a part of the whole. As regards mere teaching, this is perhaps her crowning distinction. And a prime distinction it is. It just means the difference between a portrait and a caricature.

Again, in excellencies common to all the churches she is second to none. Her doctrine is scriptural. She is modelled on the Church of the purest age. The Bible is her final court of appeal. Her Prayer-Book ranks next to the

Bible itself. She is comprehensive, yet not latitudinarian; conservative, yet almost censurably liberal. Her ministrations are stretched on no Procrustean bed. Within her pale roam at large the "High," the "Low," the "Broad"—herself acknowledging what is best in each school, yet identified with none of them in all things—and in this her attitude they are her truest sons who copy her most closely. She is not Calvinistic, she is not Arminian; she is catholic—i.e., neither—well in from extremes on all sides, keeping the *media via* of truth. Properly interpreted, the broadest charity is hers. Her service of prayer and praise has no equal in ancient or modern times. Against infidelity and anarchy she is the stoutest breakwater in the world. Her history is luminous with saints and martyrs and divines, and in every church or sect to-day may the student of theology be seen sitting at the feet of her Gamaliels. And she is evangelical—decidedly, pre-eminently evangelical, though not in the narrow, party, popular sense, for she preaches a *full* Gospel, not a *fractional*. Finally, the greatest of all the empires owes, in a very large measure, its solidity and its grandeur to the historic church of the English nation.

Remember, I have been stating her case as it stands in *theory* rather than practice; in the *books* rather than in actual operation.

Surely a church thus constituted should prosper and conquer anywhere and everywhere. Surely an institution, and one claiming to be divine at that, so richly dowered, so generously provisioned with the necessities of man's spiritual nature, so admirably equipped for ministering to the highest welfare of all sorts and conditions of men, "from the cradle to the grave," will draw them multitudinously under her roof, and there abundantly satisfy the cravings of their souls. All this might fairly have been expected; but has it come to pass? No; the very opposite. Repulsion rather than attraction seems to have been the note of England's Church ever since the Reformation. The "common people" have not "heard her gladly." England is the very *patria* of modern schisms, her church the nursing mother of religious revolt! And what do these two facts—the Church's excellency and her failure—go to prove? What but this, that she is now, and has been at every stage of her progress, better than the *living executive* into whose hands her destinies have been successively entrusted? Her shortcomings are those of her constitution, her environment. Considering her constitution, her advantages, and the gross heathenism still festering under the very shadow of St. Paul's, how can we honestly say that she has not been largely a failure?

In making this charge I am not oblivious of the fact that during the century just expired her achievements in foreign lands have been many and great, especially as compared with her previous very barren record in that direction. But are they at all commensurate with her commanding position as the Church of earth's greatest power?

Now, what of her Canadian daughter? Have we cause to be proud of *her* record? Does she lead the van in the army of Canadian Christians? We dare not claim that she does. Is she not, rather, somewhat towards the rear, in spite of the fact that she is the "fashionable" Church? True, she has had her heroes and her conquests—has such still. She has made progress, yet her advance is confessedly but little satisfactory. From all quarters comes testimony to this effect. Deanery, synod, census concur in the unwelcome pronouncement—*not prospering as she ought*. This unquestioned fact "should give" Churchmen "pause." What does it mean? What are the hidden causes of this lack of vigorous advance in a church which should be "easily first"? It is an instance of absolute advance with relative retrocession. Our church is not keeping step with the sister churches in this Dominion. She moves forward, but does not keep pace with the increase of population. And why does she not? If con-

stituted and equipped as above pictured, surely she need fear no competitor. Why, then, does she halt and go heavily? "Why tarry the wheels of her chariot?" What is the cause, or what are the causes, of this inglorious condition of affairs? In a word, what is the solution of the enigma: *A waning church in a waxing population?**

I shall now proceed to indicate briefly

SOME OF THE CAUSES,

and I shall begin by observing that some of her very *excellencies* are amongst the hindrances to her *numerical* growth in a community such as is ours here in Canada. And one of them is this: The *unspiced solidity* of the food she dispenses. For spiritual pabulum of this kind—plain, substantial, and demanding vigorous mastication, whilst lacking appetizing condiments—uncultured or vitiated palates have but little relish; and in a promiseuous population such palates are only too numerous. The palate of the staid, sober Churchman is satisfied with this plain fare; nay, the longer he uses it the better he likes it, and the more he thrives on it (although in these days he seldom gets it pure from the extant pulpit cook). Not so, however, with church-goers in general, especially the gad-about, who take a sip here and a spoonful

* See Appendix, Note A.

there. Many of these remain always "babes," used to "milk" only, or "milk-and-water"—or rather, doctrine spieily dished up or sugar-coated. For this stuff he comes to the Church of England in vain. She does not deal in spiritual confectionery. Her chief dishes are plain bread and substantial beefsteak—disrelished, of course, by "Gospel-hardened" palates, or palates depraved by a long regimen of tarts and candies. These crave jellies and cake (roaring hot, too), rather than a good old-fashioned English dinner. To surface natures, also, the Church's staid calmness seems stagnation; her reverent dignity, death; her plain, solid food, an unpalatable "hard-tack." These things do not "draw" such people; they rather repel. Hence a shortness in her number-roll, but assignable to sheer excellence on her part, not defect. The loss we regret; its cause we must at all hazards retain. The standard must not be lowered to meet frivolous caprice or debased predilection.

Another of her excellencies operating as a hindrance to her growth *numerically* is the *reverent dignity of her pulpit*. I perceive a downward tendency of late in certain quarters; but that pulpit, when it truly reflects the spirit, the genius, the best traditions of the Church, is calm, yet fervid; simple and earnest; grave, dignified, reverential. It flees gossip and per-

sonalities. It is above the plane of humor and anecdote. The tinsel and the tawdry it disdains. Of vulgar clap-trap it is simply incapable. An ambitious, inflated rhetoric it regards as bordering on desecration. All clerical buffoonery, all angling for applause, it abhors. It simply tells "the old, old story" in the old, old way. It voices the articles of the Creed, not the "views" of the preacher. Its appeals are to the understanding and the heart rather than to the nerves. In a word, it scorns the questionable arts that make some preachers famous, "drawing" crowds agape for electric shocks! In this church no preacher ever slides down the pulpit rail or opens his discourse with a quoted profanity. Spectacular rhetoric and histrionic device here find no place. Sensation is conspicuous by its absence. Result: many empty pews. The more's the pity, but vacancy is preferable to desecration, and distant reverence to an impudent familiarity. Reverence and dignity we must have, let seats fill or empty as they may. Another commendable hindrance to numerical expansion is the *honest outspokenness* of the clergy in the delivery of *unpopular and unpalatable truth*. As a body they would scorn to achieve popularity at the expense of sincerity. This has, of course, a tendency to keep their congregations thin. Integrity, however, is too high a price to pay for popularity, which is,

after all, no sure criterion of sterling merit. Indeed, I suspect it often indicates nothing better than a power of deft diagnosis of parochial idiosyncrasies, with obsequious conformity thereto. The newspaper to the contrary notwithstanding, a reputation for popularity is but a somewhat equivocal eulogium. And yet, whilst all this is true, a clergyman may be strictly honest and fearlessly outspoken, yet popular too; indeed such a one (if the right man) is sure to be so in the long run. All hinges here on the man—his manner, tact, art of putting things, disposition. One man can say without offence what in the mouth of another would give serious umbrage. I have known unpopular clergymen plume themselves on the brave honesty to which they ascribed their unacceptability, when all the time it was mainly due to clumsy oratory, an unlovable disposition, or a lack of tact or common sense. To such men popularity is simply another name for unfaithfulness. They cannot understand how any preacher can at once lash the multitude and attract them. Honesty, however, whether tactful or not, is a *sine qua non*, let hearers come or go as they will; nor does earth present a more revolting spectacle than that of the pulpit pandering to the pew.

Thus far, as regards losses or lack of large gains numerically, the Church and her clergy

deserve eulogy, not censure. The hindrances above enumerated are not blemishes, but beauties. If they tend towards paucity of membership, this is the misfortune, not the fault, of the Church and her ministers. The fault is in the people—the unconscious losers. Moreover, the loss is not *all* loss. Mere numbers are not the whole count. The *quality* of the material attracted goes far to counterpoise the *quantity* thus repelled. This remark applies when considering the Church's strength merely on her more earthly side; were all things right, however, she would have quality and quantity both. Would that I could keep on in this strain; but truth and candor forbid. The fault is not *all* in the laity. The debasement of the religious taste through the current religious sensationalism; the ever-increasing shallowness, frothiness, frivolity, and neglect of intellectual culture; the general craving for novelty, staginess, effect, even in the sanctuary—these are answerable for much, but not the whole, of our unsuccess; no, nor yet for the greater part of it. Other causes are collaterally at work in the same direction. Some of these reside in the laity; some in both laity and clergy; the rest in the clergy alone.

Of these hindrances a main one is *the evil spirit of worldliness*. This dire disease possesses most of us, and is eating the very heart

out of the Church. Its symptoms are unmistakable, and they meet us at every turn. In every church and sect it has its abode. And it is a demon most tenacious of its seat, most difficult to exorcise: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting"—*fasting*—a process not relished by most sects. In fact, the Church and the world are on the best of terms; and yet the Book tells us that "the friendship of the world is enmity to God." In this spiritual fornication the Church is the greater sinner of the two; and so long as this *liaison* continues heavenly conquests on a large scale will be looked for in vain.

Holy Scripture and the Prayer-Book recognize two great aspects of salvation—the *personal* and the *corporate*—both of vital importance. We are saved as individuals: we are saved as members of a body. This is catholic truth—too wide for the Puritanic conception. This dualistic salvation the liturgy fully provides for. In theory, therefore, the Church of England occupies the right ground on this great question; but in practice she dwells on the *corporate* at the expense of the *personal*, to her great numerical loss. Outside her pale all this is reversed. The sects, whilst strenuously and rightly urging the indispensability of *personal* religion, seem to have almost lost sight of the *corporate* idea. Both are wrong. The popular

pulpit is silent on the *corporate* salvation: the Church of England pulpit is by far too dumb on *individual*. This is a grave error, and the fruitful mother of losses. Indeed, as regards the English Church, I think that *the faint emphasis laid on personal religion in her pulpits generally, furnishes the main cause of her failure to include within her pale the great mass of the people*. Please take a note.

It demands thought, and culture, and grasp to perceive and appreciate the idea of salvation in a body, whereas the rudest unlettered minds seize at once on the individual idea. The trained Churchman sees the value of the former; to the majority of church-goers it has little or no meaning. Appeals for personal salvation wake an echo in every conscience, even when they fail to move the will; and no man avoids a pulpit that pricks his conscience; nay, the wickedest and worldliest despise the one that does *not*. They know it is no good. Nor can you convince a man that it is all well with him—be he never so outwardly consistent a member of the Church—if in his heart of hearts something whispers, "You have no part or lot in the matter." For he *knows* he has never yet done what his Catechism tells him he must do—**REPENT and BELIEVE**. To such a one, in his serious moments, what boots corporate safety, lacking personal? True, his clergyman never

disturbs him: seems to take it for granted that he is all right. Was he not baptized, confirmed, taught to "go to church"? Is he not a regular communicant? Does he not live a moral life? What more is needed? But something has roused his conscience, and it will not down. Its ruthless talons rend this fabric to shreds, and his naked soul shudders on the awful brink. Just then the "strolling evangelist" comes along. This "good Churchman" is converted and—lost to the Church! Not hers the fault; but what of her mouth-piece? Has he ever learned that his church makes personal REPENTANCE and personal FAITH a *sine qua non*, without which external baptism but adds to the condemnation? No need to leave the Church were the pulpit faithful in this all-important matter.

Just here is the rift in the pipe. Here is the leakage vent through which flows out so much of the best blood of the Church. And all because of the disregard of two little words in her Catechism! But they are great words. A world of meaning is in them. Leave out these and *all* is left out. But this is just what too many of the baptized do, and do without much warning or remonstrance. Perchance, some day, some outside agency hits them and awakes them to repentance, and they very naturally lose confidence in the old church. The chances

are that thenceforward they eye askance both herself and her ministers as but "blind leaders of the blind." And what wonder? The conclusion is natural, however wide of the mark.

Now, to all this a sneer at the "evangelist" and his "conversions" is no reply. Suppose these "conversions" spurious (which we are far from being warranted in affirming of them all), such as they are could they take place—would thousands go in eager quest of them—were there not, deep down in the human heart, a consciousness of something lacking, a sense of need of peace with God and a change of life? And these can be had in the Church as she prescribes. Wherever there is true *repentance* and genuine *faith*, there is "conversion"; and were this individual conversion made a *sine qua non* by all the clergy as it is by the Church, but few would be seen going in quest of it elsewhere. Remissness here means unfaithfulness to the Church's teaching, deadly peril to immortal souls, and perpetual secessions from the good old fold to frail and uncertain enclosures. So long as this state of things continues the Church cannot fully prosper, numerically or otherwise.

Another serious hindrance is, an *excessive and incessant preaching up the Church*. This practice is as prevalent as the preaching of conversion is rare, and is as wearisome as prevalent.

Now, it is quite right, scriptural and necessary to preach *sometimes* about the Church—a subject all but entirely lost sight of by the sects—"the blessed company of all faithful people," "the body of Christ," "His bride," "the Lamb's wife." The prevalent ignorance regarding it needs dispelling. You do not honor Christ by ignoring or disparaging His bride. Belittling the Church is like despising the *moon* because she is not the *sun*. Now, as the moon reflects the light of the sun, throwing it on us when he is hid from our eyes, so does the Church reflect that of Him who is ever "the light of the world," though now not seen above the horizon. Those who despise the Church should remember that she is the reflector of the "Sun of righteousness"; those who unduly exalt her should consider how inferior is the moon to the sun.

The Church must have her due place; but the body is below the Head. The moon eclipses the sun, but Christ must not be obscured by even His own Church. Yet this is just what "*Church, Church, Church*" comes to. Theoretically, of course, He is always put first, but in effect He gets but second place. To all practical intents and purposes the Church, her priesthood, her sacraments, have precedence. And *what* church at that? Not that mystic body, "the Holy Catholic Church" of the Creed, but the visible, and not too perfect, national

Church of England! Herself claims no such position. She would reject it with horror. She lifts her Lord high above all else. Witness the Christian year, as almanacked in her Liturgy. In this the Church and her ordinances are frequently the theme; Christ continually, persistently. In too many of our pulpits this order is reversed. Hardly a sermon is preached without some allusion to "the Church" or the "sacraments." This palls on the people, whose deeper instincts tell them something is lacking here. This is not the food their hungry souls cry out for. They want wheat, and they deem this little better than chaff. Of course, in this they are wrong. It is good and wholesome food *in its place*, and in limited quantity, just as is cheese; but who would make cheese his main diet? The inculcation of correct ideas concerning the Church and the sacraments, always and everywhere necessary, was never and nowhere more necessary than now, in this Canada of ours, and is neither chaff nor "a stone." The mistake lies in the far too frequent reiteration of it, relatively to matters of still greater moment—the old, old story of DISPROPORTION. It is as if the minister were filled with just one subject of thought, with room for nothing else. The result is lukewarmness towards a church thus over-belauded, and, in the ease of many, a

preparedness to go elsewhere for what is called "the Gospel" and the "preaching of Christ."

This was not St. Paul's way. At times he dilates on the Church in his own masterful style, but "the things concerning Jesus Christ" seem ever uppermost in his thoughts and on his lips and his pen.

It is not a *wise* way. Not the way to make the most of things. Not the way to "build up the Church." On the contrary, when carried to excess, it proves a very effective method of thinning the ranks. It tends to nauseate even the staunch, devoted members; to repel and scatter where the aim was to attract and consolidate. No man ever yet multiplied membership by ceaseless laudation of the Church. It is CHRIST that "draws." And wherever He is preached IN FULL the Church and the sacraments *must, of necessity*, find their due and true place; yes, and a high place, too, though not the highest. The "Low" school has great need to *rise* here, and the "High" to come down a little. If they did this, both would prosper more than they do.

Another fruitful source of church loss is, *the unveiled hostility of too many of her clergy towards the other Protestant folds*. I say "Protestant," for the attitude of these same clergymen towards Rome is most friendly and humbly respectful. Fierce denunciation of

"Dissent" seems to be the favorite pastime of some of them; not a whisper meanwhile against the Church of Rome. This culpable practice has become but too common of late. It does no good. It is not in line with church teaching, nor in tune with the spirit of the English Reformation. At that day hostility to Rome and friendship to the Protestant communions was the situation. Thanks to Laud and others and the "Oxford Movement," all this is now reversed. It is an attitude wholly unwarranted by the Church, and gratuitously offensive to thousands within her pale as well as without. Wrong in itself, it is both uncharitable and unwise. In a mixed community like ours it is simply pernicious, engendering humiliations and family heart-burnings, repelling "outsiders," and drawing down execrations on the poor old unoffending church herself! It seems unquestionable that the mere attitude of aloofness, the mere supercilious non-recognition of the other churches, has had a bad effect; how much more, active hostility. It is high time all this were laid aside.

The root of this antagonism is a mistaken view of "holy orders," a view which denies the validity of those not episcopally derived. Now, the English Church herself has never pronounced such "orders" invalid, although since A.D. 1662 she has insisted on episcopal ordina-

tion for her own ministers. Hence the view that thus unchurches the non-episcopal communions is a most presumptuous misrepresentation of the Church of England. They are outside *her* pale, but she has never decreed them outside the catholic church. To the "Oxford Movement" we owe the rejuvenescence of this "new departure," among many others, from the express mind and attitude of the Church. Indeed, the whole situation as regards "orders" would be laughable were it not so melancholy: *Neo-Anglicanism* eagerly acknowledging the Roman "orders" while it rejects contemptuously those of Dissent—Rome loftily dismissing the claims of both alike! Is there anything in history to match this tableau for grotesque humor-ousness and pitiable humiliation? Doubtless the clergymen who thus oppose and denounce other churches do so from a sense of duty. They have solemnly promised to do what in them lies to "banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines." And this, therefore, as honest men they must endeavor to do. But are they bound also to "banish and drive away" the holders of such doctrines? which is what they usually succeed in doing. They get rid of the disease, not the disease. I believe this is the invariable result. The antidote of error is truth. Teach the truth as outlined by the Church. Teach all comers, welcome them

cordially, treat them considerately. Never dilute doctrine in order to make it swallowable. Yet be sparing in your denunciations. How can you teach whom you have driven away? Such a course is false in principle, suicidal in practice. It captures nobody. It cankers charity. It engenders strife. It thins congregations. And it *helps to build up what it would fain pull down.*

Let me not be misunderstood. No part of the truth should be kept back, or softened down, for fear of giving offence; but why give *gratuitous* offence? Teach the distinctive principles of the Church, fully, clearly, fearlessly; but this can be done without naming systems, thrusting at individuals, or unchurching fellow-Christians whose record is, perhaps, more saintly than your own. Few things have damaged the Church more than this same clerical madness.

Again, if the ranks of our army are dwindling, it is not for lack of *officers*. Bishops, deans, archdeacons, canons abound. And this fact is not infrequently appealed to as proof of expansion and general prosperity! And they tell us that more bishops are needed. And this means more episcopal endowments. But wherefore? We are not in England. Nor do we live in the days when bishops were princes. How is it that we cannot have a new diocese until we

have banked for its head forty or fifty thousand dollars? Why should a *see* be endowed any more than a *parish*? Why should a bishop not rely for his income on the parishes, even as most rectors have to rely on the families? Can any valid reason be alleged why he should not? We are under the "voluntary system"—always excepting "their lordships"! This endowment business has gone far enough. Stop it. Let the bishop, like the parish minister, depend for his support on his success. The Church would cut a better figure in the race, although there might be fewer "races for the mitre." In any case, our crying need is, not more officers, but more *privates*.

Let not the laity suppose I am with them in their financial contracts with the clergy. I am not. The stipends of all, from highest to lowest, are too small. As a rule, the laity have little to be proud of in this business.

Again, there can be no doubt that the Church has lost heavily through her unfaithfulness, in practice, to the great principle of a *three-fold ministry*. *Practically, we have no third order*. This disloyalty to professed principle has cost her dear. It proved a potent factor in the upbuilding of Methodism in this country in the early days. The *local preacher* did the work for Methodism which the *deacon*, had he existed, would have done for the Church. In this

way was Methodism numerously recruited from the church ranks. Nay, more. The local preacher himself, in not a few instances, had been a Churchman, who, receiving scant encouragement to do work for the Church, went where his services were joyously welcomed. For this defection the clergy denounced him; but the fault lay nearer home. Aristocratic traditions have hindered us sadly.

Thus was a large percentage of her *very choicest material* not only lost to the Church, but converted into a formidable agency inimical to her interests. The thousands of good men thus estranged might have been made deacons to build her up, instead of alien agents to pull her down. And they would, doubtless, have been so made had not Old World habits and notions prevailed over both principle and expediency. I do not marvel that the Church *halts*; the wonder is that she moves so well as she does! Moreover, and above all else, if the diaconate is of divine institution, how can it be expected that the Church should flourish without it? Yet without it she is, to all practical intents and purposes. What semblance of it we retain serves mainly as a mere stepping-stone to the priesthood; except it is misused in giving the deacon sole charge of a mission or a parish. Is this the Diaconate of the Apostolic Age? We grasp the shadow, but have lost the substance. In theory

we are sticklers for *three* orders; in practice we are quite satisfied with *two*. No wonder the Church limps on the march.*

Another grievous impediment to the success of the Church in Canada, is "Ritualism," or "Neo-Anglicanism." As a Prayer-Book Churchman, I find it difficult to speak of this deadly disease in measured terms. It is simply *Popery without the Pope*; a complete reversal of the English Reformation. True, Ritualism here, as compared with its English parent, is as yet a mere infant. But it is a promising child. It is growing fast. Of the clergy, a few are full-fledged Ritualists; whilst a very large number—the great majority in fact—are in all stages of development. Our colleges, text-books, literature are saturated with the poison. In general the teaching is tainted, its trend being ever more and more towards Mediaevalism and away from the principles of the purest age. Its apostles repudiate the *Pope*, and would fain persuade the people that this is proof of their freedom from *popery*. This is a most Jesuitical falsehood. There is not a Romish tenet which they do not roll as a sweet morsel under their tongues. Their rejection of the Pope as head of the Church is just a bit of politics, nothing more. They love his *doctrines* as devotedly as he does himself. This ink-fishism is our chief danger just now.

* See Appendix, Note B.

This teaching, bad in itself, tends to alienate the laity of the Church and repel outsiders. Our people are not yet quite prepared for the extermination of Protestantism, although they are being rapidly, though unconsciously, trained for that end. The young are being sedulously and insidiously indoctrinated. There has been a vast change Romeward during the last twenty or thirty years. And, the worst of it all is, these poor people are utterly unconscious of the fact! A few years more of this, and the great conspiracy will be victorious all along the line.

We come now to the last, and perhaps the greatest, cause of failure, namely, *a defective preaching of the Gospel*; or, rather, the preaching of *a defective Gospel*. Once more this charge does not hold good as against the Church of England herself, but those of her officers who fail to use her Liturgy aright. *Outside* her pale it applies all but universally and with full force, both in theory and practice. Let our Prayer-Book programme be rigidly kept to in the pulpit, and the charge falls to the ground, so far as she is concerned. Not so as regards the other Protestant communions. Therefore, the next section of this little work will deal with the mutilation of the Gospel outside, rather than within, the Church of England. In her any such mutilation is the fault of the clergyman; outside, it is due to the system.

PART II.

WHAT IS "PREACHING THE GOSPEL" ?

THE Gospel usually proclaimed from the "popular pulpit," and not seldom from our own, is not a full, round, all-inclusive, symmetrical presentation of "the faith once delivered unto the saints" (a fact which is the very secret of its popularity). It is not a complete, well-proportioned gospel, harmoniously set forth. It is made up of *choice bits*. It is a mutilated, sectional, fractional gospel; its propounders religious *eclectics*. I shrink from calling it a *caricature*; but such it is. In a portrait of a human form or face, when certain characteristic parts or features are grotesquely exaggerated, and others ridiculously diminished, we have not a true likeness, but a caricature. And this is precisely what we have when the body of "the faith," the form and features of the Gospel, are similarly treated. This is done every day by the "popular" pulpit; and too often by the *unpopular*. Especially is this true of quarters arrogating the title of "*Evangelical*," *par excellence*. Punch, posing as an Angelo! One or more favored doctrines are habitually singled out and magnified out of all proportion to the

rest, severally; and to the whole, as a whole. It may be that the preachers *hold* the whole truth; they *hold forth* but a part of it. Or, perhaps, it were more just to say that their treatment of it is partial. They will tell you that some particular doctrine is "the very essence of the Gospel"; and their disciples love to rummage the Bible for these "essences," among which stern duty is seldom ranked. Indeed, *good works* are deemed foreign to the Gospel, if not directly opposed to it! Narrow, partial, sectional view of "the faith"! To the catholic mind, *all* parts of the Gospel alike contain its "essence," diffused throughout. The Gospel is a wide thing. It is made up of both priceless gifts and rigorous requirements. Its cardinal and its minor facts and features are many and varied, all forming one joint, inseparable whole. It follows that *selections* from these do not constitute the Gospel. The atonement itself is not the Gospel; much less is "the Church" or the sacraments. The pulpit which proclaims "the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth," prophesying "according to the *proportion* of the faith," that pulpit and that alone is entitled in the fullest sense to the epithet, "*Evangelical*."

Such is the Church of England *when rightly voiced*. Her pulpit, when her honest, faithful exponent, proclaims a *full* Gospel. Where she

is obeyed by her ministers this cannot but be so. Other pulpits may or may not; hers *must*. She has ordered it so, and the too common disregard of her demands here is a serious cause of her unsuecess. Still, within her pale, in spite of everything, the Gospel cannot be very greatly mutilated or suppressed. The Liturgy speaks where the pulpit is mute; speaks truth when the other would lie. And of what other church can this be affirmed? Where else has provision been made, and supposed to be imperative, for telling *the whole story of Christ and His redemption*, regardless of the minister; and that, not fitfully or capriciously, but on set terms and system and *in due proportion*, year by year; laying the right stress on each of His offices, on every phase of His work, on every feature of His character and stage in His eternal career? I answer, "Nowhere else!" There is good preaching elsewhere; but the congregation is at the mercy of the minister, who, of course, will see to it that the pulpit may not refute the desk. Even when orthodox, the teaching is more or less hap-hazard, unsystematic and disproportionate.

And yet, *mirabile dictu*, the Church of England, above all others, is suspected of *not* "preaching Christ"! The Prayer-Book preaches Him as does no other book but one, and that repeatedly, "line upon line, precept upon pre-

cept," all the days of the life. This charge against the Church arises from a misapprehension. And the misapprehension is this: that the *atonement* is the Gospel, and that "preaching Christ" means dilating on His death. The Church that handles a wider gospel is thought to fail in preaching the Gospel at all!

THE ROYAL ARCH OF REDEMPTION.

The popular conception as to what "preaching Christ" really means, is a false one. It does *not* mean preaching incessantly, and almost exclusively, about sin and the atonement, as the so-called "Evangelist" usually does; for Christ's death is but one item in the scheme of redemption. Still less is it preaching on the Church and the sacraments alone. True, where Christ is *fully* preached, all these are preached; for His name covers them all, and much more, too. But, "everything in its own order," and all things in due PROPORTION. The body is not above the Head; nor is Calvary the whole Gospel of the Kingdom.

"Preaching Christ" is publishing *all* we know concerning Him—*all* that is revealed, from before He made the worlds till they all shall pass away. THIS IS THE GOSPEL; and its full, proportionate proclamation is "preaching Christ." Beside this boundless sweep, how narrow and poor a thing is the evangel of the

popular pulpit! *Personal escape* through the Cross is about its range! Not so preaches the Bible. Not so the Prayer-Book. The inexpressible importance of reconciliation with God cannot be over-urged; but this is not *all*. Nor is it, by any means, the whole question of even personal salvation. Calvary is but the starting point of the campaign. No. In the divine lyre of redemption are *seven* strings. Each string gives out a tone peculiar to itself; each note has its own value in the sacred symphony. Can you say that one of these strings is everything and the rest next to nothing? And, if you harp too much on this one, what becomes of the harmony? The rainbow that spans the spiritual firmament is a bow of seven divine colors. Can you say that any one of them is less essential than another? Do not the seven variously tinted rays of the spectrum make up, when blended, the pure white light of the sun? Suppress most of these, and have you the real sunbeam? So with the great gospel light. It takes *seven* separable rays to make the one ray of TRUTH. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." The light of the seven-branched candlestick streams *equally* from each branch.

So, also, is the Royal Arch of Redemption built of *seven* celestial stones. Each has its peculiar characteristic, and all are of equal im-

portance; at least, in their mutual interdependence. In this sense, at any rate, no stone is greater or less than another. Remove any of them, the whole structure falls; the arch is a ruin. When the pulpit settles seriously down to deal with *all* parts of this arch *alike*; when it dwells on each of these stones in turn, giving to each its due share of attention; and on the whole, as a whole, regularly, systematically, year in and year out; and that to the utmost ability of the preacher; when, I say, all this comes to pass, we shall see Christ preached, not before.

In order to illustrate and make good this position, let us now proceed to consider, briefly, each part of this sublime structure. The aim shall be, not to exhaust it, which were impossible, or even to so much as name some important particulars, but simply to say enough concerning each stone to indicate its importance in the Royal Arch of Redemption in its intended bearing on our daily life, spiritual development, and everlasting destiny; beginning, of course, with

THE FIRST STONE—THE INCARNATION.

How little, comparatively, is heard about it from most pulpits! One would suppose it were deemed of little practical importance as compared with the atonement. And yet the incarnation means just as much to a fallen race as does the

tragedy on Calvary. The one is the complement of the other. In Holy Scripture the two are always linked together; the incarnation is ever the prelude to the atonement. In fact, the former rendered the latter possible. In the light of the Cross we may read the mystery of the manger.

There was as much Gospel, or "good news," in the one as in the other. It was not over Calvary, but the fields of Bethlehem, that the Angel Herald announced "Glad tidings of great joy." Good news, indeed! Wondrous news! What other world ever heard such news as this? God Himself come down to pull a whole race from the mire! Is this not as much "the Gospel" as His death later on? Is it not the very wonder of wonders? "The Word was made flesh." The Son of God became the Son of man—the second Adam—the new head of a lost race, "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," taking on Him "the form of a *servant*," "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross," "for us men and for our salvation!" Surely this is the one event of time! Does the modern pulpit so regard it? If it does, why so *silent* in its amazement?

I may here remark that a most interesting and profitable theme for the pulpit is the pre-incarnation history of the Son of God. It takes us back before the dawn of time. It antedates

creation, and traverses the aeons right down to the manger. We are told that "His goings forth were from of old, from eternity," and that "His delights were with the sons of men." In the manger He is first seen as the Son of *man*; but, as the Son of *God*, He had frequent and familiar intercourse with men before His birth of a woman. It was He that made the worlds, and all things in them. It was He created Adam. It was from His presenee the culprit skulked under the trees. It was He conferred with Abraham concerning the destruction of Sodom. He wrestled with Jacob at the ford. He called to Moses from the burning bush. He snatched Israel from the grasp of Pharaoh, and led them in the wilderness. It was He that met Joshua, with a sword drawn in His hand. In tabernacle and temple, the divine presence was His. The "Angel of the Covenant" was none other but the Son of God, and the "fourth" man seen in the fiery furnace was the Eternal WORD, "in the fulness of time" to be "made flesh."

All this is revealed. If it is not an actual part of the Gospel (which I am far from saying), it is, at least, its sublime prelude and preparative. Why, then, do we so very seldom hear it so much as alluded to in the pulpit?

But, to return. Had an archangel been "made flesh" and crucified, what had it profited

man? And had the Son of God *not* been "made flesh" He could not have died. Does not this simple fact put the incarnation on a par with the atonement? To represent man, He must *be* a man; to avail for man, He must be no less than God. And so "the Word was made flesh."

God is love. Love is self-giving, self-sacrifice. Love is outflow; Self is in-come. The love of God is measureless, as is Himself.

"Could I with ink the ocean fill ;
Were all the world of parchment made ;
Were every reed on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade ;
To write the love of God alone
Would drain that ocean dry !
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky !"

Now, nothing could tell that love as does the incarnation. It revealed God's heart of hearts. It disclosed the deepest depths of that love which He is. It was the sum and crown of all revelations, culminating on the cross. All doctrine roots in this. It is the foundation stone of the kingdom. From this all rises; on this all rests. It is THE stupendous fact in the annals of time, in the records of the universe! What are all marvels beside this—the Creator walking the earth as a *man*, and submitting to the cross? And, a fact as *blessed* as wonderful,

for, without it, earth were a sink of perdition, and hope were dead!

Is not this a rich theme for the pulpit? It has many aspects. For instance, it shows as in a mirror *the awful nature of sin*. What unenlightened human nature would call Adam's little slip, was really so big and black a thing that it brought down God Himself to mend it. Gabriel could do nothing to heal this wound. Now, if none but God Himself could set this matter right, what an awful thing must be the very smallest sin! A gigantic thing which only the Deity could wrestle with and overthrow. In the light of the incarnation we behold its unfathomable malignity, its nameless repulsiveness. In it, as in a mirror, may each man see himself as he really is, direfully diseased; nay, as he *must* see himself, before he will take the cure. For Sinai must ever come before Calvary. The law must thunder, and the wind rend the rocks, ere comes the "still small voice" of peace. Is this great theme utilized to this end in the churches? I should say, very sparingly.

Men are weary of hearing about the remedy for a disease they have never been made to feel. They do not feel sick; why care for the cure? The incarnation, duly dwelt on, should let them see themselves as they are.

Then, too, without the incarnation, the salva-

tion of the world were impossible. Man was made in God's image at the first, that God in due time might appear in man's image. The Deity cannot suffer; the God-man could, and did. He undertook to answer for us. All our sins were put on Him. Had He not been man, this were unjust; had He not been God, it were useless. On the cross must hang a being with flesh to pierce and blood to flow, yet "mighty to save." Thus, without the incarnation, the atonement could not be; as without the atonement, the incarnation could not save. Are they not, then, of equal importance? Yes. Does the popular pulpit so treat them? No. A serious charge. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Again, without the incarnation *we should have had no pattern, at once both perfect and suitable, by which to fashion our lives.* God is perfect; but, as it were, too high and far off for us. The best of *men* too faulty! Christ is just what was needed—at once imitable and perfect, being the God-man. His death unbarred heaven's gate; His life is the path to it. And a rough road it is for us, as it was for Him. It is the way of SELF-SACRIFICE. And, tread it we must, or fail of the gate. Now, is this not a hard lot? No, since the Son of Mary trod it. "He, too, was man." Was it casier to Him than to you or me? Far otherwise. As perfect

man, nature must have cried out *very* loud in Him for all innocent enjoyments and delights. These He very largely forewent. Why? Because His mission demanded the sacrifice. He came here, not to enjoy, but to suffer. His "meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him," and this involved continual self-abnegation. To do the will of God was His one aim and delight, cost what it would. And it should be ours. It *is* ours, at least in some degree, if we are Christians. For, how can we claim to be such, if we do not try to walk in His steps? His whole earthly career may be summed up in three words—*doing God's will*. And this is the one true business of life; the sole end and aim of existence; the sum and the substance of all genuine religion. Show me a perfect Christian, and I will show you one whose *will* is swallowed up in God's will, whose life is modelled on the one great Exemplar.

Towards this we can grow. How? By walking in the footsteps of the Son of man. But, *can* we so walk? Yes, by the help of Him, who, as man, made those foot-marks. "What man has done, man may do." Thus shall we grow more and more like Him "until we come to His everlasting kingdom." And in no other way. Even He "was made perfect through suffering." How then can *we* improve without it? All of which could not be, but for

the incarnation. None but the God-man could be to us "not only a sacrifice for sin, but also an ensample of godly life." Does the modern pulpit dwell proportionately on this most serious practical fact? I am sure it does not.

Again, how sweet, how cheering, the thought that our High Priest is—not an archangel, or some being without actual, personal experience of our condition—but one who felt in Himself all our needs, trials and troubles. For, was He not indeed the "Man of Sorrows"?

"O Saviour Christ! thou too art man;
Thou hast been tempted, troubled, tried."

Of such inconceivable, practical, everyday importance to each suffering, warring, struggling saint is the incarnation of the Son of God. How the pulpit here misses the mark!

Furthermore, this descent of God was the ascent of man. It lifted the whole race. Christians are now brothers and sisters of the King's Son. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." The humblest saint on earth is a royal prince, out of sight above the grandest princes of the world. The King's Son became one of us, to make us His brothers, "kings and priests," "heirs of God," "and joint heirs with" Himself! What are earth's dignities to this? In fact, it is too high for our poor mean souls to seize on, and

really believe our own. Yet, so it literally is. How, then, should they behave who are of this blood-royal? *Noblesse oblige*. And would it not be well to remind men continually of this their dignity? The question is, Do they really realize and believe it? Nay, do the preachers? One would almost suppose they did not.

Again, the incarnation made it possible for us to become branches of the True Vine, drawing thence our spiritual sustenance. At baptism we are engrafted on this Vine, whence life eternal inflows into us. "Abide in me," says Christ. "Apart from me ye can do nothing." To *have* life you must be in Christ as the branch in the vine: to *keep* life you must stay there, as many do not. And what made this union, without which we are lost, possible? The incarnation. This made union with God possible. And what concerns us more than this? Is it not our very life? Does the pulpit give this cardinal fact its due place? The Church of England pulpit does when duly filled: the popular pulpit ignores or misstates it. By the latter both the engrafting rite and the sustaining sacrament are but dimly understood, and very inadequately esteemed. Finally, the incarnation gave to man a visible Divine *Person* as the object of adoring love. Now, what a comfort, what an accommodation, is this, to creatures of our limited nature and powers! For, after all, pure Deity, "without

body, parts, or passions," seems very far above the plane of mind and heart. God, hiding Himself in the essence of His being, is, as it were, out of reach: we worship Him in His Son, the God-man. And how much easier this is! The Gospels set before us—not a principle, or an abstraction, or a being pervading universal space—but a Divine PERSON, whom all can, in some measure, comprehend, and love, and adore. True, before the incarnation God was worshipped and loved; but in human form we can, as it were, see, and hear, and touch, and know, and love, and do Him honor, to far greater advantage. Our fingers touch Him, and we are healed. Our ears hear His voice, and are satisfied. Our eyes look into His with adoring awe. Our feet bear us to Olivet, to Bethany, to Calvary, and our hearts shout for joy, and say: This is One we may trust our all to, *the* One we need, the One we cannot but love and praise with all the best powers we have. "Whom, having not seen, we love; in whom, though as yet we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

And so I might go on, but space forbids. My purpose is, not to say all that might be said on each stone, but merely enough to show its importance, and how its value is *not* brought out in the pulpit. And this remark applies to what will be said on the other stones.

One word of caution here to the reader. My remarks on any one stone in the arch must not be taken as, in the slightest degree, a disparagement of the rest, or any one of them. This would overturn my main design, viz., strict impartiality. It would be myself doing that which it is my chief purpose to expose and condemn. Each stone has its own position, its special color, and significance; but all are equal, and each is closely related to all the rest. Indeed this arch is like the human mind with its several faculties. We separate these faculties, in thought, for convenience of contemplation and discussion; but we cannot part them in *reality*, i.e., in the mind itself, which is one individual unity. Or, this arch is like the rainbow, with its seven colors, each so passing into other that no definite dividing line can be drawn. After the speciality which distinguishes each stone, the main characteristics of *all* are *equality* and *interdependence*. For instance, the incarnation runs through them all, and the judgment is the full and final complement of the incarnation. In the nature of the case what seems like repetition is almost unavoidable. My main design is to show the great, *and equal*, importance of each in the economy of salvation; and, collaterally, the shortcomings of the popular pulpit in this vital matter.

SECOND STONE—HIS LIFE ON EARTH.

The little we know of the childhood of Jesus makes Him, nevertheless, for all time, *the* pattern for the young. "He was subject to his parents"—a wholesome example everywhere and always, but specially needful in our day and on this continent. If we would train our boys up to a noble manhood, let us set the child Jesus in the midst of them; and if manhood would reach its highest, the Man, Christ Jesus, must be its one perfect ideal. Do the pulpits of Christendom dwell enough on this? Would they but expend on it the time and energy now worse than wasted on internecine bickerings it would be a happier world.

The Saviour's life on earth. Now, suppose this stone wanting to the arch. Suppose Jesus to have gone direct from His baptism to His cross. His blood is shed. Atonement for sin is made. But what a blank is here! Where, now, is the larger part of those four precious records of His life? Where all those matchless utterances, those wondrous deeds, that humble yet kingly bearing, that one ideal example? Take away this royal portrait from the world's picture gallery, how poor, how tame, how insignificant what is left! Rob humanity of these simple annals of **THE ONE TRUE LIFE**, and you leave it poor indeed. Does not the pulpit do this, in

effect, and to a large extent, when it comparatively forgets His life in dwelling on His death?

And here let me notice a matter of great consequence, too little enforced in the modern pulpit—I mean our Lord's perfect *obedience to the law, for us, and in our stead*. On the cross He took our place to *suffer*: during His earthly life He took our place to OBEY. Man could neither atone for his sins nor keep the law perfectly. Christ did both *for* him. He provided for us a perfect atonement, a perfect obedience. And now, if we are in Him, He is, to us, "the Lord our righteousness." His perfect obedience is ours. God will accept nothing less from us than a *perfect* doing of His will: and this we give Him in Christ; for *He* did that will to the letter. And *all who are in Him did it in Him*. God the Son saw from the first that we could not do it perfectly, so He came down and did it *for* us. In this, just as truly as on the cross, did He take our place. *Union with Him makes His obedience OURS*. And now God can look on us as perfect law-keepers, just the same as if we never transgressed in thought, word, or deed! What a blessed truth is this for the poor, frail, sinful sons of men! Not that it frees us from the fierce life-long fight against sin—the stern obligation to will and to do all that in us lies "to walk in the ways of His laws and the works of His commandments." No, no. So far from that,

it but adds to our obligations: even as it warms our hearts to strive after complete conformity to God's will in all things. And God's will is the MORAL LAW, which is God Himself.

Now, is not this obedience a cardinal factor in our salvation? In our pulpits does it stand out tall and clear? Does it receive, as is its right, equal notice with the atonement on the cross? Certainly not. And if not, is the Gospel fully preached? Christ died for us; but no less did He *live* for us. "Reconciled by His death," are we not also "saved by His life"? The death, without the life, is but a fractional Gospel. Will any one say that these two cardinal facts or factors of the true Gospel are equally emphasized in the popular pulpit?

Then, again, consider our Lord's teaching, miracles and example, during those three years of His ministry. Imagine the world lacking them, and who can estimate its loss? Just picture the race without its one perfect Teacher and Example. What, for instance, would be to-day the condition of this great Empire of Britain? of civilization at large? Are not His words and deeds the fountain head of all this magnificence? The Carpenter of Nazareth has built this house! His teaching has saturated and fashioned the literature of the dominant races. His example has been the inspiration of countless moral heroes down all these ages. His

deeds have been the exultation of the faithful and the despair of the infidel for nigh two thousand years! Now, suppose all this had not been, or that no record of it remained. What a thick shadow would now hang over the nations! I repeat it—the Son of Mary has built all genuine modern greatness.

We live in the sunlight. Yet I doubt whether the churches, as a whole, reflect truly the light of His life. Are they guided and governed absolutely by His plain words and perfect example? Has not the stream of truth lost somewhat of its crystal clearness? Gushing sweet and pure from its Divine Source, it has flowed down to us through wilds of controversy and quagmires of superstition: has it contracted no tincture or taint? It were a miracle if it had not. It is a miracle that we have it pure in the Gospels—that these have reached us incorrupt. Do the churches read them aright? impartially, honestly, and in every particular? For instance, when I witness the pomp and state of our spiritual princes, the struggle for precedence on state occasions I ask, "Whither has vanished that old basic law of the kingdom: 'He that would be greatest among you, let him be your servant'?" When I observe that Christians in general fight fiercely for their rights, and sternly avenge their wrongs, I cannot but ask: Have these people ever been taught that other law, the very heart

and centre of Christian ethics--SUBMISSION? "He that smiteth thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also." Are we quite sure that "hard sayings" like these have not been either entirely disregarded or diluted into practical nullities so as not to disturb the Church's cohabitation with the world?

Of course, no church *formally rejects* any saying of Christ. Those that tax too severely "flesh and blood," or do not square well with some "view," or the general tone of the system concerned, are merely watered down or conveniently ignored. Each sect has its own special pet scheme of doctrine, and these characteristic "views" must be maintained at all hazards. Should any part of our Lord's teaching seem to clash with them, it must be *got round* in some way. And what is this but rejection in practice, be profession what it may?

I have long observed how the non-episcopal mind, especially that region of it which has been moulded after the Genevan theology, affects the Pauline epistles rather than the Gospels. It has even been said by certain writers in that quarter, that the Gospels "do not contain the Gospel"! Practically this sets Paul before Jesus, light before love. The secret is this: Paul suits Geneva much better than does Christ, or rather *seems* to, for there is no real disharmony between the two. In the New Testament

the Gospels come first. Why? Just because they *are* first. The English Church says as much, bidding us *stand* when the Gospel—not the Epistle—is read. Nay, if the author of it did not preach the Gospel, who did? Tainted teaching accounts for this depreciation of the four great books.

Great, indeed. In the library world they stand alone, at the top, far above all other books. How should we bless and praise our Father for these most precious records of His Son's life on earth, and for causing them to come down to us intact and undefiled, through wreck and ruin, fire and whirlwind! Do we realize this marvel? The Church's garments are soiled, but these treasures are bright as gold. On these sacred volumes "the smell of fire has not passed." In them we have the mind of Christ; His own very words and works, "pure and undefiled." They are the greatest books on the GREATEST SUBJECT. They are THE biography. In comparison, no other life-history is worthy of perusal, since all other lives are mere inanities, shrink to mere motes beside the one true life. Here we have—not at second-hand—the *true* story of our blessed Lord's career in this dark world. Finally, we may well pity the man who finds no delight in studying these books and meditating on that career.

For, in this story, as in a mirror, may we see

what we are, what we should be, and do, and what we may become. I fear this mirror is not enough gazed in. What will the Cross do for him who has not yet seen his ugliness?—who is not growing beautiful like his model? Many pulpits that ring with His death, are strangely silent about His life. In comparison, how little do they dwell on His character—the mould in which we must be recast—His humility, His meekness, His resignation, His zeal, His prudence, His patience, His all-enduring, all-embracing love! How dimly they paint the ills He endured without murmur or complaint for our imitation; His poverty, His exposure to hunger, thirst, cold, weariness; to contempt, calumny, misconstruction, ingratitude, and all else of evil which both men and devils rained on Him all along His weary march to death! Looking at our pulpits one would suppose the Cross held *all* His woes. One would conclude that a glance of “faith” (so-called) at that was all that is needed in order to be “saved.” Here we have the very heart and core of the popular teaching; nevertheless, it is a fatal mistake. It is called “preaching Christ,” but it does not preach Him. It claims to be *THE* Gospel, but it is only a snatch of it. A widespread, ruinous delusion; an easy road to heaven, if you will, but not the road trodden and prescribed by the Saviour.

Just consider. Who are the “saved”? Are

they not, "if saved," the very brothers and sisters of Jesus? And what is it to be this? Let Himself answer: "Whosoever shall *do the will* of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." How seared we are of "good works"! One would almost suppose the worse the man the better the saint! One bad fruit of the Reformation. The truth is this: The death of our Lord not only procured us pardon for the past, but also grace to enable us to obey Him in the future. And His life shows us how to use that grace so as to grow *like Him*, which, unless we do, it was got for us in vain. "It follows that if he who takes Him for an Example, but not for a Redeemer, will be lost, so will he who takes Him for a Redeemer, but not for an Example, because the one *cannot*, and the other *does not*, follow Him." So fatally defective is this preaching which meets us on every hand! A doctrine unpopular, because unpalatable.

Some reader may even scent here the bugbear, "Salvation by works." So be it. And why not? Is there any salvation *without* works? It is one thing to say good works cannot *earn* salvation; it is quite another thing to say we can be saved without them. The Cross, as a golden key, opened heaven's gate for us; the walking thither is *our* work, though not by our own unaided strength alone. That rough road

must be trod. Our ever-adorable Lord trod it before us, and there is no shirking the toil, no by-path of so-called "faith" or aught else, if we would reach the gate. What has He said? Not that He will spare us this enterprise, but help us to achieve it. Is it thus the Gospel is preached by your "strolling evangelist"? No. He would say this is *not* the Gospel. He has found an easy path. Christ's road is hard.

It is hard in itself. Yet, to him whose heart is aflame with love, it is not so very hard after all. "Paganism was submission to superior power. Judaism was submission to rightful authority. Christianity is the submission of love." The central motive is, not hope of heaven, nor fear of hell, but sheer love of Him who wills so-and-so. The Christian sets himself to do right, not for gain, not mainly for what it will get for him in any world, but from mere love of the right for its own sake. He so loves the moral law, which is God's will—nay, God Himself—that he does right *just because it is right to do right*. And this spreads flowers on his path. This so lightens his load that he even goes "on his way rejoicing." And so he grows like Christ, and so is he fitted for heaven. A process which the spurious evangelist calls "deadly doing," a process which pulpits in general too little insist upon. For, is it not our life?

If it is true that without Christ no man can attain unto holiness, it is also true that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." And no man is "saved" who bears not, stamped on his personality more or less deeply, the "image and superscription" of the Lord. And this becomes so stamped only by gazing on His person and copying His example. As saith St. Paul: "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." True, and what is more still, there is no *other* way of being saved. This is the favorite text of the "evangelist," and there can be no better. The only question is this, Does he take it in its true sense? Does he expound it aright? There is a belief in Christ which stirs the nerves but not the life. The "acceptance" of Christ which produces no likeness to Christ, is a spurious faith, a thing of fancy, feeling, froth. True belief in Him at once sets a man to copy Him; plants his foot on the hard road of self-suppression, self-sacrifice, which He trod in love to men; makes him hunger to be near Him, and hear His voice, and gaze on His wounds, and run on His errands of love to all that are in need, and shrink with horror from wronging any in thought, word or

deed. In a word, genuine faith means vastly more than an imagined "acceptance of Christ," under excitement; it means loving Him utterly, and that means joyously *doing His will* in all things at whatever cost to self; it means *knowing* Him; that is, continuously corresponding with Him, so as to grow like Him. "He that hath My commandments and *doeth them*, he it is that loveth Me." "Whom to *know* is life eternal." True faith implies and involves obedience—I had almost said *is* obedience. Obedience begets likeness. Likeness fits for heaven. "Believing in Christ" is not a feeling or a fancy. It is a straining of every nerve to be as like Him as possible. Indeed you cannot be said to believe in *any* one unless you approve, admire and imitate.

To sum up: Whilst the popular pulpit duly presents Christ as "a sacrifice for sin," it does *not* adequately set Him forth as also "an example of godly life." It seems to forget that He was our substitute throughout His earthly life as well as in His death. And, in its just and holy zeal for the cross of His death, it all but drops from view the countless cruel crosses of His life!

THIRD STONE—HIS DEATH.

Were the cross and passion of our blessed Lord the *whole* Gospel, it would not, of course,

be possible to dwell too much upon it in the pulpit. But, it is *not* the whole of the good news. It is, after all, but one stone in the arch—one stone in seven; an important stone, to be sure, but not more so than any one of the rest. For instance, how can it be one whit more important than the incarnation, without which it could not have been? or the resurrection, without which it were of none effect? And yet the popular pulpit practically makes it the entire Gospel, and calls this "preaching Christ" *par excellence!* Now, this is no light matter. On the contrary, it is a cardinal mistake, an error as pernicious—nay, fatal—as it is widespread.

Is it then my purpose to disparage the atonement? God forbid! Who would desire, much less dare, to subtract so much as the weight of a sunbeam-mote from the unfathomable significance, the ineffable value, of that awful scene on Calvary, whose thrill made nature tremble and hell's foundations groan?—when the graves below flew open, and the gate above, not to close again till the latest saint have entered in! It is a most blessed, wondrous, awful, inexhaustible theme. And which stone is not? No Gospel without Calvary; yet Calvary is not the Gospel.

Gethsemane, Pilate's hall, Calvary are the three last acts in the GREAT TRAGEDY. In each of

them what He endured for us the holy Sufferer alone could know. He might tell, but what man or angel could understand the tale? It was no common load of woe, on that lone dark night in the garden, which wrung from His pores that sweat of blood, and from His lips that "If-it-be-possible." In that lone hour how He craved human sympathy!—"Watch with Me," "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." What mysterious burden was that? What mountain weight sank Him nigh unto death? What anguish forced those blood-drops from His frame? *A world's sin.* The sins of the world roll as one vast billow on His head! These words we can say, but what meaning have they? What do we *know*? Ask an infant to grasp millions! a philosopher to measure space! Easy to say, "He bare our sins"; but what this meant to Him created intelligence cannot conceive. The cross was not *all*. Perhaps sharper than the spikes were the brutal indignities of the hall and the ingratitude of the howling throng. And in that final torture on the cross, to all His other woes was added this crowning desolation—His very *Father* forsook Him! From His dying Son He turned away His face! Desolation of desolations!—"Why hast THOU forsaken Me?" And "why" is still the word. What answer to *that*? Why did His Father hide Himself from the Son of

His love in His dire extremity? The Holy Spirit has told us why: He "who knew no sin" "was made SIN for us"; and are we not also told that the All-holy One "cannot look upon sin"?

"Made SIN"! Awful mystery! "which things the angels desire to look into." Think of it—the spotless One nailed, AS SIN, to the cross! What marvel the sun veiled his face and the rocks burst asunder! And we think our sins *little* things! So is a bit of dynamite.

But the black' moment passes on: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." The SHADOW is gone. And so passes the world's eclipse, begun in Eden! The shadow of death lifts from the earth: sunlight is here.

In the celestial ledger a deep, broad line is drawn through the human debt; for that debt is now paid. To the uttermost farthing has it been discharged. No exception: not one soul left out. *Debt*, remember, not *duty*, is cancelled. The Creditor has no further claim, no more score, against the bankrupt sons of Adam. The Father is at one with His wayward children. The King is at peace with His subjects. God is reconciled to men; are men reconciled to God? Ay, there's the rub! That is the pivot on which each destiny will turn. It takes two to quarrel; two to make peace. God has done *His* part; have we done ours? Some still in arms.

Here is the sin of sins. Prison open—he will not come out; heaven open—he will not go in! He *will* have his own way, “paddle his own canoe,” go to “his own place.” And then, forsooth, God is accused of “sending” him to hell! The truth is, God did all He could to head him off from its mouth. God *sends* no man to hell, nor saves He any one against his *will*. How could He, and leave him still a man? Self-will sends to hell. Men go thither of sheer choice. *Self* does it all. God-worship leads to heaven; self-worship leads to hell. In fact it *is* hell, here or elsewhere. What matter “where” one “goes”? The question is, WHAT one IS? Briefly, the gate is open. Some won’t enter: they prefer the other place. Let them go; but say not *God* sent them, for it is blasphemy.

The popular pulpit seems, practically, to limit Christ’s sufferings to the final scene. Is this right? What was Calvary but the culmination of one long life pain? What was the ministry of Jesus but one long crucifixion? By virtue of His *perfect* human nature, His exquisite mental, moral and physical organization, privation of innocent enjoyments must have been felt by Him with a keenness unknown to ordinary men. And His privations were extreme. It follows that His life was a pain, as His death was an agony. “A man of sorrows” till the cry, “It is finished!” As a heathen philosopher

had foreseen, the world hailed the advent of Incarnate Goodness with one roar of execration, only silenced when He lay in the tomb. Ingratitude broke His heart. Around His cross I see scarce one of all the thousands He helped and healed. No cry of "Shame!" do I hear on His torturers. "I looked for some to have pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." Does the pulpit do justice to all this?—this painful career of utter self-suppression and daily suffering, making Him look old beyond His years? "Thou art not yet *fifty* years old," when He was only thirty!

The cross has many lessons. The first is, the blackness of sin and the depth of God's love. The next is that profound law of the kingdom—*victory through submission*. How this upsets and reverses man's cherished ideas of triumph! Conquering by yielding! Beating an assailant by "turning the other cheek"! Does the pulpit adequately enforce this great law? Does it give it its due, *i.e.*, a front place? Who, in these days, is taught to leave his wrongs in the hands of God? What modern Christian feels bound by the injunction, "Resist not evil"? Have we not all but forgotten that deepest of paradoxes, "*Victory in, by, and through defeat*"?

Indeed, the cross is a very bundle of paradoxes. In it we read that to submit is to prevail; that defeat is triumph; weakness, strength;

death, life! The cross runs counter to many of our fixed ideas. It lifts that on which it rests. A tree of death, its fruit is life eternal. Emblem of helplessness, it moves the world. Symbol of shame, it is our chief glory. Meant for torture, it is the fount of bliss. At the bottom of the social world, it yet sets the beggar above the prince. It bears its bearer aloft to heaven's gate. For it he casts all away, and so *has* all. For it he loses his life, and so preserves it. In the strength of its weakness he vanquishes the mighty. Through its valleys of humiliation he walks to the delectable mountain-tops. And in the caskets of its poverty he finds the crown jewels of the kingdom!

Calvary is the centre of the universe! To it all eyes turn—angels', men's and devils'. It is the root and the source of all that is best in the world to-day. To it all old history converged; from it all the new history, fan-like, opens out. On this pivot destiny turns. It is the well-spring of civilization, the reservoir of all the forces that go to uplift the world, making for righteousness. "Himself He cannot save"! Certainly not, if all else is not to be lost. Nor can you or I. Matchless scene! A moment's sackcloth on the sun, that a blacker sackcloth may fall off the world forever! Nothing for self: all for others. Such is Christ. Such is the ideal Christian. Can you find him? What

pulpit rings continuously with this central principle of our religion? this very heart and core of Christ's career, example, precept? I answer, *Not one.* Much about *Christ's* sacrifice; little enough about *man's self-sacrifice* for the general good. But with this left out our religion is an empty husk! And considerably out it is. All for others was Christ; all but all for ourselves are we. And the pulpit looks unmoved on this *blackest thing*, warring valiantly on windmills! I tell you *altruism* is the best mark of discipleship—not "temperance," nor a sound "creed," nor "clear views," nor "long prayers" and longer hymns, nor church-going, nor ecstatic visions, nor unholy "holiness," nor "frames," nor "feelings," nor "experiences." Selfishness and Christ are at opposite poles. True, an unselfish man *may* not be a model Christian, but a selfish man *cannot*. Some will tell you that a "pipe," or a "dane," or a "glass" is the mark of the lost; certain it is that mere *self sent* Dives to hell! On all this the current perversion of truth is truly deplorable, and, worse still, the general seeming unconsciousness of aught amiss!

FOURTH STONE—HIS RESURRECTION.

This is the keystone of the arch. If there be any pre-eminence, this one has it, for

“ 'Tis the last keystone makes the arch :
 The rest that there were put
 Are nothing, till this comes, to bind and shut.”

Without it, no strength in the arch; or, rather, *no arch*. Without the resurrection, no redemption: “Our preaching vain; your faith also vain.” All hangs on this. Hence, in the first preachers’ preaching, the front place assigned Christ’s resurrection. If that were not a fact, all else fell to the ground. There was no more to be said. If true, it was God’s full endorsement of the Son of Mary, with all His claims and pretensions. In raising Him from the dead He set His seal on Him. This is the stone on which rests the vast edifice, now nearly two thousand years a-building! Remove it and the Church is a ruin—the kingdom of Christ a dream! Hence the joy of the holy Easter morn, for it is the basis of all our hopes. Hence, too, the fierce eagerness of unbelief to dislodge this stone. Long, and with much sweat, has the enemy toiled at it—in vain. And small marvel this fury, for it is gall to sinful pleasures, it has tumbled earth’s gods, it has broken hell’s yoke. In a word, it is the very *bête noir* of infidelism, in all its shades and ramifications.

Our hope, for time and forever, rests, ultimately, on this stone. But for it life here were a very dark and dismal thing; the dread beyond, a midnight eternal. Just think of it!—

little good here: perhaps none at all yonder!— a life of pain, a death of doubt or despair! Before Christ rose from the dead the heathen *knew* nothing of the land beyond the tomb. They guessed much, they *knew* nothing. Surely the saddest reading in all history is the story of earth's wisest sons straining to catch a glimpse of the possible BEYOND! But until dawned the first Easter morning all was dark. No voice from afar broke the awful silence. Men were born, lived, died in ignorance of the great secret. All they could do was to reason, and guess, and grope, and moan in anguish of heart. An awful lot, truly! I confess I have never been able to understand how life, under such conditions, was bearable. Do most of us ever think of this? Do we realize that hideous shadow on the other side of the Redeemer's sepulchre? Does the pulpit try to *make* us think of and realize it? Perhaps it does, but such, at any rate, is not *my* experience. Easter morn brings its Easter joy, and the usual pulpit platitudes concerning it—the people simply do not *know* all it means for them! Surely something better might be done here.

Poor Plato, Soerates, and the rest! Pathetic figures they, if time's landscape shows any such. *They* groped in a cave: *we* perch on the sunlit hill-top. *They guessed*: *we know*. Now has the grave no terrors. It is but the porch of

paradise, the little cot in which, "after this life's fever, we shall sleep well." Jesus rose: hence no sting in death, no victory to the grave, no cloud on the future, God our Light for evermore! *With Christ, if like Christ—this is heaven! Is heaven thus preached? Is it so preached, in the popular religion?*

"Now is Christ risen from the dead." Precious fact for dying men! Sweet words for hearts bereft! For He is "the firstfruits of them that slept." Our dear ones in the churchyard shall awake, and walk, and know, and live, and not die. Is there a sweeter tune than this? Can we hear it too often? Who would ever tire of the story of resurrection day? "Christ crucified" is the grand "Old Hundred" of our glorious faith: "Christ risen" its "Hallelujah Chorus."

"If ye then be risen with Christ." Risen from what? From the dead, of course. From the sin-grave. All who are not "risen with Christ" are yet dead, still in their graves, buried in sin. In baptism—or otherwise—spiritual life begins. To have life is to have Christ: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath *not* life." But mark: baptism implies *repentance* and *faith* in the adult. All such, not thus in Christ, are practically dead. He rose and went up. If we are in Him, we have risen with Him "from the death of sin to a life of righteousness." We have no more

business with sin. Our backs are turned on it for good. Our faces are set heavenward. Our hearts there are fixed. "Our conversation is in heaven," though not yet without sin. Now, when this is in no measure true of a baptized person, what are we to think? Many Anglican pulpits seem not to realize the gravity of the situation here. And some would seem to regard the bare *fact* of baptism a sufficient peg on which to hang eternity! What more fatal error can there be, unless its opposite, a *belittling* of baptism—a common fault among the sects.

The risen Christ is our life. No child has this when born. "This is life eternal, to know thee." To know God; *i.e.*, to correspond habitually with God; to "live, move, and have one's being" in Him as an environment—*this is life*. And it comes in a moment of time, at the font or elsewhere: for no one can be at once both dead and alive. A soul may be dead this moment and alive the next. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise. The Spirit breathes on it, and forthwith it lives. *Growth* is slow: life-giving is the work of a moment. Some people sneer at "sudden conversions"—indulge in much cheap ridicule of such phenomena, forgetting that the change "from death unto life" cannot choose but be sudden. "In the twinkling of an eye" not only *may* this be, but it *must*, whether in baptism or not. There is no gradual transition from death

unto life, though there is from life to *full* life. Does it take the traveller on the wrong road long to wheel about? It *may* be long ere he reaches his journey's end. There are two scoffers who would do well to consider this: he who scoffs at holy baptism, and he who scoffs at sudden changes. "The wind bloweth where it listeth."

Now, I hold that this "passing from death unto life"—this great resurrection—should be kept well to the front in our teaching. Indeed it should be the starting point. What question concerns us more than this: Am I alive? or, am I dead?—risen, or still buried? The Anglican pulpit would do well to make a note of this. It has always seemed to me to be very remiss in this matter; and a more serious shortcoming cannot well be. Most Anglican divines hold that life is given in baptism always; and in this I agree with them. But if they were to ask me (as they do not) to believe that, once given, it is always there, I demur. It can be lost; and often is. What then remains to do, but to get it back by repentance and faith, the great pre-requisites of baptism?

The great "Forty Days," so rich in interest and instruction, naturally go with the resurrection. Volumes have been written on this part of the Gospel; but space forbids a wider treatment here. I would simply remark that it is

rich in themes for pulpit discussion. I do not think they are, in general, proportionately discussed in our pulpits.

That empty sepulchre is *full* of the very best things: light, and life, and health, and hope. It is a chamber ablaze with jewels. How little, comparatively, is drawn from this treasury by our preachers in general? Yet was it a front theme in the apostolic preaching. Place these two facts side by side, and draw your own conclusion. The apostles saw and felt that the divine kingdom rests on the vacated tomb; and even a child might perceive that a gospel with this left far in the background is not the Gospel of the New Testament or the apostolic days.

FIFTH STONE—ASCENSION AND PENTECOST.

These two great events, naturally linked together so as, in effect, to constitute one grand transaction, form the fifth stone in the Royal Arch of Redemption. "If I depart, I will send Him unto you." Pentecost is the complement of the ascension. We may regard the ascent of Christ and the descent of the Paraclete as one act in the divine drama. Christ went up to send the Spirit down. His work on earth, He being a *Man*, was confined to a single spot of earth: by His Spirit He could be everywhere at once. So He went away, not to forsake men, but to get *nearer to them*, and to them *all*. How sig-

nificant His parting words: "It is expedient for you that I go away!" And in this way has the Saviour been really, though not visibly, with men on earth ever since: not with a few here or there, as must have been the case had He not ascended, but by the side of every child of Adam in all the wide world, always.

Is any part of the Gospel of more practical, every-day importance than this? And who will say the pulpit fully recognizes the fact? To have his Saviour ever at his side, helping him over the rough road of life—which of man's privileges equals that? Without it how would he ever reach safely the gate of paradise? See, then, the vital connection between this stone and salvation. Does the average preacher seem awake to it?

Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter seem to be, year by year, increasingly observed even by the Dissenting churches; but ascensiontide is but faintly noticed even by many English Churchmen. By "Dissenters" it is, I believe, hardly noticed at all. Now, is this "preaching the Gospel"? What part of that Gospel is better "news" than ascensiontide brings us? What part of it more intimately concerns us than this? Strange, is it not, this ominous silence on what is so bound up with man's everlasting welfare! Yet silent the churches are, or—*unreal*.

Ascension and Pentecost are cardinal facts of

our religion. The presence of the Holy Spirit is essential to salvation. Were Christ not here, by His Spirit, who could be saved? What would sermons, the most eloquent, avail in His absence? Simply nothing.

Astounding fact! The Holy One residing in this polluted world! But we are so accustomed to hearing of this, without really accepting it in its full, *plain, literal* force, that it now makes on us but a faint impression. Practically we don't really believe it literally true; and the pulpit should try harder than it does to make it *real* to us—a naked, plain fact—God actually here, going to and fro among us to help and to save us! It is, I fear, one of the many things which are mere figures of speech to us—*vox et preterea nihil*—and which to reduce to a naked reality and literality is the pulpit's much neglected business. The question is: Did He come? and, Is He here? Not in some hazy, figurative way, but after the most literal fashion. Well, He *has* come; and He *is* here, though few realize and believe that fact. No spot of land, no space of sea, where He is not. In other words, Christ, by His Spirit, is at every man's side: not in some hazy, figurative sense, meaning nothing and practically not believed, but as really, simply, actually, and literally as is father, brother, friend, or neighbor! And were He not, we must all be lost, in spite of His death on Calvary. How, then,

is the atonement more to us than THIS? His absence means His presence: His presence makes our final rescue a possibility. How should we, how would we, how *could* we, ever reach the heaven gate, but with Him always at our side? Does the modern pulpit do justice to this most vital, most practical, most all-concerning fact of facts? Does it cast on it the blazing white light of *reality*? or, does it leave it in the dim realm of things men confess, yet neither realize nor believe? The latter, I fear.

Right here hinges our whole destiny. How stands the matter? The Spirit is here among us. What is that to us? This much. Till He open our eyes we are stone blind. Dead are we till He touch us to life. Till He live in our hearts and speak in our lives we are none of Christ's. Suppose Him *not* here. Preaching abounds: not one soul is saved! "The Giver of Life" is far away: no voice of preacher can pierce the sin-grave. On the lips of eloquence the "Word" is simply a sound. In vain it cries, "Lazarus, come forth."

How stupid were the eleven till Pentecost! The three years' work of the great Teacher seems all but wasted on them. The Spirit comes; and, lo! all bursts into flower! In a twinkling these dunces are brilliant orators, princely preceptors! The light pours into them in flood; and out of them has it streamed ever

since to the ends of the earth! Love flames in their hearts. In the dim chambers of memory wake up the long uncomprehended words of Jesus, now diamond lights of truth. Peter, the coward, is brave as a lion. These poor poltroons, so lately skulking under cover, dash forth as heroes against the giants of the world! Whence this transformation? *The work of Christ present by His Spirit.* Say you all this is over and gone? Nay, friend, it is not. It is here to-day. Is a bad man made a good man now, who does it? The self-same Spirit—none other. Can a mere preacher do it? Can a spade dig, or a pen write, *of itself*? The preacher's besetting sin in spite of himself is to think he *can*: not in theory, I grant you, but in fact. An awful mistake. No mere human voice ever yet spake the dead to life, or the foul to purity. "The light that never shone on land or sea" is let in by the Spirit, and by Him alone. The word preached is the key in his hand. The preacher is a spade, a hammer, a pen. Does the spade do the digging? Yet, without it is the soil not digged. Sermons are often fruitless. Why? Not for lack of eloquence; but for lack of the Spirit: the preacher forgets he is the *spade*—not the *Gardener*. Are the laity taught thus to view the matter? "Christ crucified" is made the "very essence of the Gospel": Christ

risen, ascended, HERE, is comparatively but little dilated on.

Yes, HERE NOW. "Lo! I am with you alway." Not more really did He sit with Zaccheus than with you—if you *will*. Still does He weep over graves, and cheer with "I am the resurrection and the life." As you sit, too, by the tomb of your hopes, He sits with you. How can you ever know from how many dire dangers He has screened you, unscen, but at hand? Through all the "changes and chances of this mortal life" does He hold you by the hand, leading you in the way everlasting. No lion's den without Him, if one of His Daniels is there. No furnace so hot but is seen therein "the form of One like unto the Son of God." From cradle to grave is He at the side of His own; warding off danger; holding them back from sin; easing their burdens; adding speed to their fingers, grip to their hands, rest to their souls, and light on the way whose end is the gate of pearl and the street of gold. And all this because He ascended—went away *from* us to get nearer *to* us.

And is all this next to nothing at all? Is that "Gospel preaching" which leaves it in the background, or gives it a passing allusion by means of a few threadbare platitudes? Are the sermons that ignore it "practical" sermons? Of what avail the atonement to you unless you

grow *like* Him by being ever in His company, ever doing His will? This supreme privilege you owe to Ascension and Pentecost: are the churches awake to the fact? Do they BELIEVE He is here? Or, is their talk about His presence, like so much of their talk, the proper thing to *say*, but meaningless—not for honest actions?

Indeed, I greatly suspect that, in dealing with Pentecost, few preachers ever get much beyond the "rushing wind" and the "cloven tongues"—the mere momentary accompaniments of the inauguration of a mighty, practical, permanent power and movement among men, vitally concerning one and all of them, for time and for eternity. Is not God's presence here on earth a fact as literally true as the presence of you or me?—the woods and fields, the cattle and the birds? Does not our eternal lot pivot on it? If so, surely it calls for something more than a few worn-out phrases at Whitsuntide? I cannot think the churches any longer really believe it *true*. And if so, the diseased state of Christendom is accounted for.

SIXTH STONE—HIS SESSION IN HEAVEN.

As the God-man, where is Christ now? At His Father's right hand. And what does that mean? It means that *all* power is His. He rules all—reigns over all. The Son of man

holds the worlds in His hand till the hour comes to hand over the kingdom to the Father. Till then the Carpenter who built the house holds the key. His sceptre sways creation. Mary's Son is universal King.

An awful fact for such as "will not have this man to reign over them"; but, O how sweet, how restful, how inspiriting to His loyal ones! Under His sceptre none can hurt them. They are safe and at peace. Yes, at peace—

"Peace, perfect peace, the future all unknown;
Jesus they know, and—He is on the throne!"

What a high rock is this, when the sea of life is wild, and its jaws gape wide to gulp us down! What a cool and solid cave to hide in, when the fires blaze about us, and all hell howls for its prey! So long as Jesus rules, not a hair of our heads may be singed. In storm and earthquake this great fact is the very sheet-anchor of the Christian's confidence; yea, and will be on that awful day when the worlds go clashing to destruction. He can smile now, though wreck and ruin crash around him; and serene will be his brow "when heaven and earth shall pass away."

Who can estimate, at its full value, the daily, practical worth of this single fact concerning Jesus? this blessed section of the good news, "the everlasting Gospel"—*He is KING?* And where is the pulpit that does it justice? Is it

so vividly, sedulously, pertinaciously inculcated, that Christians in general cannot choose but rest in it habitually, as in an impregnable fortress, under all conditions of life? If so, I can only say the experience is not mine. Doubtless it is preached. Oh, yes. But, whether as a blessed reality, or a shadowy dream?—a practical fact, or a vague speculation?

But Jesus is more. KING He is; and—
PRIEST. On Calvary He offered the Victim: He is now “within the veil,” with the BLOOD. Both Priest and Victim is He: the Sacrifice and the Sacrificer. *One Priest: One Sacrifice.* And as our great High Priest, what is He doing now? Why, the work of a priest, of course, begun while yet on earth. Mark it well—*no priest, no salvation.* Yet, there is, in this sense, **BUT ONE PRIEST.** And as such, He is, night and day, hard at work for us. This is holy ground: let us put off our shoes. We are not told all; and we dare not pry into the secrets of God. But the veil has been so far lifted as to let us catch a glimpse of Jesus within, in the very Holy of Holies, as the bearer of the sins of His people. The price paid is ever before His Father's eye. There we hear Him pleading: “Let it alone this year also.” Our very names He whispers in His Father's ear. Through Him our poor weak prayers take heaven by storm: without Him not one of them would ever reach the sky.

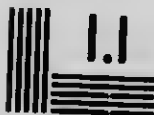
Our lame services He makes acceptable. There sits He, watching His fold below, lest the wolf catch some silly straying lamb. Thence does He deal out to us all we have and all we need. There He hears from our own lips the sad story of our sins, and sets us free; of our many falls, and lifts us up. In all our trials and troubles He feels for us and with us, where He is. When our way is dark He lights it up, or leads us by the hand under the cloud. When some dire blow hits our life, where were we but for Him? When the knees totter, and the hands hang down under daily duty, whence comes fresh vigor but from Him? In every sore temptation, under every fiery trial, who comes to the rescue at our cry for help? Most blessed truth!—an Almighty Helper, whose heart beats with our own, who has felt—who feels—all our wants and woes! “For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” He is “the one Mediator between God and man, the MAN, Christ Jesus” On the one side an offended, outraged Father: on the other, His rebel sons, quaking with fear: the DAYSMAN between, laying a hand upon each, and so making peace.

And this peacemaker is the King's Son—our Brother. Who so fitted to deal with our ease as He who “bare our sins,” and was Himself



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“made perfect through sufferings”? Who could so put himself in our place, in all our needs and trials, as He whose whole life here was one long trial and need? To aid us is now His one great care. To save us (if we let Him), He has both the will and the power. He knows all that is. He bears with us long. He is far more ready to give than we to take. Time would fail to tell all He is to us as our PRIEST—all He has done, is doing, is waiting to do for us. Behold His love in that life-blood trickling down from the cross: see that love no less streaming down always from the throne! He is in the mount: we on the waves. In the thick night we hear “It is I.” Each morning is warm and rosy with His love. Each hour does His hand bear us up as we strain on towards the goal, only so to be reached. Blessed, startling fact—no reaching home save with Jesus at our side. Without this aid, what could Calvary do for you, or for me?

Never forget your PRIEST: without Him you cannot be saved. Every day should you enter the confessional and get absolution. Not from a fellow-sinner; but from Him who alone can both absolve and cure. I dare say the devil cares little how much your thoughts run on Calvary, so long as you forget your PRIEST. No confession, no life. Christ “is exalted, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and

remission of sins." Within the veil is the true confessional. There does He sit to hear and to pardon. There does He wait for you. Ask repentance—He will grant it. Ask forgiveness—it is yours. *You need no third party in this business.* In all the New Testament I see no sinner come to a fellow-sinner for absolution. Go direct to your ONLY PRIEST. He waits. He will wait till the last sheep comes in. Then will the door be shut, to open nevermore. His work as Mediator is over. The great High Priest takes off His sacerdotal vestments, and puts on the JUDGE'S robes. There is a stir in heaven. The trumpet is blowing. The angel hosts are mustering. The day of grace is past: the day of judgment is come!

I would ask the average church-goer if it is his experience that the average pulpit does justice to all this? What religious topic transcends in practical everyday importance that of Christ's present position and work in heaven? The eternal destinies of us all hang on our present relation to Him there! Does the pulpit seem to fully realize this awful truth? Does it try hard to bring it home to each hearer by persistent reiteration as a matter of life and death? "Reconciled by His death"; "saved by His life." Is there not something strangely unreal in our current Christianity? Is not UNREALITY its very "image and superscription"? Heaps

of sectarian zeal ; practical disbelief of the great essentials.

THE SEVENTH STONE—THE JUDGMENT.

To the unbelieving world—to the unrepentant sinner—what word should be so awful as this? —“the day of judgment”—the day when all accounts shall be closed, all dooms sealed up for ever! It is coming. It may be at hand. Any moment may we hear that “shout,” see the dead start to life at that trumpet blast. Come when it may, it will be *sudden*: “Behold, I come as a thief in the night!” And the unready lose all! Do the churches realize this? Are they really making ready? Are they looking for the Judge? longing to see Him come to wind up all? Not they. Despite all warnings, both the Church and the world will be taken by surprise at the last. “Shall He find faith on the earth?”

This is the seventh stone, and the last. It is the final complement of the Incarnation. It is the summing up of all that went before; the focussing of the redemption rays; the harvest home of time; the last act in the drama of human life; the great wind-up. The second coming of Christ is the very polestar of the kingdom.

Say what will move a man if this word will not—JUDGMENT? What else would stir him to “take heed to his ways”? What a theme to

halt the headlong fools? Does the pulpit make full use of it to this end? It does not. A casual allusion; a few texts and hackneyed phrases, once a year or so—uttered as if not believed—this is about all! *It won't do.* The awful scene must be made *real*. It must be so painted that the hearer cannot but see himself *there*—not yawning, or bored, but all alive and thrilled from head to foot, standing at that last bar with myriads, yet all alone! Is that “preaching Christ” which leaves out the JUDGE? True, the subject is often referred to—said and sung at Advent—but *not* often made a real fact, a last transaction focussing all interests, and which no one may shirk. Indeed, this solemn day has but a small nook in the minds of the churches. But if this so little concerns us, tell me *what* concerns us much? Controversy, I suppose. “Gnats” and “camels”!

Certain it is that it was not thus with the Church in her first and purest days; she dwelt on the last things; she looked for her Lord's return. Strange that the nearer He draws the less she expects Him! What is this but unfaith?

The first preachers seem to never lose sight of the Second Advent. To that all-absorbing event do they refer everything. To it do they repeatedly appeal. A high note is it in the New Testament, even to its very last verse. In those

simple times all eyes are fixed on the sky. The attitude of the infant church is a watching, waiting, expectant attitude. Her eyes turn daily skyward, longing for her Lord's return, and really *expecting it*. Rightly or wrongly such was her posture—rightly, of course, being led by men inspired. It was the *true* attitude; no other is.

Is this the visible church's attitude to-day? Reader, I see you smile. No. Her eyes are on the earth and its greatness and graves. When the world slips from her hands, her gaze gets no further than the *tomb*. Perhaps her Lord will come—*sometime*; such is her posture, though not her profession. Of the millions who profess to love Him and look for Him, how many would be delighted to hear He is coming to-morrow? How many not surprised? Not one in ten thousand! What honest observer will say it is not so?

Now, this is all wrong, and marks a frightful lapse since the first days. And who is to blame for its continuance? The Church and her mouth-pieces, of course. Who else? Christ's coming is a misty contingency, not a vivid object of loving desire or recoiling dread. What pulpit sets it in the blaze of day? What hearers are told He may be here to-night? Instead of this the great fact is, as usual, diluted down till it means nothing: men are told He may come for

any one of them by death! The Advent is not brought to their doors—nor the judgment. The subject is not driven home—not preached as if believed. Men preach—when they do preach—of the GREAT ASSIZE, with as little solemnity, earnestness and devotion as they would if describing a picnic or a fair!

And the current *teaching* is at fault, too. The Christian is trained to fix his eye on *death* and the blissful *beyond* as his hope, instead of on his Lord's RETURN. This is a mistake. It seems somewhat out of line with the primitive teaching. Were we instructed, and did we live, as we ought and might, what would our hearts crave so much as a sight of our Saviour on earth in human form?

The truth of this is easily tested. How do you feel when told that your dearest, long-absent friend is coming? Does not your heart leap for joy? How drag the hours till he come? Do not your eyes beam with delight as your feet speed away to meet him at the train? Now, is it thus Christians wait and watch for *their* best Friend? How many of them would be glad—how many not shocked—to see Him suddenly confront them? What shams we are, to be sure! We affect to desire His coming. We utter a solemn "*Amen*" to the "Even so, come quickly." And all the time most of us would be dazed if taken at our word! Some

pious people would be relieved to know He will *not* come, at least whilst *they* live. Unreality!—the bane of the Church. No wonder it should be ashamed to meet Him. But it has no time to think of this—so many are its social rivalries, doctrinal bickerings, priestly fads, and fraternal feuds? To the great majority of those supposed to be straining their eyes to catch the first glimpse of Him, His Second Advent is a thing on paper; a far-off hill-top, shrouded in mist. Sinai and Calvary loom out clear; in a haze is the mement of judgment, though at the door, its dark brow bent grimly on them! What of that? Are not their hands full, fighting each other over orders and ornaments and ordinances, and splitting hairs over “views”?

The judgment is a wide, a mighty theme. The flood foreshadowed it long ago. In the doom of Sodom, in the destruction of Jerusalem, was mirrored the final ORDEAL. It concerns all as does nothing else. Not a son of Adam shall be absent from that awful BAR!

And who will be the JUDGE? Not God the Father. He leaves it to His Son to wind up the affairs of the kingdom He has bought so dear. Christ tells us that He Himself will judge us, “because He is the Son of MAN.” And who may demur at this arrangement? No fear of injustice here; He knows all, and will “do

right." Just think. Suppose a mere man, however wise, or a committee of men, however honest, on the judgment seat, how many a true man would be sentenced to the realm of lies! how many an oily rogue welcomed to the place of truth and love! But now I know that my judge is Justice Incarnate; knows all about me; can make no mistake. I know that if I am found wanting, the fault is all my own. I know that He who now says "Depart," long wearied Himself saying "Come." And my inmost heart says He would have saved me, *had I let Him*. I chose to be lost, and He can but let me have my way. He toiled to give me life; I preferred death. To all His offers my will said "No," and the WILL is the MAN. Who murmurs when he gets what he craves? God forees no human will. He drives none to heaven, or to hell.

And on what will the judgment turn? On LOVE. Charity is the test—so says the Judge Himself. He has painted the scene; has clearly laid down the principle on which each decision will rest—LOVE, as shown in helping the poor, the sick—all needing help. *Altruism is the soul of a genuine Christianity*. A selfish Christian is a contradiction in terms. God is love. Heaven is love. And only love fits for either. Love includes all, covers all—faith, hope, holiness. The one last question will be:

Did you live for self? or did you live for others? So says the Judge.

Now, is this not passing strange? After all our convictions and conversions; our "views" and experiences; our "frames" and "feelings"; our catechisms and "confessions of faith"; our sermons and systems; our church-goings and psalm-singings; our dogmatizings and hair-splittings; our churchings and unchurchings; our synods and councils; our sagots and inquiries; despite all these, consuming as they now do our main religious energies, on judgment day, not a word about it all! Remember, I do not undervalue most of these things; I simply record the startling fact that no mention is made of them at the great wind-up! Instead, "*What good did you do?*" "Where is he whom you helped?" That is all.

Who is now thus trained and fitted for the final test? What is the general pulpit voice? "Don't do this; don't do that; come to church." What is the burden of the "evangelist" pulpit? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Quite so. But what is it to believe on Him? Why, to copy Him, to be sure; to walk in His steps. And what are His steps? Acts of love to men. It follows that to believe in Christ is, in substance, to help men. *Faith in Christ is just love to men*—deeds of help—absence of hurt. It is a set purpose to be like Him, *i.e.*, all for

others, nothing for *self*. This is to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and it saves. Is this the "believing" we hear so much about? this life-long self-abnegation for others' good? this losing of life so as to keep it? Not at all. The evangelist's "believing" is little more than some sudden inward revulsion. The *nerves* are moved; not the hands or the feet, or the heart of self. This faith does *not* "work by love." It does *not* crucify self, and, therefore, is but a fancy, *not* faith in the crucified Incarnate LOVE. The moment a man really believes in Christ, he sets about being like Him. He begins to sink self. His one great aim is to grow like Him whose divine beauty ravishes his soul, and he knows that to *grow* like Him he must *do* like Him, *i.e.*, help all around Him. THIS IS FAITH IN CHRIST. Anything less is *not*. And this self-forgetting helpfulness will finally test his status and fix his destiny "Come! ye *did* it"; "depart, ye *did* it *not*!" Real faith in Christ is *imitation of Christ*, not *sensations* merely, but loving *deeds*; self-sacrifice, love to all—not as a pious sentiment, or a hypocritical pretence—but in concrete, substantial acts of HELP—that costs. This faith is solid. This faith saves. No other is worth a bawbee!

LOVE and SELF are the two poles of the spiritual sphere. They are just two other names for God and the devil: Heaven and Gehenna.

Of course, there are degrees of both ; but in the last extreme they are as opposite as God and Satan. Love and self are just GOOD and EVIL. Perfect love is GOOD, *i.e.*, God : utter selfishness is the EVIL ONE. Love is heaven : self is hell. All sin falls under the one head—self ; for self is the antagon of God, the all-unselfish One. In a word, self is badness : love is goodness. Does your modern pulpit insist on this ? Does it make it clear as day ? Does it fearlessly set it forth ? Is pompous, selfish wealth, sitting in the front pew, made to feel this lash ? No. The lash is for the poor *inebriate*—he having neither funds nor friends !

The *degrees* of selfishness are probably as many as there are human beings. Were any man utterly and entirely selfish, he would be simply a fiend. I think no man on earth was ever yet quite so far gone as that. But myriads are very far gone : myriads move on all stages of this *Broad Road*. For this road is the BROAD ROAD. To be on this road a man needs not to be a vicious man, much less a criminal. On the contrary, he may be a most respectable deacon, a model churchwarden ! *Mere selfishness is enough*. The question is : Does he live for himself alone, or mainly ? Dives was no worse than this. And just such are thousands who yet hope "to go to heaven when they die." They must have a queer conception of the land of love !

Once, and once only, does the Saviour picture a soul in torments. In Hades is Lazarus happy—*not* because he had been *poor*: Dives miserable—*not* because he had been *rich*. He is in flames. Why? For what? What has he done? In what vicious courses has he spent his life on earth? What crimes stain his soul? None. Not a single grossly bad act is recorded against him. He was just what many "good churchmen" are to-day. He "lived high," and "had no use" for "tramps"; but surely he was never sentenced for *that*! If so, what shall become of so many respectable Christians of our day? No. To solve the enigma you must consider—not what he *did*, but what he *did not*.

He lived for himself. He hurt none: he helped none. He suffers because void of love for any one but himself. The fires that burn him are mere lovelessness. A loveless heart cannot but be the seat of woe. A loveless life must needs ripen to a loveless state—reach a loveless place. A loveless being is, *of course*, "in torments." Dives lived on earth in the dismal solitude of selfishness; which has simply developed into the eternal solitude below! Solitude, utter and endless, is the matured fruit of a selfish life. It is the selfish soul's natural element. In it the lost soul is unhappy; but in heaven it would find no ease: in fact the supposition of a transfer involves a self-contradiction. A bad man in

heaven!—the proposition is unthinkable, because there his hell would be but the hotter! To Dives Abraham's bosom can bring no cooling "drop of water." The moral gulf is fixed. That bosom were, to him, more burning than the fiery embrace of Moloch. The universe holds no paradise for incarnate self. To Lazarus he "did it not"; for his soul, full of self-love, had little for another. Lazarus lay at his gate: what is that to him? So lies labor at the gates of capital. So ripen men for doom, under pulpits afraid of dollars! But do they not make amends? Do they never scourge the sinner? Oh, yes; often, and with a muscular arm—the dancer and the drinker, and the man who does not pay the parson! Then they wonder "what ails the Church"!

Terrible words, these: "Ye did it not!" Nowadays the great question is: What shall I believe? How ought I to feel? What must I not do? And serious matters these are, too. Yet manifestly the questions: What must I do? What must I BE? are more serious still. At any rate, no mention is made of the former, at the Great Trial. I hear not a word about *faith or feeling, creed or crime!* Not that these are little; but that CHARITY is great. Results, deeds—these are the evidence: "did it"; "did it not." "Come!" "Depart!"

"But," you will say, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." True. But what *is* holiness?

What is it, after all, but this very *charity*?—this self-suppression; this helping of all, and hurting of none? To help the needy, through love to Christ and them, is to copy Christ. To copy Christ in deeds is to grow like Him in character. To grow like Him is to become holy. Holiness is just Christliness: and he is most like Christ who most helps men. Holiness (so-called) void of love, and love (so-called) void of helpful deeds, are husks, shams, things unthinkable. To be holy is to be of God's mind; that is, ever overflowing in deeds of love. Likeness to Christ is holiness; and relieving want in His name and in His love is likeness to Him, if anything in this defective world is. So that, when the Judge shall say: "Come! for ye *did* such and such things," it is all one as if He said: "Come! for ye are holy." This is the test of fitness for heaven. It does not purchase a *title* to heaven. It does not *beget* the life eternal; it is the outgrowth of that free gift within. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," etc. "The greatest of these is charity." Not *mere* giving or doing; but giving and doing, *constrained by the love of Christ*. A man may "give all his goods to feed the poor," and still be "*nothing*": he who never gives or helps is *certainly* "*nothing*," however religious. The popular religion seems to be singularly seared of "good works." There is little need to fear.

When will the pulpit begin to tell the pew: *The one way to heaven is named "SELF-SACRIFICE"?*

"And the *books* were opened." What books? Is a record of each man's life kept in heaven? Who can tell? One thing we do know: there is such record kept on earth. We do know that each of us has been, all through life, writing his own record, on and in himself, with iron pen and ink indelible. The man is his "book." Thoughts, words, deeds, habits—all registered, all inwrought in his own essential personality. Thoroughly masticated, digested, assimilated, these are now parts of himself—in fact, make the man. And at the bar of judgment all his "secrets will be revealed"—at any rate *to himself*. May not this be the opening of the books?

The basal law of Christ's kingdom is *love*. Simple disregard of this law, without actual deeds of evil, shuts out of that kingdom. Indeed, the loveless, living man is already in the twilight of the "outer darkness," and there lacks but the final "Depart!" to immerse him in the endless midnight. And many have little of this love who yet deem themselves full of it. All are thus who profess to *feel* love yet never *act* love. Feelings are quicksands, *deeds* are the solid rock. I have known men loud in their profession of love to God—men who doubtless did really think they loved Him—who yet would not hesitate to hurt their neighbor.

Now, is not such love to God a delusion—a fancied warmth within, but never taking concrete form outside? So is that “love” to the “brethren” which never yet helped a brother on the rough road of life. It is not an *hypocrisy* at all, it is a sheer *delusion*—a delusion meeting us at every turn, and the result of defective teaching as to what *love means*. I am quite sure that the majority of Christians do not know what the word *love* really implies; and I am equally sure the pulpit, which says so much about “preaching Christ,” is chiefly to blame for this fatal ignorance.

Preaching Christ, indeed! Is it preaching Christ, who is love, to leave the people ignorant as to what love *is*? to exalt one doctrine at another’s expense? to see the Sufferer on the cross, but not in the mart, nor very clearly on the bench? From such a “preaching of Christ” we can only pray, “Good Lord, deliver us!”

PART III.

CONCLUSION.

SUCH is the Royal Arch of Redemption; such the *whole* Gospel in due proportion; such, "preaching Christ."

It is just what St. Paul had in his thoughts when he said, "Let us prophesy (preach) according to the PROPORTION of the faith." It is the Gospel as it is *not* generally preached in our day.

This arch is designed to show at a glance the partial, fragmentary, disproportionate, haphazard character of most of the prevalent preaching—a narrow, fractional, proportionless gospel, and therefore largely fruitless—the manner in which the truth is distorted and caricatured, especially by the sensational pulpit. The great aim of this Arch is to impress vividly the idea of PROPORTION as a prime essential in the presentation of a gospel message. It is just as true that Christ lives to save as that He died to save; that He will come back to judge us as that He came first to redeem. *All* the facts must have due place or the combined effect is error. The crying defect of the current popular

preaching is a *lack of proportion*. Such a picture of truth is a caricature.

Indeed, *disproportion* is the bane of most things human. In church affairs we meet it everywhere. A very narrow one-sidedness seems to be a marked characteristic of ecclesiastic thought. That *great* and *small* are relative terms it seems incapable of perceiving; and this has filled the world with sects. "Gnats" are strained out, "camels" swallowed. Indeed the average human intellect seems quite unequal to the task of at once grasping truth as a whole, and holding its constituent parts in due proportion as to their comparative importance. And of no type of mind is this more characteristic than of the *clerical*. This is an undoubted historic fact. Notoriously the clerical mind leans to narrowness and the magnification of comparative trifles. Strange, is it not? Surely here, if anywhere, we might have naturally looked for breadth, comprehensiveness, the great heart, the tender sympathy, since the cleric's life-long business, professedly, is with the grandest, widest, deepest, most soul-expanding of themes. Yet nowhere is there more littleness, bigotry, icy coldness, tenacity of trifles, oblivion of matters really pressing. How comes all this? Rest assured it does *not* come of Christ or His religion, which is the most softening, ennobling, liberalizing, expansive

force under heaven. Whence, then, does it come? How are we to account for a failing as anomalous as it is pernicious?

I regard the clergy in general as more or less the victims of *church history*. They have been drilled and trained in narrow enclosures. Each sect has all the truth in its own little field; the other little fields have more or less of wild mustard. The clergy are men of the cloister, too much. At college they read through colored spectacles. They have read little books on little wranglings till they have thought them great. Fed mainly on the peastraw of controversy, their souls have shrunken, their minds have warped. Their commerce throughout, as students of systems and schools of theologic thought, has been not nearly so much with Christ's religion in the heart and soul of it—its majestic frame and solid substance—as with its toes and fingers; its husks and twigs and fringes; its prejudices, squabbles and chronic, traditional bitterness, duly hauled down to them across the centuries, on the heavily-freighted trains of a dismal church history! How could we expect that beings, bred and fed on such sustenance, should mount and luxuriate on free wing in the pure boundless sunlight of heaven? Is the votary of the microscope the man who will love to range where suns and systems sweep through space? Astronomy uplifts, enlarges, ennobles.

And the religion Christ *gave us* has a range wider and higher than astronomy. It opens up a universe which is broad as space—its firmament glorious with jewels outshining suns and star-systems. And yet, as a rule, its high priests, from the Pope down, are a little breed. The clerical mind is small from long contemplation of religion's details, incidents and excrescences, to the neglect of its big things. Now, great minds never lose themselves in a jungle of details. They grasp wholes, regulate ratios, determine resultants. They can discern between *great* and *small*. They give big things big places. They do not gaze on molehills till they grow to mountains. Great statesmen, great science men, great captains are cast in this mould. Not that great men *disregard* details or subordinate matters, but that they keep them in their places—forbid them to mingle with, and so becloud, the prime essentials.

Now, is this kind of greatness a marked feature of the ecclesiastic world? Just the opposite. Here, if anywhere, are pigmies taken for giants, giants for pigmies. Calvin and Arminius thunder about what neither understands, nor need any one greatly regard. The color of a stole is a bigger thing than the cast of a character or the doom of a pagan. Result: a travesty of that kingdom which should sway

the destinies of the nations. And we ask "What ails the Church?"

Were the average cleric endowed with a keen sense of proportion, and would he consent to discard those tinted spectacles, things would be better than they are. Each matter would get its due place, bearing and relation in his mind, and *no more*. He would see that, whilst all the parts of the body are necessary to its *perfection*, all are not of equal importance—all not essential to its existence; nor would he mistake the less for the greater. He would own that a toe is less significant than the head or the heart. He would not set the body above the head, or even on a level with it. He would estimate the sacraments as vastly more than mere ceremonies, yet far below what an "advanced" priestism would make them. He would realize the fact that a snow-white *vestment* is not *quite* as important as a snow-white *life*; that penitent prayer is sweeter above than all incense aromas. He would see, and he would teach, that whilst the public *worship* of God is a great thing, public *work* for God and His creatures is a greater still; that "divine service" in the church is mainly a preparative and equipment for that diviner service in the home and the mart, the field and the forum, which consists in doing God's will, *i.e.*, making earth the better for our presence on it. He would realize and

teach that whilst to *know* the truth is good, to *live* the truth is emphatically better, and hence indulge less in doctrinal hair-splitting. Finally, he would perceive, with horror and amazement, the melancholy fact that Christianity has been marred and lamed, travestied and disfigured, by the failure of her exponents to grasp and to deliver "the *whole* truth, and nothing but the truth," in harmony, symmetry, *proportion*.

Another clerical weakness is *lust of power*. The history of the Church is a record of priestly arrogance, intolerance, jealousies, tyrannies over mind and conscience. That dark cloud which broods over the Middle Ages arose from the marshes of priestcraft. In all countries, all religions, priestcraft was ever the most pitiless of despotisms. And it is far from dead among us to-day. In spirit, at least, it is with us still. Still would it fain hold mind and conscience in its grasp. Its sweet delight is in *chains*. One church has *all* her children's minds chained up. Priestcraft abhors nothing as it does *free thought*. Nor is this spirit confined to any one church or sect. Perhaps the English Church is freest from it. I see it in synod and session, as in individual priest or preacher. For hundreds of years has priestcraft been the bane of the Church. In a word, for most of the woes which have afflicted and still afflict her, she has her own officers to thank. Outside foes are com-

paratively harmless. How has the prediction been fulfilled: "A man's foes shall be those of his own household"! The layman sees all this clearly enough, yet he gets most of the blame when the wheels drag in the mire!

It is all very sad. And the saddest thing about it is, the general unconsciousness of the fact. Oh, that the Church could arouse herself, and, breaking out from her narrow cells and sloughing off her encrustations and excrescences, could get back to the divine simplicity, reality, and common-sense of her first days! How shall we ever scrape off these noisome accretions of centuries of self-willed wrangling, unfaithfulness and corruption? The present condition of the Church at large is simply scandalous—"a house divided against itself." We were *born* to the disgrace, and so feel it not, yet there it is. And what divides us? Nothing. Nothing—to minds wide enough to see great things; big enough to despise trifles. Our great needs are, more of *fundamentals*, less of *minutiae*: more of genuine life and less of barren show; more of work and less of talk; more of loving deeds and less of metaphysical dogma; more of prayer—*i.e.*, WORK—and less of preaching; more grasp of the truth as a *whole* and less harping on its pet parts. In short, we need to get right back to our *Magna Charta*, the Sermon on the Mount. What have we left like *that*? In it, as in a

burnished mirror, we see how to pray, and preach, think, feel and do. The religion of Christ is in the New Testament. Nowhere else do I see it in its spotless purity, its sublime simplicity. Where else shall we find it *as He left it* with us? Nowhere else! The religion He gave us is buried deep in *shams*.

And what have we as its *simulacrum*? A thing without a soul. A conglomeration of jarring interests. *Oneness*—the very life of the visible church—was gone long ago. To-day we see a superabundance of "churches"—really fragments, the *disjecta membra*, of the Church. Sects and "denominations" everywhere; all in a state of chronic rivalry. Would not a still more felicitous title be "denominators," as showing the number of parts into which the unit is divided? There is no lack, either, of war-notes, called sermons—no scarcity of dogmas, opinions, "views": any quantity of "polemics," *i.e.*, theological pugilistics, speculations about another world, to the neglect of fitness for it or this: speculations as to the flowery fields and "golden streets," whilst earth bristles with brambles demanding the ploughshare; and the mire of sin is deep on all her highways. No lack of devices how to "get to heaven" without losing one square inch of earth! No scarcity of societies, bazaars, church-meetings, fussy activities, leaving little leisure for quiet thought and real God-

worshipping Work. In our day great is the greed for *hearing*, faint the relish for *doing*. I pity the city parson. What with meetings, preachings, teachings, stuffing heads with doctrines—what leisure has the poor man to read, or think, or pray? and what are these *crammed* ones the better for it all? Talk, talk, talk! We regard the Mediæval Church as sadly in the dark. In some respects she was. In two directions we Protestants might learn of her—*she prayed; and she worked among the poor*. The Old Church was on her knees *praying* and *scrubbing*: the New Church is on her feet *talking*. Religion is in the air. It is slung in heaps all around. Everybody is full of doctrine—each one his own pope. But godliness—that is, God-likeness—is not quite so abundant. Heads are stuffed; hearts not so full: hands slow to help. That sound and profound old monkish motto is laid aside: *Laborare est orare*—“To work is to pray.” And yet this is pretty nearly the whole matter! The true “divine service” is the bettering of the world. So served Queen Victoria God.

Instead of LOVE, the great white war-horse of Christ, we all, in pride and self-will, ride hobbies; and very ridiculous is the figure we cut astride of these, in the eyes of the intelligent heathen world. These hobbies are of all sorts and sizes. Each church, sect, party has its own

pet hobby. This it fiercely bestrides as if for life and death, as if the salvation of the world hung on its triumph: and all the time it is just a poor little affair. Meanwhile the stallions, camels and elephants stand idle in their stalls!

Rome's hobby is the vicarism of her Bishop. Canterbury's, Apostolic Succession. Geneva's, fore-ordination. Methodism's, temperance (so-called). That of the Baptist, dipping adults. That of the Congregationalist, segregation. That of the Quaker, dumb worship. The hobby of the Plymouth Brethren is the abolition of parsons and all church organization. The Anglican proudly bestrides his "Orders": and in the eyes of the Ritualist, priestism is the finest charger in the world!

All mounted, and tilting like children at one another! Of course, some of these matters are really grave, and not to be lightly considered—infant baptism, for instance; but most of them are not of much practical account. For *the* important THING—the very *heart and soul* of our holy religion—is LOVE TO GOD AND MAN, not controversy. How few sects strive for first place in *this*! The Saviour's repeated and last command, laid on all who should take His name, was this: LOVE ONE ANOTHER. How that solemn injunction has been respected is but too plainly seen in centuries of rivalry, antagonism, bitterness, ferocity, oppressions, inquisitions—

all done in the name of the religion of the Prince of Peace, the God of Love! And the same spirit still speaks—though but in whispers in these latter days: the same internecine war still slays and roars on all the plains of Christendom! Meanwhile the “*poor* perish, and no man layeth it to heart!”

“ With fingers weary and worn ;
 With eyelids heavy and red,
 A woman sat in unwomanly rags
 Plying her needle and thread.”

How many thousands are just thus doomed tonight in the great Christian (?) cities that wallow in luxuries, unrebuked of priest or preacher!

All the churches profess to hold one and the same belief as stated in the Apostles' Creed—the sum and substance of the faith, and yet all are at variance as to *what* to believe! Is not this the very riddle of riddles? The fact is, each church has *two* creeds—a primary creed, built of a few stones both massive and divine, and a supplementary one of pebbles, chips and straw, very largely human. Now, does not this latter pretty generally obscure the former? Are not the by-laws made to do duty for the constitution? Have not man's pride, prejudice, obstinacy, a tendency to magnify the microscopic, and fight for little traditional shibboleths, lamentably drawn him away from the contem-

plation of the grand, solid and eternal VERITIES ? Thus is the visible church splintered, crippled, palsied. And councils and synods bewilderedly ask, "What ails her?"

The Inquisition is not *quite* a thing of the past. In several quarters its spirit still breathes, the intellectual thumb-screw still crushes. The faintest deflection from "orthodoxy" subjects the delinquent divine to the wrath of church session, committee or synod. Let him in one denomination, but gently suggest the humane hope—

"That good shall fall,
At last, far off, at last to *all*,"

and lo! a thousand voices yell, "Retract, or resign!" In another he has but to shake his head at "prohibition," and not all the orthodoxy of St. Paul and the sweet godliness of St. John will save him from furious disapproval! In another, let him but recognize "Dissenters" as brethren in Christ, and forthwith is he scouted and labelled, "No churchman"! Truly, as the poet has said, "We are a little breed."

Is there not something seriously remiss in the Church when it looks on in silence as a handful of men acquire the bulk of the wealth of a continent, distilling it from the sweat of struggling millions? It is right to be rich. It is right to be a millionaire. But it is wrong to *grind*. When vast acquisitions are the result of labor

paid for so as barely to keep soul and body together, all is wrong. The world groans to-day under this wrong. This new century may witness an earthquake.

I know the answer to all this—the great law of *supply and demand*. Be it so. From a purely business standpoint, or as the foundation stone of political economy, this law is, doubtless, unassailable. All I contend for is this: *It is not CHRISTIAN*. It fits heathendom better than Christendom. Its very heart is selfishness; the heart of Christ's religion is unselfishness. It is simply anti-Christian, for its motto is, "The weak to the wall; or, if you will, "The survival of the fittest"; or, "Deil tak' the hin'most." It may be the law of the natural world; it is *not* the law of Christ's kingdom. That law is just its opposite: "LOVE ONE ANOTHER." It is a devilish doctrine, and the churches acquiesce in it.

What principle could be more antagonistic to Christ? more repugnant to His will? Was it not the *lost* He came to save? Was it not the struggling He came to help? the oppressed He came to uplift? Was it not the weakest, the *unfittest*, the *hindmost*, He cared for, first and above all the rest? Were not these the special objects of His sympathies? Finally, was it not sons of toil He made princes of His kingdom?

The churches prefer millionaires. These sit

in the front pew. These, no matter *how* their "piles" have been got, sit there, carefully unchided! And how have most of them got rich? By keeping millions poor. Talk of the Pharaoh! This continent groans under Pharaohs! And the churches receive this ill-gotten gold, and are dumb! And no Moses appears. And we still go on prating about "the Church"! Where is it?

What marvel that, in the United States, the laborer is not seen at church, and is steadily dropping out elsewhere! The toiling masses see through the whole wretched business. Not that they are turned *infidel*—nothing of the kind. They simply no longer believe *in the churches*, and who shall blame them? They know that Jesus felt—still feels—for them as the churches do not. They know they are not welcome where fashion assembles, and pride pretends to kneel.

Not long ago there was a great national gathering of the representatives of labor in New York. Vigorous addresses did *not* compliment the churches—the mere word called down a very blizzard of hisses! A spectator would have thought himself in a den of infidels. Was it indeed so? One speaker at last, in accents of reverence and love, alluded to the greatest workman ever seen on earth, the "CARPENTER of Nazareth." At the mention of that name, as a

elap of thunder, crashed forth a cheer which shook the vast edifice to its foundations!

That was the most significant cheer ever heard in the world. I regard it as an event of the age. Yes; and the priesthood must restore the Christ to His place, and the Church to her forceful simplicity, if priest and millionaire would not be swept away together.

Some reader may imagine that my arraignment of the churches is confuted by the high condition of Christian nations as compared with the rest of the world. This is no refutation. It merely shows what a mighty elevating force Christianity is, even in its lame and enfeebled state. But even in the best of Christian communities crying evils abound.

We have good laws; but is society always just? Are the very best of us just to the fallen and unfortunate? A young woman trips and falls: is she ever forgiven, especially by her Christian sisters? No. So far as is in their power she shall not rise up again in this world. And how fares her seducer? Not at all badly. He is smiled on by these same virtuous ones! Herein is a crying iniquity in a Christian land, and done by Christian people. When did society ever say to such a one, "Go, sin no more: we do not condemn thee"? Never. It embraces the man: it crushes the woman.

"But," you will ask, "what has the Church to

do with all this?" Everything. What other agent is supposed to fashion and regulate the social organism? Seduction, coupled with desertion, is one of the basest and blackest of crimes. What pulpit paints the seducer so? *She* is ruined: *he* laughs: society shakes its head at him with smiles of mock disapproval: the preacher is mute—waiting a chance to smash some poor fellow that "drinks."

When a convict has paid the penalty of his offence against society, does that society cry quits? Call it "even"? Not a bit of it. His sentence undergone, he is as far as ever from reconciliation with society. Now, is this just? It is simply black injustice—as if one should be used as still owing a debt after the last farthing was paid! Christians will not "touch him with a forty-foot pole"; and so is he driven to despair and destruction. What are the churches doing to rectify all this? What pulpit rings with indignation against this gross injustice? this heartless inhumanity, this nauseous Pharisaism? Not one. The self-complacent, but most un-Christ-like verdict is, "He made his bed, let him lie on it." Oh, what a choice morsel is that! What a luxury to know that *he*—not *you*—is under the lash! One would suppose *you* never did, and never could, do wrong. A comfortable couch, but not stuffed with Christianity. And this is the prevailing spirit, too—

so opposite to Christ's. And the churches are dumb!

Another case. A man is arrested, charged with a crime. British law regards him as innocent until proved guilty: how many so-called Christians do not regard him as guilty till proved innocent? yes, and — *after*? Talk of charity and churches!

Or, the serpent, slander, trails across some guiltless sleeper. Who blazes out against the reptile? How many steadily refuse credence, without evidence? How many are not only too willing to believe the worst? too ready to act on it? How many of these self-righteous, but shady souls, do not deem themselves the whiter of another's defilement? The slanderer is a villain. Is there no villainy in receiving and handing round his envenomed slime?

Here we have a most deadly sin, and a very general. What are the churches doing to suppress it? Very little that one can see. The people are not plainly told that they cannot be at once Christians and slanderers, or listeners to slander. "Charity thinketh no evil." Where is the charity in a greedy swallowing of calumny? "Sounding brass!" There is no deadlier scourge of society, no deadlier desolator of lives and homes, than the tongue "set on fire of hell"; but the average preacher has no mind to cut it out!

The Saviour of men was very stern and unsparing towards every form and phase of falsehood. Hypocrisy, and humbug, and all the vast household of sham, cowered beneath the indignant flash of His eye. Beneath His lash, scribe and Pharisee wilted and fumed. But with the "sinners"—the remorseful victims of passion, the heavy-laden souls bending under their burdens of conscious guilt—oh, how tender He was! To which one of these was He ever heard to say, "You have made your bed: lie on it"? Yet the churches teem with *very good* people to-day, whose spirit is just this: people so filled with a horror of sin as to extract a self-complacent satisfaction from the agonies of the sinner!

The late Philip D. Armour, the millionaire pork-packer of Chicago, was not one of these. Whether he ever *talked* religion I cannot say: that he *acted* it, all know. That the spirit of the Master was strong in him, the following anecdote will show.

A clergyman called on Mr. Armour. He told the philanthropist of a most distressing case that needed prompt relief. A young woman, he said, lay in a room absolutely devoid of furniture, save the bed on which she lay. There was no fire; there was no food; and the weather was intensely cold. By her side, in that squalid chamber, lay her child, scarcely a day old.

The great heart of Mr. Armour fairly leaped in his bosom. He rushed over to the cashier, came back with a handful of bills, thrust them into the clergyman's hands, and cried: "Jump into a carriage. Get the poor woman everything she needs. Get her a nurse. Fly, man! Come back if you need more. Poor, poor woman!"

An hour later the clergyman re-entered Mr. Armour's office.

"Well, how is she?" was the eager inquiry.

The clergyman, pulling out the identical roll of bills that had been thrust into his hand a short time before, replied:

"Mr. Armour, I have brought you back your money. I cannot use it. The woman is quite unworthy of your charity."

"Why?" demanded Mr. Armour.

"Well, sir" (as a sanetimonious look came into the man's face), "no wedding ring has ever been on her finger. The child is a child of sin."

"But the woman is without food?"

"She is."

"She has no nurse, no fire, no medicines?"

"None."

"She is in this dreadful plight, and you, a follower of Christ, refuse to aid her?"

"Mr. Armour, I grieve to say I cannot. *Her sin has found her out.*"

Then the great paeker, his face pale with anger, pointed to the door. "Get out! Get

out! 'Thank the Lord they're not all like you.'

Mr. Armour telephoned to his wife to get into her carriage and meet him at the wretched abode of the sick woman. He asked her to pile in everything she could think of in the way of delicacies and necessaries to supply the immediate wants of the young mother and child. He then telephoned his own physician, ordered him to bring a nurse, and go with all haste to the help of the sick woman. Not satisfied with that, he left his great business, and, jumping into a cab, hurried to the sick room.

This clergyman did not represent Christ, but did he not truly voice that spirit, so prevalent in the highest church circles, which makes "worthiness" the pivot on which charity shall turn? Had this been God's condition of helping a lost world, where should we all have been to-day?

Now, reader, I must close. Don't call me one-sided, pessimistic. I know there is much good done by the churches. There are thousands of good men and women walking in Christ's steps. Even *as we have it*, Christianity is earth's crowning good. The divine force in it bursts out into blessing in spite of the defects of the visible church. Christ promised His presence, and this we have mainly to thank for all the good we see around us. The existence

of hospitals and other charities, the emancipation of woman, and the like, are due to Christianity, and simply show what even a blurred and enfeebled Christianity can accomplish. What could it not do for the world were it all it might be, and—*once was*?

The sum of the matter is this: the visible church is now, and has been for centuries, the comfortable bed-fellow of the world. Professedly at war, they are really on very good terms. Of course, there is between them any amount of word-sparring, but no deadly thrusts—nothing to seriously disturb their agreeable relations. Was it so in the beginning?

The words of a great theologian shall answer this question: "Let us recollect this for our own profit, that, if it is our ambition to follow the Christians of the first ages, as they followed the apostles and the apostles followed Christ, they had the *discomfort* of this world *without* its compensating gifts. No high cathedrals, no decorated altars, no choirs for sacred psalmody—nothing of the order, majesty and beauty of devotional services had they; but they had trials, afflictions, solitariness, contempt, ill-usage." (Why? Because their war with the world was *real*.) "If we have only the enjoyment and none of the pain, and they only the pain and none of the enjoyment, *in what does our Christianity resemble theirs? what are the*

tokens of identity between us? why do we not call theirs ONE religion and ours ANOTHER? What points in common are there between the easy religion of this day and the religion of St. Athanasius or St. Chrysostom? How do the two agree, except that the name of Christianity is given to both of them?

"O may we be wiser than to be satisfied with an untrue profession and a mere SHADOW of the Gospel! . . . Pray that a divine influence may touch the hearts of men, . . . that so at length the language of the prophecy may be fulfilled to us: 'I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem,' 'The seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew,' and 'Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.'"

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

At a late eastern provincial synod the question of the comparatively unprosperous condition of the Canadian Church (C. E.), its causes, remedies, etc., gave rise to a long and earnest discussion. The *fact* does not seem to have been challenged at all. And the *Church Record*, in a late issue, has the following remarks: "The candid observer finds some grounds for apprehension that the day of opportunity is not being seized. We cannot forecast the results of the census to be made this year, but those of the census of 1891 were not very encouraging. In Manitoba the rate of increase of the Church of England was lower than that of any denomination except the Baptists. In the North-West Territories things were rather better, although here the increase of the Presbyterians from 1885-1891 was far greater than the Anglicans. In British Columbia the Anglican increase was less than that of any body except the Roman Catholics. Under these circumstances we think there is an urgent necessity for some movement that shall thoroughly arouse and educate the Church people of both Eastern Canada and Great Britain."

NOTE B.

Our Church universities in Canada are furnishing the ministry with an able and successful body of men. Nor

can we have too many of these. The native Canadian understands Canadians; succeeds where others fail. The minor training colleges of England have supplied this country with men who, as a rule, are not so successful as our own. Naturally they do not understand us too well, and, I fear, underrate us. In these days of advanced thought we need a very high order of ability and scholarship in our pulpits, as well as common-sense in our parochial ministrations.

Victoria College has done wonders for the Methodist Church in Canada. I remember the time when the Methodist ministers, as a body, did not stand very high in the ranks of scholarship. All that is past. To-day they are second to none. Nor need we grudge to say that that Church is now probably the most vigorous and prosperous of all the churches of this Dominion and of this continent. But perhaps no body of Canadian ministers have passed through so long and so thorough a course of training as have the Presbyterian alumni of Queen's University, Kingston. If the Church of England would hold her own with these she must better support her own colleges, and cease importing "Liberates."

