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VOICE

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FREEDOM
RESPONSIBILITY

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Holy Orders

By THE REV. HENRY SWABEY.

An obvious feature of the time is that fewer people are in a position to refuse claims on their time; the great majority have to obey orders to avoid starvation. What these orders are, or who really gives them, concerns the worker in a minor degree, besides the bargain that may be struck with the power that orders and pays.

Curiously enough, the ancient philosophers Plato and Aristotle agreed at least in this, that no one was capable of very high activity, certainly not political activity, unless he enjoyed leisure. Otherwise his outlook would be too mean and restricted (the Greeks had an unpleasant-sounding word for it) to make decisions on ends. Their mentality would not be free or liberal enough.

Clergy who may feel a little frustration at times might benefit by recalling that the Magna Carta opens with the clause, 'That the Anglican Church be free.' Presumably this implied freedom from material compulsion, and freedom to pursue her own vocation. We pray for instance on St. John Baptist's Day that we may 'constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake.'

Various powers, responsible and irresponsible, have interfered with this freedom to spread the truth from time to time. Yet the vocation remains to distinguish truth from falsehood, holy orders from material chaos.

For if leisure was available to a proportion of citizens some 2,400 years ago owing to the use of slaves, something chaotic and false must be infecting arrangements to-day if, despite the progress of the industrial arts, a rapidly decreasing minority can insist on living their own lives.

The older writers started by defining what a community should or could be. Starting with the individual, they worked up, it might be, to the Chinese Empire. Yet to-day such abstractions as the State or the Community are as readily accepted as the object of life, as a bee would accept the Hive, or an ant the Ant-Hill. And this distortion of the human situation, confusing means and ends, finds acceptance

and commendation in every instrument of public information. Which in fact means that the individual is duty-bound to accept the State or the Community's orders. As if an abstraction can issue orders! In fact, the orders emanate from people intent on power, who substitute a shadow-show for reality.

And they back their orders by various sanctions. On my return from Canada, the Bank of England asked me how I had spent my money in Canada; unless I answered the questions, I should not be allowed an overdraft. Anyone who owns anything receives more and more personal and impertinent orders. As recently as Edwardian times, the King protested that income tax was a war tax. I cannot see that turning Communist, adopting successively the clauses of the communist manifesto, is any way to oppose the communist menace. Nor does abstract Liberty mean anything when the various concrete *liberties* are removed.

Because of the Law of God, we cannot do just anything we want—treat people like cattle for instance. Holy orders exist to proclaim this 'natural law,' and have Authority to teach it. Unless checked by Authority, Power will pull the whole fabric of civilisation about its ears before it gives over robbing man of his dignity and of his freedom.

True and False Christianity

(Extracts from *An Introduction to Metternich* by Algernon Cecil—1943 Revised Edition.)

This is, possibly, the place to say a word in passing upon a matter which involves a digression but hardly, in dealing with the foundations of a Christian society, an irrelevance. Much revolutionary doctrine of French origin is being smuggled into the current thought of this country under cover of labels ostentatiously described as Galilean; and not a few "chaplains of King Demos" (to borrow Dr. Inge's phraseology) are aiding and abetting the illicit traffic. *Episcopi in Anglia semper pavidi!* Bishops in England, according to the adage, are always timid; and it appears more than once to have been left to the more courageous Deans—Dean Swift in his day, and Dean Inge in ours—to remind the world, if only obliquely, of the benediction pronounced upon peace-makers. The historian may perhaps play a modest part in assisting these caustic controversialists to rescue the Sermon on the Mount from the rough handling it habitually receives from the belligerent apostles of peace and philanthropy. A change of heart, a regeneration of spirit is all with which Christ appears to concern himself, and the value of any gift, from a cup of cold water upwards, is in his eyes measured only by its weight in loving-kindness. The modern reformer, who proposes to do his charities chiefly or entirely through the distribution of other

men's goods, must consequently seem to the historian as surprising an exponent of the Christian Gospel as the Good Samaritan who to his oil and wine adds an abundant provision of guns and bombs. It is impossible to conceive of St. Francis of Assisi in either rôle; and when one has said that, one has said, perhaps, all that is necessary. Yet since it is safest to be specific and clearest to be concrete, illustration may do a little more to distinguish the evolution inaugurated by Christ from the revolution according to Rousseau and Robespierre.

About the date that Metternich had indicated as right for undertaking the work of reconstruction—at the beginning, that is, of the twentieth century—two outstanding opportunities presented themselves for dealing with class feeling and national feeling on Christian lines. What became of them we know; what might have been done with them it is worth while to consider.

It fell to the lot of Mr. Lloyd George to play the star-part in respect of the problems of wealth and poverty in 1909 and of peace and war in 1919. There is a saying of Gladstone's that the difference between the Christian and the Socialist is to be found in this—that the Christian says "What is mine is thine," whilst the Socialist says "What is thine is mine"; and the saying is entirely consonant with the most admirable thing in the earlier Liberal tradition, which perceived that force is no remedy for a certain sort of wrongs and consequently threw the greater stress on persuasion. It was open, then, to Mr. Lloyd George, not just to have observed that some men in this country were exceedingly rich and others desperately poor; but to have appealed to rich and poor alike to raise their thoughts and hearts above avarice and envy, and, subject to Parliamentary assent, to agree to abide by the recommendations of a permanent body representative of all interests and required by its terms of reference to emulate the impartiality of judges of the High Court of Justice. That might have been, and since, even in the days of the Regency, Rush, the then representative of the United States of America in London, had noted the rare generosity of the well-to-do in England, there is no safe ground for suggesting that it could not have succeeded. Passion, however, and not Christianity, was in the ascendant on both sides; and Revolution won the day, with results still waiting to be fully ascertained.

"The essential nature of the crisis through which we are living," observes Professor Carr in his *Treaties on Conditions of Peace*, "is neither military, nor political nor economic, but moral." (E. H. Carr, *Conditions of Peace*, . . .) Professor Carr, like the Dean of Canterbury and Mr. Davies, appears to suppose that a new morality might be produced by some amalgamation of Christianity with Bolshevism. It is not evident how this could be . . . But there has also to be considered the paradoxical conduct of One, who being born in an occupied country, where the conqueror was not indisposed to mingle the blood of the conquered with their sacrifices, and being on His own evidence a King, showed no kind of belief in force as an instrument for changing human hearts, treated it with fine irony, suffered himself the extremity of persecution, and at length shamed the very Caesars into recognising the truth of teaching which in His lifetime had been dismissed, by the representative of Caesar with an enquiry, jesting or perhaps troubled, as to what truth might be. His victory was indeed so com-

plete as to draw from the reluctant Julian the explicit admission that the Galilean had conquered in the struggle. Any fight for Christian civilisation, even a crusade initiated by a saint, has to reckon with this fact; and the curious amalgam of Christianity with Bolshevism, which is being recommended as the basis for a new and more progressive religion, is evidence among other things of an intellectual dilemma never thoroughly thought out. For the present the Allied Nations, like Père Joseph himself, hope to make the best of both methods. *Gesta Dei*, we might perhaps say, *per Christum et per Bolshevicos*, if only it were not for the difficulty that the Bolsheviki do not encourage and did, at any rate until recently, combat a belief in God.

In some parts of the Continent they see perhaps a little clearer intellectually than we do in England. Many there, maybe, like Christianity little, because they suspect it of being true, but Bolshevism even less, because they know it to be false. Anyhow, they perceive that Britain is in no intellectual position to lay the foundations of a new Europe, as Mr. Eden hopefully aspires to do by a twenty years' alliance with Russia. Professor Carr, if I mistake not, is aware that his moral thesis wears a little thin, for towards the close of his book he takes refuge in the comfortable thought of a "European planning authority" as the master key to the problem of post-war settlement. . . . But, if "the fundamental issue" is "moral," the master key will have to be somehow moralised; and once more the question arises whether we are planning for a society dominated by love and freedom, or by hatred and coercion.

If Europe die, will it live again? Neither the modern Pharisee nor the modern Saducee knows the correct answer. For Christian civilisation, even in the far from faultless form in which it appears in the Middle Age, was very much of a miracle; and any resurrection of it will need to be something miraculous. But a miracle performed upon society can hardly be like a miracle performed upon a single man suddenly. It is at all events very difficult to imagine a mass-produced change of human hearts at the behest of a European peace-conference and still less of such a whispering-gallery as General Temperley supposed himself to have found at Geneva. Personal holiness and untiring patience will certainly be required if any advance is seriously intended to be made in that kind of industry. And old men in a hurry and young men in a ferment are equally to be deprecated as auxiliaries. But Youth must be there and active, not in word only but in power.

. . . Totalitarianism is a very tempting creed, and even more tempting in international than national affairs; but it is not a creed for such frail creatures, mentally and morally, as ourselves. If the League of Nations, instead of illustrating the sentiments of Mrs. Jellavy and the finance of Mrs. Par-diggle, were ever to be stiffened into prepotency by ubiquitous authority and overwhelming command of force, Humanity might presently recoil from the superstate it had set up as a Frankenstein from the monster he had made. Imagine for a moment—and it is no idle imagination—this highest prize of worldly power in the hands of a Russian autocrat, versed in all the despotic arts of the OGPU, or of an American boss, familiar with all the democratic apparatus of party management and political intrigue; and the merits of a balance of power in international relations will become more obvious than its demerits, and the maintenance of individual

sovereign states, or sovereign confederations of states, dear as the maintenance of liberty itself.

Such international authority as we dare dream of must rest then in spiritual minds, must exercise its power only by persuasion, recommend itself only by loving kindness, prove itself both in word and deed to be born of the Incarnate God. Catholics, to their discomfiture, Protestants, to their satisfaction, know what happened when spiritual authorities turned too friendly an eye, as the Sons of Thunder had done before them, upon coercive methods. Doubtless the ecclesiastical position was safeguarded; doubtless the Church did not cease to abhor the shedding of blood; doubtless "extermination" retained its proper sense of exile. Still the use of force was countenanced, if only obliquely, by the stewards of the mysteries of God. Let the good pagan learn, then, from the mistakes of Christian men. It is for the kingdoms of this world that their citizens destroy one another, wound one another, bomb one another, widow one another, cause the parent to mourn the child, and the child the parent. Loving kindness has no part in these things.

The Internationalism we seek can never come about until men have truly learnt to think internationally. Ethics, as Aristotle is at pains to show us, is properly a branch of politics; and until the best of a man's patriotism is given to the Kingdom of God instead of the national state, we shall get no way in this direction. But the Kingdom of God is within us and demands of its leading citizens a high degree of intellectual as well as spiritual development. The eighteenth century, because it was more deeply interested in the things of the mind and, if not in "grace," at least in the graces, was more really cosmopolitan than our own; and the thirteenth, because profoundly interested in the things of the spirit, more cosmopolitan than the eighteenth. Perhaps only if the revolution of the centuries brings such pre-occupations again into fashion, shall we behold once more the dry light of truth blending with the radiant light of vision. Europe had care of these things once, for they were to a peculiar degree committed to her keeping and from them sprang her unity and such peace as she ever possessed.

The Worldly and the Other-Worldly

There is a saying, "Man's extremity, God's opportunity." These four words perhaps crystallize the sole hope that man may, not be extricated, but may extricate himself from his present terrible dilemma. Western man is confronted in less and less veiled tones with the choice of annihilation by war or submission under World Government, a submission which cannot fail to result in the most ruthless tyranny; because power, having centred in itself all sanctions, would be absolute.

In what way, then, is such an extremity God's opportunity? And, why, if it is God's opportunity, must man extricate himself? The answer to the first question is that it is in extremity that pride and stubborn prejudice give way to humility; and the answer to the second is that when God created man He gave him the capacity to know the earth which He also created, and man can only know it by humble attention to its laws: the way God meant things to work and the way He made them to work.

Only the witless and the indifferent (God-forsaken) can fail to observe that what we are witnessing is the apotheosis of power. It is evident in the awe-someness of nuclear weapons, the soul-lessness of mass production and technology in its effect on the worker, and the de-personalised docility of the uniform State-dominated peoples.

Our Church leaders affect to distinguish between God's truth and truth, between God's power and power, between God's purpose and individual purpose. The distinctions are false. All truth, all power and all purpose are God's. He created them, and gave to each of us the power of choice to use or misuse them. In this world it is only a knowledge of, a belief in and a determination to abide by the Word of God which can prevent us from misusing the power He has given us. There are three factors: to know, to believe in and to be determined. When people know, believe in and are determined to obey Authority (the Word), we shall have the apotheosis of Authority. The question is, how is this to be brought about?

The first thing to be clear about is that what is convulsing the world, is power. Every form of evil in the world is a misuse of power, whether it is self-inflicted, whether it is person to person, or by far the gravest misuse of power that there is in the modern world—person-to-group power, the collectivisation of people in such a way that their collective power is dominated and misused by a few persons who through an error in social structure are enabled to control the group. The second thing to be clear about is that God who created the world gave to that world a law, which is part of His Word, and obedience to which in society prevents the misuse of group or collective power. It is this law to which we are continually referring in this paper. Its primary demand on social structure is unpenalised freedom of association, because it is precisely the individual person's power to contract out of an association which ensures that its purpose and activities conform to the wishes of those associating. This law must be known.

The law of unpenalised freedom of association is God's law in society. It is not enough that it should be known; to be effective in society it has to be believed in. The word belief in its original connotation was something which one holds dear. A large section of our British society before the first World War, and to a lesser extent between the wars, had unquestioned belief in freedom of association, because they found that it provided them with a wide range of choices, quality and leisure. A larger section of the population were prevented from experiencing it by poverty, they were denied the financial means, despite the obvious existence of a large actual and potential physical surplus of commodities and services to which they could have had access if they had been provided with the means. The political history of this country during this century has been largely the political manipulation of the mass of have-nots to support policies which have destroyed unpenalised freedom of association. Justice to the have-nots could have been rendered without destroying freedom of association. Many pointed the way, but the Church was silent. The Archbishop of York, as we reported last week, has confessed that the Church sinned grievously by her silence. Now that faith in the law of God in society has to be restored. It can only be restored by the Church asserting boldly Authority on justice in society and honesty in the administration of the financial

system, and by calling upon the public to use its political power only in accordance with Authority.

It is one thing to know and believe, but quite another to act and get other people to act in conformity with what they know and believe in. Essentially this is a question of whether Christianity is concerned with this world, another world ("other-worldly"), or with both this world and another world. We hear much today of materialists and materialism; and indeed we see the results of a materialistic philosophy in the misuse of power and the degradation of human life and values. The worldly (the materialists) are always blamed for this; but is it not a fact that the other-worldly are every wit as much to blame? Where one denies the sovereignty of God's kingdom, of God's laws in this world, because he disbelieves in God; the other evades his responsibility for obeying God's laws in this world, abandoning it to Caesar and the Devil, because he believes that the other-world is all that matters, and that an abstractionist, formal devotion and worship of God is all that is required of him in this world.

If there is any validity whatever to conceptions of "right" and "wrong" in this world it can only be:

(1) Because inherent in all creation there is a law which determines the *correct* way in which everything should work.

(2) Because those persons who *do* correctly in accordance with the law in creation will eventually be graced by the Creator; and those who fail to do correctly will be punished.

If there is no reward and punishment in another world, or if there is no 'other world,' then the rewards and punishments of this world are all that need concern anyone; and there are as living witnesses in their old age plenty of able, unprincipled, ruthless men, and millions of docile, not-so-able compromisers-with-truth (including bishops) who can assert with conviction from their own experience that it pays *not* to practice Christianity. In other words that the 'other fellow' can take the punishment for any laws of creation which 'I' break, through the misuse of 'my' political power or through the evasion of 'my' responsibility to speak out or do because 'I' wanted to keep on good terms with Caesar.

On the contrary, we live in God's world, even if it is a broken world, not Caesar's world; and the very fact that Caesar, Caesar's friends and those who bow the knee to Caesar, *while acknowledging that there is truth and principle by paying tribute to it*, yet find that at the cost of the meek this world pays them rewards for being untruthful and unprincipled, is evidence that there must be another world which will redeem these wrongs.

And, on the contrary the validity of the Incarnation is that Christ came to redeem this world; and the faithfulness of those who would follow Christ is in the measure of their *practical* obedience in making the social order conform to the laws of God's kingdom, not Caesar's.

Beware, false priests, you who make of Christ merely a graven image to be worshipped. God is not mocked.

"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required. . . ."

"I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite."

Division of Power and Liberty

"Men like Mr. Rowntree and Mr. Lavers have to explain how it is that the medieval centuries, when the church's influence was at its height and totalitarianism possible, were in fact the great centuries of constitutionalism, of rights and liberties, the centuries in which parliaments took their rise, and in which the civil power was not merely respected by the spiritual, but was itself so subsided that by mixed and balanced constitutions Churchmen sought to ensure the reign of law. It is tragically true that all this balance was in the end upset and much of it destroyed because one element, the civil executive, the Kings in Europe, became too strong; but Kings were able to make themselves the effective, absolute masters of so much very largely because the Church made such an exalted position for the civil ruler, and respected such immense prerogatives in his great office. Whether or no this was the capital mistake of medieval Church statesmanship, it was the very opposite of a totalitarian conception of power. It was based upon ideas of the division of power, of separate spheres of activity, each with their appropriate rights and duties. In the same way the Catholic respect for reason produced the universities and the great proliferation of specialized studies, whose exponents then, in turn, sought to magnify their functions and to use their studies to supplant and displace theology."—*The Tablet*.

The Story of England

"From all this sprang a new force with which kings and barons and even the Church had to reckon: that of national opinion. It was hard to define, but easy to feel. It was based both on Christianity and on the love of liberty and open-speaking which the English had inherited from their remote ancestors. It was fostered by a common subordination to the Law and of thankfulness for its blessings. At its core lay a strong belief in justice: of fair dealing between Lord and vassal, prince and subject, neighbour and neighbour, of a rough working balance in keeping with divine law and human conscience. 'Take away justice,' St. Augustine had written, 'and what are kingdoms but dens of thieves?' The English felt this in their bones."—Sir Arthur Bryant.

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