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18 September 1939 – 31 December 1939

N.B. Persons marked with an asterisk are included – or will be included – in the Henson website repository.

The asterisk appears beside their first citation in each volume uploaded as a PDF.

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[1]

Monday, September 18th, 1939.

We motored to Ipswich, and called on the Bishop [Walter Whittingham].* We had tea with him & M^{rs} Whittingham.

S^t John Ervine sent me two small productions off his own. (1) A Tract on "Our Heritage", and (2) The Essex Hall Lecture, 1939, on 'The State & the Soul'. He accompanied them with the following letter.

Honey Ditches
Seaton, Devon.
15th Sept. 1939.

Dear D^r Henson,

I had intended to send you the enclosed pamphlets, in one of which you will find yourself quoted, but it was not until I read your letter in The Times this morning that I knew your present address

Yours sincerely
S^t John Ervine.

The quotation on p 30-32 of "Our Heritage" is from my Gifford Lectures, and introduced by a rather surprisingly flattering description of the late Bishop of Durham.

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[2]

Tuesday, September 19th, 1939.

[symbol]

The morning papers provide ill-reading. The Courageous[sic], a big cruizer which (by an expenditure of more than £2,000,000) had been transformed into an air-craft carrier, has been torpedoed. *She had on board 1100 officers & men, of whom 400 are reported as having been saved. This is a really heavy loss. It seems to be plain that the German submarines are more numerous & far better armed than they were at the close of the last war.*

One ray of light relieves the darkness. It is reported (but is the report true?) that the infamous Jew-baiting [?] Julius Streicher has been arrested by Göring's orders! He ought forthwith to be conveyed to a concentration camp, and there smothered by the back-numbers of his obscene (and semi-official) paper the Stürmer, while a choir of Rabbis chant the 109th psalm! It might be the beginning of the end, for the anti-Semite mania in Germany is not unlike the anti-Popish madness in Charles II's reign. When once its credit failed, the whole Temple of Lies crumbled quickly.

[3]

[symbol]

I wrote (1) to John Ervine; (2) to L. P. Jacks; (3) to Dashwood; (4) to Dick. (5) Tallents.

Ella and I walked together for an hour and an half, while Fearne, who is rapidly developing into a curious blend of a chauffeur, a ministering angel, and a benevolent Pooh-bah, attended a meeting at the Rectory concerning the Evacuates.

Hitler is a master-hand of self-portraiture e.g.

One does not enter into alliances with people for whom no treaty is sacred, because they do not move about the earth as men of honour & sincerity but as the representatives of lies and deception, thievery & plunder & robbery.

The man who thinks that he can bind himself by treaty with parasites is like the tree that believes it can form a profitable bargain with the ivy that surrounds it.

Mein Kampf p. 538. E.V.

It is to be hoped that Stalin & Molotoff are acquainted with the Bible of Nazism. They would find matter for reflection in it.

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[4]

Wednesday, September 20th, 1939.

A certain Major Hay has been so moved by my letter to the Times that he has sent to me a letter, which interested me so much that I wrote a reply. He denies that approval of the War is unanimous in Scotland.

Every senior officer (above the rank of 2nd Lieut.) I know here (i.e. Aberdeen) hates this war, thinks it could have been avoided, & is not much impressed by the newspaper talk of liberty & the freedom of Europe. They will, of course, do and die without complaining in public. In 1914 the same type of officer was eager to get out to the Front as soon as possible. There is nothing left of that spirit now.

I wonder how much truth there is in this. That there is some truth can hardly be questioned. But how much?

We motored to Stratford S. Mary, and had tea with General & Lady Kenyon, with whom were their son and his wife. We got back to Hyntle Place in daylight.

[5]

Oh, how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppress'd,
When God into the hand of their deliverer
Puts invincible might

To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressor,
The brute and boisterous force of violent men,
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue
The righteous, and all such as honour truth!
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats
With plain heroic magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour arm'd;
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Renders them useless; while
With winged expedition,
Swift as the lightening glance, he executes
His errand on the wicked, who, surprised,
Lose their defence, distracted and amazed
(“Samson Agonistes”)

Milton has admirably described the Nazis, may his verse be the prophesy of their final undoing!

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[6]

Thursday, September 21st, 1939.

Charles Pattinson* writes affectionately, and sends another instalment (£50) of his debt to me. He has all but cleared it off, having refused to accept it as a gift. He says

If you have time, please write to me. I will try to write to you every week. These times recall my earliest memories of you as you used to preach to the troops in your Cathedral – a very slight figure, and ringing voice that thrilled even a small choir-boy!

There is always interest and value in the impressions which are made on the very young.

There really appears to be ground for thinking that the Nazi regime is cracking. In Czecho-Slovakia it is reported that something very like a general revolt is in progress. The Germans are trying to stamp it out with fiendish cruelty; but their task is clearly a heavy one. When once the bag bursts, all its contents begin to rush out. This may be the beginning of the end of Hitlerism.

[7]

[symbol]

I wrote to Charles Pattinson, and **then took up again the tiresome (and humiliating) task of going through my Journal with the object of discovering how far it can provide material for something which might be described as an Autobiography**. It is startling, as well as humbling, to discover how completely one's own past has fallen out of knowledge. I get the impression that I must have been an uncommonly provocative & puzzling young man, when, after my rather surprising election to the All Souls' Fellowship, I "burst on the world" of Oxford. I was probably credited with a good deal more ability than I possessed, and, perhaps, with a good deal less knowledge. But, in spite of my defects, which must have been great and apparent, **I do not appear to have made Enemies, and I certainly did make friends**. I was tremendously keen about whatever cause or opinion I adopted, & this keenness gave a taking vitality to my talk. Moreover, I was placable, humourous, and affectionate. Everybody whom I met wondered which direction I should take, & where it would lead me.

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[8]

Friday, September 22nd, 1939.

Last night, at dinner the conversation turned on Buchman's* Movement, and Miss Milne said that she had heard Russell express to D^r Black his regret at having written the notorious volume, "For Sinners Only", and his wish that it would be withdrawn from circulation. This morning after breakfast, I asked whether I had understood her correctly, and she repeated her statement. This is certainly a very notable fact, and merits investigation. I thought it well to go to headquarters i.e. write to M^r Russell himself.

We lunched with Lord Woodbridge.* There were also lunching Lord & Lady Cranworth and Major & M^{rs} Cobbold. It was very pleasant party. We walked in the very charming garden, which Lord W. has himself designed, & laid out at great expense. Lord C. had travelled in Abyssinia, & expressed himself in very harsh terms about the Emperor of Abyssinia. But he seemed to me more positive than really well-informed. However we did not quarrel.

[9]

[Marginal note]

[N.B. on p 23 M^r R 's answer is recorded]

Dear M^r Russell.

I was told by a responsible and apparently well-informed person yesterday, that you had so far altered your opinion of D^r Buchman's Oxford Group Movement as to say that you regretted having written the volume "For Sinners Only". I could not but welcome this information if it were well-founded, but before assuming that this is the case, I think it both just and prudent that I should write to you, and ascertain the truth. You will know that my unfavourable opinion of D^r Buchman's Movement is unaltered, but that circumstance makes me the more anxious not to do it injustice.

Believe me,

Yours v. faithfully

H. Hensley Henson, Bishop

A. J. Russell, Esq.
c/o Mess^{rs} Hodder & Stoughton

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[10]

Saturday, September 23rd, 1939.

I received a request from the Editor of an odd-looking little quarterly, which I had never before heard of, "Service in Life & Work", asking me to write an article on the subject of my recent letter to the Times: he writes:

After the coming issue this review will be suspended for the period of the war, and I am especially anxious that this last issue shall make the best possible contribution to the anti-Nazi cause. It will be, I think fairly widely distributed in America. I venture, therefore, to hope very much your Lordship will be able to favour me with an acceptance of my request.

He is 50 years old, was educated privately, and at Pembroke Coll. Oxford, has been twice married, and describes himself in 'Who's Who [sic]' as 'Playwright, poet, journalist, publisher, & editor'. Evidently some kind of an 'up-to-date' ['Poo-hah']

I offered to preach at S. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich, next Sunday, when the appointed Service of Intercession is to be held. My sermon w^d, perhaps, cover the ground of the Article asked for.

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[11]

16th Sunday after Trinity September 24th, 1939.

We all went to church at 8 a.m., and received the Holy Communion at 8 a.m.

We attended Mattins, & I read the lessons. The children [sic] was filled with children, parishioners and evacuates.

I was astonished, and indeed, startled, to see A. H., the serving lad, functioning as usual in surplice & cassock, although he is likely to come before the Ipswich magistrates on a disgraceful charge. The Vicar tells me that he is penitent, and it is not necessary to be unduly severe on an incident, albeit lamentable enough, in the case of a lad of 17; but something more is needed than consideration. For his own sake, &, perhaps, even more for the sake of all the other boys in the choir & in the parish, some discipline should be imposed to mark the gravity of the scandal. If he were suspended from his function until either he had cleared his character, or had served his punishment, a salutary impression would be made. As it is, I must needs think that the notion that the offence did not really matter, will take root in the general mind.

[12]

[symbol]

I wrote a long letter to Lord Scarbrough and another to Dick. Also I wrote to the Editor of "Service", promising to do what he desired e.g. write an article for that paper on the lines of the letter which appeared in the Times over my signature on Sept 15th last. Also, I wrote to my godson, Gilbert Simpson.*

[symbol] **The Poles are sill holding out in Warsaw but it is apparent that the end is very near. We are witnessing one of the greater tragedies of History.** *The emergence of Russia in this criminal conflict has rendered the restoration of Polish independence almost inconceivable; and yet nothing less than restoration would be tolerable, and certainly nothing less would fulfil the reiterated pledges of Britain and France. It is hard to see how even America, if per miraculum, she joined the European democracies, could turn back the tide of Russian conquest.* That conquest involves the establishment of Bolshevik Communism, cruel, debased, atheistic. Assuredly we are living in "a cloudy and dark day". "There is no open vision".

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[13]

Monday, September 25th, 1939.

[symbol]

After breakfast I walked to the Rectory, and myself gave into the Rector's hands the letter which I addressed to him yesterday, and, then, had a "heart-to-heart" talk with him about A. H. He tells me that, acting on the solicitor's advice, A.H. [Arthur Hine] has pleaded guilty. I insisted that, albeit penitent, he ought to be suspended from Communion for at least 3 months, and certainly not permitted to remain in the Choir, or to function publicly in the church.

I don't like this business at all, but I don't see how I could have let it pass without notice.

The Assistant-Editor of the "Sunday Times" writes to propose an arrangement, whereby I should contribute a weekly article on some religious or semi-religious article to that newspaper. This arrangement to be reviewed at the end of 3 months. I wrote to accept. Thus my hands are again getting tied. The difficulty is to find suitable subjects, near enough to immediate interests to be generally interesting, & not so near as to connect what is written with partisan ambitions & prejudices. The reluctance & timidity of old age cooperate with my national indolence to disqualify me for the task.

[14]

So familiar, and as it were so natural to man is the practice of violence that our indulgence allow the slightest provocation, the most disputable right, as a sufficient ground of national hostility. But the name and nature of an holy war demands a more rigorous scrutiny: nor can we hastily believe that the servants of the Prince of Peace would unsheath the sword of destruction, unless the motives were pure, the quarrel legitimate and the necessity inevitable.

Gibbon, "Decline & Fall". vi. 266.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a Crusade as

"an aggressive movement or enterprize against some public evil, or some institution or class of persons considered as evil".

I think that it may fairly be maintained that the War against Hitlerism, comes under this definition. It is, on every ground a "just war", and for us a Crusade.

[15]

Sir Philip Hartog* sends me a paper on "Kultur as a Symbol in Peace and War". He writes

Dear Bishop Hensley Henson,

Although I am unknown to you, I have felt many times tempted to express to you my gratitude, as a Jew, for your noble utterances on behalf of the persecuted Jews in Germany and the countries Hitler has taken. Your last letter to the Times adds to your service to the cause of Liberty and Peace. I venture to enclose a paper of mine on “Kultur as a symbol in War and in Peace”, which throws some light, I think, on the development of national feeling in 20th century Germany – though it was written so long ago as 1917, (and I only published it in 1938).

Yours sincerely

P. J. Hartog

Sir Philip Hartog was born in 1864, so he is my junior by a few months: “Who’s Who” ascribes to him an active & distinguished career.

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[16]

Tuesday, September 26th, 1939.

The weather is becoming distinctly colder.

I received a request from Donald Nicholson that I would recommend him for a minor canonry in Elly Cathedral. I sent him something which was all I could honestly produce, but which could not possibly be of any practical use!

I spent the morning in writing a "leaderette" of c. 500 words for the Sunday Times, but I shall not send it to the Editor until I hear from him.

[symbol]

The Times has a most perturbing account of the Bolshevising of Poland as the Red Armies advance:

However good Poles and Catholics the Polish peasant may be, men who have no land or too little to live on, will be sorely tempted to seize the land of the big squires, their forests and pastures. The Russian advance foreshadows a revolutionary change in the social structure of the country . . . Hitler carries Bolshevism into the very heart of East Central Europe, with consequences no one can as yet gauge. [sic]

[17]

[symbol]

Before getting up I read Pastor's account of Pope Leo X. I had not realized that, alongside his well known interest in art & literature, **he was a man of very low taste, fond off surrounding himself with debased buffoons, & given up to frivolous & unworthy pleasures.** Alexander VI was a sensualist; Leo X was a glutton. Both were orthodox, & scrupulous in their performance of religious observances, but neither can have had any deep personal religion. Savonarola confronted the one Pope: Martin Luther the other. The well-known utterance attributed to Leo at the time of his election to the Papacy is said to rest on authentic tradition – "Let us enjoy the Papacy since God has given it to us", but the author, though always very anxious to guard the honour of the Popes, cannot dispute that the impression conveyed by the words is not unfair.

"However questionable it may be whether Leo X ever did say these words, there is no doubt that they are descriptive of his desire for pleasure & of the aspect in which he regarded his great position ".

The Reformation was, indeed, overdue.

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[18]

Wednesday, September 27th, 1939.

The paper reported las night that A.H. [Arthur Hine] had pleaded guilty on a charge of indecently assaulting two small girls, aged 9 and 7; that the Rector had testified to the excellence of his character; & that, in view of this testimony, the magistrates had given him the light sentence of one month's imprisonment. A. H. was "sub-sacrist", the ~~principal~~ senior "server" in the parish church, & generally regarded as the Rector's principal assistant among the boys & girls who frequent the church, the vestry, and the Rectory. The whole affair is deeply distressing, & must needs tell disastrously on the credit of Religion in the parish.

[symbol]

Old Havelock Ellis's death has been quickly followed by that of Sigmund Freud, a still more considerable exponent of psycho-analysis. Freud was an Austrian Jew, and, though more than fourscore years of age, & a man of world-wide reputation, was driven into exile by Hitler's fanatical anti-Semitism. Neither of the two men was a buttress of morality, as morality is understood among Christians. Both were greatly admired.

[19]

I went to Ipswich, & visited the banker and the hairdresser.

I have promised to preach next Sunday in Ipswich at the special Service of "Prayer to Almighty God at this time of War", and I find it extraordinarily difficult to determine on a text and a sermon. On the whole, perhaps, I shall do best with the verse from the Psalms, which runs in my thoughts so persistently: "Clouds & darkness are round about Him; righteousness & judgment are the habitation of His feet."

This is no ordinary War, but a Crusade.

What is a Crusade? Wherein is it different from other Wars?

We are called to cooperate with our Creator in the working out of His Providential Purpose in History. "We are God's fellow-workers". A crusade is the only kind of War in which a Christian can take part, but in that he must. "We must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work". Our conscience is clear; our Cause is righteous; we are in the Hands of God.

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[20]

Thursday, September 28th, 1939.

[symbol]

The weather is again colder, but I still had no fire in my study, covering my knees with a rug!

The War-Budget is something of a bombshell. Everybody expected an increase in taxation, but nobody thought so large an increase would be made. I received a very kind letter from Lord Scarbough* written before the new taxes had been announced. He writes:

Whatever the end of this War may be, it means financial ruin and chaos for all whose circumstances & way of life have been favoured hitherto, as tomorrow's Budget will demonstrate.

[symbol] *But he could not have expected such a Budget as we must now endure. He urges me "to place on record the impressions of your life, not only for your own generation, but for those who come after. So do use your wonderful clearness of mind & sound judgment for this purpose. Indeed, from the moment you retired I always thought & hoped you would devote your leisure to this object."*

[21]

[symbol]

He adds a postscript, "Don't forget the prophet's chamber in case you want a bed any time." The publishers (George Routledge & Sons Ltd) send me an "advance copy" of a novel by a Polish Jew, which they commend very highly – "The Nazarene, by Sholem Asch, translated by Maurice Samuel". I read about 50 pages, and found it interesting.

I wrote [sic] the Secretary of the County Club in Ipswich, resigning my membership. This will save an annual expenditure of £6 : 6 : 0.

Also, I wrote to [Ernest] Alexander*, reducing old Smith's Pension to £20. per annum. Thus saving £6 : 0 : 0.

I was pleased to receive from Major Hay a kindly expressed letter in answer to my mild & sympathetic response to his angry protest against my letter in the Times (v. p.4):

"I assure you honestly that I have found in it some consolation. And that is something hard to come by in these days of uncertainty.

Sincerely & gratefully yours."

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[22]

Friday, September 29th, 1939.

I finished the Sermon for next Sunday. Then I went in to Ipswich, and visited the dentist, but with little effect. Then I went in to S. Mary-le-Tower, outside of which was a poster announcing that the preacher next Sunday would be the former Bishop of Durham. It is a large church, which was re-built in the xixth century. It has a fine xvith century font. The official told me that it was the Town church, and that the Mayor & Corporation would attend the Service next Sunday morning. Then I rejoined Ella and Fearne at the Parking Place. Before returning to Hintlesham, it occurred to me that, in view of the rationing of petrol, it might be desirable to procure a bicycle. So I went into a conveniently adjacent shop, and bought a machine for £5 : 12 : 6, which I presented to Fearne on the understanding that, when necessary, she would allow Nancy to make use of it.

In reply to my letter, (v. p.8) I received from M^r. A. J. Russell, the Author of the Buchmanite Bible, "For Sinners Only", the following:-

[23]

[symbol]

18 Fitzalan Road,
London, N.3.

Dear Bishop,

Though I am acutely conscious of its faults, I do not regret having written For Sinners Only.

I have received too many first-hand proofs of its fruitfulness for our Master's Kingdom to say that.

At least God knows that all the time I was writing it there was strong in my mind the determination to witness faithfully for Christ Whom I was striving to follow long before I met the Groups.

Whatever the differences of opinion about the Movement it describes, the book surely contains ample evidence that in it I was endeavouring to express simple Christian faith with fidelity.

I sincerely believe that the Holy Spirit honoured that motive.

I wish you a happy evening to your life.

Yours very sincerely,
A. J. Russell.

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[24]

Saturday, September 30th, 1939.

I occupied the morning, partly in writing to the Earl of Stamford, explaining why I did not feel disposed to assent to his suggestion that I should write to the Times, urging that the restoration of independence to Abyssinia must be included in the settlement after the War: and, partly, in revising the sermon which I had prepared for the service tomorrow.

[symbol in margin] *The Times has a vigourously written leading article on the Russo-German Alliance, in which it re-affirms the impossibility of our acquiescence in the Division of Poland.* Also, there is a careful and comforting article which examines the potential value of the Russian undertaking to provide Germany with raw materials, and concludes that this is much smaller than is generally assumed. Most of the most important raw materials are found in the west of Siberia, for which the transport to Germany present [sic] great, perhaps, insuperable difficulties. Moreover, Germany will have to reckon with the probability of successful Bolshevik propaganda in Germany itself. It may well be that Hitler is hanging himself.

[25]

Omnibus in terris, quae sunt a Gadibus usque
Auroram et Gangem, pauci dinoscere possunt
Vera bona atque illis multum diversa, remota
Erroris nebula. quid enim ratione timemus
Aut cupimus.

“In all the lands that stretch from Gades to the Ganges and the Morn, there are but few, who can distinguish true blessings from their opposites, putting aside the mists of error. For when does Reason direct our desires or our fears?”

Then, a few lines further on, comes the famous ‘tag’

Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.

And this is followed by the statement, as true as it is humiliating, that the foremost of all petitions and the most frequent, is for riches & their increase. This 10th Satire of Juvenal is a tract for such times as these.

I received a letter from Salter of Hartlepool enclosing two of his “window-cleaner’s” articles. He has more facility in that kind of writing than I.

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[26]

17th Sunday after Trinity, October 1st, 1939.

We motored to Ipswich, and there I preached in S. Mary-le-Tower, at the special service of War-intercession. The Mayor and Corporation were present, and there was a large congregation. My sermon occupied about 20 minutes in delivery and was listened to with close attention. Old Sir Bunnell Burton* came into the vestry, and thanked me "in the name of the congregation". He commented on the way in which the people had listened. We stayed to the Celebration, and received the Holy Communion.

[symbol in margin, with 'v. 33-4' written alongside] The Sunday Times publishes the first of my weekly "sermonettes" on its front page under the heading, "Deus le volt". It doesn't read quite as crudely as I feared.

Then I wrote to Dick [Elliott]* who has shifted his quarters to an Hotel in Middlesborough, because the lighting restrictions make it almost impossible to continue pernoctating in Norton.

Also, I wrote to Shaddick,* thanking him for sending me notice of the consecration of S. Herbert's Mission Hall in Haughton-le-Skerne, which took place yesterday.

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[27]

Monday, October 2nd, 1939.

I occupied the morning in writing another 'sermonette' for the Sunday Times, taking for my text Sir Alfred Lyall's poem "Theology in Extremis", and heading my composition by the same.

I received a friendly letter from Lord Roche.* He writes:-

Certainly I should write, if I were you, an Autobiography, or Recollections on classified topics or chapters according as you thought best: you will see how it works out.

I wrote to Betty Bruce-Steer.

The Clarendon Press sends me for Royalties on the Gifford Lectures, the magnificent sum of £3 : 11 : 3! I certainly have been remarkably unsuccessful as an author: and if, as is probably the case, the approval of the public is the most trustworthy test of literary merit, I must be worthless indeed! It is not very likely that the verdict, which I must record when I am all but 76 years old, will now be reversed, or even mitigated.

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[28]

Tuesday, October 3rd, 1939.

There was some rain last night, which rejoices the gardener's heart. It is cold this morning, and, if times were normal, I would certainly have a fire in my study. As it is, I make shift with a rug on my knees. We made the first concession to the season on the 1st October, when we had a fire in the drawing room after dinner.

I had pleasant letters from Lazenby,* and Blakeney.* The latter sends me an admirable hymn for Airmen, which he has written. It ought to be largely used.

I resumed work on the "Autobiography", and transcribed from my Journal during 1886 the record of my spiritual confusion & conflict, but when what I had written was read out by Ella, it seemed apparent to me that, albeit extremely interesting as the history of an individual's religious evolution, it could have no sufficient general interest to justify its publication. Moreover, there is something almost profane in asking the world to look at one's personal conflicts.

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[29]

Wednesday, October 4th, 1939.

The day was dark, damp, and cold. I had the fire lighted in my study. Fearne regarded it with mingled feeling, in which the rational factor conflicted with the compassionate. However, in the end mercy triumphed over judgment.

I occupied my whole working day in writing an Article (2000 words) for a paper called "Service: in Life and Work" which is published by "Rotary International". The Editor, (W. W. Blair-Fish) at whose request I had consented to write, inquires whether I desire any remuneration. Well, of course I do with income-tax at 7/- in the £: but I demurely (and falsely) replied that I was "indifferent", and that he had better follow his usual practice! Probably he, in common with most people, thinks that an ex-Bishop of Durham must be rolling in money, or, at least, (as some of the papers, which ought to know better, have stated) that he enjoys a pension of at least one third of the official income of the See!

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[30]

Thursday, October 5th, 1939.

Old Canon Rendall writes with reference to the political situation, “Now, we are indeed brought within hail of the Symplegades”. I turned to Liddell & Scott for illumination, and found it:-

συμπληγάς, ἄδος, ἡ, striking or dashing together: Συμπληγάδες πέτραι, the justling rocks i.e. the Κυάνεαι νησοί, which were supposed to close on all who sailed between them (also called συνδρομάδες). It is used of the passage out of the Euxine.

I posted the Article for ‘Service’, and wrote to Blakeney, thanking him for the excellent ‘Hymn for Airmen in a Time of War’, which [he] has written, and which S.P.C.K. are publishing at a cheap rate. It ought to be generally used. Blakeney certain[ly] possesses the rare gift of composing religious verse, which is neither “sob-stuff” nor vulgarity. He says that he is interesting himself in Astrology – a superstition of ancient name and fame, which is said to be securing many votaries in these disordered times.

I called on the Rector in the course of the afternoon.

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[31]

Friday, October 6th, 1939.

I received from my godson, Gilbert Simpson,* a very interesting letter. He says that the condition of the evacuated children “was greatly aggravated by the fact that the children were taken from their homes during the holiday period.” He writes of the West Ham Borough, where his sister “is in the Medical Office of Health’s Dep^t, and superintends the issue of dried milk to the Mothers.”

She sees the majority of these Mothers, who have either returned themselves, or brought their children back. She affirms that these people are generally the most objectionable of her clients.

The reasons for the return of the women, as told by themselves, are almost unbelievably trivial. For instance, one objected to having been referred to as the lodger. A second complained that she had to pump the water she required from a well whereas she had been used to getting it from the tap. A third complained that she had been expected to make her own bed! All the [32] other explanations freely offered to my sister seemed to be equally absurd. The fact of the matter is that many of these women thought they were going away for a holiday, and resented having to do anything for themselves: what little they did do they magnified to such an extent that they really felt they were being hard-worked. Whatever could one do with such foolish & lazy creatures?

What indeed? How will they behave when bombardment actually comes? How will they behave if there should be a serious shortage of food?

The Evening papers give a long report of Hitler’s much-expected oration to the Reichstag. He called it, & possibly deludes himself into thinking that it is, an offer of Peace, but in fact its only possible effect is to confirm the Allied democracies in their belief that, so long as he is responsible for the government of Germany, War must continue. He added insult to injury by reviling the Poles.

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[33]

Saturday, October 7th, 1939.

I was pleased by receiving a letter from the boy, Jack, Alan Henderson's* son. He writes from Lancing School, to which [he] and the other Westminsterians have been "evacuated":

"The "setting up" of the Play takes place on Sunday. This year it is the "Rudens" of Plautus, which is quite amusing in parts. Plautus is more boisterous than Terence, who produces the better verses. I am trying to get the part of the villain, called Labrax, who is a slave-dealer. Unfortunately he has the third longest part of 152 lines. However, if I get my back into it, it will be quite easy although it is Latin."

[symbol in margin] I received a ferocious letter, anonymous & signed "From a young man who will have to go". He is "astonished and disgusted to read the despicable exhibition of hypocrisy in that bloodthirsty battle-cry printed under your name in the Sunday Times of Oct. 1st". He is evidently some half-crazed Pacifist though, "subscribes very little of the Christian doctrines".

[34]

[symbol in margin] On the other hand, the Rev^d. F. H. Durnford, Rector of Howick (who says he met me at Howick, when I stayed with Earl Grey, 'the night before the Holy Land Pilgrimage') writes to thank me for my letter to the Times which he "**ventured to read & incorporate into a sermon**". He "served through the last war – with the Australians".

I occupied the morning in writing a 3rd "Sermonette" for the Sunday Times. I headed it "Tua voluntas fiat", and discussed the conditions of legitimate Christian prayer. I am not at all confident that what I am writing is what is desired or expected, nor is it easy to discover subjects on which one can usefully construct so brief a homily, which shall be coherent, interesting, and suggestive. However after 3 months, when our arrangement is to be reviewed, either the Editor will terminate through discontent with my performances, or I through the discovery of my own ineptitude. It is already apparent to me that I am humbly less competent than I had vainly imagined.

<!081039>

[35]

18th Sunday after Trinity, October 8th, 1939.

We all went to church at 8 a.m., & received the Holy Communion. The church had been tastefully decorated for the Harvest Thanksgiving. We went to Mattins, & I read the lessons. There was a somewhat larger congregation than is usual, yet not so large as might have been expected in a rural parish on such an occasion. The Rector [Mouldsdales*] preached from the words, "My God shall supply all your need", and himself sang the solo in the anthem, the responsible Choirman being absent. His performance as a soloist was more impressive for its courage in the attempt than for its success in the achievement. The sermon suggested reminiscences of a Plato lecture to the callow youth of S. Chad's, and **it was delivered with pontifical authority**. I suppose these Anglo-Catholics have brought themselves to believe the exalted theory of their office which they profess to hold.

In the afternoon I wrote to Jack Henderson, Charles Pattinson, Canon Braley, and Mr. Durnford.

[symbol in margin] My 2nd Sermonette appeared in the Sunday Times.

<!091039>

[36]

Monday, October 9th, 1939.

A very wet day. In the afternoon, I walked in the rain for exercise, & changed on my return. Braley* sends me a substantial volume, which appears to be having a large sale, 'England: before and after Wesley, by J. Wesley Bready'. He says:-

I very much appreciated your article in the Sunday Times: a friend of mine writes that it was a tonic to him to put a different complexion on the whole matter. My young men are very bored by the period of waiting to be called up. They show a most laudable enthusiasm to be at Hitler's throat.

[symbol in margin] I wrote to the assistant editor, and asked him whether the stuff I sent was the sort of thing he wanted, & inviting suggestions.

Also, I had a letter from Ruth Spooner.* She has taken up her abode in the "Catholic Workers College" in Oxford, and is slaving heroically for a household of "expectant mothers"! She is really wonderful in her unfailing enthusiasm, and complete disregard of her own comfort.

<!101039>

[37]

Tuesday, October 10th, 1939.

The Editor of "Service" writes with reference to "remuneration" for the article which I sent to him:-

You tell me to follow our "usual course" regarding remuneration. As a non-commercial publication our usual course is that we pay professional writers but not public men unless they require it. Usually, however, with the latter I prefer to enquire, so as to be sure whether they do or do not expect or desire it.

It is clear that I can hardly claim to be a "professional writer", in the sense that writing for pay is the profession by which I maintain myself, but, in the sense, that I write for payment when I have the chance, in order thereby to supplement my tenuous income, I am a "professional writer", standing, like the workmen in Christ's parable, in the market-place, waiting to be hired! Whether I can rightly be described as a "public man" is not easy to determine. It is a question of degree. We are all "public" up to some measure, or other.

[38]

[symbol in margin] The Assistant Editor [*Sunday Times*], in answer to my inquiry, writes:-

Thank you for your letter. What you are sending is exactly the kind of article we wanted you to write: it has just the right balance and outlook: and I am sure it is very helpful to readers. It would be foolish of us to give you any further direction. I feel it is much better to leave it to you. Your own feelings in the matter are the best guide.

I received two letters from my old diocese, thanking me for my articles. One writer says

I hope they are to continue. They are a real tonic in these difficult times, & a happy contrast to all the humbug which we have lately been treated to.

The other, (Sir Arthur Dawson)* says:

Will you allow me to thank you for what you have written, & to say how thankful I feel for the view you have thus publicly put forward as to the place which religious teaching ought to have [39] in the system of national education. Would that this view could be more universally held than it is. If it could be, I, for one, see no reason why we sh^d not have a real & effective system of State Schools solidly built on the broad Christian tradition of faith and duty to which you refer. I feel so strongly that it is character we need – real Christian character.

Considering that the writer has spent his life as an "educationist", and has recently retired from the important position of Director of Education in the County of Durham, his opinion has a certain value. But the clergy generally will be resentful, or, at least, will pretend to be so. For the loudly-expressed zeal for the maintenance of "church schools" is, I do verily believe, little more than a façade, which, like the imposing front of a modern shop, has little

behind to justify the show it makes. Most of the parochial clergy would secretly rejoice if they could be relieved of the financial strain of maintaining their church schools.

<!111039>

[39]

Wednesday, October 11th, 1939.

I wrote to the Editor of "Service" acquiescing in his evident anxiety to avoid "remuneration" for the Article. It costs something to be what he calls "a public man"!

Then, I resumed my reading of Harnack's History of Dogma, with the purpose of garnering from it some suggestions for my "White" Lecture. He is so vivid and omniscient that the temptation to "browse" on his pages, instead of limiting one's self to the matter in hand, is almost irresistible. His description of what he calls "Christianity of the Second Rank" is most illuminating. His 'obiter dicta' are as brilliant as (sometimes) also misleading e.g. "No religion gains anything through time: it only loses. If a hurricane does not pass over it, & purify it again & again, it gets stifled in its own withered foliage. No hurricane has yet swept over the Churches of the East. And yet they possess in the Gospel, which they too read, an element of movement which, perhaps, in some future time will bring life to the dry bones." But was it Time or Mohammed that brought the Eastern Churches to their woeful state?

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[40]

Thursday, October 12th, 1039.

[symbol]

I received from [Herbert] Fisher,* the Warden of New College, a very pleasantly worded invitation "to contribute a volume of 50,000 words on the English Bible, [inserted above] in the Home University Library." He writes:-

I remember listening with great admiration when I was a young graduate to a sermon which you preached upon the subject of the Bible in the University Church, & my recollection of your eloquence on that occasion leads me very earnestly to hope that you may think favourably of this proposal

May I say that Gilbert Murray* is as anxious as I am that you should see your way to undertake this for us.

I am strongly tempted to accept this proposal, though I doubt the wisdom of my doing so. The former undertaking (viz. to write the volume on the Reformation for the same series) had to be abandoned with the charge of a great diocese, but also the subject demanded an amount of varied reading, which was beyond my competence. 'The English Bible' would be less exacting, & more within the narrow limits of my power.

<!131039>

[42] [sic]

Friday, October 13th, 1939.

The Prime Minister's speech yesterday, in reply to Hitler's impudent "offer" of peace, was admirable in form, tone, and substance. He wisely avoided all attempt to be 'eloquent', and adopted a grave simplicity which emphasized the strong decisiveness of his pronouncement. Following on Deladier's equally admirable and determined speech to the French Chamber, Chamberlain's statement must be regarded, even by the most reluctant and optimistic, as final. There can be no peace in the world until Hitler & all that he stands for have been ended.

I wrote to Fisher indicating my willingness to write the volume, as he suggested.
Also, I wrote to the Dean of Durham.

I had tea with Lord Woodbridge* at his house, Abbey Oaks. He is evidently a sick man, but he was very friendly. In the course of conversation, I asked him whether he thought that business-morality was higher, or lower now, than when he first knew it. He replied that it was higher, & added that it was lower in America than in this country, & lowest in Japan.

[43]

Lord W. was very modest about himself. "I know nothing," he said; "but am just a business man." He noted down the names of one or two books about "anti-Semitism". He said that the heavy taxation would hit him hard; but that he would not think about it. He thought that one result of the War would almost certainly be the establishment of some kind of Socialism in this country. He urged me to come again, & I said that I would.

Alington writes:-

A line to thank you for reminding me of 'Theology in Extremis[']'. The couplet beginning "There's a life to be saved by a moment's patter". It always seems to me extremely effective with its double rhyme.

But I cannot find the line he quotes. His memory must have failed.

Apart from the Vicar of Eppleton, whose letter was hardly that of a sane man, such notices of the little article as I have received have been warmly favourable.

<!141039>

[44]

Saturday, October 14th, 1939.

Rain fell heavily during the night, and forenoon. The sweep came [sic] this morning, & cleaned my study chimney. While the room was being cleaned I worked in the smoking room, & succeeded in writing another Sermonette, N.4.) [sic] for the Sunday Times. I headed it 'Particular Providence'.

Also, I wrote at some length to Brale giving my opinion of the book 'Bready's 'England before and after Wesley'', which he had sent me.

I took a brief 'constitutional' in the afternoon and was told of the disaster which has befallen the British Navy. A Battleship, the Royal Oak has been sunk by submarines. There was a complement of 1200 officers & men, & of these only 350 are stated to have survived. *This is a sharp reminder that we must not place too much confidence in the optimistic rhetoric of Mess^{rs} Winston Churchill and Hore Belisha. I always shudder inwardly when I hear their confident assurances. We had been led to think that the U. boats were now mastered.*

[45]

[symbol]

This week has run its course without, I fear, without having any record of effective work. I made a decision which, at my age, and in my circumstances, was certainly bold, and probably even presumptuous, since it assumes my continuance in life for at least two years – I undertook to write a volume for the Home University Library. I wrote another little "Sermonette" for the 'Sunday Times', and read through a [pretentious book, sent to me by Braley, whom it had evidently impressed – "England Before & After B Wesley." The author would make the Founder of Methodism the "only begetter" of all the beneficent changes of fashion & policy which have transformed the England of 1739 into the England of 1939. He ignores the development of Science, & its effect on society. He ignores the secularisation of thought, which has certainly cleared away a mass of disabling prejudice born of perverted Religion. He gives no credit to the Church of England & the older Nonconformity, which always formed the great majority of the Christian force in the country.

[46]

I spent some time in extracting from Harnack's History of Dogma such references to the Scriptures as might assist me in preparing my "White" Lectures for S. Paul's, and I wrote some letters which may, or may not, interest or edify those to whom they were sent, but which certainly consumed a considerable proportion of my time. [symbol] *For the rest, I live in strangely complete solitude. The petrol restriction almost totally prohibits movement. The parish, which serves as the exercising yard for prisoners, does not provide much opportunity for social intercourse. The papist Squire ignores my existence altogether: and the Rector is a narrow, cunning "Anglo-Catholic", with whom it is impossible to discuss anything intelligently, and whom it would not be prudent to treat with frank confidence. My Wife's deafness makes conversation difficult, and the unending prattle of the ever-present*

“Evacuate” [sic] irritates without either informing or interesting. And all the while the Unspeakable tragedy of the War proceeds & spreads its mantle of suffering & sorrow.

<!191039>

[47]

19th Sunday after Trinity, October 15th, 1939.

The weather continues to be damp & depressing. I suspect that this “low visibility” facilitates the fiendish achievements of the ‘U-boats’.

I wrote to George Nimmins.*

We attended mattins in the Parish Church. A small congregation mainly of the evacuated girls, listened to a very thin, confused oration from the Rector, which, quite obviously, he had taken no pains to prepare, & which could have carried nothing beyond a sense of vague puzzlement to his hearers. After Mattins, I celebrated the Holy Communion, at which there were but 4 communicants, all of the female sex, & including Ella & Fearn.

Then, through some confusion of the news vendor, the ‘Sunday Times’ failed to appear, a fact which nowise sweetened my temper.

I wrote to Ruth [Spooner], who is now living in some Papist institution established in Oxford for the assistant [sic] of “expectant mothers”.

She is slaving in the approved ascetic fashion, using her wonderful musical fingers to clean boots and polish grates etc. It seems rather mad, but that is the way of the saints.

<!161039>

[48]

Monday, October 16th, 1939.

A beautiful morning, very welcome after two days rain; but it is cold, and a fire is beginning to develop [sic] from a luxury into a necessity in my study. But the business of lighting it threatens to become almost as perplexing as that of replenishing it with fuel; for the maid's incompetence is as effective in the one case, as rationing is in the ~~second~~ other! The devotion of Fearne reinforced by the wifely solicitude of Ella in seducing the reluctant, & ill-assorted, sticks to kindle, reduce me to self-convicted ignominy as a brutal trader on woman's love!

This did but begin my spiritual probation, for at lunch Ella was "in the 7th heaven" at receiving a letter from yet another of the innumerable cousins in which he announced his intention of honouring us with a visit! Fearne's righteous zeal for domestic economy, now sharpened by the imminence of "Food rations" rose! In revolt, and my despair at being able to deal with a young man (whom I hardly know by sight) here & now, moved me to more vehement protest than was either wholly fair or tolerably kind. Nor was the hospitable [49] Ella altogether discerning or considerate. In effect there was an episode of domestic friction more easily understood than justified, from which I emerged, as usual, more humiliated & baffled than relieved. Truly, as the Gospel says, "A man's foes are they of his own household". They are too near to miss him, too familiar to understand his motives, or to respect his feelings. And, on their side also, there is much to be said. They do not find in him the kindness and consideration which they imagine, perhaps naturally, that they have a right to expect. Certainly, the problem of governing one's temper is not made easier of solution by the fraying of one's nerves, & the growing perplexity of one's mind.

Fisher writes:-

A thousand thanks for your most kind letter. Murray and I are overjoyed that you can see your way to contribute a volume on the English Bible to the Home University Library. What you write for us will exert a wide influence. The date which you suggest (Dec. 31. 1940) for the delivery of the MS. will be entirely suitable. [50] I do not think that Clause 16 of the contract need cause you anxiety, but I am asking the publishers to give you the assurances which will, I am sure, be forthcoming.

So it appears that I have put my neck into the noose of yet another engagement.

In the afternoon we motored to Ardleigh, and called on Lady Thurlow,¹ who is conducting with the help of Aleck, her youngest son, the odious performance of disembowelling the vans stuffed with furniture from Sedgfield Rectory. As we approached the house, we saw one of the said vans discharging its cargo. We had tea comfortably enough, & looked at the house, which is pleasant and commodious. The garden is delightful, about 4½ acres. And the whole house & grounds cost no more than Hyntle Place apart from my study! But I don't

¹ See Charles Thurlow*.

think it would have been possible for me to live in it, especially with the monstrous war-taxes. So, perhaps, we are best placed in our comparatively humble dwelling.

<!171039>

[51]

Tuesday, October 17th, 1939.

The favourite maxim of Simeon the Righteous is:

“The world rests on three supports, the Law (i.e. the study of God’s revelation), the sacrificial worship, and deeds of personal kindness.”

[v. Moore’s Judaism. i. 311.]

[symbol in margin] Miss B., our senior Evacuate, is a young, brisk governing female, who holds office in D^r Barnardo’s institution as a “Mother” in charge of a cottage home. She belongs to one of the narrower Dissenting sects, is so severe a Sabbatarian that she conscientiously refuses to look at a Sunday paper, & so stern a disciplinarian that she will not suffer her girls to join the G. F. S., since in that too-secular society the members are permitted to dance and play cards. She is sorely exercised about the Roman type of service in the parish church, & already meditates how best she may prohibit the girls who have been confirmed from attending “Mass” there on Christmas Day. She has discovered a little meeting house of Sectaries in the parish, and takes her imperilled flock to that ‘City of Refuge’ on Sunday afternoon! She almost lives at the telephone, which shows signs of
[*photograph has cut off last few words on page*] [52] her unremitting attentions. She has been as a Missionary in China, attached to the ‘China Inland Mission’ or some kindred body, equally remote from Catholic Faith and Order. She tolerates our daily prayers in my study, but clearly holds with Andrew Fairservice that the English Liturgy is no more than ‘clots of cauld parritch’, which a true believer can endure but not enjoy or approve! Her activity is unending, and so is her talk. But since her presence may avert from us some even more disturbing presence, we agree rather “to endure the ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of.” Ella, protected by deafness, finds her tolerable, and beyond question, she possesses, in rich measure, the aggressive graces of the “twice-born” saints. But really one is (and ought to be) ashamed of taking notice of such trivial annoyances and inconveniences as are incidental to the process of “evacuation”, when the grim violences of War are beginning on sea, land, and in the air.

I had tea with Lord Woodbridge,* and much friendly talk.

<!181039>

[53]

Wednesday, October 18th, 1939.

I wrote to John Wrightson* congratulating him on his engagement to marry a daughter of Lord Dawson of Penn [Bertram Dawson*], which was announced in the Times some days ago.

Also, I wrote to M^{rs} Murray Smith, condoling with her on the sudden death of her husband [Alexander Murray Smith*], which was announced in the Times today. He was three years junior to me.

I made notes from Schürer's History of the Jewish People. There is an excellent account of the Septuagint, which was just what I wanted.

In the afternoon we paid calls, and wound up with tea with Colonel Smith.

[symbol in margin] There is nothing in the papers particularly interesting. *Suicides are said to be multiplying in the miserable Baltic States, which Hitler has literally sold to Stalin. The Scandinavian rulers are taking counsel in Stockholm. Turkey is said to be disengaging herself from Moscow, & Finland is cryptically optimistic. There are indications that both on the West, and on the Sea, the German attack is being pressed. Air-raid warnings were reported from Edinburgh to Kent. The War has certainly begun!*

<!191039>

[54]

Thursday, October 19th, 1939.

More heavy rain fell last night, and this morning. The floods in the midlands are already dislocating transport, & causing great damage. What will be the effect on the campaign? Great discomfort & misery to the troops, and much difficulty in moving troops & their monstrous machines. The Germans must surely be the greater sufferers in this respect.

[symbol in margin] Dick, the Vicar of Gorlaston, asks me to preach on Advent Sunday. I wrote forthwith to say that, on that Sunday, I was already pledged to preach to the School at Eton.

The Hon. Anne Macnaughten writes very civilly from D^r Barnardo's Homes to "thank you very much for all your kindness to our workers & children." Apparently, Miss Milne & Miss Bridges have given us a good report! I sent her a letter in reply.

Also, I sent a copy of my book on 'Spiritual Healing', published in 1925 (14 years ago!) to M^{rs} Harvey at Little Bealings, to whom I promised that it should be sent if I could find a copy yet remaining. Fearne's eagle eye discerned two copies in the book-shelves of my study.

<!201039>

[55]

Friday, October 20th, 1939.

[symbol]

Thirty seven years ago Ella and I were “joined together in Holy Matrimony” before the High Altar of Westminster Abbey. Arthur Ingram, Bishop of London, who “tied the knot” yet survives, garrulous, self-confident, & beloved, though universally regarded as episcopally “a failure”. W. P. Ker* who officiated as my “best man” has now been dead for some years. The Dean of Westminster (Armitage Robinson)* died in the gloom of insanity a few years ago. The Sub-Dean (Duckworth)* is also dead. Ella has lost her hearing: and I am beginning to lose my sight. But we live in fairly good health, and in such amity as our physical disabilities permit. We depend very much on the help and brains of Fearne Booker*, with whom we have been closely united for nearly a quarter of a century, & who has developed considerable qualities of thought and action. If life had softened & expanded her heart, as well as revealed & developed her mind, she might count among the great women.

[56]

[symbol]

John Murray* writes to say that he has “been very anxious for some time past to get a book on Prayer on the same lines as Lord Ernle’s* now famous book ‘The Psalms in Human Life’, something to show the historical occasions with which prayers have been associated & the effect that they have had on individuals and communities.” He suggests that I might feel able to undertake such a book:-

“Seeing an article by you in the Sunday Times on Christian Prayer makes me wonder whether, by any chance, you have ever collated such material, & would feel inclined to put it into book form. It is, I think, a really attractive idea, & I am sure that you will forgive me for troubling you with the suggestion. Perhaps you will think it over & let me know whether you feel there is an opening for such a book.”

I did not hesitate to reply that “the .. [word cut off in photograph] .. was not for me.”

[57]

I received the following from Gilbert Murray.*

My dear Bishop,

[Herbert] Fisher* sent me on your letter, and I feel I must send you a line to say how glad I am that you are able to accept our invitation to do a book on the English Bible, and how much I was touched by your personal reference to me in your letter.

Ever yours sincerely,
Gilbert Murray.

Also, I received letters from John Wrightson, and Barbara Marsh, both concerning their matrimonial affairs! **The first asks me to assist when his Grace of Canterbury ties the knot between him & Rosemary, Lord Dawson's daughter. The last asks me to officiate at her marriage with "Jock McNeill, a gunner"**. I doubt if I can comply with either request since trains are few, slow, & inconvenient, and petrol is lacking.

In the afternoon we motored to Edwardstone and had tea with M^{rs} Corrie and her daughter. She is, through her husband, connected with L^d Halifax.

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[58?] [Nb. page no. and date inferred, left margin missing from photograph]

Saturday, 21st October, 1939.

[symbol]

I occupied the morning in writing a 5th Sermonette for the Sunday Times. My subject was "The Conquest of Circumstances", and my text, the inscription on Adrian VI's tomb in Santa Maria dell' Anima in Rome: "Proh Dolor! quantum refert in quae tempora vel optimi cuiusque virtus incidat", (Alas! how much do the efforts even of the best men depend on the quality of their times!)

In the afternoon we expended the remainder of our petrol ration for the month in motoring to Hitcham near Bilderston, where we had tea with Bishop and M^{rs} Maxwell Gumbleton. They report that the recent raid of the R.A.F. on Wilhelmshaven was carried out by men from the large aerodrome in their parish. They have been dealing with evacuates, who seem to have been as troublesome & thankless as the general experience certifies. There are, of course, exceptions, but the rule is nowise satisfactory.

Dashwood writes to explain his grievance against the Church Times.

<!221039>

[59]

20th Sunday after Trinity, October 22nd, 1939.

[symbol]

A fine day at last. As I walked to the church for the early service, I revelled in the glory of a brilliant sunrising. A purple cloud shaped like the island of Cuba concealed the God of Day, but his waxing beams provided a brilliant border both above & below. I kept turning back to look at it as I made my way westwards.

Ella and Fearne, being afflicted by colds, remained indoors.

[symbol in margin] I wrote to the "Methodist Record" declining a request to contribute an Article in a series entitled, "Why did God allow the War?" It might be sufficient to reply that the Almighty had not given me the requisite information. For me it is enough to say with the Psalmist: "Clouds & darkness are round about Him. Righteousness & judgment are the habitation of His seat". The dark mantle of Agnosticism is ever encroaching on the excessive area of self-confident dogmatism.

Ella and I went to church, & listened to a characteristic discourse from the phrase in the Acts: "Men that have hazarded their lives for the sake of the Name of the Lord Jesus".

<!231039>

[60]

Monday, October 23rd, 1939.

The Dean of Norwich writes to tell me that his Committee intend to persist with the arrangement for the lecture on January 22nd at 2.15 p.m., at which I have undertaken to hold forth on "Parish Life as centred round the Church in the Parish between the Reformation and the First Reform Act (1832)." There's yet another fool's errand to dissipate my pitifully inadequate & now plainly failing mental & physical forces!

[symbol in margin] *In the course of the morning a telephone message came to Ella announcing that her brother Jim had "passed away" by a heart attack in India. He was 68 years old, apparently hale though becoming deaf, and extremely active. I am disposed to envy him, for he has been "taken away from the evil to come": but I am sorry for Ella. She now remains the sole survivor of her generation of Dennistouns. Gilbert and I shall remain to represent our generation of Hensons. The world is in such confusion and misery that it hardly seems decent to let one's thought rest on a private sorrow.*

[61]

Old Canon [Alexander] Patterson* writes to making [sic] "the strange request "of asking my good wishes on his retirement in his 89th year. The Chapel of Bede College is ready for dedication, but all the arrangements for a considerable function have had to be abandoned on account of the War. He denounces the blunders of the Government and recalls Dickens's picture of "the Tite-Barnacles and their chief Lord Decimus Tite-Barnacle" in "Little Dorritt".

"I wish another Dickens would arise to deal with their modern successors."

The old man is an excellent representative of that older generation which gave service freely, without expecting or receiving payment. He is, of course, "out of touch with" the greedy hustlers who now crowd the arena of public life.

Miss Pearce writes to me, and adds a P.S. to her letter, "Thank you for your kind words about Ernest in the Westminster Gazette". But I have no recollection of having written anything about him in the W. G. or in any other paper.

<!241039>

[62]

Tuesday, October 24th, 1939.

[symbol]

A fine day. James is busy planting the rose trees, and setting the wall-flowers, bulbs, &c. But shall we be in the mood next spring to care anything at all about gardens?

I wrote a kind letter to old Canon Patterson on his retirement from diocesan office in his 89th year. Also, I wrote to Geoffrey Dawson* telling him about Jim's death. His wife was one of Clara's bride's maids, when Jim was married.

Also, I wrote to Arthur Rawle.*

[symbol in margin] John Murray writes in acknowledgment of my letter declining his suggestion that I should write a book on 'Prayer', similar to to Lord Ernle's "The Psalms in Human life".

"My idea was a volume on the historical association of various prayers in our liturgy & elsewhere, whether they were used at the time with the hoped-for result or not. A prayer on a scaffold before execution might certainly seem to be a failure if the execution followed, but it might have wonderful results on others. I hope that some day I may find some one with the [63] necessary skill, historical knowledge, & time to undertake the work – and I need hardly add that if any such person should occur to you, I should be most grateful for any advice. Someday, too, I hope to get a volume on Hymns on the same lines.

Also, I received a letter, signed F. Luke, and addressed from an address in Bournemouth. It begins by saying that the writer has "read with great interest my articles in the Sunday Times, and at a time when absolute belief in an immanent Providence is the first essential if universal despair is not to prevail, he ventures to give his personal view based wholly and entirely on a life's experience covering nearly 74 years." He states that he has been led

to the most absolute certainty that every step in his career has been watched & directed by a tireless beneficence, direct, continuous, intimate and meticulous..... He has found all the way through that everything works out unexpectedly for the best, & that one's own decisions are regulated by a [64] [symbol] mysterious inevitability beyond any power of foresight & independently of one's will. I have been as foolish, often reckless as most men, but throughout, He has brought me face to face with Him, and then led me o'er "crag and torrent" until I can say "Though He slay me, I will trust in Him." Would not the faith that can "move mountains" be vastly fortified if the Church now boldly preached a faith that is above "reason", and despite wars & tumults convincingly asserted that the Everlasting Arms are under us, & that He is always with us.

The writer, who is, of course, completely unknown to me, writes effectively, and gives the impression of sincerity, but I cannot wholly approve his religious attitude. Browning's weird

little poem entitled 'Johannes Agricola in Meditation' occurred to me. It is rather terrible, a creed of sheer fatalism though expressed in terms of theistic faith.

[65]

[*symbol*]

Priest, doctor, hermit, monk grown white
With prayer, the broken-hearted nun,
The martyr, the wan acolyte,
The incense-swinging child, – undone
Before God fashioned star – or – sun!
God, whom I praise; how could I praise,
If such as I might understand,
Make out and reckon on his ways,
And bargain for his love, and stand,
Paying a price, at his right hand?

[v. Poetical Works. vol. i. p. 516]

This is the Calvinist doctrine of reprobation powerfully stated: and, surely it is the negation of Christianity. Yet the wearisome persistence of the controversies, associated with Calvin's name, suggests that the repulsive dogma enshrines a spiritual truth. In this sphere one soon finds oneself like Milton's devils in hell who debated

Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate:
Fix'd – fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute:
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

"God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son to save the world."

<!251039>

[66]

Wednesday, October 25th, 1939.

Von Ribbentrop's speech in Dantzig is printed in full in the Times. He must be very sure of the complete ignorance of the German public to think it prudent to pour out such a tissue of falsehoods & paradoxes.

I revised, and posted the article for the S. T. Also, I replied civilly, but cautiously to M^r Luke's letter, suspecting that he might be a 'Groupist', and being nowise desirous of getting entangled in a correspondence with any of Buchman's* crew.

Harold Anson* gives me the option of cancelling my promise to preach in the Temple on Dec: 10th, and I think it would be wise to take it. Things are not too good for travelling now. They will be worse then. He writes:

"We get about 6 benchers, & about 100 people, but might hope to double it for you. No longer can the ungodly ask whether the psalmist had us in mind when he sang, "All they that are fat have eaten and worshipped"

[symbol] Roche* and I were both saying today, how much we look forward to the 'Sunday Times' article by you."

[67]

Lee, the Rector of Sproughton, had tea, & afterwards talked with me in my study. The population of his parish is slightly larger than that of Hintlesham. The two parishes have about 1500 parishioners. Moulsdale is deaf and lame, also 'invalidish': Lee is lame. Neither is married. In neither parish is anything whatever being done for the spiritual help of the lads between school-leaving and manhood. It is certainly excessive to say that 100 persons attend the Sunday services in the two parishes. In fact the Church of England does nothing for the rest. Nor is it easy to see what can be done: & certainly neither Moulsdale nor Lee is likely to try any experiments! I gave him one of my two remaining copies of "Spiritual Healing".

I wrote to Anson "crying off" the Temple Sermon on December 10th: and to Kate Pearce, who is sheltering in Exeter.

I received a friendly letter from Lord Woodbridge, who is at S^t Ives, and hopes to return home next week. He says that he was "much interested" by my last article in the S.T.

<!261039>

[68]

Thursday, October 26th, 1939.

The weather became very cold, and, in spite of a fire in my study, I felt 'perished'. My will to work is as feeble as my power is inadequate. Practically nothing was done. I wrote to Lord Woodbridge.

In the afternoon, I started for a solitary walk in the course of which I visited Washburnbrook church, which, though horribly restored, retains some features of interest. I lost my way, and after walking for more than 2 hours in the rain, got home about 5.15 p.m., tired, wet, & disgruntled! Then I read again Ronald Bayne's very interesting chapter on 'Religion' in the book 'Shakespeare's England'.

A.H. [Arthur Hine] has returned home, after a month's enjoyment of His Majesty's hospitality in the Prison at Norwich. I think that alike in his own interest and in that of the parish, he ought to go right away and start life again in a new environment: and this opinion I expressed to the Rector, who, however, by no means agreed with me. Yet, I must needs think that he is allowing sentiment to prevail against prudence.

[69]

1. [red tick] Deus le volt. (October 1st 1939)
2. [red tick] The Tradition of Faith & Duty. (Oct. 8th)
3. [red tick] Christian Prayer. (Oct. 15th)
4. [red tick] Belief in Divine Guidance. (Oct. 22nd)
5. [red tick] Circumstances. (Oct. 29th) v. p.58.
6. [red tick] The Paradox of Christendom (Nov. 5th)
7. [red tick] The Child in the Christian (Nov. 12th)
8. [red tick] Charity in Peace-making (Nov. 19th)
9. Christian Agnosticism (Nov. 26th)
10. Days of the Lord (Advent Sunday)
11. The Scriptures. (Bible Sunday)
12. Prophets.
13. Judgment.
- 14.

<!271039>

[70]

Friday, October 27th, 1939.

[symbol]

Still colder. With an uncomfortable conscience, I enjoy my study fire. If, coerced by the intolerable suggestion that, while I am relatively warm, Ella is absolutely cold, I invite the dear Lady to share my retreat, I am immediately confronted by the practical difficulty implied in her friendly desire to converse. The “urge” for imparting knowledge is as admirable as it is (from the point of view of a literary man) disabling. If, then, driven to protest against interruption, she takes flight: I am thrown back to my former embarrassment with an even worsened conscience!

[symbol in margin] I expended the day in writing another little sermonette for the ‘Sunday Times’. Truly a ridiculus mus! The extremely narrow limit of space – c. 500 ~~lines~~ words – to which I am restricted adds a formidable difficulty of its own. How rarely is it remembered that the problem of literary composition is largely one of compression! To write discursively is the hall mark of poor taste, and defective culture: but it is greatly stimulated by the bad modern fashion of dictation to short-hand writers.

<!281039>

[71]

Saturday, October 28th, 1939.

A dark, wet morning, and still very cold. The postponement of the change from summer time marvellously assists the normal reluctance to get out of bed, and when to these factors there must be added a collapse of the kitchen clock, it is nowise astonishing that I was called at least half an hour after the usual time; that the water in my bath was Laodicean, and that my shaving water was, I must needs think, drawn from the well, & not from the rain water tank! Hence I started the day under unfavourable conditions.

It occurred to me that the position of recusants & puritans in the parishes was germane to the subject of my Norwich lecture. I looked at the vol. 'Temperley of Hintlesham', and found on p. 55. reference to the suspicious conduct of the parson, Pagett, who attested falsely that his patron Nicholas Timperley [sic] was a conformist.

Ella and Fearne drove through the rain into Ipswich, and met Patrick Dennistoun on his arrival from London. He is 26 years old, and has no employment. Nor does he appear to have any qualifications, which would assist him to find any!

[72]

[symbol]

It occurred to me that Crabbe's poems might* contribute something to my Norwich lecture. His life (1754-1832) falls within the period which I am to deal with.

In the beginning of 1781, he wrote a letter to Burke,* describing his history, & saying that he w^d be in a debtor's prison unless within a week he c^d pay a debt of £14... Burke though a complete stranger, came to the rescue. He read Crabbe's poems, & persuaded Thurlow Dodsley to publish the "Library", the whole profits of which were liberally given by Dodsley to the author. Burke took Crabbe to stay with him at Beaconsfield, where the poet worked upon his next publication, "The Village". Through Burke he became acquainted with Reynolds and Johnson. Thurlow soon afterwards asked him to breakfast & gave him a banknote for £100, while apologising frankly for former neglect. The success of the 'Library', hastened by Burke's warm advocacy, at once gave Crabbe a position in literature. (L.S. in D.N.B.)

[73]

[symbol]

Yet History has her doubts, & every age
With sceptic queries marks the passing page;
Records of old nor later date are clear,
Too distant those & these are placed too near;
There time conceals the objects from our view,
Here our own passion and a writer's too.

"The Library".

Crabbe's career qualified him in unusual measure for the role which he set himself to play, viz: that of a fearlessly honest recorder and critic of his own age. He "had a system (less common than might be wished) of periodical 'incremations'". His children helped him at intervals to burn masses of manuscripts too vast to be safely consumed in the chimney" "His preaching attracted large congregations. He was a clergyman of the old-fashioned school, a good friend to the poor, for whose benefit he still practised medicine, and a preacher of good homespun morality. But he was indifferent to theological speculations, suspicious of excessive zeal, & contemptuous towards 'enthusiasts', & heartily opposed to Wesleyans, evangelicals, and other troublesome innovators."

<!291039>

[74]

21st Sunday after Trinity, October 29th, 1939.

[symbol]

A dark, wet morning. I stayed at home, & (with a nagging conscience) neglected my religious duty. We went to Mattins, & read the lessons. The buzz of conversation in the church before the service is rather scandalous, but I do not think the rector, whose deafness grows on him, hears it, nor would it greatly distress him if he did. When everything is made to turn on the Mass and the Confessional, little heed is taken of anything else.

After lunch Patrick Dennistoun and I walked for about 2 hours. The weather had cleared, and the county in its autumnal colouring was charming. I catechised him on New Zealand, but did not learn much that I did not know already; but I was certainly very unfavourably impressed by his account of the morals of his own generation; nor did I notice any adequate repugnance on his own part to opinions and practices which certainly cannot be brought within the description of Christian behaviour or belief. He has a full measure of colonial self-sufficiency, and probably regards me as a pitiable specimen of bigotry & obstructive conservatism!

[75]

I wrote to Dick [Elliott]* who is now stationed in Gloucestershire: to Martin Ellingsen* in Darlington: and to Maughan, who had asked me whether he could get hold of the volume "Wartime Sermons", which I published in 1915. [symbol] All three of these young parsons say that they are reading with interest & profit my weekly sermonettes in the Sunday Times. I am so completely in the dark as to the quality and value of those little compositions that I "lap up" greedily anything that can lead me to think well of them!

Crabbe's description of 'Sects & Professions in Religion' has considerable value as a picture of the normal Anglican attitude in the later XVIIIth century – tolerant but contemptuous, indifferent to doctrine, hostile to enthusiasm, and supremely contented with "things as they are."

Minds are for sects of various kinds decreed,
As different soils are form'd for diff'rent seed;

The papists have a small place in the picture.

Among her (Rome's) sons with us a quiet few,
Obscure themselves, her ancient state review,
And fond & melancholy glances cast
On power insulted, & on p???? triumph passed.

[s.c. the Borough.]

<!301039>

[76]

Monday, October 30th, 1939.

[symbol]

A dull morning, threatening more rain, but not, perhaps, quite so cold.

The Editor of the Guardian makes yet another appeal to me to contribute to his columns.

I still have hope of your expressing "Moral Indignation". There is enough to stir it etc.

Of course there is; but what conceivable value attaches to mouthing platitudes about the world's wickedness, when the War against it is actually in progress. He sends me a windy canting effusion, drafted by Canon Barry, & formulating a world programme of prophetic witness for the "Guardian", which now modestly casts itself for the rôle of the World's Redeemer! Did you ever? It is the cult and service of Words, & the assumption that they are the equivalents of Deeds that are the shadows of democracy, and make intelligible even these revolting Dictatorships. I have always refused to sign the incessant declarations on every conceivable subject which flow so freely from Lambeth & Bishopthorpe; how can I start now?

[77]

[symbol]

I was so incommoded by headache that I could do no useful work. So I wasted the morning in writing letters. 1) to the Guardian disclaiming the "prophetic" rôle to which the Editor would commit me; 2) to Charles Pattinson. * [symbol] I received a letter from Martin Kiddle, * who has left his parish (Ch. Ch. Harrogate) to the care of the Bishop of Knaresborough, & become an Army Chaplain. He is now attached to two large camps, one being a Royal Artillery Training Camp, & the other, the First Army Signals. There are about 900 men in each camp; & he has applied to go to France with the Royal Signals early in the Spring. He seems contented with his position, but observes that there is little evidence of religion apart from the compulsory Church services.

"At our celebration of the H.C. we get only about a dozen men from both camps, & so far no officer has come."...

Only two interests in their leisure time – the cinema, & the friendship of the opposite sex."

All the men are 20 years of age.

<!311039>

[78]

Tuesday, October 31st, 1939.

[symbol]

My brother Arthur's [Arthur Henson]* birthday. He would have been 77 today. In bed this morning before being called, I read some lines in Crabbe's "the Borough" which could not but remind me of him, as he was when I saw him last at Minehead:-

Lo! Where on that huge anchor sadly leans
That sick tall figure, lost in other scenes.
He late from India's clime impatient sail'd
There, as his fortune grew, his spirits fail'd;

.....

Is it not strange that man sh^d health destroy,
For Joys that come when he is dead to joy?

My brother was from his boyhood a "business man", and went to India, while yet in his teens. He worked hard; took little rest; made a fortune; & then returned with broken health to his native land to live yet a few years dejectedly, & thus woefully to pass away. He was neither mean nor ungenerous. He had the reputation in his commercial set of a hard, but upright merchant; his employees were devoted to him; and he was certainly, in his own rather grim way, an affectionate husband and brother. But he had [79] [symbol] become indifferent to religion, & disposed to take a cynical view of life. God had sent "leanness withal into his soul." And yet in his own queer way, I think he was religious. We are all strangers to one another. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with the Joy thereof." My own life has been widely different from his; & my problems have been mostly on another plane; I have not, like Matthew Arnold's "Scholar Gipsy" been

Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled brings;

Indeed, I suspect that I must be counted among the melancholy multitude,

Light half-believers of our casual creeds, who are Sadducees of our time,
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives
And each half lives a hundred different lives.

[80]

[symbol]

D^r Everett called in response to my message, & examined my blood-pressure, which he pronounced to be satisfactory. I told him of the giddiness and headache, which have been bothering me latterly, and he was not greatly impressed. However, he undertook to "send me a bottle", and advised me to get some stronger spectacles. D^r E. is a rather stout man,

who gives one the impression of no great measure of robustness. He was under the impression – mistaken as I think – that he had met me years ago in Cambridge.

In the afternoon, Ella and I walked to the Church at Washbrook, but the light was so bad that we could hardly see it sufficiently.

[symbol]

Shebbeare, the Rector of Stanhope, sent me his latest publication, a little volume on "The Problem of the Future Life". On the title page he gives prominence to the fact that he is "Master of the Wear Valley Beagles". St Paul's phrase descriptive of some hereticks [sic] of his day, "Whose glory is in their shame" came to mind. His active patronage of "blood sports" is, however, his one clear title to be regarded as an excellent parish priest who understands country people!*

NOVEMBER

<011139>

[81]

Wednesday, November 1st, 1939.

[symbol]

After the example of the late Archbishop Laud, I record the important fact that last night I had a dream, vivid and absurd. I was in the House of Lords laying about me with a hammer, & just as their Lordships were rising in their places, unspeakably scandalized, I awoke, & behold it was a dream. The impression on my mind was so strong, that it was some while before I could shake off the feeling of a real experience.

The Dean of Norwich sends me a typescript of the letter on "Slipshod English", which he addressed to the Times some weeks ago, & which was not published. It deserved publishing far more than many letters which are published in that journal. But, to my surprise, he defends the use of the word "évacuée", & rejects "evacuate" because the Dictionary contains no such word. Of course it doesn't. A new word has to be coined. The point is how may this be done. I maintain that the right process would produce "evacuate".

[82]

[symbol]

Sir Charles Peers* writes in melancholy mood:

"Frustration is the word. I am cut off from everything that I really want to do. I am supposed to get such satisfaction as is obtainable from the reported death of Teutons! To this is our world come, after a long and costly "war to end war", only 25 years ago. etc etc.

We old men in our seventies are humiliated by our uselessness, & fretful under our inconveniences. If (as seems probable) we are to be so rationed in coal and light – to say nothing of food – our only relief from intolerable boredom, reading & writing, will be withdrawn and as we are immobilized by "black-outs", and lack of petrol we are secluded from intercourse with friends. It certainly is an unpleasant outlook; &, all the while, when we yield to the besetting sin of discontent, our consciences scourge us with the thought, that, while all the best of the nation are in mortal risk to life & limb we are "idle mouths" in the relative luxury of home!

I walked for an hour & a half in the Hadleigh direction, and returned to the house in time to listen to the 4 p.m. wireless.

<!021139>

[83]

Thursday, November 2nd, 1939.

[symbol]

I received a long and rather moving letter from Hedley Thompson, my "little airman".

He narrates his experience since the war began, which have been thrilling; and discloses his view of the war in a very frank & suggestive manner. It is evident that "the iron has entered into his soul", and that, though he "does out" his perilous duty with courage & determination, his conscience is uneasy, and his loathing of War deep and reasoned. The idealism which comes so easily to non-combatants fails to lighten the tasks off those who are actually serving.

I wrote to him, at some length, bidding him not to deprive himself of the courage & comfort of the conviction that he is fighting for a Cause, which is adequate and rightfully exacting. I urged him to "endure as seeing Him who is invisible". He sent me his photograph. It shows the face of a young man, (he is only 22,) with (so it seems to me) a look of questioning melancholy, which reflects a too early familiarity with the darker problems of our human lot.

[84]

[symbol]

Also, I wrote to Peers; and to the Dean of S. Paul's.

It was something of a relief to hear from John Wrightson,* that he assumes that I cannot conveniently assist at his wedding in London. I cannot bring myself to think that such an object provides an adequate justification for the bother and expense of a pilgrimage to Babylon in these days of "Black-outs" and petrol rationing.

[symbol] The more I read about the Church in the ~~17~~ 18th century, the more impossible it appears to make out a satisfactory case for maintaining that parochial life "centred round the Parish Church". Of course everybody had to be baptized and married there; & the grave yard provided a burying place for all who died within the parish. Confirmation was intermittent, and almost without preparation. The Church door carried all official notices, but as most of the parishioners couldn't read, those did not greatly interest them. The dull services were occasionally enlivened by public penance!"

<!031138>

[85]

Friday, November 3rd, 1939.

The weather is becoming milder. Are we to have a S Martin's summer after all? Anyway, the change of temperature may have been the cause of an incapacitating headache, which incommoded me badly all the morning.

I received a long & interesting letter from Sir James Irvine. * He is in fairly good spirits about the war, but rather doubtful about the U-boats.

The figures quoted by Government do not comfort me, and Churchill boasted a little too soon; that is a weak point in our armour I greatly fear.

The position on land may well prove to be a stale-mate if neutral frontiers are respected, and I don't suppose the Allies will force the pace in any sense, knowing that Generals January and February are like to be on our side.

We motored to Copdock, &, having transferred our Evacuate Peggy, to her new house, we had tea with M^{rs} Hempson, who is a niece of old Sir Bunnell Burton.* She said that her uncle had been organist of S Mary-le-Tower in Ipswich & had organized its choir.

[86]

[symbol]

"Nothing is more absurd than an old Child"

Whichcote's Aphorisms. 372

Tillotson, in his funeral Sermon upon Whichcote emphasizes his willingness to learn to the last.

"knowing, that no man can grow wiser, without ~~gaining some knowledge~~, some change of his mind, without gaining some knowledge, which he had not, or correcting some error which he had before"

Tillotson thought that 'studious & inquisitive men commonly at such an age (at forty, or fifty at utmost) have fixed and settled their judgments in most points; and, as it were, made their best understanding; supposing that they have thought, or read, or heard, what can be said on all sides of things, and after that, they grow positive and impatient of contradiction; thinking it a disparagement to them, to alter their judgment.

Time should bring (1) increase of knowledge. (2) self-control. (3) self-criticism. (4) tolerance – e.g. Bagehot's observation, that Shakespeare had an "experiencing nature".

[87]

[symbol]

Childlikeness must not be identified with childishness. When the wise & devoted Whichcote says in one of his famous "Aphorisms" that "nothing is more absurd than an old child", he is not forgetful of the Master's warning that "except we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom", but correlating it with the Master's general teaching, and with the plain ~~teaching~~-witness of experience. "Shew yourselves tried bankers" is, according to Bishop Westcott, "the most commonly quoted of all Apocryphal sayings, and seems to be genuine". Its sense, ^{^he^} says, ~~the same xxxx~~ "would be given by, 'Put your talent to good use'". Responsibility is the hall-mark of ~~maturity~~ manhood, as its absence is distinctive of childhood. To say of an old man that he is childlike is to indicate that he may well be a saint; to say that he is childish is all one with declaring him senile. We speak of "boyishness" as an attractive characteristic in a ^{^grown^} man, but we do not mean a compliment when we describe an ~~man~~ adult as not "grown up". We reverence childlikeness but we despise & despise & deprecate childishness.

<!041139>

[88]

Saturday, November 4th, 1939.

[symbol]

I received a very good-tempered reply to my rather brutal letter from the Editor or the Guardian. He is a long-suffering man, but rather obtuse if he still cherishes any expectation of effective contributions from me to his perishing paper!

I wasted the morning in writing the leader-sermon for the Sunday Times, heading it "The Child in the Christian". It does not please me, but it must serve.

What machinery exists for so re-constructing the human mind that its more flagrant defects may be remedied, when, by time and use, they have assumed the character of "second nature"? My wife's lack of reasonable system appears to be quite incorrigible. She is eager to take, and carry away, letters & papers from my study. Whether she reads them, I cannot say, though I doubt it; but as to her rarely, if ever returning them, I can speak with decision. She never does, until with vast expenditure of time, trouble, and temper, they have been recovered. It really is extraordinarily exasperating, and an entirely unnecessary addition to the worries & inconveniences of life.

<!051139>

[89]

22nd Sunday after Trinity, November 5th, 1939.

[symbol]

I have been reading Shebbeare's little book – "The Problem of the Future Life" -, and I find myself surprized, almost staggered, by its curiously inadequate presentation of the case which he claims to examine and demolish, and its audacious endorsement of the popular beliefs. He is an Universalist & believes in the resurrection of the body – very literally even carnally understood. Many of his criticisms on modern philosophers appear to be to be both just and acute: but the main effect of his argument on my mind tends rather to alienate than to persuade. I think an attitude of frank agnosticism is more reasonable in itself, more congruous with the deep perplexity of the question at issue, and, on the whole, more satisfying, morally and intellectually. But I am no philosopher, only an extremely unworthy & embarrassed disciple. I am not really much interested in the speculations, with which Shebbeare concerns himself, & which appear to fascinate the multitude of half-educated & uneducated people. It is enough for me to say with S. Paul, "Now I see in a mirror darkly". The discussion breeds more doubt than belief.

[90]

[HHH repeats the date in the margin with (continued) beneath it]

[symbol] Guy Fawkes Day made an ill start. Nancy called me late, and brought me hard water from the well instead of rain-water from the butt. She said she didn't, but, though the reason be superficial affecting only the skim, yet it is convincing. I shaved with pain and fear!

[symbol] If that abominable Hitler had not intervened, I should have preached in All Souls Chapel today, and renewed as an hon^y Fellow a contact with the College which I began as a probationer fellow 55 years ago. How different was the aspect of the world, and my outlook on it then! Some people would, perhaps consider that, taking everything into account, my career had been successful. But, "he sent leanness withal into their soul". I seem as I review my life, to have failed in everything to which I set my hand. And now the War has wrecked my retirement. The little literary projects, which I had formed, are all arrested or cancelled; and the war-taxation ensures a measure of financial pressure which may "drive me into the wilderness". "Forsake me not, O God, in my old age when I am greyheaded".

[91]

[symbol]

I wrote to Shebbeare thanking him for his book, & indicating my inability to accept a theory of Heaven which accorded better with the religion of Mohammed than with that of Christ. After reading it, I am rather surprised that the Dean of S. Paul's should have commended it in a short preface.

We attended Mattins, when I read the lessons, and, after the service, celebrated the Holy Communion. Moulsdale preached about the Saints, but **where I sate within the rails, I had difficulty, not in hearing his voice, but in disentangling his words.**

[next 2 paras crossed though to end of page]

My “sermonette” appeared in the Sunday Times and reads harmlessly enough. It appears under the heading “The Paradox of Christendom”.

I wrote to the Editor of the Courier, who had asked me to use my acquaintance with Lord Halifax [Edward Wood]* in the interest of his paper, which is about to give up the ghost after immersing him in expenditure of £12,000! I said that my acquaintance with his Lordship was too slight to justify me in approaching him on such an errand. My article “Whither Humanity?” appears in its “swan-song” issue – but brings me no shekels!

[92]

Crabbe’s preface, dated September 1807, is both interesting and informing. It includes his homage to his patrons, Burke, Reynolds, Johnson, Charles James Fox, and Lord Thurlow, and also to the R^{ev} Richard Turner, minister off Great Yarmouth. He defends himself against the charge “that nothing occurs, unless it be incidentally, of the great subjects of religion” and patriotism. He states his purpose in writing thus:-

“In the “Parish Register”, he will find an endeavour to describe village-manners, not by adopting the notion of pastoral simplicity or assuming ideas of rustic barbarity, but by more natural views of the peasantry, considered as a mixed body of persons, sober or profligate, and hence, in a great measure, contented or miserable. To this more general description are added the various characters which occur in the three parts of a Register: Baptisms, Marriages, and Funerals”.

The general impression created on the mind is extremely distressing.

[93]

[symbol]

Just after lunch a violent thunderstorm broke over Hintlesham. The lightening was vivid and frequent, the thunder-claps tremendous; and both accompanied and followed by appropriate deluges of rain. The elements are as disordered as the minds of men!

Lord Woodbridge,* replying to the letter, in which I had told him that on Wednesday next I shall enter on my 77th year, writes:

Seven always appear to me a lucky number and when you get two sevens side by side, it would appear to be doubly so. Adsit omen. It is most difficult for me, and doubtless for others, to realize from your looks, conversation, and writing that you are not twenty years younger than you say you are.

Crabbe’s Poem “The Squire and the Priest” is an admirable satire on the Anglican parson in the 18th century.

Remember well what love and age advise;
A quiet rector is a parish prize
Who loves his glebe, his patron, & his ease,
And finds the way to fame and profit is to please.

<!071139>

[94]

Tuesday, November 7th, 1939.

[page struck through in pen]

A mild damp day, limp and depressing.

The Dean of S. Paul's writes to hold me to my promise to preach in the Cathedral on 19th November, and he says:

"If all goes pretty much as at present, we shall have the White Lectures, but earlier perhaps at 2.30. We will see how things are nearer the time, but please prepare them if at all possible. I know how difficult it is to read about anything except the scoundrels who are breaking up the world. Our eldest son goes into the Navy next Friday.

Then he refers to Inge's* present attitude:

My predecessor seems to be getting into dubious company. I notice that he was a prominent member of the society calling itself "Christian Settlement League" which has xxxxx absorbed many of the members of "the Link". Some of these people are Nazi agents I think.

Inge has the timidity off a scholar, and the recklessness of an academic doctrinaire!

[95]

My birthday is not wholly forgotten. Presents have actually been sent.

1. [symbol] Honey. From Dick, the Rector of Gorleston
2. [symbol] A silk scarf from Welby, the Vicar of Ushaw Moor.
3. [symbol] A silver skewer from M^{rs} Braley.
4. [symbol] Her photograph from Nancy Wynne-Willson
5. A book from Ella.
6. Handkerchiefs from Ella & Fearn.
7. a box of sweet-meats from Fearn.
8. [symbol] Telegram from Linetta
9. [symbol] " " Charles & Christina
10. " " Donald Nicholson.
11. Letter from Arthur Rawle
12. " " Bishop of Durham
13. " " Canon Braley
14. " " Jack Clayton.
15. " " Dick
16. " " Betty
17. " " Mary Radford
18. " " Gerald Rainbow.

19. “ “ Alfred Spelling
20. “ “ Martin Ellingsen.
21. “ “ Alexander.
- [symbol] 22. [symbol] Letter from Jack Boden-Worsley
23. “ “ Hitchcock

<!081139>

[96]

Wednesday, November 8th, 1939.

1863 - 1939

An almost uncomfortably warm day, with sunshine and some wind.

I worked at a little sermon for the service next Sunday, but made little progress.

In the afternoon, I motored to Abbey Oaks, and had tea with Lord Woodbridge, with whom was a pretty young lady, a friend of his daughter, named M^{rs} Phillimore.

On my return to Hyntle Place, I wrote letters of thanks to the following:-

Prebendary Clayton
Christina
Nancy Wynne-Willson.
Braley
M^{rs} Braley
The Bishop of Durham.

Braley told me that the Chapel of Bede College had been dedicated by my successor, and that the Bishop of Durham made some friendly reference to me in the course of his address. It was kind of his Lordship to remember my birthday.

[97]

“Yet is there nothing man can do
When chilling Age comes creeping on?
Cannot we yet some good pursue?
Are talents buried? genius gone?
If passions slumber in the breast,
If follies from the heart be fled;
Of laurels let us go in quest,
And place them on the poet’s head.

Yes, we’ll redeem the wasted time,
And to neglected studies flee’
We’ll build again the lofty rhyme,
Or live, Philosophy with thee;
For reasoning clear, for flight sublime,
Eternal fame reward shall be;
And to what glorious heights we’ll climb,
Th’ admiring crowd shall envying see.

Begin the song! Begin the theme!

Alas! And is Invention dead?
Dream we no more the golden dream?
Is Memry [sic] with her treasure fled?

[98]

Yes, 'tis too late, - now Reason guides
The mind, sole judge in all debate;
And thus th' important point decides,
For laurels, 'tis, alas! too late.
What is possessed we may retain,
But for new conquests strive in vain.

Beware, then, Age, that what was won,
If life's past labours, studies, views,
Be lost not, now the labour's done,
When all thy part is, - not to lose.
When thou canst toil or gain no more,
Destroy not what was gained before.

For all that's gain'd of all that's good,
When time shall his weak frame destroy,
(Their use then rightly understood,)
Small man, in happier state, enjoy.
Oh! Argument for truth divine,
For study's cares, for virtue's strife.
To know th' enjoyment will be thine.
In that renew'd, that endless life!

Crabbe "Reflections" [Works 1. 234]

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[99]

Thursday, November 9th, 1939.

[symbol]

The post brought another sheaf of Birthday letters. I was particularly pleased to hear from my God-son, Alfred Spelling* and Betty Bruce Steer.

I am not sure that I am pleased or alarmed by hearing from the Cambridge Press that they will "be publishing 'The Church of England' on November 22nd".

We had tea very pleasantly with old Sir Bunnell Burton.*

Shebbeare writes in self-defence; but not, I think, effectively. He admits that he can carry with him in his conception of Heaven neither Dean Mathews* nor Clement Webb.* On returning to Hyntle Place I wrote to Betty Bruce Steer, to my godson, Alfred Spelling, to [Ernest] Alexander. Letter writing becomes a rather serious drain on one's time & energy, but it were too ungracious to leave "Birthday letters" unacknowledged.

A bomb exploded in Munich soon after Hitler had made a particularly truculent speech. His colleagues escaped with him, but several persons were killed & many wounded. It has a suggestively close resemblance to the Reichstag Fire!

<!101139>

[100]

Friday, November 10th, 1939.

[symbol]

The papers are filled with alarming reports from Holland, where the probability of a German invasion grows stronger. The enormous expenditure which Hitler imposes on all the neutrals within his reach is crippling. Germany, armed to the teeth, has become a mad dog in Europe, & nothing seems possible except her complete defeat & disarmament, if self-respecting existence is to survive on that continent. The outrage in Munich is increasingly regarded as one more device of the Nazi to recover their hold on the miserable nation, which has been shewing [sic] signs of recalcitrance. Even German docility must have reached the limit of its senile gullibility. But the machinery of despotism has been elaborated with the efficiency which only the dedication of intellect untrammelled by morality can secure, and the iron of oppression has so deeply entered into the German soul that the normal resilience of the human spirit, when crushed by the brutalities of power, is almost completely paralysed. Still, even so, there are some tender shoots of hope discernible in the wasted land which Hitler & his myrmidons hold in bondage.

[101]

[symbol]

I employed the morning in completing the sermon for tomorrow. It is probably wasted effort, for the congregation will almost certainly be composed of evacuees too young, peasants too ignorant, and a handful of more grown & intelligent people who are too bored, to give audience to anything worth my saying!

In the afternoon we went to Wenham and had tea with Miss Crisp. I was glad of the opportunity to visit again the Tower in her grounds, and the old parish church just outside. On returning to Hyntle Place, I wrote some more answers to "Birthday Letters".

The time is passing, and nothing is being done on the works to which I am pledged viz:

1. The Lecture in Norwich on January 22th.
2. The Write Lectures in S. Paul's during Lent.
3. The Warburton Lectures in Lincoln's Inn.

It seems almost impossible to bring my mind to any serious and convincing task. Even these ridiculous little weekly sermonettes for the Sunday Times demand a quite exorbitant expenditure of time and thought! Eheu!

<!111139>

[102]

Saturday, November 11th, 1939.

[symbol]

A heavy mist enwrapped the country when day began.

I expended the whole morning in writing a poor little sermonette for the Sunday Times, which I headed, not very suitably, "Charity in Peace-making". I am rather humiliated by the amount of labour involved in the production of 500 words. Indeed, I suspect it would be easier to write more.

After lunch I walked for an hour. The sun shining through the autumn-tinted trees gave a distinctive glory to the country. The oaks in the Park (so many of them as have survived the criminal destruction of timber which has marked this autumn) specially moved my admiration.

The Times reports a remarkably able and suggestive speech of Sir Neville Henderson,* addressed yesterday to the Press Club. He is now out of office, and evidently feels himself free to express his opinions frankly. The contrast between him and the ridiculous Ribbentrop, to say nothing of the jocosely brutal Goring, and the unspeakable Göbbells [sic] is so extreme that it "leaps to the eyes". And, of course Hitler!

<!121139>

[103]

23rd [Sunday after Trinity], November 12th, 1939.

[symbol]

A misty morning gave place to a fine still day.

Fearne and I went to Church at 8 a.m., & received the Holy Communion. A. H. was in church, but did not communicate. It must be rather terrible for him to be again among his familiars.

After breakfast we listened to a broadcast service in Durham Cathedral. The Dean's voice in the lessons & prayers "came through" excellently, and so did the Bishop's [Alwyn Williams*] sermon, which seemed to me excellent in substance & form. Nor did it appear to me ill delivered. I cannot understand why he is described as a "dull preacher". If this discourse be representative, I do not endorse the description.

My sermonette entitled "the Child in the Christian" appears in the Sunday Times. I wrote at some length to Dick [Elliott]* answering his rather difficult question in the everlasting perplexity of fraternizing with, or keeping aloof from, Non-episcopal ministers. The clergy in Gloucestershire appear to be rigidly exclusive, as, perhaps, might be expected in a diocese which has been governed, first by [Edgar] Gibson,* and then by [Arthur] Headlam.*

[104]

[symbol]

We lunched pleasantly at Grundisburgh Hall with Lord and Lady Cranworth. With them was a stout girl who works as a V. A. D. in Hertfordshire, and the local Vicar, Verity and his wife. The house is an old one, part belonging to the 15th and part to the 16th century. The Gurdons appear to have been an old and important family, ~~which came into Suffolk about 200 years ago~~. The service in Grundisburgh Church was well attended. I preached the sermon which I had prepared, but the desk was too low, and the light too little, so that I delivered it badly. The congregation was attentive, but, I fear, more bored than edified. Colonel Smith and 3 ladies were in the church. After the service the Vicar shewed me his church. It is interesting on several counts. The roof of the nave, the chancel screen, and the font are notable, but the brick tower (nearly 18th century) was incongruous, and so far decayed as to be unable to sustain the ringing of the (8) bells. I was well impressed by the Vicar and his wife. M^{rs} V. Is a fine-looking woman. They have three pretty children.

<!131139>

[105]

Monday, November 13th, 1939.

[symbol]

It occurred to me that I might find subjects for my weekly sermonettes in the changes respecting divers subjects which, in the course of my life-time have taken place, illustrating the word of S. John "The world passeth away". It is in itself suggestive & interesting to indicate the instability of that "climate of opinion" which subtly but surely determines individual points of view, providing what might almost be described as the postulates of "private judgement". Thus the following illustrations of dramatic change might be discussed in successive weeks:-

1. Germany. Kingsley's "The Roman & the Teuton".
2. Feudalism. "The Waverley Novels".
3. The Byzantine Empire. Gibbon's "Decline & Fall".
4. The Papacy. "The Ecclesiastical Titles Act".
5. The Salvation Army. Huxley's "Corybantic Christianity".
6. Biblical Criticism. "Essays & Reviews".

The final summary might be entitled "The Verdict of History". But could such subjects be brought under the description of "religious or semi-religious articles", which I undertook to write?

[106]

[symbol]

I wasted most of the morning in reading that most valuable book Coulton's* "The Medieval Village". It must stand alongside the books of Tawney* and [(John) Lawrence] Hammond*, as providing the starting-point of the discussion to which I am unfortunately committed by my promise to lecture in Norwich on [symbol] "Parochial life as centred in the Parish Church". The more I read the more pitifully meagre seems to be the part played by the Church in the people's life.

I walked for 1 3/4 hours, having missed my way, and, by consequence, perhaps over-exerted myself. When I returned, I was fit for nothing more strenuous than to sit in my chair, by the fire, & read a novel! Ella had given me as a birthday gift an American novel - "Unfinished Cathedral" by T. S. Stripling. The Author is said to be popular as well as prolific. His book may stand with Upton Sinclair's nauseous productions, "Oil", and "Elmer Gantry", as giving a naked & horrifying picture of America's "seamy side". Business, religion, the law-courts, lynching, and sexual life are all set out with a frankness which sometimes becomes lubricity.

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[107]

Tuesday, November 14th, 1939.

[symbol]

This is my sister Marion's birthday. She was one of God's saints. Her miserable death in the torture of cancer cast an enduring sadness on my life. How often do I long for her presence with me now in the dereliction of old age! But, as God lives, she is in peace, & in the light of His Favour. "Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints!"

The Cambridge Press invites me to suggest names of persons, to whom copies of the book "with my compliments" should be sent. Accordingly, I had the impudence to suggest the following:

1. Lord Baldwin
2. -"- Halifax
3. -"- Roche
4. The Lord Chancellor
5. Lord Hugh Cecil
6. D. Inge
7. Bishop of Durham
8. D. Jacks
9. Editor of Manchester Guardian
10. -"- The Spectator
11. -"- Sunday Times
12. Sir John Simon
13. Lord Scarbrough
14. Sir Charles Grant Robertson
15. A. P. Herbert
16. J. A. Spender

[108]

[symbol]

I wasted the whole morning in partly rewriting and revising last Sunday's sermon with a view to repeating it in S. Paul's next Sunday morning.

Colonel Smith with his 3 ladies came to tea. When they had taken their departure, and Ella and I had posted the letters, I wrote to Sybil, Lady Eden,* who had sent me a kindly expressed "Birthday Letter". The poor lady is herself in the seventies, and more lonely than ever. She writes:

"I lunched at the Castle the other day... They were very kind, but such a different atmosphere. I thought [Ernest] Alexander* looked well but not too happy...

I liked your article in the S. T. the other day..... There is no one in the whole country with any of your brains now... The clergy realize the difference.

This is the bleating of a soured woman, who intends to please, but only succeeds in annoying. But, of course, the atmosphere must be different now but not by any means necessarily worse.

<!151139>

[109]

Wednesday, November 15th, 1939.

[symbol]

We lunched with Lord Woodbridge. * There were present Lord & Lady De Saumarez, who live at Shrubland Park, Coddham, Ipswich. Lady du S. is a Swede. They were very civil, and asked us to lunch on November 26th. Also, there was of the party, Brig-General Sir Archibald Home, who lives near Bury S. Edmund's, and a General Stockwell, who had been much in Germany & was strongly Anti-Semitic. He did not impress me so favourably.

I received a friendly letter from Lady Cranworth thanking me for my "wonderful" sermon in Grundisburgh! Also. to the same effect from the Vicar. I must assume that the "performance" was "successful!"

[symbol] Lord Woodbridge was moved by my sermonette in last Sunday's paper to copy out for my benefit some lines from a poem by Edward Clodd, "The Childhood of the World".

God gives thee youth but once. Keep then
The childlike heart that will His Kingdom be
The soul pure-eyed that wisdom-led, e'en now
His blessed face shall see.

He said that it was Clodd's only essay in verse.

[110]

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Parker and Grindal, laid down the noble principle of welcoming all things and fearing nothing. When they declared of the Geneva Bible that "it sh^d nothing hinder but rather do much good to have diversity of translations and readings", and suggested to Cecil that the license to print sh^d not provide that the impression sh^d be submitted to their official oversight. This principle was to become more & more characteristic of the English Church. It is indeed the breath of her being. It was at this very moment that Rome made the first formal promulgation of the index:

v. [Richard] Dixon* vol. v. p. 332;3.

"N. B. the first list of prohibited books was put forth by the dying hand of Paul IV in 1559. His Index includes all Bibles in modern languages, enumerating 48 editions chiefly printed in countries still within the obedience of the Church. The index had been in existence from about 1543" [Ibid].

<!161139>

[111]

Thursday, November 16th, 1939.

[symbol]

The day began badly. It was a dark morning and the maids overslept with the result that everything was distressingly late, & I lost much valuable time and (comparatively) good temper before I could even make a start on my work.

Rain fell persistently throughout the day. Accordingly I remained indoors, and wrote (with absurdly excessive effort) another little sermonette for the "Sunday Times". I headed it "Christian Agnosticism".

I received an inquiry as to the apocryphal saying which I quoted in last week's sermonette viz. "Be ye prudent bankers". [symbol] It was sent on from Auckland Castle by Gervase Markham, who is now living as domestic chaplain to my successor. He has been going through "the records of the various perplexities & scandals that occurred during my Episcopate, & which were preserved in the Chaplain's room..." Time and again", he says, "I have admired the lucidity & accuracy of the judgement you have delivered at the end of the correspondence: only in one case did it have to be reconsidered".

<!171139>

[112]

Friday, November 17th 1939.

[symbol]

Jack Clayton* writes to tell me that the Lord Chancellor has offered to nominate him to a residentiary canonry in Norwich Cathedral. My account of him to the Dean must have been satisfactory as he says that he "received a cordial welcome from the Dean and Chapter". He was "quite frank about "his" very Latitudinarian (not Modernist) churchmanship". But he has not yet accepted appointment, and is going through the conventional cycle of consulting friends &c. The new Lord Chancellor (Inskip)* has made good start in the treatment of his ecclesiastical patronage. It is odd that his first nomination should be offered to a former chaplain of mine.

I wasted yet another morning over that abominable lecture. It is hard to say which is my major difficulty - the paucity of relevant material or the abundance of irrelevant!

After lunch I walked for an hour & a quarter and later wrote to Gervase Markham and to Gerald Rainbow.*

Also, I wrote to Jack Clayton exhorting him to accept the Norwich Canonry.

<!181139>

[113]

Saturday, November 18th, 1939.

[symbol]

A dull day, which turned to wet as it advanced. James drove me to the station at Ipswich, where I took train for London. It left at 10.4 am and arrived fairly to time at 10.50 a.m. I was agreeably surprized to find that it was not unduly crowded. My compartment was shared by two sailor lads returning to their training ship, and a rather garrulous young man who looked like a commercial traveller.

[symbol] On arriving at Liverpool Street, I drove through strangely empty streets to the Athenaeum, where I deposited my bags and my gas-mask. (In deference to the insistence of my ladies I carried this disgusting instrument slung round my neck). It hampered my movements, damaged my appearance, & destroyed my bodily comfort. I observed that nobody in London appeared to be wearing a gas-mask. After the hairdresser had finished his task, not without many severe observations on the ignorance & inefficiency of the Boeotian or rustic artists, I drove to Duke Street [114] [symbol] and visited an ~~oculist~~ optician, named Owen Hopkins, whom M^{rs} Murray had highly commended. He explained that he only provided spectacles on the direction of an ~~optician~~ oculist. *I told him what my own ~~optician~~ oculist had said, & how he had advised me to continue my present practice of assisting my spectacles by using a hand-held magnifying glass. With this he agreed: and finally I expended a guinea on a small magnifying glass to be carried in the pocket.* Then I returned to the Athenaeum for lunch. In the smoking room I fell in with [Lancelot] Percival,* who had come up for his duty at the Chapel Royal, and was staying in the Club. **He said that, in the opinion of the City, the war would end in the spring.** As I was leaving the luncheon room, I was addressed by a very pleasant-looking young man, who introduced himself as Lakin, the Assistant Editor of the Sunday Times. I took occasion to tell him that the Dean of S. Paul's would like to review my book. He said that, if it were sent to his paper, he would have it sent [115] [symbol] to the Dean. In the course of some pleasant talk, he said that he had lunched with Hitler on a recent visit to Germany, & was favourably impressed by him. He certainly seemed to be sincere, & was vastly superior to his entourage. **He had lunched with the Prime Minister, & found him in excellent spirits. Even his gout did not depress him, though, rather disappointingly it had attacked both his legs.** I walked to Westminster, & called on Vernon Storr,* whom I accompanied to the Abbey for shortened Evensong. I sate in the same stall as I occupied in November 1899, just 40 years ago, when I was instituted to a Westminster Canonry. After the service, I had tea in the Deanery with M^{rs} de Labillière: & then the Dean [Paul de Labillière]* walked back with me to the Athenaeum. Here M^r Ivor Thomas introduced himself to me, reminding me that I had taken him for a walk round the Park at Auckland. I remembered him as a valuable colleague in the effort to expose the Buchmanite Movement.

[116]

[symbol]

I dined in the Club, and was joined by Percival and [Alan] Don.* Both expressed themselves with some vigour on the inadvisableness of Temple's becoming Lang's successor at

Canterbury. I said that the objections on grounds of general policy were in my opinion even weightier than any which could be based on considerations of personal quality. It would be very unfortunate if the Northern Primacy came to be regarded as the normal stepping-stone to the southern. We all agreed that [William] Temple* is far too loquacious. His "pronouncements" on public policy follow one another so rapidly that they are losing all importance in the general estimate. Don said that Cosmo [Lang]* Cantuar has no capacity for finance, & that he greatly dislikes setting his name to public statements. But, certainly, he does not make this impression, &, indeed, he speaks & writes so frequently that it is not easy to believe that he dislikes the procedure. The Dean of Canterbury recently in the course of a sermon in the Abbey, expressed his desire that Communism could be established in Great Britain. The Dean of Westminster had written to him what Don described as a "regular snorter"!

<!191139>

[117]

24th Sunday after Trinity, November 19th, 1939.

[symbol]

A warm and stormy night. The wind made so much noise with the wrapping robes which darkened my window, & with the doors & cupboards in the Club outside my room - that I could not sleep. I read through my sermon, & even that failed to induce slumber, So I fell back on Pastor's History of Paul iii, who aspired to combine the characters of a sincere reformer and a shameless nepotist; and with the usual success.

I drove in a taxi to S. Paul's Cathedral, and was received by the vergers with something like affection! The Dean and the Archdeacon of London were present, & the congregation, which quietly waxed as the service proceeded, included (according to the said vergers) about 1000 persons. I preached substantially the same sermon as that which did duty last Sunday at Grundisburgh. **It is, perhaps, an indication of my preaching habit, that a sermon which I prepared for a Suffolk village appears to me suitable for S. Paul's cathedral.** I received the Blessed Sacrament at the celebration which followed Mattins & Litany. The Choir was wholly compound of men, the choirboys being now in Truro for safety.

[118]

I lunched with the Dean [Walter Matthews]* and M^{rs} Matthews. We had much conversation. They are interesting people, and have a highly intelligent family. The eldest boy is just going into the Navy. He has done brilliantly in the Oxford schools, and in normal times might well look forward to an All Souls Fellowship. It seems rather absurd that he should be sent mine-sweeping in the North Sea. M^{rs} Matthews is very outspoken on the subject of sexual morality, a subject which has been more than ever emphasized in the City by the presence of that popular sexual prophet, the Reverend Leslie Weatherhead, who now holds office at the City Temple. The Dean quotes Guy Rogers as describing the said L. W. as the most "sought after" of modern English preachers. I only know him through his books, & they have an extremely unpleasant impression on my mind.

Sir Vincent* & Lady Baddeley* were in the Cathedral congregation. They telephoned a message to me at the Deanery, suggesting that I should have tea with them. But I declined, & made my way back to the ~~Deanery~~ Club.

[119]

Last night while I was dining in the Club there was the sound of a loud explosion. "That is I. R. A.", observed Percival. "I know the sound well, for I have heard it several times before". This morning's papers show that he judged rightly. It was the explosion of an I. R. A. bomb somewhere in Piccadilly. These miscreants have no intelligible object beyond satisfying a fierce vindictive hatred which the Irish peasantry cherish against this country. It is obviously useless to attempt to "kill it by kindness". Our own humaneness holds us back from adopting a policy of extermination which would plainly be the only rational & effective

answer to these cruel & senseless outrages. What, in these circumstances, does Christianity require of its professors?

I was interested to hear the Dean's opinion of Shebbeare.* In reply to my question, what position S. held in philosophical circles, he said that he was thought to be learned, and within certain limits, able & original. He (Matthews) evidently held him in greater esteem than I had supposed.

[120]

[symbol]

Ivor Thomas sate beside me at dinner, & had some talk. He has made the acquaintance of the redoubtable Miss Maud Bull,* & finds her both amusing and adhesive. He had entertained her in the Club "Annexe". "As soon as she made her appearance", he said, "all the males in the room claimed acquaintance with her". We discussed the inevitable population question. He thought that young married people were beginning again to desire children. "My own wife died in childbirth a few months ago", he said. We spoke of the Church & State issue. He had been in the House of Lords during the Debate on the Prayer Book, & expressed great admiration of my speech on that occasion. He said that Elliott, in his recently published book on the Establishment question had referred to me in flattering terms. But, in spite of this, I understand that the book is against my position.

Ivor Thomas went back to Aldershot, where he is rendering some kind of military service, but doubts whether he is to go abroad.

<!201139>

[121]

Monday, November 20th, 1939.

[symbol]

I left the Athenaeum in good time to catch a train which left Liverpool Street at 10 a.m., and arrived at Ipswich at 12.00 noon. Ella and Fearne met me with the car, and carried me home.

Dick tells me that, through lying in a damp bed, he is afflicted with rheumatics. I wrote to him at once, giving him good counsel. He is certainly not robust, and his generous ardour to do his duty inclines him to carelessness where his own health is concerned.

Somebody from the War Office addressed me through the telephone. He desired to see me; did not think it desirable to state his business except directly: had an introduction from Costley White; & would be glad of an interview. I arranged to see him, if he called on Wednesday next. What his business can be with me, I cannot imagine. In the hectic atmosphere which we are now compelled to breath, one's imagination takes the wildest flights on the slightest provocation!

<!211130>

[122]

Tuesday, November 21st, 1939.

I worked at this tiresome lecture, and still to little purpose. Why is it that I am so persistently futile?

In the afternoon we called on the new High Sheriff (Bland) but he and his wife were out, and on his neighbour D^r Bland Anderson, who was at home, and also his wife. He is a large man, hailing from Orkney. Both he and M^{rs} Anderson impressed me as pleasant & intelligent people. We also called unavailingly on M^r Usherwood, the deaf vicar of

[symbol]

I received from Canon Charles Smyth* of C. C. College Cambridge, a copy of his pamphlet entitled "The Study of Church History", with a very civilly expressed covering letter, in which he refers rather flatterously to divers of my publications "in particular for your little book on Robertson of Brighton, and for the Ordination Charges in Church & Parson", and says he is "looking forward eagerly to the publication of the forthcoming book on "The Church of England". I read the pamphlet through with sustained interest, & rather surprisingly large measure of agreement.

<!221139>

[123]

Wednesday, November 22nd, 1939.

[symbol]

Six copies of my book on "The Church of England" arrived from Cambridge Press. It is illustrated by 8 pictures which certainly add to the attractiveness of its appearance. But it will assuredly offend many, and please none. I was amused by Lord Stamp's Editorial Preface. He evidently anticipates some outcry! He is quite polite to me, & calls my book an "impressive performance", which is, perhaps, more ambiguous than flattering!

Maybe his book will get him into trouble in some quarters. He has never minded trouble. But it will get him appreciation and gratitude in many others - and that too will never move him overmuch.

I am not at all pleased with the poor thing.

Captain Sheridan from the War Office came to see me, bringing a letter of introduction from Costley White.* He is seeking information about Buchman,* whose German sympathies are reported to be rather too openly expressed in U. S. A., and who is suspected of being in direct contact with the German government.

[124]

[symbol]

Fisher of New College had suggested that I should be consulted, and the Captain had read my charge. I disclaimed all knowledge of the man, and pointed out that the unfavourable estimate, which I had formed of him, was admittedly based on his published sayings and writings, and on those of his colleagues and victims. Of his private character, and his financial methods, I know nothing. He mentioned Kiddle,* and I said that he might well get into touch with him. Captain Sheridan said that he had knowledge about Buchman which made him extremely suspicious both of his personal influence, and of his religious methods. He had read the repulsive novel "Elmer Gantry", and thought (as I do) that it describes, in brutal caricature, the type to which Buchman belongs. But I am not disposed to assist any procedure which might reflect the hypersensitives of "spy mania", rather than a reasonable distrust.*

We had tea with Amery Cooper, whom we found playing whist with her friends. We returned in the half-light of closing time.

<!231139>

[125]

Thursday, November 23rd, 1939

A wet day, dark and infinity depressing.

My entire morning was wasted, partly because my incomparable Ella established herself in my study, seeking the warmth of my fire, and quite unwittingly (for the dear creature cannot understand the crooked ways of her impossible husband, and why he should be reduced to helplessness by any presence near him when he works) brought me to mental sterility. But it is so, and unless I am left alone, I can write nothing.

Then Linton Smith,* the retiring Bishop from Rochester, who was my successor in the See of Hereford, called just as we were about to leave the house in order to lunch with M^{rs} [sic]

In Ipswich I visited the Bank and arranged to purchase £1000 of the new War Bonds, bearing interest at 3 per cent. After listening to [Sir John] Simon's* exhortation last night, it seemed one's duty to do this, and as an investment it is fairly satisfactory.

We had a pleasant luncheon – Lord Woodbridge,* an archaeological parson named Harris, Colonel Ovie, and ourselves.

[126]

[symbol]

The Times announces [Jack] Clayton's* appointment to the Norwich canonry. If he doesn't take umbrage at some imagined slight, or feel himself compelled to bear witness against some foolish but harmless vagary of the "Catholics", or become innocently insufferable by insisting on "giving a holiday" to parsons who have neither the wish nor the money to take one, he will do well enough, and he might be a considerable success. But I never met in any other men so much essential goodness and real intellectual power combined with so much quixotic absurdity and anile prejudice. But I hope the best, and that can be very good indeed.

A brief letter from the Warden of All Souls told me that he had received the copy of my book which I requested the Press to send him "with my compliments["]". "I know", he says politely "that I shall enjoy reading it and profit". It will be interesting to know what he has to say when he has read it! There seems to have been a quiet little Gaudy, & an excellent sermon from the Chaplain.

<!241139>

[127]

Friday, November 24th, 1939.

A most dismal morning, but the day was better than its beginning. We all went to London by a morning train, which brought us to Liverpool Street at 11.45 a.m. Then we drove to the Athenaeum. Ella and ^Fearne^ went one way to look at shops, and lunch with M^{rs} Low, I to leave my robes bag in the Athenaeum, and go to the hairdresser. After being "beautified", I returned to the club and lunched. I called in at Rees' book shop, and encountered there the Bishop of Winchester, who had just bought a copy of my book. That admirable work was exposed for sale on the Counter. Wheatley expressed ~~to~~ his admiration for its appearance, especially the illustrations!

Then I went to All Saints, ~~Margaret Street~~ Ennismire Gardens and officiated at Barbara's marriage. There was a considerable gathering of relations. I improvised an address"! Then we went on to the reception in a house quite close to the Church. There was a horrible crush, and, of course, the customary inanities. We got away in ample time to catch a train which brought us to Ipswich about 7.30 p.m. Then we drove in a taxi to Hyntle Place.

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The gloom in the railway carriage made reading impossible so we passed away the time by general conversation. A young man, whose age and name I learned before we parted in Ipswich, where he changed for his destination, Norwich. [sic] His name was Rout, & he was 25 years old. He was a Methodist, a chemist of some kind, and a student of London University. Bumptious and talkative, as Methodist young men commonly are, he yet impressed me as sincere and intelligent. He had encountered Buchman's movement, but had not been attracted by it, though considerable efforts had been made to "change him". An elderly female, who had told us that she was 53, joined in the discussion of the English language. M^{rs} Rout, being half -Welsh, was particularly interested in the question of "the best English accent". On arriving home we found that Miss Bridge had brought yet another evacuate Barnardo assistant to stay in our house. Miss Hawkins looks her part, but is happily less garrulous and managing than her colleague!

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[129]

Saturday, November 25th, 1939.

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A very cold morning. The press cuttings from the Times Literary Supplement were friendly in tone, but rather concerned with me than with my book. Its description is, perhaps, intended to be kind. He thinks that

“it is probably true that a man like D^r H.H. sh^d come nearest to the ideal expositor [of the C. of E.] for in his time he has known Anglicanism from many sides & had served it in a fairly representative variety of offices. Still an even more important ~~quant~~ qualification is that, love the English Church as he may, he has never been uncritical in his regard. He has always stood just a little to one side, unprejudiced, judicial, determined to be candid critic whether Anglicans hear or forbear. The result is that this considered judgement is quite peculiarly interesting . . . It is critical exposition which, even if the whole is not covered, shows how the English Church has impressed itself on one whose vigorous mind has never been blinded either by love or policy”.²

[130]

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The “review” is accompanied by a short leader in the Literary Supplement”, headed “Clerus Anglicanus”. It says that “the publication of D^r Hensley Henson’s estimate of the C. of E. is an event that must interest lovers of English letters”.

The sometime Bishop of Durham has played many parts upon the stirring scene of Anglican affairs. As an ecclesiastical statesman, as controversialist, as a pioneer of theological liberalism, as a master of the preacher’s art, he has in the course of his long ministry always been an influential force as well as a brilliant figure, & it is singularly fitting that his gifts were finally brought to adorn a See already distinguished by a line of prelates among the most illustrious in the annals of Anglican scholarship . . . It is certain that D^r Henson has always embodied some of the highest virtues of the Anglican tradition, & not least among them that which specially concerns us in these columns, the gift of masculine eloquence.

[131]

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² R.A. Edwards, ‘Ecclesia Anglicana’, *Time Literary Supplement*, 25 Nov. 1939.

He is perhaps known best to the outside world as the coiner of epigrams that have on occasion made or unmade ecclesiastical policies; he is also known to those who sat under his pulpit and studied his books as the master of a style that can without effort triumph in the rapier play of controversy, sustain the majesty of an historical argument or rise to the height of spiritual rhetoric, turn by turn as the occasion demands. Such prose as that with which D^r Henson has enriched our Church is the peculiar property of Anglicanism. If some may feel that it errs by excess of intellectualism, by a pervasive touch of the constitutional lawyer's mind, these are qualities that have been the strength as well as the weakness of the Church of Chillingworth, Stillingfleet, Warburton, Butler & Whateley. They are qualities that can ever be lost without dire peril to an institution which, to quote our reviewer again, has always [132] [symbol] [page crossed though in red pencil] "in spite of temptations, & they have never been lacking, to accept the totalitarianism of Rome & Geneva . . . insisted that what matters most is Liberty".

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I have copied out this astonishing description because, of course, it has a certain value as stating recording the impression of myself which did not seem too extravagant for printing in a reputable journal. **But I cannot recognize it as even remotely true of myself. I am more puzzled than flattered by the eulogies of my "style" which are reported ad nauseam,** sometimes as a foil to a condemnation of my argument, and ^sometimes^ even as an introduction to a belittling estimate of my character. It is, of course, extremely difficult for any man to judge his own performance, but, even so, I do not think I can be so wholly mistaken as to the quality of my own composition as to be wrong in thinking these eulogies as unmerited & excessive.

About 5 p.m. the electric light failed, & for more than two hours we were left to the woeful half-lights of candles; & my electric clock was stopped.

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[133]

25th Sunday after Trinity, November 26th, 1939.

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The weather has become comparatively warm, and there is a violent wind from the west.

I went to church, & received the Holy Communion, and, on my return, found my study almost uninhabitable by reason of a smoking chimney.

My "sermonette" appeared in the Sunday Times under the heading, "Christian Agnosticism", but I noticed with some displeasure that it had been abbreviated by the omission of some texts, which while not affecting its "argument", did, I think, lessen its effect. However, when the issue of going on with these "sermonettes" comes up for answer at the end of the year, I may, perhaps, come to a settlement on this point!

After breakfast I wrote Dick, sending him the MS of my sermon preached in S. Paul's last Sunday, & authorizing him to dispose of it in his w.p.b. Also I wrote to Ruth Spooner,* answering her question whether I did, or did not approve of her witnessing the reception of one of her clients into the Popish Communion. I don't suppose the label makes much difference in the case of humble folk, who know nothing about controversy.

[134]

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After a considerable conflict with the cars, which for different reasons refused to start, Fearne succeeded in motoring us to Shrublands, on the Norwich Road, where we lunched with Lord and Lady de Saumarez. With them were his sister, and daughters, & also two young soldiers in khaki, shy and silent youths. I had some talk with Lord de Saumarez & ✕ formed a high estimate of him. He told me, in answer to my enquiry, that he had lost his arm in the War, & had been badly wounded. I am told that he suffered badly by the loss of his son in the same dreadful experience. He has that look of suppressed tragedy, and that gentle melancholy, which both reveal and conceal the deeper sorrows of human experience. The abominable inequality of human fortunes which is the latent cause of discontent at all times, leaps up into such cruel aggressiveness in War, that the strain becomes almost too much for natural strength and supernatural faith. We got home about 3.30 p.m. and had hardly disposed ourselves for a peaceful evening before the electric light failed, & sequestered us from normal activities for more than 2 hours. Later we listened to the Prime Minister's broadcast.

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[135]

Monday, November 27th, 1939.

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Still more rain. We shall have extensive floods to distract our minds. The news from the War is extremely disturbing. It is apparent that we have not yet found any effective answer to the latest Nazi war-method – sowing magnetic bombs on the trade routes.

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Alington writes:

I must send a line to say with what pleasure I have read the tribute to you in the leader in the Literary Supplement: **it will appeal to all your friends**. I shall look forward to reading the book itself – but why should so distinguished a son of Oxford go to Cambridge for a publisher?

The choice was not mine: but it seemed unwise to publish a book on the C. of E., which had been my intention, when there was about to issue from the Cambridge Press a book on the same subject. For this reason, when a necessary explanation as to my point of view had been made, and the Press asked me to undertake the volume in the series on “English Institutions” edited by Lord Stamp. I could not well refuse. But I sh^d have preferred Oxford.

[136]

[symbol]

I finished reading Oman's new book. “On the ~~value~~ writing of History”, and found it so interesting and suggestive that I wrote to him to express my appreciation. I mentioned also his daughter Carola's [Oman]* romance, “Alfred”, which Ella read aloud, and which we all enjoyed. It is at least 55 years since first I met Oman. It was at a meeting of the Seminar and I remember the striking appearance which he made with his curly hair, and brilliant large eyes, his amazing knowledge & unusual ~~many~~ manner of expressing himself. Shortly afterwards, I came into close & continuing contact with him for he had been elected to an All Souls' fellowship in 1883, and I was elected in 1884. We became attached to one another. I baptized his children. His son, Charles, is my godson. But he, and, perhaps, still more, his wife, were very stiff Protestants, and resented my support of the Revised Prayer Book. So in some sense and measure, we were alienated from one another. We never came to any open dissidence, but our relations became less intimate. But the world has changed so greatly that all differences cease to count.*

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[137]

Tuesday, November 28th, 1939.

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The Times has a review of my book, which rather cunningly represents me as an apologist of Anglicanism as conventionally pictured, whereas my "speculum" exhibits the portrait of an incoherent and finally impracticable compromise which is apparently bank-rupt [sic] intellectually, morally, and spiritually! However I suspect that the reviewer's motive was not unkindly; he would "save me from myself". It ends thus:

The book may not be a complete "mirror", to use the author's word, of the English Church, and any reader will perceive at once that there are points where the Bishop's sympathy fails him: but nevertheless it is an extraordinarily interesting and important piece of work, and it reveals very clearly that, in spite of the problems still unsolved, and of many perhaps insoluble, in its structure, the English Church has, with astonishing success, asserted the principle of Freedom as a fundamental part of a Christian Church".

It would appear that I have written in vain!

[138]

The Bishop of S^t E. & I, to whom a copy of the book was sent, called yesterday, & expressed warm approval, but he had not read more than a third of it, & may have cause to change his mind, if he has patience to "endure into the end"! I had a letter from Wynne Willson, in which he says that the book has arrived, but that he has not yet read it. That is probably about as far as most people will get, even of the elect fragment who buy it! Matthews tells me that he has received the vol. from the Sunday Times. He ought to review it in some genuine sense.

Lord Roche* thanks me for his copy, & looks forward to it with pleasure & agreement except as you know about disestablishment. He adds, "I am glad you are writing", and sends me a letter which he had received from his "old friend, Arthur Woodbridge, because of the reference to yourself." The latter is kind enough:-

I have now met your Bishop five or six times, & like him better each time I see him. In spite of his great learning & ability, he talks to me most charmingly & listens too to any ~~talk~~ [139] [symbol] half-baked ideas I may venture to air."

This is funny enough, for I am not really either able or learned, but it has a certain value as an obviously sincere description of the good man's impression of the greatest Humbug I know!

We had tea with a deaf parson, the Vicar of Belstead who said that he was Kitty Inge's* cousin, and had met me years ago at the S. Paul's Deanery. He is a small man, who talks the more persistently since he is self-exempted by deafness from listening to anybody else. He

spoke intelligently, and is evidently a man of education & fairly well-read. He had with him his daughter, and a Barnardo teacher, who had been “planted” on him “for the duration”! His parish has a population, according to Crockford, of 214. He has held the Rectory for five years, and “enjoys” a net income of £265. His parsonage is a small but convenient modern house. The Rev. E. C. Usherwood has been 37 years in Orders, and is a widower. Fearne motored home through rapidly darkening roads. We were back in Hyntle Place before 5 p.m.

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[140]

Wednesday, November 29th, 1939.

The Cambridge ^Press^ sends to me the note in which Lord Hailsham* acknowledges receipt of the copy of my book which had been sent to him. He says:

*He has often enjoyed listening to Bishop Hensley Henson in the House of Lords,
an[sic]*

he looks forward with keen interest to reading his book.

So sound a Tory will hardly find his expectation satisfied!

[symbol] *I received several letters from Fanaticks who resent bitterly my reference to them in last Sunday's sermonette as breakers of the Third Commandment! Among them, somewhat to my surprize, † was Violet Kennedy (née Wilberforce) who apparently has inherited her father's zeal for Teetotalism.*

Then, I "worked", but to no purpose, on a stupid little sermon for Eton. Why is it that my mind is as sterile as the Sahara, and my purpose as vacillating as a shirt flapping on a clothes-line? To add to my discomfort, my study fire smoked with the nagging persistence of an evil conscience, and destroyed even the wish to work! There is a restless, chopping wind from the West.

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[141]

Thursday, November 30th, 1939.

The thermometer in my bedroom at 7.30 a.m. stood at 60 degrees (Fahrenheit). A few days ago it stood at 42°. These sharp oscillations of temperature are very trying to body and soul.

I received from Lord Baldwin* a civil acknowledgement of the copy of the book which had been sent to him "with my compliments". But he has not read it!

"I am going to read it with the greatest interest and with grateful thoughts of the Author".

This is kind; but I should like to know his thoughts of the Author when he has read it!

D^r [Robert] Chapman,* the Secretary of the Clarendon Press, writes:

The T.L.S. reviewer of your book (would it could have been ours also!) twice uses the phrase "parson's freehold" as if a recognised term. I think I see what it is, but it is not known to me, & is I suppose not in the dictionaries. If you could tell me anything about it I should be grateful; we are always collecting for our dictionaries. But perhaps I ought rather to ask your reviewer.

[142]

I employed the morning in writing a "sermonette" for the 2nd Sunday in Advent, (10th December). For my subject I took "The Bible" as obviously suitable for "Bible Sunday".

The Dean of Westminster asks me to preach in the Abbey on the evening of Easter Day. "when we hope to recommence our evening services". But he adds:

I have just been sending a copy of your new book to a friend as a birthday present, and I am greatly looking forward to the pleasure of reading it myself in the near future.

It will be interesting to hear the good man's opinion when he has read it!

Ella and I walked out for more than an hour and a half, and made two futile calls. In both cases the folk were not at home.

On my return I wrote both to D^r Chapman and to the Dean of Westminster. To the first, I made self-excusing explanation of my flirtations with the Cambridge Press & to the last, I gave a cautious promise to preach on Easter Day in the Abbey.

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[143]

Friday, December 1st, 1939.

[symbol]

An unpleasant morning, warm and gusty.

The professional rat-catcher came to do his murderous duty. He assured me that when he had finished, the house would be free from rats, and secured against their re-turn. I inquired whether his success would not leave defunct rat-corpses which would disclose themselves offensively, but he assured me that I might be confident that there was no danger of this kind. The man had acquired a curiously rat-like expression. So true is it that we grow into the likeness of our employments.

I received an affectionate letter from Oman. * He was evidently pleased by my praise of his book.

I finished the sermon for Eton – truly a “ridiculus mus” for such a labouring mountain of episcopal effort!

The Bishop of Durham, acknowledging a copy of the book, writes:

“I have been reading it with the warmest interest, and certainly with a great measure of agreement. I have not yet finished it”.

I wish he had postponed his statement until he had finished his reading.

[144]

I called on Lord Woodbridge, * and gave him a copy of the book. He was friendly, and disposed to talk. He told me that he possessed the curious power of removing headaches by the touch of his hand. He is evidently interested in these semi-theurgic phenomena (faith-healing etc.). In the course of our conversation, he spoke of his bereavements which have been cruelly severe.

I received a letter from the “London Press & Publicity Services”:-

Should you be interested in writing articles on the religious aspect of the present political situation? We feel sure that authoritative writings from such a great personality as yourself would be of immense interest to the newspaper reading public.

I replied briefly that I could not at present add to my literary undertakings.

I gather from a review in the Spectator that Inge* has declared himself as an “out and out opponent of the War.” He is an odd mixture of greatness & pettiness of mind.

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[145]

Saturday, December 2nd, 1939.

[symbol]

I got away from Ipswich by 9.50 a.m. express which brought me into Liverpool Street at 11.45 a.m. Then I drove to the Athenaeum, & having deposited my bags ~~and~~ there, walked to Hugh Rees's book-shop. M^r Whalley told me that he had sold "a good many copies" of my book. I returned to the Club, & dined, having as my trencher-companion the ghost of the late Bishop of Oxford, which haunts the place with the uncanny persistence of an ill conscience. He appears to oscillate between his flat, where he lives with a deaf sister, and the Athenaeum. He has lost his memory sadly, and repeats himself with embarrassing frequency. It distresses me the more to see him, since I must needs perceive in his decay the picture & prophecy of my own.

I wrote to Ella, though I had nothing to say to her, save the flimsiest twaddle, but the arrival of the letter will at least give her proof that she was in my mind, & that can never be wholly unwelcome to a wife who holds her partner in affection.

[146]

I had tea in the Club, and, with it, some talk with [Alan] Don,* the Archbishop's Chaplain. He started to speak about my book, which, he said was being carefully read by his Grace. We proceeded to discuss his Grace himself. "Is it true", he asked, that when "Lang stood for the fellowship at All Souls, you expressed the judgment on his work, that it showed first class ability and second class genius". I could but reply that I had no recollection of having done so, but that, after so many years, I could not be positive as to what I might have said, and as to the opinion itself, it did not appear to be either unreasonable, or ungenerous. Indeed, much the same judgment on the present Archbishop was not unfrequently expressed. Don did not express dissent, though what his personal view of his official chief really is, it would be difficult to say. I drove to Waterloo, & caught a train, which, leaving that station at 4.45 p.m., reached Windsor somewhere about 6 p.m. A chauffeur had been sent to meet me, and I found the Provost [Lord Hugh Cecil]* expecting me in his study.

[147]

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There are two refugees staying here – a Professor & his Wife from Vienna, both Papists.

The Provost took me to dine with an ancient Canon Vaughan and his wife. He was said to be 89 and she 70. The Company included Sir George & Lady Young,* M^{rs} Lunn, and two other ladies, whose names I forget. One of them said she had known my wife in girlhood, & was connected with the Dennistones by marriage. I think she said that her unmarried name was Grant. We had a most interesting conversation on German politics after the ladies had withdrawn. Sir George Young disclosed a considerable knowledge of Hitler - & some of his entourage, especially the infamous Streicher. His son who is a diplomat in Berlin had known

them well, & from him, he had himself learned much. His account of Hitler was especially interesting. He appears to be a very odd creature indeed, feminine in his temperament, rather than masculine, & is the victim of moods.

[148]

[symbol]

Sir George Young said that his son's rooms in Berlin were frequented by the Nazi stalwarts who surrounded Hitler; that the servants took the precaution of making them drop their revolvers into a pail of water before giving them admission! that they had informed him of the intention to murder Roehm, & the others, some while before the "Blood-purge" had actually been carried out; that he had informed the British Government but that his information had been ignored as incredible.

His son had described Hitler as a most difficult person to talk with, for a subject, or even a word, would have the effect of starting him on an outburst of rhodomontade, which made discussion impossible. I asked whether Hitler could be described as sane; & he replied "Probably not". He spoke favourably of the infamous Jew-baiter, Streicher, whom he regarded as sincere, and, apart from his anti-Semitic obsession, as neither uncultivated nor immoral. He thought that Hitler's hold on the Youth was at present secure.

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[149]

Advent Sunday December 3rd, 1939.

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[first para crossed out in red pencil]

A warm night, and fresh air largely excluded in order to darken the windows. I slept badly, and read Plutarch with difficulty because the bedside lamp was so low that, only by raising it precariously on a mound of books could I bring light on to my book!

I attended the service in Chapel at 8 a.m. There us something profoundly moving in the spectacle of a crowd of boys receiving with devotion the Holy sacrament. They are, of course, unstable and foolish, but they are not often insincere, & they have a wonderful power of response to spiritual appeals. I am inclined to think that the worship of their chapels may be not the least of the benefits which our public schools bestow on their youth. And it is probably, at the time the least realized or even suspected. It consecrates boyhood as nothing else can. Who can measure the injury to character which is implicit in the crude & violent excision of Christian Worship from the educational systems of the continent? I was pleased to see so many boys communicate.

[150]

[symbol]

The service in the College Chapel was most impressive. The great building was completely filled; and the singing of the hymns & psalms was hearty enough. I preached for 16 minutes by the pulpit clock, & did not observe any symptoms of fatigue. My text was from Isaiah ii. "The idols shall utterly pass away." After the service we had coffee in the Vice-Provost's house.

I lunched in Hall pleasantly enough and afterwards attended Evensong in S George's Chapel. Before beginning the 2nd lesson, † Canon Anthony Deane* announced that the death of Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll* had taken place this morning, & asked the congregation to remain standing while the Dead March was played after the service. Then I had a few words with the Dean and tea with Canon Deane & his wife. He tells me that Radcliffe, a Fellow of All Souls, is a co-respondent in a Divorce suit in which the lady is one of the Charnwood* [151] [symbol] girls. She has two children of her own. This is lamentable news.

In T.S. Elliot's little book, "The Idea of a Christian Society" on p. 78, he refers quite civilly to my changed attitude on the subject of Disestablishment. He adds the following:-

"I must take this occasion for calling attention to the great excellence of Bishop Hensley Henson's prose, whether it is employed in a volume prepared at leisure, or in an occasional letter to the Times. For vigour and purity of controversial English, he has no superior today, and his writing should long continue to be studied by those who aspire to write well".

"Controversial English" is an odd expression. What can it properly mean? Controversy written in the English language cannot employ any other kind of English than that which is linguistic & literary. One does not speak of "homiletic English". "argumentative English", or "epistolary English" why should one speak of "controversial English"?

[152]

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I had a "heart-to-heart" talk with [Lord Hugh] Cecil* on the subject of Sexual Morality. He is quite impervious to argument, maintaining with cold logic the traditional Roman position. He does not allow that any new factors have entered into the old problem. His whole method and outlook are medieval and scholastic, not modern. Therefore, it is really impossible to discuss anything with him, for from the start it is apparent that from his premises, his conclusions are really unassailable. He does not allow that the properly determining factors in the problem which had to be solved are admissible. For him there is no problem, only the facts of infallible Truth & human obstinacy in rejecting it. He expressed himself as woefully disappointed in Cosmo Cantuar*, whom, he thought, had lost his "nerve", and could not be trusted to make a decision. While admiring his gifts, he demurred to his character! He was much more friendly to Buchman than I should have thought possible in a man so rigorous & fastidious.

[153]

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Professor and M^{rs} Goldman, the Austrian Jewish refugees were much impressed by a flamboyantly absurd description of D^r Henson in the "Observer" [written by a certain Canon Roger Lloyd, [whom I neither know nor wish to know.] If ~~his~~ he is an honest & educated man he must be a fool. If he is neither honest nor educated he is an offensive knave. The quality of his "review". Of my book] headed, "D^r Henson and the Church of England" is sufficiently indicated by the opening sentence:-

"When D^r Henson decided to seek Ordination England lost a second, and, perhaps, a still greater Gibbon"

This balderdash is infinitely annoying & mischievous. It is difficult to think that it can be either sincere or friendly.

Before going to bed I had a "heart-to-heart" talk with mine host. We discussed the Church's attitude toward the multiplying problems of sexual morality, and found ourselves in deep disagreement, I was astonished at the obsolescence of his opinions, the subtlety of his arguments, and the cast-iron rigidity of his mind. He is a medievalist in the methods of his reasoning, the strength of his prejudices, & the obscurantism of his outlook.

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[154]

Monday, December 4th, 1939.

After breakfast I accompanied the Provost to the Chapel for prayers. The scene was impressive and suggestive. The building was crowded with the boys; the service was brief but dignified and well-arranged. The Provost himself read the lesson and prefaced it with a short address, admirable in the devoutness of its tone, and the simplicity of its form. The attention of the boys was close and sustained. Hugh Cecil has become venerable in appearance; he is now 70 years old & fully looks his age. He has an aristocratic dignity, ~~xxx~~ and a natural authority which adds solemnity to words which are never slipshod or superfluous. It must needs be an excellent element in their education that Etonians should inaugurate their school-work by a religious exercise led by a man so personally distinguished.

After the service, we went back to the Lodge and the Provost spent $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour in showing me the "leaving" portraits. He increases their interest by comments which disclose knowledge and artistic judgment. Then I bade him [155] farewell and went to the station in order to return home. I drove to ~~Waterloo Station~~ Liverpool Street and [effected ^joined^ junction with] joined Dick on the platform. We lunched on the train, and were met at Ipswich by Ella and Fearne with the car, & so got back to Hyntle Place.

The Headmaster of Eton said that a party of Nazi schoolboys had visited the school. They had attended the service in chapel, but had not behaved well. I asked him how they impressed him, & he replied that he was struck by the apparent absence of personality. They seemed to be "like dough".

The Provost told me that the young son of Lord Rayleigh [Robert Strutt]* who so strongly impressed me when I met him at Terling, is now at Eton, and, though somewhat delicate in health, is intellectually most promising. He is proving true to his family tradition, by disclosing a marked preference for scientific studies. If his health holds, I prophesy that he will become distinguished.

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[156]

Tuesday, December 5th, 1939.

Ella's tribute to the merits of Miss Charlotte Yonge appears in the Times, and reads very well. It is so clearly the composition of a well-bred lady, that no one can suspect any "assistance" from that hardened epistolary ~~D~~ Ishmaelite, her husband. The dear lady was evidently (and very rightly) pleased at her emergence in the columns of the Times.

I spent the morning in discussing with Dick the propriety of describing the War, as I am in the habit of doing, as a "Crusade". I do not think that the time was wholly wasted, for he seemed to be really impressed by what I said to him, & especially by the little Airman's letter, & my reply, of which I had fortunately made a copy.

Grant Robertson* writes to thank me for the copy of the book. He adds:-

Grisly times are ahead of us. We are now slowly learning what the Russo-German Pact means both for us and for the rest of Europe & the world. Whether Germany will rue the day when Ribbentrop secured Russia remains to be seen. Finland is seeing it now. Bolshevism [157] is the most formidable feature since Sept. 1. A Russia that nobody can get at.

I incline to agree with him. Is it possible for Germany to cast aside the works of Hitler and to revert to her true historic role as the bulwark of Christendom against the pagan Slavs? This could only be by her re-conversion to Christianity, and it is hard to believe that that is possible. Is it only of apostate individuals that the words of the Scripture are true? "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgement, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries". If it shall turn out, that Germany, by allying herself with Russia, has facilitated, perhaps even necessitated, the Bolshevisation of Europe, then, indeed, she will have committed suicide after the manner of Samson, associating her enemies in the destruction which she has brought upon herself. "The Lord is king ^be the people^ never so impatient. He sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet".

[158]

The Cambridge Dailly News is rather "sniffy" over my book, mainly, I suspect, because it regards me as an impenitent Tory in my political views! It begins rather menacingly.

D^c Hensley Henson, one-time Bishop of Durham, is making good literary use of his retirement. He is writing much, but whether much of it will rank with his earlier work is doubtful.

And it concludes by exhibiting me as the very "demonstration of the chameleon character of Anglicanism". "The able Bishop" has showed "that a man's Theological waverings need not influence his political convictions in the slightest". This precious "review" is headed "Bishop

of Comprehensiveness". It would be interesting to know how much of my "earlier work" the ~~wit~~ writer had seen, & how much of my latest volume he had actually read. "Reviewing" is almost a lost art. Books are described more or less fairly, & their authors are referred to in a manner, hostile or friendly, but there is rarely any attempt to consider and appraise the actual substance of the book. I doubt whether they have much effect on the public.

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[159]

Wednesday, December 6th, 1939.

J.A. Spender* writes a very interesting letter when acknowledging the copy of my book which had been sent to him by the publisher “with my compliments”. He began flatterously:

“I have just finished reading your book on the Church of England, which ^you^ so kindly sent me, & must send you a word to say how much I have admired and appreciated it. It is a rare pleasure to come upon a religious book written with such distinction & so discursive in its ideas & illustrations.

I understand your impatience with the secular fetters & should probably share it if I were serving the Church in orders. When I was a young man I included Liberationism among my Liberal opinions & thought the case for it a strong one from the Nonconformist point of view. But at this moment I would do nothing which in the eyes of the world might seem to damage the status of any Christian Church which holds to the Christian fundamentals – the great moral calamity of modern times in public affairs has been the [160] denial by a long line of Germans beginning with Hegel that these fundamentals have any binding force in the business of statesmanship, & this has come to a climax & is symbolized in the formation of a German Church which combs Christianity of everything that conflicts with the theory & practice of Hitlerism. This is the German idea of what a Church owes to the State, & I have a feeling that the Church of England, as the other principal Church with a definite relation to the State, would do a very great service, if it projected itself into the foreground as repudiating this doctrine & setting against it the contrary doctrine that the Christian fundamentals are binding on the State. An English Encyclical to this effect would need the same kind of scholarship (in the philosophical sense) that the Romans bring to bear on their Encyclicals, but I believe it would be worth doing, & if well done, make a formidable appeal to a world-wide opinion.

I see the names of Bishops & clergy [161] appended to all sorts of semi-political movements, War-aims Committees, Federation Movements, League of Nations Movements &c. They are quite entitled as citizens to express themselves in these ways, but they are the ways of political mechanism, not of the moral & spiritual foundations. Is it not possible that they should join together, & dropping all sectarian or merely dogmatic points, testify in the name of a State Church that they expect their Government & all Governments to profess Christian principles. I say “profess” because in the state of War, or semi-war in which we are, & have been living, the practice is attended with innumerable difficulties. These the clergy must leave to the politicians, but it is always their business to see that Governments do not, like the German, commit the sin against the Holy Ghost of denying and repudiating the Christian doctrines.

[162]

You cheered me & lured me ~~on~~ into writing by your affirmation that there is a "Common Christian" doctrine. The denial of this, and the splitting up of this doctrine into schools & sects has, I am sure, been one of the great disservices to religion in my life-time. It has sent scores of thousands of intelligent people looking elsewhere for what they feel instinctively must be a common doctrine, if it is to help the world.

Forgive me for writing at this length, but your book tempts me to all sorts of speculations.

Yours sincerely
J. A. Spender*

This is a remarkable letter from a remarkable man. Spender was born in 1862, and is, therefore, my senior by one year. He has had a distinguished career as journalist, political writer, & biographer. His contributions to the newspapers are invariably noteworthy, in form & substance.

[163]

The Rev. A. F. Judd, Vicar of Christ Church, Bath, writes:

I have been reading your book on the Church of England with immense interest & profound admiration. Ever since I used to listen to your Lordship at S. Margaret's as a Highgate school-boy, I think I may say I have read all you have written & should like to express my gratitude.

But he finds my chapter on the clergy very depressing, & inclines to think it overdrawn.

[symbol]

Prof. Grey Turner* writes to tell me that he was in the Chapel at Eton on Sunday, and "much enjoyed" my discourse. He adds:

I watched the boys & am sure that most of them were most attentive & interested. We were immured in the Memorial Chapel. There one hears quite well but the outlook is severely limited & we did not get a glimpse of you.

I spent the morning in writing a "sermonette" for the S.T. taking as my subject "Words", & painfully producing the requisite number!

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[164]

Thursday, December 7th, 1939.

[symbol]

The Times reports the death of Milo Gates, Dean of the vast new Cathedral in New York and formerly vicar of the Church of the Intercession in the same city. I made his acquaintance on one of his visits to England, and renewed it when I was in America. He was a typical American ecclesiastic – secular-toned, shrewd, given to bombastic rhetoric, and vastly optimistic. He had immense vigour and “drive”, and, like most of his fellow churchmen, (not even excluding the excellent Bishop [William] Lawrence*) he identified the popularity and financial prosperity of the Church with trustworthy evidences of spiritual vitality. He told me that he had been commissioned by the millionaire, Huntingdon, who found the Spanish-American Museum, to collect objects for that institution, & he described the methods which he employed to induce Spanish priests to part with church-ornaments. They seemed to me at least as notable for their unscrupulous cunning as, he assured me, they were for their remarkable effectiveness. He was kind, hospitable, & interesting, but curiously and consistently unspiritual.

[165]

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I received a letter from Clarence Tait* telling me that his father [Edward Tait], now a very old man, was nearing his end, and asking me to write to him:

Whilst I was there (at his father's house) he spoke of you many times. His affection and admiration for you are as great as ever, & it w^d be very kind if you c^d just send him a short line & your blessing....

I wonder if you have any idea what a help you have been to me all through life. Dorothy I am sure feels the same. The little prayer-book you gave me after my Confirmation has kept me company on all my travels. Certain words of advice you gave me have also been my guide on many occasions.

Clarence, 35 years ago, was a curiously shy, silent lad, & I had not suspected that he was specially interested in his confirmation, or impressed by what I said to him by way of preparation. But “the thoughts of a boy are long, long thoughts”, & I was mistaken.

[166]

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I wrote to D^r Tait, enclosing the letter in another to his son, asking him to forward it to his father, as I had lost his address.

[symbol]

Also, I wrote to Cyril Lakin agreeing to write a “full size Article” (1500 words) for the issue of the Sunday Times on December 24th and to continue the “sermonettes” until the end of January. He points out very justly that in the present distress it is certainly irrational, & probably also useless to make arrangements far ahead.

After lunch, I walked for more than an hour in the damp and dismal atmosphere of an unpleasant December day.

I wrote to Grey Turner, and to Martin [Ellingsen*]. The keeping up correspondence with my young parsons is enormously wasteful of time & energy: I am not sure whether it is worth while: & yet it is possible that, in my present circumstances, there is no other employment which would be more useful. Letters tend to multiply, & the kind of letters that come to me now seem to require some better answer than a few lines of conventional civility.

<!081239>

[167]

Friday, December 8th, 1939.

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A most unpleasant day, wet and windy.

The Spectator has a review of my book. It is headed "Henson Agonistes, and signed 'Charles Smyth*[']. It is polity, even flattering, to me, and, though not wholly favourable, yet not apparently unjust to my book. It sets in contrast a paragraph from "Cui bono?" on "Establishment", and another from the chapter on "Church & State". They read oddly enough. "On the whole, it may be said that D^r Henson is more convincing as an observer than as a prophet: he is better at describing what is happening than at predicting what ought to be done".

However, he concludes:-

D^r Henson has given us an exceptionally shrewd and stimulating book, & one that deserves to be widely read & carefully considered. It covers a remarkable amount of ground: its most serious omission lies, perhaps, in the **absence of any adequate reference to the revival of the religious orders in the C. of E.** One of its finest passages is a just and memorable panegyric on Archbishop Cranmer. On almost every page there is something to applaud, [168] [page crossed through in red pencil] and something with which to quarrel: and that is a great deal to say of any book. But there is more to be said of this: namely, that it will commend itself not only to those for whom the Church is primarily a problem to be debated, but also to those for whom the Church is primarily a mother to be loved: than which there could be no higher tribute.

The Rev. Charles Smith sent me some weeks ago a pamphlet on "The Study of Church History", and accompanied it by a very civilly expressed letter in which he said that he was "looking forward eagerly to the publication of my forthcoming book on the C. of E." (n.p. 122). I liked it well enough to thank him. So far I have seen no notices of the book in the Non-Anglican papers. I hardly think that the Sectaries will find it to their taste, and the Papists will find so much "grist be their (polemical) mill" that they may possibly omit to denounce my anti-Papalism. Cosmo Cantuar delays his letter, which, as [Alan] Don* said, he means to send to me.

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[169]

Saturday, December 8th [sic], [9th] 1939.

[symbol]

Gervase Markham writes to me:-

I am much interested in reading your book, but as I have only got half-way through it, I will not presume to comment on it. The following anecdote may amuse you:-

Three days after it was published, I went into the principal book-shop in your former Cathedral City, and asked for a copy of "Bishop Henson's book". The girl at the counter looked a little blank, and said "Which one would that be? I said "The one that has just come out – it is called The Church of England". She look [sic] vaguely round the shelves, and then said "I don't think we have got it": is it fiction?"

The poor maiden may be pardoned. Most of the books dealing with the C. of E. may fairly be classed as "fiction"!

The incident ~~as~~ has a melancholy suggestiveness as indicating how soon, and how completely, I have fallen into oblivion in Durham. The normal process has probably been quickened by the dramatic character of the last 2 years.

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[170]

2nd Sunday in Advent, December 10th, 1939.

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[symbol]

I went to church for the 8 a.m. service, and received the Holy Communion. On my return to the house, I found the prospect of breakfast had been brought into distressing dubiety by the thoughtlessness of the maid who, on the score of indisposition, had decided to spend the night at her home in Ipswich, and had omitted to return the key of the cupboard in which the breakfast crockery was locked! However this difficulty was surmounted, & (after some delay, and with the Evacuate's assistance) breakfast was provided: but not without a regrettable display of annoyance by the Pontifex! "Mind not high things", says the Apostle, "but condescend to things that are lowly". For, indeed, the really searching tests of personal religion are provided by the infinitesimally important, & boundlessly exasperating trivialities of ordinary experience. Then, alas!, the devout communicant discloses the radical paganism of mind & habit. Then the Fall of the Angels repeats itself on the terrestrial plane: and Lucifer gain falls from heaven. Well, well! "It is He that has made us: & not we ourselves".

[171]

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[symbol]

We went to church for Mattins, and I read the lessons. The Rector preached from the words in Hebrews ix. 27 "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgement". The sermon was **a typical "Anglo-Catholick" pronouncement, delivered with a marvellous assumption of dogmatic certitude**. We were bidden to distinguish between the particular judgment, which every one must face at death; & the general judgement at the last day. There was no further period of probation, though there might be opportunity of post-mortem development. We were led to the conclusion that we must always obey our consciences, but must educate them for their task, & never disobey them when they bid us make confession to the priest. I found the discourse very offensive, more, perhaps, from the authoritative manner in which it was delivered than for what it contained. I doubt whether it would edify the congregation of evacuated girls and rustic parishioners, to whom it was addressed. Like the Apocalyptic Scorpion its sting was in its tail, that is, in the concluding suggestion that we ought to make confession to the priest.

[172]

[page crossed through in red until "symbol"]

Elia and I walked for more than an hour, proceeding for the most part in a "companionable silence", since the dear lady's deafness really prohibits conversation. Milton's description of his blindness as "Knowledge at one entrance quite shut out" may be applied with not less fitness to deafness.

After tea I wrote letters to the following:

1. Captain McNeill

2. Prebendary Wynne Willson
3. Mess^{rs} George Waterston & Sons (quill pens)
4. Gervase Markham
5. Harold Henson

[symbol]

Ella has been reading aloud Newman's Loss and Gain. She reads remarkably well, so well that it is a pleasure to listen to her: but the poor dear has to do all the work, for her deafness makes it impossible for me to read to her, and so take my fair share of the common task. Good reading is by no means common, and requires more sympathy and intelligence than most people possess. But there is the reader's throat to be considered.

<!111239>

[173]

Monday, December 11th, 1939.

I work at this preposterous Norwich lecture. It is a case of "making bricks without straw" – a process infinitely fatiguing & practically futile.

Betty Bruce Steers writes to tell me that her mother has died. The poor lady's condition was such that her departure was "a happy release" both for herself and for her family: but, of course, the shock of bereavement is severe. I wrote a letter of condolence.

Bishop Lasbrey* writes me a Christmas letter. It is dated October 14th and arrived on December 11th, which argues a slow passage. He writes

The people are very loyal & anxious to hear all the news. The Government publish a summary of the wireless Empire broadcast twice weekly, & it is translated into the vernacular & put up in prominent places in the different villages. One small boy at one of the schools put following question to me – "We hear that the children in England are being hidden. Why are we not hidden?" I expect he felt it might be another case of racial discrimination.

[174]

I think a good many were disappointed that Italy did not come in. They were longing to go across Africa & help ~~the~~ to free Abyssinia. As a matter of fact the Government had actually warned people that they were going to commandeer seven or eight hundred large lorries, mostly native-owned, to transport ~~throughout~~ the Nigerian troops across Africa, but it was countermanded when Italy declared her neutrality.

The one chance of restoring Haile Selassie to his throne passed away when Italy, preferring prudence to honour, left her Axis partner unhelped.

The Times announces that the Bishop of Durham has appointed [Michael] Ramsey*, who was Vice-principal of Lincoln Theological College under Archdeacon Owen, to be Canon of Durham and Professor of Divinity in the place of Quick who has been removed to the Regius Chair in Oxford. He is a Cambridge man, & will mitigate the prevailing Oxonian aspect of the Durham Chapter. He wrote a book "The Gospel and the Catholic Church".

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[175]

Tuesday, December 12th, 1939.

[symbol]

I received an affectionate letter from Clarence Tait thanking me for having written to his father. It appears doubtful whether the latter will live to read what I wrote to him, or, if he does whether he will have retained sufficient strength to read it. He tells me a curious thing about the old man:

Dad is still conscious, & was searching all over Ipswich in his sleep on Wednesday night. Most remarkable considering he had no idea what I had written to you. Nor, as far as I know, any idea of your whereabouts.

Was there some subtle telepathic communication between Father & Son when the one talked about Ipswich in his sleep and the other was addressing to me at Ipswich the letter in which he asked me to write to him. I am disposed to think that the reality of such communications between dying persons and individuals, for whom they have affection is too strongly supported by testimonies to be reasonably disputed.

[176]

We lunched pleasantly with Archdeacon & M^{rs} Buckley. He was a junior contemporary of mine at Oxford, where he was one of a rather brilliant set of Merchant Taylor boys at S. John's. He was a pupil of Hutton,* afterwards Dean of Winchester, &, of course, knew [William] Murray* and Maynard. He was ordained in Truro in 1901, and is my junior by five years. He [sic]. Since 1921 he has been Rector of Polstead, of which (according to Crockford) the net income is £841. The population is only 598. He has published several volumes, and would appear to be well-read. I had some talk with him in his study, and was pleased to hear him express sentiments which were more latitudinarian than Anglo-Catholick. He has some reputation as a raconteur.

On our way home we called at the Deanery & saw the Dean of Bocking and M^{rs} Downe. I gave a vague promise to preach in his church.

Lady Limerick [May Pery*] sent me two silver candlesticks as a Christmas present, and some silver gift to Ella. Arthur Rawle* sent me £10 for distribution.

<!131239>

[177]

Wednesday, December 13th, 1939.

I revised and dispatched to the Sunday Times yet another “sermonette” – “Words”. Also, I declined an invitation to read a paper on some historical subject to the College Historical Society of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, which had been sent to me by M^r David Thomson, the Research Fellow in History.

We motored to Great Bealings, and lunched with Philip Tallents, to whom I gave a copy of my book on the C. of E. as a Christmas present. On our way we stopped in Ipswich, that I might change a cheque at the Bank.

Dick [Elliott*] writes:-

I am a little bit troubled by a situation which has arisen in one of the places for which I am responsible. The Vicar of the place is an extreme Anglo-Catholic & quite determined that the men shall attend his High Mass on Sunday mornings as their parade service. I have tried to explain to him that most of the men are not used to High Mass, & that they would much appreciate a simpler service at some time, which would not [178] interfere with his parochial arrangements. But he will have none of it. The position at present is that last Sunday when they were being drawn up for Church parade, the men sent a deputation to the Company commander begging to be excused going to Church.

That is substantially true all over England. The people as a whole loathe “the Mass” which carries no other suggestion to their minds than that of unlawful essay in Popery: and, since in most cases, they have no alternative but absenteeism from Divine Service, they give up going to church altogether. The “Church Times” exults in the advance of “Catholicism”, but the angels weep over the abandonment of Christianity.

I sent my signature to be appended to a short address to Oman* on the occasion of his 80th birthday, January 12th, 1940. It is hoped to present it in the Hall of All Souls on Jan. 12th at 12.30 p.m. I ought to be there, & I should like to be there, but, in these times & circumstances, a journey to Oxford is formidable.

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[179]

Thursday, December 14th, 1939.

I received along (type-written) letter from his Grace of Canterbury [William Temple*], kind but condemnatory of my book, which he thinks is “pessimistic”, and will provide materials for the enemies of the C. of E. He may be right, but “pessimistic” is not a sufficient synonym for falsehood, & even enemies are entitled to urge legitimate objections. He starts flatterously enough, but, like the scorpion of the Apocalypse, the sting is in its tail. He identifies the Church with its Establishment, and resents any criticism of the last as if it were directed against the first, whereas I had explained in the Preface that I held the Establishment to be no longer “morally defensible”. I wrote to acknowledge the Archbishop’s letter, and said that, in the unlikely event of a 2nd edition being required, I should add some observations.

[Archdall] Wynne Willson* tells me that he has bought a copy of the book for Nancy, and asks for my signature on a piece of paper to stick into it. He adds some appreciative words about the poor thing, and again urges me to get on with my Autobiography, but there is little likelihood of that task being brought to fulfilment.

<!151239>

[180]

Friday, December 15th, 1939.

The naval action of the South American coast is described (I hope not excessively) as a brilliant victory for the British ships, which, though inferior in armament, forced the German "pocket battle-ship" to take refuge in the harbour of Monte Video.

In spite of the weather, which was dismally damp and dark, we motored to Ardleigh, & lunched with the [Charles] Thurlows* who are now comfortably established in their new house. They certainly secured a good bargain, for though the house cost no more than this, it is far more commodious & modernly arranged, and has at least twice as much ground attached to it. However, I could not have afforded to live in it, & therefore, it is as well that I did not buy it. The sharp increase of the income tax, & the probability of further increases in the near future make it doubtful whether it will be possible to maintain even this modest establishment. One consequence of the War is certain, whatever side come out victorious, there will be a drastic social revolution. "The first will be last, and the last first". The looser our hold on this world the better.

<!161239>

[181]

Saturday, December 16th, 1939.

A bitterly cold day, and a domestic crisis! One of the two maids is at home, threatened with bronchitis. The maid who was acting as substitute must go home, as her husband has announced his immediate arrival. The cook is wanted at home for the week end, on some ground or other! And we are left without help, and an evacuate in the house! Fearne, after some preliminary explosions, set herself to make some "carrying on" arrangement, but it is really exasperating, all the more for the cool indifference to their duty & our convenience which these young women exhibit.

I worked at the Christmas Article for the Sunday Times, but with little success.

I walked for more than an hour in the afternoon, and, as I returned, fell in with M^{rs} Frazer, who told me that her brother, the Rector, was indisposed. I inquired whether he had any promise of assistance for tomorrow's service, & being assured that he had, refrained from any other offer of personal help beyond the midday celebration. I do not wish to be counted on for anything more.

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[182]

3rd Sunday in Advent, December 17th, 1939.

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A bitterly cold morning, & a wonderful rally of the reserve forces of helpful service. Fearne excelled herself, the Evacuate attained a height of acceptableness which had seemed as inaccessible as Mount Everest; and James laboured with the solemn pertinacity of a country regiment!

Meanwhile, I lay about reading about the Jesuits, & received with the equanimity of S Dominic welcoming the Angel with the loaves, all my normal requisites! The Homeric hero waited on by maidens, & the medieval Saint visited by celestial servitors provide precedents for the spectacle presented by the late Bishop of Durham.

I walked to the little paper shop, and fetched the "Sunday Papers", which in spite of the Puritanic severity of our Evacuate's visage, are still admitted to the house. My little sermonette on "Words" has been abbreviated by the omission of the paragraph which I myself most highly esteemed, but even so the miserable thing is coherent and intelligible. It offends my pride that even an Editor should put his hand to revising my work, but I am bound to assume that his action was determined by the fact of "space".

[183]

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The Rector being indisposed, his place was taken by an old clergyman, retired from active service. I read the lessons, and celebrated the Holy Communion after Mattins, when there were only 5 communicants beside myself. The Church was bitterly cold, for the vestry fire smoke so abominably, that the door had to be kept open. Also, the coughing of the congregation, mostly composed of evacuate girls and choirboys was persistent and distracting.

I wrote letters to the following:

1. Wynne-Willson
2. Dick
3. Mortimer (declining an invitation to address undergraduates in Christ Church, Oxford)
4. Charles.
5. Martin.

Miss Bridge comments not infrequently on the lack of any provision for the younger men & youths in the parish on Sunday afternoons, and I suspect that she is hinting at a possible employment for an idle old Bishop, who has abandoned the exercise of his spiritual task, and put his hand to no useful substitute. But, _____

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[184]

Monday, December 18th, 1939.

There is a careful, and rather flatterously worded notice of my book in the "Church of England Newspaper". It is headed "Speculum Ecclesiae Anglicanae", and is written by Prof Norman Sykes. * He has evidently read the book, and he makes some effective criticisms. But the broad effect of the whole Article is certainly favourable, and the references to me are friendly. It concludes thus:

Bishop Henson has done our church good service by his volume; and perhaps modesty would not forbid him to allow that the genus of episcopal historians was not entirely extinguished with the death of Mandell Creighton.

Of course there is the inevitable allusion to my literary composition. "No reader can fail to enjoy its style and pungency". This may pair off with the eulogy of my "controversial English" by T. S. Eliot, but it does not please me for the very sufficient reason that in my own opinion, save for occasional sentence, my style is ragged, & not always grammatical! I am pleased to note that Sykes expresses special approval of the chapter on "National Education".

[185]

[symbol]

I completed the Article on Christmas for the Sunday Times, but with little satisfaction. It isn't at all what I would wish to say on that theme; but it must serve.

Lord Woodbridge* came to see is. He is friendly and humourous sort. He and his friend Lord Roche* had been to the secret session of Parliament together; but (though he told me nothing) I inferred that no information of any importance was given. He had been in communication with a Plymouth Brother, who has asked the use of a hall belonging to him for use of the Bible Class which he has been planning apart, of course, from the Vicar's knowledge. Lord W. did not express himself as attached to the said Plymouth Brethren! I strongly suspect that our Evacuate belongs to the Sect, and that she also is actively propagating its heresy. **If proselytising zeal be a trustworthy evidence of spiritual quality these fanatical stories must stand high; but I do not think that Christ would allow the validity of that evidence. Did He not condemn the Pharisees for "compassing sea, land to make one proselyte," and only doing so to the proselyte's utter ruin"?**

<!191239>

[186]

Tuesday, December 19th, 1936.

I found the source from which I drew the statement, which his Grace says is unfounded that the Abp. Of C. is "to this day ex officio Superintendent of a non-episcopal Church" (p115 of my book). I took it from the Dedication to the Archbishop of a booklet published in 1881 by James Gibbs 43 Palace Street, Canterbury. This booklet is entitled

Christian Firmness of the Huguenots, and a Sketch of the History of the French Refugee Church of Canterbury by the Rev J. A. Martin B.D. late Pastor of the Church.
To be obtained of R^{ev} J. R. Barnabas (Minister).

In the Dedication the Archbishop is described as "Superintendent of the French Church so long established in the Crypt of the Cathedral".

Such Dedications are generally exact to the point of pedantic scrupulosity in their addresses, though distressingly disfigured by bombast & flattery. Yet the Archbishop ought to be acquainted with his own official description & responsibilities i.e. I must suppose that M^r Martin used the word "Superintendent" in a very loose sense!

[187]

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Another morning was frittered away, mostly in letter-writing. I wrote to Grey Turner,* who has sent me a small ~~book~~-box of quills, but not the long, strong swan quills which my soul loveth, but which seem to have passed wholly out of use.

In the afternoon I took a "constitutional", and ended it by calling at the Rectory to enquire after the Rector, who has been "hors de combat" with that horrible affliction, a chill on the liver. He was still in bed, but cheerful, & clearly "on the mend". He is clearly neither unintelligent nor unread. He has had large experience of life, & has for many years lived in academic circles; but his entire interests are ecclesiastical not in the larger sense of the word, but in the narrowest. He has been a standard-bearer of the Anglo-Catholick faction, & an adroit organizer & wire-puller in its interests. He certainly desires to impress me with his tolerance & intellectual range, but I distrust the first and doubt the last. It is entirely impossible for me to discuss any religious question with him, for he rests contentedly in the chose jugée of his "ecclesiola".

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[188]

Wednesday, December 20th, 1939.

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I worked at the Norwich lecture, which does actually begin to take shape in a coherent scheme.

I wrote to Sir Robert White condoling with him on the death of his son, Lieut-Commander While R.N. who was in command of the Duchess, sunk after a collision.

In the afternoon, Douglas, now Vicar of Raydon, and formerly Vicar of Stillington in the Durham diocese, called with his wife and daughter to see the house, and have tea. They all seemed cheerful and well. Also they expressed much admiration of my study. I had never met the 2nd M^{rs} Douglas before. She is a large woman in mourning for her first husband, if her funereal garment are evidence. She said that she was older than I, but when I said that I was in my 77th year, she had to confess that she was only 73.

D^r Chapman, of the Clarendon Press, writes about the "Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs:

"We hope the sale from this advertisement (sc. A big lunch given by the bookseller) – I think we should touch the million mark before 1939 is out".

That is excellent indeed.

[189]

I finished reading "Emma", and was more than ever amazed by the picture of English society which it presents. The pettiness of the interests, the strength and absurdity of the class pretensions, the complete absence of any tolerable version of Christianity – all afflict the considering reader with a melancholy wonder. It is, however, important to remember that Miss Austen does but present with almost photographic fidelity the Society which dominated England in the early XIXth century, and which has set the note of the "upper class" ever since. Leslie Stephens's brief account of her in the D.N.B. quotes many remarkable testimonies to her genius, e.g. Sir Water Scott declared (diary for 14 March, 1826) Miss Austen's talent to be "the most wonderful he had met with". "The big bow-wow strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch which renders ordinary commonplace things & characters interesting from the truth of the description and the sentiment is denied to me. What a pity such a gifted creature died so young!" [She was born in 1775, & died in 1817].

<!211239>

[190]

Thursday, December 21st, 1939.

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The shortest day, and a brilliant one! Now, at last, we begin to face towards the sun. The suicide of the Graf Spee is made the subject of a sympathetic article in the Times. It is difficult to condemn his action, and still more difficult to approve it. He appears to have obeyed a direct order of his superior, Hitler, and therefore, what ignominy attached to his action did not fall on him, but on the finally responsible person. Yet a fine sense of professional honour could not be satisfied by a formal defence, and, in shooting himself, he made it apparent to the world that he repudiated the act he was required to perform. Hitler's decision is difficult to understand. Probably it is folly to look for a rational Explanation of any of his actions.

I spent another morning on the Norwich lecture. Incidentally, I read again the opening chapter of S R. Gardiner's* History of England. It is a masterly summary of English History. I know none better. What a queer looking creature he was, ugly as an ogre, and yet with a curious attractiveness.

[191]

*It is true that, in theory, a considerable influence was assigned to the laity in the Presbyterian system; but it was to the laity regarded as members of a congregation, not as members of a State. In the eye of the Presbyterian clergy, the king and the beggar were of squalid importance, & ought to be possessed of only equal influence, as soon as they entered the church doors. Noble as this idea was, it may safely be said that this organised ecclesiastical democracy could not flourish upon English soil. England has been Papal, Episcopal, and Liberal: she has shouted by turns for the authority of Rome, for the Royal Supremacy, and for the Rights of Conscience. **One thing she has steadily avoided: she has never been, and it may be affirmed without fear of contradiction that she never will be Presbyterian.***

v. Gardiner's history of England. Vol. i, p. 23.

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[192]

Friday, December 22nd, 1939.

[symbol]

A sharp frost, white on the grass & hard on the path. I received from the Press cuttings Agency a definitely hostile review of my book, which has appeared in the "Manchester Guardian", where I had expected something more friendly. But as it was written by "Artifex" (Canon Peter Green) who is definitely a "High Churchman", who has added to that character some private crankdoms, anti-gambling, feminism, teetotalism, & pacifism, I had really no reason for thinking that he would find my volume other than distasteful. He says that it "is sure to be widely read". I wish I could share his assurance, but my experience is that people only buy what flatters their prejudices, and confirms their opinions!*

"The present volume makes distressing reading... the whole tone is so pessimistic and so critical that it is certainly not a book one would put into the hands of anyone who knew little of the Church & whom one wished to attract to it." He says that he was most disappointed with the chapter, from which he had expected most – that on the English Clergy.

[193]

[symbol]

I am myself disposed to think that there is a measure of justice in this criticism: the book needs, and, if space had been at my disposal, it would have included, an additional chapter describing the activities of a well-worked Anglican parish and emphasizing the great extent of practical failure which must equitably be assigned to causes which lie outside the Church's control. If the opportunity should arise for writing a preface to a second edition, I might do something in this direction, but I have no reason for thinking that another edition will be required.

I spent another morning on the Norwich lecture, and in the afternoon walked for an hour and a quarter.

I received from D^r Tait's daughter, M^{rs} Russell-Smith a touching account of her father's last hours. He seems to have been really pleased and helped by my letter, which he was still strong enough to hear & appreciate. I am glad I so far overcame my incorrigible habit of postponing duties, as to write to him at once, on receiving Clarence's letter.

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[194]

Saturday, December 23rd, 1939.

A hard frost, and a mist deepening into fig. I received a pleasant letter from Sir Robert White in response to my condolence on the death of his son. Also, the Principal of the University College of the South West sent me a civil invitation to preach to the University in Exeter Cathedral on May 5th, 1940: but I had to decline, as I am already pledged to preach in the Temple Church on that day.

I wrote to the Warden of All Souls.

In the afternoon I took my “constitutional” in the course of which, as I was returning, a hefty young man addressed me with much civility, explaining that he was the son of M^r Reid of the College Farm, & would be glad to show it to me. I inquired how he stood in the matter of the War, & he said that he was 29 years old, & had not yet been called up. Moreover, he thought he would in any case be exempted for military service on the ground of his father’s infirm health. I didn’t like the sound of this, as it revealed the behaviour of the farmers in the last War. Their “hinds” had to serve but their sons managed to obtain exemption. Farmers have many virtues, but not that of self-sacrificing patriotism.

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[195]

4th Sunday in Advent, December 24th, 1939.

[symbol]

A bitter frost. I was called in good time, and walked over a hard & slippery road to church in order to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

My article on "Christmas" appeared in the Sunday Times without mutilation. It reads coherently, and is at least sub-Christian! There was a special delivery of letters by way of relieving the Festal pressure on the postmen. I received some more cards, & letters from the Bishop of Jarrow, Jack Clayton, and Beryl Wynne-Willson. The last sent me a fascinating picture of her baby girl, Anne. The child bids fair to be as fat and good-tempered as her father.

We went to Church for Mattins. I read the lessons, and the Rector preached from the words of S. Paul's Ep. To the Philippians. "Rejoice in the Lord always". Before the service, I gave the Rector £1 for the choirboys Christmas-boxes, and charged him to expend Arthur Rawle's benefaction (£10) on gifts for the poorer old folks in the parish.

I sent him a cheque for the money (£10). I wrote a long letter to Bishop Lasbrey in answer to his letter of October 14th.

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[196]

Christmas Day, December 25th, 1939.

Milder weather, and a beautiful morning.

Some more cards & presents arrived. I was pleased to received [sic] letters from Robin, & Dick. Old S. Clair Baddeley sent his substantial & vastly learned History of Painswick.

We all attended Mattins, & had the rare privilege (!) of hearing the "Athanasian" Creed, which seemed grotesquely out of place in a congregation, of which almost the whole were Barnardo's girls and choir-boys. The sermon gave us the theology of the said "Creed", vulgarized and, perhaps, misrepresented by the preacher. I cannot doubt that such preaching multiplies unbelievers.

Claude Nunn was one of the communicants. His mutilated hand brought back to my memory the impression made on me in Barking, where mangled hands, the result of frequent accidents in the Jute works, were pathetically common among the communicants. The Rector informed me that the lad has succeeded in getting a sum of £500 allowed to him from his employer, who will also have to pay the "costs" of the litigation. The said employer is our popish squire, Stokes.

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Rather to my surprise, our Evacuate communicated together with several of the Barnardo girls. It is, perhaps, well not to enquire into their qualifications, but, at least, it argues good intention.

Rowaleyn Cumming Bruce came to tea. He is now stationed at Acklington in Northumberland where also is Robin. He gives a similar account of waste and confusion. One illustration was the pouring away of 350 gallons of petrol in order to provide space for some additional guns! It is not necessary to place unlimited confidence in such complaints by young officers; but there is only too good reason for thinking that they have far greater justification than it is pleasant to reflect on.

A little note from Kitty Inge,* expressed with the curious fulsomeness which distinguishes the language of both the daughters of M^{rs} Maxwell Spooner, & tends to conceal their genuine kindness, tells me that she has been reading my "great" little book on the C. of E. She adds in a postscript "Ralph also was enthusiastic. His arm is not shortened, his power of expression and thought as great as ever."

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[198]

Tuesday, December 26th, 1939.

The maids overslept themselves with the natural consequence that the household arrangements were belated & confused, and the bad consciences of the delinquents co-operated with the ill temper of their employers to create an atmosphere of discomfort and unrest! Yet it is hard to see how a remedy is to be found: for if the maids elect to "walk out on you", there is but little prospect of replacing them! In a large household, there is a chance of getting a disciplined life, but as we are, everything turns on the precarious chance that a really good servant, capable of standing alone in the way of duty will be found. Probably, the root of the "servant problem" lies deeper than personal quality. There is a deepening repugnance in the popular mind against the social system, which demands the existence of a "servant class" for its due working. The "amour propre" of "Labour" is wounded by the very notion of "domestic service", and, probably, no improvement in wages & conditions will suffice to secure the permanent existence of the class ordering of nation [sic] life which "domestic service" implies.

[199]

With much difficulty I succeeded in comprising a "sermonette" for the "Sunday Times" on "Good Resolutions". It is humiliating that such trivial things should need so much labour. In the afternoon I walked for an hour & a half. The temperature has risen, &, perhaps, for that reason, I have been bothered with a persistent headache.

I finished reading Rauschning's book "Hitler & Speaks". The ~~concluding~~ chapter on "Hitler himself" gives a horrifying description of the man, who has inflicted a vaster mass of suffering on mankind than any known to history, save possibly such half-mythical monsters as Genghis Khan or Tamerlane, and who still wields more power than any other living man. The chapter begins with the question, Is Hitler mad? It is impossible, after reading the chapter, to return any other than an affirmative answer. The man is a criminal lunatic, filled with morbid sanity and insane ambitions. Moreover, he is dowered with an uncanny hypnotic power, which dominates everybody.

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[200]

Wednesday, December 27th, 1939.

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A bright, cold morning. Braley writes

I think you are probably wrong in thinking that people are not disposed to read serious books at this time. For example – I gave a copy of your new book to M^r Askew-Robertson, who owns Ladykirk (near Norham). He told me yesterday how grateful he was to you for giving something that he could really enjoy for the style of English in which it was written. He gave me six of his special quills to send to you as a token of his thanks. (I will send the pens when the holiday rush is over). I believe there are a lot of people like him – who are glad to get away from the War. The “black-out” gives many people an opportunity for serious reading. Yes, I have read “The Church of England” & so carefully that I could pass an examination on it! I think you have done justice to your subject”

But he can't stomach Disestablishment!

[201]

[Half a page crossed through in red pencil, to “Dolphin...”]

I wrote a “sermonette” on “The Religion of Humanity”, a subject suggested by the Epiphany. In the afternoon I walked to Chattisham, and, as I was returning, was overtaken by Archie Reid of the College Farm (v. p. 194). He said that his mother would gladly show me the house, which was of some interest. This young man, who has an attractive appearance, though, perhaps, inwardly disposed to accept Cuddie Headrigg's view of military service! appears inclined to get into friendly relation with the ex-Palatine of Durham. The latter will certainly not decline his advances.

Dolphin* uses the abominable word “evacuee”. He ought to know better. He has not yet read my book but has “enjoyed” reading the Sunday Times articles. He has lunched at Auckland Castle, and “noted the many changes”. [symbol] **He has a class of confirmation candidates consisting of Jarrow Secondary School boys, all about 15 years of age. “I gave them Bibles, & asked them to turn to the Acts of the Apostles. None could find it. I found that all of them were searching in the Old Testament! This is the “Christian basis of National Education”.**

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[202]

Thursday, December 28th, 1939.

[symbol]

I received from the Bishop of Chichester [George Bell] an acknowledgement of the copy of my book, which I had caused the publishers to send to him. He says that he has read it, and "written a full review by request in the Fortnightly".*

"I think the book first class – extraordinarily interesting, and full of most apt judgements as well as rich in historical background. You will not expect or want me always to agree. But though occasionally I may have felt a lack (as I print in my review), especially, perhaps, in appreciating the Catholic and the Evangelical (a lack which Davidson shared, notably on the Catholic side!) I certainly know no book of a similar compass which portrays the Church of England so well. And churchmen ought to be grateful to you for writing it, & for writing so brilliantly."

I shall await for more deliberate & cautious opinion in the Fortnightly.

Also, I had a long letter from Captain Radcliffe on the much agitated question of army church parades.

[203]

[symbol]

The Bishop of Sheffield writes.

"I have been enjoying & I hope profiting by your book on the Church of England".

The Bishop of Blackburn writes:

I have been reading your book with great interest & profit. I think you must have enjoyed writing it.

The Warden of All Souls sends me a long and interesting letter in which he repeats a story told to him by Bob Lawrence, the brother of the famous Lawrence of Arabia.

He (sc. Bob Lawrence) served as a doctor with the forces in the last war, then went out to Sechuan [sic] in China as a medical missionary, & is now home with some toxic evil in his hands, but with a big heart. He is, I think, very like Lawrence in appearance. The expression in his eyes & his mouth recall his brother to me, but he is a simple primitive Christian, to me with marvellous charm, & very quick memory of sights & sounds of beauty when he talks about Western China... He was in a district where for years there [204] has been a great deal of fighting, and when he was talking of things, he told us of one little incident which is something for ever in one's hand.

Refugees were fleeing from one district and outside the city one of his lady missionaries who was helping found an old man sitting on the road side with his long pole on which he carried his roll of bedding, his rice pot, and a singing bird in a cage. She asked if she could help him. He had come 70 miles, and had still another 70 to go. He said he did not wish money as he had been robbed three times. "Come into the city", she said, "and we will give you food". He said that he would stay where he was because he wanted to be on the road before the city gate was opened. And then he said "If I am tired, I have my bed: if I am hungry, I have my pot: if I am sad, I have my bird to sing to me: & I am a Christian & have God in my heart. What more do I need?"

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[205]

Friday, December 29th, 1939.

Bitterly cold. The country covered with a thin veil of snow and bright sunshine.

The Scottish stationers, to whom Sir James Irvine advised me to betake myself, sent me a quill after my own heart, but terribly expensive, 8/6 per dozen, accompanying it with a letter which is not without interest.

If you are accustomed to cutting and shaping your own pens, a habit which is now almost unknown, this Swan quill will outlast many of the others, and we shall be glad to have your comments on the enclosed.

We would like to say that we are much interested in your enquiry, as at one time and for many years, we made these quills in our own factory where we still make sealing wax in large quantities. The Quills reached us in the raw state from the far north, and mostly from Scandinavia and Russia, and were cleaned by heating & pressing by a workman known as a "Dutcher", [206] and thereafter trimmed and cut by hand. Unfortunately, the sale today is practically non-existent, and it is very difficult indeed to lay hands on suitable material for the purpose.

There is a pathetic interest about the passing of an industry so intimately associated with literature.

I wrote to [Grant] Robertson,* condoling with him on the death of his mother, a fine old lady of 93. These Scotch women (e.g. M^{rs} Raleigh, M^{rs} Haldane & M^{rs} Robertson) are really wonderful - shrewd, godly and yet gracious.

In the afternoon I walked to College Farm and called on M^{rs} Reid. The door was opened by a buxom wench, who, as I rightly guessed, was Archie's sister. The older people had gone to Ipswich, as was their normal practice on Fridays. However, I encountered them not far from the house, and promised to call another day. The roads were not too safe for an ancient, rather apt to slip on ice!

[207]

One Charles Thompson writes from the Conservative Club, York, on Christmas Day. He had read my Article in the Sunday Times, and does not appear to have been much helped by it.

"You quote our Lord's words, "Think not that I came to bring peace on the earth &c." To me this has always been the most inexplicable text in the Bible. I remember only once in my life – I am nearly 76 – having heard any sermon based upon it, & I should then be a boy about twelve. It was in my native town, and by Canon Henry Twells, the author of that sublime hymn, "At even ere the sun was set". I quite forget what line he took. Whatever our Lord meant, it is true that in every one of the 1900 years it has been the sword, and always the sword, until this year of horror, 1939. Like

thousands, I struggle to keep my faith. I dare not let my Reason have play or I should be submerged in doubt. I know there is no Refuge but Faith.

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[208]

Saturday, December 30th, 1939.

Bitterly cold, and the snow yet lying on the land.

The Archbishop writes:

About that little matter of the title of the Abp. of C. as "Superintendent" of the Huguenot Congregation which worships in the Crypt of the Cathedral, I am impressed by the care which you have taken in such a comparatively trivial matter. I must confess that on further enquiry, there seems to be more justification for your use of that title than I had supposed. As I told you, I knew that I was one of the ex officio Trustees of the Endowment which is under a scheme of the Charity Commission. But I had never regarded myself as in any sense Superintendent. I learn now that in the official papers of the Congregation the Archbishop is described as "Surintendant" followed by the Pastor. This is an entirely honorary title and I certainly have never exercised, and do not propose to exercise, any kind of active superintendence of this small and dwindling body; and I think [209] I must communicate with the worthy Pastor and say that I am unwilling to accept a title which carries with it a meaning which it is not intended to possess – namely, some actual superintendence. But so far as you are concerned, I fear ~~we~~ I must admit your justification in the sentence in your book except that what I do ~~is~~ not do is superintend.

It is handsome of his Grace's part to acknowledge his own error: but he will be very ill-advised if he destroys a most interesting historical survival, and arouses some not unwarrantable suspicion by disclaiming a description which his predecessors have accepted. Moreover, as himself born and bred a Presbyterian, his refusal to acknowledge a connection with a Presbyterian congregation, might fairly be resented. But I doubt not that it would commend the welcome approbation of the Anglo-Catholic sycophants who surround him!

[210]

I finished reading a small but excellent book, "Jonathan Swift Dean and Pastor" by Robert Wyse Jackson L. L. D. [S. P. C. K.]. He insists on Swift's abnormality as explaining his strange behaviour towards his wife, his sincere but cryptic personal religion, and his disgusting obsession with sheer physical filth. He gives an interesting account of his life as Rector and Dean, & certainly succeeds in impressing the reader with the justice of his contention that Swift was both a sincerely religious man, and a singularly unselfish and devoted parson. His account of Swift's preaching accords entirely with my own estimate of it. I was particularly pleased with his careful analysis of the "Letter to a Young Gentleman, lately entered into Holy Orders", "Even today", he says, "it would be valuable as a text-book in the theological colleges". I reflected with satisfaction that I have been accustomed to recommend it to Ordination candidates.

[following paragraph crossed through in red pencil]

The Popish Squire ~~entered~~ entertained the children of the parish, as well parishioners as evacuates, at a party in Hintlesham Hall. Ella and Fearne went to it, but I preferred my fireside, and employed myself reading, and writing letters.

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[211]

Sunday after Christmas, December 31st, 1939.

[page crossed through in red pencil]

Bitterly cold. Slippery roads. No wind.

I went to church, and received the Blessed Sacrament at the 8 a.m. service. Arthur Hine was serving. It is hateful to allow one's mind to be shadowed, even for a moment, by a quasi-Pharisaical resentment. (One can never safely forget the Master's challenge. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.") And yet, as a matter of essential discipline, I cannot think that he ought to have been re-admitted to office. That he should be restored to communion I approve, for he has paid his penalty, and is presumably repentant. But office stands on another footing. If there be such a thing as an incapacitation fault, then it can hardly be disputed that his was such. Moreover, I must needs think that the credit of the Church is a spiritual interest which cannot but be injured by a procedure which suggests that a low moral standard is acquiesced in even in the case of church officials. There is also the probable effect on all his coevals and juniors, of both sexes to be considered. (cf p. 18, 68)

[212]

I absented myself from Mattins, and write to M^r Thompson, and my little Airman. I wrote also to my godson, Gilbert Simpson.*

In the afternoon, I walked to Chattisham, & on the way, left a card on Sir William Brass, and called at Chattisham Hall to enquire after Sir Gerald Ryan. He was said to be better, and intending to come home to be nursed. A dubious-looking nan stopped me in order to tell me that he possessed a book of Martyrs, "printed at Bungay", which he imagined to be of great value! I asked the date, & was assured with pride that it was 130 years old, that it was not Fox's! He asked whether he might bring it round for me to see. I could not decently say, No, but these vendors of priceless ancient volumes are as notorious, as they are ignorant & untrustworthy!

I wrote to Ruth Spooner, John Radford, M. Jean de Botton, and John Redfearn.

And so comes to an end the unhappiest year, perhaps, of my life which assuredly has not been lacking in unhappy years. Yet even so, I have much for which I am bound to thank God. Therefore, let it end with "Laus Deo"!