

Henson Journal Volume 80

26 July 1940 – 5 October 1940

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]

Friday, July 26th, 1940.

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I received a letter from the 10 Downing Street:-

Dear Bishop Henson,

It has been suggested to the Prime minister that you might be willing to surrender your well earned leisure in order to do some "War work".

Perhaps when you are next in London you will allow me to submit a proposal to you.

I can call upon you at any time or place you appoint.

Yours truly,
Brendan Bracken.

I presume that this gentleman, who is described in "Who's Who" as M.P., is Winston's Parliamentary Secretary.

I telegraphed to the Secretary of the Athenaeum asking whether I could have a room in the Club on Wednesday night, & received an affirmative reply. I wrote accordingly to M^r Bracken suggesting that he should see me at the Athenaeum on Wednesday afternoon or Thursday morning. This would enable me to dine at Grillions.

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Missen called for me shortly after 11 a.m. and motored me to Bungay, where we lunched at the Hotel with Archdeacon Perowne and the Headmaster of Bungay School. Then I attended the prize-giving ceremony at which the Archdeacon presided as Chairman of the Governors. There were about 150 boys, mostly sons (as I was told) of farmers & shopkeepers. They looked healthy, manly, and fairly intelligent. I gave away the prizes, and mad[sic] a speech for just over half an hour. The boys listened with attention, unbroken by applause until the end, but whether they were interested or bored, I could not discern!

Then we had tea with the headmaster and his wife. She was at Girton, and is attractive. They have a family of 3 small boys.

Missen was an interesting companion, and talked with animation and intelligence. Two of the Masters of the School claimed acquaintance, one of whom asserted that I had confirmed him privately in the Chapel at Auckland. But I could remember neither of them.

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[3]

Saturday, July 27th, 1940.

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[first paragraph crossed through in red.]

There was a thunderstorm during the night with some rain, but no air raid. After an interval, the storm broke out again with considerable violence, the thunder and lightening were almost incessant. The usual disabling influence of thunder was assisted by the disturbance of the storm, with the result that my morning's work which began with the highest intentions ended with the poorest achievement.

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The disabilities which I cannot conceal from myself, when the suggestion that I should undertake some war-work has actually to be faced are formidable. (1.) Age, I am nearing 77. (2.) Physical debility. My eyesight is beginning to fail: [my teeth (or lack of teeth) prohibits freedom of movement.] (3.) my disorderly intellectual habit makes concentration of mind on any specific task difficult. (4) my method of preaching lends itself with difficulty to any popular speaking, as, for example, to troops. (5) my "helplessness" in travel makes any peripatetic employment repugnant. These, and the list might be extended, are real obstacles, but they would not all apply, & none with extreme force, to my tenure of a Westminster Canonry. Though how that c^d be war work, is not so evident.

[4]

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But I am distressed and humiliated by my present situation – an unserviceable onlooker at this supreme crisis; and, if I could be lifted out of so painful a condition, I should rejoice.

[remainder of page crossed through in red.]

The 6 p.m. wireless announced that there had been raids last night, but not on a great scale. The effect was, militarily estimated, trivial.

The hostile weather compelled us to abandon our projected excursion to Norwich to call on the Bishop of S. E. and I. in the place of his present sojourn.

Whiting's book, Nathaniel Lord Crewe Bishop of Durham (1674-1721) and his Diocese is written from an Anglo-Catholic point of view, and discloses the fact very crudely, but it is careful [sic] piece of work, and contains much valuable information. It is full of interesting information which I regret had not been in my possession when I resided in Auckland Castle. It would have made me a more successful host to the visitors who stayed at Auckland Castle. It is, perhaps, regrettable that a view of Auckland is not included in the illustrations of the book.

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[5]

10th Sunday after Trinity, July 28th, 1940.

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A beautiful but doubtful morning, alluring and alarming like a fascinating child. We all went to church at 8 a.m., and received the Blessed Sacrament.

I read the lessons at Mattin[sic]. The relevance of Ahab and Naboth was almost ??? painfully relevant to Hitler and his victims. It needed no preacher to point the moral.

In the afternoon I wrote to Whiting thanking him for his book, and pointing out his error in crediting Cosin* with the great chapel at Auckland. Raine, Lightfoot, and Hodgson demonstrated that what Cosin did was to transform Pudsey's dining Hall into a chapel. I also took occasion to demur to his unfair treatment of Burnett, referring him to Firth's "Introduction" to Miss Foxcroft's Life, and to Airy's article in the D.N.B. I made a copy of my letter in case it should lead into a discussion!

Claude Nunn, the eldest of the 4 boys of the Hall gardener, came to see my study, and I amused myself with him for nearly an hour. He is the son of a Scottish mother, and a Suffolk father, and has never gone further into the county than the next parish! But he is not unintelligent or ill-mannered.

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[6]

Monday, July 29th, 1940.

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A sound argument may be present in arguments which disguise and discredit it. The truth of history may be garnered from legends as well as from sober records. It is like water which may rush, pure & limpid, from the mountain spring, or be dark & dirty in the puddles of a much travelled road, or painfully distilled from the ocean's briny waves, or the desert's brackish pools. Forgery may reveal faith, as well as corrupt and distort it. Prejudice may be disclosed by the selection of facts hardly less than by their perversion or suppression. All this has been abundantly illustrated by Christian Apologetic. Nothing could be more fantastic and irrelevant than the specific prophecies which the apologists of the ~~?????~~ primitive church ~~offered~~ claimed to have been fulfilled in the life of Jesus; yet when these are all disallowed the core of the Appeal to Prophecy is not touched. The modern apologist is on firm ground when he insists that Jesus stood in the succession of the prophets, validating and completing their spiritual witness.

[7]

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These reflections were raised in my mind as I read D^r Glover's* fascinating volume, "The Conflict of Religions in the early Roman Empire". In ch. vi "The Conflict of Christian and Jew" he discusses the patristic appeal to prophecy at some length. He is, perhaps, on doubtful ground when he rejects the claim of Lactantius that 'Jesus is the author of the system'.

"Something of the kind is suggested by Luke (24. 29) But it is obvious that the whole method is quite alien to the mind ~~of~~ and style of Jesus, in spite of quotations in the vein of the apologists which the evangelists here and there have attributed to him."
(p. 133)

D^r Glover is at the pains of setting out in parallel columns the events in the life of Jesus, & the prophecies which they fulfil in the argument with which Justin presses the Jew Trypho. Among these is the famous interpolation; "The Lord hath reigned from the tree". Justin charges the Jews with erasing it from their text. "There is no evidence that it was ever in an ancient Hebrew text. But it gained currency among Christians through its use in the hymn of Fortunatus 'Vexilla Regis', [8] [page crossed through in red.] which was translated by Neale, and is still sung in our churches, "The Royal Banners forward go'

Fulfill'd is now what David told
In true prophetic song of old,
How God the heathen's King should be,
For God is reigning from the Tree.

A reference to Lucian's dialogue, Charon, sent me to my Loeb, and I found it there, and forthwith read in a very successful translation. It is curiously relevant to the cosmic suicide which we are now witnessing. It ends thus:

"How silly are the ways of unhappy mankind, with their kings, golden ingots, funeral rites and battles – but never a thought of Charon!"

We motored to Horstead, about six miles from Norwich, and had tea with the Bishop of S^t E. & I in Mill House, which he has purchased in order to provide himself with a place in which he can 'make his soul' before he goes hence and is no more seen. It has a pleasant aspect, and is in [9] [page crossed through in red] the midst of an attractive country. He has rather more than an acre of garden, which looks charming being on a slope, and encircled by trees. Perhaps in view of the Bishop's weak heart, the steepness of the slope is rather disconcerting. Indeed, his daughter expressed some fear on this count. But both he and his wife expressed much satisfaction with their new home. Suffolk is becoming a refuge for resigned bishops – Durham, Rochester, and now S^t Edmundsbury & Ipswich beside some 'returned empties'.

On our way we turned aside to call on the Rudgards. The Major is as great a misery to himself and as difficult a problem to his wife as ever.

It is probably a case of "nerves". The house and garden had a shabby and neglected appearance, and the garden was filthy with the droppings of geese, which seem to have it to themselves. The village, Drayton, is full of soldiers, who, so M^{rs} Rudgard assured us, were extremely well behaved.

I was pleased to see the excellent appearance of the crops everywhere. The recent storms do not seem to have 'laid' them anywhere.

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[10]

Tuesday, July 30th, 1940.

The Christian State may regulate its acts by Christian principles, though it is wholly severed from the ~~State~~ Church. The State does not necessarily become heathen or infidel, because it confines itself to its own sphere, and does not intermeddle with that of the Church. And it seems hardly to be questioned that the reign of Christ upon earth was more fully, more heartily, and more practically recognized by the primitive Church, in her poverty, her weakness, her political nullity, than in the subsequent period, when kings became her nursing fathers, and their queens her nursing mothers, shielding her indeed from outward violence, but often injuring her by mistaken kindness.

[v. Thirlwall Charge 1869, when the question of Irish Disestablishment was being fiercely debated. The Bishop's speech for the Bill was, in the late Lord Salisbury's opinion superior to the famous speech of Magee against].

[11]

Alliance with the Imperial rule, with all its justice and all its lawfulness, became an impending necessity. Then all history would predict that alliance with the State could not become an accomplished fact without a practical outburst and shock of worldliness probably of a terrific sort. So it was. But the worldliness was a violence to the principle and motive of the alliance, whose strength was its purity, and Reform would henceforth be the salt of every age.

But the maintenance of a position unallied with the State and outside it, independent, indifferent, unaggressive would have involved a faithless worldliness inaccessible to reform. "The external bond may be severed for a time", says Bp. Lightfoot "but the State cannot liberate itself from the influence of the ~~State~~ Church, nor the Church from the influence of the State... Where there is not an alliance there must needs be a collision. Indifference is impossible, & without indifference, there can be no strict neutrality".

Benson, Cyprian, p. 528-529.

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[12]

Wednesday, July 31st 1940.

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A bright warm day. Fearne motored me to Ipswich, and there I took the 9.56 train, which arrived at Liverpool Street fairly to scheduled time, 11.35 a.m. I drove to the Athenaeum, and went to the Hair-dresser who gave me his professional attention. Then I lunched at the Club, after which I looked in at Hugh Rees, & ordered Cecil's Book of Christian Verse.

[symbol] At 4 p.m. M^r Brendon Bracken came to see me at the Athenaeum as arranged. We sate in the seat outside the Club, and talked for about half and hour. He explained that the Prime Minister wished to know whether I would accept the vacant canonry at Westminster Abbey as a piece of war work. He thought it of real public importance at this juncture that I should occupy that pulpit. [Moreover, he desired to have the advantage of my advice in the matter of Church appointments, for he was extremely dissatisfied with the present system]. M^r Bracken expressed himself with much frankness, even going so far as to indicate that Disestablishment might be included in the necessary re-adjustments which would follow the War. I inquired whether he would object [13] [symbol] to my discussing the matter with the Dean of Westminster, & he replied that he had already ascertained that the Dean & Chapter would welcome my return to the Abbey. Finally, I asked whether I was to understand that, if I were willing to accept appointment, I should be offered nomination. He replied in the affirmative.

Then I walked to Westminster, [following passage within brackets crossed through in red] [& called on Baker-Wilbraham at the Ecclesiastical Commission's Office. I asked whether my episcopal pension would be affected by my appointment to the canonry. He seemed uncertain, & almost doubtful: but, on referring to the Episcopal Pensions Measure, agreed that its terms were explicit. The pension was for life. However he sent for M^r Brown, his second in command, & he took the same view. I gathered that the question of my returning to Westminster had been made known to them. Then] I fell in with the Dean, & returned with him to the Deanery. He read to me the letter which he had addressed to the Prime Minister, in which he raised the question of the double income, and assumed mistakenly that the retention of the pension would be illegal.

[14]

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I said that any specific conditioning of the appointment would be against the law, but that no objection could be fairly urged against my stating my intention of taking no more than my expenses from the statutory income, and handing over the surplus, if any, to the general fund of the Abbey. I thought also that the Prime Minister should make public the special reason why he had invited an aged bishop, confessedly past diocesan work, to occupy a stall at the Abbey. The Dean said that all this seemed to him both reasonable and satisfying.

The House which, in the event of my becoming a canon, I should have to occupy is the attractive one which Gore and Beaching occupied, & which was originally built by Bushy in the 17th century.

The months of residence in 1941 would be April and Aug-September.

I instructed Hugh Rees to send a copy of my book on the Church of England to M^r Brenden [sic] Bracken at 10 Downing Street.

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[15]

Thursday, August 1st, 1940.

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A hot close night, hostile to sleep. I felt quite “played out” before the day started.

[first two sentences crossed through in red] *After breakfast I wrote to Martin Kiddle, giving him the unpalatable, but (I must needs think) salutary advice not to marry a lady 10 years older than himself, he being already 36. Also, I wrote to Charles Pattison, declining his kind suggestion that we should seek refuge from air-raids in his beautiful parish.* | Then I walked to Lambeth, and had a talk with the Archbishop. He is to see the Prime Minister tonight about ecclesiastical appointments. He was, of course, already acquainted with my problem, & I do not think that he is altogether pleased with the prospect of having me again as his neighbour at Westminster! However he agreed that I could hardly decline the Prime Minister’s proposal, but that I should make clear in accepting it that I did so as performing “a bit of War Work”, & that in no case should I hold the canonry after I had reached the age of 80. He approved of my plan that I should, after accepting the canonry, write to the Dean about the income, and that my letter should be made public. I walked back to the Athenaeum for lunch.

[16]

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Bishop Strong, who still haunts the Club, took the table beside me, and maundered in what is now his accustomed manner. He is a sad spectacle, and warns us to what extremes of incapacity we may be brought by the relentless, insidious assault of age.

[remainder of page crossed through in red] I travelled comfortably enough by the train that left Liverpool Street at 4 p.m., and arrived at Ipswich at 5.56 p.m. There I was met by the car, and the news that both the maids have given notice to leave! Housekeeping is certainly not a simple problem in such times as these.

Flo Lawrie is going to marry her cousin Lord Massarene. I found a letter from him asking me to “tie the knot”. He was married before in S. Margaret’s when I was Vicar there: and he is now 67 years old. Flo must be about the same age. There is a minimum of romance about such an union, but there may, perhaps, [sic] a sufficiency of good sense and good feeling. Given a reasonable measure of mutual liking and a general agreement of tastes, there is no reason why the marriage should not bring substantial happiness to both.

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[17]

Friday, August 2nd, 1940

I read through [Arthur Winnington-]Ingram's* review of his ministry. It is very slight both in extent and in quality, but, of course, it is interesting, for he retained throughout the taking, infectious gaiety of a healthy, happy boy, who was well-endowed physically and morally. He had a singularly fortunate career, and enjoyed it. In the course of the half-century, he travelled far, everywhere escorted by goodwill, and welcomed with enthusiasm. He attracted "all sorts & conditions of men", and acquired so wide a popularity that his success become assured. His path crossed mine on several occasions, from the time when he succeeded me as head of the Oxford House. He preached against me in Ely Cathedral, and I addressed him in an "Open Letter" which was published in the volume, "The value of the Bible". We were generally in opposition, and it was well known that I thought his administration of the diocese of London calamitously weak. [remainder of page crossed through in red] [In this view the late Archbishop of Canterbury (Davidson) concurred, and certainly the present Archbishop (Lang) takes the same view in private. But Ingram's popularity is too great to make that astute opportunist say as much in public.]

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[18]

Saturday, August 3rd, 1940.

I received the following letter, which would appear to be Winston Churchill's definite proposal to nominate me to the King for the vacant canonry of Westminster Abbey. It illustrates what the Archbishop said to me at Lambeth about his complete ignorance of ecclesiastical business, and his absorption in the War. Both are more than pardonable, though I should have liked a personal letter! However, he means well:

August 2nd, 1940.

Dear Bishop,

The Prime Minister is delighted by your decision.

He tells me that he will not fail to be present when you are installed in your canonry.

And I am greatly obliged by your gift.

Yours sincerely

Brenden [sic] Bracken

Now I must write both to him and to the Dean: and I shall send copies of my letters to the Archbishop.

[19]

This was certainly highly informal, but it was none the less quite explicit, & I treated it as such by sending a formal acceptance of the Prime Minister's proposal. Then I wrote to the Dean of Westminster enclosing a letter in which I stated my intention of accepting no more than my actual additional expenditure, & devoting the surplus of the canonical income to the general Fund of the Abbey. This letter I begged him to send to the Press, as soon as my appointment had been officially announced, and not before.

Finally I wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury endorsing copies of the letters ① to the Prime Minister ② to the Dean of Westminster.

[remainder of page crossed through in red] Then later, when I remembered that there had been new statutes for the Abbey, and that these had probably lengthened the residence required of the canons, I realized that I had been precipitate, and might have "bitten off more than I can chew", i.e. had undertaken what I should not find myself able to perform!

Accordingly I resolved to write to Brendan, asking him to "hold up" my letter to the P. M.

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[20]

11th Sunday after Trinity, August 4th, 1940.

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I worried over the problem in the night, and, before breakfast, wrote letters to Bracken and the Dean of Westminster. That wise woman, my wife, suggested that I should telephone to the Dean first: and this, with Fearne's assistance, I did. I inquired about the new statutes, and was told that they are not yet in force. I said that I could undertake to furnish a few rooms, sufficient to enable me to reside for the 10 weeks of "close residence", to attend chapter-meetings, & to come up for special occasions, and he replied that "under war conditions", he thought so much would suffice. Accordingly, I tore up my letters, & awaited events.

I attended Mattins, read the lessons, & then celebrated the Holy Communion.

In the afternoon, we motored to Polstead, where I harangued a small assembly on the subject of Liberty, at the Gospel Oak. The service consisted of shortened Evensong, and was conducted by the local vicar, Archdeacon Buckley. Afterwards we had tea in the vicarage in company with several of the congregation. Then we returned to Hyntle Place in time to hear the 6 p.m. wireless.

[21]

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This hectic week leaves me committed to another most unexpected adventure. What precisely I can do to justify so scandalous an appointment as that of an aged episcopal pensioner to a canonry of Westminster, it is extremely difficult to see. That there will be some, perhaps much, ill-natured, though certainly not unnatural, criticism is, I must needs think, certain. To some extent, my statement that I do not intend to take more of the canonical income than will cover my expenses, may silence the basest kind of criticism, but emphasis will be placed on my advanced age – 77, and on the claim to an episcopal pension based on the allegation that I was physically incapable of my work! Of course, there is a difference between the government of a difficult diocese, and the relatively small duties of a residentiary canon. There is unquestionably an extreme jealousy of anything which savours of plurality: and, in view of the low-toned temper of the general body of the clergy, this is not easily kept within the limits of justice, reason, and courtesy. Still, passi graviora, & the end is not far off.

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[22]

Monday, August 5th, 1940.

A very hot day. Harvest work proceeds rigorously. I worked at the Warburton Lecture all the morning.

In the afternoon we motored to Woodbridge, and had tea with the Shebbeares.* In the course of congregation I "put my foot into my mouth" with truly Hibernian recklessness. The recent marriage of Bill Shebbeare to a young Papist was mentioned, and I observed that the R. C. Church used women in the interest of its proselytising. "We are all Roman Catholics here", observed mine host severely. I made a shambling apology, & changed the subject. A message from D^r Rendal suggested that we should all go on to see him, & this we did. Here my ill fate pursued me, for again I stamped on the Papist's toes by inquiring when the Crown was transferred from the Divine Child to His human Mother, when D^r R. showed us a carving of the Madonna & Child, in which a very conspicuous crown on the first emphasised the absence of any symbol of regality on the last. "She is called "Regina Caeli" from the earliest times" observed M^{rs} Shebbeare resentfully. Monolatry has old roots, I know, but it certainly grew amazingly in time. Again I "changed the subject"!

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[23]

Tuesday, August 6th, 1940.

The Dean of Westminster writes:

I should like to say once more how thankful I am that you have seen your way to accede to the Prime Minister's proposal that he should submit your name to the King in connexion with the vacant canonry of Westminster. The appointment is one which will bring real distinction to the Abbey, and I confidently pray that you may never have occasion to regret the generous step that you have taken.

This is very kind, and now I must "possess my soul in patience" until the official announcement is made, and (such is the obsession of the P. M. with the besetting anxieties of the War, and, perhaps, his natural lack of interest in such relatively petty matters as constitute his ecclesiastical duty) there may be some delay. Meanwhile, I must get on as best I can with the preparation of the Warburtons.

Our mid-day delivery is cut off, so that we now only receive letters once in the day. This is inconvenient, but, save for the annoyance, need not really cause any trouble.

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[24]

Wednesday, August 7th, 1940.

The Archbishop of Canterbury writes:-

I am grateful to you for letting me know so fully about your correspondence with the Prime Minister and with the Dean. I do not think you could have put the point of your regarding the Canonry of Westminster in our case as a piece of temporary war work better. It also seems to me that your proposals about finance are both satisfactory and generous.

It is assuredly strange that you should be returning after these 28 years to the post of a Canon of Westminster. But I fully understand that you felt that the offer of the Prime Minister was one which you could scarcely set aside. I only hope that your health will stand the strain – if it be a strain to you – of preaching in the Abbey & of moving from your present home to Westminster. God give you strength to rise to the opportunity which has been [offered?] to you.

Yours aff.

Cosmo Cantuar:

To this I can but add, Amen!

[25]

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I worked again at the Warburton, but to little effect.

Dick [Elliott]* arrived for a brief visit. This morning he had been invested by the King with his Military Cross at Buckingham Palace. He looks well, and seemed to be in good spirits. He told me that the Germans, so far from being largely youths not yet out of their teens, as has been frequently stated, were well-grown men, apparently both well-fed, and self-confident. It was officially stated here two days ago that the average age of the airmen whom we have taken prisoner is 26. Yet the officer with whom I conversed in the train between Paddington and Oxford, and, who had served both in Norway and Belgium, affirmed confidently that he had seen many German prisoners, and been greatly impressed both by their youthfulness, and their readiness to surrender. The difficulty of arriving at the truth when one has nothing but human testimony to depend on, is both apparent, and, from a religious point of view, terribly disconcerting. For, have not apologists often emphasized the dependence of the Christian religion on historic facts, the facts of the evangelist's' history, which are nothing better than the affirmations of human testimony, which may be wholly inconsistent with the truth?

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[26]

Thursday, August 8th, 1940.

Before getting up, I read in my Loeb's Classics, the account of Hadrian in Scriptores Historiae Augustae. I was interested to read that "as he was sacrificing on Mount Casins, which he had ascended by night in order to see the sunrise, and [sic] a flash of light descended and struck both the victim and the attendant". This is a genuinely modern touch, and the more noteworthy since appreciation of natural beauty is curiously infrequent among the ancients. But Hadrian was also notably modern in his insatiable curiosity, his love of travel, and his democratic habit. Most people only think of him as the lover of Antinous, and the author of an address to his soul.

Et moriens quidem hos versus fecisse dicitur:

Animula vagula blandula
hospes comesque corporis,
quae nunc abibis in loca
pallidula rigida nudula?
nec ut soles dabis jocos!

The verses cannot be said to indicate any notable poetic gifts, but they express well-enough the rather sardonic humour which was his characteristic.

[27]

[They are rendered well enough by David Magee Ph. D.

O blithe little soul, thou, flitting away.
Guest and comrade of this my clay,
Whither now goest thou, to what place
Bare and ghastly and without grace?
Nor, as thy wont was, joke and play.]

Sir Robert White died this week at his house near Woodbridge. His son asked me on the telephone to give a short address next Sunday morning at his parish church, and (rather weakly, but how could he decently refuse?) I consented.

Fearne motored us to Hadleigh, where she paid the grocer, Ella stayed in the car: while Dick and I viewed the church, for which he expressed an admiration which seemed to me greater than it merited. Then we went on the Kersey, and looked at an uncommonly attractive church and village. We returned to Hyntle Place in time for lunch, after which we played croquet until tea time.

Dick tells me, to my great regret, that Patrick Wild* has had something of a mental breakdown under the strain of active service as a chaplain combined with the distress caused by the death of his father, followed, after a brief interval, by that of his sister.

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Before we went to bed Dick read to me so much of his private journal as covered the Retreat to Dunkirk, and evacuation of the troops. It was a very moving record – modest, graphic and profoundly sad. The strain must have been extreme, and the quiet determination with which it was sustained was truly heroic. Dick has a great and loving heart, & its powers of service were drawn upon to the full in those terrific experiences. One man, to whom on the preceding day he had ministered the Holy Communion was mortally wounded. Dick knelt beside him, and repeated the Lord's Prayer. The dying man looked up with a smile - "I am all right, Sir"- and died. A party of terrified nuns, bombarded about out of their convent, encountered him. He made unavailing efforts to secure them transport, & finally had to content himself with putting them on the right road to the place which they desired to reach. "Pray for us", said the leader. "We will pray for you". The description of the terror & misery of the Belgian refugees is appalling, and the final escape to England is record of miracle.

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[29]

Friday, August 9th, 1940.

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Under the heading "Bishop Hensley Henson", the Times announces my appointment to the canonry, and publishes the letter which I addressed to the Dean of Westminster informing him of my intention to hand over whatever surplus of the official income remained after the expenditure had been provided to the general fund of the Abbey.

I received the following from Winston Churchill, type-written, save for the last sentence, & the signature:

My dear Bishop Hensley Henson,

I was very glad to receive your letter of August 3, & to know that I might submit your name to the King for appointment to the vacant canonry of Westminster. I now write to inform you that His Majesty has been graciously pleased to approve your appointment, & I send you every good wish in the task you have undertaken.

Thank you so much for your kind words.

Yours sincerely,

Winston S. Churchill

[30]

[symbol]

Dick went away after breakfast. He impressed as having been mentally and morally developed by his experience in the Army. He thinks and speaks with lucidity and decision, and certainly is not afraid of taking his own line.

Martin Kiddle writes to thank me for my advice in the matter of matrimony, and declares his intention to follow it. He adds.

With all my heart I hope that you will see your way to accepting the suggestion about a canonry ~~of~~ at Westminster. It has always seemed to me a great loss to the Church that you with your vigour of mind and body should be in retirement. Yesterday I had lunch with the Bishop of Ripon, and was interested to hear him voice the same opinion.

It is well enough, but he knows little of the true extent of what he calls "vigour of mind and body". I know, alas but too well, how lamentably both mind and body have grown feeble and untrustworthy, so much so that I am still doubtful whether they are not inadequate for any new task.

[31]

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The Daily Telegraph **gives prominence to my appointment, which is apparently Winston's first essay in important ecclesiastical business, & indicates "freshness & originality"**! It makes some flattering comments, & publishes my letter to the Dean.

After lunch we motored to Ipswich, and attended a memorial service for Sir Robert White in S. Mary-le-Tower. It was largely attended, and included a very suitable and laudatory address by the Bishop. As the congregation dispersed, old Sir Bunnell Burton "congratulated" me. Several persons expressed pleasure at learning that my appointment to the canonry would not involve my departure from Suffolk.

The Bishop of Dunwich and Mrs Maxwell-Gumbleton came to tea, and were joined by Lady Thurlow and Rowaleyn Cumming-Bruce. The Bishop was anxious to know what his position as Suffragan would be when his Chief's resignation took effect on September 1st. It seems absurd, but I was quite unable to tell him, though I must have faced precisely that problem when, as Bishop of Durham, I had to determine my attitude towards the Bishop of Jarrow, who was "bequeathed" to me by Bishop Moule!

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[32]

Saturday, August 10th, 1940.

I received several kindly expressed letters of "congratulation". Among them was one from Archdeacon Donaldson welcoming me back to the Abbey: and another from Costley White,* Dean of Gloucester, who as Canon of Westminster, had occupied the house which goes with my canonry. He gives a attractive account of it as a place of residence, & assumes that I shall move my books there! Bishop Linton Smith,* who has just retired from Rochester, writes:

It will be a gain to the nation that you should have a "platform" from which you can administer encouragement & rebuke – in words which no one can refuse to heed. The Prime Minister & his advisers are to be congratulated on their wisdom but I abstain from "congratulating" you on this incursion into your retirement: & your "self-denying ordinance" in the matter of finance is just what would be expected from one with your past record.

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[33]

12th Sunday after Trinity, August 11th, 1940.

I have a heavy cold, probably the result of sitting in the garden & talking with Rowaleyn. The weather is both stuffy and chilly. The wind blows in restless gusts, and adds to my feeling of general dilapidation!

We motored to Boulge, and there I preached a "funeral sermon" for Sir Robert White, the squire, who had been buried last Friday. After the service I celebrated the Holy Communion. The Vicar, Eden, a tall, deaf man, read Mattins, and the new squire, Sir Richard White, read the lessons. The congregation included Lady White, & several other relations. She asked for my sermon, & I gave her the MS.

Before the service I looked at the grave of Fitzgerald, the author of Omar Khayum. It is beside a rather pompous vault, and has inscribed on it the words "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves".

After the service, we went to Little Bealings and lunched with Colonel Smith with whom were Tallents and his sister. I could with difficulty keep my eyes open & thus presented a repulsive spectacle of impoliteness. We returned to Hyntle Place for tea, and I slept!

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[34]

Monday, August 12th, 1940.

[symbol]

The post brought a considerable budget of very kindly expressed letters, mainly from members of my old diocese. The writers for the most part assume that I am about forthwith to transfer myself, "lock, stock & barrel", from Hintlesham to Westminster. They seem to think that it is possible for me to ignore the changes which a whole generation has effected in Westminster and in me, & that in returning to the Abbey, I can take up again the old ministry in the old ways! In truth, everything has so changed that no precedents retain any authority, & experience carries no wisdom! Moreover, there are signs that my appointment will not be universally welcomed. The Daily Herald, which expressed the views of "Labour" devotes more than a column to demonstrating my incompetence, not merely on the ground of excessive age, which is reasonable enough, but also on that of my known opinions, which is, perhaps, more questionable. It quotes divers utterances of mine, which, though quite plainly true, & in their context sound enough, have a horrifying appearance when paraded before the eyes of "Labour".

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[35]

Tuesday, August 13th, 1940.

[symbol]

A hot close day, inducing fretfulness & indolence. Alas, for this bondage to temperament & temperature!

Another batch of "congratulations", among others from the Archbishop of York. the Bishop of Birmingham and M^{rs} Barnes, * Prof. Grey Turner, * Miss Rose Bradley, Canon Poole, and Kitty Inge - all kind enough, but rather dismaying, for they seem to expect much from my presence at Westminster, far more than is reasonable, and vastly more than I can hope to achieve.

Temple writes:-

I am delighted to know that your eloquence is again to be heard in the central place to confirm our resolution and help to keep us true to the cause we are called to serve. I always remember with admiration your prophetic speech in the Lords on appeasement with Italy. Half our present troubles come from a tendency to be over diplomatic and insufficiently loyal to principle. You will do much to keep us straight.

Shall you take on a House at the Abbey or spare yourself that labour and expense?

[36]

[symbol]

The Bishop of Birmingham writes:-

Few ecclesiastical announcements have given me more pleasure than the news that you are returning to the Abbey. We have both felt strongly for the last 18 months that your gifts were not being used to the full. Your influence as a writer has been great, but your influence as a preacher and speaker has been even greater. In the anxious times that follow the War you will now be able fully to play your part. May you combine the wisdom of age with the optimism of youth!

As both Temple and Barnes were Canons of Westminster I must needs welcom [sic] the assurance that they approve my resuming that character in spite of the decrepitude inseparable from my age.

Miss Rose Bradley belongs to that remote age, when her Father was Dean of Westminster, and I first came there as an unknown & suspected junior Canon. She writes with something like enthusiasm of my return in the same character!

[37]

[symbol]

Kitty Inge contributes the following:

"I was not taken so completely by surprise, because the Bishop of Southwark, Parsons, for whom I have a sincere admiration was staying with us last week, & he told us that Winston had told him, "I have an ecclesiastical surprise for you, of which I am very proud, & I think you will feel it is an excellent choice."

"When thou wast young, thou girdeth thyself, & wentest whither thou wouldest, but when thou hast become old, another shall gird thee, & carry thee whither thou wouldest not!" – how pathetically true!

Prof. Grey Turner writes:

This evidence of your continued activity and devotion is an example to us all. May I express the wish that you may have the health and strength to sustain the appointment for the period you have set yourself!

"Death's mild curfew may from work assoil" any day now, when the air-raids are repeated daily & nightly.

<!140840>

[38]

Wednesday, August 14th, 1940.

I went to Ipswich, and spent a comfortless hour with M^r-Martin the dentist: changed a cheque at Barclay's Bank: and called on M^r-Alderton the book-maker, but vainly since my shoes were not ready for "trying on". Then I rejoined my ladies at the car-park and went home for lunch.

*In the afternoon we played croquet until tea-time, and then I betook myself to acknowledging the letters of "congratulation" which I had received by the early post. Among these I was glad to receive a **kind letter from the new Bishop of London, a rather pathetic letter from Jimmie Adderley**,* who is now entering his 80th year, & very decrepit: a characteristic letter from Canon [Robert] Poole,* another from old Lady Surtees,* and several others, more affectionate than important, but welcome as disclosing a tenacity of attachment which contrasts sharply with the shifting habit of this strange world.*

But the day contributed nothing to my belated Warburtons!

<!150840>

[39]

Thursday, August 15th, 1940.

This morning my post has returned to its normal proportions, & contains nothing of special interest. I wrote to Canon Lanchester definitely cancelling my vague promise to read a paper to his branch of the Sacred Study Assⁿ; and to Egerton Swann, the queer communistic modernist who was Rashdall's pupil and admirer: and to Duff, the Durham warden, who had sent me a very kindly-expressed letter.

Then Fearne "dropped" me at Abbey Oaks, where I had arranged to see Lord Woodbridge.* I found him sitting in a beautiful nook, one of the gem-like beauty-spots, which he has arranged in his garden. He was looking better, and gave me the impression of being in better heart about himself than when last I saw him. Fearne kept tryst very loyally, and picked up in good time. After depositing me at Hyntle Place, Ella and she went out to lunch with M^{rs} Storey: and I remained to lunch with Harford.

He continued with me until about 5 p.m., and had tea. He is rather silent, and, perhaps, somewhat slow, but he is neither unintelligent nor unresponsive. He heard the sermon which I preached to Cambridge University after the rejection of the Revised P. B.

[40]

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Fearne has informed me that I also am definitely DEAF. She declined to mitigate the brutal fact by adopting the more considerate, and certainly less alarming phrase, "hard of hearing", and repudiated with something like resentment my suggestion that she herself has degenerated into the habit of those dubious characters who were described by the Prophets as "peeping" and "muttering! It is not to be denied that incipient deafness first betrays its presence by a tendency to demand the repetition of every remark addressed to one, and a disposition to rebuke everybody of "not speaking up": but, surely, all these familiar phenomena need not justify the declaration that one is definitely DEAF. But I must admit that the description is not entirely irrational; for I cannot deny that my eyes are beginning to fail: &, if so, why not also my ears. My memory is certainly becoming untrustworthy, & my temper has degenerated woefully. Why then should I be startled or resentful when I am informed, with the crisp candour of unflattering familiarity, that I am actually DEAF?

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[41]

Friday, August 16th, 1940.

My morning "post" consisted of a single letter, one from the Bishop of Salisbury. It is expressed in kind terms. He approves of my appointment to the Westminster canonry, as creating a potentially useful precedent:

I am also privately pleased at the precedent your appointment seems to afford for a thing that has been in my mind that, if he wishes to do so, a Bishop who retires, sound in mind and limb, but over 70 years of age, should be allowed to take a small country parish on terms which w^d leave his pension intact, or wh. w^d leave his total income not in excess of what what [sic] it w^d be if he remained idle. I have felt increasingly since I have passed "3 score and ten" that I sh^d like something of the kind, and you know there are many little country parishes very difficult to fill. Of course it w^d have to be ruled that he sh^d take no such charge within his former diocese.

All this seems to disclose considerable confusion of mind, & misunderstanding of my position.

[42]

I wrote to the Bishop of S. pointing out that my acceptance of the canonry could hardly provide such a precedent as he desires. Any financial stipulation would probably involve an offence against the Law of Simony, and there could be no suggestion of "war work" in normal circumstances.

*The "Guardian" makes no comment on my appointment, but contents itself with stating the fact and reproducing my letter to the Dean under the heading "Bishop Henson's Return". **! imagine that clerical opinion would be generally hostile, and, of course, there will be some disappointed appetites!** Moreover, the ecclesiastical public is highly suspicious of anything that can be represented, however unfairly, as a clerical (an a fortiori) an episcopal "job". Few clergymen approve the genuine loathing for the association of religion and money which I feel. It was announced this week that a clerical Trade-union, on recognised Trade union lines is actually in process of being organized [sic] with the blessing of the T. U. R. !!*

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[43]

Saturday, August 17th, 1940.

A brilliant day, becoming hot and even sultry. Fearne motored us to Ipswich, and parked the car at the station. We left at 9.3 a.m., & arrived at Liverpool Street fairly to scheduled time, 10.45 a.m. There it occurred to me that, since my ladies were subjected to somewhat unusual fatigue, it would be well that they should have some refreshment. So I caused them to stop at the Refreshment Room where Ella was provided with a cup of coffee, and Fearne with a glass of milk. But my well-meant effort was baffled by the comfortless crowding of khaki-clad warriors in the Refreshment Room, & the perverse recalcitrance of my beloved, but incalculable, partner. She loitered at the bookstall, and finally repudiated her coffee. I was irritated & ejaculated wrathful words into her unheeding ear. So we drove to the Deanery, Westminster, where we were courteously received, & then while the ladies went to visit 4 Little Cloister, I discussed with the Dean divers matters of business. **We arranged that I should preach on September 8th, when a National Day of Prayer has been appointed, & that he should arrange with the P. M. the date of my installation.**

[44]

Then I joined the ladies at my official house. It is, oddly enough, the house, then occupied by old Canon Prothero, into which I came when for the first time I stayed in Westminster Abbey. I was then newly appointed Vicar of Barking and I preached in the great church. The house is commodious, dignified, rather large but convenient. M^{rs} Thompson Elliott and her youngest daughter, a pleasant maiden of 18 en route for Oxford, were courteous and accommodating. There is some furniture which it is desired that we should take over, but this raises a rather formidable question. The Dean carried us across to the Church House in order that we might see the accommodation provided for those who make their lodging there. The Bishop of Portsmouth ([Frank] Partridge) came on us in the lift, & I hailed him with sardonic pleasantry. "Have you come as Nebuchadnezzar to exult in your handiwork. Is not this great Babylon which I have built?" Then we went to the Deanery, and lunched very pleasantly, after which we drove to All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, when the marriage of Lord Massereene & Flo Laurie was taking place.*

[45]

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And here I encountered my second "jar". The rector (Relton) was in the vestry when I entered. He met me with a glooming & even hostile manner, and uttered no civil speech (as I had naturally expected) about my return to London. On the contrary, he indicated something like a sense of personal injury. "I have a letter here which I think you ought to see". I was conceited enough to imagine that it was probably some friendly expression about myself, but it was a letter from some M. P., answering an application from himself, promising to press his "claims" for appointment to a Westminster Canonry on the P. M., and setting out his merits in highly laudatory terms! I could only return to him the document with the observation that it was very interesting, and marvel at the boorish tactlessness of the man, with whom I have but the slightest acquaintance. His behaviour brought back to my mind

that I had heard some while ago that his unpleasant voice and lack of culture were insurmountable barriers to his preferment. But I was certainly astonished that he should have received me with such gratuitous rudeness.

[46]

The marriage ceremony proceeded without incident. For the address, I adopted a procedure which I dislike viz. reading I Corinthians xiii. But I added a few observations, which could not have been either offensive, or unfitting. Then I endured the horrifying experience of the reception, after which we drove to Liverpool Street, had tea, and returned to Ipswich by the 5.12 p.m. which arrived a few minutes after time, 7 p.m. Fearne recovered the car, & carried us home.

And then came my 3rd & most painful "jar". It occurred when we discussed our future action in the matter of the prebendal house. My ladies seemed to be unworthily indifferent to the public aspect of my position, and too much absorbed in private metropolitan aspirations! But I am rather bound into a quandary, out of which the way of escape is not apparent: & I have real need of all the support which domestic sympathy & understanding can provide. So that the too-frequent emergence of a certain difference of ultimate objective existing between these dear creatures and myself, is quite extraordinarily enfeebling.

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[47]

13th Sunday after Trinity, August 19th [sic] [18th]. 1940.

I went to church for Mattins, read the lessons, and celebrated the Holy Communion. After the mental storms of yesterday, the second lesson came as an oracle of consolation. It included the scene in the boat with its venture of faith in an hour of disappointment, the emergence of unexpected achievement, the confession of penitence, and the merciful commission for new & greater effort.

"Let down your nets for a draught."

"Master, we toiled all night & have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word, I will let down the net."

They filled both the ships.

"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

"Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

Is this correspondence between appointed lesson, and personal necessity, mere coincidence, the creature of purposeless chance? Or are we right in imagining that the Divine Ruler of our lives deigns thus to charge circumstance with His own message, and by this means to give, in the darkness of the world, a light by which we may direct our steps?

Or, are we in thinking this only the victims of our own exorbitant & self-centred vanity?

[48]

In the afternoon, I wrote a number of letters, among others to Londonderry, to Gladys Scott Thomson, to my brother Gilbert, who completes 74 years of life this month, and to Braley Mouldsdales preached this morning from the words of the Gospel: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see." He succeeded, rather surprisingly, in having a fling at German criticism, of which his hearers were certainly ignorant, & he himself knows probably as much and as little as an assiduous student of the Church Times may succeed in garnering from his study of that learned and impartial publication! He spoke with some severity of the prevalence of gossip in the parish, but probably he was more severe than wise: for his own incapacity for movement cannot but limit his opportunity for getting a first-hand knowledge of his parish, & make him dangerously dependent on such gossip as his intimates may bring to him. In any case, it is not at all probable that the guilty parties were included in the scanty congregation, and those that were, if any, are not likely to have been edified.

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[49]

Monday, August 19th, 1940.

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The press-cutting agency sends me some more newspaper comments on my appointment. They do not amount to much, and, indeed, are what I expected. The Church Times is hostile & insulting: the Dissenting papers express approval. The Guardian makes no comment, & the Church Family Newspaper is polite, and perhaps, friendly.

The appointment of the new Bishop for this diocese is announced. As I expected, the Archdeacon of Coventry, Brook, is appointed. He has an excellent record, academic & ecclesiastical: he is not too old, being now 60 years old, and he is the author of some sound & scholarly work. He is married, and has the reputation of being liberal-minded. As a contributor to the volume, "Foundations", he might even be credited with 'Modernist' sympathies.

A copy of Augustine's De Civitate Dei reached me from Blackwell. It is dated 'Lipsiae 1877', & may be supposed to be a fairly good text. On the fly-leaf is 'Sidney George Owen, from his Father Nov: 2nd 1889'. The date carries me back to the beginnings of my ministry in Barking, to which I had been instituted in Advent 1888.

[50]

The wind shifted to the north, and carried over the house the stench of the manure, which, with unneighbourly disregard of our comfort, the farmer has heaped on the adjacent field. He is fully aware of the nuisance, but persists in maintaining it, though there could be no difficulty in shifting his dung-hill a little further from the house. He has recently purchased a great quantity of manure from the sewerage of London, & this is peculiarly offensive. He is, I suspect, taking advantage of the new importance which the War has attached to agricultural activities. I can count on no sympathetic reception by the local authorities for any complaint which might be represented as subordinating the public interest of food production to private comfort or convenience. So, it appears, that I must endeavour to acquiesce in a gratuitous injury, which has no other reason than the gratification of the churlish self-assertiveness of an ill-natured farmer! The day has been unpleasant from start to finish, and my output of work has been practically nil. Eheu!

<!200840>

[51]

Tuesday, August 20th, 1940.

My wife possesses a clock, to which she is much attached in spite of the fact that it is always 'losing', and, therefore, never fails to provide her with an excuse for being late, a convenience for which she is often in need. She likes the clock, she tells me, because it has a nice face, easy to read, & though its statement is rarely accurate, it is always clear and confident. Such a guide is the Roman Church, always easy to read, and clear in its guidance, but always behind the times, and, therefore, misleading. Yet there are many people who, like my wife, prefer convenience to truth, and value their time-piece, not by its accuracy, but by its face!

M^{rs} Thompson Elliott wrote to suggest that I should have the use of her husband's study furniture, and thus avoid the necessity of storing it. Her son, for whom it is reserved, is in Ceylon, and will not need it for some years. Probably my second sojourn at Westminster will have run its course by that time.

Gerald Rainbow* tells me that he is to be married on August 29th, and ordained to the priesthood on Sept. 28th! A representative Anglican parson!

[52]

Tea being now severely rationed, and our stock being small, we ought to be vigilant against avoidable tea-parties. Nevertheless, we received at tea the Rector, and his two sisters, M^{rs} Wilson and Miss Campbell, and thus depleted superfluously our lessening reserve. Hospitality triumphed over prudence and practical sense.

Moulsdale told me (but I find it difficult to believe him) that some years [ago?] he "gave up" the Church Times, and held that journal in low esteem. It may be that he has (like S. Peter's back-sliding sow) 'returned to his vomit again'.

He was curious to discover what I thought about the appointment of our new Bishop, and was, I think, disconcerted when I expressed emphatic approval. He is becoming inconveniently deaf. He inquired whether Ella was able to hear his sermons, adding that he took pains to address himself particularly to her in order to assist her infirmity. I thanked him for his consideration, but found myself unable to congratulate him on the success of his benevolent efforts to assist her. He is rapidly becoming equally deaf himself.

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[53]

Wednesday, August 21st, 1940.

The day is clouded and distinctly colder, in fact ominously autumnal.

I was pleased by receiving very kindly expressed letters from Josceline [Jocelyn] Perkins,* who is almost the sole survival of my contemporaries at the Abbey: from old Blakeney,* who tells me that he is himself an 'old Westminster': from old Canon Rendall, whose perverse beliefs about the authorship of Shakespeare's plays move my amused contempt, though he has not fallen into the Baconian absurdity: from the Archdeacon of London (Sharpe): and from Monty Bere,* for whom, though I have not seen him for years, I have an unalterable affection. But he totters on the brink of Pacifism, and finds "Days of National Prayer" more disturbing than spiritually profitable. I can understand his state of mind, and, up to a point, even sympathize with it. But on the balance of the relevant arguments for and against such religious arrangements, I cannot but give a deliberate, though not enthusiastic, assent. If we are waging "the Good Fight", then we cannot be wrong in seeking from the Divine Captain courage & power to wage it rightly.

[54]

Then we essayed to motor to Ipswich, where I had an assignation with the dentist, and with the boot maker, and Fearne was cook-hunting. But an air-raid warning was sounded as we were starting, and we were held up at the approaches of the city. The delay was short, & we finally achieved our business.

M^r Alderton, the boot-maker, showed me the fine 15th century oaken ceiling in his shop. It was opened out in 1918, and various interesting objects were discovered including a child's horn-book. These are preserved under a glass-globe in the shop.

Ella seems to have led M^{rs} Inge to think that we are about immediately to visit her & Ralph in their country home. But this is, on many counts, so highly inconvenient as to be practically out of the question. I expressed this as civilly as I could in a letter to Kitty. It is extraordinarily difficult to persuade these admirable females that, when a great War is in progress, normal pleasures & procedures are necessarily suspended or disallowed.

[55]

Missen came in his car shortly before 4 p.m., and motored us to Tuddenham, where he has established himself with his charming young wife, and his son (a pretty little boy of 4) in a pleasant house, delightfully situated with a fine view of the parish church. There came to meet us at tea, Missen's colleague, an agreeable youngish man, who has been selected for a highly important mission to the 'near East'. His name is Savage, and he was at school in Sedbergh, when Ernest was on the staff. He impressed me very favourably. Missen said that he was an excellent linguist, and had been chosen out of a number of candidates.

Missen motored us back to Hyntle Place, where we arrived shortly after 6 p.m. Hardly had I settled in my study than Fearne reported that a parachutist had been seen descending on a field, not far from this house. There are a number of soldiers on the look-out. We had to show our identity cards no less than 4 times in the course of our drive from Tuddenham. The Nazis appear to be very determined in their attacks on this part of England. The weather became gusty and cold. Rain fell at intervals.

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[56]

Thursday, August 22nd, 1940.

The Bishop-designate acknowledges my letter of 'congratulation' with commendable promptitude.

"I am glad to learn that you will not be in permanent residence at Westminster, and hope that from time to time I may have the pleasure of meeting you, & that, stimulated by your vision, I may be preserved from lapsing into dull mediocrity."

There may be a worse fate. Is it not written, "If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into a pit"? However he is civil, if somewhat flippant.

Old M^{rs} Murray-Smith writes to express her "joy in the midst of this universal anxiety to hear that you are coming back to Westminster", and expresses her hope that my "influence" will restrain the "advanced ritualism" which now prevails in the Abbey services!! She adds in a p.s. "I fear Canon Storr will be laid up for some time." This is sad. If I were in Westminster, I would willingly "take on" the old church for a while to assist him: but I can hardly do so while I am living here.

[57]

I made a start on the Abbey sermon, but was soon betrayed into "meandering" in the Cambridge Ancient History, which has a marvellous lot to say about the Assyrians on a marvellously small foundation of historical evidence. The guess-work of enthusiastic 'diggers' is a poor substitute for written records, but really these 'ancient historians' have little more to depend on. I note with regret that the historicity of Sennacherib's disaster before Jerusalem is far from secure, in spite of the assistance of Herodotus's mice. Can I honestly assume it in the Abbey pulpit?

We had another tea-party for the newly-married Massareenes, with Miss Douglas Hamilton their hostess and a lady friend proposed themselves overnight, and arrived about 4 p.m. They were amiable & interested. I like Lord M. better as we talked together.

Then the Dean of Westminster telephoned to say that the Prime Minister suggested that Tuesday, the 3rd Sept. should be the date for my installation as Canon. He wished to know whether if he attended with the Cabinet (that day being the actual anniversary of the War) I w^d preach. I replied "Barkis is willin", & he undertook to consult the Cabinet!!! So there.

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[58]

~~Saturday~~ Friday, August 23rd, 1940.

The glass stood at 55° when I was dressing. This is 12 degrees lower than yesterday. I received a characteristically whimsical letter from my little airman, who is about to go to Africa, but precisely where he can only guess. He infers from his inoculation ^for yellow fever^ that his destination is West Africa. He writes almost enthusiastically about my pamphlet, "The Good Fight", which I sent him, & which seems to have matched his mood.

I expended the whole morning in reading my Journal, for the past two years, with a vague notion of equipping myself for the task of composing a sermon for the anniversary of the War, if Winston's project matures. Until I hear Aye or No on this point from the Dean of W., I cannot settle to work on the poor thing.

In the afternoon I walked to Chattisham, meeting almost nobody. The harvest has mostly been gathered in safely. It is not plentiful, but fair & in good condition. The fear that it might be extensively destroyed by incendiary bombs has been disallowed by experience.

[59]

The newspapers announce the disappearance from the scene of two distinguished figures – Trotsky, the rival, and now the victim, of Stalin, has been assassinated in Mexico, and Sir Oliver Lodge, famous as a man of science, and notorious as a spiritualist has died at the age of 89. He was a noble-looking man, with a Shakespearian brow, an impressively big man with a stately aspect and manner. I remember spending a week-end with him at Birmingham, when Gore* was bishop there. He described the enthusiasm which Gore evoked when first he arrived in the city as its bishop. "He seemed to us the very ideal of a liberal, broad-minded ecclesiastic: but we soon learned that his broad-mindedness had a limit. We came up against a brick-wall in his mind, which barred advance." I was the more impressed by this opinion, since it accorded with that which I had myself formed on my distinguished Westminster colleague. Liberal views in theology were not in his case, nor in the case of any other of the 'modernist' Anglo-Catholics, (though he had a larger character & stronger wits than the rest,) rooted in a genuine belief in freedom, but only in its value as a tactical device for promoting "Catholicism".*

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[60]

Saturday, August 24th, 1940.

The glass stood at 53° at 7 a.m.: but the coldness was relieved by a bright sun. My only letter was one from Cuthbert Headlam* expressing his pleasure at my return to Westminster. He, like everybody else, assumes that I am about to transfer myself forthwith to Westminster.

My whole day was frittered away in reading vol. III of the Cambridge Ancient History, which has for its general subject "The Assyrian Empire", and includes no less than five chapters on Jewish history, of which four are written by Stanley A. Cook. He writes from the modern critic's point of view, & makes wild work of the traditional History. The **broad effect is to strengthen the uncomfortable opinion, which grows ever stronger in my mind, that what is called 'History' is a poor foundation on which to rest a Religion.** Meanwhile my indispensable tasks remain unaccomplished, & indeed, in any ~~real~~ genuine sense, unattempted. The real strength of such dogmatic Totalitarianism as that of the Roman Church arises from its serenely impudent indifference to "History".

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[61]

14th Sunday after Trinity, August 25th, 1940.

A dull morning, but not noticeably cold. I went to Church at 8 a.m., and received the Holy Communion.

In the vestry before Mattins Mouldsdales started to speak of the new bishop, referring to him rather flippantly as a Modernist. "But I also am a Modernist." "But you have changed your mind," he said. "Not to my knowledge," I replied. And, then, he spoke, as I thought, rather insolently, and an unedifying dispute seemed about to develop [sic], when the Churchwarden entered, and I took occasion to go into the church. Mouldsdales announced that he had received a letter from the outgoing Bishop with a request that he should read it to the congregation, and a suggestion that it might take the place of the sermon. He prefaced the reading by a statement that he himself did not agree with some things in the Bishop's letter, and he ignored the suggestion. His sermon was based on Acts ii. 42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." It was a crude, crisp declaration of antiquated Tractarianism, delivered with an assumption of oracular authority which was almost ludicrous.

[62]

I walked home with our neighbour, Mr Sidgwick. We discussed the Bishop's letter, and I was surprised to note that he was far more in sympathy with the Rector's attitude, than I should have thought possible in a moderately educated layman. He invited me into his house, and there his wife "took up her parable" on the subject, and disclosed the too-familiar bigotry of an "Anglo-Catholic" zealot. I strongly suspect that Mouldsdales has been busy in prejudicing the people against the new Bishop, and, no doubt, against me. I recall his reputation at Durham, where I may, perhaps, have been imprudent in ignoring the many warnings I received from those whose knowledge of him was longer and more intimate than mine. Bishop Knight disliked and distrusted him, and the Bishop was neither an unwise nor an uncharitable man. His successor at S. Chad's, Brewis, certainly thought ill of his influence on the men at S. Chad's, whom he indoctrinated with the crafty & lawless "Catholicism" which he himself has adopted. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"

[63]

When, if ever, is it worth while to resent personal affronts? On the whole, I think that few men have been more often affronted than I, and my general practice has been to ignore rudeness and injury: but I am not wholly convinced that in this respect, I have been wise as well as magnanimous. But I have never allowed myself to forget that I am myself an extremely enigmatic, &, therefore, an easily misunderstood person, and many injustices have their origin in not wholly unnatural misunderstandings. Then I have a constitutional dislike of shibboleths and parties, whether secular or religious, and these, for the majority of mankind are the treasured substitutes for the labour & sorrow of thinking. Thus, while I see myself as one of those prematurely stereotyped persons, who are incapable of intellectual growth, the generality of my contemporaries regard me as the very embodiment of a

scandalous instability. "Judge nothing before the time" writes the most misunderstood of all the apostles, the most loyal, and charitable, and at the same time the most bitterly resented, and the most insistently exasperating!

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[64]

Monday, August 26th, 1940.

[symbol]

A letter from the Dean of Westminster runs,

I have had another talk with the P.M.'s secretary (Anthony Bevis) and I have arranged that we shall hold a service at 3 p.m. on the Anniversary of the declaration of war (Tuesday, Sept. 3rd). The Prime Minister hopes to bring the whole of his Cabinet to this service, and at his request you have promised to give a short address. I have told him that the whole service shall not last more than an hour.

My first suggestion was that your Installation might take place during this service, but on second thoughts I am inclined to think this would be a mistake. It w^d add considerably to the length of the service, & also mar the symmetry of the service by introducing an element which has no relation to its main purpose. I hope, therefore, that you may be willing to be installed in the course of Evensong on the previous day. All this in no way affects your kind undertaking [65] [symbol] to preach at the 10.30 service on the day of National Intercession, Sept. 8th.

Accordingly, I sent him a telegram approving this arrangement, and then fell to the work of preparing the said "short address"!

The Press-cutting agency sent me some more "personalia". Canon Charles Smyth* has taken up the cudgels on my behalf in the columns of the Church Times, where he answers the rather rude letter of a Taunton Prebendary. He writes:

In a generation in which the University Sermon is sparsely attended, there are conspicuously two preachers, beside the Primate of All England, who can still draw a considerable undergraduate auditory to Great S^t Mary's at the uncomfortable hour of 2.30 on a Sunday afternoon: the Abp. of York is one, and Bishop Hensley Henson is the other. Recent appointments to Westminster canonries have not, perhaps, been uniformly happy: but some of us are young enough to hail the latest appointment as a stroke of genius.

This is hardly a pleasant introduction to my new colleagues!

<!270840>

[66]

Tuesday, August 27th, 1940.

One to whom the emperor had entrusted the command of legions and of the most important province asked Demonax what was the best way to exercise authority. "Don't lose your temper!" said he; "Do little talking and much listening".

Lucian. "Demonax" [Loeb i. 167]

I read the above in bed before being called, & it seemed to me so suitable to the suitable sentence which M^{rs} Douglas-Hamilton asks for her war-saving maidens, that I sent it her forthwith.

I completed a "sermonette" for use in the Abbey next Tuesday, though Hitler's activity in attempting to bomb London leads me to doubt whether the service will ever take place. We motored to Ipswich, where I visited the dentist, and the bootmaker. Then I purchased a little device for sharpening those abominable servitors of idle domestics called "stainless steel" knives, which, in the propriety of language, are [67] not knives at all, since they are unable to cut anything, & a non-cutting knife is self-contradictory.

In the afternoon I wrote at some length to Dick. The dear boy is evidently much attracted to the curious blending of "Anglo-Catholicism" and Communism which expressed itself in divers little "Franciscan" experiments. He has not "found his feet" religiously, and is apt to be "carried away" by movements, which impress him as genuinely and courageously Christian. He was nearly captured by Buchman, and was evidently much attracted by the resolute unworldliness of Karl Barth. Now he is powerfully affected by Pacifism. My personal influence counts for much with him, for it is rooted in ~~to~~ what I believe to be a strong affection. But, in the nature of things, the influence of an old man, on a man young enough to be his grandson cannot but decline, & give way to that of younger and nearer persons. His present experiences cannot but have a potent effect on his opinions, and, what matters more, on his character. I wish his home were more religious, and more sympathetic with the best things in him.

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[68]

Wednesday, August 28th, 1940.

I received the following from the Assistant Editor of the Sunday Times.

My dear Bishop Hensley Henson.

As September 8th is a National Day of Prayer we are very anxious to have on the leader page of the S.T. an article of about 1500 words on the general subject of its purpose at this time.

The Editor would very much like you to write this Article if you could possibly find time. He would be prepared to pay a fee of twenty guineas for it.

Perhaps you would be good enough to let me know as early as possible if you can undertake this work.

Yours sincerely
Cyril Lakin
Assistant Editor

I at once wrote a letter, assenting to this proposal, & "assuming" that it w^d suffice if the MS. were sent in by next Thursday. (Sept. 3)

[69]

For some unknown reason I was unable to sleep last night with the normal consequence that this morning I am a "spent force", unable to think or compose! But I must do both for I am pledged to produce the article for the Sunday Times, and the Sermon for the National Intercession, and the task is not facilitated by the fact that both must handle the same subject, with which, moreover, I shall have dealt already in the Abbey pulpit. And the Warburtons?

The Article must explain how a religiously divided nation can join in Prayer. Within what limits can prayer be "national", and, since it is to be offered in a Christian Churches, also "Christian". It may be pointed out that fundamental morality is not distinctively Christian, though in Christianity it finds most fitting and complete expression: that Christian prayer is conditioned (α) by the Christian doctrine of God. (β) by the Teaching and Example of Christ. (β) [sic] by the needs and intentions of those who offer it. There the range of ~~the~~ legitimate petition lies within ~~the~~ the ambit of morality and knowledge. We may not ask for what is incompatible with righteousness, nor for anything which is intrinsically irrational e.g. miracles.

[70]

We lunched pleasantly at Shrublands, where Lady de Saumarez and her two daughters, Victoria and Veronica, received us with kindness. Brigadier General ^Brett^ ~~xxxx~~, & Arnold Forster who reminded me that I had met him in Westminster, when his Father, the rather ill-fortuned War-minister, was living in a house in the College Garden. After lunch we sate in the garden, which was laid out in the Italian style about 1770. It was difficult to realize that a war was in progress, & that enemy planes were often over the house. Such was the mildness of the weather that we sate comfortably in the open air, & such the brilliance of the sun that we seemed to be in Italy. Lord de Saumarez was absent, being with his son, (an Etonian of 16) in Wales, where he has a house, and where no less than 14 acres of the Park had been planted with vegetables, which were sold by the ton to the Government. I asked the Brigadier whether he thought that the bombardment from France with big guns was really formidable, and replied with a decided negative. They were readily silenced by air-craft.

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[71]

Tuesday, August 29th, 1940.

The temperature has fallen, and there is a distinctly autumnal feeling in the air. A brisk westerly wind is bringing down the leaves.

I reflected on my promised article for the S.T. The paradox implicit in the proposal that we should observe a Day of National Prayer may, perhaps, serve for a "taking off" position. For Christianity is not, and cannot be, a national religion; historically it is a universalized version of a national Religion. Yet nationality has flowered most richly within the sphere of the Christianity; and the ~~British~~ English tradition is both the most deeply Christian and the most distinctive of modern nations. For English Christianity is, the least ecclesiastical, and the most Biblical of all the national versions of Christianity. The Puritans gave it a predominantly Jewish character ^with the Old Testament^; the Evangelistic sects, Methodists & Salvationists, carried the New Testament into the thought and habit of the people. The common charge of "hypocrisy" against the English is largely ~~xxx~~ caused by ~~this fact~~ their insistence on Ethics. We instinctively think and speak in terms of Christian morality, though too often we are swayed by ~~our~~ motives which are not Christian.

[72]

Hitler's insolent disregard of the moral tradition of Christendom has transformed the War, which he has forced on Great Britain into a Crusade, that is, a Holy War, waged for no material object but for the maintenance of the first principles of civilization, as Christians have come to understand it. Therefore, it cannot but be a truceless War, fought out to the bitter end. It is impossible to conceive of a civilized world, partly ordered on the Hitlerite assumptions, and partly on the tradition of Christin civilization, even more plainly impossible than it was for Abraham Lincon to contemplate an American Republic, partly free and partly servile. When, therefore, at the crisis of the War with Hitler, ~~we do not come~~ we fall to prayer, we come as God's commissioned soldiers invoking His Blessing on a Cause which is only ours because we know it to be His. If, then, we are asked whether we may rightly pray for Victory, we must needs reply, What else can we pray for in the Good Fight? What else do we have in mind, when in this desperate time, we repeat the Divine petitions, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be [73] done on earth?" We do not pray for Peace save as the result of the triumph of Righteousness. For any other peace would be defeat, & the pledge of future War. Since we are fighting in God's Cause, we pray for Victory. Since it is our Cause we pray for courage, fortitude, self-control, compassion. Crusaders ^we know well^ may so wage the Holy War as to transform it into a hideous travesty, & then the measure of the moral degradation is determined by the moral altitude from which they have fallen. We pray for the forward-looking faith, which "endures as seeing Him, Who is invisible", which holds firmly to the Vision of the a World, rescued and reformed, which shall grow from the infinite sorrow and suffering of the War. We shall remember as we pray that the Victory for which we pray will also be that of the victims of Hitlerite perfidy and violence, and we shall pledge ourselves to work with unflinching zeal for the restoration of the European communities which have been broken & wasted by War, so that they with us may by the goodness of God be granted the blessing of secure & righteous tranquillity.

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[74]

Friday, August 30th, 1940.

I spent the day in preparing the little sermon for next Tuesday, and in completing the Article for the Sunday Times. It is humiliating that so great expenditure of labour should be needed for such petty efforts, but you cannot escape from the decrepitude, while you may pretend to ignore the fact, of old age. The Dean telephoned to inform ^me^ that their Majesties intend to be present at the Abbey service. I told him that my sermon would not exceed a quarter of an hour, and that I should make no allusion to the King and Queen. Thus my appearance in the pulpit as, for the second time, a newly-installed Canon of Westminster will be associated with a public occasion of exceptional interest. The mess into which Sir George Paish has blundered through “gassing” about himself & his influence in guiding American opinion, makes me nervous about even a distant allusion to American “neutrality”; yet – after considerable reflection & many attempts to cast my reference into a “safe” form, I finally decided to retain it. I aim at keeping my discourse within 15 minutes.

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[75]

Saturday, August 31st, 1940.

I received a long letter from Canon Charles Smyth* informing me that he has become the Editor of "The Cambridge Review", and asking me to become an unpaid contributor to it.

My suggestion is this. Would it be possible to persuade your Lordship to write down for us some of your recollections? I remember that when you came to tea last term, you produced some fascinating reminiscences of M^r Gladstone, Lord Salisbury and others. If I might have them for the Review, I am sure that they w^d also be a great feather in my editorial cap.

This is out of the question. My personal contact with these great men was far too slight & occasional to justify a publication of experiences, which c^d not but suggest that I knew them intimately. Moreover, there is the problem, which every autobiography raises, & which is unsolved, and perhaps insoluble, viz. the conditions under which it is morally legitimate to repeat private conversations, when the other fellow cannot have any opportunity of telling his version.

[76]

Yet, it might be worth while to make public some account of episodes in my life, which made some noise, drew down on me much abuse, and are still generally misunderstood. The controversy which was aroused by my nomination to the See of Hereford is a conspicuous instance. It has been described, very fairly from one side by Bell in the Life of Archbishop Davidson, and the hostile view, as false as it is dishonouring, continues to be repeated in "Anglo-Catholic" circles, as Moulsdale's insolent language to me last Sunday made very apparent. But I myself, who am most concerned and know the truth, have kept silence. My journal would provide material, and my new appointment might suggest a suitable occasion. There are, indeed, two obvious objections, the one private, the other public. It is extremely repugnant to me to "wash the dirty-linen" of personal conflict before the world, which is no longer interested in the issues the process would perform raise and, it may conflict with patriotic duty, to write anything which might have a divisive effect on the general mind. Still it would be a distraction!

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[77]

15th Sunday after Trinity, September 1st, 1940.

I read the lessons at Mattins, and celebrated the Holy Communion. The congregation was even smaller than usual. It is not unlikely that the disturbance of sleep caused by the frequent air-raid warnings may strengthen the normal disposition to neglect public worship. Indeed, the newspapers are urging people to revise their accustomed habits in order to secure sufficient sleep.

Moulds was oleaginous, and called my attention to some flattering observations in his parochial ~~flag~~ rag referring to the prospect of my departure from Hintlesham. But I dislike him in his oily mood, even more than when he is insolent, for I judge him to be less sincere! However, he must just be accepted as part of the outfit of terrestrial life like defective teeth, or a tendency to headache!

I wrote to Jordan of Darlington, & Shaddick of Haughton-le-Skerne, congratulating them on their appointment as Hon. Canons of Durham.

I wrote also to Sir Richard White congratulating him on the birth of a son; & to Canon Salter, thanking him for his lines headed "A Soldier's Prayer".

I wrote to M^{rs} Joanna Martin (née Dennistoun) and to my godson, Gilbert Simpson, thanking them for their congratulations.

[80] [misnumbered by Henson]

I find Greville's Diary, not only fascinating as a study of human character, as it disclosed itself in England a hundred years ago, and a first-hand picture of European society by a singularly acute and well-placed observer, but also extremely reassuring for, if this country could survive such enormous corruption as then marked English life, who can reasonably doubt its ability to surmount the less flagrant evils of our own time. Greville was a strong Tory, but he was clear-eyed and candid. He saw where the roots of the prevailing corruption were to be found, and he approved reforms which could not be reconciled with his political programme. His attitude towards Religion was interesting. He felt the attraction, while he despised the superstition of Papistry. He was under no delusion as the humbug of fashionable [sic] Protestantism. For sectarian fervours and vulgarities he had the disgust of a fastidious & cultivated gentleman. He reminds me of Rowland Prothero,* who also could tolerate a Sybarite, and recognise a Saint.

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[81]

Monday, September 2nd, 1940.

Another brilliant day. On arriving at Ipswich station, I learned that the trains were running at odds time. My train, instead of arriving at 11.35 a.m. took a circuitous course by way of Cambridge, & reach [sic] Liverpool Street at 1 p.m. It was grossly overcrowded, mainly by soldiers, but not exclusively. I gave up my seat to two young women, & remained standing until a young sailor invited me to take his. So ~~we~~ at last I reached Liverpool Street.

I was struck by two things in the behaviour of these young men – their resolute taciturnity, and their irrepressible mobility. They would not open their mouths, and they could not keep their seats. The Germans will not find them disposed to be 'chatter-bugs' & our authorities will find it difficult to get them to "stay put"!

On arriving at Liverpool Street, I was surprized and annoyed to find that no room had been reserved for me. When I pointed out that they had replied to my telegram by assuring me that I could have a room, the servants expressed regret and provided a room without difficulty. I lunched in the Club, having at the table next mine [82] the Rev^d Philip Usher, who told me that he was now the Editor of the Church Quarterly. "That is the Bishop of Gloucester's organ", I said, and he replied that it was no longer owned by the Bishop, though his Lordship was still a contributor.

I sent a telegram to Ella, advising her & Fearne to fend for themselves in the matter of lunch tomorrow, as the train service was so dilatory & irregular.

After this, I drove to the Deanery, & was installed as Canon in the course of Evensong. I found great difficulty in reading the Latin oath, by reason of the lack of light. After this function I had tea with the Dean & M^{rs} deLab. While we were thus engaged, the air-raid warning sounded, & the Dean insisted on my having my meal, & betaking myself to the Shelter in the Abbey Garden. Here I found quite a numerous party, including M^{rs} Thompson Elliott and her daughter Nora. They were having tea, & amusing themselves. After awhile, I wearied if this, and managed to get a taxi, for returning to the Athenaeum.

[83]

First impressions count for much with me, and though it would be excessive to say that they are not sometimes corrected by subsequent experiences, yet it is certainly true that they are more commonly justified. Marriott did not impress me favourably. He is a well-built, good looking man, and he was very civil, but he has a narrow, fanatical expression, which accords with his reputation for intractable "Anglo- Catholicism". He is said to be a considerable preacher of the popular type, & to have gained a reputation for rather violent opinions on social and economic questions. He is not likely to have been well-pleased with the rather tasteless & tactless suggestion made by Canon Smyth, & others that the unwisdom of recent appointments to the Westminster Canonries justifies the evocation of a septuagenarian bishop to a stall in the great church! Nor do I think the suggestion either just or reasonable. The decline of the Abbey pulpit has other causes than the inferiority of the preachers, & probably these would be decisive whatever the quality of the canons might be.

[84]

[Archibald] Fleming* was in the Club. He grows very fat. He introduced me to a Presbyterian Chaplain in the R.A.F. uniform, with whom I had a short conversation. He spoke in the highest terms of the young air-men he has to serve in his office. They are not, indeed, markedly religious, and some of them are “a bit wild”, but they have “the root of the matter” in them. I asked what he had been able to learn about the age of the German airmen, & he said that he thought that the statement which recently appeared in the Times viz. that their average was 26 was probably true. ۞۞ As in the case of Fleming, one could not fail to recognize the unconfessed assumption of this young man that the Presbyterian-trained Scot is a better Christian & a superior man, than his Episcopally-trained English colleague! National Pharisaism dies hard, in both nations, but perhaps hardest in the smaller.

The Germans have added yet another count to the lengthening indictment which they are constructing against themselves by torpedoing a ship containing some hundreds of evacuate children on their way to Canada. Happily the children survived.

[85]

Winston has insisted on my address at the service tomorrow being broadcast, a venturesome procedure since he has no knowledge of its contents! However ‘a wilful man maun ha’ his way. I was rung up on the telephone from the B.B.C. to ask for a copy of my MS, which I could not give, & then they sent a civil young man who made the same request in person. With a rashness not inferior to the Prime Minister’s I gave him my MS, on his solemn assurance that it should be returned tomorrow by 11 a.m. without fail. I felt very uncomfortable at being thus denuded of my indispensable armament.

Awaiting me in the Jerusalem Chamber this afternoon was an affectionate letter from Dick who has been shifted with his regiment to Weymouth, where he is “enjoying the magnificent weather and the opportunities of sea-bathing.”]

Also, there was a kind letter from Bishop Tubb, the Dean of Chester. He says that “many of us think it was a stroke of genius to ask you back. There have been criticisms of your appointment - esp. in the Church Times – but as Dean Inge once remarked, there is always hope for any course condemned by the C.T.!!”

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[86]

Tuesday, September 3rd, 1940.

Another very hot day following a very hot night. The heat co-operated with air-raid warnings in making sleep impossible. After breakfast, while I was writing to Dick there was yet another air-raid warning. I noticed that the people in the streets seemed but little affected, and the omnibuses continued to run. I went to the hair-dresser and was trimmed for my function this afternoon. Then I visited Hugh Rees, and ordered Buchan's "autobiographical" book, and a set of the Oxford Tracts on the War, which I instructed Wheatley to get bound for me in cloth.

Then I returned to the Club. As I was entering, I was hailed by a slim, sleek man, whom I could not recognize. He told me that he was Harold Goad,* whose acquaintance I made during the last war at the hospitable table of Miss Leslie and Miss Mundella. He professed much distress at the situation in Italy, which he assured me was contrary to the wishes of the Italian people. He defended with suggestive & unconvincing energy, the attitude [87] of the Vatican towards Abyssinia, but could not deny my contention that the Papacy, while keenly sensitive to the interests of the Church, was curiously indifferent to those of morality. Herr Hitler succeeded in spoiling the service in the Abbey! An air-raid warning sounded as the congregation was assembling, and the great church was immediately cleared. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister with several of his colleagues were arriving at the Deanery. I shook hands with him, Halifax, Eden, & some others. Their Majesties were understood to be intending to come, but the P.M. sent a message conveying his "official advice" that the King should not leave the Palace. So the service was carried through with the Cabinet Ministers, and a handfull [sic] of people. I felt, & must have looked like, "a sparrow sitting alone upon the housetop". Just as the service was ending the "All clear" sound rang out, but the service had been, for all public uses, wrecked and my labour & 'flutterment' were rendered vain, and almost silly. However, the P.M. spoke civilly to me afterward, & the Times man took off my MS. We picked up my bags, drove to Liverpool Street, and caught the 5.12 p.m. to Ipswich, and so home.

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[88]

Wednesday, September 4th, 1940.

The Times says that the American Ambassador, M^r Kennedy & Sir John Dill, Chief of the imperial General Staff, were in yesterday's congregation and that some people, including members of the Gov^t, were stopped by police & A. R. P. authorities, & prevented from reaching Westminster. ~~Other Ministers present was Lord~~ "M^r Churchill, however, arrived some time after the sirens had been sounded. Other Ministers present were Lord Halifax, M^r Greenwood, M^r Eden, Sir Kingsley Wood, Lord Simon, Lord Tryon, M^r Cross & Sir John Reith." Most of my sermon is reported, & accurately.

I posted my article for the Sunday Times and set myself to prepare my Sunday sermon but the agitations of yesterday, & the great heat (80° in my room) today, reduced my working power to nothing.

In the afternoon we had tea with M^{rs} Johnson. There were some of her friends there, among them a lady from British Columbia, who said that she knew Gilbert & Lois [Henson]* in Penticton. Her niece M^{rs} King was pleasant & rather pretty.

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[89]

Thursday, September 5th, 1940.

Another very hot day. I finished the sermon for next Sunday's Day of Prayer, but suspect that Hitler will probably prevent its delivery! He is not likely to leave such an occasion without an air-raid.

The Prime Minister made another strong and heartening speech in the House of Commons this afternoon. He evidently expects that the next few weeks will witness a notable increase in the air-raids, & probably some considerable naval & military action in the Mediterranean. It is certain that nothing would give more pleasure to the British Public than that these miserable "dagoes" should get a really effective "dressing-down".

Roumania [sic] has got its Dictator. Carol accepts the humiliating position of a Merovingian Monarch tied to a "Mayor of the Palace"! It is the nearest approach to Constitutional Monarchy that these poor-souled continentals can achieve: & it combines the disadvantages of absolute monarchy with those of the fictional Monarchy which is "limited" or "constitutional". Only the dignity & gradualness of long historic development saves the British Monarchy from failure & contempt.

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[90]

Friday, September 6th, 1940.

A restless night, punctuated by the noise of gun-fire. I started the day in a jaded condition which prohibited work.

I received the following letter, which is not without a certain interest as casting a side-light on our "incomparable establishment".

My Lord Bishop,

I have lately retired from my living, & have settled in Tonbridge. I find I am under a dark cloud which reaches from Tunbridge Wells to Sevenoaks – the Protestant Patronage Trust. The Vicar of Tonbridge, whom I am helping, is a conscientious & hard-working clergyman, but, of course, tied down by the rich M^r Deacon. My object in troubling you is to ask you if there is any prospect of your little pamphlet "Sibbes & Simeon" being published again. I read it some time ago, & I feel that it might do much good under this patronage cloud. W. H. Smith & C^o say it is out of print. Do you mind letting me now if you [91] are willing to re-publish it.

Believe me &c.

F. S. Morgan

Appletrees, 134 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge

I told him that I should most willingly consent to the re-publishing of "Sibbes & Simeon", but that I doubted whether any publisher could be found who would adventure a certain financial loss!

[remainder of page crossed through in blue pencil]

General & M^{rs} Kenyon came to lunch, and stayed until the 3.33 bus carried them to Ipswich on their homeward journey. She suggested that her son might lend us his furniture, which now was stored in the General's garage. I said that, if convenient to him & the transference of the said furniture could be arranged, I would hire it. But he, as a soldier, is ill-placed for making permanent arrangements: and I should not care to hire furniture for a shorter period than the 3 years of my tenure of the house in Little Cloister. Probably it would be most prudent to decline an arrangement, which might breed confusion, and even become the occasion of "strained relations". It is a wise counsel which warns one never to do business with friends and relations!

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[92]

Saturday, September 7th, 1940.

Fearne motored me to Ipswich where I took train for Liverpool Street. The train was not crowded, & (save for a persistent head-ache) I travelled comfortably to Liverpool Street, arriving about 10 minutes after scheduled time.

I went at once to the Athenaeum. There I fell in with the late Swedish minister, who spoke with cheerful confidence about the War.

"I telegraphed to Stockholm last week. Great Britain will be victorious. That was not propaganda, but my real mind".

He expressed his pleasure at my returning to activity, and, when I said something about the interruption of last Tuesday's broadcast, he said "That doesn't matter. The Prime Minister quoted you afterwards. I had not noticed it.

Charles Pattinson writes

At 8 o'clock on Wednesday [?Tuesday] the wireless told us that the sermon would be broadcast. And then at 3 came the announcement that the service would not be broadcast. We were all in the drawing-room – the Owens & ourselves".

[93]

I received a letter from a man named Frederick Heathcote, late of Barking, Essex, invoking my assistance for his daughter who "is interned owing to her past association with the Fascist movement" but who "is entirely innocent of any evil intent". I replied from the Athenaeum as follows: -

It is 45 years since I left Barking, and your daughter must needs be completely unknown to me since you say that she is only twenty years old.

I remember a very good friend of mine, named Heathcote who, when I was Vicar of Barking (1888-1895) was the proprietor of a very well-conducted public house, named (if my memory does not mislead me) "The Spotted Dog". Both he and his wife were regular worshippers in the parish church & I held them in high reward. But I have never met them since I left the parish, and I may be mistaken in associating you with them. In these circumstances it hardly seems possible that I can be of any service to your daughter: but I should [94] gladly do anything in my power to assist any member of my old parishioner's family.

Yours sincerely, H. H. H.

I lunched in the Club, and afterwards had some interesting talk with the ex-Swedish minister about Buchman, with whom he has had personal dealings. He expressed his disgust of

Buchman's tuft-hunting method, which he illustrated by his (Buchman's) plan for introducing his movement into Sweden by "[word illegible] in" a number of titled personages. He showed the list to the Swede, who warned him against what would have been a gross tactical error. His attitude towards Buchmanism was becoming steadily more hostile. While we were so talking, we were joined by a tall well-built man in early middle life, who was introduced to me as Lambert. He joined for our discussion of Buchan [sic], and, after the Swede had withdrawn, continued to talk with me on a variety of topics. I found him candid, intelligent, and interesting. We separated with expression of mutual regard.

[95]

I walked to Westminster, and saw Vernon Storr* in bed, whereto he is confined by a severe attack of sciatica. The younger boy, Tony, is thought to be developing appendicitis. The Storrs are certainly very unfortunate in the cardinal matter of health. I told Storr that I would gladly give him any such help at S. Margaret's as it might be possible for me to give. Then I called on M^{rs} Perkins, and had tea with her. While we were talking together, the air-raid warning sounded, & was soon followed by bursts of gun-fire. Soon a hot battle developed in the heavens, I walked back to the Athenaeum & was impressed by the indifference of the people. Taxis were moving freely, & many civilians were walking unconcernedly in the Park. At the Club a group of members were watching the "dog-fight" from the balcony. I joined them, but was unable to see the numerous air-craft which were contending above us. The "cease-fire" signal was sounded after about 2 hours: & then I had dinner. Nothing hot was obtainable as the gas, which enables the cooking, had been cut off. I managed well enough on cold meat, cold plum tart, & cheese.

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[96]

16th Sunday after Trinity, September 8th, 1940.

There was a tremendous air-raid during the night. The noise of gun-fire & bombs was intermittent & sometimes alarming. Sleep was, of course, impossible. I "deceived the road[?]" by reading Buchan's* posthumously published book, "Memory hold-the-door". It is "the Autobiography of John Buchan", and very interesting and characteristic.

At breakfast we could get what (after an interval) the kitchen could provide. No papers had reached the Club, but I was able to buy the "Sunday Times" in the street, & ascertained that my article was there under the title "The Nation at Prayer".

I walked to the Abbey for the special service at 10.30 a.m. There was a considerable congregation, including the Abp. of Canterbury. Marriott read the prayers ~~bef~~ from the pulpit before the Sermon. My sermon occupied 22 minutes by the pulpit clock, and (as I was assured afterwards) was well heard, though the comfortless night had made me jaded & voiceless: I assisted in ministering the Holy Communion.

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There was an air-raid warning as the sermon was ending, & everybody betook himself to the Shelter, except myself. I preferred to walk to the Athenaeum.

The Raiders did considerable damage last night. S. John's Church, Smith Square & Victoria Station were both hit by bombs. In the East End it was stated that there had been 400 persons killed, and about 1400 wounded. This was a provisional estimate. No less than 88 German bombers were destroyed, against a British loss of 22. How long can the Germans keep up so costly an offensive?

Two members of the Club, both unknown to me, expressed themselves flatteringly about my sermon. I wonder how many persons will read my article in the S. T.

The later report stated that the Germans lost 99 planes last night. They are evidently determined to press the attack on London, & it is already apparent that our air defences, though wonderfully effective enough, are not able to save London from very serious damage, and great loss of life. The prospect is rather bleak.

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[98]

Monday, September 9th, 1940.

Another woeful night. The air-raid continued from about 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., and was most violent. I went to bed, & continued there, reading Buchan's Autobiography until 3.30 a.m.: when the explosions was [sic] so frequent & close, that I descended to the basement, where I found such members as are staying in the Club stretched on chairs & benches, trying to get sleep. I joined them, but was so disturbed by the persistent snoring of one of their number that I went to the hall, where some of the Club servants had gathered. The noise of bombs & guns was most alarming, and there were evidently great fires not far from the club. The noise of the fire-engines rushing through the streets provided a commentary, which could not be misunderstood. I returned to bed at 5.30 a.m., & shortly afterwards the "Cease Fire" signal was heard. Then I promptly fell asleep & was wakened by the advent of my tea. The air is thick with rumours of destruction: no morning papers came to the Club; & we had to "possess our souls" in such patience as we could muster.

[99]

It had been generally assumed that the area within which Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, the Houses of Parliament, & the great Government Buildings including Downing Street are included constituted a kind of oasis, immune from danger, but this week-end has effectively disproved that comfortable assumption. It is now demonstrated that, excellent as our defensive provision is, it is quite unable to prevent the German bombers from getting past, and once they can get to work, their destructive potency is powerful. It is, perhaps, satisfactory that the blows fall on the West end as well as on the East, for there is always the possibility of an ugly agitation (none the less dangerous for being groundless) built on the supposition that more care is taken to protect the "classes" than to protect the "masses". Indeed, I noticed with some concern that this note was audible in the language of some of the Club servants, who live in districts where bombs have fallen. The chronic weakness of industrial society is the ineradicable suspicion with which the working multitude regard the "upper" class. This suspicion is the armoury of revolutionists.

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I walked to Westminster, and called on M^{rs} Thompson Elliott, whom I found busily engaged in the process of evaluating 4 Little Cloister, which is to be my house during my second tenure of the Westminster Canonry. Nora was there, and brought me a cup of coffee, which I accepted (though I loathe such occasional drinkings) lest I should hurt her feelings! Then I called on Perkins & talked with him. He sent for Bishop, the Clerk of the Works, who will arrange for whatever repair & decoration may be required before I take possession. This would be slight, as the house has quite recently been thoroughly "put into codition [sic]" for the late Canon. As the expense of whatever is done falls on "domus" I need not worry about it. Also, I called on M^r Hebron in the Chapter-clerk's office. He told me that the house was assessed at £113, & that the rates were 12/- in the £. These are both less than I expected. He said that on Sept 29th I should receive one quarter's income i.e. the amount accruing since

my predecessor's death. I begged him to warn me if there was no business at the Chapter Meetings i.e. none of sufficient importance to bring me to London.

I went to Smith Square & there found [Frank] Barry* the Rector. The bomb appears to have fallen on **[101]** the road outside the West end of the Church. It had made a considerable crater. The force of the explosion had shattered windows both in the church, and in the adjacent houses.

I next proceeded to Westminster Bridge, and looked at the damage inflicted on S. Thomas's Hospital, and on the County Hall, which face one another on the Surrey side of the Bridge. There was some demolition of the fabric of the Hospital, & the windows of both buildings had suffered badly. I drove back to the Athenaeum, & lunched. At the next table was a well-groomed young man from the Foreign Office, who for 18 months has been a member of the Club. We talked amicably together, & when we parted, he told me that his name was (if I have not already forgotten it) Weigall:

I happily remembered that I had left my robe-bag with the porter at the Abbey. I walked thither, & recovered it. The porter, whose name is Marshall, said that he had been the gardener's boy when I was formerly Canon of Westminster. I drove back to the Club, and occupied myself there until it was time to proceed to Liverpool Street in order to catch the 5.12 p.m. train to Ipswich.

I looked in on Dashwood* & discussed that fascinating subject, the Income Tax. He was friendly, and gossip-filled as usual, and, perhaps, as accurate!

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[102]

Tuesday, September 10th, 1940.

On receiving a further letter from M^r Heathcote respecting his daughter's internment, I wrote the following to Simon:-

My dear Lord Chancellor,

I hope you will forgive me for intruding a letter on you: but I always allow myself to regard you as a personal friend, & I know your genuine devotion to justice. The enclosed letters do, I think, explain themselves.

I can assure you that my personal knowledge of the Heathcotes in Barking during my incumbency, make me ~~it~~ very sure that the family tradition is wholly inconsistent with disloyalty, & though, as I have reminded the young girl's father, I have no personal knowledge of either, beyond such as he himself has provided, yet I cannot doubt the truth of what he said, nor hesitate to commend his daughter's case to the rightful authorities.

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I would be really grateful if you could bring this case with my representation to the notice of the responsible authority and believe me, with many apologies.
Most sincerely yours.

H. Hensley Henson
Bishop

The journey from Liverpool Street to Ipswich included, when I made it last night, almost every element of railway discomfort. The train started half an hour behind time: it moved with exasperating reluctance, and when finally it reached Ipswich, it was no less than 1¾ hours late. It was grossly overcrowded, mostly by khaki-clad warriors, who smoked persistently. Some screaming children made a contribution of their own to the general clamour. The windows were darkened long before we had arrived at our destination, so that there was not light enough to read. The young soldier who sate beside me [sic], a dull-looking, lumpish youth, stuffed himself with plump~~s~~ and sweatmeats [sic] throughout the journey. I looked at him with something of the apprehensive expectancy with which the Melitan islanders regarded the ship-wrecked apostle, whom the viper encircled but did not injure! It was a horrible experience.

[104]

I started work again on those most ill-fated Warburtons.

In the afternoon we motored to Stratford S. Mary and had tea with General & M^{rs} Kenyon. His son and daughter-in-law, who own the furniture now stacked in the stables were there,

and after tea, we were shown the said furniture, which presented the usual appearance of various squalour [sic] which stored furniture commonly presents. I had some conversation with the owner, & told him that I should not care to hire the furniture unless I could be assured that it would not be reclaimed before my need for it had come to an end with my tenure of the canonry i.e. in 3 years. He seemed unable to give me such an assurance, since, on the expiration of the War, he & his wife would probably settle down, & need their furniture. Finally, we agreed that Ella should determine the kind of stuff we needed, & he should then provide us both with an inventory of his furniture, and a statement of the cost of storing it. I should then be able to decide whether I would hire it, what I would hire, & what I should pay.

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[105]

Wednesday, September 11th, 1940.

The weather has become definitely autumnal. I found it desirable to turn on my electric heater in my study, though I cannot overcome a certain dislike of that substitute for the open fire. The latter threatens to pass out of use through the quickly waxing price of coal. It will involve the disappearance of a pleasant and characteristic feature of English domestic life. But it has the disadvantage of demanding a kind of labour which appears to be specially repugnant to modern servants – laying fires & cleaning grates.

In the afternoon, we motored to Polstead, and had tea with M^{rs} Cooper. Among those who were there was the Rev E.B. Clibbon, the Vicar of Stoke-by-Nayland, for whom I have promised to preach on Sept. 22nd. He was a student at S John's, Durham, and disclaims sympathy with Anglo-Catholicism. He said that his predecessors had been "advanced" men, who had so effectively driven the parishioners from the Church, that the chapels flourished while the noble parish church was nearly deserted. It is everywhere the same story. Of the Church of England it is certainly the case that her foes are they of her own household. It is a very distressing fact.

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[106]

Thursday, September 12th, 1940.

I contracted a chill in the course of that miserable journey last Monday, & I made it worse yesterday when talking to M^r Clibbon in a bitter north wind. This morning I am still "a worm and no man", and shall be perdu in my study, in which my fire was lighted.

I wrote to Faith Owen, giving her a pastoral on her writing, which is abominable; to Brian Canning who is now a curate in Darlington, and to Turnbull, the Rector of Kedington, who had sent me a War pamphlet of his own composition. I wrote also to Martin Ellingsen.*

No newspapers arrived until the afternoon. Then, at last, I was able to read the Prime Minister's broadcast, which is strong, dignified, & heartening. Buckingham Palace was bombed last night, & considerably damaged. Their Majesties were happily absent. They were visiting the scenes of destruction in the East End. Certainly, they are doing their duty very nobly, &, if Hitler reckons on causing civil disturbances in London, I think he will find himself mistaken. The P.M. evidently expects a serious attempt at an invasion in force.

[107]

Today the quality of our religion is being put to the test. The conflict is not only between the graces of civilization and the rawness of barbarism. More is being challenged than the system of ethics which we believe to be basis of our laws and liberties. I am of Blake's view:

"Man must and will have some religion; if he has not the religion of Jesus he will have the religion of Satan, and will erect a synagogue of Satan."

There have been high civilizations in the past which have not been Christian, but in the world as we know it, I believe that civilization must have a Christian basis, and must ultimately rest on the Christian Church. Today the Faith is being attacked, and the attack is succeeding. Thirty years ago Europe was nominally a Christian continent. It is no longer so. In Europe, as in the era before Constantine, Christianity is in a minority. What Gladstone wrote seventy years ago, in a moment of depression, has become a shattering truth:

[108]

"I am convinced that the welfare of mankind does not now depend on the State and the world of politics: the real battle is being fought in the world of thought, where a deadly attack is made with great tenacity of purpose and over a wide field upon the greatest treasure of mankind, the belief in God and the Gospel of Christ".

The Christian in name has in recent years been growing cold in his devotion. Our achievement in perfecting life's material apparatus has produced a mood of self-confidence and pride. Our peril has been indifference, and that is a grave peril, for

rust will crumble a metal when hammer blows will only harden it. I believe – and this is my crowning optimism – that the challenge with which we are now faced may restore to us that manly humility which alone gives power. It may bring us back to God. In that case our victory is assured. The Faith is an [109] anvil which has worn out many hammers.

We are condemned to fumble in these times, for the mist is too thick to see far down the road. But in all our uncertainty we can have Cromwell's hope.

"To be a Seeker is to be of the best sect next to a Finder, and such an one shall every faithful, humble Seeker be at the end."

So as a tail-piece to this book, I would transcribe a sentence of Henry Adams:

"After all, man knows mighty little, and may some day learn enough of his own ignorance to fall down and pray".

Dogmatism give place to questioning, and questioning in the end to prayer.

[This is the conclusion of John Buchan's Autobiography. Memory-hold-the-Door. Considering the man, and his marvellous career, it is a deeply impressive Confessio Fidei]

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[110]

Friday, September 13th, 1940.

I paid a formidable bill for coal and coke - £25.4.0. The cost of fuelling this little house is rather alarming: I note payments this year:

Jan ^y 22:	£ 6.2.0
March 28 th	16.14.0
June 15	8. 2. 10
Sept 13	25. 4. 0
	<u>£56. 2.10</u>
Wood	<u>5. 0. 0</u>
	<u>£61. 2.10</u>

I tried to work on the Warburton, but without success. The truth is that I “have bitten off more than I can chew”. It will, I think be necessary to include some reference to Orosius, whose posthumous influence as an historian was in curious contrast with his historical competence. Taylor’s “The Medieval Mind” has some excellent observations on the historical argument against paganism as urged by S. Augustine and Orosius. (vol. 2 ch iv) He suggests that hagiology was, in some sense, a development of apologetic history, being also designed to demonstrate the truth of Christianity.

[111]

I received from Charles Smyth* which [sic] has some value as indicating a possible type of Autobiography:-

Dear my Lord Bishop

Very many thanks for your kind letter. I fear that my request was a little presumptuous but an Editor’s first duty is to his paper, and I sh^d have esteemed it no ordinary privilege to have published anything of an autobiographical character from your Lordship’s pen. I fully understand, and if I may so [sic], very much admire the reasons for which you feel unable to comply with my request, although as a professional historian, I should be sorry if everyone were so scrupulous.

But may I say one thing? Please do not imagine for one moment that my generation – the generation that grew to manhood after the last war – has ceased to be interested in the problems & personalities that bulked so large for you and your contemporaries, merely because the major issues of our time are of such a different character; for nothing could be further from the truth. Like the old [112] gentleman who said, “Every time that a new book is published, I read an old one”, I feel that I know all that I wish to know about Hitler and Mussolini, whereas I do not know anything like as much as I should like to know about M^r Gladstone & Lord Salisbury. The convulsions of the present hour are like a dust-storm in the desert, very alarming & unpleasant but only an episode in the history of the Church of God. Speaking for

myself – but not, I think, only for myself – I am surfeited with books like, “I knew Hitler’s Washerwoman” or “Whither Europe?”, which continue to pour from the groaning presses of the day, & am much more interested in the problems by which the Church of England is going to find herself confronted after the war is over, & therefore, very particularly in the study of the same problems in the somewhat different form in which they confronted you & your contemporaries. I want to know precisely [113] what the word “Disestablishment” conveyed in the nineties. I want to know all about D^r John Clifford & the Education controversy. I want to know the outline of the Battle of Belief, of the rise & fall of Positivism, Agnosticism, etcetera, in the days of my fathers. On all these matters I am disgracefully ignorant, & eager to be enlightened. There are not many men left to whom my generation can look for the enlightenment that we are seeking. Lord Hugh Cecil, I suppose, is one; your Lordship is certainly another. Politics without history are a tree without wood, as Seeley said, and politics includes Church politics. We want your guidance & encouragement to help us to deal with the problems which lie before us. Your Lordship’s life covers what is perhaps the most critical & fruitful periods in the history of the Church of England since the 16th century, a period which still awaits the historian, & for which the material is not so adequate as it might be.

I am not, of course, asking you to [114] to reconsider your decision respecting the Review. I accept that as final. But I am begging you to dismiss your doubts whether you should publish anything of an autobiographical character.

If I may speak freely, I think that you underrate what you mean to my generation, whether we always agree with you or not. And I sincerely trust that you will not immolate your journal upon the altar of the Ministry of Supply!

Pardon my freedom, & believe me
Your most devoted & obedient servant
Charles Smyth

The 6 p.m. wireless reports that the Germans have again bombed Buckingham Palace. Happily their Majesties were uninjured, though much damage appears to have been done. The enemy seems to be directing his attack against the public buildings of the capital. Downing Street was bombed, and many of the more interesting churches have been damaged.

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[115]

Saturday, September 14th, 1940.

The bombing of Buckingham Palace will shock the nation and the Empire, but is itself perhaps rather helpful than injurious to the good cause. It will deepen loyalty, cement our unity and discredit the enemy. The danger to our great buildings, among which Westminster Abbey is supreme, is more serious.

I received the following.

Dear Canon Hensley Henson.

Many years have past [sic] since I had the privilege of serving you as a Chorister at S. Margaret's Church from 1899 to 1903, & the pleasure of last meeting you before I went to West Africa in 1914, but I have always felt proud when following your various official changes & reading your many wise orations.

Now that you have returned to dear old Westminster, may I be permitted to subscribe myself with humble but hearty congratulations and all good wishes.

I have the honour to remain

Yours very truly

Bernard Ralleen

[116]

I think we grow more sentimental as we grow older, and certainly the earlier phases of life gain influence as they recede from the later. That a choirboy should retain sufficient thought and affection to think it worth while to write to me after an interval of forty years moved & pleased me ridiculously. I wrote to him at once, and sent him a copy of "The Good Fight".

I spent the morning in reading Taylor's "Medieval Mind" with the object of clearing my mind on the difference between ancient and modern conceptions of what an Appeal to History implies and can effect. Bury's* book "The Ancient Greek Historians" has some illuminating contributions, though I do not think that I can wholly accept his severely scientific conception of History.

The new fashion of announcing the name of the individual who reads the news on the wireless synchronizes with the emergence of a gentleman whose voice is almost intolerably raucous. Surely this addition to our discomfort is unnecessary.

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[117]

17th Sunday after Trinity, September 15th, 1940.

I pleaded my cold as an excuse for remaining in my study instead of attending Divine service.

I wrote to Charlie Norcock* & to my brother Gilbert. Then, falling yet more completely under the dominion of a lethargic egotism, I wasted the morning in reading through a mild little story by that pleasant Irish humourist, Canon Hannay* who calls himself "George Birmingham". Unlike most of his tales, "The Hymn Tune Mystery" is a conventional detective story, effectively conceived and worked out. It seems to reflect his experience as Rector of Mells, for the plot is placed in a Cathedral city which is quite obviously Wells. Why is it that cathedral foundations provide writers of fiction with such ample material? Anthony Trollope has a numerous following. The life of those little capitular societies is so narrow, so intense, & so sharply individualistic that it serves well as a mirror of the life of society as a whole. There is little to mitigate the clash of personality when it must needs express itself on so restricted an area. Interests are small, and feelings are strong in the tiny communities which live, quarrel & worship around an ancient cathedral, & within it.

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[118]

Monday, September 16th, 1940.

The Eugenics Review (July 1940) opens with a careful and illuminating article on the question, Is War dysgenic? And includes a review of D^r Martin Gumpert's volume Heil Hunger! which is a discussion of public health in Nazi Germany, 'the whole of the material of which has been taken from official German sources & from medical and technical publications'. I was sufficiently impressed to write to Hugh Rees for the book.

I succeeded in bringing to some sort of completion the 3rd Warburton Lecture. It is stuff! Then I wrote to Sir James Irvine, from whom I have heard nothing for months.

After lunch it came on to rain, so that I abandoned my intention to get some bodily exercise by digging potatoes in the garden, and remained in my study. More by chance than by design, I picked up "The Catholic Catechism, drawn up by Peter Cardinal Gasparri. London. 1932.", and fell to reading it. I may assume that this version of Papistry is both authoritative & official, and quite up to date. It would require very slight alteration in order to adapt it to the pastoral requirements of the Rector of Hintlesham.

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[119]

Tuesday, September 17th, 1940.

A tempestuous night, and early in the morning the electric light failed for some reason as yet unknown. I was reading in bed a really bad book, which, when I bought it on its publication in 1911, disgusted me so much that I cast it aside, but, since it had a rather flattering "Introduction" by Bury,* & was published by Macmillan, I preserved it, and now, since the Warburtons have directed me to the 3rd century, I thought it might be useful to look at again.

My original impression is strengthened. "The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus" is, as a piece of historical investigation, contemptible, being disfigured by anti-Christian prejudice so extravagant, that the author, (who must be a highly unpleasant person,) appears to be quite unaware of the grossness of the paradox which he elaborates as history. The miserable little sex-maniac, whom he strives to dress up as an earlier and nobler Constantine, would in our time be relegated to an asylum for the incurably insane. M^r I. Stuart Hay, the author of this nauseous nonsense, has evidently soaked himself in the psycho-pathic sex literature of Germany, but he has no sense of proportion, & no better clue to the history which he caricatures than a blind hatred of Christianity. [120] But, for me the only importance of the book is the light that it casts on Bury. I had heard, but I found it difficult to believe, that he had become an embittered opponent of Christianity, and indeed of all religion: but I had not imagined that he could have fallen so low as to commend such stuff as this:-

"M^r Hay, he says, has broken new ground, and he has done history a service, in making Elagabalus the subject of a serious & systematic study"

He even associates this reptile with himself, the common ground being evidently their hatred of Christianity:-

To a disinterested mind it would appear that Mithra or Isis might have become the divinity of western civilisation. They were certainly well in the running. We may guess what circumstances aided the worship of Christ to rise above competing cults, but for inquirers, like M^r Hay and myself, who hold no brief, and do not accept the easy axiom that what happens [121] is best, it is unproven that Christianity was decidedly the best alternative. Perhaps it was. You may suspect that, if the religion which was founded by Paul of Tarsus had "by the dispensation of Providence" disappeared, giving place to one of those homogeneous oriental faiths which are now dead, we should be today very much where we are. However this may be, it seems that in the third century the Christians were far from commending their doctrine to the rest of the world by any signal moral superiority in their own conduct. The bad opinion which pagans held of their morals in the time of Tertullian cannot be explained as mere wilful prejudice, and Tertullian's reply that the charge is only true of some but not all nor even of the greater number (Ad nationes 5) is a significant admission that, taking them all round, the Christians were not then conspicuous as a sect of extraordinary virtue. Moreover, there was nothing in the ethics of their system which had not been independently reached [122] by the reason of Greek &

Roman teachers, and they are entitled to boast that the success of their religion depended not on any superiority in its moral ideals to those of pagan enlightenment but on its supernatural foundations.”

He concludes his “Introduction” thus:-

“Among other readers of Gibbon, the very name of ‘Heliogabalus’ will always ‘force a smile from the young and a blush from the fair’. But it may be expected that, after M^r Hay’s investigation, it will be recognized that this Emperor made, according to his lights, a perfectly sincere attempt to benefit mankind, which must be judged independently of his own moral or physiological propensities.”

Bury has a great name among historical scholars. A long list of learned & brilliant volumes have issued from his pen. His influence on younger students cannot but have been very great. It is truly startling, and almost incomprehensible, that he should vouch for a crude imposter like Hay, and appear [123] to share his offensive opinions, which only an ignorance which can hardly be credited to the Regius Professor of Cambridge, could make intelligible. And it cannot but shake confidence in Bury’s historical judgements. Bury’s close study of Gibbon has confirmed his temperamental dislike of Christianity, and led him to adopt that tone of scornful belittlement, when referring to religion and morality, which is so characteristic and so deplorable a feature of Gibbon’s famous style.

A boisterous south-westerly gale encourages the hope that England’s ancient ally will not fail us in our present pinch. We may, perhaps, be able again to sing as in the days of the Armada, “Exsufflaviv ventis suis et dissipati sunt”.

We went in to Ipswich after breakfast. There I had an interview with the dentist, and then with the banker. Orders have been issued for the evacuation of ancients and children from Ipswich, and others are counselled to leave if they possibly can. The authorities appear to think an invasion in this part of England to be not unlikely.

[124]

I received from Bishop Lasbrey* of the Nigeria very [sic] interesting letter, including a type-written Report of the proceedings of his diocesan Synod, and a copy of an Article by himself entitled “Twenty years of an African Diocese – 1919-1939[.] In his letter he speaks of the prospect of African Christianity when the European leadership has been withdrawn from the Nigerian Church.

Leaders are arising among the natives of the country, & the growth of Education has produced a certain number of men intellectually fairly well qualified. Whether the pull of the low moral standards around it would not seriously lower the standards set up, and maintained for members of the Christian Church is a matter about which we cannot fail to have grave apprehensions. If a power like Germany which, I imagine, would be hostile to the establishment of the Christian Church in countries like this were to gain control, would the Christian Church be

largely swept away as in the case of the Church of N. Africa when it came under
[125] Mohammedan sway? Please God such a thing will never happen, but yet we cannot help thinking of the possibility, and I hope we are endeavouring to strengthen the foundations.

The danger is certainly neither improbable nor remote. Within the last few days, the news has come from Japan that the Japanese Church has sent away the English and American Bishops in deference to the frenzied nationalism which now dominates Japan. Asia is not Africa, but we are assured that 'nationalism' is a growing power even in Africa. That queer blend of Judaism, Paganism, & Christianity which is presented by the ancient Church of Abyssinia is an illustration of what can happen to Christ's Religion when it has been long isolated from the influence of civilization. Whether ~~indeed~~ the result would have been essentially better if Abyssinia were in religion where Southern Italy is now, may indeed be questioned. The Jesuits are, thanks to Mussolini, now for the second time trying their experiment on the Abyssinian Church. Will it have more success in the 20th century than it had in the 17th? We must 'wait and see'.

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[126]

Wednesday, September 18th, 1940.

When posting my letters, I fell in with two of the Holbrook boys, and learning that they were returning to school on Friday, I took them in to the house, & showed them my study. They impressed me well, and wrote down their names before leaving.

Henry Bennett

Frederick George Savage

Both had been confirmed by the late Bishop, whom they recognized from the photograph in the smoking room,

[Joceyln H.T.] Perkins* writes from Westminster:

The west window is perforated with a number of small holes, & a lot of glass has been smashed in Broad Sanctuary. I imagine that the west window can be repaired without much trouble. Although more interesting than beautiful, it occupies a distinct position in the history of stained glass. It would be a grievous thing if it were destroyed.

The bombing becomes more destructive as the days bring experience to the bombers.

<!190940>

[127]

Thursday, September 19th, 1940.

[The date, authorship, and historical value of the Historia Augusta have been extensively discussed in recent years. v. The Cambridge Ancient History xii, 710 and ref. On this issue depends whatever fragments of evidence can be offered for Stuart Hay's extravagances. He only values it for its anti-Christian bias.]

I sent a cheque to the Tithe Commutation Commission in Ipswich in order to extinguish the petty charge on this house. The cost was only £9:7:1.

M^rBernard Relleen replies to my letter in a very friendly way. His description of himself ("at S. Marg^{t's} I was the chubby boy who left at the age of 13 to go to Emmanuel School for 4 years.") corresponds with my own recollection. He writes in course of an air-raid.

Last night a bomb fell in Hamilton Place and did a lot of damage there, & to Park Lane property including Londonderry House N^o19 (a few doors from here) and at the time of writing the German planes are overhead here now.

I wrote to Scarbrough and Londonderry, whose town houses are in Park Lane, expressing sympathy, and inquiring whether much damage had been done.

[128]

I received from Principal Murray an answer to my inquiry about the sermon in Exeter Cathedral on October 13th. "The arrangement holds so far as the College is concerned." So I must "gird up the loins of my mind" and "do out the duty".

I wrote to Arthur Rawle* saying that I would visit him either before, or after the week-end in Exeter. Also, I wrote to Betty to the same effect.

Now what shall I say to these young men, the students of the University of the South West of England? Probably they will be of much the same type as the Durham students, and mostly very young men, under 20 years old. So much has been, and is being, spoken about the War, that there is large probability that they are sick of the whole subject. I feel utterly weary of it myself, especially of the ceaseless stream of superlative eulogy which B.B.C. discharges on the country. Even if we all are such romantic heroes as we are represented as being, we must be nauseated by the implication of so much praise viz. that the indispensable condition of our doing our duty is that we shall be the objects of limitless & unending flattery! Genuine heroism is almost always modest.

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[129]

Friday, September 20th, 1940.

I felt impracticably “indisposed” when I got up. & perforce surrendered myself to the highly disconcerting necessity of another fruitless day. I read again [George] Salmon’s* “Infallibility”, in order to refresh my memory of the tiresome and interminable Roman controversy. As a political essay it appears to me a “tour de force”. [John Henry] Newman* opposed to Salmon is no better than a pretty protesting female under cross-examination by a first-class barrister! Yet – and this is the point that has ever puzzled me – Newman’s sophistry is vastly more effective than Salmon’s inexorable dialectic. Why?

I received a letter from Dick [Elliott] and gather from it that he has never received one, if not two, of my letters to him.

In spite of my waxing indisposition I went with my ladies to see Denington, and have tea with Canon Lanchester at Tramlingham. On the way home, I felt ever worse, and, even as I entered my own gate, was overtaken by a violent sickness. I went at once to bed, and passed a comfortless night, with some returns of sickness, and much futile coughing. It is clear that the chill, which I contracted in the course of my miserable journey from London (cf p.10) has been renewed.

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[130]

Saturday, September 21st, 1940.

This has been a “dies non”, for I did not descend to my study, after breakfasting in bed, until it was nearly noon:, and, in the afternoon, I did nothing but revise an old sermon for use tomorrow, and read, for the second time, that very fascinating novel, by Richard Ince, “When Joan was Pope”. I was more than ever impressed by its power, skill, and felicity. It is really an extremely effective “skit” on the Christianity of the “Dark Ages”. My letters included a very kindly expressed answer *from the Lord Chancellor to my invocation in the interest of Miss Heathcote* (v. p. 102). He says

“I should indeed be grieved if you did not regard me and treat me as a personal friend. I look back over long years at All Souls, and have never had but the greatest kindness at your hands. Besides, I admire amongst other things courage & good speaking and, therefore, am necessarily devoted to the new Canon of Westminster.

He says that he has shown my letter from M^{rs} Heathcote to the Home Secretary, & is sure that attention will be given to it”.

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[131]

18th Sunday after Trinity, September 22nd, 1940.

A beautiful autumnal day, beginning in mist and soon passing into sunshine, like a child whose tears give place with strange rapidity to radiant smiles. It is a fair world. Too fair to be outraged by the murderous madness of War. But, with the same inconstancy, the sunshine gave place to rain, and we returned home after church on puddled roads.

We motored to Stoke-by-Nayland, where I preached at Mattins in the noble parish church to a considerable congregation mainly consisting of men in khaki, the members of a ~~considerable~~ detachment of the R. A. M. C. now stationed in the squire's house. I was feeling ill, and preached with difficulty: after the service we had lunch with M^{rs} Cooper. The Rector & his wife were of the party. He was trained at S. John's College, where he had known Edgar Dobbie, of whom he spoke with affection.

There was an air-raid last night, which dropped bombs in the neighbourhood. Little Hawkesley Church, we were told, had been completely destroyed.

I had no comfort in my preaching, for my sermon was unsuitable to the congregation, and my voice had nearly perished.

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[132]

Monday, September 23rd, 1940.

A beautiful day after the rain of yesterday.

After breakfast Fearne motored me to Ipswich where I visited D^r K. W. MacKenzie, 52 Ivory Street, in order to consult him about this abominable and enigmatic “wisdom” tooth. He recommended its extraction, thought that the process ought not to be difficult, & might be safely effected with the aid of a “local anaesthetic”. He advised me to entrust myself to M^r Martin’s tender mercies!

D^r M^r MacKenzie is a young, slightly built, keen-looking youngish man, rather self-confident & very talkative. He embarked on an energetic argument against charitable, or even moderate, views as to the German character, which, he maintained, had been disclosed by the horrible outrage, reported in the morning’s newspapers, which had caused the death of 83 evacuated children on their way to Canada. The steamer, on which they travelled, was 600 miles from the Canadian coast, the sea was running high, and the ship was torpedoed without notice.

The King broadcast an excellent message to the British People, announcing his creation of a new Order for the recognition of civilian heroism in the War.

[133]

I attended a meeting of the parishioners in the Village Hall to discuss the War. The Rector presided, and the attendance was, considering the hour and the air-raids, rather surprisingly good. As there were no less than 4 speakers announced, including myself, I assumed that it was the normal kind of public meeting, but I was mistaken. The meeting was designed for the discussion of air-raid precautions! Thus the principal speaker disclaimed all intention of addressing the company, & forthwith sate down. The next two – Cobbold and a local air-warden – did much the same, & then I delivered of myself of some platitudes which appeared to me both tiresome and irrelevant. The audience listened with civility, and even applauded, but were probably as relieved as I was when an air-raid warning made an end of my speech! I could not but feel that I had been brought to the meeting “under false pretences”. However, nothing really matters! M^r Smith, the carpenter, most considerately insisted on driving us back to the Hyntle Place. The darkness of a fine night was relieved by the brilliance of the search-lights – great shafts of piercing questioning, rising from every corner!

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[134]

Tuesday, September 24th, 1940.

[symbol]

I wrote to Kenneth Hodgson, who had sent me a letter of "congratulation" from Bishop Auckland, and to that rather quaint person, Captⁿ Richard Crawsley, who wrote to me two years ago, a rather despairing letter. My reply was copied into my letter book on September 14th, 1938. He is a lover of birds.

Also, I wrote to Bishop Lasbrey in Nigeria in answer to his letter of August 11th.

[symbol]

It is reported that General de Gaulles [sic], when he attempted to land at Dacca, so far from being welcomed, was received with open hostility, some of his company being killed and wounded, and that he has withdrawn his force. Meanwhile, British ships have bombarded Dacca, which is described as "an open port", whatever that may mean. The Vichy Government are said to be using the most threatening language, but it is not quite clear that it can do us much more injury as an open enemy, than it has done, & is doing, as an ambiguous ally, obviously compelled to "toe the line" of the Nazi conqueror's policy. But I am not comfortable about the latest developments either in West Africa or in Indo China. Germany & Japan are using the French as their catspaw.*

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[135]

Wednesday, September 25th, 1940.

A pleasant letter from Lord Scarbrough, who remains at Sandbeck. His work takes him alternatively to York & London, so that he finds his own house "the most convenient domicile". The bomb in Park Lane "fell by the fountain near 21 and blew out the front windows there, & at the adjoining houses, otherwise no other damage.

"Vincent Square had a delayed action bomb dropped near by, and all the patients, 16 [in my Nursing Home] and staff had to clear out at 3.30 a.m. The former to Westminster Hospital. They removed the bomb safely, & all were back in the Home the same evening".

He writes interestingly of the general situation.

In a sense I think our position is stronger thro' the betrayal of their ally by the French politicians. We stand alone & can make & act on our decisions without having to consult others. I had an interesting talk with de Cartier, the Belgian Ambassador, the other day about the King of the Belgians & his action. He convinced me that we must suspend judgement till the full facts are known.

[136]

I telephoned to the dentist and ascertained that he had heard [sic] from Mackenzie respecting my blessed "wisdom" tooth, & that he held with him that it ought to be forthwith extracted. As I am pledged to preach on Sunday next, we arranged that the business should be carried through on Monday next.

Then I wrote to Principal Murray cancelling my engagement to preach to his University in Exeter Cathedral on October 13th, and to my cousin cancelling my visit to Holnicote House. How vain is it to attempt to order one's life in such a world of reeling instabilities and uncertainties as this!

D^r Everett, the leach from Hadleigh who functions in Hintlesham, called at my request, and examined my chest &c in the usual way, assuring me as a result of his enquiries that there was no cause for alarm, since both my heart and my lungs were unusually sound for a man of my age. So far, so good: & if I could get rid of this plaguy, persistent cough, I should be satisfied: but, as it is, I am a nuisance to myself and to my ladies.

[137]

My mental provender today has been provided by two Irishmen, both representative of their alluring and yet exasperating nation – D^r Salmon and Canon Hannay, who writes charming stories under the nome de plume of George A. Birmingham. I am reading again Salmon's famous Lectures on Papal Infallibility in order to renew my acquaintance with the "Roman Question", which must have a place in my 4th Warburton. I cannot lay my hand on any more

complete, indeed annihilating, criticism of the Roman claims. It is so complete, so annihilating, that one can but marvel how those claims can still be advanced, and (still more incomprehensively) allowed. I suppose the explanation must lie in the inextricably mingled character of religious belief. Reason and knowledge play a humbly small part in the process which finally emerges in conviction. Mighty intellectual giants like the famous Provost of Trinity carry all before them on the controversial arena: but when the dust of the conflict has subsided, and the situation can again be clearly discerned, little appears to have changed. The battle is resumed on the old issues, & for the most part, with the old weapons. It is a puzzling, rather disheartening, spectacle.

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[138]

Thursday, September 26th, 1940.

I wrote a short letter to the Times on the subject of “Reprisals”, which has, during the last few days, been discussed in its columns, with, I fear, a tendency to favour that foolish & futile procedure. I posted the letter myself in order that it might be carried by the morning post. Whether I have done wisely, is not quite clear, but, since the matter had actually been raised, it hardly seemed possible for me to stand aside.

It is evident that General de Gaulle’s rebuff at Dacca, is not only a considerable disappointment for him, but also a considerable success for our enemy. It now appears that the port is practically manned by Germans & Italians ^dropped by parachute^ and a strong contingent of Vichy French conveyed there by the warships which we fatuously allowed to pass Gibraltar unmolested. The ambiguous position of the Vichy Government, and the natural sentiments of de Gaulle himself, have led us into a grave military disaster. The effect of this unfortunate episode in both hemispheres can hardly fail to be equally great and unfortunate. It strengthens Vichy against de Gaulle in French Africa & not there only. U.S.A. is much perturbed.

[139]

Does this fiasco at Dacca mean that Winston is repeating his blunder, when he urged our futile & costly intervention in Bolshevized Russia? There is certainly an arresting resemblance. There also we were totally misinformed as to the actual state of opinion among the Russians. The ardent optimism of the anti-Revolutionary Russians was as ill-founded as that of de Gaulle’s “Free Frenchmen”. It takes more than is easily perceived by foreign & interested sympathisers than is easily perceived by foreign & injured men to draw sword against their own government and nation. Nor in the case of the French do we realize the strength of the home sickness, which makes it all but intolerable to remain exiles in Britain. What mostly I fear, however, is the effect of our defeat at Dacca on our own prestige among the African natives. We shall presumably have explanations in Parliament, and we must await them with such patience as we can command.

My ladies after having their capillary attractions increased by profession assistance in Ipswich, spent the afternoon in disclosing their charms to a serving party in the smoking-room.

[140]

Friday, September 27th, 1940.

I received from Perkyns [Perkins] a rather alarming account of damage inflicted by the German bombs in and about the holy places of Westminster. S Thomas's Hospital has been "so cruelly bombed that it is practically impossible to carry it on as an institution, and its staff are being dispersed". "The chapel of Westminster Hospital was wrecked on Saturday night."

"Up to the moment of writing the Abbey is safe. The West window has had a number of small holes made in it from our own shrapnel, and the hideous Chaucer window has been smashed beyond repair. On the other hand, the Choir Shool has had a terrible gash made in the first floor on the Smith Street side".

On the envelope is a final message of war:

Alas, S Margaret's has had an incendiary bomb a few hours ago. There is a great hole in the north side aisle roof, a number of pews burnt, & one or perhaps more windows in the north aisle destroyed. The rest of the church, though in a great mess from water, is uninjured.

[141]

The 1 p.m. wireless brought news of what looks like a very sinister development. Germany, Italy, and Japan have formed a military Alliance in order to establish a "new order" in Asia under the leadership of Germany, & in Asia under the leadership of Japan. It seems that the final conflict between Force and Freedom will take the form of a War between the English-Speaking Democracies and the despotisms, European and Asiatic, and that the evil tyrant at Moscow will garner most of the spoils of victory.

We motored to Bealings & had tea with Tallents and his sister. A substantial but not unamiable lady, named Miss Heywood, came from Ufford, where there is the elaborate font-cover in the parish church. She is said to be an artist. Miss Tallents had much news from Westminster, similar in character to what I had myself received from Perkins. It is evident that the Nazi air-men have learned the road to Westminster and have already done much mischief. I tremble for the safety of the Abbey.

On the way we stopped at Abbey Oaks, in order to inquire after the health of Lord Woodbridge.* The Butler was not very cheerful.

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[142]

Saturday, September 28th, 1940.

A quiet night for a change! Yesterday's heavy losses may have disinclined the Nazis for more excursions! The air is fresh, with a prophetic "nip" in it, but the foliage is still verdant and ample, & the sun is bright.

I occupied the morning in writing a sermon for a harvest thanksgiving Service. This is the first occasion for many years since I have preached on such an occasion, for among the few privileges which I allowed myself to enjoy as Bishop of a Dioceses was abstinence from Harvest Festivals & bazaars! The result is, of course, that I am rather specially incompetent for this kind of preaching.

We motored to Clare and called on M^{rs} Brocklebank, the daughter of Athelstan Riley* who is now in Jersey, residing on the Seigneur de la Trinite on his estate in that island. He is 82, and too old either to enjoy, or to endanger the brutal domination of the Nazis. M^{rs} Brocklebank is unable to obtain any ~~news~~ trustworthy news as to her father's present state & situation, but neither can be pleasant or secure.

[143]

M^{rs} Brocklebank, though now a middle-aged woman, retains the aspect and vivacity of a girl. She is an incessant and reckless talker, seeking perhaps to shock her listeners into a kind of reluctant admiration! But she indulges in a kind of talk, which is not only reckless, but, potentially, if not always actually, very mischievous. The substance of her voluble chattering is just the accustomed speaking of her sex and class – a violent and quite extravagant vituperation of everything connected with Germany! She is precisely the type of "Society" woman, who, only a few years ago, expressed the most ardent admiration ~~of~~ for Hitler and Mussolini and never tired of belittling the "democracy" of their own country. They formed the strength of Oswald Mosley's ridiculous movement, and never ceased to provide nutriment for the class-tendencies latent in our Labour Party. They are responsible for much of the bitterness which separates the classes in England. Guided & swayed by the surface prejudices of the movement, they have no principles, and no great power of survival. It is only their ephemeral character which robs them of their power for greater mischiefs than they cause.

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[144]

19th Sunday after Trinity, September 29th, 1940.

A clouded sky, illumined by brief intervals of sunshine, and darkened by interludes of rain. After breakfast Fearne motored us to Hitcham, where I preached in the noble parish church. There was a congregation which nearly filled the ~~parish church~~ building, being no doubt swollen beyond the normal size by the occasion of the annual Harvest Thanksgiving. After the service, we lunched pleasantly with the Bishop of Dunwich and M^{rs} Maxwell-Gumbleton at the Rectory. The curate, Graham, was also at lunch. He was until recently the Conservative agent in Ipswich, receiving a stipend of £600, with a prospect of an increase up to £1000. But he had always desired to be ordained, and had not hesitated to sacrifice his comparatively large stipend in order to secure his desire. He now receives £300 p.a. from the Rector, & is practically the responsible incumbent, leaving the said Rector free to perform his episcopal duties. The Bishop spoke of him in the highest terms, and I myself was favourably impressed by his aspect, manner of officiating, & conversation.

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[145]

Monday, September 30th, 1940.

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DIES FATALIS

I received a pleasant note from Lord Woodbridge, written by himself, from which I infer that he is for the moment feeling stronger. He says that he read my sermon & the letter in the Times "with interest and edification". Arthur Rawle* writes sympathetically about my troubles with this abominable "wisdom" tooth, & Principal Murray generously allows the adequacy of my plea for "crying off" the Exeter Sermon.

He adds

On one score I am somewhat relieved. I had been feeling the long double journey under the present conditions was a heavy imposition on any one, & perhaps too heavy.

Certainly my latest experience of railway travelling accords with this view.

Canon Sturt thanks me warmly for my letter on "Reprisals" which he is sure "will find an instant & sympathetic response in all true hearts". I am not so sure, though no true heart can be other than troubled.

[146]

In the afternoon Fearne motored me to Ipswich, and deposited me at the dentist's, where it had been arranged that I should face the ordeal of having the "wisdom" tooth extracted. I had screwed myself up to a martyr-like determination to endure agony, but the experience was not very terrible. The local anaesthetic was very effective, so that the extraction was far more rapid & less painful than I had feared. M^r Martin was in some perplexity as to the so-called "wisdom" tooth, & rather inclined to the conclusion that it was a normal tooth, which had been broken-off when I had a lot of teeth out under gas. If this be so, I must needs think that the responsible dentist failed in his duty. However, whatever the ~~thing~~ "tooth" was, it is out of my jaw, & that is the main thing. It remains that the necessary re-fitting of the plates shall be achieved, & then I may hope to be in case to face the world again.

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There were several letters on "Reprisals" in the Times, mainly on my side of the controversy. The sophist's habit of irrational rigidity in a super-subtle analysis ^of action^ betrays so many, especially the half-educated & prejudice-bound, to forget and submerge the eternal severities of Morality!

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[147]

Tuesday, October 1st, 1940.

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My post was disappointingly meagre. That active and masterful lady, Dame Merial Talbot, approves my letter to the Times, and is good enough to say so! She probably represents that phase of Anglican feeling which combines, very astonishingly, liberal, & even extreme, social theories with an unyielding sacerdotalism. The prophet and arch-Sophist of the Sect is her uncle, the last Bishop Talbot of Winchester.^{*} But she writes civilly enough:

May I thank you for your letter today on 'Reprisals'. There has been so much shallow thinking & foolish writing & talking on the subject. I have been sometimes in despair at my fellow-Christians & countrymen.

Now comes your letter – forceful, unanswerable. All who have sought to put forward the truth will be feeling intensely grateful to you today.

May I also take the opportunity of saying how I rejoiced to learn of your return to Westminster.

I remember how old J. G. [John Gilbert] Talbot,^{*} her father, seceded from S Margaret's in protest against my heretical teaching from its pulpit!

[148]

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My excellent wife is, in her way, bookish, but not altogether according to what is either intelligent or appropriate to so sage and senior matron. She has her full endowment of Mother Eve's curiosity, and loves nothing more than to "nose" curiously in those ancient & ill-ordered establishments, which vend, or profess to vend, antiques, & which among their miscellaneous rubbish generally include a few shelves of dilapidated books. These are commonly as cheap as they are worthless. From time to time she lights on some volume which, judged by its title, might be suitable for an episcopal husband. This she purchases, & returning home, presents it to me as the result of considerate devotion. Thus, a week since, she presented to me "The Bishop's Book Move, a work which affected to be a translation of a lost original and was really a pornographic record, of no value either historical or literary. I ran through it, the while rather ashamed of myself, & then, having at length reached the end, indicated my opinion of its character, & my loyalty to ecclesiastical precedent, by committing it to the flames in my study grate. It burnt slowly, & was totally consumed.

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[149]

Wednesday, October 2nd, 1940.

The Dean sends me a rather grim description of the situation in the Abbey.

We are indeed, passing through rough waters. Storr* has been brought very low by the long ordeal thorough which he has passed. He was removed into the country on Sunday, but it will be many weeks, if not months, before we see him again. Both Donaldson's and Mariott's houses have been rendered temporarily uninhabitable by a bomb, & [Frederick] Barry's* house has suffered hardly less, though he is still continuing to live in it. As for the poor Abbey, it is a scene of desolation. All the windows in Henry VII have gone as well as many in the nave - & the dirt is indescribable. We managed to hold services in the nave last Sunday in spite of the cold & constantly falling fragments of glass. It will be at best months before the damage can be repaired - & who is to say that the same thing, or worse, may not happen again. Meanwhile Barry & I are carrying on as best we can. We must keep things going somehow. None seems to [150] be unduly downhearted – and, strange to say, we find a certain exhilaration in this hunted life.

This makes me feel very base in being absent, though, indeed, it is hard to see what good would come from my being in Westminster, even if it were possible for me to go there. Nor does it seem prudent to undertake any considerable repairs until "this tyranny is overpast", and we may have some reason for thinking that we are not wasting our capital resources, by expending them on work which will be almost immediately destroyed.

The Oxford University Press sends me the impressive amount of £1. 8. 4 on account of Royalties on my Gifford Lectures. This, of course, means that the poor things have been true to my literary habit, & passed into swift oblivion!

D^r Everett called, and returned my copy of the "Economic Review". We had some talk on the subject of "Contraceptives", on which we appeared to be in agreement. He says their use is general in this district. I gave him my last remaining copy of my "Notes on Spiritual Healing".

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[151]

Thursday, October 3rd, 1940.

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My post brought me a characteristic letter from Lady Oxford, written in pencil. She is good enough to approve my "Times" letter on 'Reprisals'. She raves at 'the Winston policy of "intern the lot" which is equally vile'. But here the cloven-foot of old partisan hatreds too plainly emerges. She writes enthusiastically about Cannon (sic) Hannay* who is, in her judgement, the best preacher in the English Church. She derides the fear of invasion:-

None of my sailor friends thinks it possible tho' they are all in favour of our coastal preparations. We have over 2 million armed men Home Guard etc. with nothing to do for the winter (unless, of course, Winston is right). My friend de Gaulle (a fine fellow with no advisers) w^d never have had such a lamentable failure, had he had more support from our men. I blame no one – it is all too difficult. The reason I write this letter is to thank you for yours in the Times. This is not a war of conquest but of [152] conscience, & because other countries do such vile things, I see no reason why we sh^d. "Vengeance is mine" saith the Lord. This is enough.

Curiously enough, I received from Durrant's Press Cuttings, a consignment plainly intended for Canon Hannay. It was an extremely interesting review of "George A. Birmingham's books", as disclosing a view of Irish politics. I sent it to the Canon, with a covering letter.

The Editor of Theology (Rev^d Alec R. Vidler B.D.[.]) sends me, at the author's request, Canon Smyth's* new book, "Simeon & Church Order", that I may "consider reviewing it" for his journal. Accordingly I wasted most of the day in reading, what I found to be an informing and entertaining work.

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It was announced that Chamberlain has resigned from the Government on the ground of health. Winston, in accepting his resignation, sent him a highly flattering letter. There is a general re-shuffle of cabinet offices and both Oliver Lyttelton and Lord Cranbourne* enter the Government.*

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[153]

Friday, October 4th, 1940.

I received a long and affectionate letter from Sir James Irvine.* He and all his family appear to be fully engaged in War work, of one kind or another. His references to my Westminster appointment are very generous, but rather dismaying.

“I am exceedingly glad that you felt it to be your duty to go to Westminster, & your sermon in the Abbey on a day of grave crisis was just exactly what was needed. Indeed, I believe that each of the changes recently introduced into your life has just been another inevitable step bringing you to the spiritual centre of the Empire precisely when you were most wanted.

But he does not share my view of ‘Reprisals’.

Hitler must have corrupted me for I am a whole-hearted hater of the breed he has made. Twenty-five years ago I had to fight the same battle with myself on the subject of reprisals in kind, for the use of poison gas, & my decision was taken when I saw the results & endured some of the consequences. There can be no doubt [154] that our reply shortened the War, and left a lesson in the German mind which even his stupidity has not overlooked. They are at heart a cowardly people unless they have changed profoundly since the days I spent with them as a student.

Two of the Church Papers, the C. of E. Newspaper and the English Churchman, are good enough to assure me through their Editors that they agree with my Times letter; & I received some protest from cranks, pacifist & fire-eating, who don’t.

The University publisher, Macmillan, sent me some newspaper cuttings from America, purporting to be reviews of my book on ‘The Church of England’. They were not worth much, though quite polite to me.

Hebron, the acting Chapter Clerk writes.

The poor Abbey with its windows out is a very sad sight to look upon. We have transferred our services to the nave as it is at the moment dangerous at the east end with the glass hanging from the frames.

It is all very sad.

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[155]

Saturday, October 5th, 1940.

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I received the following letter:-

Dear Hensley Henson,

(If I may assume the All Souls privilege of so addressing you) I simply must send you a word of thanks for your letter in yesterday's Times. It made me glow. It reminded me of a meeting at Bishop Auckland, of a sermon in All Souls Chapel, of many gaudies, of much incisive speech, and many keen and friendly glances from under eyebrows not easily forgotten. I could hear & see you saying it. But more than that, it seemed to be something that needs saying just now more than anything else. We must remember what spirit we are of. Thank you for it most warmly.

I am going to send you a book by a former pupil of mine, which I think is good stuff. Don't trouble to acknowledge it or this, but accept it if you will as a token of respect & consociality.

Yours sincerely,
Kenneth Bell.

[156]

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The book, thus so kindly commend [sic], reached me yesterday, and I started to read it in bed this morning. It is rather heavily written, but impresses me as learned, thoughtful, and challenging. –

'Christianity and Classical Culture, A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine by Charles Norris Cochrane. Oxford. 1940.

[symbol] The Times announces the appointment of George Macaulay Trevelyan O.M.* to be the new Master of Trinity. This is an admirable choice, & peculiarly fitting as an acknowledgement by one illustrious Churchill of the rather belated justice which Trevelyan has done to the memory of another. I could not refuse myself the satisfaction of sending the Master-elect a letter of congratulation. Thus History in the person of Trevelyan replaces Science in the person of J. J. Thomson: as Science replaced Theology, when Thomson followed Montague Butler in that great Place. Personally, I am greatly pleased, since I both know, and like, the new master. He is no less than 13 years my junior; & ought to have some years of valuable historical work yet in front of him.

[157]

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Hugh Rees Ltd sent me a 2nd hand copy of [James] Welldon's edition of the de Civitate Dei, and I read through his Introduction. It is interesting, careful, and in many respects good, but in none, perhaps, quite good enough, considering the great importance of the work, and his own undoubted qualifications. In a short preface, he can say what, I suspect very few persons can truly say:

“Whether my own explanatory notes are too many or too few, at least I can claim to have read all the writings of Augustine, & to have verified all the references which I have made to him and to other ancient authors, whether ~~Christian~~ classical or Christian.”

Welldon always seems to have in view some “gallery” which he desires to please, and, like a popular orator, he is ever bending his argument to ‘topical’ references, which may quicken interest & evoke applause. I have never heard him preach without noting this procedure, & I judge it to have been one principal reason why, in spite of considerable ability, notable academic distinction, & magnificent opportunities, he has never quite succeeded in winning the confidence & respect of his contemporaries.

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There are some thirty quotations from Virgil's poetry in the De Civitate Dei alone – Augustine in fact points the way to the reverence which was felt for Virgil by all the great writers of the Middle Ages, especially perhaps of Dante. But he never overcame a certain repugnance to the use of classical writings, whether Greek or Latin, as instruments in the education of Christian children; and he would have felt an astonishment, not far removed from indignation, at the place of the classics in the Universities and in the schools of Europe from the reformation to the middle of the XIXth century.

Welldon. Introduction. P. iv.

Would Augustine have been less indignant at the multifarious snippets which have replaced the classics? Would not the method of nakedly secular education have been even more abhorrent to his profound and reverent mind even than an education conditioned by polytheism & philosophy.