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# CHRIST OR SOCIALISM?

**A Human Autobiography**

BY

**H. MUSGRAVE READE**

*For 20 years a prominent Atheist and Socialist*

*Late Secretary of Manchester and Salford*

*Independent Labour Party*

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**CHRIST OR SOCIALISM?**

## APOLOGIA

IT has been said that "of making many books there is no end," and one feels that a strong justification is needed in these days to warrant the increase even by one more. My apology for thus continuing the output is my intense conviction that this present book is a real need for the present age and will be helpful to my fellow-creatures. It is a human document describing the wanderings of a human soul in search of a haven of rest, and as such, is sure to be of vital interest to all other human souls. It lays no claim to literary merit, but is sent out with the hope and prayer that even its weaknesses may be its strength ; for our reliance is not in "the wisdom of this world."

I hesitated for some considerable time before making public my private opinions, especially as I shrank from crossing swords with my late Socialistic comrades, not that there was any fear of man in my

## APOLOGIA

heart, but a tender regard for many noble-minded men and women whom I know and still love, who might feel hurt at my opposition to their principles.

Yet the sense of duty and loyalty to my Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and the growing conviction that many of His disciples are being unconsciously drawn into the meshes of a godless economic Utopia, and away from the Divine principles of Society that He came to reveal to mankind have constrained me to lay aside all such scruples, and to boldly assert and give reasons for the principles that now guide my life, in the hope that many men and women may be led to re-consider their present position towards Socialism, and others may be warned from the dangers ahead.

In this fervent hope, I commend this book to the earnest consideration of all seekers after truth, and trust that with the blessing of Almighty God it may be used for His glory and the extension of His Kingdom.

H. MUSGRAVE READE.

118, EVINGTON ROAD,  
LEICESTER.

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“ If the SON, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall  
be free indeed.”

TO MY WIFE,  
WHOSE LOVING AND FAITHFUL  
COMPANIONSHIP DURING ALL THE YEARS  
OF MY WILDERNESS WANDERINGS, AND WHOM  
I PRIZE AS THE RICHEST TREASURE  
THAT EARTH CAN GIVE,  
I DEDICATE THESE  
PAGES.



## CHAPTER I

### AUTOBIOGRAPHY

**W**HETHER the modern theory of "reversion to type" is borne out by fact or no, I am not sure, but if I might use the simile psychologically, it would be interesting to trace the variation and the tendency of some members of a family to leave all the familiar characteristics of their parents, and revert to some ancient stock. At least this seems to have been my tendency, for on no other grounds can I explain why I so outrageously differed from my respectable ancestors. In taking refuge in this comforting theory, one wonders whether the reversion was to some good old Puritan who fought against the "divine right of kings to govern wrong," or to some Danish or Saxon progenitor whose buccaneering proclivities still linger in my veins. In any case, there was no doubting the fact that I differed greatly from my parents and from the rest of my family.

I was born at Salford, in the County of Lancashire, in the year 1860. My father was the late Captain L. L. Reade, County Magistrate and owner of large ancestral estates. Connected by birth with

the aristocracy, he had been presented at Court, and was a staunch Churchman, Orangeman, and ultra-Tory. Although he had squandered his fortune, in the time-honoured fashion after leaving college, by purchasing a yacht and spending his time and money circumnavigating the globe along with other sprigs of nobility, and had only sufficient money left to purchase a commission in the army after the Encumbered Estates Court had finally relieved him of the burden of landlordism, yet he still retained the dignity and hauteur of the old family.

But I believe I was born a rebel; at least, as early as I can remember, I had tendencies in that direction. When I was but ten years of age, my father, then a commissioned officer in the British Army, and attached to the garrison stationed in Manchester, was zealously training me to occupy his position and receive his commission when he retired. Most of my early days were thus spent in barracks amongst the soldiers. It was at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, and I was kept busy studying the war-maps and recording from the daily papers the position of the armies as the war progressed. I became intensely interested as the war drew to a close, and as the result proved the entire corruption of the Imperial *régime*, I was not slow to declare my delight at the fall of the Third Empire. To say that I startled my father when I announced my unqualified admiration for Gambetta and the French Republic is to put it very mildly—he was horrified

that a son of his should give expression to such disloyal sentiments. The heinousness of the offence of declaring oneself a Republican, at a time when he was preparing me to become a loyal soldier of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, inclines me to believe that I must have inherited rebel tendencies from some of my forbears.

As I grew older, the opportunity of becoming a servant of the Crown vanished, for the abrogation of "purchase" in the army, by the passing of Mr. Gladstone's Act—a welcome release to me—ended all my prospects of military glory, and put a stop to the martial career destined for me by my father.

His death soon followed, with the result that I was sent to a more congenial occupation as a clerk in the counting house, and subsequently in the shipping department, of Messrs. Rylands and Sons, Limited, general merchants, Manchester.

I was brought up in the faith of the Church of England, attended Sunday-school, and worshipped in the Parish Church of St. Paul's, Pendleton, and when I had attained my twentieth year I was duly confirmed by the late Bishop Fraser at Pendleton. But, unfortunately, at this most critical period of my life, when I had just entered upon man's estate, the advent of a new incumbent to the church I attended provoked much controversy by the introduction of ritualistic practices, which soon emptied the church, and drove many to seek the aid and fellowship of

Nonconformists, and paved the way for others to receive the prevailing scepticism of the age.

The contentions between the "high" and "low" Church parties soon drew me into the study of what is called the "higher criticism." I felt, like most young men do at that age, "wise in my own conceits," and fully able without a teacher to grapple with all the intricacies of doctrine and tradition. I felt that I need not go to church to hear prosy sermons. It was all very well for women and children who had no opportunity of learning, but for an "up-to-date young man" it was surely a waste of time. When I could drink from the Fountain it seemed folly to go to the dried-up wells to slake my thirst; besides, could I not study at the Free Libraries all the doctrine and theology from the most eminent divines and teachers, and become as proficient in knowledge as the preachers.

Such were the subtle arguments that prevailed with me. I had not been taught, or I had not heeded the teaching, that the proper motive for attending church was not to hear sermons, prosy or otherwise, but to worship God, to render thanks to my Creator and Preserver for the many blessings He had showered upon me during the past week, and to adore Him for His mercy and goodness.

This abstention from the House of God I consider the *first* step towards that declension which had such deplorable effects upon my life in after years, and I would solemnly warn all young men to distrust their

own vain conceits in reference to the deep things of God, and seek counsel of those who are their elders, both in age and in Christian experience.

The democratic impulse of my earlier years also received new life, and was fostered and fed by an ever-increasing appetite for all literature pertaining to the French Revolution. My heroes of that unhappy period were not the popular demi-gods, but the humbler leaders of the people, such as Jean Paul Marat, "*l'ami du peuple*," Mirabeau, and Babeuf. The other historic upheavals of society, such as the struggles of '48, the Commune of '71, and the writings of Mazzini, Louis Blanc, Robert Owen, Victor Hugo, and others, soon gave a definite tone to my convictions.

At this time I heard of the existence of a republican club in Salford, where lectures were being given every Sunday. I attended, and purchased their periodical, *The Republican*, but was greatly disappointed upon discovering its atheistic teaching. I remember protesting that I could only join a Christian Republican Association, and went away sorrowful.

But "*Facilis descensus Averni*" is a well known proverb, indicating the ease of the descent into hell, and truly my descent into infidelity was very rapid after this. I read eagerly Strauss's "Life of Christ," in which he contended that the gospel account was on a par with the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome, and that Christ was simply a myth, probably

taken from the Hindu god Krishna. Then I readily drank in Renan's "Vie de Jésus," with its beautiful but soul-destroying picture of Christ, neither divine nor human, neither the Son of God, nor a truly noble and good man. Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and a host of German metaphysicians then captivated my fancy, and I was soon in the vain imaginings of idealism, transcendentalism, and pessimism, and thus I blossomed out into a philosophical deist. August Comte, with his Positivist Philosophy, then attracted my attention; his plausible theory of science and religion gained many adherents, mainly through his attempts to spiritualise free-thought into a religion. The Religion of Humanity was the cult, and its devotees were asked to worship an abstraction, that is, to elevate the idea of the whole of humanity, past, present, and to come, into a Grand Being, to be revered and worshipped. In London this was carried out to the *reductio ad absurdum*. They erected a Church and had a ritual or service in imitation of the Christian Church, busts of great examples of humanity such as Socrates, Christ, Buddha, and Napoleon were placed on pedestals, and the Being of Humanity (whatever that may mean) was worshipped; and thus it was seen that even atheists instinctively desire some object to worship. Professor Huxley was scathing in his denunciation of it, aptly terming it "Catholicism minus Christianity."

This phase of Positivism had no attractions for

me. Having ceased to worship the God of my fathers I had no desire to degenerate into a self-worshipper or become a member of a Mutual Admiration Church. And this in its turn gave way to the study of extreme critics and opponents of Christianity. Rousseau, Voltaire, Volney, Paine and others were eagerly sought after, and the tenets of Christianity were insidiously uprooted from my mind. I became what is termed a freethinker, although why a rejecter of Christianity should have the monopoly of this title I have never been able to understand. The transition from this phase was greatly facilitated by a course of study in the realms of science, in which I was introduced to the works of Büchner, Haeckel, Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley, Clifford, and others, and thus imbibed the theories of evolution which completed the work and left me a materialistic atheist.

In this state of mind I met Charles Bradlaugh, Mrs. Annie Besant, Dr. Edward Aveling, and other prominent atheists, and took part in the agitation for the right of Mr. Bradlaugh to sit in the House of Commons. Twice I attended, as a delegate from Salford, the Trafalgar Square demonstrations in London in favour of what we called the "rights of Northampton," the town which had returned Mr. Bradlaugh to Parliament.

Under Bradlaugh's teaching I developed into an active anti-Christian propagandist, and in 1882 became the Secretary of a branch of the National

Secular Society, of which he was the President, and carried on an active campaign against Christianity in many of the surrounding towns of Lancashire and Cheshire.

This incessant iconoclasm with its continuous attack upon Christianity soon palled upon my mental appetite; it was neither food for the mind nor inspiration for the life, to be ever kicking what I considered to be a dead horse. Surely there was something better to live for than a mere negation, and I soon tired of Foote's inane blasphemies. These and similar thoughts seemed to have stirred up a considerable number of the followers of Bradlaugh, for soon afterwards the Secular Society in Salford, of which I was the secretary, became extinct. I do not say that the members gave up their infidelity, but I believe that, like myself, they wanted something more substantial to feed upon than a mere negation, for that is all that the Secularists can offer to a seeking soul.

Although I had left the sterile National Secular Society I was still an atheist, and sought the companionship of what is called "advanced men," and soon found myself a member of the International Working Men's Association, a branch of the old "Red International," once the terror of continental governments, and founded in 1864 by Karl Marx and others, and known mainly as the inspiring genius of the Paris Commune of 1871. We met at a restaurant in Manchester called the "County



Forum" (now the Clarion Café) where lectures on political economy, and especially the doctrines or theories of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were propounded. The members of the I.W.M.A. were full of enthusiasm, and really believed that they would shortly establish a Commune in Manchester after the fashion of the one lately deceased in Paris, but their efforts to instil communistic principles into the minds of the stolid working men of Manchester were fruitless, and after many months of propaganda our numbers did not perceptibly increase.

About this time, in the year 1883, there was much ferment amongst Radical thinkers, and the advent of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" gave an impetus to the study of purely economic, as apart from political, theories. I became a convert to the theory of land nationalisation, and organised a Land Restoration League for Manchester, still retaining my membership in the more advanced section of the I.W.M.A. During this year the publication of the Democratic Federation's Manifesto in London by William Morris, H. M. Hyndman, Belfort Bax, Dr. Aveling, and Michael Davitt revealed the fact that a great economic movement had commenced in Conservative England. William Morris wrote to myself and others of the I.W.M.A. urging us to join hands with them and show a united front; but the appeal to give up a purely socialistic organisation for one that outwardly seemed only democratic did not prevail, until H. M. Hyndman

came down to us in Manchester and explained that the new organisation was founded on Marxian principles, and, upon the change of name to the Social Democratic Federation and the issue of a weekly newspaper, *Justice*, in January, 1884, and a monthly magazine, *To-Day*, I joined the Federation, being the first member from the North of England to accept this new economic religion. It did not take me long to convert some of my late Secularist comrades, and with this small nucleus I organised the Salford Branch of the Social Democratic Federation in 1884, and was its secretary for several years.

During this period I first became acquainted with John Burns. He came to Manchester in search of work, being then an unemployed mechanic, and as he was a member of the Social Democratic Federation, I invited him to speak at our open-air meetings in Stevenson Square. Afterwards I and another comrade took him to see the slums of Manchester. He stayed with us but a few days, and unable to find work, made his way to London, where he at once took up the cause of the dockers, which resulted in the great dock strike of London, and became famous as "the man with the red flag." His election as a London County Councillor and Member of Parliament, the renunciation of his socialistic opinions and ultimate acceptance of the Presidency of the Local Government Board, with a seat in the Cabinet, are matters of history.

We carried on an active propagandism, not only at

our branch meetings, but in the open air, and at all political gatherings, compelling attention to our doctrines, fully assured that Socialism was the panacea for all the evils that disturbed modern society.

During this period I might mention what I think was a unique Election; we ran one of our comrades, George Smart, who was out of work, as a candidate for the Salford School Board. I was his election agent, and wrote his "address to the electors"; and we won the election at a cost of only £1 5s.; and defeated the ex-mayor of Salford, whose election expenses amounted to about £60.

Following this came the "academic" Fabian Society. I felt that permeation was a kind of warfare just suited to my capacity. I saw infinite possibilities of sending doses of socialistic tracts to the Press and public writers and speakers. I remember noticing the *nom de plume* of a new writer in the *Sunday Chronicle*; he had a remarkably facile pen, and his matter was considerably above that of the ordinary journalist; it seemed to me to be something between that of a Carlyle and an Emerson. His style quite captivated us, but we felt that he had not yet got his message. His sermons to the working class lacked definiteness, and so we judiciously plied him with Fabian tracts, and in a few weeks had the great satisfaction of beholding the conversion of "Nunquam" to Socialism.

Robert Blatchford soon came out in active

propaganda, and in 1890 became the President of the Manchester Fabian Society (of which I was the Secretary), and by his powerful advocacy, soon established a large following in Manchester and the surrounding towns.

This propagation of Socialism in the columns of the *Sunday Chronicle* did not, however, suit the Tory proprietor, who ordered him to cease such writings—"Nunquam" characteristically replying that *was* the only reason why he wrote for the *Chronicle* to propagate Socialism. I remember the very day the rupture occurred. The Electrical Trades Union was holding a meeting in St. James' Hall, Manchester, and Robert Blatchford told the meeting of his dismissal from the *Sunday Chronicle*; the whole assembly rose to their feet and cried, "Start another paper." This was not so easy; but after a few weeks of temporary work on the *Workman's Times*, at a little gathering of nearly the whole of the staff of the *Chronicle* at the Garrick Club—at which I was privileged to be present—"Nunquam" gave us the outlines of the future journal, and said: "Boys, what do you think of *The Clarion* as the title of the new paper?" It was welcomed with acclamation, and soon afterwards the *Clarion* appeared in print, with nearly the whole of the *Chronicle* staff as writers, the first number being published December 12th, 1891.

It spoke well for the earnest zeal of this little

company of reformers that they willingly renounced a prosperous journal, with comfortable salaries, rather than compromise their principles, and the outlook of having to make a living upon a Socialist weekly paper was anything but inviting. The struggle to maintain the paper is a story that redounds to the credit of this plucky little band of writers and reformers, at first without the usual advertisements, but eventually this had to give way, and although they never condescended to permit questionable advertisements, they were compelled to fall in with modern methods of publishing, and now the *Clarion* can boast a circulation of over 80,000 copies per week.

It was at a May Day Demonstration—I think, in 1892—organised by the Fabian Society and the Trades Unions, that we were enabled to see to what extent the spread of Socialism had permeated the working classes of Manchester and Salford. The immense gathering at Alexandra Park was a great surprise to us all. We wondered what it all meant. Blatchford said significantly, “It is the Social Revolution!” I said, “Yes, it wants organising”; and next day I received an invitation to attend the *Clarion* office, and was one of the seven men who formed the Independent Labour Party, seconding Robert Blatchford’s proposal of the now famous “fourth clause,” which prohibited members from voting or helping in any way the candidates of the other political parties. In 1894 I became the

General Secretary of the Manchester and Salford Independent Labour Party.

Amongst other activities I was engaged in at that time, I wrote a series of short biographies of our comrades in the columns of the *Workman's Times*, including R. Blatchford, John Burns, G. Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, Tom Mann, and Ben Tillett; also articles in the *Labour World* and *Municipal Reformer*, and in the *Clarion* I wrote the column of "Foreign Notes" during its early years. I was also used to furnish facts and figures about the sweating in the shirt trade for the *Clarion*, being interviewed as Mrs. Drudge for several articles on "The Song of the Shirt." This so roused public attention that I was induced to attempt to organise the women shirt makers, and became the manager of a Trade Union Shirt Co., introducing for the first time in England the "trade union label." This effort to make shirts upon a humane wage was soon doomed to failure, the sympathy of those who were roused to indignation at the white slavery in their own city did not resolve itself into the practical shape of purchasing their garments from us, and the only result to myself was the loss of my own little bit of spare cash, and a threat of dismissal from my employers if I did not abandon the scheme.

Thus my activities continued, full of the one thought—the amelioration of the social condition of the people. For twenty years I had continued in this vein of thought, varying my ideals as the

humour took me. Now it was Positivism and the Religion of Humanity; then Secularism, with its utilitarian morality; then Egoism and its self-centred life; Epicureanism and its searches for the higher pleasures of life: and now Materialism and its culture of pure reason, or Socialism and its dream of equality.

All these panaceas were tried, and yet my life seemed meaningless. I wondered what I was here for, and there seemed no answer. Life appeared to be only a farce, and we—compulsory players. Why should we build up an edifice of intellectuality, which would crumble away without a moment's warning? What were all our boasted Science, Philosophy, Art, and Literature? Really they were vanity and nothing more. Yet I could not abandon them. There seemed to be some purpose in it all, but strive as I would I could not fathom it. Life was an enigma to me.

## CHAPTER II

### AMERICAN EXPERIENCES

WHILST I was at the height of my rebellion against God; whilst consorting with Anarchists, and Egoists, and disciples of Nietzsche, glorying in the most blasphemous extravagancies against Christ and the Christian faith, refusing to allow my children to be baptised, or have any religious education, or come under any Christian influence whatever, I was appointed by my employers, Messrs. Rylands and Sons, Ltd., Manchester, to undertake a long journey on business, about 16,000 miles. This was a remarkable circumstance that I, a *clerk*, should be given this task of representing one of the largest firms in the world, having had no previous experience as a traveller, when there were fifty other home travellers eager and capable of undertaking the work.

I sailed from Southampton on March 17th, 1900, by s.s. "New York," arriving at Cherbourg at four o'clock, and, after taking a few passengers on board and releasing ourselves of a few stowaways, we sailed across the Atlantic. We had no sooner got well out to sea than a stiff breeze sprang up which



soon developed into a storm, and although the "New York" was strongly built, having been the cruiser "Harvard" in the late Spanish-American war, she got severely tossed about, all passengers were kept below, hatches were fastened down, and we were soon experiencing the discomforts of *mal de mer*. Our steam steering-gear broke, and the crew were put to use the hand steering-gear. So rough was it that another vessel lay to for several hours, noticing that we were in distress; but our captain would not hail her, nor give any indication that we needed assistance. Eventually the engineers repaired the steering-gear, and the weather smoothed down, and we reached New York Harbour on March 24th, without any other mishap.

Spending a week in New York, I then moved on to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the Capital City of Washington. I was greatly impressed by this beautiful city with the Capitol and White House, the residence of the President of the United States; then on to New Haven, Providence, and Boston, where I stayed a few days; then on to Worcester, Springfield, and Albany, the Capital of New York State. From there I journeyed to Utica, Oneida, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo, and on Easter Monday spent the day viewing the wonderful Niagara Falls; thence on to Pittsburg—the first American city that resembled my own native, smoky city of Manchester—from there to Cleveland, and, to vary my journey, I took the steamer across Lake

Erie to Detroit, and thence proceeded by way of Owosso, Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo to Chicago. Here I stayed a week and saw something of the cosmopolitan character of these Western cities, with all their vice and wickedness; thence to Dubuque and Milwaukee, "where the beer comes from," and on to the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, afterwards to Des Moines, a prohibition town where a glass of lager beer could not be obtained for love or money, but any quantity of Kentucky Rye Whiskey, a vile poisonous concoction, could be had for the asking, proving how differently they do these things in the States.

Going further south, I visited Omaha, St. Joseph, and Kansas City, and arrived at Denver, May 10th. After a few days I took train *via* the Rio Grande Railway, and ascended the famous Rocky Mountains and arrived at Salt Lake City. This is one of the finest cities in the world, with its splendid avenues and streets, all set out in beautiful order, with the amazing perspective of the snow-capped Rockies in the distance, "where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile." Here we have the Mormons and the Yankees in opposing forces, or, as they are called by others, the Saints and the Philistines. To visit the relics of the golden days of Mormonism in the shape of the mansions of the favourite wives of Brigham Young and other interesting sights, such as the Tabernacle, and the Zion Co-operative Stores, gives a very clear impression of the far-reaching

influence of this new religion upon the people of the West. The great Salt Lake, with its wonderful stretch of briny water, where neither fish nor bird is found near to its precincts, and where the specific gravity of its waters prevents the bathers from sinking, all add to its novelty as one of the wonders of the world. Then I crossed the desert to Ogden; and Portland, in Oregon, brought me to the Pacific Coast, where I found quite a crowd of miners preparing for their journey to the gold-fields of Klondike. They invited me to join them, assuring me that I should make my "pile" far quicker than as a "drummer."

From Portland, Oregon, I journeyed to California, calling at the Capital City Sacramento, with its beautiful oriental gardens of tropical plants, where, I believe, flowers reach perfection as in no other spot on earth, the fields are covered with brilliant masses of wild flowers, wild roses, lupines, geraniums, and in places the perspective was painted an intense yellow with the Californian poppies. Arriving at Oakland, our train was taken on board a ferry-boat, and, after crossing the bay in that fashion, we landed at San Francisco, where I stayed a week, visiting Chinatown, with its doss-houses, theatres, and restaurants, all run in Chinese fashion, and its 50,000 Chinamen living in domiciles like cellars underneath their shops. Guides take you to see the sights, the opium dens, etc., etc. From 'Frisco I went to San José and then on to

Los Angeles. Here I felt I could lay down my burden and rest awhile, for if there is an earthly paradise it is in this city of roses and fruits and equable climate. However, after enjoying several days here, I commenced a long journey through the length of California, intending to go to Texas. We were delayed eight hours by a train wreck at a place called Willcox in the wilds of Arizona; here we came in direct touch with the cowboys and cattle ranches. Then on through New Mexico, where I experienced a specimen of American officialism, for whilst the train was speeding through this wild district, in the middle of the night, I was awakened by a State official asking where I had come from. Upon telling him I was from 'Frisco he politely informed me that I could go no further; as a sanitary inspector of the State of Texas, it was his duty to stop all passengers from entering that State who had come from California, owing to the fact that bubonic plague was rife in San Francisco. In vain did I appeal to him to examine me if I had any indications of that deadly disease. He was adamant, the train was stopped and I thrown out bag and baggage, marooned in a desert at one o'clock in the morning, and had to wait all next day, being Sunday, until a train going back to New Mexico picked me up, and then, to get to New Orleans I had to take a circuitous route of over 2,000 miles, at an extra cost of 52 dollars. Such is the condition where State jealousies are rampant.

Thus I arrived at New Orleans, the chief cotton mart of the world, peopled mainly with negroes and a large population of French and Spanish Roman Catholics, who give the place quite a continental tone. Then on to Kansas City again, Memphis and St. Louis. At this last city I witnessed the great Tramway Strike, where the whole town was in a state of siege. Armed police were parading the streets, and many conflicts took place in which scores of people were shot. Then on to Louisville, Kentucky and Tennessee, Cincinnati, Columbus, Harrisburg, and New York, and across to England again.

## CHAPTER III

### CONVERSION

WHAT, then, was the result of this experience to me? Was it by mere accident that I was allowed to undertake this journey? No! I am fully convinced that it was God's merciful providence that ordained this as His method of drawing me to Himself, with the ever unfolding panorama that came before me as I was travelling over those thousands of miles, coming into contact with all the races of mankind, black, red, yellow, and white-skinned people. Now on the wild prairies of the West, then across the wonderful awe-inspiring cañons of the Colorado, up 15,000 feet on the snow-capped Rockies, across sandy deserts for hundreds of miles, amongst the Red Indians of New Mexico, mixing with the cowboys of Arizona, into the beautiful scenes of California; then the sights of Chinatown, with its 50,000 Chinese, and then amongst the negroes in their log cabins.

All this had its deep influence upon my mind unconsciously, and it eventually resulted in the revelation of God to me as a Personal Being, knowing and loving the creatures He had made. The hour of the

revelation drew nigh. I was in the railway car, slowly climbing the wonderful Rocky Mountains. We had reached an altitude of 15,000 feet above the sea-level, an elevation to which the train had been gradually mounting, and here a magnificent prospect of indescribable grandeur burst upon our view; the sun, which shone brilliantly in that clear atmosphere, lighted up the snow to a whiteness that was dazzling. We had left Colorado 90 degrees in the shade, and here we were passing among snow-capped pinnacles, where eagles were sweeping past as the train slowly laboured up the heights: deep abysses, chasms, and ravines surrounded us, millions of pine and fir trees were growing on the mountain sides: and thousands of feet far down below, valleys, clothed with the richest verdure, added beauty to the scene.

The panorama, to a city man brought up amidst the grimy bricks and mortar of Manchester, was overwhelming. Here I beheld a wonderful cataclysm of nature, the "Royal Gorge," some three miles deep, which lay on one side of the rails over which we were passing, and we were now on the edge of a precipice, and again mounting up to another peak until we reached the highest point. At this altitude the train climbed so slowly that all the passengers left the car, preferring to walk, and I was alone. I sat in a reverie gazing at the spectacle, whilst I began instinctively feeling about, so to speak, in my mind for an explanation of these wonders. The first defined thought was, "Surely all this is not the result

of fortuitous circumstances, blind chance, matter and force, or," as we glibly say "a fortuitous concourse of atoms." Something else than the atomic theory must account for all these wonders. Could "evolution" explain it at all? Evolution can give a plausible case to us whilst we are studying nature in our chamber amongst our books, but immediate contact with nature herself, in all her rugged beauty, speaks to us of the existence of a Power higher than ourselves.

I found my mind was insensibly undergoing a change; an irresistible feeling of wonder, awe, and reverence crept into my thoughts. I had ever been an honest seeker after truth, and the thought suddenly flashed into my mind, "Might I, after all, have been mistaken?" I felt I must face this question. I fell upon my knees and cried "Oh God, if Thou dost exist; reveal Thyself." I asked for *light*, and it came like a flood! The whole car seemed full of light, it was the veil torn off from my mind by the Spirit of God, and I capitulated without a struggle. I, who had resisted so long His gracious pleadings, who had rebelled against His authority so many years, was at last brought into submission. I arose from my knees filled with joy, saying "GOD IS!" There had come to me, "The true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John i. 9).

There could have been no "association of ideas," as some would say, to account for this, for as I fell



on my knees, I had in my hand one of Ingersoll's books which I had been reading. The *sudden* change simply meant that the Spirit of God had come into my life, in spite of my resistance, without my seeking, and without the help of man or books, and I knew that I beheld the glory of *God* and *His* wondrous works!

Oh, what a revelation! What a revolution of ideas! What joy and peace to know the unfathomable love of God! Was I dreaming, or ill with the fever? Nay, neither, I never felt better in health than at that moment. *It was my first realization of the personal presence of God.*

When I reached home I told my infidel friends that I believed in God. Some tried to laugh it out of me, others said I was ill, or that my nerves had been shattered by the long journey; but they soon found it was deeper than that, that there was more in it than they had reckoned upon, and one by one they left me severely alone, and avoided me as little less than bereft of my senses.

Some months passed, when I began to get uneasy about my past life. I felt that I had some sins to account for. I felt that I had led an awful blasphemous life, and wondered whether I had committed the unpardonable sin. My condition got worse. I had sleepless nights, my thoughts haunted me during the day so that I could think of nothing but the twenty years of service in sin. I dared not mention the matter to anyone, and my

torture became so great that I thought I must die if it continued much longer. At last the thought occurred to me to buy a Bible and see what the Word of God had to say about my condition. I thereupon purchased a Bible, and every evening, sending my wife to bed, I sat up and pored over the Scriptures to see if there was any hope held out for such a great sinner as I felt I was. I commenced at Genesis and continued through the whole of the Old Testament without being helped, but rather made more desperate, as I came upon the denunciations and the punishments to be awarded to those who blasphemed the Name of the Lord. But I persevered, as a desperate man, until I came to that wonderful text in the New Testament: "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT *WHOSOEVER* BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE" (John iii. 16).

Here, now, was something that met my case! *Whosoever* meant anybody, and that included me; there were no conditions but belief, and I truly and sincerely believed that Jesus Christ died for sinners, and I, being one of the chief of them, knew He died for me. In a few days after this, the full import of the finished work of Christ came into my heart and mind, and I spontaneously testified to my friends the joyful news that I was a pardoned sinner, that all my past was nailed to the Cross of Christ, and that God had under-

taken, for His sake, to remember my sins no more.

The new life brought with it not only great joy and peace, but an earnest desire to spread the good news to others. Having tasted that the Lord was good, I yearned to let other blind souls know this great joy; but I soon find out to my surprise that they did not want to know about this "good thing of God." They did not wish to be disturbed, they were quite comfortable in their sin and blindness. I marvelled greatly that they could spurn such love, that the blessed news of Christ's love to sinful men should meet with such a cold response; but I remembered my own sad case; how blind and perverse I had been for twenty years, and I wondered why He had chosen me. I liked to linger on this joyful fact, that He not only had given Himself a ransom for my many sins, as He has done for those of every man, but He had called me with His own gentle voice, and I heard Him, and came to Him, and He said, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Such thoughts did truly awaken in me the most loyal and loving impulses. I was deeply concerned about the more than loss of those twenty years in the service of Satan, and earnestly desired to redeem the time that was left to me.

I sought the Lord much in prayer, and asked what He would have me do. As my reasonable

service I presented my body a living sacrifice to God. I consecrated all my moments to Him, who had done so much for me, and sought the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CALL TO SERVICE

**A**LTHOUGH I continued at my employment under Messrs. Rylands and Sons, Limited, Manchester, the desire grew stronger that I might be used of God to spread the knowledge of His love and salvation, and to witness to my fellow-creatures of the wondrous transformation that had taken place in my life. One of the first Christian books that I came across was a second-hand copy of "The Lord's dealings with George Müller." How I praise God for this book; it revealed to me the Living God, the faithful Jehovah, the wonder-working Saviour; it taught me to love and obey the Bible as the very Word of God. I fed upon it daily and imbibed its wonderful spirit of prayer and faith, and longed to put into practice this life of trust.

I next heard of the Keswick Convention and its teachings on the Higher Spiritual Life, and longed to be present at those gatherings of the saints in that picturesque little town amongst the Cumberland Lakes. As the time of the Convention approached I felt impelled to go, and so in the summer of 1903 I arranged to take my holidays for that occasion,

I attended most of the meetings in the Tents and received much blessing from the instruction given. At the Missionary meeting held on the Saturday I was deeply impressed by the closing address given by Mrs. Howard Taylor, a missionary from China, who spoke of an interesting experience she had during her wedding journey, when she and her husband travelled through a district in China containing over ten millions of people. At an inn they met a society of about forty women, who were banded together to seek the true God. How glad she was to be able to tell them how they might know the true and living God, and what a joy and privilege to reveal Jesus as the Saviour to them. The chief women of that society said, "You are not going away, are you? If you go away, how can we find the road to heaven?" "The cry of those hearts," continued Mrs. Taylor, "has never left me. Dear friends," she said, "I have never been back there again. Would you not like to go there for Christ and win those souls?" Then she pleaded with that vast congregation to leave their comfortable homes and sacrifice something for the sake of those millions of heathen who know nothing of the Saviour who died to redeem them from their sins and misery. The appeal went right home to many hearts that afternoon, and to mine especially, for I found myself along with many others solemnly standing up in the meeting, offering myself to the Lord Jesus Christ for service in the foreign field.

The enemy was not long in telling me what a fool I was to do such a thing. "How absurd for a married man with three children to offer for such service," and then, "What folly to abandon a good situation, and after thirty years' labour in striving for the position, to give it up at the moment of success," and such thoughts—but to no purpose, I felt I had done the right thing to offer *myself* to the Lord and Master of my life.

On the following day, another crisis in my spiritual life occurred. In spite of the fact that all my friends of the little party amongst whom I was staying were going to a special meeting, I felt impelled to go and hear a lady speak in the Wesleyan Chapel. It was a meeting held by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, and her theme was, "The Word of the Cross to every tongue and people and nation." I was riveted by the message; never before had I heard of the wondrous power of the Cross; the veil was taken from Calvary and I caught a glimpse of its Divine purpose. The intense personality of the speaker drew me to her as I instinctively felt I was in the presence of one of God's chosen teachers. I eagerly drank in all that she poured out, and my cup was full when I heard the story of how she had been to India, called of God, to give the message for a little booklet that was to be printed on some wonderful machines, and so scatter the message of the Cross "to every tongue, and people, and nation."

After the meeting I told the speaker that this was

the very thing that God had been showing me, that the people needed the Word of God, they were dying for lack of His Word, and that I would like to distribute some of those booklets in Manchester. She graciously told me to write to her again in a month's time, meanwhile to wait upon the Lord and ask His counsel about it. This I did very earnestly. I remember going every dinner-hour to a quiet little corner in the Manchester Cathedral and waiting upon God to reveal His will to me. The burden of my prayer was: "What wilt Thou have me to do, Lord?" and I soon found that the impression deepened as week after week I continued with the one plea. I then wrote Mrs. Penn-Lewis saying I felt that God would have me do something in connection with the scattering of the message of the Cross. I had not long to wait, for one evening I received a letter from this lady, asking if I were willing to go out to India.

Here then came the test. I had offered myself to the Lord at Keswick for foreign service, and now came the trial of my faith. As I read the letter, my whole being throbbed with great joy, and I said with great rapture, "Yes, Lord, I will go anywhere for Thee," and my wife cheerfully and lovingly agreed to my going, so that there could be no doubt it was of God. The most remarkable thing about it was, that Dr. Rudisill in India had been writing to Mrs. Penn-Lewis that he must have some help in connection with the production of these Bible



Booklets, and that he wanted, not an ordinary Missionary, but one who had received a business education, to help him in the Mission Printing Press. At the very time that he was feeling the need of a helper, God was indeed preparing such an one for that purpose.

I therefore resigned my position at Messrs. Rylands & Sons, where I had been employed, from boyhood up to manhood, for thirty years, and trusted myself to the Living God. In faith I launched out, and in answer to prayer the Lord inclined the hearts of the late Rev. Francis Paynter and Mrs. Paynter to meet the entire expenses of outfit and passage to Madras; and on January 8th, 1904, I sailed for India. Thus we see the faithfulness of God; within six months of offering myself as a Missionary at the Keswick Convention, I was on my way to the foreign field. How quickly He will work if we are really in earnest!

## CHAPTER V

### MISSION LIFE IN INDIA

THE voyage to India by the s.s. "Marmora" was uneventful but deeply interesting to me, as the first glimpse of the East came into view on our arrival at Port Said. What a sight it was to see this big steamer coaling by night. The flaming torches, the dusky figures, the coloured lights on the ships, the small boats moving silently, each with a firefly on its nose, the town lamps, the revolving rays of the lighthouse, and over all the moonrise and canopy of star-spangles make a strange contrast to the homeland.

The change from West to East grows more marked as we slowly steam our way through the Suez Canal and into the Red Sea, giving a call at Aden, and then out into the Indian Ocean. The fine approach to Bombay, with its peculiar and distinctive hills, is most striking, and fills the eye, but upon landing one finds indeed a vast change from the countries of the West: the wealth of colour in the crowded streets, the poor half-starved oxen in the carts laden with cotton and merchandise, the stunted buffaloes moving so deliberately through the thorough-

fares, the magnificent vegetation along the roads, the numerous fine public buildings and statues, all so well placed and to be seen from many points of view, the deep red afterglow, like a furnace, with the moon and stars glittering through it, the new moon resting on its back as it does in these lazy latitudes, the drives under fine avenues of banyan trees, which would quickly make an impassable forest if their long feelers were not cut, for they hang straight down like fishing nets put to dry.

The journey from Bombay to Madras takes two days by train, and is in some places very wild, through jungles abounding in wild animals (24,230 people killed in one year). I first went to Bangalore in Southern India to attend a Missionary Conference, and had not been there many hours before I was booked to deliver an address at the L.M.S. Hall. This was my first witness for Christ to a native audience. It was a strange sight to see for the first time a hall full of dark-skinned students, in all kinds of coloured garments, not relieved by a single white face. They listened very eagerly and attentively as I told them the story of my conversion from Atheism to Christ. I invited their questions at the close of the address, and many availed themselves of the opportunity, asking strange questions, all in English, as they were University students, Brahmans, Mohammedans, and Theosophists. I invited any that desired further information to meet me in the morning at my bungalow where I was staying.

A young educated Brahman, who had just taken his degree at the Madras University, and who was studying law, having been drawn to Theosophy by Mrs. Annie Besant, accepted my invitation and called upon me. I received him cordially and spent an earnest hour with him, giving him my personal experience of the power of Christ within to keep from the dominion of sin. He came to oppose Christianity, and had brought a paper full of questions to ask me, but he acknowledged that he had never seen it in that light before, and had no need to use his paper of questions as they had been fully answered.

The Y.M.C.A. secretary then captured me for a large public meeting in the Mayo Hall, attended by missionaries, civilians, and some of the garrison stationed in that city. Thus early I witnessed to the saving power of Christ.

Upon my arrival in Madras I soon found my time fully occupied with the work of issuing the Bible Booklets—"The Word of the Cross," the object for which I had come specially to India, and unto which I believed, I had been specially chosen and called by the grace of God. Not many months elapsed when Dr. Rudisill, having been called suddenly home to America on Mission business, left me in charge of the Printing Press as manager. I found myself in charge of 200 native employees, pastor of a native church, superintendent of a native boys' orphanage, manager of six Hindu schools, in charge

of sixteen native pastors, teachers, evangelists, and Bible-women; with the oversight of three circuits of the Methodist Episcopal Mission, one of which, consisting of 200 villages out in the jungle, was in virgin territory, 134 miles south of Madras; and also taking my share on the "plan" as a preacher at the English Church and two Eurasian chapels in Madras.

In this way I soon became familiar with all the work connected with a great mission, and probably learned more in the three years than many a missionary does in ten years. As an instance of the life of an itinerating evangelist, I cull the following from my journal, dated August 6th, 1904.

Went with Matthew, my native evangelist, on a tour through the villages comprising the new circuit opened by Dr. Rudisill near Pondicherry. We left Madras by the 6 o'clock train, and arrived at Kanda-mangalam about 1.30 p.m. At this station all arrivals are searched for dutiable articles, as it is on the border of French territory. The native inspector, an educated Hindu, was greatly interested to know our mission, he took us to the house of the female inspector, a Eurasian, who, he said, would be glad to receive us. We were glad to go as we wished to have our "tiffin." We found that she was a Christian, and had attended our church at Pudapet, and another lady friend was there on a visit. We had a time of prayer and praise, and a long talk with the native inspector, who is deeply interested in

Christianity, but cannot yet break away from Hinduism. Whilst talking with him, the Eurasian chief inspector, Sutie, came in, and I asked if he belonged to Christ. He replied that no one in his position could maintain the Christian life, it was so difficult. I soon pointed out that Jesus Christ was not only able to save but to keep to the uttermost. He was deeply impressed and convicted. I asked if he wished to become a Christian, and he said he did indeed, so we knelt down and he yielded himself to the Saviour. He became a changed man and lived a consistent Christian life to the end, which came a few months before I left India; he was thrown from his horse and kicked to death by the animal. I attended his funeral in Madras.

We hired a bullock, with two bullocks yoked, and started on our journey, visiting the following villages: Varudarajahparam, Papusamthuram, Kandasasidi, Valuthour, Kandpaka, Iamgutupolam, Parakollam, Pillaypollyam. Most of the villages are newly opened, never having been visited by a missionary. Our visits were received in a most friendly manner, even by Brahmans. As soon as our party arrived in a village, we were surrounded by the whole body of inhabitants, who clamoured to know who I was, the white "Doray" (Master). We gave each a Bible booklet—"Word of the Cross"—in their native language, Tamil, and those who could read gathered a group around them whilst it was read aloud to them. Many asked questions, and I spoke to them,

while Matthew interpreted. We gave special attention to the village school, and spoke to the scholars and schoolmaster. At meal times we spread our tablecloth in the centre of the village, and all work was suspended to watch the white man feed ; great interest was centred in the preparation of our coffee by the aid of the spirit lamp, and every article of food was inspected and discussed. At one Mohammedan village I gave a few children a biscuit each with a little jam on, which called forth the remarks from the men, " Why was Doray so good to give away his food ? " " What made Doray so good ? ' This gave me an opportunity to preach, and so, through Matthew, I explained that it was because of the teaching of Yasa Kristu (Jesus Christ), and after our meal we gave them the Gospel of Christ's redeeming love to mankind, which was so well received that the head man of the village begged of us to stay with them for several days, and it was with much regret that we could not, but we told them we should give them many more visits.

We continued our itinerary through many villages, with varying results, some sympathetic, others indifferent, but none hostile, until darkness set in, and we wished to reach a village where we might camp for the night, as it was dangerous to sleep out in the jungle because of wild animals. Whilst we were jolting along the deep ruts of the bad roads in the black darkness, all at once I felt water, and found that we were crossing a river of considerable

width. The drivers were yelling and beating the bullocks, and we got fast in the middle, but eventually landed safely across, and, after having been eight hours without food, we halted at the entrance to a village and prepared our meal. Then the bullock cart was made into a bed for myself, whilst the others slept around outside. Just as I was nodding off to sleep, very tired, a loud drumming of a tom-tom awoke me. Then I again tried, but was awakened by a downpour of rain, but eventually I got a little sleep.

Next morning all the village was out to inspect and question us. We gave them all copies of the Bible Booklet in Tamil, and preached the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. After our breakfast we again continued our journey. Twelve miles from Pondicherry the road was one of the most beautiful that I have ever seen, a high road intersected by villages of different castes, potters and farmers. The Banyan trees were some of the finest in India, planted symmetrically in avenues, also the palms and bamboos were luxuriant. Along this high road moves a constant stream of villagers, going and coming, and to every person we met we gave a Bible Booklet, and now and again we stopped the bullock cart and spoke to the crowd that followed us. Our drivers, who were Mohammedans, got quite interested in our work, and whenever a man or woman declined our Booklets the drivers took pains to tell them that it would do them good to



receive our books and read them. We found many so timid that they were afraid to come near us, and when we approached them they ran away in great fear. At these times our drivers shouted after them not to be afraid of us, we would do them good.

In connection with the scattering of these Booklets, I am deeply convinced that if the great Missionary Societies knew the value of this method of evangelising the villages by sowing the seed, which is the Word of God, they would be wise to adopt this plan. India is purely a land of villages where the millions live, and here is an opportunity of giving the essence of the Gospel of Christ in a little book which has been translated and printed in eighty different languages. The novelty of the Booklet is always more attractive than a tract, and, as it is a miniature Bible, it is eagerly accepted by the people, it can be hidden in the waistband and taken out to read by those who are secret disciples and afraid of the Brahmans, priests, and headmen, whereas the ordinary native Bibles and Testaments are too bulky to be carried about without being observed, and so this little book, containing as it does all the essential portions of the Gospel of Christ's redeeming love, is able to lead men and women to salvation. May God lead His servants to use this little messenger not only in India, China, and Africa, but to the uttermost parts of the earth.

On Sunday afternoon we arrived at Pondicherry,

and went to the evening service of the only Protestant English Church in that French settlement. It is a small S.P.G. church, with about twenty European and Eurasian worshippers. The lay preachers told me that they despaired of doing anything in that city, owing to the persecution from the Roman Catholics. I then discovered that there was an English lady missionary labouring in the city, and soon found Miss Jessie Porter, a brave little woman, struggling against great odds to keep the standard of the Cross flying in that dark Romish city, though constantly persecuted by both priests and Hindus. Attached to no Missionary Society, she is living in entire dependence upon God for her supplies. May God move many hearts to help on this good work.

As we finished the day's work and were resting, Matthew and I opened our hearts to each other in prayer and praise, and made the solitude sweet, and when he asked me to explain to him what "full surrender" meant, I praised God for the opportunity of unfolding to him the pathway of the Cross, the power of Christ's resurrection, fellowship with His sufferings, and being made conformable to His death, and as I spoke as I had never spoken before of Him who had trodden that lonely path, and as we fell asleep, we felt that Jesus had indeed been in our midst that evening.

To give a glimpse into heathendom I recall a visit of a fellow-missionary to my bungalow one evening.

He told me to come quietly out and follow him, as they were going to see the great Mylapore Festival. It is a sight which not many white people have had the privilege of seeing, as it takes place late at night and is only for heathens. But as we were known to a friendly Rajah, he undertook to let us occupy the balcony of his residence, and thus see the fête without being observed ourselves. We drove through throngs of people all wending their way to the temple—there were about a million people attending this festival. We arrived too late to see the procession of the gods (62 in number), but we saw the great car which carried the great god, and the old elephant which had been in the temple service for 75 years—poor old beast, he too, like the priests, had the sign of Vishnu painted on his forehead. We reached the outer court of the large temple, but the crowd was so dense that we could get no further. The noise was terrific, and, together with the screaming music and the coloured lights that kept burning so vividly, it all reminded one of the Crystal Palace fireworks.

Whilst we were waiting they brought along the god Parthasarvady, and everyone (except us) made a "puja" to it. Oh, how sickening was the sight to see thousands of intelligent beings bowing down to a wooden image dressed up in silks and decorated with costly jewels and precious stones, and carried by the priests. Other priests held a costly bejewelled umbrella over it, reminding me of the pictures of Belshazzar's feast. The open temple, its many

decorated pillars, its gorgeously painted ceilings tinged with a lurid red light kept always burning were a sight for a lifetime. No pen could describe it, nor painter do justice to such a scene. It was hell rehearsed, and we felt like Dante in his visit to the infernal regions.

We had many a talk with the people, some considered that we had no right to come and gaze upon their gods out of curiosity, and I have no doubt that these same people would not have hesitated to have sacrificed us to some of their deities had not the power of the British been too much dreaded. Yet in many native states even this does not prevent fanatics from using violence towards strangers.

Others were more kindly disposed, and looked pityingly upon us. The women seemed terrified as they held up their hands, or their babies, as the god was carried around. The utter ignorance of these women cannot be conceived, and it is part of the religion to keep them under the spell of the excitement, noise, and glare. Their whole life is one of extreme seclusion. They never leave the house except at these times of "puja," and then are thrust into this pandemonium.

We left with heavy hearts, feeling how helpless we were amongst such satanic work. Surely devilish ingenuity reaches its limit at these festivals. These orgies, bestialities, and fanaticism show us to what depths the human being can descend. Would any "higher critic" doubt the existence of a personal

devil after such a sight as that? Nay, it would knock all his theories to pieces by its overwhelming testimony that these poor people are surely possessed by him.

For three years we continued producing the Bible Booklets in the native press in Madras, scattering them to every quarter of the globe. About *eight million* copies were printed in about sixty different languages in this brief space of time. But when changes took place in the management of the Press I returned to the homeland, and now at the time of issuing this "romance" of the grace of God to sinners I am acting as secretary for the issue of the Bible Booklets in conjunction with others in Great Britain and other parts of the world. We believe that this booklet is—as an evangelist has said—"destined to cover the earth." Already since my return to England the output of the Bible Booklets has increased to over *ten million* copies, and it has been translated into over *eighty* different languages, and translations are still coming in from all parts of the field, indicating that it is indeed the purpose of God that this little Booklet must be issued in all the languages into which the whole Bible has been translated by the indefatigable labours of the various Bible Societies.

The message of the Booklet fills my heart. It is the story of the love of God to dying men shown in the giving of His Son to die for them and in their stead upon a Cross of shame, and proclaims not only

reconciliation with God through the blood of the Cross, but deliverance from the *power* of sin by the believer's fellowship with the Lord upon His Cross, through which He is "crucified to the world" and the world "crucified unto Him."

This message of the Cross is the vital need of the present hour, when men are turning to vain philosophies and human wisdom for consolation. It must be proclaimed throughout the world, for it is the only message of hope for mankind. The little Booklet is God's method of sending out this vital message quickly; *it is a Telegraphic Message, and must be delivered immediately*, and by the million, so that it may be scattered, as leaves of autumn, to the four quarters of the globe.

Will *you*, dear reader, ask God if He would have you become a Messenger of the Cross, and thus cooperate with Him in carrying the "glad tidings" to some weary and perplexed soul? \*

\* A sample copy of the "Word of the Cross" Bible Booklet will be gladly sent to anyone applying to the Author, Bible Booklet House, 118, Evington Road, Leicester,

## CHAPTER VI

### NEW LIGHT ON OLD PROBLEMS

THE new life in Christ brought with it new light on all subjects. I soon found that the Spirit of God was a wonderful teacher. He taught me that the Great Artificer of the Universe had not left His offspring without a knowledge of His plans and purposes both for the individual and for society, and that we need not seek for any system of society "made in Germany" or elsewhere; that the Son of God had come from the bosom of the Father with the special revelation of His will upon this as upon every other subject that relates to human conduct and welfare. I found that the eternal principles which should govern man were revealed by Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Word of God.

In the Sermon on the Mount, and in the Letters of the Apostles, were included all that was necessary for the welfare of mankind; but, alas! I found that neither the nominal followers of Christ nor the people of the world would have anything to do with them, and that these principles were a dead letter to all save a small and insignificant body of His disciples. I found that even in so-called Christian

England, the basis of the laws of the country was built upon the pagan jurisprudence of ancient Rome, and not upon Mosaic or Christian principles; and that it would have been considered the height of absurdity had any legislator, before introducing any Bill into Parliament, suggested the consultation of the New Testament point of view.

I closely examined the Bible account of the origin of man and his destiny, with the scientific or modern theory called evolution, and found that they were entirely opposed to each other, in spite of the attempts of certain theologians to harmonise them.

The Scriptures taught that man was made by the Creator in His own image, perfect, but fell from that estate. Evolution, on the other hand, supposes that we came from that mud-jelly named by Professor Huxley "protoplasm," and found at the bottom of the sea.

As the *Clarion* so refreshingly puts it: "The passage of our ancestors from the depths of the sea to the surface; their migration into freshwater; later, their terrestrial life; their perfected adaptation to an insectivorous diet; the advent of the seasons; their ascension into the trees where the fruits of higher plants now called them; their descent into the plain, rich with new kinds of food; and lastly, the defensive war against the giant carnivora—all these things have made us what we are!"

This direct antithesis between the Scriptures and Evolution shewed me clearly that, according to the



Bible, mankind's golden age was in the past, while that of evolution was supposed to be in the future. The whole of the Scriptures shewed that mankind, as a race, was going from bad to worse; that the progress of the world was not upward, but downward; that unless men accepted God's gracious salvation through Jesus Christ, they would end in destruction.

Evolution believed in the inherent power of man to save himself; that as he had come from a bad past, to which he never would return, the prospect was ever brightening, until he could create for himself a paradise on earth. It was therefore evident to me that, *either I had to give up the Bible or my Socialistic principles.*

The Bible taught me that I could never expect an earthly paradise, whilst sin, sorrow, and death reigned upon earth. We might improve the material surroundings and increase the wealth of the people, give greater facility for culture and ease to the working-class, but until sin, sorrow, and death were abolished, true and lasting happiness was impossible.

I saw the eternal truth in these hard facts of existence. I was not to be blinded by optimistic Socialist scribes full of the fervour of a new delusion. I knew how it was all worked up. I had bottomed the depths of Socialism by a study of the subject for nearly twenty years; I had felt all its hollowness; I knew it was a counterfeit of the devil. I saw that

what man needed, and what society needed, was a *Saviour*. No mere re-organisation of society would be remedial; a change of form is not a change of essence. This is where the Socialist reformer or revolutionist will fail in the ultimate; he works from outside in; he tries to create life by organisation. Jesus Christ is not the Great Reformer, but the Great Regenerator. He aims at a new social order, but it must come from a new social *life*, emanating from Himself—"Ye must be born again," is both applicable to the individual and to society.

I was, indeed, startled when I returned from India after three years' absence to find a new element imported into the teachings of Socialism. It was the so-called philosophy of "determinism." If I had repudiated the principles of Socialism as unscriptural, and therefore Utopian, I now loathed them, if they, indeed, included this detestable creed. It passed my comprehension that any writer who knew his fellow-man could promulgate such ignoble and debasing principles as that:—"*Everything that a man does is the very thing he cannot help doing.*" . . . "*No man is, under any circumstances, to be blamed for anything he may say or do.*" . . . "*Man is the creature of heredity and environment.*" . . . "*There is no such thing as sin.*" . . . "*Man is a product, a chemical product, nothing is more certain than that man, individually and collectively, has no free will, he has no choice, he is bound by the same laws in his actions as prevail in the mineral kingdom.*"

It reduced my old comrades from "Clarionettes" into nothing more than marionettes.

This propaganda of error I found was carried on with unceasing zeal on the part of my late friends, wrecking all faith not only in religion, but in ordinary morality. I have met cases where men have been staggered at the thought of attempting to be consistent with their newly-adopted principles. Their sympathies had been aroused by the stories of poverty and misery, and by the assurance that the adoption of these principles would be the panacea for all the evils that man is heir to, and thus their hearts had carried away their heads, and before they knew where they were, they were pledged to principles from which, when they attempted to put them into practice, their whole being revolted. I know of a man—a late comrade of mine—who, with his wife, were rudely awakened out of this fool's paradise by the too faithful adherence of their daughter to the loose moral tie of the new principle of "determinism," and the frantic efforts of deluded parents to reclaim their children from the Socialist clubs to which they had foolishly introduced them. The new philosophy was indeed coming home to roost. The fact was, I saw, that once the human mind launches out without guide or pilot upon the sea of "liberty," there is no limit to the excess, absurdity, and immorality into which it may not drift and ultimately wreck itself.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOCIALISM

SOCIALISM is a generic term, and may mean anything or nothing. No definition, at once true and precise, has ever been given, or ever will be given. As Professor Flint observes, "It is essentially indefinite and indeterminate. It is a tendency and movement towards an extreme. It may be very great or very small, it may manifest itself in the most diverse social and historical connections. It may assume, and has assumed, a multitude of forms. It may show itself merely in slight interferences with the liberties of very small classes of individuals; or it may demand that no individual shall be allowed to be a capitalist or a proprietor, a drawer of interest, or a taker of rent; or be entitled even to have a wife or children to himself."

It is something to conjure with. There are scores of schools of Socialism, and all promise some delusion or other. The one fact that appeals to the man in the street is that it will remove the undesirable restraint that present society imposes upon him, and he gladly accepts the promised change, not caring

much to what it will lead. This is no superficial or cynical criticism on my part, but the matured conviction of some twenty years of practical observation amongst democratic orators and their *clientèle*.

Belfort Bax, one of the earliest and frankest supporters of present day Socialism, says, "It not only implies the emancipation of mankind from economic thralldom, but also his emancipation from every other thralldom, from political thralldom, from intellectual and moral thralldom, from domestic thralldom. Hence all the existing forms of these things, founded as they are on convention and tradition, must necessarily go by the board." In a word, the whole system of present day civilisation, society, religion, and home must be turned upside down and abolished, without any idea as to what will supersede it, nothing but vague vapourings as to what will replace the civilisation which has taken centuries of toil and sacrifice, but *carte blanche* must be given to an irresponsible crowd of political experimenters, to gamble with the wealth of the nation, uproot the religion of our Church, and destroy the sanctity of our home and marriage life, and introduce a slavery more intolerable than the mind of man has ever conceived.

Let the Socialists speak for themselves, for out of their own mouths they are condemned. What does Mr. Grunland, a well-known socialist writer say? "*Family exclusiveness must be broken down first of all. . . . Children do not belong to their parents,*

*they belong to Society*”; and H. G. Wells is quite as frank when he says, “*The Socialist no more regards the institution of marriage as a permanent thing than he regards a state of industrial competition as permanent* ;” “*Socialism repudiates the private ownership of the head of a family as completely as it repudiates any sort of private ownership. Socialism, in fact, is the State family. The old family of the private individual must vanish before it just as the old waterworks of private enterprise or the old gas companies. They are incompatible with it.*” There is no shy reserve about Mr. Wells, he tells us plainly that Socialism means the abolition of marriage, home life, and family responsibility.

Professor Karl Pearson is equally frank as to the liberty and morality that would ensue under socialism. He says: “I think the sex relationship of the future will not be regarded as a union for the birth of children, but as the closest form of friendship between man and woman. It will be accompanied by no child-bearing or rearing, or by these in a much more limited manner than at present. With the sex relationship, so long as it does result in children, then the State will have a right to interfere, and this on two grounds: firstly, because the question of population bears on the happiness of society as a whole; and secondly, because child-bearing enforces for a longer or shorter interval economic dependence upon the woman.” These candid statements by socialist authorities give a glimpse of the degenerate tendency

of the teachings of a morality based upon the assumption that "there is no such thing as sin." Can we wonder, then, that there should be a moral twist in all the doctrines preached by the rank and file of socialist orators in the various clubs, and at the street corners, if this is the poison that is given in the text-books of scientific socialism as the true doctrine of progress, and may one not naturally expect to see grow up around us a race of decadents and moral perverts fed as they are upon such garbish as this.

The student of socialism, the seeker after "liberty, equality, and fraternity," may be earnest, and start out with good motives; but as the Scriptures truly say: "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Proverbs xiv. 12). It may be that State Socialism soon dawns upon the "seeker after liberty" as possibly only another phase of slavery, that the good that he is earnestly striving for may really be a worse state than the present; and he thus abandons this school of socialism for another. Philosophic anarchism attracts him as surely the ideal of socialistic schemes, and so he avows his adherence to that, only to find that Communism is the perfection of the socialist goal.

I remember, some years ago, spending an evening with a young man who had "evolved" from State Socialism to Anarchist Socialism. He was enthusiastic about his new principles, and quoted "com-

rades " William Morris, Prince Krapotkin, Tolstoy, Elisee Reclus, and other revolutionary socialists. I enquired whether he had any sympathy with the physical-force anarchists; this he indignantly repudiated, stating that he was an "academic anarchist!"

I was also taken by a friend to an anarchist "at home," where I was introduced to a cultured and beautiful young woman, who had adopted these principles. She was a poetess, and claimed to live the life of perfect liberty, to have her chambers and meet her male friends with the same liberty as the men did.

It was a curious coincidence that led me, some months ago, to cut out of the London daily papers two separate bits of news. One was to the effect that a dangerous Anarchist had been released from Sing Sing Prison, New York, after having served five years' imprisonment for leading a mob of desperate unemployed against the police, when many persons lost their lives. The other cutting was as follows:—"UNEMPLOYED RIOTS IN PHILADELPHIA. MOB LED BY YOUNG WOMAN ANARCHIST." "Fired by the incendiary eloquence of a beautiful female apostle of anarchism, who has been hailed by her followers in many cities as the American Louise Michel, one thousand Russians and Italians, shouting grim words of defiance against the authorities, raised the banner of Anarchy—a huge flag with a red field and black border—and marched



in procession towards the City Hall. 'You need employment,' the woman's thrilling voice told them, 'the Trusts are crushing you. You are like cattle; you bow your heads and do not resent your wrong. Why do not you be men? Show that you are not downtrodden dogs.' Through the streets the demonstrators marched, saluting the red flag, seizing every cart and tramway-car they met. One waggon, containing a load of heavy canes, and another containing knives supplied them with weapons which they used vigorously, when at the corner of Broad Street their progress was suddenly stopped by 300 mounted police and reserves. Instantly a wild fusillade began, and for half-an-hour pistol shots resounded in the streets. Only when a score of policemen and private citizens had been wounded and a number of rioters had been shot was the disturbance quelled. To-day fourteen of the demonstrators are lying in the hospitals suffering from bullet wounds. How many more are concealing their hurts at home is not known. The police are patrolling the streets of Philadelphia in large numbers, prepared to suppress ruthlessly any further outbreaks.

"The young woman will be arraigned for MURDER. She is of unusual culture, gaining a living as a teacher of music and languages. She is a contributor to the Anarchist journals of Europe and America."

I need hardly say that the two cuttings referred

to the very persons whom I had met years ago in search of more liberty.

I do not say that every seeker after liberty gravitates to anarchism, nor that every Socialist puts into practice the principles of "determinism." They are not so logical or consistent. But the inevitable tendency of modern Socialism, I believe, leads to a laxity of moral restraint, and to practical atheism in daily walk and life.

It is comforting, however, to think that time works miracles with some where experience has been their teacher. I have had the joy of knowing many who have given up the wild dreams of their youthful days, and who have returned to the religion of their fathers. I will give an instance, viz., John Oldman, of Oldham. He was an irreconcilable anarchist and atheist; so violent a hater of Society and the State that he was always in hot water. He had commenced his rebellion early in life, serving two months in prison for inciting the mob to pull up and burn the railings enclosing Fakenham Common; was tried for a similar affair on Darwen Moor, also at Rudyard Lake, and his other exploits would fill a large volume. At the Coronation of King Edward he had a large black flag hung out of his bedroom window. His case seemed to me so bad that I thought him past praying for. Yet, it was only some months ago, as he was walking between Derby and Nottingham, that God, in His infinite mercy, spoke to him. As he saw the beautiful

flowers and heard the birds singing so sweetly, his heart smote him for his long life of wickedness. He wrote, asking me to come and visit him. I came, and I saw that he had found the pearl of great price, the Saviour, Jesus Christ, after forty-eight years of rebellion. Praise God. Since writing the above it has pleased God to take this trophy of grace to Himself. I saw him just before he passed away. His end was peace, and in full assurance that God had, for Christ's sake, pardoned his sins and called him to his eternal rest.

Socialism is essentially materialistic because it treats the phenomena of human social life as it would the phenomena of the natural sciences, and by the scalpel and analysis of purely sensuous investigation, would reduce the intricate and wonderful acts of human relationship to the domain of natural philosophy with its rigid system of laws, causes, and principles.

Thus it is classed as a branch of the natural sciences, viz., Sociology, and humanity is analysed, dissected, and classed like any other natural phenomenon. Professor Ferri says: "Darwinism is not only not in intellectual opposition to Socialism, but is its scientific foundation."

The menace, therefore, of Socialism is not only a political and economic factor, but must be now met in the region of religion. Many P.S.A.'s, Adult Schools, and Brotherhoods are openly recruiting agencies for Socialism, and are led by young

ministers who are hardly aware of the dangers that await their compromising attitude to this great peril. All over the country there are Socialist "Churches" and Sunday Schools where the only "Gospel" taught is that of a material salvation. Socialism, as a religion, must fill with husks the mouths that are open to receive it; for it takes no account of sin, of temptation, of the spiritual life, or of the eternal, and thus ignores half of our life.

I am aware that there are persons who call themselves Christian Socialists, and even ministers and clergymen are declaring their adherence to the principles of Socialism as being compatible with the doctrines and teachings of Christianity.

Without in any way apologising for my temerity, I boldly assert that they must have a very superficial knowledge of their Bibles, and the basis of the Christian religion, if they can in any way harmonise the theories of Socialism with the sacred revelation of God's will as it is recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

As I have received many letters on this subject asking my opinion as to whether a believer and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ can also be a Socialist, I have selected one from the Secretary of a Christian Mission in London as representative of the many I have received and answered according to my light. My reply was as follows:—

"I am glad of the opportunity of giving expression to my convictions on the points raised in your letter,

as I feel that they are representative of what many of our brethren feel. That Christians are found to accept Socialism only shows that they have accepted assumptions without going back to the basic principles of their religion. The majority of mankind is neither logical nor consistent, and it should not surprise us to find worthy men being led by emotion rather than by the Word of God.

“The two Labour M.P.’s you mention are caught by the glamour of Parliamentary tactics, and believe that they can solve the problems of society by majority vote, but they may learn in time as I have done. It is twenty-five years since Socialistic propaganda commenced in England, and its success is no nearer than it was then; nay, it may be that at the next election every Socialist M.P. will lose his seat, for there is an evident reaction already in the attitude of the working-class. The fact is, if these two men are Christians they are relying upon human wisdom instead of Christ to save society, and so are practically helping Christ’s opponents. Their error is that they reject the Lordship of Christ, and place their confidence in human wisdom and in materialistic theories.

“I deny that our Lord was in any way a Socialist. This is one of the vaguest of the assumptions of the nominal Christians. He came to establish the Kingdom of God, and the entrance to that was by the *spiritual birth* of the individual—one by one, not *en masse*. Christ always dealt with a man as a *unit*,

not collectively. It is the so-called scientific evolutionary theory that treats him as an organism like any other portion of matter.

“The Socialist has no remedy for sweating, intemperance, or other evils. He only talks about reorganising society, which means revolution. He has no *immediate* remedy. Neither has the Christian; the evils of society are like the sin in an individual, they cannot be patched up or reformed, they must be destroyed. But the Christian offers man a *new life* NOW, whilst the Socialist talks about a reorganised society in the far distant future. It may be that these thoughts will be helpful to yourself and friends.”

A second letter sent to the same friend was as follows :—

“You ask, ‘Is a man justified in describing himself as a Christian Socialist?’ For my part, I reply emphatically, No. The title Christian does not admit of any addition to it. If it did, it would mean that Christ *and* human wisdom were the remedy. It is this lack of faith in the glorious salvation purchased by Jesus Christ on Calvary that gives advantage to the enemy to tack on to the principles of Christianity things that do not belong to it; for instance, we have Christadelphianism, Christian Science, and Christian Socialism, all alien in *principle* to the Bible teachings or the doctrines of Christ. These are the counterfeits of Satan ‘seducing doctrines of demons’ that we are told will be taught

in the latter days (1 Tim. iv. 1). Dear Brother, do not be misled by phrases—'The loftiest and noblest features of Socialism' you call them. Where did they get these from? Surely you know that their source is the Bible. The materialistic Socialist writers are the greatest of plagiarists, stealing all their ideals from Holy Scripture and leaving out sin and redemption, which are not suitable to their godless gospel. If you examine the Utopias of these Socialist dreamers you will see that they are all Godless and Christless, built upon the evolutionary theory that sin is only 'a striving after the best,' in a race of humans descended from the brutes, and who vainly imagine they are going on to perfection—all without a Saviour. Now, however pleasing these lofty ideals may be, they are not Christian, but anti-Christian, because they ignore or deny that man needs a Saviour. Their remedy for human ills is the reorganising of society—not as Christ declared—a new birth. As regards the immediate evils of society, those can be remedied by our Legislature within *certain limits*. We can never make men moral or spiritual by Act of Parliament, but we can restrain *gross evils*. But in all legislation we must ever see that it can never be remedial, but palliative. Therefore, a Christian worker should leave these attempts at patching up to others who may believe in such work, his plain duty is to 'make Christians,' and in so doing he will be assured that though the process may be slower than the spectacular attempts of the

Socialists, it will be more effective, and in the end the best means of solving the problems of society."

In connection with this subject, and the plain injunction of the Bible that the followers of Christ should not be officially connected with unbelievers, it is interesting to note that the principal leaders and founders of Socialism have all been Atheists or non-Christians, viz., Karl Marx, F. Engels, F. Lassalle, Liebenecht, Bebel, Louis Blanc, Fourier, St. Simon, Proudhon, Jaures, R. Owen, Hyndman, W. Morris, G. Bernard Shaw, Belfort Bax, Dr. Aveling, R. Blatchford, Ferri, &c. Surely this can be no accident, but shows a consistency on the part of the leaders and founders of Socialism that may well warn the Christians who would follow them.



## CHAPTER VIII

### CHRIST THE DELIVERER

**B**UT the most insidious part of this propaganda is that it not only undermines religion, but ordinary morality. Its dictum that "there is no such thing as sin" is a straight challenge to the basic principle of Christianity. The Bible teaches that SIN *is the great enemy of the human race*, and there is no illusion so extraordinary as the light-heartedness of men, in view of the mastery which sin manifestly has over them and in them. Who that has visited such places as Chicago, Port Said, Paris, or London can deny the exceeding sinfulness of sin? Or, if we wish to see the human beast in all his bestiality, let us go into any heathen land where the revelation of God, through Jesus Christ, has not permeated.

Deliverance from sin's power is the supreme need of the world. Rich and poor, old and young, are under its tyranny. We cannot and dare not ignore it. Every human heart, no matter of what country, knows its own sinfulness. Civilisation does not eradicate it, but merely covers it with a veneer to avoid seeing its grossness. It is doubtful whether

the human race has improved any, in regard to the question of sin, all along the centuries. A study of Græco-Roman civilisation in the first century does not lead us to believe that it was worse than any of the twentieth century. There is a change of vices, but that is a matter of fashion, each century indulging in its special evil, to be changed only in satiety. What an egregious mistake we make in calling this country of ours a Christian country. It is nothing of the sort. It is a genuine pagan country. Its principles are heathen, its policy is heathen, its laws are heathen. The newspapers are all written from a heathen point of view. It is the view of writers who leave Christ entirely out of the question—who would never dream of stopping to consider what Christ might have to say about this or that, and so there is no difference in the civilisation of ancient or modern, eastern or western, as regards the question of sin. The heart of the natural man has not changed a whit, it is the same article in the Orient as in the Occident, in ancient Babylon as in modern Babylon. As the Scriptures truly diagnose its condition—"For out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," and not out of environments, social conditions, or geographical position. It is one of the greatest libels on the working-class to say that poor surroundings produce sin. It is the evil heart that produces sin, no matter whether it be in a drawing-room in Belgravia or in a slum tenement in Ber-

mondsey. The millionaire, surrounded with all the luxury that the five senses could desire, may have murder in his heart, and all his beautiful environments will not save him from his devilish deed. Whilst some of the most beautiful of human flowers grow up and bloom into holiness of character, pinched by poverty and encompassed by vile surroundings.

*But there is a deliverance, thank God, through Jesus Christ.* He came to declare that "sin shall not have dominion over you"; and this glorious truth is for every sin-stained and sin-sick individual, no matter what heredity or environment has done for him. If one poor wreck of humanity has, by faith in the Son of God, been delivered from a life of sin and misery into that of light and love and peace, it overthrows all the specious arguments of "determinism" and the gospel of despair.

And we have not far to go to find thousands of such trophies. The Salvation Army can produce fresh examples of these "miracles of grace" every day; and if anyone doubts the power of Jesus Christ to deliver from sin, I would refer him to a recent book called "Down in Water Street," published by Fleming H. Revell and Co., London. Here will be found sufficient material for those who deny the existence of sin; and here is given indisputable evidence of the reality of the salvation by Jesus Christ. Fifty thousand of the worst specimens of humanity in New York saved from a life of sin

through the instrumentality of a converted forger and drunkard! That fact alone is worth all the befogged philosophising that the Socialist dreamers ever gave, or ever will give, to a needy world.

Oh, my comrades and readers, JESUS *can save from sin, from the power of sin. He saves me.* Will you let Him save you? Just ask Him, then. He has triumphed over heredity and environment. He was born of our flesh, in poor surroundings, felt the pressure of temptation, yet without sin, was pure in the midst of the world's defilement. He submitted in mind and body to the very worst the world could do to Him, yet proved Himself its conqueror; and the glory of it all is that His victory is intended to be ours also; and through His life, and Cross, and Resurrection there is opened to the world a Divine deliverance from all sin, peace with God, and the power of an endlessly holy and blessed life.

Dear, sin-stricken soul, you are conscious that your heart is, as Christ says, full of evil. When you would do good evil is present with you, and you find it easier to do evil than good. Then come to Jesus Christ and be cleansed from your sin, and receive from Him the power to conquer sin. *It is possible*, for it was for that very purpose that He came from God. He has purchased deliverance from sin for every man. He tasted death for everyone, and conquered Satan and all the forces of evil on the Cross of Calvary; therefore His victory is meant to be our victory over sin and Satan.

It is a *finished* work, and only needs our appropriation. Will *you* have the Victory? You can claim it now, and enter at once into the enjoyment of it. Try it to-day; *it works*.

“THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST HIS SON  
CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN” (I John i. 7).

## CHAPTER IX

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD

**B**UT what is the alternative to Socialism? Surely it is the Divine one—the pattern from the Mount—the *Kingdom of God as revealed by the Son of God, Jesus Christ*. The unutterable yearnings of mankind, the inarticulate cry of great hearts in all ages, and the present day unrest are all heeded and answered by God in the establishment of His Kingdom upon earth. He knows the human heart's deepest need, and He alone can satisfy it. Vain is the effort to supply it from human fountains; they are but bitter waters which cannot satisfy.

The Kingdom of God that Jesus Christ proclaimed, and commissioned His disciples to preach, was the ideal world, the perfected world-society, the social ideal, which the national prophets had heralded for centuries, and had foretold that the Messiah would inaugurate. That the world has ignored it, as it has also ignored and despised Him and His salvation, is so much the world's loss, but will not alter the fact that it was proclaimed as the Divine plan, and is still the only remedy for the evils of Society.

There is an objective Kingdom of God, as well as a subjective one. The great mistake the Church has made in all past ages is to ignore this truth. It has narrowed the aim of believers to merely "save the soul," and thus produce an individualistic Christianity. Christ taught both truths, that the Kingdom of God was within you, and without you. This is one of the chief reasons why the Church has lost its hold upon the multitude. The Kingdom of God includes the whole world in extent ; but in its content it only embraces those who have surrendered themselves to its laws.

Thus it is primarily a spiritual kingdom, into which men enter by a spiritual birth (John iii. 3). But at the same time it has its physical aspects, which are profoundly important. It is accordingly made clear that heaven and earth and the Church, visible and invisible, are all included in the extent of the Kingdom ; while its content embraces heaven, the invisible church, and only such members of the visible as have been regenerated. Many enter the visible church without any experience of the "new birth"; but none can enter the Kingdom of God without being "born from above."

Will the Kingdom of God spread throughout the world? Yes, ultimately Jesus Christ will reign as King on this earth ; but the Scriptures prophesy that before this takes place there will be a vast "apostasy," or "falling away" from revealed Truth, principally through Sacerdotalism and Rationalism.

The "drying up of the great river Euphrates," which symbolises the disintegration of the once powerful Turkish Empire, will take place before the Second Advent of Christ; the ten kingdoms of Europe, comprising the old Roman Empire, will federate and choose a Head, who will become so powerful that he will become an object of worship; and thus will be established the "Man of Sin," or Anti-Christ. I have never before been able to see how the conflicting nationalities of Europe could federate into one State; but I now see that the power that is going to accomplish this is SOCIALISM. This godless system of society will be the leaven that will leaven all conflicting interests, and so weld together into one whole the myriad forms of rebellion against God. As soon as this occurs we may expect the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to overthrow Anti-Christ, and to institute the Millennial reign—the universal Kingdom of God upon earth.

Even at this present time events are rapidly occurring in Europe with such mighty import as to stagger one at the thought of how wonderfully prophecy is being fulfilled, and the purposes of God are being accomplished.

Dear reader, how is it with you? Are you putting your trust in the seductive schemes of men, which must come to nothing; or is your hope and confidence in God, and in the Kingdom of His dear Son, Jesus Christ, which is from everlasting to everlasting?



## CHAPTER X

### AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

**A**N able writer in a Christian journal draws a very suggestive parallel between the methods of Socialist speakers and those which should characterise Christian men and women. He finds it in the following items :—

Socialists go to the people where they are.

They are at their business in season and out of season.

They aim at conversions.

They speak with burning passion.

They do not read their discourses, but speak them.

They are proud of their creed.

Those who have had the opportunity of listening to the fiery oratory of Socialist speakers in parks and streets and from van platforms, will recognise the correctness of the picture. Quite apart from what is taught, the deadly earnestness of men who believe that the salvation of the people depends wholly upon a changed social order is certainly impressive. Christian men and women have something to learn from this. For very many, thank

God, the parallel is complete. There are innumerable workers who are consumed by the zeal of God's House, who do go to the people, who are at their business in season and out of season, who aim at conversions, who speak with burning passion, and who are proud of their gospel. But he would be a hardy man who dared to affirm that the parallel holds good of the majority of church members. If it did the religious aspect of England would not be what it is to-day. When the whole Church of Christ is awake to her proper work, the great miracle will happen, the Revival will come. "*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him*" (Isaiah lix. 19).

Fellow Christians, we cannot doubt that the enemy of souls is at the present moment flooding our beloved country with the "doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. iv. 1). Spiritualism, Atheism, Sacerdotalism, Christian Science, Mormonism, and Socialism are rampant, drawing our young people from the Churches, unsettling the elders and undermining the principles of religion and morality to an extent which few are able to comprehend.

Every church bears witness to arrested progress and falling off in attendance. In Liverpool, a sample city, in 1881, 40 seats out of every 100 were filled at morning worship in the Free Churches: in 1891, 31; in 1902, 25; in 1908, 12. So also evening attendance has fallen from 57 in every 100 seats in 1881, to 28 in 1908. The average morning attend-

ance in 1881 was 274; in 1891, 212; in 1902, 170; in 1908, 85. So also the average evening attendance has fallen from 392 in 1881 to 190 in 1908. Are not these figures appalling?

There is something wrong somewhere. It cannot mean that the old Gospel is not sufficient for the modern man. There is a leakage somewhere. It may be that the following recent cuttings from a London daily paper will throw light upon it:—

“The keenness with which the Socialists are endeavouring to gain converts is well illustrated in the annual report of the Independent Labour Party, which was presented at the annual conference at Edinburgh on April 10, 12, and 13, 1909.

No fewer than 152 *new branches* have been formed during the last twelve months, the total number of branches increasing from 735 to 887. The expenditure on propaganda and organising has grown steadily. In 1906-7 the amount spent was £448. In 1907-8 it rose to £1,041, while for the current year it amounted to £1,229.

The sales of the *publication department*, one of the *most effective and insidious means of Socialist propaganda*, have increased from £1,202 to **£5,040** in the three years.”

#### RESULT OF PULPIT SOCIALISM.

“The Baptist Union, which meets for its annual gathering to-day, has to face a melancholy record in Church membership, which has decreased by 5,869 during the year. Sunday School scholars were 8,816 fewer during the same period. Both decreases constitute a record in increasing ratio over previous losses.

On the occasion of the last Baptist meeting the Rev. J. G. Greenhough, now a member of the new Nonconformist Anti-Socialist Association, vigorously denounced the de-Christianising inroads which Socialism is making in the Baptist Churches, and predicted the losses now recorded."

When we consider the extent to which the Socialistic propaganda has grown, with its dozen vans preaching revolution in our villages and industrial towns, its numerous Socialist Sunday Schools where no Bible is read, and little children are taught revolutionary songs instead of Gospel hymns, its Vocal Unions, Social Clubs, Fellowships, Handicraft Guilds, Cycle Meets, Clarion Scouts, and above all its Socialist "Churches," with their "New Religion," can we doubt where much of the leakage from the Christian Church has found its way?

What shall be done then? Let us take courage from the above Divine promise (Isaiah, lix. 19).

God HAS lifted up the standard of the Cross against the enemy, and it must prevail. He is calling for warriors, for overcomers to flock to His Standard, and He is asking for souls to be steadfast and faithful in these latter days, to witness to the power and truth of Calvary, that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin."

Who will help to carry the standard, to preach the Cross of Christ to a sin-sick world? Who will proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth, to counteract the teachings of a godless

Socialism? Who will be wise to win souls from the snares of the devil into the Kingdom of God's dear Son?

I am sure there are thousands of Christians who are ready to do something in the cause of Christ, but are at a loss to know what to do, for they are painfully aware of their own limitations. They cannot preach or teach, and have not the courage to take up any individual service for their Master, and so the Church of Christ suffers because she cannot find work for them to do.

In the Gospel of St. Luke, chapter x., there is a practical solution of the problem in the Master's own direction to His disciples.

*"After these things, the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself was about to come. Therefore said He unto them: The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send forth the labourers unto His harvest"* (Luke x. 1, 2).

This is the Scriptural method. God's plan for soul-saving. The Lord's sending His own forth, two by two into every city and place and street, where He Himself is about to come. Every redeemed child of God is therefore appointed by Him to do this work, and needs no other appointing.

In every town and village, and attached to every church and chapel throughout the United Kingdom,

there ought to be a Band of *Heralds of the Cross* drawn together by the Spirit of God, irrespective of creed or church, who will go forth two by two (two brothers together, and two sisters together), supplied with Christian ammunition, scattering it broadcast, visiting every stronghold of Satan, full of holy zeal, with a passion for souls, calling at every house in the district, speaking the truth in love, and entreating sinners by the mercies of God to flee from the wrath to come.

Proclaiming the glorious news that Satan is a conquered foe, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Lamb of God, defeated him on the Cross of Calvary, "having stripped off from Himself principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it"; that when He said "*It is finished!*" the wonderful work of man's redemption from the penalty and power of sin, and the dominion of Satan was ended; that henceforth there was nothing for a sin-stained world to do but to accept God's gracious offer of forgiveness for the past, and the promise of power over present and future temptations, through the sacrifice and death of His Son Jesus Christ, whom "He hath made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

It is a great mistake to suppose that the people of this generation have an intelligent apprehension of the saving truths of the Gospel of Christ, or of its vital relation to the sin and misery that exist in their

midst. I am bold to say that there are men, women, and children, in the villages and slums of our towns, as ignorant of the salvation through Jesus Christ, living in as black a darkness, as any in a heathen country.

It was not always so in the land of England, but there has grown up during the last generation a vast population which has seldom, if ever, been within the portals of a Church or Sunday School. So that we are faced to-day with an enormous mass of people who have had practically no Christian teaching, whose lives are those of civilised pagans, and who are the eager recipients of all the quack remedies and Satanic doctrines that are so prevalent in these days.

The Churches and their exclusive methods are proving every day their powerlessness to reach the masses. In every denomination the decrease in membership is more and more apparent. Vain efforts to draw the people by Institutional Churches, Brotherhoods, and Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, result only in a watering down of the principles of Christianity and a lack of conversions. It therefore behoves the people of God to take up this matter solemnly and prayerfully as a personal responsibility. The great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel, *to every creature,*" is imperative to every redeemed child of God. We are saved for service, and dare not relegate "our reasonable service" to anyone

else. Service under the Lordship of Christ cannot be done by proxy. *It is personal service to Him.*

Let us all then obey the call to service, "Go out," the Lord said, "*into the highways and compel them . . .*" The people will not come into the Churches, let us go to them. Let us carry the warfare into the enemy's camp. Too long have we been on the defensive, permitting the enemy to have it all his own way, mildly protesting against his destructive work. Too long have believers apologised for the religion of Christ, as if it were something of doubtful benefit. A truce to such timidity. I for one will have none of it. I have proved the wondrous power of Christianity to save and transform the life, and I will commend it to the world in the most strenuous manner, and with all the power of my spirit, soul, and body.

To counteract the insidious doctrines of the "new theology," Socialism, Christian Science, Spiritualism, Mormonism, etc., not only is it needful that literature by expert writers should be used, but the whole work of Tract production and distribution should be reconsidered. To underrate the intelligence and arguments of the enemy, has been the short-sighted policy of too many Christian workers in the past. I believe there is a general desire on the part of Tract Repositories to bring their literature more into touch with the burning questions of the hour; the greatest hindrances being the purchasers, who fail to discern the need of the people, and do



not put the same thought or care into the Lord's work that they would into their own temporal affairs.

For general distribution, there is nothing so good as the Word of God, but as even Gospel portions cannot be widely distributed owing to the expense, the Bible Booklet, "The Word of the Cross," being so inexpensive, comes within the reach of all, and has been widely used by all kinds of Christian workers in all parts of the world.

Open-air preaching is another method of reaching those who cannot be induced to attend our churches. It was said of our Lord, who used this kind of ministry more than any other, that the common people heard Him gladly, and I am sure that they will hear His disciples, if they go in the same spirit of compassionate love for souls, and speak to them out of a full heart, telling them what great things God has done for them, speaking a human word to them in their own language; showing them their deepest need, and gently leading them to the only source that can satisfy that need.

In the words of an anonymous writer, which are well worth reproducing, I would say, "Aim at conviction, divert the attention of your hearers from yourself, your natural powers of voice, language, or gesture, remembering that just in so far as the attention of the hearer is given to either or any of these, so it is withdrawn from those things to which it should be your object to direct it. Aim, there-

fore, at concentrating it upon Christ and His Salvation for sinners, upon your message of warning, invitation, and pardon; and that not as a message of your own, but as one given you by Christ, which you at your soul's peril must deliver.

“Your delivery must above all be characterised by LOVE. There must be no coldness, stiffness, or reserve; no severity, roughness, harshness, or asperity; no lecturing, scolding, laying down the law from a platform of Pharisaic superiority, still less of human irritation and anger; but love and sympathy, real and genuine, strong and inexhaustible; gentleness, tenderness, compassion, pitifulness; pleading, imploring, entreating even with tears—the greatest gift of God, given only to the greatest saints and the greatest preachers.”

“Endeavour to stretch invisible wires of sympathy between your heart and the hearts of your audience, to establish ‘rapport’ and touch between you and them by means not so much of words and thoughts as of manner and tone; and let an electric stream of love flow continuously from you to them.”

“Manifest and exert this love, not primarily and intentionally that you may win acceptance for yourself, or that you may attach men to yourself and obtain a personal influence over them; but whether you are loved or not, love them for their own sakes, for the sake of Christ, with Christlike, Godlike love.”

The Heralds of the Cross must have the passion

for winning souls to equip them for this work. God has promised to give the very words to him or her who will speak for Him, and the Holy Ghost will clothe with power the heart that is anointed for this service.

An incident in my own experience may be helpful to others. I quote from an article that I wrote for the first number of the "Overcomer," which appeared on January 1st, 1909:—

"One Wednesday afternoon, in a conversation with Mr. Evan Roberts, he asked me if there had been 'a break' in the Leicester Market Place meetings. I replied, 'No!' He said, 'Why has there not?' I answered, 'I suppose it is because I have no power.' 'But you have power,' said he. I replied that it was not very evident, as my words did not convict of sin. To this he said, 'I know you have power, because you have the Holy Spirit; *power is a Person.*' I knew this, but had not fully realised it. He then explained further, 'There are three kinds of meetings—first, where the people respond to your words; second, where they are indifferent; third, where they are hostile. In each meeting you have the same power, but it is not manifest in the same way to you. It is like a man striking upon a stone, he smites it a dozen times, and the last stroke breaks the stone. Which stroke was it that broke the stone?' 'Why,' I said, 'each stroke was equal.' 'Exactly, in like manner, every utterance given in obedience to the Holy Spirit is given with the same

power, but the visible result is not manifest.' 'Are you,' he said, 'willing to speak by the Holy Spirit without seeing any response?' I replied, 'Yes.' 'Then shall we ask that your next message to the men in the Market Place shall be with response, and the one following be without response?' I said, 'Amen.'"

On the next morning my fellow-worker and I went to give the free breakfast to the hungry men in the Market Place. I spoke first, and then he followed—both without any visible response from the meeting, but as we were going away and the crowd lingered, I turned round to the men again, and, with a little warmth, told them that they did not really *believe* our testimonies, for if they did they would not continue to live the life that they were living, but would eagerly accept Christ's glorious salvation from sin and misery. Was there not one who would that morning abandon sin and accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour? I pointed my finger to one man and said, "Will you take Christ as your Saviour?" He promptly replied, "I will." I said, "Then raise your hand as an act of faith and say, 'I take Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.'" He did so. I turned and pointed to an old man and said the same words, and he immediately responded, "I will." Then of a third and a fourth I asked the same question, and they also said, "I will," and confessed Christ as their Saviour. The sudden and unexpected response to my appeal

was overwhelming to me. The Spirit of God was so working that, had we continued, we might have reaped a dozen souls, but the enemy came in the person of an interrupter, who wanted to argue about some questions, so we had to end this impromptu after-meeting, the four men joining us in praising God.

The Spirit of God thus proved what Evan Roberts had said, that if we have the Holy Spirit abiding within us we really have all the power we need for the service to which God calls us, if we will but rely upon Him, and "trust and obey."

Prayer is another method of reaching the unconverted. Prayer Groups should be formed amongst the Heralds, even if there are only two or three, preferring those who are really in sympathy with each other; controversial spirits only hinder. They should meet together as often as possible in their own houses, as the early Christians did. Definite believing prayer should be made, claiming the Victory of Calvary over the ground to be worked by the Heralds. The great Revival in Ireland in 1859 had a very small beginning. Four young men met together to pray at an old schoolroom near Kells, to make supplication for God to pour His Spirit upon the neighbourhood. After a time others joined the little group; the Spirit of prayer became more intense. A spirit of anxiety became apparent in the neighbourhood, occasional conversions took place, and before long a mighty Revival swept over

the neighbourhood and throughout the country. Similar small beginnings in prayer preceded the recent Revival in Wales, and now a great expectancy is in the hearts of many that God will visit this country with an outpouring of His Spirit upon the millions of unconverted souls, and a great awakening of the Church of Christ from its apathy and indifference, to an entrance into the abundant life, that it may be a praise and a glory to His Name.

Already there are many bands of "Heralds of the Cross" formed in England, Scotland, and Wales, and their numbers are rapidly increasing. As the minimum of organisation is needed, all that is requisite is that a few devoted Christians, with a burden for the perishing souls in their district, band themselves together, select a leader from amongst themselves, and commence work at once.

In Leicester a little band of some thirty converted young men and women have been for some time at this definite work for the Kingdom of God. This devoted little band of "Heralds of the Cross" has stormed the strongholds of Satan, not only in Leicester, but in all the surrounding villages of the country. Many and glorious have been their trophies laid at the feet of their Master: drunkards reclaimed, infidels won to Christ, and books burnt, sinners convicted and yielded to God in the open-air, on tramcars, in the back slums; anywhere and everywhere this little band carries the good tidings of salvation.

Their latest exploit is to take away the reproach of neglect that the unemployed cast upon the churches—that they do not care for the temporal needs of the poor—by supplying a free coffee stall in the market place where bread and cheese and coffee has been given to some three to four hundred hungry men during the winter months. After the meal is partaken of, the Heralds then preach to these unemployed about the love of God and His Kingdom with much more acceptance, and already the good work is bearing fruit in conversions.

If this is possible in one town why should it not be possible in every town and village throughout the United Kingdom? The need is as great, and the conditions the same. I am more convinced than ever that the Lord is not going to evangelise this world by polished sermons or correct moral essays, but by the simple testimony of plain men and women saved by grace from sin and Satan, by *Witnessing* to the masses—in the open air, and in the homes of the people—of the power of God unto salvation. May He multiply and thrust out many such witnesses to “speak of that which they do know.”

It may be that there are some who have often had a desire to do something for their Lord, and yet have never seen any definite way in which they could put their talent out to service. Will such as read this book ask themselves the question, “Does the Lord Jesus require *me* to become a Herald of

the Cross, and to 'go out into the highways and compel them to come in?'"

If after prayerful consideration the "voice within" urges the undertaking of this service for your Master, and any reader should feel drawn to write to me, I will gladly give hints and directions how to proceed in going forth as a "Herald of the Cross" in your district.

I would explain that there is no attempt on my part to form any organisation, each little band of workers must be self-controlled, attached or unattached to a church as the circumstances permit, my desire only being to help the Church of Christ to utilise the dormant energies and undiscovered talents of many of its members who hitherto have never done any service for their Master.

The result of this awakening to active aggressive work on the part of the members of the Body of Christ must tend to the consummation of that yearning that has been manifest in the seven years' prayer for world-wide revival, and bring to pass that outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all flesh, which has been promised for these latter days, and for which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth until now," "for the earth *shall* be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," "and the kingdoms of this world *shall* become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and He *shall* reign for ever and ever." Amen.