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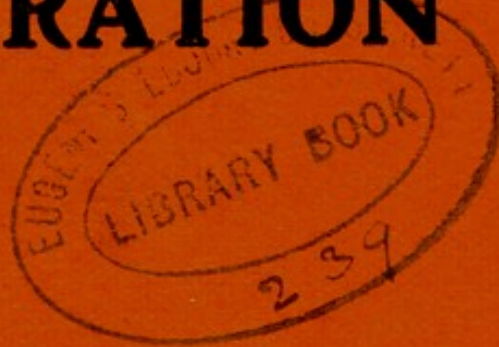
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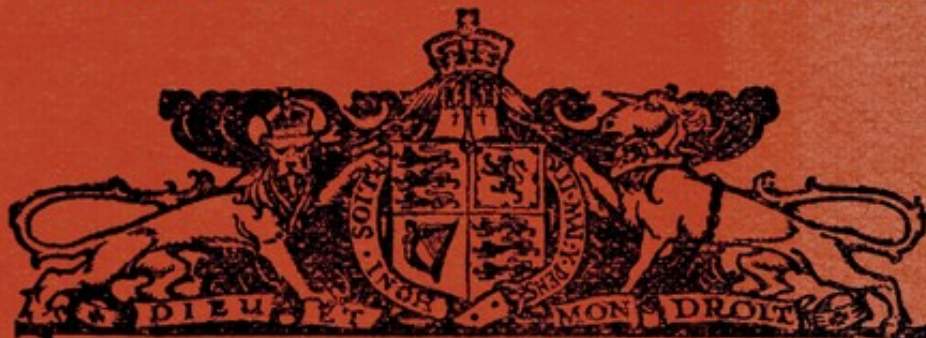
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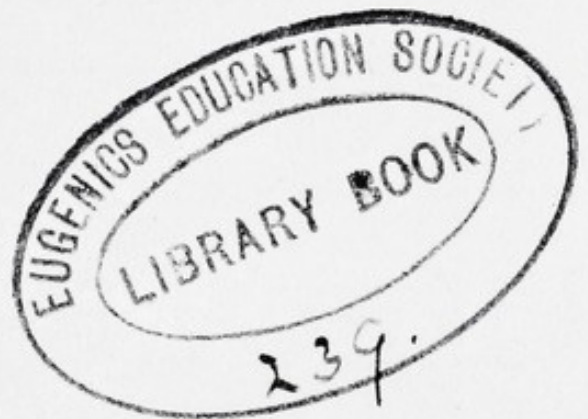
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RELIGION AND RACE-REGENERATION

BY

REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.



NEW TRACTS FOR THE TIMES

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NEW TRACTS FOR THE TIMES

Their Scope and Purpose

(Extract from the General Introduction)

THESE tracts might have been called "New Tracts for New Times," since they interpret the signs and prophecies of a new world in the making, demanding the application of loftier ideals, more widely embracing principles, and surer methods of advance than have hitherto prevailed. They do not merely deplore and combat the manifest evils of the past and the present changing conditions, but reveal the foundations of a richer civilisation.

. . . The supreme and dominant conception running through these Tracts is the Regeneration of the Race. They strike, not the leaden note of despair, but the ringing tones of a new and certain hope. The regenerated race is coming to birth; the larger and nobler civilisation is upon us.

These Tracts must awaken a sensitive, enlightened social conscience throughout Great and Greater Britain, which is being welded into a more compact Empire, and give voice and new life to the long-silent and thwarted aspirations for a regenerated humanity.

In their several ways the authors of these NEW TRACTS FOR THE TIMES, each being alone responsible for his or her own contribution, adopt this bracing and hopeful attitude towards the transcendent problems which it is the object of the promoters—The National Council of Public Morals—to elucidate.

JAMES MARCHANT

HOLBORN HALL, W.C.

Religion and Race-Regeneration

CHAPTER I

THE FACTS

THE facts are these ! Things are not altogether well with us. Never was our trade more prosperous, nor our military and naval strength more invulnerable ; never were our coffers fuller, nor our luxury more profuse ; never did the gates of political freedom stand more widely open, nor was greater attention ever paid to educational efficiency and social problems. But, notwithstanding all, there is abroad an uneasy sense that there are symptoms of dry-rot in the foundation-timbers of the house of national well-being.

The other day a statesman was complaining of the symptoms of national flabbiness. Certainly there is a notorious deficiency of strong men in several of the professions. We have a high average of ability, but it is generally admitted that the Army and the Church are suffering from a dearth of proper candidates. It has been freely said that in the Civil Service there are signs that the demand for competent men in the higher ranks of employment is greater than the supply. Every nation requires men of eminent ability to carry on its government, and lead

Religion and Race-Regeneration

it in literary, artistic, and scientific progress worthy of the great past and the greater future. But the grave fear is that just now the supply is failing to meet the demand, though the extension of the Empire and the complicated issues which demand expert handling were never so insistent.

Side by side with this, we have an immense increase of legislation providing pensions and insurance, for the benefit of the respectable poor; we are expending vast sums in Poor Law relief; and we are carrying an ever-increasing charge for asylums, penitentiaries, hospitals, and public institutions of a charitable and philanthropic nature. Concerning this aspect of the question, the recent report issued by the majority of the Commissioners on the Poor Laws makes the following significant comment:—

“ It is very unpleasant to record that, notwithstanding our assumed moral and material progress, and notwithstanding the enormous annual expenditure, amounting to nearly sixty millions a year, upon poor relief, education, and public health, we still have a vast number of persons quartered upon us unable to support themselves, and an army which in numbers has recently shown signs of increase rather than decrease. . . . The statistical review of the expenditure incurred, and of the results attained by it, prove that something in our social organisation is seriously wrong, and that, whatever may be the

The Facts

evils, they are not of such a nature as to be improved or removed by the mere signing of cheques or the outpouring of public funds. . . . A generation has elapsed since elementary education became universal, and the benefits to be derived from the system should now be accruing to the nation. Persons now above fifty years of age have not, it is true, participated in the advantages conferred in 1870, but of persons below that age there is no diminution in the number coming upon the Poor Laws. . . . Least progress has been made in regard to the able-bodied. Indeed it would appear that there has recently been a considerable retrogression in this branch of the Poor Law. Either the urban population is becoming less fitted for maintaining their independence, or the facility with which relief may be obtained, and the immunity from labour which it confers, are enticing a large number to avail themselves of Poor Law relief."

The Commissioners go on to state that, in a recent year, between 30,000 and 40,000 able-bodied men in health received outdoor relief without any task or work. It is also stated that of the 15,000 births that take place annually in the workhouse wards, 10,000 are illegitimate.

The increasing luxury ; the restlessness which is exchanging the home life for the hotel, and demands the week-end trip to seaside or country ; the large

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monopolisation of our great public sports by the professional element ; the increase of brutal forms of professional boxing ; the open depreciation of marriage in certain influential quarters ; the high standard of living and the low standard of morals, are other reasons for anxiety, which does not become pessimism, because we cannot doubt the inherent vitality of our people, and the certainty of the Divine leading of our national life.

But beneath all these there is the still more ominous symptom of the falling birth-rate—the question arising whether it is symptomatic only or fundamental.

The fall of the birth-rate, it is truly said, is an old story in the history of nations, and has been the prelude to the ruin of states and the decline and fall of empires. It was their alarm at the fatal dearth of children in the patrician families that led the Roman emperors to offer special privileges to the fathers of three or more. It was when Spain was bereft of the scions of noble houses, as the result of her extravagant expenditure on the battlefield, in her colonies, and in her childless monasteries and convents, that the decline set in, from which she has never recovered.

In France, Belgium, and more lately in Germany, the birth-rate has been steadily falling during the last quarter of a century. In France, in one recent

The Facts

year, the births were actually fewer than the deaths—"more coffins than cradles." And this parasite on mighty empires has been equally merciless in its ravages on Great Britain. Here the number of births has fallen from 36 per 1,000 in 1876 to 27 per 1,000 in 1907.

If this decline were spread equally over all classes of the community, we might view it with less anxiety, but such is not the case. It is in the wealthier or more prosperous families that the decrease is most conspicuous. The aristocracy and nobility, the official, professional, and commercial classes, and, most notable of all, the better-paid artisan class, are those where the diminution in the birth-rate is most conspicuous. There is no fall as yet in the ranks of casual labourers and of the feeble-minded men and women amongst us. The fall in the birth-rate of the former classes since 1876 has been 50 per cent., whilst that of the latter has remained constant.

During the last fifty years the upper classes have reduced their birth-rate by one-half, and threaten to pass below that point to the situation in which the number of births ceases to balance that of deaths.

Taking the statistics of two friendly societies only, it is shown that 38,000 fewer children were born to the respectable artisans who constituted their membership in 1904 than would have been the case if they had maintained the average of 1880.

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But, on the other hand, the classes with the poorest physique and feeblest mental endowment, whether inherited or environmental, who are least able to sustain the burdens and responsibilities of empire, show no signs of dwindling numbers, but the reverse.

The number of those persons who are suffering from mental defect, whilst not certified as insane, is estimated at 150,000. These persons are specially liable to drunkenness, immorality, and crime. A medical officer of one of the large prisons for juvenile boy offenders considers that 40 per cent. are feeble-minded; whilst all the records of rescue societies go to show that the lack of self-control which sends the boys to the prisons sends the girls on the streets. It should be remembered that the authorities have no power to detain them in school or keep them in custody after the age of sixteen. It should be also borne in mind that only within the last hundred years have these persons been able to survive or to pass on their enfeebled minds and impaired bodies to children. Formerly they were incarcerated in prisons and asylums, but only from the middle of the last century have the severe restrictions been removed, and have they been sent out on society to propagate their kind with prolific fertility. The average number of children in healthy families is *four*, whilst in these degenerate families the average

The Facts

is something over *seven*. In one workhouse alone, the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject found that 16 feeble-minded women had produced 116 children, and out of one such family of 14 only 4 had been able to do any remunerative work.

In that very valuable book "The Family and the Nation," the situation is defined thus :—

"Two hundred thousand births fewer each year than should be expected now take place in the British Isles, i.e. one-fifth of the annual total. And this fifth that is wanting is the most valuable of the whole, because it represents the younger children of the best stocks of the nation, who should have been born had the old average been maintained. We shall not be overestimating if we suppose that at least one in two thousand of these would have possessed eminent ability. Hence, every year, among the two hundred thousand, the country is losing one hundred babies who, if they had come into existence, and had lived to grow up, would have become eminent. Who can estimate the injury to the nation by the suppression of this lost legion ? "

It may be suggested that this diminution of the birth-rate is involuntary, and in a sense non-moral, because the result of the luxury and haste of our time. But there are no symptoms of decline in the natural fertility of our people. There is no decline

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in the families of the clergy, the Roman Catholics (who are forbidden by their Church to tamper with the birth-rate), the Jews, the casual labourers, and the feeble-minded. The most casual glance at advertisements which appear in daily and weekly newspapers, the unmistakable evidence afforded unblushingly by the contents of certain shop-windows, the facts which are familiar to the medical faculty, suggest another explanation, and go to show that our people have eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and that this fatal limitation of family life is directly volitional.

It is not necessary for our purpose to analyse the causes which prompt to this evasion of the responsibilities of family life. Of course, one obvious reason is the increasing cost of living. It is impossible to have as much money to spend on motors and travel where there is a family of children to rear and educate as where husband and wife are only concerned. Then the new careers which are opening to women in the professions and in politics indispose them to the quiet home life which is so needful where young children are concerned. A woman is tempted to believe that she can get more out of her life, and perhaps use it to better purpose, in any of the fresh avenues of activity which are within her reach, than in the restricted sphere of motherhood. In the struggle for existence which the middle-class trades-

The Facts

man or the artisan is called to face, it can hardly be wondered at that parents shrink from giving, as the saying is, too many hostages to fortune.

It would be an inapt criticism of these compressed paragraphs to argue that eminent men may be furnished from all ranks of society, and that they will be furnished by the lower classes if not by the higher. Without doubt the great artisan and mining classes have contributed a large proportion of the most brilliant personalities famed in our island story. But they are involved to a large extent in the same category of birth-limitation as the upper classes ; and on the whole it will be generally admitted that the families which have possessed sufficient ability to force themselves into the front rank, and to maintain themselves there, are they to whom the nation will naturally turn for a continued supply of that same ability in Law and Medicine, in the Church and the State, in Science and Invention, in War and Peace.

If men were born equal, it might be possible by carefully adjusted environment and conditions to create Shakespeares and Wellingtons, as bees create their queens by a judicious course of feeding ; but men are not born equal, and on the whole there are stocks that yield as there are stocks that do not yield the finest type of manhood. But these stocks are not confined to what are known as the upper and

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wealthy classes. They are found in the homes of industrious toil, in the village school, in the labourer's cottage, where sobriety, thrift, and religion reign. But we repeat, there is as much peril for these, as for the other classes, to be infected by the craze for the small family. And on the other hand, to the rest of our nation, there is the steady increase of the feeble-minded and incompetent. And when once one part of the population begins to gain on the other, its gain will be in geometrical progression, and the march of civilisation will become hampered by a vast weight of undesirables, for whom it will be necessary to provide not only by direct contributions, but by the maintenance of a vast army of officials who will be required to minister to their needs.

CHAPTER II

THE DEMAND FOR RELIGION

SUCH being the facts of the case, as we have been able to collate them, the next question is to consider the remedies that have been proposed. They may be classed under three divisions.

(1) *The Mechanical*.—Under this heading fall proposals of racial breeding, which deal with human nature from the standpoint of the stock-breeder; the advocacy of segregation; the suggestions of enforced sterility; the gallant attempt to arrest racial poisons in their disastrous effect on the vitality of the race. It is not difficult to find vulnerable points in these proposals. That men and women are something more than animals to be bred for points; that any undermining of liberty would threaten dangers to the community incomparably graver than the evils with which we have to cope; that these proposals lay too much stress on the effect of heredity, and too little on the possibilities of environment—such criticisms are not lightly to be set aside, though some may not be incapable of a formidable reply. But the fundamental objection to leaving these methods to supply exclusive or adequate contribution to race-regeneration is that they are apt to become impulsive, fragmentary, and fickle. They lack

Religion and Race-Regeneration

sufficient driving force. They are operative so long as the school which promoted them survives, but are liable to disintegration and disuse when some new turn in the wheel brings a fresh theory to the top. The permanent solvent for the ills of humanity must be as profound in its origin and impulse as the humanity which it sets itself to heal. The remedies just named are external and temporary. They appear to deal with symptoms more than with the cause of the disease. Of what use is it to deal with feeble-mindedness so long as the sensual passion, the alcoholic craving, the unnatural habits of the parents, remain unchanged?

(2) *The Educational*.—We have great sympathy with the movement which seeks to instruct the young in the sacred mysteries of birth, sex, and parenthood. It is urgently necessary that the first words on these subjects should be uttered in the ears of the growing boy or girl from the pure lips of the parent, rather than picked up at random or come from a vicious and polluted source. Where the parents fail to perform this necessary service, we would call in the religious teacher, the physician, or the schoolmaster. It is highly necessary that the gross ignorance which has laid myriads open to suggestions that they would not have tolerated had they understood their true significance, should be rendered impossible. But education alone is not enough to resist the strong

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current of the time. The appeal of the scientific Socialist, who, as Dr. Peabody points out, finds the supremacy of the family incompatible with his scheme of social reconstruction, is made not to the uneducated but to the educated. Though it is quite true that the earliest appeal to the mind is likeliest to hold it permanently, yet the more thoughtful and intelligent of our working-classes are no doubt coming more and more under the predominating influence of the school of thought which insists "that the current type of sex relationship is inconsistent with economic independence, and is therefore a type destined to extinction." If the appeal is made to the intellect and understanding only, it lacks that unquestionable authority which is furnished only by the soul's recognition of Truth, as contrasted with human opinions, systems, or syllogisms.

(3) *There is the Moral Appeal*, which is concerned with the wide outlook on the race. We are reminded that as we are under immeasurable obligation to the generations that have preceded us, so we are bound to think and act in such wise as to leave a wealthy legacy to those who follow. And it is true that the command to love our neighbour as ourselves applies not only to our contemporaries but to our descendants. But the circle of our altruistic love is drawn so wide by this theory of morals that the impulse to be good

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becomes as thin as diffused vapour. It has no driving force. Tolstoi says of this :—

“ There was a time when it seemed natural to believe that the solution of my own life was given by the law of the whole universe. But after a while I stopped growing. I felt that I was no longer developing, and even that I was slipping back. My muscles weakened ; my teeth dropped out, and I felt that this law not only explained nothing, not only had never explained anything, but had not been a law at all ; that, in fact, I had taken for a law what I found in myself at a particular stage of life.”

His subsequent reflection will lead us to the particular point to which this chapter is intended to converge :

“ As I found no explanation in science, I began to look for the answer elsewhere, and something, which I can only call the consciousness of life, compelled my intellect to turn in another direction, and to rescue me from my desperate condition ; and I was finally and inevitably led to see that quite independently of human knowledge, which formerly seemed my only guide, mankind had another guide, a guide that is irrational—faith, which makes life possible. Faith seemed to be as irrational as ever, but I could but recognise that faith alone gave mankind an answer to life, and in consequence made life possible.” A conclusion which in a true sense

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is the only one adequate to the problems under our consideration.

We are not of those who undervalue science or underrate the importance of scientific method ; all that we contend is that science is not capable of dealing finally and sufficiently with the problem of race-regeneration. She is the daughter and hand-maid of religion, but her discovery of the primal laws of Nature needs to be supplemented by the endorsement and enforced by the sanctions of the spiritual realm, which is the special province of religion, before they can become universally recognised, operative, and permanent in the realm of human morality. Morals are a branch of the tree of religion, whose roots are in the unseen. We give all honour to ethical societies, and ethical impulses and ideals, but their ultimate authority and life, whether recognised or not, are in religious sanctions and inspirations.

Regeneration is distinctively a religious term, as the process of regeneration is essentially a religious concern, nor may it be employed unless to connote a department of human nature which is not touched by the physical, the mental, the scientific, or the moral, but which is as necessary as any of them, and probably more integral to the well-being and development of the individual and the race. There is no reason for any division between those who

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believe thus and the new school of eugenists. The term eugenics has been severely criticised, and it is admittedly not euphonious, but when resolved into its compounds *eu* and *genesis*, it stands for a high and holy conception, and we can readily accept it, stipulating only that the eugenesis of the race cannot be secured unless the science which it denotes is understood to include the whole man, and to include also that re-genesis which calls into play other forces than those with which science primarily deals.

If eugenists refuse this wider connotation of the term and confine it to an aristocracy of race which can, so they think, be realised apart from religion, even so, we do not refuse fellowship and co-operation so far as our paths coincide or lie side by side. We admit that eugenics, in its limited sense, has many suggestions of prime utility, though we say again that they lack finality, permanence, and driving power until associated with regeneration in those wider aspects that religion suggests. "Eugenics," said Sir Francis Galton, "must become a religion." At any rate it may rank as an integral part of religion.

There is one further thought, in confirmation of our contention that religion alone can give a satisfactory solution to the problem of race-regeneration. She alone, as we have seen, gives ultimate authority,

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permanence, and driving power ; she alone deals with aspects of human nature which are fundamental to man's well-being and progress ; and she alone has that note of universality which is characteristic of the race-instinct. The religious and racial instincts are alike universal. They spring from the same source, move towards the same end, fulfil the same purposes ; both have fallen and risen together, both await their final consummation and crown.

CHAPTER III

THE PAST RECORD OF RELIGION

It is impossible to exaggerate the important part which religion has played in the history of our race. From the days of which the merest records in rude implement and dwelling have descended to us, to our own time, religion, however corrupt, has been the dominant power creating, moulding, and destroying royalties and priesthoods, empires and peoples. Beneath ephemeral superstitions have burned her holy cleansing fires. Wise men have brought to her in all ages their gifts of learning, rulers have leaned on her for support, judges have appealed to her for her sanctions, the sorrowful have fled to her for comfort, the dying have demanded her companionship, ignorance and misery in love and fear have adored her. Religion alone has satisfied the human soul in all circumstances. Her place is thus assured by history and human nature. All permanent influences which have worked together for the uplift of humanity have sprung from religion. No discovery can emanate from mortal brain to replace or supersede her. No weapon that is formed against her can prosper, and every tongue that rises in judgment against her, as an essential element in humanity and in the

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history of the world, sooner or later becomes condemned.

When we use the word religion in this general sense, what do we exactly mean? Schleiermacher says: "The common element in all the varied expressions of piety, which distinguish religion from all other feelings—that is to say, the essence of religion—is this, that we are conscious of ourselves as absolutely dependent in relation to God." Biedermann says almost precisely the same thing: "The content of the religious process in the spiritual life of man is the freedom of the finite spirit from finite conditions in an infinite dependence." Lipsius puts the same thought thus: "Religion is the reconciliation of the longing for freedom with the sense of dependence." May we not define religion as being even more than a sense of dependence? Is not religion, in its widest significance, *the point of contact between the nature of man and the immanent and informing Principle of the Universe, whom we know as God?*

The reproduction of the race has always been the profound care of religion. Mystical rites, specially in the East, have always surrounded marriage, maternity, and the other physiological processes of birth. The modern decrees of consanguinity were framed by the Church; and all our modern researches only invest with fresh significance the warnings of

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the marriage service, that marriage, with its consequent expectation of child-birth, is not to be taken in hand "unadvisedly, or wantonly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, and in the fear of God."

The immense power of religion in this question is proved by the excesses to which men have been driven when she has dictated courses which have been in direct opposition to the strongest instincts of our nature.

Metchnikoff delineates, in their naked deformity, the results of the monastic view of the essential corruptness of the body. So absorbing were the demands of the dualistic theory on its proselytes, that they sank to the level of wild beasts. Hermits abandoned their clothing, resorted to the lairs of animals, and went about naked with shaggy and disordered hair. In Mesopotamia and part of Syria, there arose a sect of eaters of grass. They had no dwellings, and ate neither bread nor vegetables, but wandered on the hills and fed on herbage. Cleanliness of the flesh was regarded with disfavour as indicating corruptness of soul, and the most venerated of the saints were those who took no care of the body. It is easy to see how inevitably such doctrines led to the perversion of some of the noblest instincts and functions of the race. The bonds by which individuals were bound to their family or society

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became so relaxed, that fanatics became indifferent to their kinsmen and countrymen, and in order to secure admission into a Christian community it was necessary to renounce one's country. These facts serve our purpose as proving the immense power wielded by religion, when turned in a direction which is resisted and repudiated by all that is strongest in our nature. How much enhanced may her power become when it acts conformably with the noblest promptings and highest instincts of men !

Another illustration of the resistless power of religion is furnished by the history of the Jews. Racial distinctiveness and purity of blood have been preserved nowhere more carefully than among the Jews. Their stability has been unchanged through thousands of years, and amid destructive agencies of the most virulent and aggressive type. Amid the alternation of prosperity and adversity, the favour of kings and the horrors of popular Jew-hate, amid the rise and fall of great empires with which their fortunes were closely allied, the Jews have persisted, jutting out of European civilisation, as the Tarpeian Rock in the midst of ancient Rome. How can this remarkable fact be accounted for ? Not by the Jew's martial prowess, nor his artistic and literary gifts, nor by his commercial aptness ! Not because he was dogged and obstinate in a determina-

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tion which as an anvil broke the hammers of his antagonists! No, but by his belief in his divine mission, by his reverence for his sacred books, and by his faith in the God of his fathers. To summarise the glowing paragraphs of H. S. Chamberlan: In comparison with Rome or Greece their intellectual horizon was narrow, and their mental capacities limited, but these were fully counterbalanced by the power of their faith. However poor the Jewish "law" might appear, when compared with the religious creations of the various Indo-European peoples, "it was in fact a law, which men humbly obeyed, and this very obedience was of supreme ethical importance." Next to their Synagogue and Passover has been their care of their Hebrew stock, and this as prescribed by their religion. The Israelite maiden might wed a Gentile—such an alliance was not forbidden and did not involve the degeneracy of the race; but the Jewish man must not marry outside his own nation, "lest the seed of the chosen people should be contaminated by foreign admixture." It is because of the dictates of their religion that statistics give no indication of decline in the birth-rate of the Hebrew race. But if Judaism, which must be confessed to be a spent force, as judged by the decay of missionary enthusiasm, has achieved so great a miracle in the conservation of the Jewish race amid the changes that have supervened since

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the Dispersion of the Ten Tribes, or the Fall of Jerusalem, what may not the power be and become of a religion which is ever renewing herself at her springs and still has the dew of her youth !

It is not necessary here to prove that Christianity presents us with the highest type of religion which has ever arisen on our planet. Christ, as one of the greatest men of the nineteenth century has said, was "not wise but Divine." It is not a mere chronological expedient that has divided the ages into B.C. and A.D. Christ gave man the supreme conception of God—He is a Spirit, Love, a Father. He revealed man to himself. He drew the veil from the Unseen and the Future. He taught the secret of Redemption. He gave human life the true basis of morals. He set before man a high calling which gave him a new conception of his possibilities, and started him on a quest, every step of which is an attainment whilst it creates a further passion for heights that rise always beyond heights. If the light that is in Christ is darkness, then woe to us all !

But the remarkable characteristic of Christianity is in this, that, contrary to the usual custom of men, who rely mainly on external machinery, Christ supplies an inward impulse, a sustained and living inspiration. He looks quietly on as we construct

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our great pieces of mechanism and social reorganisation. He does not criticise them uncharitably. He knows the earnest purpose by which we are prompted—which, in fact, His Spirit has inbreathed. He may even vitalise and use them presently. The various methods of social reform, old-age pensions, insurance schemes, labour bureaux, etc., pass before Him as Jesse's sons before the prophet, and as they pass they receive His smile and benediction, but they are not His special work. They are fruits of seed which He scattered centuries ago ; but He has at heart something more radical, more creative, more satisfactory. He makes not machines but men. " It is for others to serve the world by organisation ; He serves it by inspiration." They attack the problem from without, He renews from within. He sends forth His Spirit and men are re-created, He renews the face of the earth. His perpetual message is " The Kingdom of Heaven is within you."

Christ, moreover, left the impression on His followers that He would be the perpetual source of inspiration and renewal. " Lo, I am with you always," He said, " even to the end." He would be the Tree of Life always bearing fruit ; the Divine Spring always pouring forth streams of influence ; the Bread of Life always nourishing ; the Light that never grew dim ; the Sap of perpetual spring-tide that never died down. Class these facts together ; the inworking

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of the Spirit of Christ, the choice of the inner spirit of Regeneration rather than the outward system, and the perpetual impulse of an indissoluble life—and surely provision is made for that race-regeneration that shall deal with the whole manhood, and deal with it effectively from within outward, and regenerate the race because it regenerates the individuals of the race. “There is no political alchemy,” said Herbert Spencer, “by which you can get golden conduct out of leaden instincts.” Granted! But you will hardly fail to get golden results, if by a divine alchemy you can make golden the inner springs of conduct.

What words can set forth the priceless services that Christianity has rendered to our British nation? It found us in a vast howling wilderness of warring elements—a very chaos. Briton and Anglo-Saxon, Kelt and Teuton, Dane and Norman, stormed, ravaged, burnt, slew. No dune or down that was not soaked with blood; no estuary or tidal river that did not reflect the blaze of burning towns. But Christianity unified the incongruous materials into our British race. At the Reformation it was the impulse of the new Protestant spirit that threw open the doors of the monasteries and laid the foundations of the age of Shakespeare and Bacon, of Philip Sidney and Drake. When in the eighteenth century the heart of our people seemed dead, it was the Spirit

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of Christ, animating and leading the Methodist Revival, that led to the movements which culminated in the social reforms and the literary harvests of the Victorian era.

The rise of modern investigation and research, which were misunderstood by the religious leaders of the time and construed as antagonistic to religion, when in fact they were only friendly, led to a temporary reaction towards social and philosophic materialism ; but at the present time, partly owing to the influence of Bergson and Eucken, we are witnessing the retreat of materialism and the re-advance of religion. There is less emphasis laid on the non-essentials, and more on the essentials of the religious life, and Christianity is once more reasserting its ancient concern and control of the generation and regeneration of the race. It is absorbing and moulding to its own spiritual ends the newer knowledge of heredity, of the principles of racial well-being, and of the respective values of heredity and environment. It is entering the lists and taking up the gage of battle flung down by those who advocate the abolition of the family, and the substitution for the lasting obligation of marriage of an affectional and passionate affinity, which may be dissolved at any moment at the will of either party. No other antagonist can be found to meet and defeat the onslaught, which threatens the

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foundations of modern society with disintegration. But the religion of Christ, fed from the eternal sources of life, and based on the sanctions of conscience, is equal to the strain, and will again regenerate our race and lead it forward to meet the age of gold.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANSWER OF RELIGION TO THE CHALLENGE OF THE HOUR

WE have seen that religion generally, and the Christian religion particularly, has always concerned itself with questions relating to sex, marriage, birth, as though she instinctively realised that it was only in so far as man was true to the deepest and most radical conceptions of his nature, that he could be true in his attitude towards all Being and Existence, whether seen or unseen. The Church abdicates her functions if she does not fulfil this ancient rôle. She is well within her rights when she embodies amongst her sacred mysteries the symbol of Mother and Child.

But obviously the contribution of the Christian Church must chiefly be by her voice. She may train her sons and daughters to go forth and organise great institutions, and perform heroic deeds of self-sacrifice. But, as far as she is concerned, she has to be content with witness-bearing to the eternal Truth. Yet this is no small thing, for words which are spoken out of the truth of things, and therefore carry their own credentials to all truth-lovers everywhere, are living and creative. They are spirit and they are life. They have the power of making that which they affirm. A profound truth is embodied

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in the ancient record of creation where the words, "And God said, Let there be . . ." are instantly followed by the appearance of the forms of creation out of the formless void. So when religion speaks, not in the language of time-worn tradition, not in the tongue of metaphysics, not by rote or custom, but from things as they are, she is able to create what she affirms, and lo! a new heaven and earth begin to shape themselves. If the religious people of to-day would only agree to differ about non-essentials, and would unite their testimony to eternal truth, dealing with the living issues of the present, instead of contending over obsolete ceremonies, costumes, and forms of words, the mists of falsehood and misconception would be dissipated, as the sea-fog before the touch of the sun. "Truth is mighty, and will prevail," is a well-worn proverb; but we may well ask ourselves if we have ever properly estimated the flimsiness of error, whether of ignorance or intention, when it is met by the clear, strong, unfaltering, and unashamed enunciation of Truth, as it exists in the very constitution of the universe.

To deal, first, with some of the lesser services that religion may undertake. Suppose it should be found that some kind of segregation is absolutely necessary—we will say of a woman, for instance, whose record shows her to be so hopelessly feeble-minded that she is the destined prey of every man

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who wishes to abuse her—religion will follow that woman into her segregated life, and minister to her. Probably she will relieve the State of the charge of such, by the institution of refuges and harbours of refuge, whither such defectives may voluntarily retire. Or she will specify it as a special part of her duty to care for the shiftless, the casual worker, the tramp, and the will-lessly incompetent. Or she will insist that any comprehensive legislation concerning them shall be paternal and friendly as well as just. Or she will bear witness against the evil conditions of nurture, of alcoholism, of insanitary houses, of overcrowded and fetid slums, which almost invariably mean defective senses, dull intelligence, and low vitality. Or she will follow in the footsteps of the almost miraculous experience of Dr. Maria Montessori during the two years when this brilliant physician and pedagogue had charge of the schools for the mentally defective children in Rome. By a combination of special gymnastics, medical care, and her novel pedagogic methods, she was able so to educate children that at the end of the process they actually competed successfully in the ordinary branches of education with normal children in the Roman elementary schools. We must not only segregate the mother, but must reform the nursery, some one has said ; and the care of the environment of the children, and the ultimate transformation

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of the nursery and slum, are the special charge of religion.

There is another thing that religion may do. She has already drawn up a list of prohibited alliances. "A man may not marry" "A woman may not marry" Why should she not go farther and say that no person shall marry who is aware of mental or physical disease, or knows that he carries the taint of racial poison, of epilepsy, or of insanity, so that no innocent man or woman should be called upon to share and suffer the life-long curse, and that no child should be sent out into the world to find that life is a living death, and that because the parent has eaten of the forbidden fruit its teeth should be perpetually set on edge? The man who deliberately forgoes marriage, home, and the embrace of childish arms, the prattle of childish voices, because of an awful respect for womanhood and a noble altruistic love for the race, who decides that in him at least some bad hereditary strain should end, should be canonised by religion amongst her martyrs and saints, the hero of the moral battle-field, the winner of the parsley crown of high honour and unchallengeable integrity.

There is yet another of these foothills over which religion may climb to her supreme attempt. Much of the trouble of the present crisis arises from the great cost of maintenance. In other days—days when the

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wife and mother found her most congenial province in her home, when she was adept in all the arts of housewifery, when she resented the thought that aught was menial which she might do for those she loved—it was possible for the young man and woman to marry early in life, and it was natural for them to surround themselves with a family of young children. But now, through the cost of living, and especially from the gradual obliteration of the middle class of shopkeepers, marriage is apt to be deferred towards middle-life, when the nerves are wearied, and habits are formed, and the body is set. Probably no witness that religion can give at the present juncture is more necessary than that life does not consist in the abundance of goods that we possess, but in character, in purity, in righteousness, and in love. Greater simplicity is the crying need of the age. Let girls be taught that a strong and beautiful home-life is not dependent on costly expenditure or the large retinue of servants who give relief from household duty, but on the deft touch that transfigures the plainest furniture and the simplest decoration with a charm, which only the quick intuitions of love can impart. Let young men learn from the lips of religious teachers that the zest of life, like the dew, tarries not till mid-day, and consists in sacrifice, in self-giving for wife and child, in the comradeship that treads with the twin-soul the rougher paths of the mountain-foot, on their

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way to the far-reaching glories of the upper lawns. Plain fare, stronger thinking, and simpler living, fewer servants, and more home ministry, the well-appointed cottage-home as the stepping-stone to the mansion of after-life—these are truths that need to be spoken, because the extravagance of our expenditure on externals is seriously impeding race-regeneration.

The spirit of extravagant display is hard to exorcise. It has entered too deeply into the very heart of the people. We speak, for instance, of a "good" marriage when an actress marries a lord, or a poor man an heiress; but surely a good marriage is one in which each partner brings to the other a healthy body, a well-stored and contented mind, hope and faith and love, high ideals, and the resolve that, whatever storms may sweep the outward life, nothing shall ever be permitted to break the perfect bonds of understanding, sympathy, and affection by which their souls are knit to each other. Religion must never hesitate in affirming this, and in magnifying the naturalness and charm of large families. It is, obviously, impossible to discuss openly the question of wilful infecundity, but the religious teacher can show the advantage to the race, the country, as well as to the family, of more children than the one lonely chicken which too often is found in our homes, suffering untold privation in never knowing the sweet relationship of brother or sister.

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This applies especially to our influence over the young. Intercourse with those whom they respect has far-reaching results in after-life.

Ideals which have been early instilled mould conduct. Impressions are made which remain as seed-germs of character, not fully understood at the time of reception, but valued and treasured as succeeding years unfold their reasonableness and value. Much more than we know is the life of a nation influenced by its ideals : those ideals create public opinion ; and public opinion creates fashion ; and fashion is made by speech as well as act. It is said that, after all, academic argument and appeals to reason will of themselves produce but little effect. They may be needed to start a movement, but to make it a living force in the world, those who are already convinced must give currency to their conclusions by continued suggestion and association of ideas ; and for these we cannot begin too early with impressionable youth. Just as we brand with dishonour the man who will not earn his living, or the woman who neglects her household, so we should expose to disfavour those who refuse to take their share in the maintenance of a strong and healthy nation, because only as our people are physically, mentally, and morally fit on the one hand, and numerically strong on the other, can we fulfil our mission to mankind.

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But a still more important function of religion is to insist that the family rather than the individual is the true unit of civilisation. As to the origin of the family much disputing has taken place of late. For instance, it is not very long ago that we were told that in the earliest stages of human development "a community of sex prevailed, limited by no differences of any kind; all brothers and sisters were husbands and wives to each other, and all their children brothers and sisters; that the first step of progress from this state was the establishment of the mother's right known as matriarchal." But more recently it has been convincingly proved that even the oldest Aryans, before the breaking off of the Teutonic branch, knew nothing of this, and that the oldest parts of the Aryan language point to the supreme position of the father and head of the household. "There is, in fact," says Ernst Grosse, quoted by H. S. Chamberlain, "no single primitive people whose sexual relations approached a condition of promiscuity, or even hinted at such a thing. The firmly knit individual family is by no means a late achievement of civilisation; it exists in the lowest stages of culture as a rule without exception." Besides, all recent anthropological and ethnological accounts testify how much we have undervalued savages, how superficially we have observed, and how thoughtlessly we have drawn conclusions. The

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phenomena of "free love" as advocated to-day cannot be supported by analogies or arguments drawn from primitive or savage races. A most interesting illustration is furnished by the original inhabitants of central Australia, supposed to be the most backward of all races, and whom Lubbock described as "wretched savages." Since his time two English officials, who lived amongst them and gained their confidence, have given a detailed account of their intellectual life, which is most complicated. Their belief in the transmigration of souls is the basis of their religion. Every marriage union with strange races is forbidden, and thereby the race is kept pure and their restrictions on marriage amongst themselves ingeniously guarded against the perils of continuous in-breeding. We turn from these so-called savages to the systems which are being advocated amongst us at the present hour with the question whether we are not called to cleanse the inside of our cup and platter !

From these Australian natives we turn to ancient Rome, and there again meet with the sanctity of the home as the inviolable and essential unit of the State. The Greek, though woman held a high position in the constitution of Grecian civilisation, took the State as his starting-point, whereas the Roman began with the home. The family was the unit of his civilisation, and on this basis he raised the structure

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of society and law. One historian, in the excess of his enthusiasm, avows that the family was found in Rome in a form more beautiful than the world has ever seen. Every Roman citizen, whether patrician or plebeian, was lord in his own house, his disposition of property was never questioned, the interference of his wife's family was set aside by a custom which made relationship descend from the father's side alone ; and certainly woman has never held a more honourable position than in the days of the Republic, and in the first Christian centuries when Stoic influence wrought greatly in purging Roman society. The historians of the time expressly describe the reform :

“ In the remarkable fervour for social justice, which was the direct outcome of that reform, woman,” says Mr. Joseph McCabe, “ was bound to find profit. The service done to her consisted mainly in providing a sounder basis for the liberty and power she had already won. The Stoics—philosophers, lawyers, and emperors—believed in the equality of men and women. Antoninus Pius embodied in one of his judgments the common Stoic sentiment that fidelity was equally expected of husband and wife. The great Stoic jurist, Gaius, severely criticised the older Roman law that dealt unequally with man and woman, and scouted the popular apology as to the mental inferiority of the female sex. Briefly, the

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Stoics, who controlled the legal and imperial courts for more than a century, completed the work of putting women on a level of legal and social equality with man, and their world included—as the letters of Plutarch, Seneca, Tacitus, and Pliny show—a large number of women of equal culture and character.”

Thus the Roman home became a worthy ideal, in spite of certain exceptions, with which all readers of the history of that time are familiar, and which are no more typical of Roman civilisation than the vagaries and excesses of certain circles in New York, Paris, or London can be accepted as typical of our age.

It would take us too far from our present purpose to show in how many parts of the world the same high ideal of the family has obtained ; not universally, of course, but still with remarkable persistence from Assyria and Egypt in the East, to Peru beneath the rule of the Incas in the West. In our time, unhappily, as we have hinted, another theory of sex-relationship has been gaining ground, which proposes to view marriage as a temporary contract—“ an association terminable at the will of either party.” These proposals have been accounted for by tracing the course of two currents of thought, which, though diverse in their original fountains, are mingling their waters in a common channel.

The *first* of these is the development of the individual.

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“The movement of progressive societies,” says Sir Henry Maine, “has been uniform in this respect. Through all its course it has been distinguished by the gradual dissolution of family dependency and the growth of individual obligation in its place. The individual is steadily substituted for the family as the unit of which civil law takes account.” The same opinion, which, however startling at first sight, is the deliberate opinion of an unimpeached authority, is corroborated, as Dr. Peabody reminds us, by a similar statement of Horace Bushnell, who says: “All our modern notions and speculations have taken a bent towards individualism.”

The *second* influence, which militates against the maintenance of the family, is the insistence by a strong school of modern thinkers of the impossibility of establishing an absolute social unity vested in the State, so long as the integral unity of the separate home is maintained. “The thrift, economies, and centralised interest of the isolated home tend to detach those who are devoted to such homes from complete devotion to the socialist ideal. Family supremacy, therefore, is reckoned to be absolutely incompatible with an independent solidaric commonwealth.” It is held by this school that the desire to hold and transmit property was the original purpose that eventuated in the formation of the home. Without accepting that proposition, it is easy to

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see how inconsistent the family tenure of property is with certain modern ideals of reconstruction. It is easy to estimate how necessary to their realisation is the destruction of the domestic unit.

Amid the clash of these suggestions religion has no alternative than to reaffirm, without compromise, the great teachings of Jesus Christ. There can be no doubt about His attitude. When solemnly questioned about the law of divorce, His answer to those who tempted Him was unmistakable and final: "They are no more twain, but one flesh." For a husband to put away his wife and marry another is adultery, and for a wife to put away her husband and marry another is adultery. In Matthew's record the clause is inserted, "saving for the cause of fornication," but in the two other Gospels this exception is not made, probably because neither Mark nor Luke thought it needful to add so obvious a point, for obviously the act of adultery nullifies any unity which the act of marriage may have forged. The one particular that claims attention here is that adultery is not chargeable until another is taken in the place of the divorced. Christ does not prohibit voluntary separation in the case of alcoholism, unkindness, or want of affinity. But, in His unerring judgment, there can be no re-marriage, unless it is clearly proved that the divorced one has been guilty of adultery. Marriage in the teaching of Jesus is

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indissoluble. There can be no re-marriage except adultery has been proved.

The Pharisees thought that this ruling was too severe ; and even the disciples said, " If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry." Yet, if you relax the stringency of Christ's ruling by admitting that a case for divorce may be made out for other reasons short of adultery, you at once open the door to that tampering with the marriage tie which threatens the disintegration of society in some of the Western States, which are said to be approaching a time when the separations caused by divorce will exceed those caused by death, and where less care is observed in arranging a contract of marriage than is involved in a contract concerning a horse or a tract of land. The only two cases in which our Lord suggests that marriage may be avoided without blame are either through some inherited or some engrossingly important mission. To the former case He alludes when He says, " Some are born eunuchs from their mother's womb," and to the latter in the words, " Some make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." But in each of these cases the door is not thrown open to a laxer morality or the illicit gratification of passion ; but a further demand is made for continence, abstinence, purity.

It is quite admissible to suppose that this teaching

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of Jesus has brought suffering into many lives. Persons who know each other only in the glare of the ballroom, or the frivol of the racecourse or picnic, can hardly be expected to form unerring judgments of each other, such as will stand the test of life's ordinary drab and grey. But the Master looks at the question, as He so often views similar ones, from the view-point of the world, and these special cases must be considered in the light of the well-being of the greatest number. We all agree that "the general good" is best realised and conserved when the greatest possible number of individuals are reared in full vigour and health, with all their faculties perfect. Race-regeneration stands for that ideal, and this was in the mind that has given infallible guidance to the foremost nations of civilisation, in uttering His verdict on the permanence of the marriage tie. In certain cases that verdict may mean that a man's foes will be they of his own household, and that a daughter-in-law will suffer endless misery, as Madame Guyon did at the hands of her mother-in-law, but nevertheless the Lord insists on monogamy as the law of marriage, and the integrity of the home as integral to the stability of the State. Therefore Christ put all honour on the home. He lived with Mary in the home at Nazareth for thirty years, performed His first miracle at a wedding feast, made much of

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Peter's home during the Galilean ministry, and of Martha's during His visits to the metropolis. His parables were founded on the relationships of the home, the father with his sons—and though on one occasion He refused the interference of His people, He could find no closer affinity than that of mother, sister, or brother to express the love He bore to those who were in affinity with Him, because they did the Father's will. "Family affection," says the author of "Ecce Homo," "is in some form an almost indispensable root of Christianity."

It was in strange and fatal contradiction to these teachings of the Gospels, that some leaders of the early Church came to regard celibacy as a higher state than marriage; and thus the Roman and the Teutonic ideals were replaced by the narrower conception, for which some justification appeared to be given by the Apostle Paul. In justification of his teachings with regard to marriage and women, we must remember that he believed, and he wrote to those who believed, in the approaching overthrow of human society, and the introduction of a new order. For him and those with whom he associated, the air was quivering with anticipation of the near approach of the reign of Christ. The heavens were to be rolled together as a garment. The world and its works were to pass through cleansing fires. At any moment the trumpet of dissolution might be sounded, at any

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moment the herald rays of the eternal morning might tremble in the sky. "The time is short," he cried. "Let those that have wives be as though they had none." "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." These precepts given for temporary expediency, were interpreted as of permanent obligation; and beneath the exhortations of Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose, vast numbers of the noblest souls withdrew to the cloister and the cell.

Directly you admit that celibacy is a higher and holier condition than marriage, you strike at the foundations of the family, and open the door to destructive theories of woman's inferiority, theories which again react on the ideal of the home. Homes, in the truest, deepest sense, are only possible among those races and in those periods which yield to woman her queenly position as man's consort, comrade, and companion, differently endowed to him, but in her sphere as regal as he in his. The laws that stand on our statute-book, unrepealed, attest the miserable distinctions made by legislation between the rights of men and women, to the immense disparagement of the latter. But who shall estimate the immeasurable loss sustained by society in the withdrawal of so many noble natures from marriage and the home? How many reformers, preachers, theologians, and saints would have been given to the world, had these

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persons, many of whom were richly dowered in character and intellect, been parents, expending on children affections which were fought down, and repressed with ruthless severity as though they were temptations of evil? The suggestion has been hazarded, indeed, that some of the golden splendour of the Renaissance might be traced to the relaxing of the iron rule of the Church, and the return of the best strains of manhood and womanhood to the ordinary walks of human life. To the same impoverishment, until quite recently, our own race and nation have been subjected through the embargo laid on the marriage of those holding fellowships in our universities. When the long line of illustrious sons, who have sprung from Presbyterian manses in the glens and straths of Scotland, is compared with the dying-out of great names in the Anglican Church, one is startled to realise the impoverishment which these prescriptions of celibacy have caused. A more sinister aspect of the subject is suggested when one remembers that the prohibition of marriage has exposed to grievous temptation those who were not able to sustain the strain for which they were unprepared.

Religion is therefore summoned to a double task. *First*, she must reinstate marriage in its original position as fulfilling more perfectly than celibacy the Divine ideal of man's creation. "He made them

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male and female." The perfect type, as the Hindoo states it, is a trinity—father, mother, and child. *Secondly*, religion must insist on the careful regimen of the racial instinct.

We give all credit for sincerity to men and women of high character, who, seeing the many evils of our modern civilisation, are endeavouring to reconstruct it on a new basis. But from one's reading and observation the conclusion is sometimes pressed home that some of those who have ranged themselves under their banner are not actuated by the high purposes of their leaders. This is a universal experience, and it is unfair to judge the main body by the heterogeneous groups of its camp-followers and adherents. But marriage has less to fear from the theorist and the doctrinaire than from those who slightly veil their desire to return to the lowest type of society and the most degrading view of the mutual interdependence of the sexes. In all hearts, probably, though in large numbers unrealised because unsolicited, there exist traces and tendencies of those earlier stages of evolution, through which, if Darwin and Wallace are to be credited, humanity has passed upwards through the ages ; and it is against these that religion must raise her most determined and unrelenting witness.

Those, however, who would concede to instinct the ultimate adjustment of the relations between the sexes, are not alone in making illegitimate and

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perilous concessions to its demands. Under cover of legalised marriage licence is too often given to the impulse of unregulated desire. Without desire for food, drink, sleep, exercise, and the pleasure connected with the gratification of desire, the human body would probably fail of necessary aliment. The pleasure connected with the gratification of natural instinctive cravings in these directions is necessary for the maintenance of our physical well-being ; and apart from sexual instinct, with its appeal to emotion, it is probable that the race would not persist. But because pleasure is connected with the gratification of instinct, there is always a lurking peril that man should divorce what in the nature of things is united. There is always the peril that the pleasurable gratification of desire should be divorced from the supreme purpose of its implantation—that purpose being, in the present instance, first, the expression of a holy love, and secondly, the perpetuation of the race.

If we are to regenerate the race, we must begin at the beginning, at the origin and genesis of existence, at the gate through which its children pour into our Edens. We must regenerate generation, or at least mend the conception of generation. We must raise the ideal. We must rebuke the heat of unbridled passion. We must lead men to eat of the Tree of Life as well as of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

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That I am not exaggerating the case, and the evils which the unregulated force of instinct may introduce within the limits of an institution sanctioned alike by religion and the law, I would like to quote the noble and eloquent words of that prince of French orators, Lacordaire :

“ Not beyond and around him, but within himself, within the living circle of his personality, man encounters a palpable flesh, an animated and sensitive flesh, which holds to his soul, which receives its orders, but which in its turn reacts upon him and offers him a field to which he may call life from the very bosom of God. God, who gave to all living creatures the command, Increase and multiply, still more issues to His highest creature the command to live beyond himself by transmitting himself to a posterity. In regard to those it was given only for a body, but in man the seat of life is the soul. He needed, therefore, to exercise a paternity like that of God ; and as God in the inaccessible light of His existence said to Himself, speaking to another than Himself, ‘ Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten Thee,’ so it was needful that man, first soul, and secondly body, should at the same time and in the same act, evoke a soul and a body living in his own likeness, and be able also to say to them like God : Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee. *An heroic moment which man has corrupted with all the*

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rest, and in which, under the chaste veils of affection, he has found the secret of an intoxication without honour, without power, without life, but which goes far beyond frenzy ; for if we say the frenzy of gambling, we may say also the delirium of voluptuousness. What hath not God done in order to raise this mystery to the height of its nature and its end ! The sacred union of souls under the immortal yoke of a love freely promised, pleasures and duties for ever in common, misfortunes borne together, afford an unspeakable mixture of blessings or troubles shared ; but man is more skilful in his corruption than Providence in his prudence. He has burst his bonds, rejected his obligations, and from the very sources of life has drawn forth corruption and death for the noblest faculties of his being."

Those penetrating words speak for themselves, and in these days when men and women are seeking the pleasure without the fruit, when they are grasping at sensual delight, unsanctified by the thought of a godly seed, when the married count the marriage-seal the warrant for incontinence, and the unmarried proclaim the conviction that they must follow the direction of natural instinct without staying to ask if it may not be held in leash or bidden to heel, it is surely time for religion to lift up her voice to cry " What God hath cleansed, make not common." It is time for her to insist that the two conditions which

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transfigure the act of marriage, and make it a sacrament, are, first, the love which has mated souls in an everlasting affinity, and secondly, the dower of children, who, having been conceived in purity and love, will carry with them in all after years the impression of that sacred moment when the final act of Creation was repeated so far as it falls within the limits of our humanity ; and of them also, as of Eden, a Divine voice pronounces its immutable benediction, " Behold, it is very good." Is it impossible that religion, by her repeated and strong affirmation of this ideal, may teach mankind to seek it ; the more especially, when, as we shall presently see, she indicates the dynamic that shall render self-control possible ?

Dr. Saleeby has drawn an interesting contrast between the instincts of animals and our own. The instinct of an animal is an almost completely fixed, rigid, and final thing, and it is perfect. " You cannot teach the cat anything about how to look after a kitten." But in us the instincts are plastic, educable, and capable of amazing transmutations, and here religion may find a wide sphere for her operations, as she sets about the high task of teaching man that he must yoke and drive the fiery coursers of his chariot with a wise, strong hand ; that he must not vent his passion on the woman he has sworn to love, lest he end by hating her ; and that unrestrained

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passion will reproduce itself in lives that may become the scourge-whips of the Furies to the last hour of his life. Strange that we should have to suffer to wintry grey hairs for the lack of self-discipline and self-control in the spring-tide of our lives ! But the Church too often has failed to help us because she has spoken so ineffectively of those forces which Christ revealed to His followers, and in living contact with which He is prepared to place all those who obey the conditions necessary to their utilisation.

It might not be permissible to dilate at large on this aspect of the question, unless we were concerned with religion, in the universal acceptation of that term ; but since the writer holds that we are here touching a point which all religions have sought after, though some have glimpsed from afar, but which is clearly set forth in the way of Christ, he ventures to expand these suggestions. There is little room for doubt that the soul of man, though richly dowered, is incompetent, with such energy as it can muster, to cope with the rapacity of passion. We make this statement generally, and in full view of the vast number of noble exceptions, which are, however, incomparable with the mass of evidence on the other side. But this moral weakness has been provided against through the *dunamis* which, the Christian believes, resides in a superexcellent degree in Jesus Christ. Ever since the beginning this has been within

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the reach of all great souls, who have sought it in connection with the divine and timeless Christ—the Logos—the Light that lighteth every man coming into the world. When the soul of man discovers those forces of the spirit-world, and correlates itself with them, and allows itself to be infilled and dominated by them, it suddenly finds that it is more than a match for the dictate of passion and the love of appetite. It becomes more than a conqueror! How well it would be if religious leaders would combine on this, and bear unfaltering witness to the spirit-world, to the repertoire of power hidden there, as once the electricity lay hidden in nature, awaiting the discovery and use of the formulæ, the spell of which was irresistible. This is what the Apostle referred to when he said that the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation, and when he asserted, further, that the Law of the Spirit of Life had made him free. Into the precise conditions which must be fulfilled before that power begins to operate, we must not enter, as this is not a theological or religious treatise, but they are well known, and when the word to which the lock is set is spelt the wards of the great safe will open.

It is well known that there was no word for Love, in the Christian sense of that word, before the Christian ages. Had there been, it would not have been necessary for the Apostle to exert his gifts,

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as in 1 Cor. xiii., to show what it was and what it was not. The word that was chosen to set forth the nature of the Supreme and that attribute of His which was to be implanted in the soul of man had to be cleansed from the base alloy of unhallowed association and newly minted. This is the supreme attainment of religion. She teaches love after the Divine ideal, and when that passion enters the heart of man it subdues the base greed which is often described as love, and extinguishes its heat, as sun rays extinguish household fires. It is in that love that hearts mate. It is of that love that marriage becomes the outward symbol and seal. It is that love which forbears to wed, if any taint of evil should be carried over into untainted lives. It is that love which provides the atmosphere in which young children thrive, and reveals to them presently the Divine Love. It is that love which carefully considers the need of the world and the call of coming generations. It is that love which proclaims the immortality of love, and predicts with no faltering voice the existence of an unfallen world. When that love shall permeate the hearts and lives of men, our race will be regenerated, and regenerated by religion. To have made that warm but stainless emotion the link between men and women, and the guardian of helpless babes, may well justify the eulogium: "No battle, no change of dynasty, no natural phenomenon, no discovery,

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possesses for our race a significance which can be compared with that of the short life on earth of the Galilean."

This is the mission which religion must fulfil, if she is to keep her place like the beacon-fire at the head of the march of the Israelites. She can reinforce the efforts of a true science. By discouraging the union of the unfit ; by adding wisely among her written or unwritten code to her degrees of prohibition ; by the teaching and example of her members ; by permeating public opinion, through pulpit, press, or platform ; by the dissemination of Christian ideals ; by magnifying the excellence and beauty of the family life ; by her appeal to the spirit of self-denial ; and by her advocacy of a simpler manner of life, she may do much to regenerate the race. And her worthiest service will be to breathe through human hearts the breath of a divine love, and quicken human spirits with the inspiration of a divine strength. Again we ask what influence other than religion is deep-seated enough, or pervasive enough, or universal enough, to deal with the vast and ever-widening racial and inter-racial questions which are involved in this great question ? Social reformers may deal with method, science may discuss the laws of blending and growth, educationists may train the young, and moralists urge our nature to self-discipline and self-control, but only religion can comprehend them

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all, co-ordinate them with each other, and supply the breath of life. Its scope is humanity, its power is irresistible, its foundations are changeless and eternal.

May we not from this view-point forecast the religion of the twentieth century? Has Romanism had its day? Has Protestantism passed its meridian? Is the soul of man demanding a fresh presentation of vital truths, not apart from history and historical evolution, but with less emphasis on creeds and rites, and more on the spiritual dynamic? We do not ask to be freed from the demands of labour, business, recreation, society, government. The nature of man is many-sided, and must not be starved in any of its departments. One of the most promising signs of the time is the energy with which men are attending to social conditions and building the wastes of many generations. The ancient gulf between religion and science is closing up. The world is recognising a universal kinship. The myriad appliances of intercommunication, like the nerves of the body, are binding the race into solidarity. The mastery of the elements is nearly complete. Nature has told so many wonderful secrets, which man has eagerly exploited for his use, that it seems as though we must be getting to the last of the Sybilline books. The veil that screens the unseen world glows with unusual radiance, waxes thin, and sways to

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and fro with movements on the other side. Is this the coming of the Christ to institute another era in the history of the race? Are the new heaven and earth about to be revealed? Is a new platform of progress nearly gained? Is this the beginning of the regeneration of which Christ spoke? If so, it becomes the Church to bestir herself, and prepare a regenerated race to enter and possess the new era; and with the loftier conception of wedlock there shall come a statelier Eden back to man.



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