

# PASS IT ON

by

**Geoffrey H. Gilbey**

## Preface

A long preface will ruin a book. I was once told. I must bear this in mind in bringing out a new *Pass It On*, as I have so much to explain. In order to avoid writing a long preface, I will embody what I have to say in Chapter I. All I feel I need say is that *Pass It On* was written in the hope that the good news I had heard in my life might help others. It may be thought unbelievable, but I have had over a thousand letters and messages from readers to tell me how much the news has helped them and also the joy they are experiencing in passing on the good news to others. I hope and pray that they and others will continue to *Pass It On*.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE REASON

It was in July, 1917. I was sitting in my Army hut just outside Poperinghe, writing a farce for our 20<sup>th</sup> Divisional Concert Party, 'The Verey Lights,' when a knock came at the door. I was not very pleased at being interrupted, as the farce was progressing well, and we were in a hurry for it. "Come in," I shouted.

In came my friend, Canon F. R. Barry, D.S.O., whose books and helpful broadcasts are so well known to us. He was our Senior Chaplain.

"I want you to do something for me," he began. I replied that I would most certainly do anything in my power. I was Camp Commandant, and I imagined he wanted me to indent for a new saddle for his horse, to arrange leave for his servant, or to play the piano at one of his services. But he had not come to see me in my official capacity. He said, "Read this," and he laid a paper in front of me. It was a communication from the Assistant Chaplain General, and I have kept a copy of it.

Here it is:

To ALL S.C.F's. C/F. DIVISIONS.

"Please ask some layman of thoughtful disposition to be good enough to place his opinions at the disposal of the Church by answering the attached questions.

"I should be glad if you would hasten a return of the result to this office.

"E. R. DAY,

"Assistant Chaplain General."

Third Army. 13/7/1917.

He asked me to be the "layman of thoughtful disposition." I felt flattered, but explained that I was afraid the task was beyond me. Mr. Barry was insistent, and those who have the pleasure of knowing him will not be surprised to hear that he got his way.

The questions were to do with the worship of the Church, and I thoroughly enjoyed answering them.

I sent home copies of the questions and answers to my mother. She was so enthusiastic about them that I determined there and then to write a book on religion. I started it in September, 1917, and continued it at odd moments during the rest of the war. I finished it in France, in November, 1918, just after the Armistice.

When it was completed, I showed it to a few friends, but they were all emphatic it was so personal it could never be published. This was a big blow, as the book

contained so many messages I longed to pass on. I consoled myself with the thought that perhaps one day my chance would come.

When I was demobilised, the Daily Express took me on as a reporter, and after three months I was given the job of writing on racing. I wrote about nothing else but racing, and I loved the work. I had always been desperately keen about racing and the good name of the Turf. I used all my energies to fight those who were bringing the Turf into disrepute.

After I had been a racing journalist for a few years, several book publishers wrote and asked me to write them a book. "Now," I said to myself, "I shall be able to write about the only things in life that really matter." It was not surprising though, I suppose, to find that the publishers one and all wanted me to write a book on racing. I replied, "I can't do that, but I'll write you one on Religion." They politely informed me that although they were sure I could write very interestingly on religion, they were afraid no one would read it. "You have made a name for yourself in the racing world," they said, "and the public will expect only racing from you, and won't want anything else."

I must confess that I was a little crestfallen. I was so certain that I could help people if only I could get the chance. My chance came eventually in a remarkable way.

On Friday, September 7th, 1928, I read in the Daily Express that a series of articles was going to be published on "Belief." I imagined that several of these articles would be of an atheistic or agnostic nature. I took for granted that they must all deal with religious beliefs.

It occurred to me that although I knew the writing of a racing journalist might look very tame against the arguments of brilliantly clever men and women, I would set my simple faith on paper. It would probably never be published, but I could cause no harm in so doing.

That day I was racing at Folkestone, and on my way down in the train I wrote my simple ideas on paper. "What are you doing?" asked my brother.

"Something which I expect will never be published," I replied. "Then why waste your time?" he asked. I didn't answer.

When I had completed the article and read it through, I was in two minds about sending it off. In church on Sunday I finally decided I would. I argued to myself that it might help some lonely soul. I accordingly went to the office and left it with a note for Mr. Beverley Baxter, who at the time was Editor.

All next day, while I was playing cricket at Lord's against the jockeys, I was thinking how terribly conceited it was of me to have written this article. Then when the articles began to appear and I found that the distinguished men and women were only expressing their belief in such things as Beauty and Poetry, I realised that there was no need for alarm, that the articles were not on religious matters, and that mine

would not be published.

Then came a letter from Mr. Baxter. He said, "Your article is charming, and of course I shall use it. I can't tell you how grateful I am for it."

The article duly appeared on the Saturday, September 15th. I was prepared for much abuse. By Tuesday night three hundred letters had reached me. Among this number was only one which might be called discouraging. It was short, and to the point. The writer said, I always thought you were mad. Now I know it."

In this chapter I should like also to give the reason why I am bringing out another *Pass It On*.

The book became out of print last year, and ever since I have been inundated with requests from people who have been trying to buy it. I called at a large number of bookshops in the autumn of last year to inquire if they had a spare copy of the book. When I was told that they had sold out, I inquired if they could get me one. They all told me that a week rarely passed when they were not asked for copies of the book, and some said that they had even advertised unsuccessfully to get copies.

*Pass It On* had a huge sale, but my one regret was that it was not everybody who can afford half-a-crown or five shillings for a book. The book was written especially for those in need.

I was only too delighted to buy copies myself from the publishers to give to those who genuinely wanted the book but who could not buy copies for themselves. I could, though, only give copies to those with whom I was brought in touch, in my prison and my other work.

I feel that I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton for putting this book within the reach of the many thousands who can afford a shilling.

When friends heard of this new edition they said, "Please don't alter one word."

I have endeavoured to make as few changes as possible. Many chapters I have left without one word being altered. I have added one extra chapter on Nerves, because I heard from hundreds of nerve sufferers who wrote and told me that the chapters had comforted and helped them, but who also asked for more.

If you have friends suffering from nerves, do please pass on the messages contained in these chapters to them.

I must also say that I have dealt with the subject very fully in my book *The Way Out*. In *The Way Out* I take the nerve sufferer by the hand and take him out by the same way as I went. By this same way I have been privileged to lead hundreds of nerve sufferers.

## CHAPTER II

### RELIGION AT THE FRONT

It occurs to me that some extracts from my unpublished book, to which I have referred in Chapter I, might be of interest. I am quoting them exactly as they were written. It will be seen that I used the iron ration simile, which I later used in my article, "I Believe in God." Those who read this book will find that my ideas have changed since the war. I publish the following extracts, as it is likely that some readers at the present time will be feeling as I felt then.

". . . If you wanted to back the winner of the Derby, you wouldn't go and ask a clergyman for a tip. And yet I am going to ask you to do something which will appear to you to be equally foolish. I am going to ask you to read my views on religion. You will wonder how I can have the audacity to put them on paper, when I tell you that I am a mixture of an actor, a devotee of the Turf, and a temporary soldier.

"The reason why I am writing this book is that I have never read a book dealing with religion which could be understood by people like myself. We are frightened by the word 'faith.' We are told that without faith we are lost. Those of us who have got no faith then throw religion aside as something beyond us, and we live without it.

"But I think I am right in saying that we all feel that we are left with a gap. There are times when we hardly notice the gap, but there are times when the gap becomes an aching void. I am going to attempt to fill up the gap . . .

"Whenever I have a job to tackle I invariably begin on the most difficult part first. That is my reason for dealing first with 'Faith.' We begin our lives with Faith, and there may be many fortunate people in this world who still retain the faith which they learnt as children. I retained mine until I was nineteen.

"I was at Oxford at the time, and was determined to be ordained. One night after dinner I met a fellow undergraduate who asked me what I was going to do when I went down. I told him, and we started a discussion on religion. My childlike faith had no chance against his brilliant brains. After several conversations with him I was left with a few threads of faith, which have occasionally asserted themselves out here in France, but which have soon given way again.

"A child's faith is quoted as very beautiful, but the unfortunate thing is that unless it is reinforced and strengthened at school, it will be unable to withstand a strong attack. If a child is brought up of honest parents, he will believe everything he is told. It never dawned on me that I was not expected to believe every word of the Bible. I believed in the Bible in the same way as I believed our coachman when he told me that I could catch a bird by putting salt on its tail. I remember throwing some crumbs out of the nursery window and waiting with a handful of salt while the birds collected. If I had not tested his experiment with the salt, I should have gone on believing it, until I was told by someone else that it was not true.

“So it was with my religion. When I was at my private school at Cothill, and at Eton, I never heard any religious discussion. I simply heard the same Bible stories told over and over again, and I never doubted them. I was confirmed at the age of sixteen, but I didn’t understand it. I simply accepted it. I went to Communion pretty regularly. My religion was selfish. I prayed for everything I wanted. I believed in prayer, and I still do, but I don’t attribute this to faith.

If I had prayed earnestly and devotedly for things, and my prayers had never been answered, I should have given up my prayers by now. No, I have tested prayer. I know there is a God, who listens to us, in the same way as I know there is a sun and a moon.

“Yet there are a number of things which a clergyman tells me I must believe. He tells me, too, that I can only believe them by faith, and that if I do believe them I shall be rewarded. I always make the same reply, which is as follows: - ‘If you told me that you would give me £5 if I would believe that I should live to the age of a hundred,’ I couldn’t claim the reward, because, although I can understand that there is a remote possibility, yet I frankly can’t believe it, because *you don’t know*. . . .

“. . . I must answer the question, ‘Have you prayed in France as you should have done?’ My answer is ‘No.’ The trenches have found me out: have made me despise myself : have made me realise that my threads of faith are worthless.

“I landed in France as the second in command of a company in July, 1915. For the first six months of trench life I felt that I had at last found the meaning of Christianity. I used to look forward eagerly to my Sunday Communion. I felt that if I was killed, God would overlook my past life. I lived in a sort of trance.

“Looking back on those six months reminds me that I was no better than during any other period of my life. As far as I can remember, I was, if possible, more selfish, more intolerant, worse tempered and more conceited than I have ever been. I certainly prayed more, but I am ashamed to admit that my prayers were more on behalf of my skin than my soul.

“At the end of the six months I began to drop away. I used to attend Communion occasionally, but the service began to mean nothing to me. My prayers were half-hearted to a degree. I used to forget all about them until I happened to come under some heavy shelling. Then in my weakness I would turn to God, and implore Him to give me strength to keep my head. Like many other officers, I was chiefly frightened of showing cowardice in front of the men. I wrote home to my mother about it at the time, and mentioned that in the trenches every man was an actor or a hero. (My letter was published anonymously in the Daily Express.) I was certainly an actor.

“The awful experiences of the Somme fighting did not help me. Living among dead bodies, both our own and the enemy’s, made me almost wonder if there was a God. I was then second in command of the Battalion, and fortunately I had several facts to keep me going. The first was the fact that I adored my Colonel. He had a truly

wonderful character. He was a deeply religious man, very sympathetic and phenomenally brave. (It is curious how one's whole life can be affected by a strong character.)

“Unfortunately we were talking together at the mouth of our dugout during the worst bombardment that I have ever experienced, when he was badly wounded by a piece of shell. Again I asked myself, ‘Is there a God?’

“During the next week I only prayed once, and that was my old prayer for courage. We had been relieved, and I was the last to leave the trenches with my orderly. We were winding our way round the loathsome shell-holes - it was a pitch-dark night - when suddenly a ‘five-nine’ shell landed very close to us. I was pitched into a shell-hole which was full of bodies. A mixture of horror and terror seized me. I was on the point of screaming, but instead of this I knelt and prayed. I have never mentioned this before, even to my best friends. I wonder if my orderly ever told anybody about it. The poor fellow was killed a few days later.

“Since then (it is now over two years ago) my prayers have been very half-hearted, and irregular. I have gone to bed at night and have forgotten my prayers, or have hurried them through. Suddenly I have been awakened by the noise of bombs falling. I listen, and hear the aeroplane gradually coming overhead. I am then tempted to get down on my knees and pray. It is then that I turn to my iron ration.”

### CHAPTER III

#### I BELIEVE IN GOD

Do I believe in God? Of course I do. I am as certain that there is a God as I am that there is a Devil. They are always with us. They are in everything and in everybody, and they are speaking to us every moment of the day.

There is a difference in the way in which they address us. God says, “Do this or don't do this.” The Devil does not speak so directly. He says, “Why don't you do this? It can't do you much harm,” or “Why give up your greatest pleasures? Enjoyment cannot hurt you.”

I have supreme confidence in God, and I know that if we trust Him, He will not let us down. For many years I found certain things impossible to understand. When I saw some saintly man or woman slowly dying of cancer, I was inclined to cry out against the apparent injustice of God.

I am sure when we hear of children or dumb animals being burnt to death in a fire and other ghastly tragedies, we wonder how God could allow these poor creatures to suffer such a terrible death.

We sing in church the hymn, “God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform,” but that is not sufficient for us.



The greatest ordeal a woman has to go through is in bringing children into the world. The greatest mental torture a man can go through is the knowledge that she whom he loves best is suffering torture. Yet out of this torture come more wonderful joys in the shape of children than we can ever before have imagined.

I believe that all the saints and all the innocent creatures who have suffered agonies in this world will receive compensation in the next world. Of course, there is a next world, and of course there is a heaven where joys unspeakable are awaiting us.

I am sure that everybody and every living creature will eventually get to heaven, but the time in which it will take us to reach it will depend on what we have made of our opportunities on this earth. When after death we see how far we are from heaven, we shall curse ourselves for having been so damnably selfish, so immoral, and so cruel to one another and to God in this world.

I believe Jesus Christ died for us, and that we must always obey our conscience, which is, of course, His voice speaking to us. I myself go to church on Sunday, and when in London I never miss the ten-o'clock choral Communion at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, where I have the honour of being churchwarden.

I do not believe, though, that because I am a Churchman I am one whit better than the savages who have never heard of God, or than the thousands who never go inside a church except for a wedding or a funeral. I go to church because the service helps me in my losing battle against the temptations of the earth.

For the same reason I say my prayers. The majority of us treat God and prayer much as we used to treat our iron rations during the war. We used to find our iron rations a nuisance to carry, but when we were on our own and cut off from all food supplies we were very thankful to be able to turn to them.

When things are going well with us, we hurry through our prayers, and have little time for God, but when, for example, those nearest and dearest to us are dangerously ill and we are powerless to help them, it is then we fall on our knees and pour out our hearts.

When we pray for anything and it is not granted to us we say, "What is the good of prayer if God does not listen to us?" I always think the best answer to this question can be found in eight lines written by Procter:

Pray I though the gift you ask for  
May never comfort your fears,  
May never repay your pleading -  
Yet pray, and with hopeful tears!  
An answer - not that you long for,  
But diviner - will come some day;  
Your eyes are too dim to see it,  
Yet strive and wait and pray.

I believe that far and away the worst sin in the world is cruelty. I can forgive a man or a woman most things, but I believe cruelty to children, to animals, or to those of our fellow-creatures who may be weaker than ourselves, is the most damnable crime in God's eyes. Next to cruelty I believe suicide is the worst crime.

God entrusts our lives to us, and we have got to bear whatever we are sent to bear. At one time I suffered mental hell from nerves. I felt I could never shake them off. I have dealt with this subject fully in *The Way Out*. If any one is frightened of suicide, I am sure he will lose that fear after he has read my own experience and the experience of many others which I tell in the chapter on Suicide.

What also helped me in my breakdowns was when I realised that I deserved the hell I was enduring, and a good deal worse, and that the best thing I could do would be to go on my knees and thank God for opening my eyes.

Religion plays a much bigger part in the lives of men and women than they like us to think. Nowadays if we broach the subject of religion we are either written down as humbugs or as being mad.

Yet I believe that many of those who scoff at religion share my beliefs, but find it easier not to acknowledge them even to themselves.

My beliefs are delightfully simple, but, thanks to them, I find life simply delightful.

## CHAPTER IV

### IS PRAYER ANSWERED?

### IT ALL DEPENDS ON YOU

“Yes, Always.” By prayer I mean real prayer, not the gabbling of mere words.

As soon as I was able to talk I was taught to pray, and I learnt the prayer which children throughout the country will be saying at their mothers' knees to-night. God bless father, mother, brothers, and all kind friends, and make me a good boy, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.”

Who can say that these prayers are wasted or unanswered, even if the little mites find the saying of them an irksome duty? God answers these prayers. He helps little boys and girls to be good if they want to be good.

I never understood the value of prayer until my mother suggested to my brothers and me that we should think of our worst sin and ask God to help us to conquer it. We had a week to decide on what that sin was.

I thought over my misdeeds and came to the conclusion that failing to get out of my bath when requested to do so by my nurse was what was ruining my young life. Therefore as a sort of postscript to my other prayers I added the words, “And please God help me to get out of my bath quickly.”

I realised that it was up to me to help God, so from that moment, directly my nurse said, “Out you come,” I sprang out as if I had been scalded.

I believe that now we are grown up we could get rid of our other sins just as easily. Unfortunately we say, “God help me to get out of my bath,” and then lie back in the water and expect Him to lift us out without making any effort ourselves.

When I was about seven or eight I used to hurry through my prayers. I horrified a good lady at breakfast one morning by announcing that I could “dress in four minutes, teeth, prayers, and all.”

At my private school I began to pray for the most earthly things. I prayed that I might make runs at cricket, that I might get goals, win races, not be bullied, and a thousand and one other things.

My prayers were always answered, even though the answer was often in the negative. My faith received a shock when in one of the most important cricket matches I made a pair of spectacles, and missed two of the simplest catches.

At first I felt that I had been badly let down, but later I came to the conclusion that, having just got my cricket colours, I was probably much too big for my boots, and that my Best Friend was only giving me what was good for me.

There was one thing, though, on which I set my heart. It was a French prize. A master had caught me writing on a piece of paper a very bad word which I had just learned. I had got into terrible trouble, and I knew I should get a bad report at the end of the term. I trembled to think what my parents would say. If only I could win this French prize they might not be so annoyed.

So night and morning and in church on Sundays I prayed as I never prayed before that I might win it. At half-term I was many marks behind, and it looked hopeless. Still I went on praying, and I worked as hard as ever I could. When after the examination at the end of the term the marks were added up they came to several thousands, and I won it by two marks.

If I had not prayed I should certainly not have won that prize.

This, I suppose, will horrify some people, but I do not feel ashamed. Any one who wanted to criticise might say, “Do you suggest that he who prays hardest wins the Calcutta Sweepstake?” I most certainly do not, as this is pure chance and requires no effort on the part of the individual. I do feel, though, that we can ask God to assist us in our daily life.

Many people have given up prayer because some special request was not granted. What we forget is that we are children and cannot know what is good for us. Our babies may cry because we will not allow them to play with matches or with our razors.

I have dealt with the lowest form of prayer first, for real prayer is not asking ‘for,’ but asking ‘to be.’ “Prayer is no good to me,” said a great friend the other day. “I pray to

be moral. When temptation comes, I fall as easily as ever.” I said, “Now be perfectly frank. When you pray to be moral, do you mean that you never want to be immoral again?” He hesitated before replying and then said, “That’s a pretty tall order.”

We say in the Lord’s Prayer, ‘Lead us not into temptation,’ but we make no effort to keep out of temptation’s way. It is frequently the reverse. We deliberately go where we know temptation is awaiting us, and when we fall we are inclined to blame God for putting temptation in our path.

It seems to me to be a waste of time to pray to be pure, kind to others, or straightforward if we do not in our heart of hearts want to be pure always, kind to everybody and straightforward in all our dealings. It is very easy to be repentant just after we have done wrong and are fearing the consequences.

The only real repentance is when we can look back on our sins and be sorry for them, not because we are suffering bodily or mental discomfort on account of them, but because we have let down our Best Friend.

The secret of real prayer depends on us realising the fact that Christ is our Best Friend. He died on the Cross for our redemption and suffered mental and bodily tortures for us, and in return we devote at the most a few minutes to having conversations with Him. During these conversations we make the mistake of doing all the talking. We excuse ourselves that we are dead tired, and we are only on our knees for a few seconds before we get into bed.

We hurry through the Lord’s Prayer, asking Him to forgive us our trespasses, and asserting that we forgive those who trespass against us. As our head goes on the pillow we are thinking out how we can get our own back on Jones, who may have annoyed us during the day. Then the telephone rings. It is Smith.

We can always find time for Smith. He is so bright and amusing. We may talk to him for a quarter of an hour about what is going to win the Liverpool Cup, the last football match we saw, or the fine round of golf we played last Sunday.

We have quite forgotten that we were too tired to talk to God about the things which really do matter.

I am wandering, though, and must return to my subject. Our prayers are answered, but we must think what we are saying. It is better to say one sentence and really mean it than to stay on our knees for half an hour repeating long prayers, but not thinking about them. An excellent plan is to say our prayers out aloud.

Many of us would be well advised to go back to the prayer we learnt at our mother’s knee, ‘God bless those near and dear to us, and make us good,’ and then to ask to be cured of our besetting sin.

It may be a tall order, but life is made up of tall orders. There is no pleasure in accomplishing tasks which require no effort on our part. If Allen and his men bring back the Ashes, they will have something about which to be proud, because the

Australian side is a magnificent one.

It would be no satisfaction to Allen to bowl out a lad who cannot bat, or for Maurice Leyland to make 100 against a team of children.

Let us see to it that it is our worst sin we want to conquer. If we want to conquer it we shall do so with God's assistance. It will be difficult, for there will be hundreds of so-called friends who will say to us, "Life is so short. You enjoy yourself and don't listen to what that madman writes."

Each time we resist the temptation we are strengthening our character. We shall soon find that we don't even want to stay in our baths when told to get out.

In conclusion, may I very humbly suggest a morning prayer? If you have not said your prayers for years, why not say, "Help me to do a kind action to-day"? How much happier the world would be if we all said this prayer every morning.

We shall have any number of opportunities of showing kindness. It may only be necessary for us to say a word of encouragement to someone down on his luck. It may be necessary for us to give up some personal pleasure in order to bring a ray of happiness into someone else's drab existence. It may be a kindness to an animal.

Nobody need know of these kindnesses except our Best Friend and ourselves. If we ask God to help us perform them He will do so, and we shall discover that the true answer to the question 'Is prayer answered?' is 'Yes, always.'

## CHAPTER V

### ARMISTICE DAY, 1918, 1928, & 1936

"November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918. . . . Those of us who have been lucky enough to get through must be truly thankful. I am determined to make good."

This is an extract from a letter I wrote home to my mother ten years ago to-day. How many thousands of men on the various battle-fronts must have made the same solemn resolution? I wonder how many can say honestly that they have made good. I am afraid the percentage would be very small. Although ten years have passed, the rest of us find ourselves saying, "I am going to make good!"

Thousands may have made good in the eyes of the world. If we were judged on this earth, a barrister could make out quite a good case for us. He would point out that we are not cruel to animals or children, and that our intentions are good, and that we sometimes endeavour to help lame dogs over stiles. He would gloss over our countless failings. If we were to die, a kind friend might write a complimentary obituary notice about us. The world might say we had made good, particularly if we happened to leave a few thousand pounds in our wills.

Bank balances, newspaper cuttings, complimentary letters from people who do not really know us, will not be much help when we are examined hereafter. There will be

barristers in heaven, but we shall be unable to brief them. We shall have to give an account of our own deeds and misdeeds.

Where have we failed? Surely it is that we suffer from the commonest of all complaints, self-love! It is the cause of all the trouble and of all the disputes in the world. We all suffer from it in some way or another, whether we are a bishop or a bookmaker, a jockey or a journalist. Our one thought in life is "How will it affect me personally?" We think of our wretched selves from morning until night. Our prayers concern our immediate wants. Even our religion is selfish. We are jealous of other religions, and despise those men who have different views from our own.

The last few words will annoy many devout men. Since I wrote the article 'I Believe in God,' I have been privileged to meet many men and women whose religion is their life. I have met men of all denominations. It is natural that they are all convinced that their faith is the only true faith, but many of them seem almost to spoil their lives by the attitude they take up towards those with different beliefs from themselves. Why cannot we thank God for the great beliefs which we have in common, and not worry so much about the minor differences?

When we are judged hereafter we shall not be questioned whether or not we believe in transubstantiation, the use of vestments, or reservation. We shall have to give an account of what we have done. It will avail us nothing if we believe that Christ died for us, but yet have done nothing for Him in return.

To-day is the one day in the year in which all religions can sink their differences. It is the day on which even those who profess to have no religion must want to be better. We all know the strain of the Two Minutes' Silence. The remembrance that those whom we loved died for us is almost more than we can stand.

What have we done for them during the past ten years? What are we going to do for them in future? Let us ask ourselves these two solemn questions during the Two Minutes' Silence to-day.

Why not begin this minute by trying to conquer our terrible self-love? Let us tell our loved ones who are waiting for us that we have begun to make good. No message could make them happier. Then each night before we go to bed, and each morning before we get up, let us say the simple prayer, "Lord, help me in my effort to make good." If we do this, then November 11<sup>th</sup> 1928, will be an even greater day for us than was November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918. . . .

Now Armistice Day, 1936, has passed. Have we made good during the past eight years? We must all admit that we have fallen very short of what we hoped to be. We have had our successes and our failures.

It has been brought home to me that our failures are often very much more important to our characters than our successes.

I was thinking the other day what I could say in my own defence if I was suddenly

called upon to give an account of my stewardship. The three outstanding efforts I have made during the past eight years to do what I knew was the right thing have all ended in gloomy failure.

In each case I have struggled against overwhelming odds, and the world would say that the effort was a waste of time and money. I know better. I know that they were worth infinitely more than what other people will consider were successful efforts.

*Pass It On* has brought me in touch with hundreds of men and women I should not have met otherwise. With many I have shared my difficulties, and I have received the greatest inspiration from the strong and even the weak characters I have met.

The greatest inspiration of all I received from Mr. Hind-Smith, who is particularly well known not only as a lecturer, but also for his work in connection with Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

He did me the best turn I have ever been done in my life. A book, one day, arrived for me called *In Green Pastures*.

It is with me wherever I go. It is inscribed:-

“To Geoffrey Gilbey with the best wishes of a well wisher in gratitude for *Pass It On* and *One More Chance*, and more to follow, he hopes.”

Many 'good' books have been sent to me at different times by known and unknown friends. For all I have been grateful, for some particularly grateful, but I can say I don't like to think of the days and nights I was without *In Green Pastures*.

It is a collection of the writings of Dr. J. R. Miller, and was published many years ago by Messrs. Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd.

Ever since I have had it, I have invariably passed on the good news about it whenever I have spoken in church, or at some Brotherhood or other Service.

There was a curious coincidence in connection with the book. One Sunday afternoon last year I was speaking at the Epsom Brotherhood. In the course of my talk I quoted an extract from the book, and I asked all who knew of it to hold up their hands. Six people in the big congregation held up their hands. The six included my elder daughter Rosemary, and my trainer, Bill Wightman, to whom I had given copies.

Next morning at breakfast I received a letter from a stranger in Essex to tell me that she was blind, but that she had received so much help from *Pass It On* and *One More Chance*, that she was going to send me a book called *In Green Pastures*, which she was sure would help me.

I make no apology for writing so much of the book, for I have received overwhelming letters of thanks from people to whom I have given it.

I will conclude this chapter by opening it at random and writing down what I read. I can do this with perfect safety because everything in it is helpful.

I have opened it at page 157. It says for August 18<sup>th</sup>:-

“We enter a world of antagonism and opposition the moment we resolve at Christ’s feet to be Christians, to be true men and women, to obey God, to forsake sin, to do our duty. There never comes an hour when we can live nobly without effort, without making resistance to wrong influences, without struggle against the power of temptation. It never gets easy to be a worthy and faithful Christian. Some times we are almost ready to give it all up and to cease our struggling; but we should remember that the spiritual nobleness and beauty after which we are striving can become ours only through this very struggling.”

Life is a continual battle. We fighters must always remember that the happy are not those who have Commissions in the Army of the Devil, but those who serve in the ranks of God’s Army.

## CHAPTER VI

### WONDERFUL WOMEN

In 1929 I was asked to write an article on ‘Women Who Interest Me’; I quoted the article in full, in a chapter called ‘My Five Heroines’ in the original edition of *Pass It On*.

The five women I picked out on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1929, as interesting me most included Lady Astor, Miss Mabel Constanduros and Miss Mary Brough. Poor Miss Brough has since died. This fine actress and great-hearted woman will never be forgotten by all who were privileged to know her.

Miss Mabel Constanduros is still the same delightful entertaining artist, and I hope she will continue to amuse her thousands of admirers for many years to come.

Lady Astor I knew only slightly in 1929. Now I am proud to say I know her very well. When I only really knew her by her work for others, I thought she was a wonderful woman. Now I know she is more than that.

In January last, when I was returning from my holiday in Switzerland, I met her on the Channel boat, and we had such a delightful talk on deck that we were in Folkestone before I felt we could have got half-way across the Channel.

In the course of our conversation she gave me a good talking to. She was telling me that I shall simply kill myself if I take so much out of myself working for ex-prisoners, many of whom don’t want me to help them. Lady Astor has spent her life fighting other people’s battles, and she told me that at one time she was in danger of wearing herself out completely.

Christian Science certainly saved Lady Astor. When people come to me and run down Christian Science, I always point to Lady Astor. I don’t know enough about Christian Science to write about it, but I have the book *Science and Health* beside me, and I read it and receive help and comfort from it. I thank God for Christian Science, and the blessing it is to thousands and thousands of good, intelligent



people.

Although I am not a Christian Scientist, it upset me very much when I heard a clergyman preaching in Winchester Cathedral say "There is nothing good in Christian Science."

It is wicked to make such a statement, but particularly so from the pulpit to people who expect help and uplift from the preacher.

My last two heroines were not people the world knows by name. Number Four was a type. I will repeat exactly what I wrote of her and of my Number Five.

We will call Number Four, Miss Help. I know personally at least six Miss Helps, and there are scores all over England. There are no words which can sufficiently express my admiration for her. She is a parish nurse. Her whole life is devoted to others. She spends all day, or often all night, nursing, comforting, and bicycling or walking, from cottage to cottage. She is the willing servant of all. She never grumbles. She is happy. She receives little money, but she gets her reward in the feeble smile of gratitude from the young mother she has assisted through her agonies, and from the man, woman, or child racked with pain which she has worked to alleviate.

I cannot give the name of my last pick either. We will call her Mrs. Smith. She is a woman who was happily married before the war, and who had one delightful son, whom she worshipped. The boy was killed in the Somme battle. Mrs. Smith and her husband were highly strung, nervy people in normal times. The shock of the boy's death almost unhinged them. Within two years the husband died.

Mrs. Smith, who had already begun to drink heavily, got worse and worse. For a time she made an effort to fight against it, but eventually she gave in. If there was ever any justification for using the word hopeless, the cruellest in the English language, it seemed justified in describing her case. There was nothing one could say or do. She refused to be helped.

My thoughts went back to a conversation I had with her son in the trenches on the day before he was killed. We were very great friends, and used to discuss every subject, particularly religion. On this occasion we had been talking of the poor fellows who were lying unburied by the hundred all round us, and I remembered him saying, "I used to think that the only person who would go straight to heaven when she died was my mother, but I am sure all these poor chaps who've given all must have gone straight there." He then went on to tell me that his mother would go through hell for him.

It was my last card, and I played it. I told her of our conversation, and pointed out she had gone through hell for her son, but that for his sake she must not remain there. Only those who have passed through mental hell know what she had to go through to get out. Yet Mrs. Smith won. She is now devoting her life to others, and she is happy.

I have written of Mrs. Smith so that no one can recognise her. When I say that she interests me I am expressing it very feebly.

During the last month three of the ex-prison friends who had sworn by everything sacred that they would never let me down have been convicted for despicable crimes. In one case especially have I found myself using the word hopeless, but when I think of Mrs. Smith and Our Lord's words that we must forgive seventy times seven, I feel ashamed of myself. One of them wrote to me when he was awaiting his trial at Brixton: "I wonder how long it is before you give up a man as being absolutely hopeless." This man I shall certainly not give up. He would have gone straight for certain if I could have found him a job.

I cannot find words in which I can sufficiently express my gratitude to those good people who have given jobs to my ex-prisoner and other down-and-out friends.

## CHAPTER VII

### HAPPINESS - WHERE AND HOW TO GET IT

Can happiness be bought? Of course it can.

Those who have been trying to buy it all their lives, and who have failed consistently to get it, will say: "Rot!"

But it is not rot. If we want to buy a leg of mutton we go to a draper's, and, on failing to get it there, complain that it is unobtainable. Yet those who want to buy happiness will go to the shop which only stocks self-indulgence.

I should like to publish the photographs of two men to illustrate what I am going to say. One of the men can be seen any day on our race-courses. He is very well known.

Once I was able to do him some trifling service, and he said, "Why are you doing this?" I replied rather fatuously, but perfectly truly, that it gave me great pleasure. He then startled me by asking: "How do you know I would do you a good turn in return?"

I explained that the idea had not entered my head and that, anyhow, I was returning to the Somme next day, so the possibility of anyone being able to do me a good turn in this world was remote.

He then startled me still more by saying: "You are a young man, and the kind of fellow people would take advantage of; but let me give you a piece of advice : Never do anybody a good turn unless you are certain they will do you a good turn in return."

The other photograph I should like to publish is of an Earl, who was the father of one of my greatest friends. I think he had the kindest face I have ever seen. I met him staying in the same house in France when I was a boy on my holidays. What interested me most about him when I was introduced to him was to hear that, fifty

years before, he had won the same school race as I had. Within half an hour I was asking myself the question, "Why is he the most delightful man I have ever met?"

The answer was not difficult to discover. My old friend knew the happiness shop, and he spent all his life passing on to others what he bought in that shop.

We were a remarkable collection of people in that house. There were beautiful married women who thought they were in love with other women's husbands; there was a very famous old scientist who spent all his time taking photographs; there was a girl who had just broken off an engagement to be engaged to somebody else; and there were hardheaded business men and their wives.

I was only a boy, but I must have been very sympathetic and precocious, as I used to have amazing confidences poured into my ears. I learnt that most of the guests hated the others, but one and all adored my old friend.

He died in 1915, but he must still live in the memory of all who were privileged to know him.

There was no ulterior motive in his kindness. The word 'kind' is misused a million times a day. I have always felt thoroughly ashamed when actions of mine which I know are horribly selfish have been described as kind.

Many beautiful damsels will be telling their male companions this evening: "It is kind of you to take me out like this." If they spoke the truth they would probably be saying, "It is infernally selfish of you to take me out, and waste your money pouring champagne down my throat, while your wife (or sister or mother) is sitting down at home to a lonely meal."

The one thing I loathe is self-deception. There is no harm in enjoying ourselves in moderation, but let us not try to deceive ourselves with the idea that we are taking out Mrs. Gush because she has such a lonely life; that we own race-horses to keep the sport going and to improve the breed of horses; that we employ a staff to look after us because so many people are out of work; or that we go to the theatre because we feel it is up to us to support an art which supplies so many people with jobs.

But let me return to my kind old friend. His greatest delight was to give someone an entirely unexpected thrill. Who can deny that unexpected thrills are the greatest?

The most wonderful day in my life was years ago. I was at my preparatory school at Cothill, near Abingdon. It was, and still is, an excellent school in a beautiful situation, but the life of a schoolboy is much the same each day.

I still remember, for instance, that every Wednesday we did Catechism, Latin, Greek, mathematics in that order. One Wednesday morning after breakfast we were all summoned to meet the headmaster in the big classroom.

We naturally concluded that the headmaster, who was a sort of Sherlock Holmes, had detected one of us doing, or thinking of doing, something wrong. Who among us was going to be publicly disgraced?

When we were assembled, the headmaster announced that char-a-bancs were waiting outside to take us for the day to a picnic by the White Horse, near Wantage.

A drive along a dusty road behind a pair of slow horses might not be a great attraction to me now, but the joy of that day in 1901 cannot be described adequately in words.

We can all give someone a pleasant surprise. Don't put it off, and don't ask yourself that wicked question, "Does he or she deserve it?"

Thousands of people never do a hand's turn to help anyone, and they excuse themselves on the grounds that they are terrified of giving to an undeserving case.

On the second day of a race meeting at Sandown I was due for a day off, but I wanted to see the two big races, so I motored down and left my car on a common a mile away from the course. As I walked along the road in the sweltering heat I was thinking of this chapter when I noticed a tramp resting on the side of the road. Here was my chance, so I walked up to give him a few shillings. (Please don't write to me and say that the money would have gone in the public-house; that his present state is probably his own fault; and that the money should have been given to a hospital.) I decided not to wake him, as I should be back in just over an hour.

I turned the corner and saw two sandwich-men who looked thoroughly done up and who were resting in a ditch. I walked towards them to give them half a crown each when I decided that, as I was in a hurry, I would give them the money on the way back, as I could then have a chat with them.

When I returned, the sandwich-men and the tramp had vanished, which only shows that it is fatal to put off anything.

Don't put off going to the happiness shop. Go now. You need not take money. You have to pay for happiness with individual effort.

Give a pleasant surprise to somebody. Remember the more unattractive the person may be, the greater will be his or her surprise. Don't be disheartened if you get snubbed, or if your efforts are mistaken.

The shopkeeper may try to see if you really want to buy 'happiness.' He may offer you other goods which are practically the same. Be firm with him. Let him know that you have come to buy happiness, and will be content with nothing else. When he sees that you are determined to get it, he will supply you.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FRIENDSHIP OF GOD

"Friendship is responsible for all the joy in life."

I made this statement to a clergyman, and he said that if I had said religion and friendship, he would have agreed with me.

I endeavoured to point out that true religion is friendship with God.

When I was a child I regarded God as a sort of schoolmaster who took a fiendish delight in jotting down my many sins in a book. I was terrified of Him, and I was haunted by the fear that I should sooner or later be cast into hell by this cruel Master.

When I was given the text "God is Love" to paint, I felt that it was a lie. When I heard that He had allowed His only Son to be crucified, I more than ever feared Him.

It seems to me criminal that children should not be taught first of all that God is the one Friend Who will stand by them all through their lives, and Who will always love them.

If we could all fix the idea in our heads that God is our Best Friend, we should be well on the way towards what I long for - a universal religion.

My religion is very simple. When I commit damnable sins, I loathe myself for having let down my Friend. He trusts me, and I have abused that trust.

I go to church, and I make a solemn promise to my Friend that I will not commit that sin again. He helps me to keep my promise. I do not believe that He minds where I talk to Him.

When I was in Scotland I always found Him at the delightfully simple services I attended in the kirks. I have found Him in Roman Catholic churches, in chapels, at Brotherhood services, and at Anglo-Catholic services.

The joy of friendship, whether with God or man, is in service. Those who only want to be friends with God in the hope that they will get earthly benefits will suffer grievous disappointment. Those who only make friends with people for what they can get out of them will die friendless.

We are always meeting men and women who tell us that they get on very well without religion. There are people who get on very well without their parents, but it is nothing about which to boast.

The parents may have slaved and pinched to give the children good educations. Thanks to education, the children have bettered themselves. (How I hate that word "bettered"! ). They have learned to appreciate good furniture, good pictures, and good music.

They are ashamed of the antimacassars, the gaudy pictures, and what they choose to call the bad taste of their parents. They forget what the parents have done for them in the past.

Their only thought is that they are not much use to them in the present.

Let me take another case. We become ill and are suffering pain. We send for the doctor. He comes, and stops our pain and makes us better. We vow eternal gratitude.

As we grow stronger and stronger our gratitude becomes weaker. When the doctor's bill comes along we positively hate him. We vow that in future we will get along without doctors.

We do until we are ill next time, when we send for him in feverish haste. He puts us right, and we again vow eternal gratitude. Many of us treat our Best Friend as we treat the doctor.

There are thousands who tell us that they do not believe in God. Their conscience tells them all they want to know, and they find they can lead decent lives by obeying their conscience.

They certainly can, but they forget that conscience is simply the voice of God. These people rely entirely on the advice of their Best Friend, but they do not call that friend God.

When I write on religion there are a few who tell me that it is a mistake. "There are certain things we do not talk about," they say. Personally I like to talk about the things that really matter. The weather, the theatre, bridge, racing, and golf are excellent topics of conversation, but they do not make up our whole life.

I know that friendship makes up my whole life, and I am not ashamed to talk of my friends, and, above all, of the Friend Who gave all for me and for Whom I do so little in return.

I have found so much joy and comfort in this friendship that I long to tell others about it. This Friend is so wonderful, He always listens to us. Provided we are really sorry, He is always ready to forgive us, however much we have sinned.

He is always there to comfort us when we lie awake at night, depressed with morbid thoughts or in pain.

Sometimes we find men and women who have little of this world's goods, who are practically alone in the world, who have bad health, and who are yet radiantly happy.

The secret of their happiness is that they know the friendship of God. Let us cultivate this priceless friendship, and, above all, let us impress it very deeply into the minds of our children.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FRIENDSHIP OF MAN

A brilliant author said to me one day: "I envy, more than I can say, your capacity for making friends." When I replied that any one can make friends if he or she takes the trouble, he replied that if I could write a book showing people the secret of friendship I should be doing the world a service. I am delighted to write on what has always been the chief joy of my life.

We must fix in our minds the right idea of friendship. I once heard a mother advise

her son to make useful friends. It sent cold shivers down my back. I heard a father impressing on his children the necessity of making friends who were in the same station of life as themselves. Again I shuddered.

We all arrive into the world by the same train; we are all put down at the same station, and we all leave by the same train. It is a mistake to confine our search to those who are like us in character or who have the same tastes. My best friend is my wife. We are absurdly happy together, but our tastes are very different.

She is reserved, she hates publicity of any sort, and does not really like racing; she hates wireless, photography bores her, and she regards highbrow music as just a noise.

On the other hand, I am not at all interested in household details, in gardening, foreign languages, in old china or glass, in museums, or in history. We are friends because we both adore the 'things' which really matter.

The elder of these two 'things,' Rosemary, is now fifteen. Veronica is twelve.

The friendship of any child is a priceless possession, and when the child is one's own it is the most wonderful, the most sacred thing in the world. I pity more than I can say those parents who have to confess that they do not know their children, or that they are gradually dropping out of their lives. It is nearly always the fault of the parents for having spoiled the child.

We cannot show a child too much love, but love does not mean giving it whatever it asks for, regardless of whether it is good for it or not.

My other best friends vary in age from eighty-seven to eighteen. I was not introduced to the majority. We met in trains, in trenches, in prisons, on racecourses, at cricket matches, or they wrote to me after reading one of my books, and we met and became friends.

Very few of my friends have any money. Money is such a bar to friendship. There are so many who only seek the friendship of the rich for what they can get out of them that the rich are inclined to suspect those who make advances to them. In the whole of my life I have only had ten very rich friends. Most of my friends have been short of money and short of friends. I infinitely prefer those who do not give their friendship easily, and who are usually written down as being difficult and unsympathetic.

The pleasantest side to the war was the way in which we dispensed with introductions. When we are in danger we are somehow drawn towards each other.

I am thankful for books like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and for that great play, *Journey's End*, for reminding us of the friendships we made when we were suffering hell together.

We find more and more that we are longing to see our war friends again. I may mention as a proof of this that I am Hon. Secretary of the 20th Light Divisional Dinner Club. I have the addresses of 230 officers who are spread all over the world.

Over eighty attended the dinner in November last, and another six would have been there if they had not become ill at the last moment.

Why need we be so stand-offish with each other? I am sure we are all very much nicer than we look. I always feel honoured when a stranger speaks to me. I do not remember ever having been snubbed when I have spoken to a stranger.

If we are sufficiently fond of people and are careful not to bore them, they will get to like us in time. I have proved this over and over again.

We sow service and we reap friendship. We cannot buy friendship. Money only helps in one way. If we have sufficient for our needs, those whose friendship we desire cannot mistake our motives.

There are many who tell us that they cannot make friends. That is because they are not sufficiently unselfish. If I had no friends, I should go down to the Embankment and make some. I have been on the Embankment after midnight.

I have chatted to down-and-outs and prostitutes of seventy or more. I have not been in search of copy or looking for friendship, but I have been anxious to find out if it might be possible to help them.

I have found that money is not so much what they need as a friend who will believe in them, and who will help them to get back their self-respect.

It is never too late to start making friends. It is not true that friendship need take years to make. I knew one of the greatest friends of my life for three days.

We met during the Somme battle. He was a schoolmaster, and very like the character in *Journey's End*. He loathed war, but he had a very keen sense of duty. He was a deeply religious man and a man who hated to show his feelings. I was second-in-command of the battalion, and this man, who was many years older than myself, was a second lieutenant. I was always desperately interested in the character of every man in the battalion.

When this man joined us I could see that he had a wonderful character. We had four long talks in the trenches, and we poured out our innermost thoughts to each other. I felt proud to know such a man.

When he was killed after three days, I felt that I had lost a lifelong friend.

I have heard people complain that they cannot attract others. That is their own fault. I have heard people say that they get nothing out of life. That again is their own fault. Edward Carpenter wrote: "Seek not your life, for that is death but seek how you can best and most joyfully give your life away - and every morning for ever, fresh life shall come to you from over the hills."

Our trouble in searching for friends is that we look for someone to love us. We should look for someone to love. We shall not have far to look. There is no one who need go friendless.



## CHAPTER X

### THE FRIENDSHIP OF ANIMALS

It is an interesting question to ask ourselves what we would do if we had our time over again. I know that I should do very much more for animals than I have done. The older I get the more I realise what an enormous amount animals do for us, and how little we do in return. I asked a little girl recently why she loved horses so much. Her reply showed that she remembered what she learnt at school: "I love a horse because he is a noble animal," she said. We as a nation love horses, but I think that it is not so much their nobility as their helplessness and their trustfulness that arouse our love.

If we analyse our feelings I believe one of the chief reasons why we love animals is that the majority of them are in our power. I am not going to discuss hunting or shooting in this chapter, but even the most bloodthirsty hunter would get no pleasure from chasing and killing a tame animal.

We, as a nation, detest bull-fighting. It certainly requires pluck and skill on the part of the men who are in the ring, but the idea of keeping an animal in order that he may be killed in a horrible way for the amusement of onlookers disgusts us. Those who go to bull-fights may not agree with me that it is a cold-blooded, disgusting performance, but those who watch and take no risk themselves must be cold-blooded.

I believe that most, but not all, the cruelty to animals is caused by thoughtlessness. It must never be forgotten, however, that thoughtlessness may be a reason, but there is a big difference between 'reason' and 'excuse.' I am sure those who applaud certain animal tricks they see at circuses can have no possible idea of how those animals are trained.

I should dearly love to see all acts in which wild animals like lions and bears take part made illegal. Personally, I would go further. I hate seeing wild animals in captivity. Why should those poor innocent creatures spend their lives shut up in a cage so that we can gaze at them? I am not suggesting that all the animals in the Zoo are unhappy, and that they are not all treated with the greatest kindness, but I know that on the only two occasions I visited the Zoo since the war, I came away feeling thoroughly depressed.

I am afraid I have done very little work on behalf of animals myself. My only work has been in connection with the International League for horses. We on this League have been carrying on the work which was done so marvellously and so pluckily for so many years by the late Miss Cole. She could truly be said to have given her life fighting that horses should have their rights.

Our work is to try to prevent for good and all our horses being shipped for butchery to the Continent from this country and our colonies. Thanks to the amazing work of Miss Cole, the traffic is infinitely better than it used to be, but every real horse-lover

in this country cannot be happy until a Bill is passed in Parliament prohibiting the export of horses for butchery.

As a memorial to Miss Cole we have at South Mimms, Herts, a Home where old horses are cared for, and have a short time of rest and comfort, before being humanely despatched in the presence of one of the members of our Ada Cole Memorial Council.

My articles in the Press exposing the horse traffic brought me into touch with the perfectly splendid men and women throughout the country who are working in the most self-sacrificing way on behalf of animals.

At first I became very worried when I found the great animosity which existed between many of the societies and leagues working on behalf of animals. One would have required more wisdom than Solomon to decide who was in the right in these differences of opinion. Many of the greatest animal-lovers are so very worried by one form of cruelty to animals that they allow it to absorb them to such an extent that they become embittered.

Now I come to the object of this chapter; it is our debt of gratitude to animals. Nothing pleases me more than to see differences set aside. Anything which can do away with what people call 'class hatred' must have a beneficial effect on the world. Animals help to remove all class feelings. I am not a politician; I record my vote for the man who I think will do the country the more good. I refuse, though, to believe that the majority of those who stand for Parliament, whatever side they represent, are not whole-heartedly sincere.

Many years ago I heard somebody remark of someone else, "She is a delightful person, but she hates children and dogs." This is surely an impossibility. If we think for one moment of the best characters we know, we shall find that they are devoted to children and animals.

It has been said that the work on behalf of animals in this country is carried on by sentimental old women. This is a wicked lie. The work is carried on for the most part by men and women who are already overworked, but who realise not only the joy they get from their friendship with animals, but also their duty to animals.

Every human father worthy of the name makes the weakest and most helpless of his children the object of his especial care. If we consider this essential in a human being, we who call ourselves Christians must surely attribute such loving care, with far greater certainty, to the Father of all created things.

There are many who deny a future life to animals, but who are quite convinced that we ourselves have a future life. Those who believe this should do all they can to make the one life of the animal happy.

The pleasure, the companionship and the joy we get from animals cannot be exaggerated. The devotion of a dog to his master, even when the master is cruel to it,

is a wonderful example to us all. A horse has not the same intelligence as a dog, but his whole life is devoted to the service of man. A horse by itself is quite helpless. He depends on man for everything. That should make us feel our responsibility all the more.

There are those who tell us that they find it so hard to know what really constitutes cruelty to animals. Their difficulty, I think, is that they try to believe what they want to believe, and not what they really feel. Let us suppose that we like bull-fighting. Let us be perfectly frank with ourselves about it. No doubt lovers of bull-fighting can produce arguments that bullfighting is not cruel. They may even persuade themselves that it is not cruel. They, in fact, gradually come to believe what they want to believe.

Then there are those who put forward the argument that most animals are by nature cruel, and that therefore if we are cruel to them they are only getting what they give to others. Captain Fairholme, when he was Secretary of the R.S.P.C.A., put forward what is surely an unanswerable argument when he wrote, "The so-called 'cruelty of nature' is a debatable point, but, in any case, man, having a brain superior to that of any other animal, should not have to come down to the level of an animal when he tries to justify something he wants to do."

If we would only obey our consciences as to what is cruel and what is not cruel, cruelty to animals would die out. Every animal slaughtered would be destroyed with a humane killer.

I am not going to write at length on the joy we get from our friendship with dogs and other animals. There is hardly a home in this country where there is not a dog or a cat. The most joyful homes in the world are those where there are children and animals. Alas, many married couples are denied the joy of children. For them the friendship of animals is an especial comfort. They realise to the full the great joy they can get from that friendship. The more we cultivate the friendship of animals, the more delightful we find it.

Above all, let us not only work ourselves for animals, but let us appreciate the work of other animal-lovers, and never doubt their sincerity.

*Let us never forget that unity is strength, and that the more united we are, the more we can help our four-footed friends.*

## CHAPTER XI

### TO THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL BOY

*(An address to those boys who are leaving their schools at the end of the term.)*

It is delightful to see your smiling faces, but I suppose most of you are sad to be leaving the school which has given you such a wonderful time. Just a few of you may be wondering if the money lavished on your education has been spent in vain, but

the rest of you will be reflecting with pride that you have done 'jolly well.'

You have brought home prizes, you have won scholarships, you have an excellent batting average, and the masters have written to your parents that you have been a credit to the school. You have made many friends, you have not disgraced yourselves morally, your consciences are clear and, in fact, you are thoroughly pleased with yourselves.

The Headmaster has given you some excellent advice. He has probably told you to play the game. This the public-school boy cannot help doing. You cannot be at a public school for five or six years without learning to play for your side. The Headmaster probably told you to respect women. You can thank God that you have mothers or sisters whom you love and respect. I am not worried about your morals, as I believe you have learnt strength of character, and will not be immoral on the grounds that it is the thing to do. You have been warned of the folly of gambling and drink, but you have the good sense to realise that the man who drinks or gambles to excess must come to grief.

You may have been told to work. Nowadays we are all proud to work. Idleness holds out no attractions. You have all seen the misery of the wretched men who cannot get employment.

Yet you have not been informed of the commonest disease in the world to-day. I am sure Thoughtlessness is the disease from which we are all suffering. At first I was going to say selfishness, but I prefer to use the milder word. The public school teaches you to use your heads, but it seems to neglect the much more important lesson of teaching you to use your hearts.

It teaches you to be good servants; it teaches some of you to be successful leaders, but it does not teach you the most important lesson of all - how to be good masters. Yet you are all masters of sorts. You cannot be a good master unless you use your heart.

If I wanted to know what you really were like I should not look at your school reports, I should not ask your friends about you, or read of your achievements at games in the School Magazine. I should go to the boys' maids, to those who work in the school shops, or to any who have been paid to serve you. The private soldier is always a better judge of the character of the company commander than is the commanding officer.

The Headmaster may pride himself on knowing you, but by reason of his position it is terribly difficult for him to know you intimately. You are never quite natural with him. You are perfectly natural with the man who serves you in the shop, and he knows what an unpleasant character the Headmaster's blue-eyed boy can be. I believe implicitly that the average youth of to-day is a delightful boy if he will allow his heart fair play. No boy, if he knew the misery he was inflicting, would give the boys' maid a dog's life. No boy would make his mother miserable if he could help it,

but there are thousands of young men throughout the country who by their thoughtlessness are causing untold misery, and even unrest in this country.

Your mother knows that the only time you write to her is when you want something. She makes excuses for you; she says you have so much to occupy your time and that you are really very considerate when you are with her. She treasures the memory of the day when you gave up some small pleasure to go and pay some dull call with her. You do not think of the years she may have given up pleasures so that you could have an expensive education, and the best of everything in the holidays.

When you are at home, you are unpunctual for meals. You never think that the servants have their lives to live as well as you. You are asked out to dine; if you don't like the people next to you, you make no effort to help your host and hostess by talking to them. When you get out of your car and are told by a policeman who has his duty to do that you cannot leave it in that particular street, you are as offensive to him as you can be. If, when you are driving, you consider somebody hasn't got out of your way quickly enough, you hurl unpleasant remarks at him. If you . . .

Let's change the subject. I know you have the public-school spirit. You will not kick up an undue fuss if the umpire gives you out, caught at the wicket when you have not touched the ball. If anyone says anything against your school, or against any of your friends or relations, you will knock him down. If there was another war, you would join up to-morrow as you did in 1914. Thank God, your love of King and Country is very deep. You realise that King Edward like his father has devoted his life to our interests, but how much of your time do you devote to the interests of others? If anyone asked you to help anyone less fortunate than yourself, you would gladly do so, but on the day of judgment we shall not be judged on what we would have done, but on what we have done. (Please don't begin to look down your noses at me - please smile again. That's right.)

I speak to you to-day because I want you to continue to smile, and because I know from my own experience what misery we encounter when our one thought morning, noon, and night, is Self, Self, Self. Go into the world determined to make others happier. If you use your hearts, you will do so. Begin to-day. If we can leave the world a happier place for having lived in it, we can indeed offer up a prayer of thankfulness.

I'm not going to say any more. It was indeed kind of you to listen to me so patiently. By so doing you have made me happy, but there are millions in this world who deserve happiness more than I do. Search them out. Begin to-day. My last words I say with all reverence, "Good-bye, and God bless you."

## CHAPTER XII

### WORRY

Let me confess at once that I have been a great worrier.

I am proud to have worried. Those who have never known the meaning of the word 'worry' have never known the meaning of the word 'love.' The turnips in the field have no worries, but I am not jealous of them.

It is essential, however, that we should not let worry become our master. It is an excellent teacher, but a cruel master. We can most of us remember occasions when it has mastered us completely.

When it did so, well-meaning individuals came to us and said, "Why worry? It can do you no good." They very likely read us quotations to prove the folly of worrying from the writings of Shakespeare, George Eliot, and Dr. Johnson; but forgot to mention that these geniuses all suffered from ghastly fits of depression. We can produce excellent arguments why others should not worry.

The man who keeps his worries bottled up and who has no one with whom to share them is chiefly deserving of our pity. Worry can only poison us if we keep it bottled within us. Bottled-up worry will at first make us feel out of sorts, and depressed; but if we do not get rid of it, it weakens us to such an extent that our whole body, and eventually our soul, gets infected.

Those of us who are happily married, and who are lucky enough and plucky enough to have a wife with whom we can share our worries as well as our joys, should indeed be thankful. Those of us who also have a friend to whom and with whom we can pour out our hearts, can also be thankful.

The question I may be asked is – "If you have a wife, how can you need another friend?" The answer is that as we love our wives more than anything in the world, our chief worries will be about them, and we must have a friend with whom to share those worries. As we grow older we find that a worry shared with a devoted friend is halved, but that a joy shared is doubled.

Out of our worries come our greatest joys. The two greatest worries of my life are now my two greatest comforts. From the day I knew that a child was to be born to us, I worried first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Friends told me that birth was perfectly natural, but that would not take away the worry. I have no respect for the husband who does not worry.

From this worry love is born. Our love for our children is almost too sacred to describe in cold print. Their thrills are our thrills, and their laughter in our ears is the most inspiring sound in the world. Yet when they are ill, or when they have to undergo operations, the mental hell we experience is almost unendurable.

We must also steel ourselves to the thought that one day some one else will come into their lives whom they will prefer to us. Then our love and devotion, which have

been everything to them for eighteen years or more, must give way before the passionate outbursts of a young man who may turn out to be a rotter. It will be cruel, but life is cruel, and no amount of worrying will change it.

We must differentiate between things worth our worry and things which are not. At one time anonymous letters and harsh criticisms used to worry me. I used to be unduly sensitive, and would not allow my friends to have moods. Whenever people said they did not like an article I had written, I used to worry about it.

Then my health got on my mind. I used to take my pulse, and I was always worrying about my temperature. My bedroom became full of quack medicines. I worried myself into a terribly nervous state, but I look back on these worries with shame. They were not caused by love for others, but by love for myself. This is the worst complaint from which any one can suffer, but if we set about it in the right way, we cannot fail to cure it.

Let us look at one other great worry before we examine the cure. We all have to die one day, and it is no good worrying about this fact. Yet there must be thousands of men and women who get a certain amount of mental hell when they reflect on death. I cannot believe that there are real atheists in the world. Perhaps I say this because I have so often heard the voice of God. We all hear that voice, but we do not listen to it, as it usually gives us a message we do not like.

There are occasions in all our lives when we have been very close to God, and when we have been told to follow in the footsteps of His Son. This is no idle superstition. It is as real to me as is the breath in my body. If we have listened, we have replied that we would follow later, or perhaps we have said: "I'll follow, but I must take my pet vice along with me." We have started with our pet vice on our backs, and it has overwhelmed us.

Do these words strike home? If they do, let us worry. Let us worry that we are not fulfilling the purpose for which we have been put into the world. God has given us love - the only thing in the world that matters. The future can be bright for every one. Yes, it can be bright for you who are lying on your bed racked with pain and with death approaching you. The future is bright for all who can get the Peace of God in their hearts. We have all experienced that peace at some time or other in our lives, but through our damnable selfishness we have not retained it.

My thoughts go to a friend in the Royal Home for Incurables in Putney. He has been in constant pain for fifteen years. He lost his devoted wife during the war, and he lies suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, which has crippled his poor body. He has lost everything the world can give, but he is perfectly happy. As I gaze at him I envy him his one priceless possession.

His future is bright, and he will have his reward. He has not been a great churchman. He is not a deeply religious man, but God is within him. He does not worry. When he dies there will be no obituary notice in the newspapers, but obituary notices or

reputation will not help us when we are asked to give an account of our stewardship. No worry is too strong for us if we are armed with faith. It may be argued that many of the clergy are serious worriers, but a reversed collar or even a bishop's gaiters are no guarantee that the wearer has real faith.

We must get out of our heads the idea that life is easy. Jesus Christ cried in Gethsemane: *"Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me."* Let us pour out our worries to God, in the same way as Christ poured out His Agony.

## CHAPTER XIII FAITH

In the next three chapters I am going to write on three words which are very familiar to us.

Faith; Hope; and Charity; and I am starting with Faith, the most difficult of the three. It is difficult because at the very mention of the word Faith we are inclined to close our ears. If a clergyman starts off his sermon with the words, "I am going to talk to you about Faith," we remember past sermons on Faith, and either decide to have a snooze, or resign ourselves to being bored. If on the wireless we hear these same words, we at once feel like switching off.

Faith is a dull subject. It is not amusing, like immorality. Nowadays we must be amused. We worship at the shrine of amusement. We do not mind how perverted or insincere a man or woman may be if he or she has the gift of being amusing.

Yet we are extremely short-sighted in treating Faith in such an off-hand way. We all want happiness, and yet when Faith comes knocking at our door with bundles of happiness to present to us, we either let her go on knocking, or send her away with the observation that we don't believe in her, or have not got time for her.

Faith is as important to us as the engine is to a motor-car. A motor-car without an engine, or one with a rotten engine, will not get very far: nor will the life without Faith.

All through my life I am afraid I have paid very much more attention to my body-work than to my engine. The world judges us by our body-work, but one day our body will be scrapped, our engines will be exposed, and we shall have to give an account of what we have done to those engines.

Most of us - and I know I am among the number - are content to promise the engine a complete overhaul one day, but as the years pass we put off the overhaul.

What is Faith? Faith is belief. Our body could not exist without faith in our fellow-creatures. Our soul cannot exist without Faith in God. If we were suddenly stopped in the road and asked what our faith was, the majority of us could not answer. My own faith is very simple. A few years ago I began to read what all the great thinkers



thought about God. The more I read, the more at sea I became. I looked for guidance, but I found I was being pulled first in one direction and then in another. The writers argued that their way was the correct way, but my poor feeble brain could not grasp their brilliant arguments. Then, in my bewilderment, I turned to the New Testament. Here was the teaching a child could understand. Here was the true teaching of the greatest Man who ever lived. My Faith can be summed up in the words, "I believe in Jesus Christ, and in His teaching." It is a delightfully simple Faith, and I know it is true.

How do I know it is true? I know it in the same way as I know I have breath in my body. It is not sufficient, though, to have Faith. We must show that Faith in our lives. For example, it is no good believing in kindness to children and animals if we do not practise it in our lives. It is no good believing in Christ if we ourselves do not endeavour to be Christ-like.

Friends sometimes say, "What is the use of Faith or religion? Where does it lead you?" Sooner or later we find ourselves like ships tossed on an angry sea. At first we are frightened of the forbidding-looking rocks, but as we manage to avoid them for a time we say, "Oh, they won't hurt us." We see the lighthouse in the distance, which inspires us with hope, and we just wait and say, "Some one will come along and tow us into harbour." A wireless message reaches us that we have power within us - an engine called Faith, which will take us into harbour if we will only use it. We say, "Oh no; I do not believe in it, and I'm not going to try it." We continue to drift until we are dashed on the rocks.

The power of Faith is limitless. Christ tells us that if we have Faith we can remove mountains. We may not want to remove mountains, but we can remove mountains of troubles. I have never yet prayed earnestly, with Faith, for anything that I have not received. I am not going to say that everything I have asked for I have received. What I do say is that everything I have asked for with Faith, I have received. I have never been let down.

The question may arise, "How is it that some of those with the greatest brains in the country have not Faith?" The answer is that Faith is the Gift of God. If we do not accept that gift when it is offered to us, we cannot expect to possess it. It is the most priceless gift in the world, and even those of us who have refused it in the past can get it if on our knees we ask God fervently for it. We must not, however, say, "I must know the why and wherefore before I accept the gift." There are thousands of us who have had faith and lost it because we have allowed doubts to enter our mind and because we have asked for proof. We trust doctors who give us medicine when we are ill, but we do not trust the Great Physician. We ask for proof.

All of us who want Faith can get it if we humble ourselves and ask God for it. Our faith must be childlike, and we must aim at trusting God as our children trust us. When we pray, we must not try to guide God's hand, but we must ask God's hand to direct us. If we can say with sincerity the words, "Thy Will be done," we shall never

know the meaning of the word fear. There is no man or woman in the world who trusts God implicitly who is not radiantly happy.

## CHAPTER XIV

### HOPE

Hopeless is the word I dislike most in the English language. Hope is not the word I like best, but it comes second only to love. We cannot live on hope alone, but without hope life is not worth living. I read somewhere that as we grow older our hopes become fewer. I disagree. Our hopes for ourselves may become fewer, but our hopes for others increase correspondingly.

If we were to write down on paper our greatest hope, I suppose the majority of us would have to confess it is, "To have a good time." Our idea of what constitutes a good time changes almost daily. May I take the liberty here of reprinting the first words I ever wrote which appeared in a newspaper. I wrote them in the trenches in September, 1916, with the object of inducing the only two members of the Eton Manor Boys' Club who had not joined the army to do so at once. They were published in the *Daily Express*:

"When I was three, I used to think by far the greatest joy  
Was going to the local shop, and purchasing a toy.  
When I was five I loved to sit upon a 'bus, outside;  
But that had changed when I was six, and I had learnt to ride.  
I thought that I was quite a man when I was nearly nine,  
And then the best thing in the world was sitting up to dine.  
When aged thirteen how I adored a schoolboy cricket match,  
Especially if I made ten runs, or caught a simple catch.  
At Eton, life perhaps was best the day I got my shorts,  
And then somehow I won the half at Oxford in the sports.  
Since then, I've changed my mind about a dozen times each year,  
When music, racing, hunting, golf and other things appear.  
At twenty-six I tell you straight, that life out here is grand;  
I've found that work and happiness are always hand in hand.  
Do come, there's heaps of splendid work and happiness for you.  
I've found the best thing in the world, so come and find it too."

At the age of forty-seven I find that my greatest hopes concern my home life and my work for ex-prisoners, people with nerves, and down-and-outs. My chief hope is that my wife and children may have health and happiness. My greatest joy is when I can plant a seed of hope in a life which was really in need of it. The following is an extract from a letter from a clergyman I received some years ago:

“I feel that I ought to write to you to let you know the good seed sown by you has borne fruit in a mental hospital, and has been the means of restoring happiness to a very distressed family.

“I may explain that the -- Hospital is situated in this parish, and that I am the chaplain to it. Some three months ago there was brought in a patient, a retired non-commissioned officer. I happened to know him before he was brought in here, and a very fine type he was, both physically and morally. He was also a highly religious man. He worked very hard for the soldiers during the war, and has done so since for the discharged soldiers.

“The fact is that he overworked himself, and this was the cause of his nervous breakdown. He became obsessed with the idea that he had committed the unpardonable sin, that he was quite beyond redemption, and that God had forsaken him. I tried my best to disabuse him of such an idea, and at times I was hopeful that I had succeeded. But the very next day I would find him back again in the same state of unutterable despondency and despair.

“One day he got hold of the *Sunday Express*, and saw your article on ‘The Friendship of God.’ He read it, and from that moment he began to mend, or, to put it more truthfully, he was cured. He saw things in their true light, he was inspired by a fresh hope, and in a fortnight he was discharged. He could have been discharged the next day, so far as his cure was concerned. I heard from him this week, and he is perfectly well and happy with his wife at his home. In his letter he tells me again that he attributes his cure to reading your article in the *Sunday Express*. From what I know of you from your writings, I am sure you will be glad to know that you have been the means of bringing happiness to one poor fellow who had lost it, and especially to an ex-soldier.”

My heart was brimful of thankfulness when I received this letter; having passed through the mental hell of nerves myself. It may be thought conceited of me to publish this letter, but I can say emphatically I have never felt so humble in my life as when I read it.

Hope is infectious. It is like love. If we give it out it returns to us multiplied. Every week I endeavour to go and see some of the friends I have made through my books, and who happen to be in hospital. When I see those who are suffering from what they know are incurable diseases, I marvel at their wonderful spirit. The word hopeless does not apply to them. They never complain. They have their hopes. They look forward to the weekly visits of their friends and relatives. They long to hear what their grandchildren have been saying. They long to hear all about how their favourite team is doing at football.

A month or two ago I was visiting a reader, the pluckiest and most gallant old friend I have ever known, who was in hospital for radium treatment. In the next bed was an old man, who must have been very near the end, and who was unable to speak for

several minutes to his visitors. When the poor old man was able to speak, I heard him whisper, "Who got the goals?"

The more I see of people in hospitals, the less I am frightened of death. It used to be a nightmare to me that one day I must die. I am not going to pretend that I hope to die soon; far from it. I love life passionately, and so I ought to. My friends in hospital are not afraid to die. When we think of death, we are inclined to think of undertakers, coffins, churchyards and crematoriums. Let us rather think of it as Longfellow thought of it:

"As a fond mother, when the day is o'er,  
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,  
Half willing, half reluctant to be led  
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,  
Still gazing at them through the open door,  
Nor wholly reassured and comforted  
By promises of others in their stead,  
Which, though more splendid, may not please him more.  
So nature deals with us, and takes away  
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand  
Leads us to rest, so gently that we go  
Scarce knowing if we wished to go or stay;  
Being too full of sleep to understand  
How far the unknown transcends the what we know."

If we think of it like this, death is very beautiful. I have purposely written about death in this chapter on hope, because I know there must be hundreds of people who are in the depths of depression because some one very dear to them is on the point of death, or has died recently. Their faith may not be strong enough at the moment for them to know that they will see their loved ones again. Of course they will. Our one real joy in life is love and friendship, and we are not sent into the world to love and then be separated for ever from those we love. Life would be unbearable if at any time those we adore could be taken from us for ever. There is much we cannot understand in life, but we must all agree that God is the God of love. We can trust Him.

If we find Faith difficult let us begin by Hoping. If we hope and pray, we shall get Faith, as hope is the stepping stone to Faith. Let us never miss an opportunity of trying to inspire each other with hope. Let us remember that there is hope for everyone. Above all, let us not write down as hopeless those who have committed the same sin over and over again. Let us remember our own damnable sins, and the way we have fallen to the same temptation over and over again. Let us thank God for our own hopes and our own enthusiasm, and let us endeavour to plant seeds of hope wherever we go.

## CHAPTER XV

### LOVE

“And the greatest of these is Love.” There is nothing more beautiful in the world than love. There is no word which is more misused. We frequently deceive ourselves into thinking what we should rightly call lust is in reality love. Lust is the opposite of love, because whereas lust is always selfishness, the highest form of love is self-sacrifice.

How often have we told people that we will do anything in the world for them, and yet when the occasion comes along we grumble at being asked to put out ourselves, or change our arrangements for them. Match-making is a dangerous game, and I have only played it once: I had two very great friends, and I was very anxious for them to meet, as I was sure they would fall in love with each other, marry, and live happily ever afterwards. Everything went smoothly; they became engaged to be married. He was very fond of hunting and, unfortunately, or perhaps I should say fortunately, she wanted him to go and stay where she was staying for a Hunt Ball in another part of England. He considered she was very unreasonable to ask him to miss a day's hunting. The engagement was broken off.

I am not fond of too much self-analysis, but I do think we should examine the greatest loves in our life. We love our wife and our children; we say truthfully that we would do anything for them, and I am sure there are few fathers or husbands worthy of the name who would not die for their children or their wives if occasion demanded it, as it did in 1914. It is painfully true, though, that many husbands are appallingly inconsiderate. We use up every atom of our strength in our daily work, or on behalf of friends or even strangers, and return home irritable and with jagged nerves. We know our wives love us, and we love them, but we are too tired almost to talk to them when we return home.

Then we love our children; their kisses, their confidences, and their laughter thrill us; but do we earn those kisses and those thrills? We are certainly working to keep them, and we must have exercise and relaxation, so the time we spend in the theatre, at golf, tennis, hunting, and squash-rackets, is well spent; but do we really devote enough time to our children or to planning out their future? In other words, is our love for them selfish or not?

Most of us must confess that it is very much more selfish than it ought to be. I do not suggest we should go to the other extreme and deny ourselves all pleasure just for the sake of denying it. The Reverend F. W. Robertson wrote, “Self-denial, for the sake of self-denial, does no good, self-sacrifice for its own sake is no religious act at all. . . . Self-sacrifice illuminated by love, is warmth and life, the blessedness and the only proper life of man.”

We see splendid examples of love wherever we go. I am sure my sex must agree that women are much better lovers than we are. Think of the mothers who give up everything, and who wear the shabbiest clothes, and who never go to theatres or

picture-houses so that their children may have a good time. Then there are mothers whose chief and, in fact, only real pleasure in life is to be with their sons and daughters, and yet they will save every penny so that these sons and daughters can leave them and can spend their holidays with friends in Switzerland.

A man or woman does not want a great brain to love. Love is one of the few lessons we can learn from animals. We cannot pay anyone a higher compliment than to say that he loves with a dog-like devotion. Most of us are very exacting in our loves. We say, "I love you so much, and I have such a high standard for you, that it grieves me terribly when you fall short of it." We are miserable sinners ourselves, but we are not going to overlook the slightest transgression on the part of our loved ones. I am constantly having to pull myself up in this respect. I put one or two closest friends on pedestals, and am miserable if they are not always perfect. Then I have to remind myself constantly that my love must not be just a mixture of jealousy and emotionalism. May Kendal put me on my guard about this. What she wrote might put other people on their guard, so I quote the passage which awakened me. . . .

"The jealous emotional egotist is easy to cheat, a pressure of the hand, a tone of the voice, will give him back his confidence - because he loves, not us, but our love for him. But the tender, the humble, the selfless - these have known us all the while. These whom we almost scorned for the blindness of their constancy, have been hoping against hope. Of course they remain faithful to us. They are not the slaves of their emotions, whether of sympathy or contempt, and the admiration may have died out of their love for us, but it has left a Christ-like compassion."

We are told that it is love that makes the world go round. It is love that makes life worth living. It is love that makes a man or woman popular. We meet a man or woman of average intellect, and are drawn to them instinctively. Then we meet a man who may be brilliantly clever, and with a world-wide reputation, or a woman of amazing beauty, and we shrink from them. We are drawn instinctively to people who give out love.

I have attended church gatherings, and at times I have been struck by the absence of love. I have talked to prostitutes, down-and-outs, and to men and women whom the world would like to see put into a lethal chamber, but who all could hold classes and teach the lesson of love. They know the meaning of the word charity. Prostitutes would give their last farthing for each other; yet some of the richest men who have the reputation for being philanthropic because they have given some infinitesimal proportion of their incomes to charities would not give one penny to help a fellow-financier who was down on his luck. They would excuse themselves with that cruel sentence, "He has brought it on himself."

It is not easy to love our enemy, and it is not easy to be broadminded about those who fall to temptations which hold out no attractions at all for us. Let us, however, remember our own detestable faults. I remember hearing a very well-known member of the aristocracy denouncing the wickedness of Sunday games. He later

proceeded to boast to other old gentlemen of his immoral achievements on the previous Sunday.

A sentence which hundreds of people use to excuse themselves doing anything for their fellow-creatures is, "Charity begins at home." The majority of people who use this sentence are quite correct; their charity begins at home with themselves, and ends there.

Let us try to be more charitable towards others. Let us not delight in hearing of their faults. Let us make allowances for them, as we would expect them to make for us if they knew our secret faults. Let us this year search out some of those who have little love in their lives, and give them the one gift which costs nothing and which is of priceless worth.

## CHAPTER XVI

### CREDO

That happiness consists in throwing off morbid sadness and vain uneasiness and in conquering the passions which tyrannise over us.

*That* it is very simple to write these words and to believe in them, but terribly difficult to practise them.

*That* the ills sent us must be for our own good, and that unless we really believe that they are, we cannot believe in God.

*That* if we would be Christians we must be prepared to bear our cross at all times.

*That* though there are days when the weight of it seems very much more than we can bear, we are always given sufficient strength to carry it.

*That* mental and bodily anguish bring out the best in us.

*That* we never hear the names of the real heroes in the world.

*That* we get praise and honour in this world for some action done in the heat of the moment, whereas the heroes and heroines who give up everything to help others are regarded as failures because they have none of this world's goods

*That* we are damnably cruel in the way in which we condemn others for sins which hold out no temptations to ourselves,

*That* my duty to my neighbour is, as the catechism tells us, "To love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me."

*That* we should read our duty towards God and towards our neighbour every morning.

*That* if anyone can say he has never hurt anybody by word or deed he can be quite certain of going straight to Heaven, even if he has never been inside a church or said his prayers in his life.

*That* those who are always smiling may not be those who have the easiest lives, but who have the greatest pluck and who see in everything the accomplishment of God's will.

*That* the greatest joy in life is when we discover that some action of ours has made life easier for somebody or has saved some animal pain.

*That* we should soon have a universal religion if we would concern ourselves only with seeing where we agree with the religions of other people and not worrying where we disagree.

*That* it is not so much our beliefs that matter, but the sort of lives we lead.

*That* this life is only a preparation for the greater life, and that the hell we are laying up for ourselves will be the hell of remorse.

*That* our eyes then will be opened to the loathsomeness of sin, and that we shall not only be sorrowful because we are found out and exposed, but because we have so badly let down the trust reposed in us.

*That* there is no need for us to be psalm-singers or to wear sackcloth and ashes or to give up harmless enjoyment.

*That* when we are down-and-out we do not find consolation by talking to those who are well endowed with this world's goods, but by searching out and finding those who are even worse off than ourselves.

*That* class hatred is rapidly dying out because more and more people realise that there is only one class.

*That* people are much less selfish than they used to be, and that the example of the King, Queen Mary, and all our Royal Family, is a wonderful inspiration to us all.

*That* Rabbi Habel gave us some very sound advice when he wrote, "Judge not thy friend until thou standest in his place."

*That* we should judge others as we shall be judged hereafter, not on what we have done, but on what we have tried to do.

*That* if people married for real love and not lust, the divorce-court judges would soon be out of work.

*That* the East End of London is infinitely more charitable than the West End.

*That* instead of wasting our sympathy on Lord Croesus because now he can only employ ten gardeners instead of twenty, we should sympathise with, and try to find employment for, the ten gardeners thrown out of work.

*That* it is never wise to point out to anyone that he is being cheated by anyone he employs. He probably knows it already and is making the best of it.

*That* for the same reason it is equally unwise to tell a woman that her husband is unfaithful to her.



*That* every year people in this country are becoming more and more humane, and that very soon it will be compulsory for all animals and birds to be slaughtered humanely.

*That* our divorce laws are in a chaotic state, and that men are making things worse by allowing their erring wives to divorce them.

*That* it is no worse to cheat at cards than to cheat on the turf.

*That* it is farcical that if we steal another man's pig we go to prison, but if we steal another man's wife our only punishment is that we are not allowed in the royal enclosure at Ascot.

*That* one of the wickedest lies is that all is fair in love and war.

*That* the way to get the best out of ninety-nine out of every hundred people is to trust them implicitly.

*That* it is infinitely better to be let down by one man in a hundred than to be handicapped all through life by mistrusting everyone in case they should let us down.

*That* the man or woman who wants to succeed in life must never use the expression, "That's not my job."

*That* when we look at a rose tree we should not grumble about the thorns on it, but rather thank God for the roses it bears.

*That* however down and depressed we feel, we should make an effort to make those about us think we are happy.

*That* the B.B.C. religious services on Sundays and weekdays are an enormous help and inspiration.

*That* it is never too late to mend, but that the day on which to give happiness to another or to start leading a less selfish life is not to-morrow, but to-day.

## CHAPTER XVII

### TO THOSE WHO MOURN

" . . . If only you could convince me that we see our loved ones again after death, you would make me very happy. I want to be convinced that it is true that there is a God and that we shall be reunited to those we love; but the more I read and think, the less I feel I can believe . . ." So writes the mother of a delightful boy who died within a few days of his twenty-first birthday. She lived for him, her only child, and he was equally devoted to his mother.

We must believe that God is infinitely good. If He is infinitely good, He is just. How can we call just the God who allows saintly men and women to be tortured with cancer? How can He allow precious little children to suffer? How can He cut off in

their prime those who are living unselfish lives for others? How can He allow animals to be tortured?

The only answer I can give is that one day we shall know. We must not expect to find the answer in this world. Those who think that death is the end of everything cannot believe God is great, or good, or, in fact, anything but cruel. What crueller torture can we inflict on a mother than to take her innocent child? Life is cruel. Why does God allow men who are looking for work, to go workless? Why does He allow innocent men to be punished?

Why our eyes are not opened more than they are, we cannot pretend to know. After death, we shall say, "If only I had known."

My faith makes me believe that as soon as our soul leaves our body, we see God and loathe evil. We talk of our better moments, but all should be better moments. In our heart of hearts we all love God, and want right to conquer wrong. When we see a play, or read a book, we do not long for the hero or heroine to be immoral or to lead a self-indulgent life. Those of us who have children know that the greatest joy parents experience is when they hear that one of their children has done some fine unselfish action.

We must meet again those we love. Our love for our wives, our parents, our children, and our friends is sacred. For many of us it is our whole life. We have our work and our hobbies, but we are like children in that our chief delight is the pleasure our work gives to those we love. Parents know how their little child thrills when she shows them a picture she has coloured in her painting book of little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf. What matter if the Wolf is blue, and the red paint is smudged over Red Riding Hood's face and hands?

I had been sitting writing this chapter in the Chelsea Hospital gardens. I had written as far as this when I heard footsteps on the grass behind me, and then felt arms around my neck; I had been found by my little girls - I thought they had gone shopping. We have just had a delightful five minutes together, and they have gone off to play. Could I live another moment if I believed that the day would ever come when I should never see my wife and children again?

No! I repeat, God is good, and God is just. I should be ashamed of myself if I did not trust Him implicitly. We know that at times it is exceedingly hard to believe that our trials are good for us. It is a great comfort if we can get fixed in our heads that nothing belongs to us in the world. Everything is lent by God.

When anyone lends us anything, we are at first exceedingly grateful; but when we have had it for a long time we almost forget that it belongs to somebody else. We eventually regard it as our own property, and are indignant when we have to give it back.

God gives us sight, health, those we love, and everything we possess. When the day comes for us to return what has been lent to us, we cry out bitterly.

God has not put us into the world to tantalise us. He has put us into the world to fit us for the life hereafter, and to fit us for His Kingdom.

That wonderful man, Max Muller, wrote: "Great happiness makes one feel so often that it cannot last and that we will have some day to give up all to which one's heart clings so. A few years sooner or later, but the time will come, and come quicker than one expects. Therefore I believe it is right to accustom oneself to the thought that we can none of us escape death, and that all our happiness here is only lent us. But at the same time we can thankfully enjoy all that that God gives us. . . ."

I have just had another delightful interruption. Five little children have been introducing themselves to me. The four boys tell me their names are Timothy, Anthony, Geoffrey, Buster; the girl, a most persistent young lady of two, is called Jocelyn. She is at the moment reading Max Muller's book upside down. Geoffrey is apparently as confiding and loquacious as his namesake. He tells me that he and Anthony are twins; that they sometimes wear blouses, but that Daddy prefers them in jerseys - that when they were in their bath yesterday Nannie came back from Woolworth's, where she had been with Amy, their cook, and gave them dispatch-cases which she had bought for them. He and Anthony have insisted on showing me the contents of these dispatch-cases. Timothy is amusing himself by jumping over the back of my seat, and by giving pick-a-backs to Buster, who is almost as solid as he is. They are all delightfully confiding, and have told me all about their parents.

It was a heavy, depressing day when I came out this morning, and the world looked grey, but how can anyone be grey when there are Rosemarys, Veronicas, Geoffrey's, Anthonys, Busters and little Jocelyns? . . .

My thoughts go back to the mother of the boy who died within a few days of his twenty-first birthday. She has a terrible burden to bear, but she won't mind bearing it if she can be convinced that she will see him again.

Let us pray to-night that not only she, but all the other people in this world who have lost those who made life possible for them, may realise the great truth that they will meet their loved ones again.

It so often happens in life that we have to be cruel to be kind, and those who are in terrible trouble may feel that what I am now going to say is cruel.

We must make every effort to avoid becoming selfish in our sorrow, and becoming entirely absorbed in it. As Canon Scott Holland wrote:-

"The hard path of daily duty is the only path to tread, not because one is thinking of oneself, but because one wishes to forget oneself, and to think only of God and those that remain.

"Self-denial: to put self last, not out of sight, but last, that is what one is always called to do, and it is a sad bit of disloyalty to God if one becomes more selfish in sorrow."

Let us go about our daily duties trying to bring comfort to others; trying to help them bear their burdens.

A great friend of mine lost her husband, to whom she had been married many years, and whom she adored. They, unfortunately, had no children. She had no thoughts which were not connected with her husband. . . He died . . . life for her was at an end. She had friends who longed to help her, but her burden was not one which could be shared.

She had amazing pluck, but the burden seemed too heavy for her, and she was in danger of dying of a broken heart.

She was saved by two little children who took her into their confidence. They told her all about their dispatch-cases which their nurse had bought them when she was out with Amy, the cook. They took possession of her; they began to regard her as their own property. With their little confidences and their love, they brought her back to life. She loves and adores her husband as much as ever she did. She lived for him while he was alive, and now that he has passed beyond she still lives for him, and is leading a useful life helping others.

May everyone of us, when faced by tragedies which seem unendurable, have the courage and strength to lock our grief in our hearts, and to interest ourselves in the confidences and win the precious love of the Rosemarys, the Veronicas, the Timothys, the Anthonys, the Geoffreys, the Busters, and the tiny Jocelyn.

## CHAPTER XVIII NERVES

*(This chapter and the following four chapters, are written only for those who are troubled with nerves. I suggest that they should not be read by those fortunate people who do not know the meaning of the word.)*

"No, it's nothing; she's only got nerves. . . ."

I wonder how many times we have heard that remark made. We never hear anyone say, "No, it's nothing, she's only broken her leg." And yet those who have broken a leg, and have also suffered badly from nerves, would tell us that nerves are infinitely the worse torture. When I say that nerves are hell, I am not using a slang expression. I believe emphatically that nerves are a foretaste of hell. They are a state of mind. When we finish with our body, we do not finish with our mind. Call it what you will; mind, soul, or spirit - it does not matter.

It seems perfectly obvious what happens when we die. We cannot suppose that death is the end of all things. It would be intolerable. The Supreme Being is not so cruel as to send us into the world to form the closest ties, and then separate us for ever from those we love. Of course we shall meet hereafter those who have been so much to us on this earth. When we have realised the horror of evil, and have paid the penalty, we shall be fitted for the life hereafter. It will take many of us a long time before we

are fitted for the state of mind called Heaven, but I am sure we shall all get there eventually.

When we have nerves we are horribly ashamed of our selfish pasts. We cry out that the mental burden is more than we can bear. We vow that if the burden could be lifted from us, we would never go back to our old, immoral, selfish ways. The burden is lifted, and we gradually drift back to our old ways.

Nerves are fear, and there is nothing more agonising than fear. When we die we shall know better the meaning of the fear of God - the most dreadful of all things. Sometimes in my life, when I have committed some particularly bad sin, I have said, "Yes, I know it was damnably wrong, but it was worth it." I cannot believe that we shall put forward this defence hereafter. I cannot really believe that it was worth it. No pleasure, even intense pleasure to the senses, can have been worth the remorse we feel, or ought to feel.

Hereafter we shall meet God, Who is infinitely kind. He won't try to catch us out in the way that an objectionable schoolmaster tries to catch out the boys in his house. He will show us how cruel we have been to Him, and we shall feel as we feel now when we discover that through our conduct, or rather misconduct, we have been cruel to those we love best.

When we die, our mind is not ready for Heaven. We should feel out of place if we went there, in the same way as a man who could only produce discordant notes on a mouth organ would feel out of place in the orchestra at the Queen's Hall. Heaven is not a place where we shall sit round smugly playing harps, stopping from time to time to look down on the poor wretches who are writhing in the same mental hell we have just left.

No, we shall experience the joy, which passes human understanding, of knowing that we have conquered sin for ever. Some of us know the joy we get, even on this earth, from conquered sins. I don't mean the sins which, by reason of our age, we have become too old even to want to commit, but those sins which are tempting us ever, but which, thank God, we are having the strength of character to conquer.

I do implore you, who have nerve trouble, to rid yourself of it by the only certain cure. I speak from experience. Doctors can help you in the wonderful way they helped me - the loving patience of your wife, your husband, or your friends can help you. Tonics and bromide can help you, but the only person who can cure you is yourself. I have helped scores of people by convincing them of this simple truth. I have many letters from people who have cured themselves.

Welcome nerves: realise that they are a taste of the hereafter, and thank God that you are doing some of your penance on this side. You may think you will, but you won't give way under the burden. Remember that thousands are feeling as you are feeling on this side, and millions on the other side. Go on with your daily jobs determined that you will think less of your own mental torture, and more of other

people's. Pray as you have never prayed before. Remember that the burden will not be lifted from you in one day, but that it will gradually get lighter and lighter.

The nerve sufferer is like a man who has fallen into a well, but who has not been hurt bodily. He is terrified, and lonely, and can only see death approaching him. He shouts for help, and along comes a man who says, "Oh, so you've fallen in the well, and you're still alive. By Jove, you're lucky! You ought to be jolly thankful."

The next man who comes along lectures him on the folly of falling into the well, and says, "Well, it was your own fault. You took no notice of the warning which said, 'Be careful of the well.'" The next man says, "The only way for you to get out is to pull yourself together and climb out." The next man says, "Oh yes, I'll get a rope and try to pull you out." He gets a rope, but when he has pulled him halfway up the rope breaks, and the poor man is worse than before.

He is at his last gasp, when along comes a man who says, "Cheer up! I've fallen down the very same well. It's loathsome down there, but you can climb out, as I climbed out. If you feel the walls of the well, you will find some nails. They are strong enough to support you. It may take you time, but you'll get out all right if you go slowly and confidently."

I am not talking of what I think; but of what I know. Life will get brighter for you the second you realise that nerves are sent to you, not as a punishment, but as a warning.

## CHAPTER XIX

### NERVES (continued)

In the last chapter I have mentioned the fact that I have been able to help many people who were staggering under the terrible burden of nerves.

This is not just a conceited boast. A man riding across country, who gets brought down by some hidden barbed wire, will, if he has a spark of decency in him, do his utmost to warn those who are coming after him of the trouble they will get into if they go the same way as he went. If he is too late, and they are already entangled in the wire, and he has discovered a way out of the field, he will endeavour to show them the way.

The real reason I have been able to help other nerve sufferers has been that I have passed through the same mental agonies that they have, and I have been able to show them the way out.

"But surely, Mr. Gilbey, you have never had such and such a feeling?" some poor woman will say to me. I am able to assure her that I have had exactly the same feeling.

I found the mental strain of tackling some of these men and women was quite

appalling. I felt particularly well one day, when a stranger came to see me at two-thirty. He was in a ghastly state, but he left, well on the road to recovery, at three o'clock.

He was followed by another man, with whom I also had an exhausting interview. He had spent the morning trying to pluck up courage to throw himself under a 'bus and end it all. He stayed with me for half an hour, and after a struggle I was able to instil hope into him. When he left me it was perfectly obvious that he had already got his feet on the bottom rung of the ladder, but as I shut the front door, and wished him good luck, I myself felt in a complete state of collapse.

During my life I have had three, what I suppose must be called nervous breakdowns. They were all different, and the causes of each were different. I am describing them in detail in the hope that they will help others.

The first occurred at the Front in March, 1916. One night when my Company was relieved, and we were coming out of the trenches at Ypres, I felt ill and knew I had a temperature. When we got back to our huts behind Vlamertinghe our medical officer at once packed me off to the hospital at Poperinghe. I had a bad feverish chill, but although in a week I was better, my temperature flatly refused to remain normal. The Colonel of the hospital was a great friend of mine, and he said that he was afraid he would have to send me down to the base, and back to England for a rest, as I was suffering from nerves. I was highly indignant - I always thought nerves was another name for funk. It is true I was frightened enough in the trenches, but my devotion to my men and the other officers in the battalion was so great that my only thought was to get back to my Company.

One of the doctors, a delightful Scotsman, said to me, "Have you got anything on your mind? Is there anything worrying you very much, because I am convinced that that is what's the trouble." He was a shrewd doctor, and it was a great loss to our Division when the poor man was blown to bits later, in the Battle of the Somme. He had discovered what was wrong with me. There was something which was worrying me desperately.

A fortnight before my illness I had had a sergeant in my Company killed, and I hadn't got a suitable corporal to recommend to take his place. There was, however, a rifleman who had done magnificent work with our snipers, and who had always refused, up to that moment, to take a stripe. I talked over the matter with him, and finally said, "If the Commanding officer would make you an acting-sergeant straight away, would you take on the job?" He said that he would. I went to the Colonel, and the Colonel said that it was an extremely unusual thing to do. I said that I would stake my life on the man making a brilliant sergeant. I assured him that he was out and away the best man in my Company. The Colonel gave way.

At this time, leave, which had been stopped, restarted, and I sent off my new sergeant. On the day appointed for him to return, he didn't come back. I was amazed

not to have had a wire to say he was ill. As each day he didn't return I got more and more upset. He hadn't returned up to the day I became ill. When I was in hospital I worried desperately about him; and my feelings can be imagined when I heard that he had been arrested in England and brought back to the battalion in disgrace. I had all my life prided myself on being a judge of character, and the fact that I had been let down by a man I would have trusted as I would have trusted my own brother, was a cruel blow.

I told the doctor about him, and as he understood my temperament, he knew it was quite enough to be responsible for my state of nerves. Still my temperature went up every night, and the Colonel told me that he would give me another couple of days, and that if I did not get right by then he would have to send me home.

That very night one of my subalterns was hit when on a working-party, and brought into our hospital next morning. I knew that our battalion were going into the line that night, and that my Company would naturally be extra short of officers, so I went to the Colonel of the hospital and implored him to let me go back that afternoon to the battalion.

He said that he thought it was madness, but I pointed out that no harm could be done by my returning, as there was a possibility of my thoughts getting off myself if I had work to do; this I felt might cure me.

The Colonel was a real good sportsman, and he let me go to my battalion, with the result that that night I managed to reach my Company headquarters at a spot called 'The Willows.'

I was feeling desperately ill, but those who maintain that nerves and funk are the same thing would be interested to hear that I was probably less frightened of shells and machine-guns that night than on any other night during the war.

After a few minutes' rest I endeavoured to visit my front-line posts. On the way I collapsed. I realised that it was hopeless, but I was much too weak to get out of the line that night. I spent all next day lying in my dug-out feeling very ill, and waiting until it was dark enough to leave the trenches.

About four o'clock in the afternoon the Company commander on my left, Captain Banbury, his Company sergeant-major, and my sergeant-major were sitting on my bed talking to me, and trying to assure me that I should soon get well at home and be able to return to the battalion.

Suddenly the Germans started shelling us heavily. There was a direct hit on the dug-out next to mine. My Company sergeant-major, sitting on my bed, was hit by a piece of shell. Several men were killed and wounded, and were buried in the smashed-in dug-outs. We spent the next half-hour feverishly digging them out, and attending to the wounded.

When the job was over, and the wounded were as comfortable as possible, I strolled



along the trench to Captain Banbury's dug-out. He asked me what time I was going back to hospital, and I suddenly realised that the work I had been doing had completely cured me. I rang up the battalion headquarters and told the Colonel and the Medical Officer, and they were amazed to hear of my recovery. In the latter part of the war I was on brigade and divisional staffs, but my nerves, I am thankful to say, never broke to the same extent again.

I have mentioned this story to show that a certain type of nerves is caused almost entirely by being unable to get one's thoughts off oneself. This disappointment about my sergeant was on my nerves, and I could think of nothing else until those German shells had shaken me out of the terrible self-centred state into which I had fallen.

## CHAPTER XX

### NERVES (continued)

Number two case was chiefly brought about by smoking too much, and by very foolishly misunderstanding what my doctor said to me.

I had been smoking over forty Turkish cigarettes a day, and my heart was getting slower and slower. Things came to a head at Newmarket on the July course when my legs were too weak to support my body. The doctor who came to see me asked me if I had been gassed in the war, and when I said "Yes" he told me that this attack was partly due to the after-effects of the gassing. He told a friend that I should be very unlikely to live for the rest of the year. He told me that I should be a semi-invalid for the rest of my life.

My own doctor when he saw me said, "You have been smoking too much. You must cut it down, but it would be impossible for you to stop smoking completely." I thought he meant I had not the strength of character to give it up, so I foolishly gave it up from that moment.

I spent about ten days in bed, but after a fortnight I was well enough to go to Newquay to recuperate. For the first four days everything went splendidly. I ate well, and slept well. Then suddenly a reaction set in. I did not crave for cigarettes but my nerves without the nicotine to deaden them got completely out of control.

I felt as I would never have believed it was possible for anybody to feel. I could not eat; I could not bear it if my wife went out of the room for five minutes. I lived in a state of terror. I could not say what I was frightened of unless it was that I should go right off my head. Nothing interested me. One of my horses won a race, but I didn't care. I felt so dreadful that I wouldn't go through those days or weeks again for a million pounds.

I had become friends with a doctor in the hotel, and although he, poor man, was on his annual holiday, he could see the state I was in. I shall never forget his patience and the never-failing devotion of my wife during those awful days. "Why, oh why," I

said to myself, "wasn't I killed in the war and saved all this mental anguish?"

I felt that I could never get well again. It seemed as though there was a ton weight pressing down on my head. I longed to find somebody who had experienced the same feelings I was going through, but this I was unable to do. I imagined that all people who had had those feelings must have got worse and had been put in an asylum.

I have mentioned in chapter three what really helped me to get well. In order to save readers turning back to that chapter I am repeating the paragraph . . . "What helped me more than any doctor or any tonic was when I realised that I deserved the hell I was enduring, and a good deal worse, and that the best thing I could do would be to go down on my knees and thank God for opening my eyes."

I have written all this because I know there must be hundreds feeling as I felt then. I am not saying that this breakdown was entirely due to chucking up smoking in one day - I was also worrying terribly about something connected with my work.

I was not cured of this nerve attack as rapidly as I was of my first attack. It was a long fight and at times a very depressing one. Just as I began to think I was well on the road to recovery I would get back some of those awful feelings, and I would conclude that I was going to be just as bad as ever. My patient doctor assured me, however, that it was only natural I should have those slight relapses; that I should get them less frequently as time went on, and that each one would be of shorter duration and less intense. He was quite right.

Relapses come, but when they do come we must show pluck. There was some excuse for us to lose heart when we first had a breakdown, but having beaten off the great attack, there is no excuse for us to be faint-hearted when we have to face minor attacks. We know that with God's assistance we are strong enough to win through.

The following experience may help those who have lost all confidence in themselves, and who are beginning to regard trivial things they have to do as an ordeal.

I have always found broadcasting the greatest possible nerve-strain. On one occasion in 1931, when I was due to broadcast, I was so seriously ill and in such a nerve-exhausted condition that my doctor told me that I must stop all work and go away for a month. "I had better ring up the B.B.C. at once," I said, "and tell them I cannot broadcast to-night." "No," he replied. "you have sufficient pluck to go through with it; stay in bed until it is time to dress for dinner; drink a glass of champagne with your dinner."

At 9.25 my brother and I broadcast a discussion for thirty-five minutes. I am not mentioning this as an example of pluck; I am mentioning it to show what prayer can do. I prayed earnestly that I might have the strength to go through with what seemed to me an impossible ordeal. I was given the necessary strength. It must be understood that I was suffering from neurasthenia, which is as much an illness as is measles or whooping-cough.

We cannot fail to conquer our nerve troubles if we set about the task in the right way.

## CHAPTER XXI

### NERVES (continued)

My number three nerve attack was different from the other two. It was just a case of nerve exhaustion.

Mr. Lorrimer, in his book, *Old Gordon Graham*, makes that delightful character say, "Health is like an inheritance; you can spend the interest in work and play, but you must not break into the principle."

For many years I had been living on the principle. On the day on which 'Cameronian' won the Derby I found myself bankrupt. (I am not speaking of finance.) My doctor who came to see me found that I was suffering from extreme nerve exhaustion. I knew it was entirely my own fault. Life had been very good to me; I was wonderfully happy in my home; I had a job in which I was not only interested, but of which I was very fond, and devoted friends.

But for many years I had been endeavouring to do very much more than I possibly could do. I had become so exhausted that not only did I find my writing extremely difficult, but after any work I had a feeling as though there was weight on my head. It was also alarming to find no feeling in my face when I shaved. When I came back from the Derby I could not feel a pin when it was stuck in my wrist. Frankly, I was frightened.

My doctor packed me off to Evian-les-Bains, where I had to forget my work. He told me that on my arrival I must go and see a doctor with a name I could not remember and could not pronounce. I have told the story in detail in *The Way Out*. This doctor taught me how to relax, and he taught me how to laugh at myself.

This time I had got into a very weak state indeed, and when I got back I had many tussles with myself. At times it was difficult not to believe that I was slipping back again into the same bad state. I had many small, what might be called relapses, and the worst was after I had had two falls within five minutes of each other when hunting with the Oxford University Drag Hounds, and thoroughly shaken my nervous system.

The next morning I again felt that numbness, and knew the danger signal. I also knew that no tonic in the world could bring me back my lost energy.

I was advised to go and see a doctor who has helped thousands and thousands to regain the joy of life. The first thing I said when I saw him was, "I can quite believe you see thousands of people like me; I think, however, I start with an advantage, because I know that I have been knocking my head against a wall, and that the best way to get rid of the bump is to stop doing so. At the same time, I have come to you

because I hear how wonderful you are at not only showing people how to regain their nervous energy as quickly as possible, but also at showing them how to keep that energy once they have got it back.”

When he examined me he explained that I was like a battery that was run down, and he immediately set to work to recharge me. He did me a great deal of good.

I am afraid I have repeated myself several times in these chapters on nerves, but I have done so intentionally. There are certain points I cannot emphasise too strongly. The word ‘hopeless’ must never be used in connection with nerves. No one dies of nerve trouble. There is no connection between nerves and lunacy.

Readers may think that these notes are very personal, and they will wonder how it is that I am not ashamed to lay myself naked in this way. I have done so because I know that in so doing I can help others. This book is written with the object of helping; particularly those people who are down the well. I want readers to understand that this book doesn’t claim to be able to lift anyone out of the well, but it is written by one who has been down to the bottom more than once, and who knows that no one is too weak to get out.

We need assistance, but the actual climbing must be done by ourselves. As I have already said, doctors have helped me wonderfully, but they themselves could not lift me out. They could only encourage me in my climb, and assure me that the nails were quite strong enough to support my weight.

What happens when we get out of the well? When we were down there, we swore that if ever we got out we would never go near the top again. But alas; memory is short, and also human nature is weak. So many things in life which we crave for most, such as immorality or other forms of self-indulgence, are dangerously near the top of the well.

The doctors warn us, and we know it is sheer madness to play near the top of this well, and yet we do so. I pray that I may have the strength of character never to go near it again.

Let us remember that those who know the true meaning of perfect love need never fear that they will fall into the well. If only we had perfect love, there would not be such a thing as nerves in this world.

## CHAPTER XXII NERVES (concluded)

I make no apology for writing an extra chapter on Nerves in this edition. We live and learn, and I have certainly learnt more about nerves during the past four years. What I wrote before need not be changed, but there is more to be said.

Scores of nerve sufferers who read this book wrote to me, and many came to see me. I have been in touch with some terrible cases, and I have spent hours and hours

helping people out of the well.

I have taken so much out of myself sometimes that when they have left me I have been deep down in the well again.

I have found the truth of the words of Dr. Miller. "At no small price can we become true helpers of others in this world. That which has cost us nothing in the getting will not be any great blessing to any other person in the giving."

In the last four years I have several times been deep down in the well again. On every occasion I have only had myself to blame or thank. I know very well that there are limits to what we can do, but repeatedly I go beyond the limit. My friends quite rightly tell me that I ask for trouble and get it, and that it is very unfair on my wife and daughters. It is, though, extremely difficult. Time and again when I am overdone myself I get an S.O.S. from people in the very depths of the well imploring me to see them. I know I can help them, and I also know that if I do help them I shall have to suffer. On three occasions during the past four years I have gone on until breaking point was reached.

I am glad I have done so, because each time I have learnt further lessons which enable me to pass on messages of comfort to other sufferers.

Nearly three years ago I was in such a nerve-exhausted condition that I could not have gone into a shop by myself for a thousand pounds. I had to give up all work. I was in constant fear of fainting. I dreaded meals. I dare not go out of doors for a walk. Nothing interested me.

On this occasion, my wife wanted me to go and see a Mr. Eeman, who, she heard, had cured a huge number of nerve-exhausted people. I refused to go so she made an appointment for me. I went much against my will, but I shall always bless the day, or rather the evening, I went. Mr. Eeman's treatment, which is delightfully simple, not only cured me completely, but I have been practising it with never-failing success on all the nerve cases with whom I have been brought into contact ever since.

I know many readers would write to me for his address. To save them the trouble I will give it. It is:-

L. E. Eeman, Esq.,  
24 Baker Street,  
W. I.  
(Tel. No. Welbeck 5059)

I could print scores of letters from men and women who once were very bad nerve-sufferers, but who now are completely cured. I will content myself by referring to what I think was one of the worst cases I ever came across.

A woman who had read my nerve chapters in *Pass It On* wrote to me from Brighton to tell me that she was in a perfectly ghastly state, that she could not go on living, that she would be desperately grateful if I could send her a word of comfort in her

mental agony. I wrote to say that I should be in Brighton very shortly, and if she would care to see me, I would gladly call. She wrote back to say that she was very much afraid I did not understand that she was only a working-class woman, that she lived in a back street, and that she would be much too shy to meet me.

I naturally told her that I would, of course, come and see her, that all my best friends lived in back streets, and that nobody in the world was ever shy of me.

I called, and found she had certainly not exaggerated her nervous trouble. She was in a terrible state, but, bad as she was, I knew that if she would do what I told her to do, she would make a complete recovery. I gave her an hour's treatment. It was hard work, and the only amusing incident was when she told me in front of her husband that he had been furious with her for writing to me.

"Didn't he believe in me?" I asked.

"He didn't," she said. "He told me, Gilbey is only after one thing - he wants to sell his books."

The husband, who was an excellent fellow, looked very awkward. I was able to put him at his ease by assuring him that I could perfectly understand his point of view. He had found it difficult to understand what 'I got out of it.'

'What I have got out of it' is a letter dated 30/12/1935. Here it is word for word.

"Dear Mr. Gilbey,

No doubt you will be surprised to receive this letter, but I thought - in fact, I know - that you will be glad to know that I am very, very much better.

In case you have forgotten me, I would remind you that I wrote to you last year when I was in a bad state of nerves, and was almost at the end of my tether, and you came to see me just after Christmas.

I have never forgotten your great kindness. I pinned my faith in your words and God, and with His help I have practically won through. It's just wonderful to be well again.

Thanking you very very much,

I remain,

Yours sincerely, - - - "

When I found this letter on my return from my holiday in Switzerland, it cheered as nothing else could have cheered me. I can see again this poor terrified woman as I saw her in her home in Brighton. I can well remember the mental struggle I had with her for the first half an hour and the dreadful doubts I had to dispel.

I could tell of scores of similar cases. You who are reading this, can take heart, however mentally tortured you are. I give you my solemn promise that you will

recover your own control and regain the joy of life if you set about it in the right way. Think, too, what a blessing you can be in helping others when you have recovered. I have always given this message to bad sufferers.

I had a great struggle with myself two years ago, when I was right down in the depths. I remember going on my knees in the hotel where I was staying at Sandbanks and asking God to give me the strength to bear my burden so that I could help others to bear their burdens when I regained my strength. I made myself utter a prayer of thankfulness to God for the lessons He was teaching me.

It is desperately hard when we are in the depths to thank God for using us, but if we do, He will give us strength to bear the burden.

Dr. Miller says: "No books, no universities, can teach us the divine art of sympathy. We must be sorely tempted ourselves before we can understand what others suffer in their temptations. We must have sorrow ourselves in some form before we can be real and true comforters of others in their times of sorrow. We must walk through the deep valley ourselves before we can be guides to others in the same shadowy vales. We must feel the strain and carry the burden and endure the struggle ourselves, and then we can be touched with the feeling of sympathy and can give help to others in life's sore stress and poignant need. So we see one compensation of suffering: it fits us for being in a larger sense helpers of others."

I swear on oath that I thank God now for the breakdowns I have had. They have helped me to understand the sufferings of others and have enabled me to show them 'The Way Out.'

## CHAPTER XXIII

### CHRISTMAS DAY

*(To be read on Christmas Eve.)*

Christmas Day! What memories it conjures up! It was the day on which I learnt the truth of our Lord's words, that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

At the age of four or five it was thrilling to undo the parcels and see the forts, the soldiers, and the golliwog books which kind friends and relations had sent me, and to open the envelope containing the postal order from Uncle Willie and Aunt Magara.

It was, though, most thrilling of all to see the joy with which Mother, Papa, Nannie, and the household used to show when we gave them pen-wipers we had worked, texts we had painted, or scarves we had knitted. What used to make me swell with pride was when my mother, my father, and the footman, and, in fact, everybody to whom I gave a gift, always told me it was just what they were wanting.

Those days are long ago. Yet my eyes do not fill with tears when I realise that nearly

all those with whom I spent my earlier Christmases are no longer here in body, for I know that they are here in spirit. My father and mother, James the footman, Lucy the housemaid, and, in fact, all of them are as real to-day as they were when I was six years old in 1895. They were all so good and kind. Goodness and kindness live for ever.

Has Christmas Day changed much in the last forty-one years? Those of us who are lucky are now receiving, instead of giving, painted texts. Christmas, thank God, is unchangeable. It must be for all time the most wonderful day in the year. It is the birthday of Christianity, without which life would be impossible.

Has the day always meant as much as it should have done to us? When I was a child, I associated it, as I have already said, with the exchange of gifts. It was rather annoying when it came on a Sunday or a Monday, to have to go to church on two consecutive days, but I felt that it was worth it. When I was a little older, I associated it with sitting up for dinner and eating, if possible, more than ever. When I was seventeen I began to get *blasé*, and was inclined to regard the day as rather a bore. At twenty-one it was a distinct bore; there was no racing and no hunting!

I was woken up again to the joys of Christmas Day in 1914. I was then a second lieutenant in the 11th Battalion Rifle Brigade, and we were training at Black-down. I had a very great friend called Gerald Meredith. He was in the 11th Battalion K.R.R., but we used to spend most evenings together. On Christmas Eve, 1914, we spent the evening together as usual, and discussed almost everything under the sun except religion.

On Christmas morning, although I had not been to Communion for some time, I got up early and went down to the little tin church. There was a very small congregation, and the first person I saw there was Gerald Meredith. He was as pleased to see me as I was to see him, and, needless to say, we became even closer friends after this. He was one of the finest characters I ever met, and it was a terrible blow when he became desperately ill during the March retreat in 1918. He refused to go sick and leave his battalion, although he was in dreadful pain, with the result that when he did get to hospital it was too late.

That Christmas Day in 1914 was a very happy one. We played inter-platoon football matches of four a side in the morning, and I remember being sent spinning by a little rifleman who was half my size, and who afterwards became regimental sergeant-major. The men in our battalion were the best lot of men I have ever met in my life, but on that Christmas Day I realised more than ever what wonderful sportsmen they were. That evening I sang in three different battalion concerts, and went to bed desperately tired, but wonderfully happy.

The Christmases in the trenches are also very fresh in my memory. I am afraid I was always a very bad hater. I had not been in the trenches many nights before I began to feel desperately sorry for the Germans. I have a pretty vivid imagination, and I could



never get out of my head the thought that the majority of the poor devils who were entrenched in the mud opposite must be hating it just as much as I was.

On Christmas Day I found that even the greatest haters on our side felt less bloodthirsty than usual. By Christmas, 1916, my hatred against the Germans was at a very low ebb. It is impossible to live in trenches full of dead bodies of our own soldiers and also the enemy without being cured of hatred.

I have, I am afraid, allowed my pen to run away with me, but those Christmas Days during the war meant so much to me. The spirit of good fellowship was magnificent. Christ was very close to us then.

Now, as a father, I look forward to Christmas each year more and more. To-morrow morning we shall be woken up while it is still dark by Rosemary, and Veronica. . . . It is all so thrilling and it seems almost too sacred to write about it in cold print. . . .

The day will come, I suppose, as it has come for other parents, when Rosemary and Veronica will be playing their part in the world with houses of their own. Then on Christmas morning I shall have to live in the past, as so many other parents will be doing to-morrow. Tears will come into my eyes as they will throughout the world. May they be tears of thankfulness that our beloved children are making good. When we get old, our happiness depends so little on ourselves and so much on the happiness of our children.

What are we going to do on this Christmas Day? I am not a great believer in too much self-analysis, but let us ask ourselves a question.

The question we might ask ourselves to-morrow is, "Am I a success?" In order to find the answer we need not ring up our bank manager, or make an inventory of the things in our house.

Our own hearts can answer the question. We know that we must make happier or unhappier all who are brought into touch with us. Can we honestly say that we have made many people happier?

The most wonderful definition of Success I have ever read was in a book called *Precept and Practice*, published by Bagster & Sons of Paternoster Row. . . .

"He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often, and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of little children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who has left the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem, or a rescued soul; who has never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who has always looked for the best in others and given the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory a benediction."

There was a time in my life when the one thing I craved for mostly was popularity with the world. I soon found that in my job as a journalist I could not satisfy my conscience and be popular. Now I don't care a rap about popularity except with the

people I love and respect.

Then there was a time when I longed to be well known. I longed to see my name in big type in the newspaper. I have seen it in big type. I have seen it on posters. The first time I saw it, I pretended not to be thrilled, but I was delighted. The poster proclaimed to the world that Geoffrey Gilbey had given some long-priced winners, and as I read it I felt rather a hero. A hero, mark you!

What of Rifleman Smith who loathed war, and who loved his wife and children, and who yet had been patriotic enough to leave a good job and join up in the first weeks of the war? His name appeared in small type in the newspapers one day among those who had given their lives for their country. His body was never identified, and he is one of those whose remains lie buried in a cemetery in Belgium.

What of the hundreds of nurses throughout the country who are devoting their lives to others? What of the mothers who are slaving for their families? What of the wives who are struggling gallantly to keep their homes together though handicapped with drunken, useless husbands? What of the husbands who, equally plucky, are struggling to protect the name of their immoral wives? What of the underpaid clergy, of all denominations, who are living to bring comfort to others?

These are the heroes. Their names may not be in big type on our posters, but they will have their reward. These are the successes of life.

We want something more for which to live than popularity and big type.

If Christ came to-day and said, "Follow Me," what should we say? I am afraid, the great majority of us would say, "I'll come next year," and it would be a case of always next year, but never this year.

On this Christmas Day I am going to make a much greater effort than ever before. It is not too late for any of us to start a life of success. Let our Christmas message be the message of 'Peace, goodwill towards men.' Let us try desperately hard to see the other person's point of view. When people taunt us, and slight us, let us try to understand their reason for so doing. Let us on this great day, banish all hatred from our hearts. Let us try to love our enemies or, better still, let us have no enemies.

It takes two to make a fight. There is no one in the world whose real friendship would not be worth having. We were all made by God in His own image. There is good in everyone.

On this Christmas Day let us get this oft repeated sentence fixed in our heads. We may be a warder in prison; we may be brought into touch with those poor wretches who in the past have not had the strength to resist the temptations of crime. Let us not blame them - rather let us thank God for not allowing us to have their irresistible temptations. Let us try to help them. Let us kneel before God and ask Him to help us to follow in the footsteps of Him whose birthday is celebrated throughout the Kingdom to-morrow.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### CONCLUSION

It now remains for me to conclude this book. I do so with the sincerest hope that you who have read it have found some helpful message. If you have only been reminded of what you learnt at your mother's knee, the book will not have been written in vain.

If you have found a helpful message, do please pass on that message. If you have failed to find anything helpful, please pass on the book to a hospital, to someone who is lonely, or suffering from nerves, or to some boy who is just leaving school.

It is my greatest wish that this book should be read by those who are just about to get married and set up a home. They may think they know each other, but they cannot do so until they have discussed the only things that matter.

There are so many people nowadays who only use the church for weddings, christenings, and funerals. They may have comfortable homes, but the really happy homes are those into which God is always welcome.

Let all young people remember that "religion is not a narrow thing of time and space, but broad and infinite." True religion does not make us narrow-minded, but broad-minded. Religion does not stand in the way of our love for our wives, our children, or our friends. It makes that love infinitely more intense and infinitely deeper.

I speak from bitter experience when I say that I know how miserable and how meaningless life can be when we shut out God. We may imagine we are progressing for a time, but a child of two might progress for some distance along the edge of a cliff.

If we are living without religion, we have no purpose in life. I have heard people argue that some man who they say is not religious spends his whole life working for others. What we forget is that this is a religion in itself. It is the greatest of all religions. It is Christ's religion.

We must not associate religion with depression and long faces. Religion can only bring joy. Many of the most amusing companions I know are deeply religious people. Their sense of humour is not dimmed by their religion. Their religion is not dimmed by their sense of humour. Their religion and their humour together make their influence with their fellow-creatures enormous.

If you who are reading this book are just setting out in life, I do implore you for your own inward happiness, and for the happiness of all who are brought into contact with you, to give some thought each day to the things that matter. Set aside a time each day when your thoughts can turn to God. God does not ask you to wear sackcloth and ashes and to spend your days reciting long prayers that mean nothing to you. He asks you to do His Will.

If you are in love and have never discussed religion with the one who matters so

much to you, do so when next you meet. The happiness of married life depends on the religion in the home. Fix an hour each night when you will pray for each other. Prayer unites us as nothing else can. When my friends or I are in special difficulties, I often arrange that we shall pray for each other every night at the same time. There is nothing sloppy or sentimental about it. We know that these prayers help us in our difficulties and temptations.

If you are miserable, and are living without God, why not invite Him into your hearts? There is no hovel too humble for Him to visit. There are no sins too black for Him to forgive, if we are truly repentant. There are no burdens He will not help us to bear. There are no miseries He will not share with us.

We must get out of our heads the idea that life is sordid and complicated. We must blame ourselves if it becomes sordid and complicated: it is our own selfishness and lack of faith that make it so. Life is delightfully simple, and if we will only turn to the remedy at hand, it can be made simply delightful for all of us. If we have sufficient faith, even death itself can be wonderful; for it means that we shall meet not only our loved ones again, but our Friend Who has never failed us and Who gave His only Son for our redemption.

Inward happiness is at hand for us to grasp. Let us not even wait until to-night; let us breathe a prayer this very minute. Let us invite God into our Heart, and let us say with all sincerity, with all reverence, and yet with all cheerfulness those wonderful words: **THY WILL BE DONE.**

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Note: Nothing has been changed; it is as it is.