

CHAPTER THE THIRD - INSOMNIA

(1)

THE night after his conversation with Eleanor was the first night of the bishop's insomnia. It was the definite beginning of a new phase in his life.

Doctors explain to us that the immediate cause of insomnia is always some poisoned or depleted state of the body, and no doubt the fatigues and hasty meals of the day had left the bishop in a state of unprecedented chemical disorder, with his nerves irritated by strange compounds and unsoothed by familiar lubricants. But chemical disorders follow mental disturbances, and the core and essence of his trouble was an intellectual distress. For the first time in his life he was really in doubt, about himself, about his way of living, about all his persuasions. It was a general doubt. It was not a specific suspicion upon this point or that. It was a feeling of detachment and unreality at once extraordinarily vague and extraordinarily oppressive. It was as if he discovered himself flimsy and transparent in a world of minatory solidity and opacity. It was as if he found himself made not of flesh and blood but of tissue paper.

But this intellectual insecurity extended into his physical sensations.

It affected his feeling in his skin, as if it were not absolutely his own skin.

And as he lay there, a weak phantom mentally and bodily, an endless succession and recurrence of anxieties for which he could find no reassurance besieged him.

Chief of this was his distress for Eleanor.

She was the central figure in this new sense of illusion in familiar and trusted things. It was not only that the world of his existence which had seemed to be the whole universe had become diaphanous and betrayed vast and uncontrollable realities beyond it, but his daughter had as it were suddenly opened a door in this glassy sphere of insecurity that had been his abiding refuge, a door upon the stormy rebel outer world, and she stood there, young, ignorant, confident, adventurous, ready to step out.

"Could it be possible that she did not believe?"

He saw her very vividly as he had seen her in the dining-room, slender and upright, half child, half woman, so fragile and so fearless. And the door she opened thus carelessly gave upon a stormy background like one of the stormy backgrounds that were popular behind portrait Dianas in eighteenth century paintings. Did she believe that all he had taught her, all the life he led was--what was her phrase?--a kind of magic

world, not really real?

He groaned and turned over and repeated the words: "A kind of magic world--not really real!"

The wind blew through the door she opened, and scattered everything in the room. And still she held the door open.

He was astonished at himself. He started up in swift indignation. Had he not taught the child? Had he not brought her up in an atmosphere of faith? What right had she to turn upon him in this matter? It was--indeed it was--a sort of insolence, a lack of reverence....

It was strange he had not perceived this at the time.

But indeed at the first mention of "questionings" he ought to have thundered. He saw that quite clearly now. He ought to have cried out and said, "On your knees, my Norah, and ask pardon of God!"

Because after all faith is an emotional thing....

He began to think very rapidly and copiously of things he ought to have said to Eleanor. And now the eloquence of reverie was upon him. In a little time he was also addressing the tea-party at Morrice Deans'. Upon them too he ought to have thundered. And he knew now also all that he should have said to the recalcitrant employer. Thunder also. Thunder is

surely the privilege of the higher clergy--under Jove.

But why hadn't he thundered?

He gesticulated in the darkness, thrust out a clutching hand.

There are situations that must be gripped--gripped firmly. And without delay. In the middle ages there had been grip enough in a purple glove.

(2)

From these belated seizures of the day's lost opportunities the bishop passed to such a pessimistic estimate of the church as had never entered his mind before.

It was as if he had fallen suddenly out of a spiritual balloon into a world of bleak realism. He found himself asking unprecedented and devastating questions, questions that implied the most fundamental shiftings of opinion. Why was the church such a failure? Why had it no grip upon either masters or men amidst this vigorous life of modern industrialism, and why had it no grip upon the questioning young? It was a tolerated thing, he felt, just as sometimes he had felt that the Crown was a tolerated thing. He too was a tolerated thing; a curious survival....

This was not as things should be. He struggled to recover a proper attitude. But he remained enormously dissatisfied....

The church was no Levite to pass by on the other side away from the struggles and wrongs of the social conflict. It had no right when the children asked for the bread of life to offer them Gothic stone....

He began to make interminable weak plans for fulfilling his duty to his diocese and his daughter.

What could he do to revivify his clergy? He wished he had more personal magnetism, he wished he had a darker and a larger presence. He wished he had not been saddled with Whippham's rather futile son as his chaplain. He wished he had a dean instead of being his own dean. With an unsympathetic rector. He wished he had it in him to make some resounding appeal. He might of course preach a series of thumping addresses and sermons, rather on the lines of "Fors Clavigera," to masters and men, in the Cathedral. Only it was so difficult to get either masters or men into the Cathedral.

Well, if the people will not come to the bishop the bishop must go out to the people. Should he go outside the Cathedral--to the place where the trains met?

Interweaving with such thoughts the problem of Eleanor rose again into his consciousness.

Weren't there books she ought to read? Weren't there books she ought to be made to read? And books--and friends--that ought to be imperatively forbidden? Imperatively!

But how to define the forbidden?

He began to compose an address on Modern Literature (so-called).

It became acrimonious.

Before dawn the birds began to sing.

His mind had seemed to be a little tranquillized, there had been a distinct feeling of subsidence sleepwards, when first one and then another little creature roused itself and the bishop to greet the gathering daylight.

It became a little clamour, a misty sea of sound in which individuality appeared and disappeared. For a time a distant cuckoo was very perceptible, like a landmark looming up over a fog, like the cuckoo in the Pastoral Symphony.

The bishop tried not to heed these sounds, but they were by their very nature insistent sounds. He lay disregarding them acutely.

Presently he pulled the coverlet over his ears.

A little later he sat up in bed.

Again in a slight detail he marked his strange and novel detachment from the world of his upbringing. His hallucination of disillusionment had spread from himself and his church and his faith to the whole animate creation. He knew that these were the voices of "our feathered songsters," that this was "a joyous chorus" greeting the day. He knew that a wakeful bishop ought to bless these happy creatures, and join with them by reciting Ken's morning hymn. He made an effort that was more than half habit, to repeat and he repeated with a scowling face and the voice of a schoolmaster:

"Awake my soul, and with the sun

Thy daily stage of duty run...."

He got no further. He stopped short, sat still, thinking what utterly detestable things singing birds were. A blackbird had gripped his attention. Never had he heard such vain repetitions. He struggled against the dark mood of criticism. "He prayeth best who loveth best--"

No, he did not love the birds. It was useless to pretend. Whatever one may say about other birds a cuckoo is a low detestable cad of a bird.

Then the bishop began to be particularly tormented by a bird that made a short, insistent, wheezing sound at regular intervals of perhaps twenty seconds. If a bird could have whooping-cough, that, he thought, was the sort of whoop it would have. But even if it had whooping-cough he could not pity it. He hung in its intervals waiting for the return of the wheeze.

And then that blackbird reasserted itself. It had a rich boastful note; it seemed proud of its noisy reiteration of simple self-assertion. For some obscure reason the phrase "oleographic sounds" drifted into the bishop's thoughts. This bird produced the peculiar and irrational impression that it had recently made a considerable sum of money by shrewd industrialism. It was, he thought grimly, a genuine Princhester blackbird.

This wickedly uncharitable reference to his diocese ran all unchallenged through the bishop's mind. And others no less wicked followed it.

Once during his summer holidays in Florence he and Lady Ella had subscribed to an association for the protection of song-birds. He recalled this now with a mild wonder. It seemed to him that perhaps after all it was as well to let fruit-growers and Italians deal with singing-birds in their own way. Perhaps after all they had a wisdom....

He passed his hands over his face. The world after all is not made

entirely for singing-birds; there is such a thing as proportion.
Singing-birds may become a luxury, an indulgence, an excess.

Did the birds eat the fruit in Paradise?

Perhaps there they worked for some collective musical effect, had some sort of conductor in the place of this--hullabaloo....

He decided to walk about the room for a time and then remake his bed....

The sunrise found the bishop with his head and shoulders out of the window trying to see that blackbird. He just wanted to look at it. He was persuaded it was a quite exceptional blackbird.

Again came that oppressive sense of the futility of the contemporary church, but this time it came in the most grotesque form. For hanging half out of the casement he was suddenly reminded of St. Francis of Assisi, and how at his rebuke the wheeling swallow stilled their cries.

But it was all so different then.

(3)

It was only after he had passed four similar nights, with intervening days of lassitude and afternoon siestas, that the bishop realized that

he was in the grip of insomnia.

He did not go at once to a doctor, but he told his trouble to every one he met and received much tentative advice. He had meant to have his talk with Eleanor on the morning next after their conversation in the dining-room, but his bodily and spiritual anaemia prevented him.

The fifth night was the beginning of the Whitsuntide Ember week, and he wore a red cassock and had a distracting and rather interesting day welcoming his ordination candidates. They had a good effect upon him; we spiritualize ourselves when we seek to spiritualize others, and he went to bed in a happier frame of mind than he had done since the day of the shock. He woke in the night, but he woke much more himself than he had been since the trouble began. He repeated that verse of Ken's:

"When in the night I sleepless lie, My soul with heavenly thoughts supply; Let no ill dreams disturb my rest, No powers of darkness me molest."

Almost immediately after these there floated into his mind, as if it were a message, the dear familiar words:

"He giveth his Beloved sleep."

These words irradiated and soothed him quite miraculously, the clouds of doubt seemed to dissolve and vanish and leave him safe and calm under a clear sky; he knew those words were a promise, and very speedily he fell asleep and slept until he was called.

But the next day was a troubled one. Whippam had muddled his timetable and crowded his afternoon; the strike of the transport workers had begun, and the ugly noises they made at the tramway depot, where they were booing some one, penetrated into the palace. He had to snatch a meal between services, and the sense of hurry invaded his afternoon lectures to the candidates. He hated hurry in Ember week. His ideal was one of quiet serenity, of grave things said slowly, of still, kneeling figures, of a sort of dark cool spiritual germination. But what sort of dark cool spiritual germination is possible with an ass like Whippam about?

In the fresh courage of the morning the bishop had arranged for that talk with Eleanor he had already deferred too long, and this had proved less satisfactory than he had intended it to be.

The bishop's experience with the ordination candidates was following the usual course. Before they came there was something bordering upon distaste for the coming invasion; then always there was an effect of surprise at the youth and faith of the neophytes and a real response of the spirit to the occasion. Throughout the first twenty-four hours they were all simply neophytes, without individuality to break up their

uniformity of self-devotion. Then afterwards they began to develop little personal traits, and scarcely ever were these pleasing traits. Always one or two of them would begin haunting the bishop, giving way to an appetite for special words, special recognitions. He knew the expression of that craving on their faces. He knew the way-laying movements in room and passage that presently began.

This time in particular there was a freckled underbred young man who handed in what was evidently a carefully prepared memorandum upon what he called "my positions." Apparently he had a muddle of doubts about the early fathers and the dates of the earlier authentic copies of the gospels, things of no conceivable significance.

The bishop glanced through this bale of papers--it had of course no index and no synopsis, and some of the pages were not numbered--handed it over to Whippham, and when he proved, as usual, a broken reed, the bishop had the brilliant idea of referring the young man to Canon Bliss (of Pringle), "who has a special knowledge quite beyond my own in this field."

But he knew from the young man's eye even as he said this that it was not going to put him off for more than a day or so.

The immediate result of glancing over these papers was, however, to enhance in the bishop's mind a growing disposition to minimize the importance of all dated and explicit evidences and arguments for

orthodox beliefs, and to resort to vague symbolic and liberal interpretations, and it was in this state that he came to his talk with Eleanor.

He did not give her much time to develop her objections. He met her half way and stated them for her, and overwhelmed her with sympathy and understanding. She had been "too literal." "Too literal" was his keynote. He was a little astonished at the liberality of his own views. He had been getting along now for some years without looking into his own opinions too closely and he was by no means prepared to discover how far he had come to meet his daughter's scepticisms. But he did meet them. He met them so thoroughly that he almost conveyed that hers was a needlessly conservative and oldfashioned attitude.

Occasionally he felt he was being a little evasive, but she did not seem to notice it. As she took his drift, her relief and happiness were manifest. And he had never noticed before how clear and pretty her eyes were; they were the most honest eyes he had ever seen. She looked at him very steadily as he explained, and lit up at his points. She brightened wonderfully as she realized that after all they were not apart, they had not differed; simply they had misunderstood....

And before he knew where he was, and in a mere parenthetical declaration of liberality, he surprised himself by conceding her demand for Newnham even before she had repeated it. It helped his case wonderfully.

"Call in every exterior witness you can. The church will welcome them.... No, I want you to go, my dear...."

But his mind was stirred again to its depths by this discussion. And in particular he was surprised and a little puzzled by this Newnham concession and the necessity of making his new attitude clear to Lady Ella....

It was with a sense of fatality that he found himself awake again that night, like some one lying drowned and still and yet perfectly conscious at the bottom of deep cold water.

He repeated, "He giveth his Beloved sleep," but all the conviction had gone out of the words.

(4)

Neither the bishop's insomnia nor his incertitudes about himself and his faith developed in a simple and orderly manner. There were periods of sustained suffering and periods of recovery; it was not for a year or so that he regarded these troubles as more than acute incidental interruptions of his general tranquillity or realized that he was passing into a new phase of life and into a new quality of thought. He told every one of the insomnia and no one of his doubts; these he betrayed only by an increasing tendency towards vagueness, symbolism,

poetry and toleration. Eleanor seemed satisfied with his exposition; she did not press for further enlightenment. She continued all her outward conformities except that after a time she ceased to communicate; and in September she went away to Newnham. Her doubts had not visibly affected Clementina or her other sisters, and the bishop made no further attempts to explore the spiritual life of his family below the surface of its formal acquiescence.

As a matter of fact his own spiritual wrestlings were almost exclusively nocturnal. During his spells of insomnia he led a curiously double existence. In the daytime he was largely the self he had always been, able, assured, ecclesiastical, except that he was a little jaded and irritable or sleepy instead of being quick and bright; he believed in God and the church and the Royal Family and himself securely; in the wakeful night time he experienced a different and novel self, a bare-minded self, bleakly fearless at its best, shamelessly weak at its worst, critical, sceptical, joyless, anxious. The anxiety was quite the worst element of all. Something sat by his pillow asking grey questions: "What are you doing? Where are you going? Is it really well with the children? Is it really well with the church? Is it really well with the country? Are you indeed doing anything at all? Are you anything more than an actor wearing a costume in an archaic play? The people turn their backs on you."

He would twist over on his pillow. He would whisper hymns and prayers that had the quality of charms.

"He giveth his Beloved sleep"; that answered many times, and many times it failed.

The labour troubles of 1912 eased off as the year wore on, and the bitterness of the local press over the palace abated very considerably. Indeed there was something like a watery gleam of popularity when he brought down his consistent friend, the dear old Princess Christiana of Hoch and Unter, black bonnet, deafness, and all, to open a new wing of the children's hospital. The Princhester conservative paper took the occasion to inform the diocese that he was a fluent German scholar and consequently a persona grata with the royal aunts, and that the Princess Christiana was merely just one of a number of royalties now practically at the beck and call of Princhester. It was not true, but it was very effective locally, and seemed to justify a little the hauteur of which Lady Ella was so unjustly suspected. Yet it involved a possibility of disappointments in the future.

He went to Brighton-Pomfrey too upon the score of his general health, and Brighton-Pomfrey revised his general regimen, discouraged indiscreet fasting, and suggested a complete abstinence from red wine except white port, if indeed that can be called a red wine, and a moderate use of Egyptian cigarettes.

But 1913 was a strenuous year. The labour troubles revived, the suffragette movement increased greatly in violence and aggressiveness,

and there sprang up no less than three ecclesiastical scandals in the diocese. First, the Kensitites set themselves firmly to make presentations and prosecutions against Morrice Deans, who was reserving the sacrament, wearing, they said, "Babylonish garments," going beyond all reason in the matter of infant confession, and generally brightening up Mogham Banks; next, a popular preacher in Wombash, published a book under the exasperating title, "The Light Under the Altar," in which he showed himself as something between an Arian and a Pantheist, and treated the dogma of the Trinity with as little respect as one would show to an intrusive cat; while thirdly, an obscure but overworked missionary of a tin mission church in the new working-class district at Pringle, being discovered in some sort of polygamous relationship, had seen fit to publish in pamphlet form a scandalous admission and defence, a pamphlet entitled "Marriage True and False," taking the public needlessly into his completest confidence and quoting the affairs of Abraham and Hosea, reviving many points that are better forgotten about Luther, and appealing also to such uncanonical authorities as Milton, Plato, and John Humphrey Noyes. This abnormal concurrence of indiscipline was extremely unlucky for the bishop. It plunged him into strenuous controversy upon three fronts, so to speak, and involved a great number of personal encounters far too vivid for his mental serenity.

The Pringle polygamist was the most moving as Morrice Deans was the most exacting and troublesome and the Wombash Pantheist the most insidiously destructive figure in these three toilsome disputes. The Pringle man's

soul had apparently missed the normal distribution of fig-leaves; he was an illiterate, open-eyed, hard-voiced, freckled, rational-minded creature, with large expository hands, who had come by a side way into the church because he was an indefatigable worker, and he insisted upon telling the bishop with an irrepressible candour and completeness just exactly what was the matter with his intimate life. The bishop very earnestly did not want these details, and did his utmost to avoid the controversial questions that the honest man pressed respectfully but obstinately upon him.

"Even St. Paul, my lord, admitted that it is better to marry than burn," said the Pringle misdemeanant, "and here was I, my lord, married and still burning!" and, "I think you would find, my lord, considering all Charlotte's peculiarities, that the situation was really much more trying than the absolute celibacy St. Paul had in view."...

The bishop listened to these arguments as little as possible, and did not answer them at all. But afterwards the offender came and wept and said he was ruined and heartbroken and unfairly treated because he wasn't a gentleman, and that was distressing. It was so exactly true--and so inevitable. He had been deprived, rather on account of his voice and apologetics than of his offence, and public opinion was solidly with the sentence. He made a gallant effort to found what he called a Labour Church in Pringle, and after some financial misunderstandings departed with his unambiguous menage to join the advanced movement on the Clyde.

The Morrice Deans enquiry however demanded an amount of erudition that greatly fatigued the bishop. He had a very fair general knowledge of vestments, but he had never really cared for anything but the poetry of ornaments, and he had to work strenuously to master the legal side of the question. Whippham, his chaplain, was worse than useless as a helper. The bishop wanted to end the matter as quickly, quietly, and favourably to Morrice Deans as possible; he thought Morrice Deans a thoroughly good man in his parish, and he believed that the substitution of a low churchman would mean a very complete collapse of church influence in Mogham Banks, where people were now thoroughly accustomed to a highly ornate service. But Morrice Deans was intractable and his pursuers indefatigable, and on several occasions the bishop sat far into the night devising compromises and equivocations that should make the Kensittes think that Morrice Deans wasn't wearing vestments when he was, and that should make Morrice Deans think he was wearing vestments when he wasn't. And it was Whippham who first suggested green tea as a substitute for coffee, which gave the bishop indigestion, as his stimulant for these nocturnal bouts.

Now green tea is the most lucid of poisons.

And while all this extra activity about Morrice Deans, these vigils and crammings and writings down, were using all and more energy than the bishop could well spare, he was also doing his quiet utmost to keep "The Light under the Altar" ease from coming to a head.

This man he hated.

And he dreaded him as well as hated him. Chasters, the author of "The Light under the Altar," was a man who not only reasoned closely but indelicately. There was a demonstrating, jeering, air about his preaching and writing, and everything he said and did was saturated by the spirit of challenge. He did not so much imitate as exaggerate the style of Matthew Arnold. And whatever was done publicly against him would have to be done very publicly because his book had got him a London reputation.

From the bishop's point of view Chasters was one of nature's ignoblemen. He seemed to have subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles and passed all the tests and taken all the pledges that stand on the way to ordination, chiefly for the pleasure of attacking them more successfully from the rear; he had been given the living of Wombash by a cousin, and filled it very largely because it was not only more piquant but more remunerative and respectable to be a rationalist lecturer in a surplice. And in a hard kind of ultra-Protestant way his social and parochial work was not badly done. But his sermons were terrible. "He takes a text," said one informant, "and he goes on firstly, secondly, thirdly, fourthly, like somebody tearing the petals from a flower. 'Finally,' he says, and throws the bare stalk into the dustbin."

The bishop avoided "The Light under the Altar" for nearly a year. It

was only when a second book was announced with the winning title of "The Core of Truth in Christianity" that he perceived he must take action.

He sat up late one night with a marked copy, a very indignantly marked copy, of the former work that an elderly colonel, a Wombash parishioner, an orthodox Layman of the most virulent type, had sent him. He perceived that he had to deal with a dialectician of exceptional ability, who had concentrated a quite considerable weight of scholarship upon the task of explaining away every scrap of spiritual significance in the Eucharist.

From Chasters the bishop was driven by reference to the works of Legge and Frazer, and for the first time he began to measure the dimensions and power of the modern criticism of church doctrine and observance.

Green tea should have lit his way to refutation; instead it lit up the whole inquiry with a light of melancholy confirmation. Neither by night nor by day could the bishop find a proper method of opening a counter attack upon Chasters, who was indisputably an intellectually abler man and a very ruthless beast indeed to assail, and meanwhile the demand that action should be taken increased.

The literature of church history and the controversies arising out of doctrinal development became the employment of the bishop's leisure and a commanding preoccupation. He would have liked to discuss with some one else the network of perplexities in which he was entangling himself, and more particularly with Canon Bliss, but his own positions were becoming so insecure that he feared to betray them by argument. He had grown up with a kind of intellectual modesty. Some things he had never yet talked about; it made his mind blench to think of talking about them. And his

great aching gaps of wakefulness began now, thanks to the green tea, to be interspersed with theological dreams and visions of an extravagant vividness. He would see Frazer's sacrificial kings butchered picturesquely and terribly amidst strange and grotesque rituals; he would survey long and elaborate processions and ceremonials in which the most remarkable symbols were borne high in the sight of all men; he would cower before a gigantic and threatening Heaven. These green-tea dreams and visions were not so much phases of sleep as an intensification and vivid furnishing forth of insomnia. It added greatly to his disturbance that--exceeding the instructions of Brighton-Pomfrey--he had now experimented ignorantly and planlessly with one or two narcotics and sleeping mixtures that friends and acquaintances had mentioned in his hearing. For the first time in his life he became secretive from his wife. He knew he ought not to take these things, he knew they were physically and morally evil, but a tormenting craving drove him to them. Subtly and insensibly his character was being undermined by the growing nervous trouble.

He astonished himself by the cunning and the hypocritical dignity he could display in procuring these drugs. He arranged to have a tea-making set in his bedroom, and secretly substituted green tea, for which he developed a powerful craving, in the place of the delicate China tea Lady Ella procured him.

(5)

These doctrinal and physical anxieties and distresses were at their worst in the spring and early summer of 1914. That was a time of great mental and moral disturbance. There was premonition in the air of those days. It was like the uneasiness sensitive people experience before a thunderstorm. The moral atmosphere was sullen and close. The whole world seemed irritable and mischievous. The suffragettes became extraordinarily malignant; the democratic movement went rotten with sabotage and with a cant of being "rebels"; the reactionary Tories and a crew of noisy old peeresses set themselves to create incurable confusion again in the healing wounds of Ireland, and feuds and frantic folly broke out at every point of the social and political edifice. And then a bomb burst at Sarajevo that silenced all this tumult. The unstable polity of Europe heeled over like a ship that founders.

Through the swiftest, tensest week in history Europe capsized into war.

(6)

The first effect of the war upon the mind of the bishop, as upon most imaginative minds, was to steady and exalt it. Trivialities and exasperations seemed swept out of existence. Men lifted up their eyes from disputes that had seemed incurable and wrangling that promised to be interminable, and discovered a plain and tragic issue that involved every one in a common call for devotion. For a great number of men and

women who had been born and bred in security, the August and September of 1914 were the supremely heroic period of their lives. Myriads of souls were born again to ideas of service and sacrifice in those tremendous days.

Black and evil thing as the war was, it was at any rate a great thing; it did this much for countless minds that for the first time they realized the epic quality of history and their own relationship to the destinies of the race. The flimsy roof under which we had been living our lives of comedy fell and shattered the floor under our feet; we saw the stars above and the abyss below. We perceived that life was insecure and adventurous, part of one vast adventure in space and time....

Presently the smoke and dust of battle hid the great distances again, but they could not altogether destroy the memories of this revelation.

For the first two months the bishop's attention was so detached from his immediate surroundings and employments, so absorbed by great events, that his history if it were told in detail would differ scarcely at all from the histories of most comparatively unemployed minds during those first dramatic days, the days when the Germans made their great rush upon Paris and it seemed that France was down, France and the whole fabric of liberal civilization. He emerged from these stunning apprehensions after the Battle of the Marne, to find himself busy upon a score of dispersed and disconnected war jobs, and trying to get all the new appearances and forces and urgencies of the war into relations with

himself. One thing became very vivid indeed, that he wasn't being used in any real and effective way in the war. There was a mighty going to and fro upon Red Cross work and various war committees, a vast preparation for wounded men and for the succour of dislocated families; a preparation, that proved to be needless, for catastrophic unemployment. The war problem and the puzzle of German psychology ousted for a time all other intellectual interests; like every one else the bishop swam deep in Nietzsche, Bernhardt, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, and the like; he preached several sermons upon German materialism and the astonishing decay of the German character. He also read every newspaper he could lay his hands on--like any secular man. He signed an address to the Russian Orthodox church, beginning "Brethren," and he revised his impressions of the Filioque controversy. The idea of a reunion of the two great state churches of Russia and England had always attracted him. But hitherto it had been a thing quite out of scale, visionary, utopian. Now in this strange time of altered perspectives it seemed the most practicable of suggestions. The mayor and corporation and a detachment of the special reserve in uniform came to a great intercession service, and in the palace there were two conferences of local influential people, people of the most various types, people who had never met tolerantly before, expressing now opinions of unprecedented breadth and liberality.

All this sort of thing was fresh and exciting at first, and then it began to fall into a routine and became habitual, and as it became habitual he found that old sense of detachment and futility was creeping

back again. One day he realized that indeed the whole flood and tumult of the war would be going on almost exactly as it was going on now if there had been neither cathedral nor bishop in Princhester. It came to him that if archbishops were rolled into patriarchs and patriarchs into archbishops, it would matter scarcely more in the world process that was afoot than if two men shook hands while their house was afire. At times all of us have inappropriate thoughts. The unfortunate thought that struck the bishop as a bullet might strike a man in an exposed trench, as he was hurrying through the cloisters to a special service and address upon that doubly glorious day in our English history, the day of St. Crispin, was of Diogenes rolling his tub.

It was a poisonous thought.

It arose perhaps out of an article in a weekly paper at which he had glanced after lunch, an article written by one of those sceptical spirits who find all too abundant expression in our periodical literature. The writer boldly charged the "Christian churches" with absolute ineffectiveness. This war, he declared, was above all other wars a war of ideas, of material organization against rational freedom, of violence against law; it was a war more copiously discussed than any war had ever been before, the air was thick with apologetics. And what was the voice of the church amidst these elemental issues? Bishops and divines who were patriots one heard discordantly enough, but where were the bishops and divines who spoke for the Prince of Peace? Where was the blessing of the church, where was the veto of the church? When it

came to that one discovered only a broad preoccupied back busied in supplementing the Army Medical Corps with Red Cross activities, good work in its way--except that the canonicals seemed superfluous. Who indeed looked to the church for any voice at all? And so to Diogenes.

The bishop's mind went hunting for an answer to that indictment. And came back and came back to the image of Diogenes.

It was with that image dangling like a barbed arrow from his mind that the bishop went into the pulpit to preach upon St. Crispin's day, and looked down upon a thin and scattered congregation in which the elderly, the childless, and the unoccupied predominated.

That night insomnia resumed its sway.

Of course the church ought to be controlling this great storm, the greatest storm of war that had ever stirred mankind. It ought to be standing fearlessly between the combatants like a figure in a wall painting, with the cross of Christ uplifted and the restored memory of Christendom softening the eyes of the armed nations. "Put down those weapons and listen to me," so the church should speak in irresistible tones, in a voice of silver trumpets.

Instead it kept a long way from the fighting, tucked up its vestments, and was rolling its local tubs quite briskly.

(7)

And then came the aggravation of all these distresses by an abrupt abandonment of smoking and alcohol. Alcoholic relaxation, a necessary mitigation of the unreality of peacetime politics, becomes a grave danger in war, and it was with an understandable desire to forward the interests of his realm that the King decided to set his statesmen an example--which unhappily was not very widely followed--by abstaining from alcohol during the continuance of the struggle. It did however swing over the Bishop of Princhester to an immediate and complete abandonment of both drink and tobacco. At that time he was finding comfort for his nerves in Manila cheroots, and a particularly big and heavy type of Egyptian cigarette with a considerable amount of opium, and his disorganized system seized upon this sudden change as a grievance, and set all his jangling being crying aloud for one cigarette--just one cigarette.

The cheroots, it seemed, he could better spare, but a cigarette became his symbol for his lost steadiness and ease.

It brought him low.

The reader has already been told the lamentable incident of the stolen cigarette and the small boy, and how the bishop, tormented by that shameful memory, cried aloud in the night.

The bishop rolled his tub, and is there any tub-rolling in the world more busy and exacting than a bishop's? He rolled in it spite of ill-health and insomnia, and all the while he was tormented by the enormous background of the world war, by his ineffective realization of vast national needs, by his passionate desire, for himself and his church, not to be ineffective.

The distressful alternation between nights of lucid doubt and days of dull acquiescence was resumed with an intensification of its contrasts. The brief phase of hope that followed the turn of the fighting upon the Maine, the hope that after all the war would end swiftly, dramatically, and justly, and everything be as it had been before--but pleasanter, gave place to a phase that bordered upon despair. The fall of Antwerp and the doubts and uncertainties of the Flanders situation weighed terribly upon the bishop. He was haunted for a time by nightmares of Zeppelins presently raining fire upon London. These visions became Apocalyptic. The Zeppelins came to England with the new year, and with the close of the year came the struggle for Ypres that was so near to being a collapse of the allied defensive. The events of the early spring, the bloody failure of British generalship at Neuve Chapelle, the naval disaster in the Dardanelles, the sinking of the Falaba, the Russian defeat in the Masurian Lakes, all deepened the bishop's impression of the immensity of the nation's difficulties and of his own unhelpfulness. He was ashamed that the church should hold back its curates from enlistment while the French priests were wearing their

uniforms in the trenches; the expedition of the Bishop of London to hold open-air services at the front seemed merely to accentuate the tub-rolling. It was rolling the tub just where it was most in the way.

What was wrong? What was wanting?

The Westminster Gazette, The Spectator, and several other of the most trusted organs of public opinion were intermittently discussing the same question. Their discussions implied at once the extreme need that was felt for religion by all sorts of representative people, and the universal conviction that the church was in some way muddling and masking her revelation. "What is wrong with the Churches?" was, for example, the general heading of The Westminster Gazette's correspondence.

One day the bishop skimmed a brief incisive utterance by Sir Harry Johnston that pierced to the marrow of his own shrinking convictions. Sir Harry is one of those people who seem to write as well as speak in a quick tenor. "Instead of propounding plainly and without the accreted mythology of Asia Minor, Greece and Rome, the pure Gospel of Christ... they present it overloaded with unbelievable myths (such as, among a thousand others, that Massacre of the Innocents which never took place)... bore their listeners by a Tibetan repetition of creeds that have ceased to be credible.... Mutually contradictory propositions.... Prayers and litanies composed in Byzantine and mediaeval times.... the want of actuality, the curious silliness which has, ever since the

destruction of Jerusalem, hung about the exposition of Christianity....
But if the Bishops continue to fuss about the trappings of religion....
the maintenance of codes compiled by people who lived sixteen hundred
or two thousand five hundred years ago.... the increasingly educated
and practical-minded working classes will not come to church, weekday or
Sunday."

The bishop held the paper in his hand, and with a mind that he felt to
be terribly open, asked himself how true that sharp indictment might be,
and, granting its general truth, what was the duty of the church, that
is to say of the bishops, for as Cyprian says, ecelesia est in episcopo.
We say the creeds; how far may we unsay them?

So far he had taken no open action against Chasters. Suppose now he
were to side with Chasters and let the whole diocese, the church of
Princhester, drift as far as it chose under his inaction towards an
extreme modernism, risking a conflict with, and if necessary fighting,
the archbishop.... It was but for a moment that his mind swung to this
possibility and then recoiled. The Laymen, that band of bigots, would
fight. He could not contemplate litigation and wrangling about the
teaching of the church. Besides, what were the "trappings of religion"
and what the essentials? What after all was "the pure gospel of Christ"
of which this writer wrote so glibly? He put the paper down and took a
New Testament from his desk and opened it haphazard. He felt a curious
wish that he could read it for the first time. It was over-familiar.
Everything latterly in his theology and beliefs had become

over-familiar. It had all become mechanical and dead and unmeaning to his tired mind....

Whipham came with a reminder of more tub-rolling, and the bishop's speculations were broken off.