

remedy? Who will lift the load from those overburdened shoulders?

"Therein the physician must minister to himself." Civilisation must itself apply the remedy. I have said that the two ruling forces at the present time are greed and a want of conscience. Surely this is patent to all men. Is it really futile to hope for moderation where now an all-grasping spirit prevails, and for the revival of the individual and national conscience? Surely it is not the highest happiness to heap up colossal fortunes *per fas et nefas*. And yet this seems to be the be-all and the end-all of life in this age of savage greed. Even the pagans knew better than this, and their poets sang of happiness as the result of contentment with moderate wealth. So-called Christian morality is in this respect falling below that of the pagans.

The late war reveals the fact that every one who was in a position to do so was making huge profits without any very great scruple as to the means. War generally debases the commercial conscience, and it has done so in this case on a world-wide scale. You may set up every possible kind of legal machinery, but it will all be of no avail unless the individual conscience is sensitive and is ruled by a sense of religion. Conscience as we too well know, is not a sufficient safeguard where the sanctions of religion are lacking.

One huge load which is going to break the backs of the civilised nations is the portent of trusts, combines, "rings," and monopolies. As the dollar is omnipotent, so are these capitalistic societies threatening to become more powerful than the governments themselves. All small enterprise is crushed out. Trade and commerce are to be in the hands of these financial magnates who administer untold millions, and whose power is becoming in several countries almost uncontrollable. No wonder that President Wilson should say, that if the Government of the United States cannot control these Trusts, the Trusts will control the Government.

It will be said that all this is true, but that no remedy as yet has been suggested. As a matter of fact the suggested remedy runs right through the argument. It is that the nations which call themselves civilised should get back to the ethics of Christianity. But do they know what Christian morality and Christian principles are? Is Christianity and its teaching very conspicuous in the Peace Treaty, which has lately been signed? If the Pope had been allowed a representative there, we might have had a more Christian note predominating. But the Father of the Faithful was not allowed to speak in that document, though his voice has not been silent, but has often spoken to the different nations on the great virtues of justice, fair dealing, and charity.

But how, I ask, are we going to get back to the teaching of Our Lord, when so large a proportion of the population does not even know what that teaching is? Let me take England. If one could summon all the youthful non-Catholic population of 18 years of age, what proportion has had religious instruction during school hours? What proportion goes to Sunday School? No doubt a good many can say the Lord's Prayer. But how many have studied the life and teaching of Our Lord? How many even know the Sermon on the Mount? How many even see the inside of a church on a Sunday? How many have drunk in the Spirit of Christ?

You certainly are not going to instil into a nation the principles of the Sermon on the Mount by neglecting to teach it Christianity when its youth is at school. And I have not selected England because I think it has less religion than other countries, but because it is the most appropriate example.

To my mind it is here where civilisation has gone wrong: in its civil schools its education is either godless or a diluted Christianity, which is not worthy of the name. All this must be altered if our boasted civilisation is to be de-paganised.

No one who knows anything of the spirit of the age can help being saddened and even alarmed at its materialism and semi-paganism. Men's hearts are set upon luxury, material comforts, "and the Pride of life," and they worship the shadows of a day. We boast of our inventions of science—which in truth are wonderful enough—and everyone seems to be bent upon speed, upon road—and air—locomotion. But "not by bread alone doth man live." It is not in these things but in the things of the spirit, in which the soul of man should find rest. But he has no time for this, scarcely time for a thought of God, even on the day which has been appointed for His worship. God is being neglected in His own creation.

And there is one result of all this pursuit of the things of sense of which it is not everybody that thinks. It all results in *heartlessness*. If any one asks for an explanation, I will set before him two examples.

The Prophet of God said to Jerusalem: "Great as the sea is thy sorrow." It is not long since this might have been said of the whole world almost, for the gentlest of our kind everywhere mourned their beloved, who were never to return. Even now, if you listen, you may hear faintly rolling upon the shore of that sea of sorrow the sobbing echoes of those fruitless tears and the agony of broken hearts.

To-day yet another cry reaches us. The same great Prophet said "My eyes have failed with weeping, when the children and the suckling fainted away in the streets of the city; when they breathed out their souls in the bosoms of their mothers." Now in stricken countries of Europe the babes and the sucklings are dying in scores of thousands, of starvation. Is there a man, who has a heart to feel, who is, not strongly, even terribly, moved by this awful spectacle? Assuredly, if ever a cry rose to Heaven, there to appeal to God's dread justice, it is the cry of these helpless victims slain by man's lust for war. It makes one ashamed of one's kind, that inhumanity of such an abhorrent nature should exist under heaven.

And London—and Paris, too, of course—was never so gay, so frivolous, so light-hearted,—and, let me add, so pagan and so godless. How heartless, how horrible is our civilisation, if *this* is civilisation!

The oldest recorded prayer addressed to the true God is an invocation dictated by Jehovah himself as the form of blessing which Moses and Aaron were to impart to the children of Israel. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord show His face to thee and have mercy upon thee. The Lord turn his countenance to thee and give thee peace." Is mankind turning its back upon its Creator and is God turning away His face from his creation? Is the world going to live without God? The floundering of poor humanity amid banks of quicksand and quagmires, as it tries aimlessly to reach its goal, its going after shadows and overtaking only the mirage of illusion wherein is no substance, would seem to point to the lack of God's guidance and blessing. Whither is civilisation going and who are its leaders? Will it be able to retrace its steps and get back to the solid ground and straight path, which it has almost forsaken? Meanwhile it is adding burden after burden to its back, but the greatest of these is paganism.

Mr Philip Snowden says: "There was a time when the English newspaper was a model of fairness and probity. That day has passed, and with few exceptions the British daily newspaper is an unscrupulous and blackguardly instrument for misleading the public in the interests of financial and political schemes. There are no means by which its propaganda can be effectively counteracted. It publishes concoctions of what purports to be news which is known to be false. It introduces its own interpolations into official documents. It refuses to publish contradictions from people who are misrepresented, and letters which expose the falsity of its statements."

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