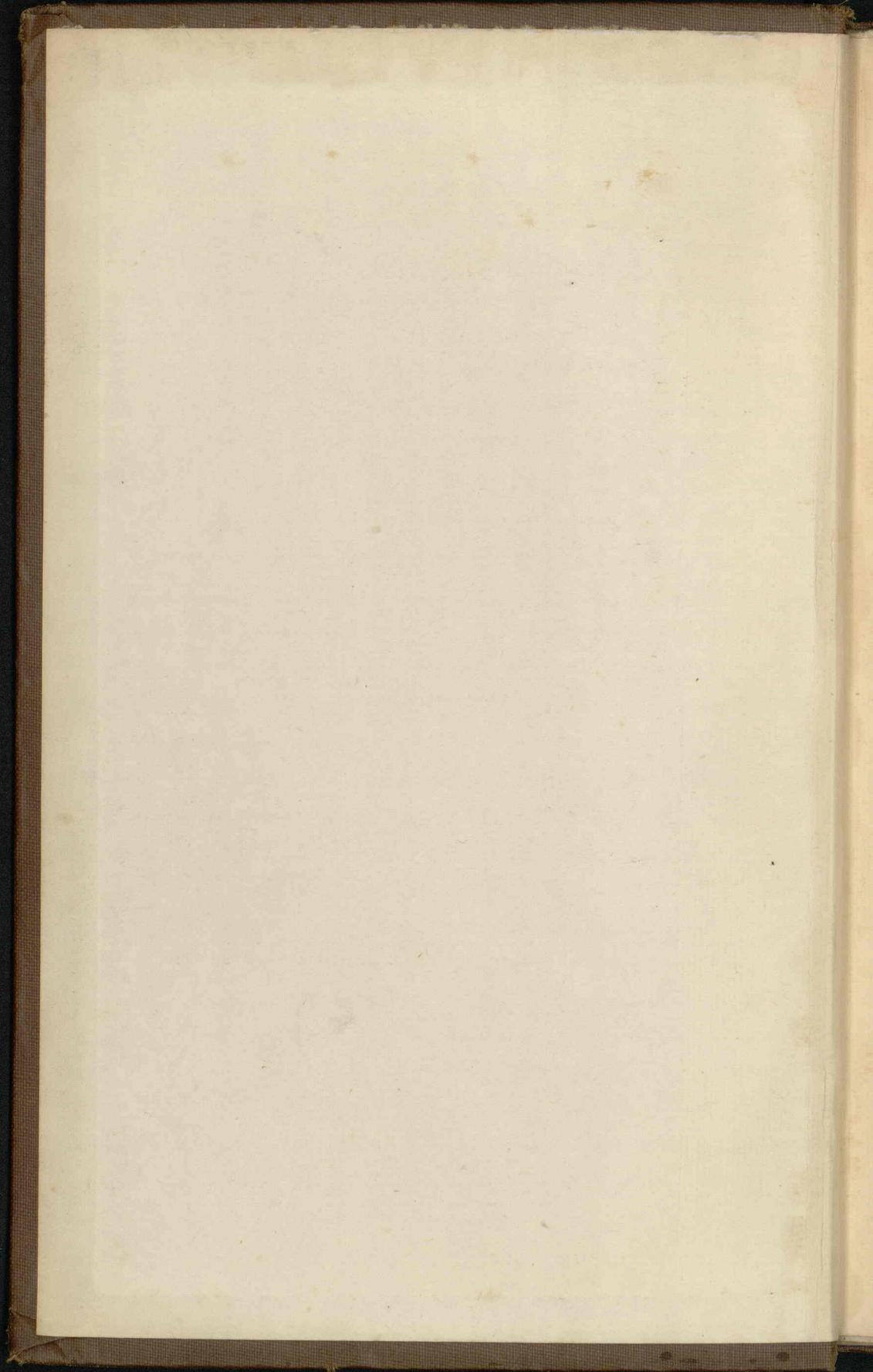


RE  
R  
S



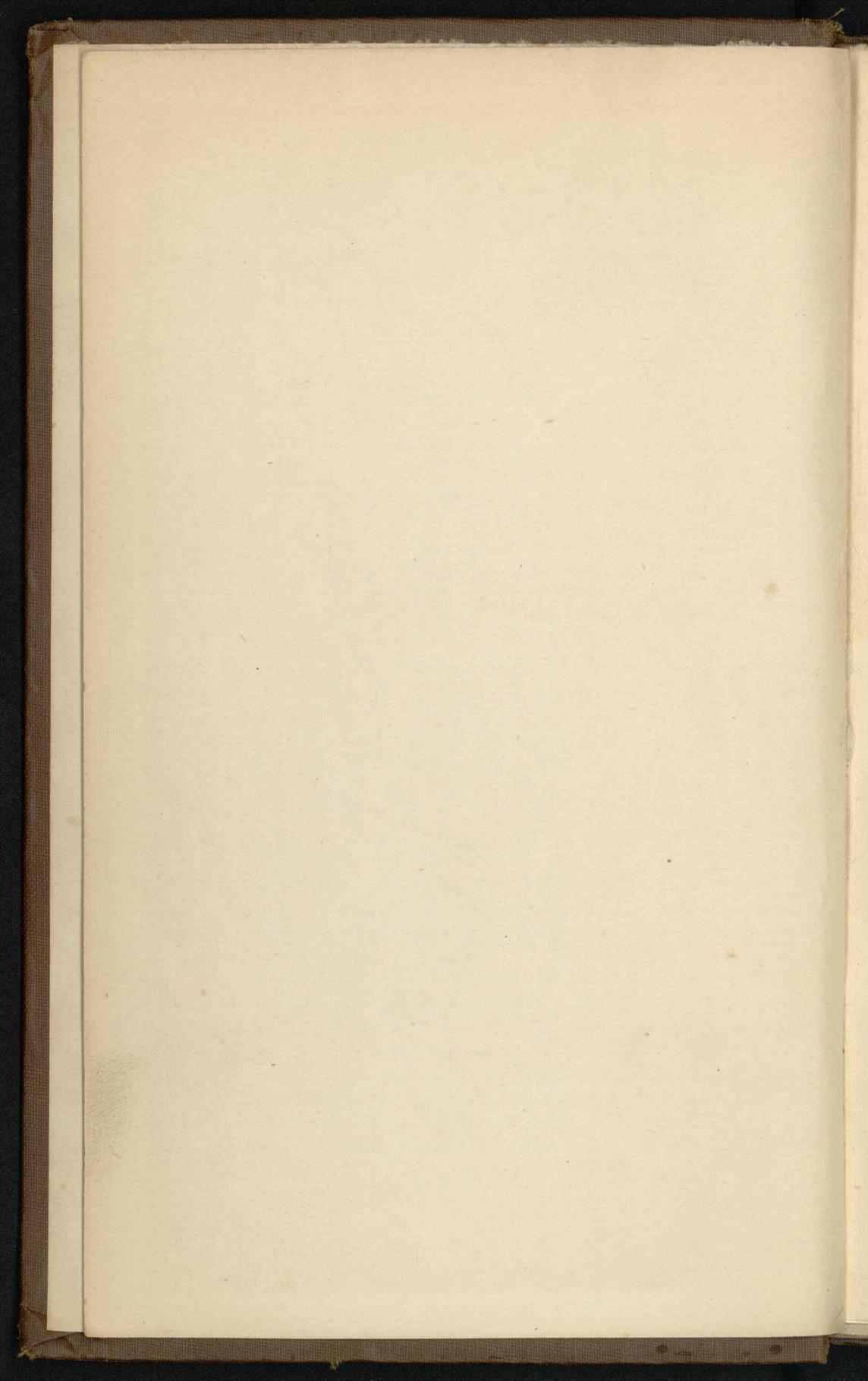
N 83

op

15 20

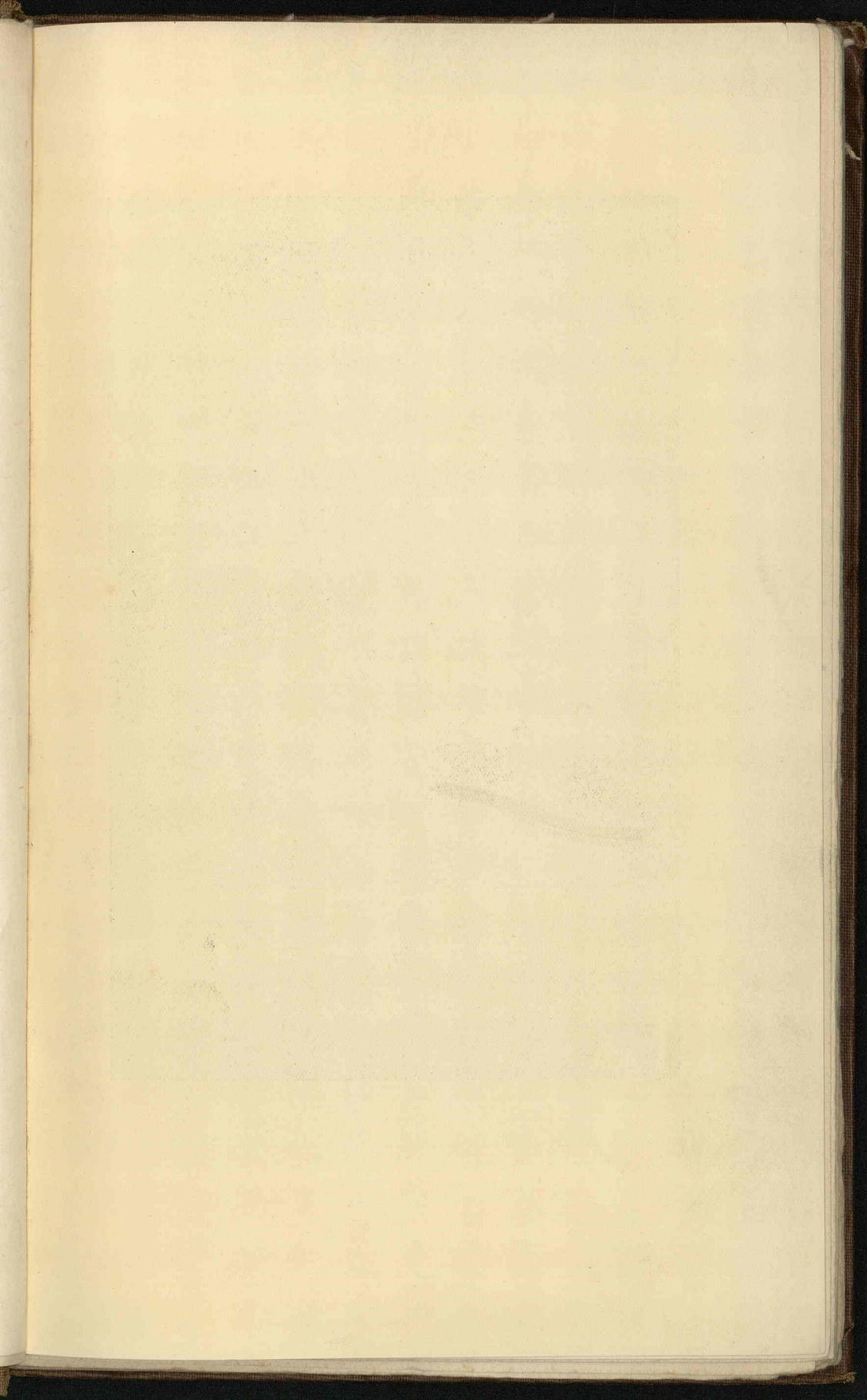
5802

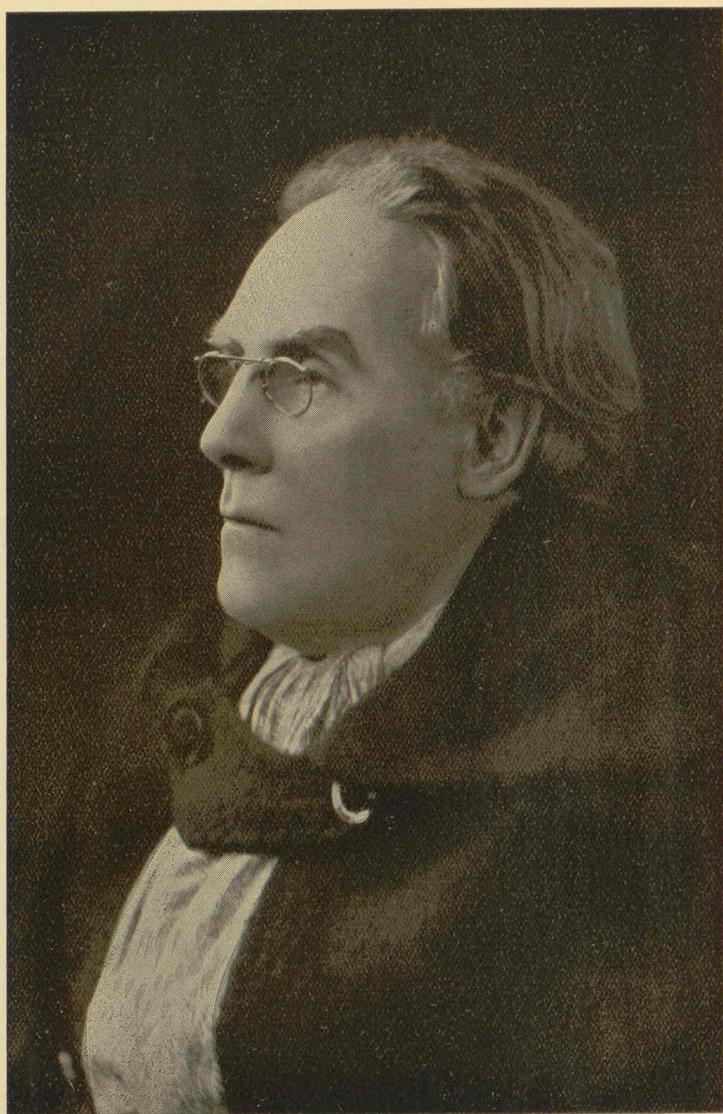
(1)



A MINSTREL FRIAR

A. M. S. P. 1848





A MINSTREL FRIAR  
THE STORY OF MY LIFE AND WORK  
By ERNEST NEWLANDSMITH

THE NEW LIFE MOVEMENT, 1927  
LONDON AGENTS: W. & G. FOYLE, LTD.  
121-125 CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.2

A MINISTRE DE L'ÉCLAIR  
LE MINISTRE DE L'ÉCLAIR  
LE MINISTRE DE L'ÉCLAIR

THE NEW THE MOVEMENT  
LONDON AGENTS W & D TAYLOR  
111 CHANCERY CROSS ROAD W.C.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preface . . . . .	9
<b>BOOK I—LIFE IN THE WORLD</b>	
1 Early Life . . . . .	13
2 Student Days . . . . .	18
3 Concerts and Concert Tours . . . . .	21
4 Musical Culture . . . . .	26
5 New Ideals . . . . .	32
6 A Change . . . . .	36
7 I become a Friar . . . . .	39
<b>BOOK II—LIFE AS A FRIAR</b>	
1 The North Devon Mission . . . . .	45
2 In Journeyings Oft . . . . .	50
3 A New Headquarters . . . . .	53
4 An Advance in the Work . . . . .	59
5 Extensive Mission Tours . . . . .	62
6 A Strenuous Time . . . . .	68
7 A Message to the Nation . . . . .	71
<b>BOOK III—THE PURPOSE OF THE MISSION</b>	
1 The Modern Babel . . . . .	77
2 The Mission in 1925 . . . . .	80
3 The Ministry of Music . . . . .	84
4 The New Life Movement . . . . .	91
5 Is there any hope for Modern Civilisation? . . . . .	96
6 Where, then, is our Hope? . . . . .	99
7 Christ or Chaos . . . . .	102

# CONTENTS

Page	Title
1	Introduction
13	Chapter I—Case in the North
18	Chapter II—Case in the South
24	Chapter III—Case in the West
30	Chapter IV—Case in the East
37	Chapter V—Case in the Middle
43	Chapter VI—Case in the North
50	Chapter VII—Case in the South
57	Chapter VIII—Case in the West
64	Chapter IX—Case in the East
71	Chapter X—Case in the Middle
78	Chapter XI—Case in the North
85	Chapter XII—Case in the South
92	Chapter XIII—Case in the West
99	Chapter XIV—Case in the East
106	Chapter XV—Case in the Middle
113	Chapter XVI—Case in the North
120	Chapter XVII—Case in the South
127	Chapter XVIII—Case in the West
134	Chapter XIX—Case in the East
141	Chapter XX—Case in the Middle
148	Chapter XXI—Case in the North
155	Chapter XXII—Case in the South
162	Chapter XXIII—Case in the West
169	Chapter XXIV—Case in the East
176	Chapter XXV—Case in the Middle
183	Chapter XXVI—Case in the North
190	Chapter XXVII—Case in the South
197	Chapter XXVIII—Case in the West
204	Chapter XXIX—Case in the East
211	Chapter XXX—Case in the Middle
218	Chapter XXXI—Case in the North
225	Chapter XXXII—Case in the South
232	Chapter XXXIII—Case in the West
239	Chapter XXXIV—Case in the East
246	Chapter XXXV—Case in the Middle
253	Chapter XXXVI—Case in the North
260	Chapter XXXVII—Case in the South
267	Chapter XXXVIII—Case in the West
274	Chapter XXXIX—Case in the East
281	Chapter XL—Case in the Middle
288	Chapter XLI—Case in the North
295	Chapter XLII—Case in the South
302	Chapter XLIII—Case in the West
309	Chapter XLIV—Case in the East
316	Chapter XLV—Case in the Middle
323	Chapter XLVI—Case in the North
330	Chapter XLVII—Case in the South
337	Chapter XLVIII—Case in the West
344	Chapter XLIX—Case in the East
351	Chapter L—Case in the Middle

Poets! ye rise above the common crowd,  
In aspirations lofty and serene;  
With philosophic eye ye view the world;  
Ye seat yourselves upon judicial seats,  
And clothed in solemn ermine summon all  
To attend before your bar.

\* \* \* \* \*

I ask you not to lay your robes aside,  
But, clothed with humility, to take  
A higher seat; I ask you not to leave  
Your books of wisdom writ with human skill;  
But come and sit (a privilege supreme)  
With quiet meekness at the feet of Him  
Who spake as man had never spoke before.

GEORGE MARSLAND.

*When every Bard with sacred songs shall be  
Inspired, and greatest gifted spirits lay  
Their tribute at the Saviour's feet, and sing  
As angels sang at His auspicious birth,  
Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth,  
Goodwill to man; then will the living fire  
Of holy love, in conflagration rise,  
Encircling all the earth; the institutes  
Of man be fused as in refining bowl,  
And fresh poured out as seven times purified,  
Into new, perfect, beauteous moulds. The slow  
And laboured process of dogmatic teaching,  
Will then give place to that more rapid power,  
Of living energy. Then is the time,  
Predicted long, the Spirit's pouring out,  
When prophecy shall burn upon the lips,  
Of human sons and daughters; when old men  
Dreaming shall dream, and young men "visions  
see."*

GEORGE MARSLAND.

## PREFACE

The chief purpose of the following pages is to place on record a brief outline of the circumstances under which the Movement which has grown up around my life and work—and which is now known as *The New Life Movement*—first came to arise.

The book is not an autobiography in the ordinary acceptance of the word, for I have suffered too much in outward circumstances—and still more in the interior life—to attempt to write such a work.

Moreover, in an autobiography it is usual to introduce some of the more notable and world-famous people one may have met, with many an anecdote and entertaining story; and for this, again, I have no taste. It is true that in the course of a somewhat eventful career I have had to do with many such people. But these people have not for the most part impressed me favourably. They have been so largely of “this world”—whether religious or otherwise; also when “tried in the balance” they have so often been “found wanting.” Indeed, it is in very few instances that I have ever felt either uplifted, encouraged or helped by the acquaintance or friendship of any man. When it has been so the people in question have rarely been what the world calls “great.” They have usually been obscure and retiring souls whose lives would be of no public interest whatsoever.

The present volume therefore resolves itself into a brief account of some unique spiritual work; and it is

sent forth in the hope that it may not only make the nature and purpose of that work somewhat clearer, but also encourage the reader to try to carry out the Christian ideals involved therein more thoroughly than I have done.

E.N.

Book I

LIFE IN THE WORLD

*An account of my work in the world of music, and  
of the way in which God called me to the life of interior  
prayer.*

## I

### EARLY LIFE

Anyone who refers to a copy of *Who's Who* for the year 1908 will find the following entry :

NEWLANDSMITH, Ernest, violinist, conductor, author and composer; b. 10 April, 1875; s. of Rev. J. Newlandsmith, M.A. Edu. Royal Academy of Music (six medals, Sub-Professor 1895); A.R.A.M. 1899; President of the Laresol Society; editor of the *Laresol Review*; Musical Director to the British Musical Society; the Newlandsmith concerts are noted for introducing new works and artists—over 200 concerts having been given in London and the Provinces. Publications: *The Temple of Art*, *The Temple of Love*, *Art Ideals* (books). "Noc-turne in F" for String Orchestra; "Schlummerlied," "Ballade," "Reverie," "Idylle," "Polonaise-Caprice," for Violin (musical compositions); and various other works. Recreations: rowing, cycling, reading. Club: Royal Societies.

This extract plainly has reference to myself, but so great is the change in my life nowadays that it is becoming increasingly difficult to realise it. For in 1908 I became a Minstrel of God—a Pilgrim Friar.

How this came about, the philosophy which led up to such a change, and the extraordinary experiences through which I have passed since, I hope to relate in the pages which follow. First, however, I had better give a brief account of my earlier life.

The fact is I am a thorough son of the Church. Not only was my father a clergyman, but several of my uncles and both my grandfathers on each side of the

family. That may partly account for the "religious urge" in my life. Whilst my first experience of the unutterable wonder and greatness of music was when, as a child, in my cot in the nursery, I used to hear my mother playing of an evening on the drawing-room piano. Since then many a great pianist has played in my own house, but I do not think that any have possessed a more sublime gift of expression than hers. It was my mother, too, who, when I was about four years old, gave me my first toy violin. A few years later a sister gave me another. After that, when I was about eleven years old, a clergyman uncle lent me a real violin on condition that I might *keep* it if I could teach myself to *play* it. That was indeed my "day of opportunity," and after a few weeks' work in a top-storey room I returned to him triumphantly and played piece after piece! The good soul was greatly astonished; and when a young cousin ran in saying, "Why, I thought it was papa playing!" my cup of joy was full.

From that time forth I longed to follow music as my vocation. Unfortunately, however, this did not seem very possible; for my father had died when I was five, and our family had been left so entirely unprovided for that there seemed little chance of obtaining the money that would be needed for my training. However, I began in due course to receive a little elementary tuition; and after studying for two terms, made my first appearance in public. I was only eleven years old; but the work I performed was so bristling with chords, cadenzas, staccato-bowings and harmonics, that as I left the platform a well-known violinist exclaimed enthusiastically: "You're a regular Paganini!" This was naturally a great encouragement.

But it was around my dear and well-beloved mother that my musical achievements usually arrayed themselves; and wonderful were the musical evenings we would have in the drawing-room at home. As I have

said in my book, *The Temple of Love*: "Around her presence all the most precious memories of the past ever seem to array themselves, and one of my earliest recollections of those beautiful moments in which the unfathomable glories of the heavenly spheres seem to cast some transient reflection upon our earthly pilgrimage, was on the memorable occasion when we sat side by side, and hand in hand, at a performance of Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*. . . . How well do I remember the scene! As we sat and listened to the sweet strains of 'How lovely are the messengers,' we felt to breathe quite a glorified atmosphere—a diviner and purer atmosphere than that of earth; and in an old schoolboy diary I find this performance referred to as 'the happiest day of my life.' Little did I dream that in the following year I should myself be playing in that very orchestra, under that great conductor—August Manns; yet, young as I was, this was so."

When I was about twelve years old I began to compose my first crude compositions. These included several songs, such as "O the joys of summer!" and "Murmur, gentle Lyre"; a violin solo, "Eloigné de moi"; a quantity of four-part Church-music; and a number of simple, but decidedly *vivacious*, piano-duets—with which my sister and I used to enliven the holidays.

Then, at thirteen, I was fortunate enough to win an open scholarship at a local academy of music; and when it expired, my professor—who soon won my childish admiration—was kind enough to teach me without fees for several further years. I fear, however, that this course of events really delayed my advancement, for I arrived at the age of eighteen without yet having received any of that "higher training" which is so essential to a soloist, and which only a virtuoso can give. My youthful days were filled with interest, and during my schooldays, in addition to music, conjuring and elec-

trical apparatus also occupied much of my time—to say nothing of literary work. My replies to queries would appear in *The English Mechanic* when I was still but a lad; more than one article was accepted by *The Strad*; I contributed to *Answers*; an article, both written and illustrated by my pen, was bought and published by one of Cassell's papers, *Work*; whilst one of my very first literary productions appeared in *The Musical Standard*.

But in due course my first love, music, prevailed over all; and at the age of eighteen I determined that somehow or other I would become a student at the Royal Academy. By adopting this course I not only hoped to obtain a thorough grounding in musical education generally, but also to climb the heights of Parnassus by studying the violin under the famous Belgian virtuoso, Emile Sauret, who was at that time the chief violin-professor at that institution. But being now too old to enter for a violin scholarship—even had I been sufficiently well taught or clever enough to win it—the question as to ways and means once more arose. However, I was determined that no stone should be left unturned in my endeavour to raise the necessary money for the fees, and after thinking out various ideas I eventually decided to set out during my summer holidays and give open-air recitals at the seaside. It was a great plan; and ever since my first experience of minstrelsy it has always seemed to me a tragedy that the “minstrel” of old is no longer in our midst. Surely his was a great vocation, as wandering happily from place to place he would sit with his harp by the baronial firesides and pour forth his rhapsodies in verse and song! And it was, I think, with something akin to his romantic spirit, that I eventually set out that summer. My entire capital in the whole world was thirty shillings, and I remember how, as I left home with my friend the pianist, my clergyman brother called after us that we should be back again in two days' time! But it was not so. On the first day it certainly did look as if

we were going to be defeated. But we soon "learnt the ropes"; and although we only played in the evenings we made over sixteen pounds in the very first week!

In those days there was no wireless. Most of our villages, and many of our large cities also for that matter, rarely heard a note of good music, and in many areas the people were so starved in soul that they welcomed artists who ministered to their needs by giving them performances that were really within their comprehension. So when I and my friend were working on the lines I have mentioned we usually gave very simple and yet thoroughly good and high-class music, reserving the more elaborate works for special occasions.

And as we went forth on our uplifting mission we found that we not only gave joy and delight to thousands, not only made many helpful friends—but also proved what a help and solace such music could be to bruised and jaded hearts. We proved, indeed, that:

*There is a living spirit in the lyre,  
A breath of music and a soul of fire.*

## II STUDENT DAYS

However, the summer tour did not bring in the finance I had hoped for, and a sufficient sum of money had therefore to be got together in various other ways. This was done, and I entered as a student at the Royal Academy of Music the following autumn.

Here I was fairly fortunate. Sir Alexander Mackenzie—who was then the Principal—was decidedly sympathetic. I was placed under Sauret for my violin studies; and during my studentship gained six medals; played one of my own compositions at a St. James' Hall concert; and in two years from the time of entering was elected to a sub-professorship. That was in 1895, when I was twenty. Previous to this I had already obtained several private pupils; and the fees from these, together with occasional engagements either as a violin soloist or in an orchestra, sufficed to see me through.

As to my violin studies, they were a never-to-be-forgotten experience! Indeed, Sauret was such a very stormy and excitable individual that his pupils needed great courage to attend their lessons. On the wall of his teaching-room he had a list of some seventy concertos, all of which I believe he could play from memory; and it was no uncommon thing for a really clever pupil to get through a new concerto in the course of a week. Pupils from all parts—British, French, Italian, German, Swedish, American—thronged his studio, where he would sometimes be at work for nine or ten hours a day. Often one's lessons would take only a few minutes; for after making fun of you, or scolding you without mercy,

he would say, "Nevaire mind, my poor dear! 'Ave a cigarette! Do not excite yourself!" At one time, when your tone was bad, he would crawl over the floor, saying: "I am looking for de cat! I am looking for de cat!" At another time, when you played incorrectly, he would bring you to a terrified halt by banging his arms down with a crash all over the piano. Or when a singing pupil was heard from an adjoining studio, vigorously practising some vocal exercise, he would look very concerned and say: "Ah, poor man, he is very ill!"

Once, when he heard that I had fulfilled an *orchestral* engagement, he said: "If you play orchestre, you play orchestre; if you play solo you play solo. But if you play *orchestre* what use to come into this room?"

Among my contemporary R.A.M. violin students were Elsie Southgate, Edie Reynolds, Gerald Walenn, Aldo Antonietti, Frederic Frederiksen, Carl Heinzen, and W. H. Reed. Among the singers were Robert Radford, Frederick Ranalow, and Phillip Brozel. Among the composers: Charles MacPherson, Harry Farjeon, Adam Carse, Josef Holbrooke, John B. McEwen, and many others who have since become known to fame.

Towards the end of my studentship, and also after leaving the Royal Academy, I took up work as a professor at various schools of music, and I think I may say that I had considerable success as a teacher—one of my pupils at the Royal Academy gaining 99 marks out of 100 at one of the annual examinations.

But I cannot say that academical work ever greatly appealed to me. The fact is, I have always felt that music-teaching is rarely carried out on satisfactory lines, and that to try to make performers of those who have no real gift or natural aptitude for music is usually a waste of time. Accordingly, two or three years after leaving the Royal Academy, and when in the thick of

the professorial world, I brought forward some new ideals in an article on "Musical Education" that appeared in *The Musical Standard*. This article set forth an idea which was then practically new, and I remember how at the time it appeared I wondered with all the fervour of youthful enthusiasm (for I was only about twenty-four) if it might not prove to be the germ of a complete revolution in the musical training of the future. It was, in brief, a proposal that music-teachers should adopt a method that is now practised far and wide—namely, classes for giving instruction in musical appreciation.

But, as is usual, where new seed is sown, time is required to allow it to germinate, and at first sight—in the far-off days of which I speak—it looked as though little notice would be taken of my theories. It is true that Professor Niecks, of the University of Edinburgh, wrote warmly in support of the principles laid down, but he was careful to add that excellent as the new theories undoubtedly were, the British parent would probably form an almost insuperable obstacle to carrying them out. Nevertheless, the idea *steadily grew*, until nowadays this method of musical training has become a recognised feature of the ordinary school curriculum.

It should perhaps be mentioned that by this time I had become fairly well known in the musical world: for on leaving the Academy I had established my own Chamber Concerts in one of the smaller concert-halls of London, and had also given one or two Orchestral Concerts at the (old) St. James' Hall; and owing to the fact that I constantly produced new works the concerts received wide attention in the Press.

### III

#### CONCERTS AND CONCERT TOURS

There is no doubt but that during the period of which I am writing (1895-1905) British musicians were rather at a disadvantage. The rage for foreigners was then at its height, and foreign orchestras—especially since the arrival of the Blue Hungarian Bands—were invariably engaged in preference to British. This was really a very great scandal; and in 1896, as a student of twenty, seeing that in most cases English artists had very little chance, I wrote to the Imperial Institute offering to supply a "Scandinavian Orchestra." Much to my delight, my offer was accepted. But now, of course, I had to deliver the goods; and the trouble was to find some Scandinavians! However, Mr. Petersen, who had just retired from the violin mastership at Rugby School, kindly acted as principal first violin, and with his aid and that of one or two others I managed to pull through. I myself, as conductor, appeared under the name of Sigvard Eireksen.

But there was more to follow! A year or two afterwards, when I had become fairly well known through my chamber concerts, I received a letter from the *Daily Mail* asking for an interview.

Accordingly, I arranged to meet their representative—Mr. George Bull—at Pagani's Café.

It appears that I had, at some time or other, related my Imperial Institute experiences to Mr. Patchett Martin—a well-known writer on the staff of the *Spectator*—and apparently he had passed on the story to others in such a graphic way that Lord Northcliffe,

who at this time happened to have got his knife into the policy of the Institute, was exceedingly glad to make use of it. The result was a big head-line article in the *Daily Mail*—an article which wrote up the whole thing in so powerful a style that it caused a thorough commotion. Then Mr. Labouchere began to deal with it in *Truth*. He said that if my statements were correct, it disclosed such a disgraceful state of affairs as to call for the intervention of the Prince of Wales and Lord Herschel, as Presidents of the Council. The point in question was that the "Imperial" Institute was only prepared to engage an orchestra provided that it was, at least, colourably "foreign." Altogether it was an exciting time! Eventually, however, the atmosphere calmed down; and many congratulations came to me for having dealt such a blow at the unjust foreign favouritism that was then so rife. Indeed, later on, the incident provided a widespread advertisement for some concerts for String Orchestra which I conducted at the old St. James' Hall in 1898-9, when I was twenty-three.

As a matter of fact, I think this vexed question of the foreigner cuts both ways, and that it is really nothing more than an exemplification of the great truth that "a prophet is not without honour save in his own country." For certainly I always used to feel that as soon as I had crossed the Channel my status began to improve, more or less mechanically, and that I used to drop into the rôle of *le grande artiste*, both in regard to fame and fees, far more easily than when amongst my own countrymen.

But both my British and foreign tours were very interesting experiences. I remember how on one occasion during a tour on the Riviera I was stranded financially. So I sent my secretary to a famous restaurateur, with the request that I might play at his place of an evening. He immediately jumped at the idea, and so well did the plan succeed that I went out again the following year, and found that in this way I

could make quite a large income. But it was not at all pleasant work! To this day I can see the excitable little Italian proprietor running to and fro, shouting out his orders with angry and eager gestures, as his various distinguished patrons came constantly in and out. At times he would become much concerned at the too "classical" nature of my music, and when unable to stand it any longer he would cry out, "Why don't you play something *gay*! Why don't you play something *gay*! You come here to make money. But you too shentleman! You too much shentleman! You should be one great big monkey! Bow and scrape! Make them dance and sing! Order champagne! Why don't you play something *gay*!" While one of his assistants — an enormous and imperturbable personage with black "Dundreary" whiskers — would solemnly approach, after too long a pause in the music, saying, "If you don't *play*, they won't *pay*!" followed by much blinking of his eyes and a slow nod of his head to emphasise the fact!

I remember also a tour in Ireland when it rained day and night until the dampness so affected one concert-hall (and in consequence my violin strings) that it was almost impossible to play. But in spite of these drawbacks, the enthusiasm was so great that as we left the town one good lady ran after our conveyance waving her arms and cheering! At another concert in the same locality the "National" feeling was so strong that "God save the King" was forbidden and mounted police had to guard the hall.

Among places abroad, Biarritz used to prove a delightful field of work. There I would be engaged as violin soloist at the *Concerts Classiques*. There, too, I met that highly-cultivated soul H.R.H. The Princess Frederica. During my first visit she gave me a remarkable book on Art (written by her father, the late King of Hanover) which she had inscribed to me "with grate-

ful regards." The following year I accepted an invitation to stay at her beautiful country house, *Mouriscot*, and during this visit I played before King Edward VII in the English church.

Naturally, these varied expeditions gave me a very wide experience of men and things. They also considerably widened my outlook; and extended my grasp of human interests in many spheres of life. It is not surprising, therefore, that with so much to occupy my thoughts, it came to pass that by the time I was thirty I had almost given up my academical work, and was devoting my time to the work of a concert-artist—giving violin recitals, chamber-concerts, lectures and music-scenas. And it is not, I think, overstating the case to say that these various fields of work, together with my later experiences as a Friar, have enabled me to try such varied experiments in musical appreciation among all sorts and conditions of men—rich and poor, young and old—that they have provided me with a really unique opportunity for gauging the musical culture of our country. For, apart from my London recital and chamber concerts in Mortimer Hall, Princess Rooms, Steinway Hall, Wigmore Hall, Aeolian Hall, St. James' Hall, and Queen's Hall, I have in later years played for the people in the highways and byways, in reeking slums and palatial hotels, to the poor, the destitute, the maimed and the afflicted, in workhouse, prison, hospital and asylum, to the sick and dying lying helpless in their beds, as well as, in former years, to the fashionable *beau monde* of London, Paris and the Riviera. And after the varied tests that I have applied, I cannot say that I am greatly impressed by the general culture of the people. Indeed, I would suggest that some of our over-idealistic friends should ponder over the melancholy fact that the St. James' Hall of old—the home of all that was noblest and best in musical art—has long been a popular hotel-café-restaurant; that whilst

the London Symphony Orchestra can scarcely pay its way, the Savoy Hotel jazz-band fills the Queen's Hall; and that Covent Garden Opera House, of classic fame, has been used of late as a dancing saloon for jazzers. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

#### IV

### MUSICAL CULTURE

I often think that the good influence of those who are striving to inculcate true musical taste in the souls of the rising generation is rendered largely fruitless by the falsity and poison which—like some loathsome cancer—abound on every hand throughout the entire realm of the popular arts. Personally, I have found that when people are given the good *only*, they soon acquire a taste for it; but that when they are given both good *and* bad they usually gravitate towards the bad.

I remember how in my younger days I once made arrangements with the town council of one of the smaller seaside resorts to give me the exclusive right of performances of music during the whole of a summer season; and, on the strength of their promises, proceeded to engage other artists of high standing to take part in the concerts. But the devil got to work at once; in that the owner of a piece of land that adjoined the site where my concerts were to take place rented a "plot" to some aspiring *pierrots!* What followed? Simply that night after night hundreds of people streamed past our concerts, at which famous artists were appearing, to sit on a piece of waste ground where night was made hideous by utter drivel.

Another interesting experiment was an effort to bring about higher ideals in musical appreciation amongst the working class population of one of the poorer districts of London. At that time (1907-1910) I was musical director at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, and had formed a choir and orchestra among the

people. The fearsome noises that proceeded were—at first—enough to flay one's ears. But after long and patient training such remarkable results were accomplished that our choral and orchestral concerts became a feature of the district. "It only proves what can be done when anyone takes the trouble," thought I; and then proceeded to make a proposal to the effect that we should give a concert at which the first half of the programme should be drawn up and conducted by me, and that the second half should be arranged by the people themselves, according to their taste, and without any direction whatsoever. An enthusiastic lady—who was "interested in the education of the masses"—expressed a wish to be present, and appeared to be duly impressed by the works of the great masters which formed the feature of part one. "Only give the people the higher and nobler," quoth she, "and they will soon prefer it to that which is mean and base." When lo! part two began; and on to the stage stepped the vulgar comedian, and the performance waxed so fast and furious that the lady in question "thought she had better be getting home." No! "the education of the masses" is not so easy as it sounds!

The fact is, the more experience one gains in regard to this important subject, the more one comes to the conclusion that there are many things that *cannot* be taught. Amongst these things I should place the aesthetic sense. Some men will tell you quite frankly—and in a cheery, self-satisfied kind of tone—that they "don't know one tune from another," without it once occurring to them that they are proclaiming themselves to be "deficient"! Others—people of leisure—frequently cultivate a "taste" for certain art-forms which is nothing more than a gigantic "pose," and these people surcharge the atmosphere to such an extent that totally false values arise, until gradually we are confronted with a new difficulty, inasmuch as people are trained to

“appreciate” what they had far better be trained to detest.

After all, so much depends upon the point of view. For instance, at the conclusion of one brief London season, during which I was concerned in producing no less than nine new *ensemble* works of this erudite nature, the *Standard* said that such enterprise was “worthy of warm recognition, and should secure the support of their future concerts by all genuine music-lovers.” Yet, when we performed a celebrated work of this character at a concert a little distance *out* of London, there was not a handclap; and I have sometimes wondered if the audience—hearing the amazing convolutions of sound—may not have thought that we were playing off a joke upon them!

Then, too, I remember how, after a series of chamber concerts in the provinces had come to a conclusion, I received a letter from a certain Lady D——, saying what a spiritual help the music had been to her. But that was not how it struck the ancient gentleman who acted as caretaker at the concert-hall. Not that he lacked enthusiasm. Oh dear no! It was simply that he was of a different temperament and saw things in a different perspective. For, after the concluding concert was over, the programme having ended with a somewhat brilliant Finale, he remarked to my secretary (with unalloyed admiration beaming from his venerable countenance): “’Tis wonnerful! Somethin’ wonnerful! When I seed ’im to-night, a-playin’ farst’r an’ farst’r, I said to myself, ‘Shure! ’e’s goin’ to show ’em what ’e can do afore ’e leaves’”!

Personally, I think that before we begin to introduce young people, or indeed any musically-uncultivated people, to the more complicated works of the great masters, we should do well to see that they know something of simplicity and quality through the finest examples of national songs and dances and the inspired

melodies to be found in the magnificent hymnology of Hebrew and Christian worship.

Talking of simplicity, I remember how, years ago, at a time when London concert-halls were undergoing a serious epidemic of hideous noises under the delusion that it was music, I offered—through the columns of the *Daily Telegraph* and other papers—a prize for “a simple melody.” But in response I received nothing but weak, insipid tunes, not one of which was worthy of any prize. I was in a dilemma: for if I awarded no prize it would have seemed like a breach of faith with the competitors, and yet it was plain that any prize that I might award would have to be given not to “the best” but to “the least bad” of the compositions. So—as a way out of the difficulty—I selected the three most possible melodies and decided to play them on my violin (accompanied by strings) at my next London concert, leaving it to the audience to decide by votes as to which composer should be “the winner.” It was a terrible ordeal—the playing of these sublime works—and I remember that the critics of the London daily papers were somewhat surprised at being handed a ballot-paper on entering the hall! However, it was done; and the public, as may be imagined, chose the worst of the three!

Simplicity alone will not, of course, be enough! We must have quality also: quality of performance and quality of inward essence. And I am convinced that the lack of “quality” in present-day music is due to the lack of the religious ideal. We need a re-union of religion and the arts. We need music of a divine quality: music that will stir men’s souls to higher issues. Most of our art at the present time reeks of man—poor, fallen, sin-laden man—with all his complex emotions and passions, good, bad and indifferent. Whereas if only we had once caught some faint, far-off glimpse of the Beatific Vision we should soon find that this

perpetual contemplation of our own ugly face was a very weary—if not loathsome—business. “Except you play and compose every note to the glory of God,” said old John Sebastian Bach, “your music will become mere noise and jingling.” “Glorious it is to climb nearer to Heaven than other men,” said Beethoven, “and then to diffuse God-like rays among mortals here upon earth.”

To do this we have no need to be “high-falutin’” like the highbrow of to-day. We need, rather, to impart a divine “spirit” into “forms” that are simple and coherent. We must begin where the people begin, and not blame the public for lack of support because we are determined to soar (if it *is* soaring) in complicated realms to which, at present, they are unable to reach. Still less must we blame them (but indeed respect them) for refusing to descend into the infernal regions in which so many of our modern artists appear to delight to wallow.

For my part, I know the pleasure—and the pain!—of playing most involved chamber-music. I know, too, the delight of playing some “big work” as violin soloist at some *concert classique* with a fine orchestra, and (incidentally) with a “big fee” into the bargain! But it is not in any of these things that I feel to have, as it were, entered Heaven. No! the nearest thing I have ever known of “heavenly” attainment was in an experience of quite a different character. It was at the time that I had begun to work on more ideal lines, and about the year 1906. I had been writing some articles on music in the *Daily Mail*; and in one article I drew a picture of what I considered would be an ideal concert at the seaside. Shortly after this I received an invitation to go down to a certain town as solo-violinist at a concert connected with the Corporation which was to be held in some very beautiful gardens on lines similar to those I had indicated. I accepted the invitation, and played the simplest music: some arias and dances. Never, as long as I live, shall I forget the effect—both on myself and

the audience—as, assembled in that glorious woodland scene, I poured forth my soul in the still night air!

And I am convinced that to-day—as never before—we need a new race of artists: “bards,” who will produce simple and soul-stirring art-forms so fraught with divinity that they will kindle the hearts of the multitude with the highest and noblest ideals of life

## V

## NEW IDEALS

From what has now been said, it will be gathered that after several years of artistic work I soon began to feel that modern Art was doing little to raise mankind to higher ideals of life and being—that it was, in short, “filled with worldliness and the worship of mammon.” I saw that in place of that Heavenly Food that Art was intended to bring to the souls of men—the popular drama, music, literature and other branches of Art, were largely disseminating a bad influence, and helping to foster the vanity and folly with which the world was already filled to overflowing. It seemed to me a terrible thing that millions of pounds, and thousands of valuable lives, should be expended year after year in the upkeep of work which could be, for the most part, of but little value—and was in many instances actually wrong—in the sight of God. And I longed for a new order of Art to uprise, an Art that should be more in keeping with Longfellow’s lines :

*God sent His Singers upon earth,  
With songs of sadness and of mirth,  
That they might touch the hearts of men,  
And bring them back to Heaven again.*

From 1900-1905 I thought much on these lines, and in 1904 I published, through Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., my first book, *The Temple of Art*: a plea for the higher realisation of the Artistic Vocation. This book was so well received by both Press and public that it passed into its second edition in less than a year, and

I began to hope that in future I might begin to work on more ideal lines.

And so, in the autumn of 1905 I entirely altered the nature of my programmes, a course, which, naturally enough, provoked much comment in the London Press. Speaking of this new departure in my work, the *Morning Post* wrote:

Mr. Ernest Newlandsmith began a series of concerts which promise to be interesting, for he has undertaken to present his audience with programmes of what he terms "simple" music. He has felt—and many have felt with him—that much of the music brought forward in the present day does little to advance humanity to higher ideals, and he therefore proposes to try the effect of a return to the purer forms of Art, and by so doing to carry out his ideals, which find expression in Longfellow's words about "bringing men back to heaven." There is no doubt about his earnestness.

In the following autumn I began a series of concerts at the Steinway Hall with a lecture upon "Art in its Relation to Life," in the course of which I set forth my (so-called) "new gospel" of Art; and this brought forth such an outburst of criticism that a little white booklet was issued bearing the title *Mr. Newlandsmith Replies to his Critics*. Naturally, the "Art for Art's sake" school was against me; and one of the leading London daily papers dealt with the matter in crushing terms.

But I could not but remember that the things of God are hid from the (so-called) wise and prudent and revealed unto "babes" on the one hand, and unto the "magi" on the other; and throughout my life I have received letters of encouragement which have quite outweighed the contradictions of those who are filled with the wisdom of this world. In one of these letters the writer says:

I can hardly express what that music was to me, and I fear as a perfect stranger to intrude on you with many words: but I think you will let me say I thank you. The

chance of hearing you never came to me before : my life has been singularly set aside from such chances, and the joy will remain with me.

Please forgive these poor words from a woman who has suffered much, and to whom music seems the highest expression of Love and Life, even more so than poetry, or rather I should say than written poems—for true music *is* poetry.

Another writes :

I hope you will forgive me for troubling you with a letter, but I must say thank you from the bottom of my heart for your beautiful music to-day. Applause in a concert-room, which may or may not be genuine, is such a poor return for what we receive, and I for one feel more inclined to saye a "grace" for it. Yet, after all, the thanks are to God who has given you the power to lift us up and give healing and comforting and strengthening—and you made us feel that the music was from Heaven.

Another :

Though we have never spoken to each other, you have "befriended" me. . . . You shall not say reproachfully of me, "Where are the nine?" I will turn and thank you for our healing. Such a feast as you gave us to-day is a rare luxury for us, and a balm sadly wanted for bruised and jaded hearts.

With such expressions of sympathy as these, and in the face of what I had seen and heard inwardly in my own soul, I could find little to agree with in such ideas as those brought forward by a writer in one of the daily papers who said that "Art must ever reflect the spirit of its Age, for it is the outcome of contemporary beliefs and views of life. . . . It is not a matter of right or wrong as Mr. Newlandsmith suggests; but simply the inevitable result of progress." On the contrary, I knew that although contemporary Art might reflect the Spirit of the Age, it ought not to be led by the Spirit of the Age. If it should be it becomes, in its relation to life, in the position of a dog led hither and thither at the

whim of its master, no matter how blind the latter may be, nor how far he may have wandered from the path of Truth. Rightly speaking, Art ought—being fed from the inexhaustible well-springs of Eternal Truth—to lead the Spirit of the Age ever onward and upward: to help in moulding and fashioning the Spirit of the Age until the latter conforms to the Highest Truth. And I felt like crying out in the words which Frederick Myers put into the mouth of St. Paul:

*O could I tell, ye surely would believe it!  
O could I only say what I have seen!  
How should I tell, or how can ye receive it!  
How, till He bringeth you where I have been?*

*Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest  
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:  
Yea with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest,  
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.*

## VI

### A CHANGE

As these ideas were becoming impressed upon my mind, my consciousness was changing also; and I became less and less capable of going forward in the old and more customary paths. I could not, like the Puritans of old, cut Art out of my life, because I believed—nay, I knew—that Art was the divinely appointed medium for awakening and maintaining the truest and noblest ideals in men's hearts. I therefore felt that my right course was to endeavour to remodel my career in accordance with my new perceptions.

Who can tell of the awful struggles and privations that ensued? Becoming less and less fitted to work on the old platform, and without yet having found the new, my position was filled with difficulties. It was not only that I had to direct my Art-work into new channels, but that a special public had to be created; and whereas, in former days, Wigmore Street had been lined with carriages when one of my concerts, resulting in some £60 profit, was taking place in the Bechstein Hall, a far more beautiful concert which was given on the new lines resulted in a loss of £15.

It is not necessary to describe the throes through which any one passes in undergoing such a metamorphosis. Difficulties crowded in on every side, financial disasters were ever overshadowing me, and at some periods of my career I was brought to such utter ruin that I was obliged to sell my possessions, including the very instruments needed for my work. One fond hope after another seemed doomed to failure, and gradually the "own" will and the "own" ideas were offered up in

sacrifice. Very likely these experiences were due to other causes apart from these that we are now discussing, but be this as it may, my whole life underwent a complete overturning. Of the long-drawn-out agonies and the heartrending struggles there is no need to speak. We can all of us picture something of what such things mean, and how at times it seems as though the mind might be following a mere illusion. Yet through all this long dark night, when I had to walk by faith, seeing that there was no other light to guide me, I felt that in some mysterious way, and for some special purpose, God was leading me.

It was in journeying through this thorny pathway that I was first brought into the realisation of the wondrous spiritual possibilities of truly God-filled music. How I longed so to combine Art with Religion that each was either: a living prayer to the Most High! It was with thoughts like these that I designed some of the powerful wordless music-dramas which I gave at this time in London; and I had already conducted (in 1907) a soul-stirring service of Musical Devotion (with an address on "Religion and the Arts"), at a well-known church in Birmingham, which to some extent enshrined my ideals. It was here that I felt most truly at one with my work, and that I felt to be fulfilling my own special vocation. Indeed, to me, a kind of "Bardic Friar," kindling the hearts of the people in the love of God, is the Ideal Artist, fulfilling the true mission of Art.

As I have said elsewhere: "I believe that God would have us create a great ministry of music, in keeping with Longfellow's lines—a great spiritual Evangel that would enable the Holy Spirit to bring His final message to the Church and to the world. There is, indeed, an old tradition in the Religious Orders that before the coming of the Kingdom the spirit of David will be recovered, and be manifested for the warning and the kindling of the nations. But with this blessed Evangel

I would unite the verbal delivery of the One Truth of the Ages—the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in its fullness—exoteric and esoteric. And I would carry such a ministry of music into the churches throughout the length and breadth of the land, firmly believing that this is the will of God.

“For as one who has striven, however humbly, to be a ‘minstrel of the Kingdom,’ I know what it is to have wandered in the highways and byways making melody on my violin, and bringing God’s glorious messages to the souls of men. I have played by the sea at night, the stars shining above in the heavens, the waves lapping gently on the shore, and the wind softly murmuring in the distant trees, and great strong men have been stirred to the depths and blessed; little children have come to me with tiny offerings of love and service; and women, old and young, have wept and rejoiced in God.”

## VII

### I BECOME A FRIAR

Now towards the beginning of this long struggle I began, as I have already said, to work out a higher philosophy of Art; and I wrote books, and articles in the papers, and delivered public lectures, and gave concerts of simple and soul-stirring music. And in 1906 a Society was established to represent this higher view of "Art in its relation to Life." This was *The Laresol Society* (afterwards *The Religious Art Society*); and its magazine *The Laresol Review* (afterwards *The New Life*), published articles calculated to promote the higher realisation of the artistic vocation, looking at the matter from the standpoint of the religious life, and the definitely directed Love and Service of God and Humanity. This little Society consisted at first of myself as President, and a few personal friends—the members of the Advisory Council being Sir John Hynde Cotton, the Rev. John Merrin, the Baron Rudolph de Bertouche, and Capt. T. F. Watson; and although with much effort a number of local centres were established in various parts of the country, and many lectures and meetings were held, and some 200 or more members were enrolled, it seemed as though the Society—like its founder—must die to live.

Eventually in 1908, assisted by some sympathetic friends—I succeeded in establishing a Country Hostel (Kirdford Priory) in Sussex, to serve as the Headquarters of the Movement. To this quiet Retreat House were invited those in need of rest and a suitable environment—apart from the noise and clamour of the world—for progress in the Spiritual Life. In the

grounds of the Hostel there was a little Chapel, known as the Oratory of the Holy Spirit. The place was ideally situated for Retreats and Quiet Days, and the country around contained some of the most beautiful woodland scenery in England. How much I loved this place will be gathered from the following :

“It is morn! The sun has risen over the hills, the dew is glistening like a sea of light, and the joyous songs of the birds fill the quiet air with harmony and gladness. As I look out from my lattice window, the view—for miles around, o’er hill, and dale, and wood, and common—fills my soul with blessedness and joy unspeakable. See the young rabbit playing round the old-world sundial on the green lawn below! How happy he looks! . . . And now the sound of the distant bells, floating in at the open casement, calls me to the Holy Eucharist. Oh! greatest of all things in the whole wide world—to meet my Beloved in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar! . . .

“The quiet service is over; but it is joyous to linger in the little church, ere strolling homewards through the sunlit fields. Then a little rest in the beautiful Priory grounds, amidst the dear kind trees, and the birds, and the flowers. Hear them all singing—singing, in tune with my own glad heart, their morning hymn of praise and thanksgiving! Ah! thrice-blessed is he who dwells in quietness and peace with Jesus!”

I well remember how at the time I wrote the above lines, I thanked God for bringing me to this “haven where I would be.” But after settling down in this God-sent place I found that to work “in the world” gradually became impossible. I was conscious that I was being called to the Prayer-life; and I was conscious that I was being called by a Voice that I had long known and tried to follow: that I was being drawn “by the cords of Love” to Him who first loved me and gave Himself for me on the Cross of Calvary!

And so wonderful, at this time, were my experiences of the consuming fire of the Love of God, and so impossible did the world and its falsity become, that I "forsook all," and renouncing this world's interests and possessions became a Pilgrim Friar of the Love of Jesus.

After taking the vows at the Holy Eucharist on November 1st, 1908, I began to wear the usual cassock and cord in my public work; and on the handbills announcing my autumn concert in London, I published a fervent *Apologia*, setting forth Jesus Christ as the one test and valuation of all that is, and explaining that (as an artist) I meant in future to devote my Art and life solely to the furtherance of His glorious Kingdom. This *Apologia* was such a remarkable document that I thought it would cause sufficient comment in the Press to rouse up followers in every sphere of life. But this was far from being the case. It is true that the Father Superior of a well-known Anglican Community (the S.D.C.) wrote to me saying, "Brother, it is an inspiration!" But people in general kept somewhat coolly aloof.

At the concert, the hall was aglow with a dim religious light, two great candlesticks stood on either side of the platform, whilst behind all, at the centre of the stage, hung a great wooden cross. Some of the audience were deeply moved at the atmosphere of reverence, and the beauty of the music; but the critics were mostly silent. *The Times* and the *Morning Post* did little more than direct the attention of the public to the fact that Mr. Ernest Newlandsmith was now Brother Ernest, S.L.G., and the bulk of the Press ignored my message.

Apárt from my more recent lectures and articles on "Art in its Relation to Life," I had, as I have already said, published in 1904 my first book, *The Temple of Art*. In 1906 my *Art Ideals* and *The Temple of Love* were published, and in 1910 *The Temple of Life*.

But I knew well by now that an advanced philosophy

of Art—however true and sound—could never of itself produce the desired results. To secure true and God-like Art we need true and God-like souls. Hence, if pernicious, extravagant, and confused Art is to be stamped out of existence, and replaced by Art which is in keeping with Longfellow's lines, the most direct method must be to draw men to the Religious Life, i.e., the total surrender of the soul to God, until all is done to His greater glory, and His quickening Spirit rules in all things. In consequence of this, there grew up within the outer courts of the Society a Prayer Order called *The Society of the Love of God*.

We of this Order knew that there is only one Way to the truly Religious Life: only one Way by which a man can ever come to God; and that is through the mediation of that Eternal Logos, Divine Idea, Infinite Wisdom, and Blessed Meekness—Jesus Christ. In Him only is Life—and through His Spirit alone shall the face of the earth be renewed.

Oh that artists might arise who would hold up before men's eyes—through simple and easily-understood Art-forms—the true spiritual ideals for which the world is thirsting even though it knows it not! We need artists who will aim at becoming the channels of the Holy Spirit—artists who will strive

*To be fulfilled with Godhead, as a cup  
Filled with a precious essence, till the hand  
On marble or on canvas falling, leaves  
Celestial traces, or from reed or string  
Draws out faint echoes of the voice Divine,  
That bring God nearer to a faithless world.  
Or higher still and fairer and more blest,  
To be His seer, His prophet: to be the voice  
Of the Ineffable Word: to be the glass  
Of the Ineffable Light: and bring them down  
To bless the earth, set in a shrine of Song.*

Book II  
LIFE AS A FRIAR

*Herein it will be seen how the mystical life is often  
a life of great activity.*

# I

## THE NORTH DEVON MISSION

It was on August 1st, 1909, that I set out on my first pilgrimage as a Friar; and as I wandered over hill and dale, in the woods and by the sea, my experiences both at this time and afterwards were romantic and wonderful to a degree. But soon after this, in the summer of 1910, the Priory in Sussex had to be abandoned, as the use of the property was required by the owner; and that is how it was that the "Mission of the Holy Spirit" came to be inaugurated in North Devon. The work of these days was strenuous indeed! On a Sunday morning, for example, I would be out before eight for the Holy Eucharist; and after breakfast would get everything ready for a service, which I would take single-handed, at eleven, at my (S.L.G.) Mission Hall. At 3.30 I would conduct the afternoon Mission Service—also alone; and then go to the theatre and rehearse the choir and stage details for a Miracle Play. I would then take the entire charge of the 6.30 Mission, preaching my third sermon for that day, and go straight on to the theatre; and at 8.15, after a little prayer and a glass of water, would go right through the Mystery Play, preceded by an address—my fourth sermon for that day! Here would be assembled hundreds of souls, including innumerable workpeople from Bristol and Cardiff, many of whom would not have dreamed of entering church, chapel or mission hall. One burly navvy—wiping away a tear—was overheard saying: "Better'n any sermon, ain't it, mate?"

The following account from *The Ilfracombe Gazette* will give some idea of the effect of such scenas:

## THE VISION OF THE HOLY GRAIL

It is not often that an entertainment is given in our town at once so novel, so beautiful, and so uplifting as the musical scena entitled *The Vision of the Holy Grail*, which was held in the Alexandra Hall last Sunday night. It was modelled on the lines of the old church mystery plays, and was in reality a religious service of a most elevating order. The hall was packed, and no wonder; and it only remains to be hoped that the collection was proportionate. As we waited in the darkened hall, every eye was turned upon the gaunt, monkish figure sitting alone in his cell, in the dim light cast by two candles that burned before the oaken crucifix upon the altar. The monk's meditations were illustrated symbolically by selections on the violin (exquisitely rendered by himself), some suggestive of prayer and humble penitence, others of struggle and dark spiritual wrestlings, others of tender devotion or the awakening of hope, and some again rising by degrees to heights of passionate adoration. Sometimes, as the music worked upon him (or rather his own emotions symbolised by the music), the monk would spring erect from his chair and pace about the cell. Sometimes, he would stand gazing upward for minutes together.

At length, as if in response to his yearning aspiration, a bright shaft of light shines in upon him, and in the light an angel in white vesture bearing the Holy Grail. This is the moment of his life, the fulfilment of a hope he has scarcely dared to cherish. He goes slowly forward in amazement towards the apparition; but at this juncture, suddenly the clanging of the monastery bell breaks in harshly and insistently, summoning him to his daily task of distributing alms to the poor at the gate. He hesitates; it seems sacrilege to leave this wondrous visitant. But he is waved away; and he departs with head bowed low in grief. However, when he returns from the fulfilment of his duties, it is to find the angel still awaiting him; he can scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes, but yet he advances towards the angel, as in a dream. Then he kneels and partakes of the chalice's blessed contents, while voices of an unseen choir sing "The King of Love my Shepherd is," and the whole cell is flooded with supernal light.

Perhaps some people will wonder what is the work Brother Ernest has set himself to do. Our impression is that it is two-fold; first, he seeks to rouse men to a desire for a genuine

spiritual life; and, secondly, to show how best we may employ art for God's glory, and in the service of man.

It will be strange if we fail to give Brother Ernest every encouragement, for he is one who must appeal to many classes of people. He must appeal to all who can appreciate exquisite violin-playing, and much more to those who love art, and hate to see her degraded to base ends. He must appeal to everyone who is capable of admiring a man possessed of sufficient courage to strike out a new path for himself, and thus lay himself open to the calumny or ridicule of a censorious and hopelessly unoriginal world. He must appeal even more strongly to those who realise and regret the flippancy and aimlessness of the present day, who know how hard it is to find a truly earnest and disinterested man; who know how disillusionment and loss of ideal have brought about a State and Church filled with those who seek their own aggrandisement only. And lastly, he must appeal most strongly of all to those truly sincere Christians who have sought in vain for satisfaction in conventional religion; who are weary of hollow prayers and perfunctory praises; and who have wit enough not to shun all new movements for fear of heresy, but rather to welcome them in the hope of finding signs of re-awakening life.

Beautiful as this work often was, the strain was very great; for I was author, composer, chief actor, stage manager, organiser, preacher, director of the music and chief artist all in one: my part as the "Minstrel Pilgrim" requiring me to pour out my very soul in thrilling music.

At the conclusion of the performance I would see various people, sometimes count the collection (no little anxiety in case it should fail to cover the expenses) and start off home, carrying various properties and my violin and music.

On Monday morning I would be up early, and, toiling up the tremendous hill to the station, with bag and fiddle, would journey 200 miles in order to earn money to keep the Mission afloat. Arriving at Littlehampton about 4.30 I would make all the preliminary arrangements and give a Violin Recital there the same evening. Continuing these during the week, with

perhaps a Children's Fête and a visit to the hospital thrown in, I would return to North Devon on Saturday for another round of work.

The following note of appreciation appeared in the *Ilfracombe Gazette* just before I left the town :

#### BROTHER ERNEST'S MISSION

All who have been privileged to come into touch with Brother Ernest must learn with deep regret that he will not be remaining many more weeks in Ilfracombe. It is probable that there has rarely been a greater or more sincere man at work in our little town, and whatever conclusion one may have arrived at with regard to his views, there can be no doubt that he believes in them himself most passionately. This is surely a great point in these Laodicean days.

A compromiser will win the world's tolerance, but can never command its respect. If we endeavour to disarm hostility by putting forward our opinions in a diluted form, opposition will doubtless cease, but we shall find ourselves ignominiously ignored instead. This is very largely, however, what the Christian Church has been doing, and the reason why she is becoming more and more neglected by ardent and independent thinkers. The world's leading philosophers and men of science go their way, treating the Church's utterances like those of a harmless child, which need not be taken too seriously. They feel that, while they deal with facts, she is content with the repetition of catch-words.

But could the Apostles and the early Fathers, with their burning zeal, have been so treated?

No one can deny the justice of what we have written; and therefore no one at all interested in the Christian Faith should fail to hear what Brother Ernest has to say, and to weigh his impassioned words with care. His addresses must simply be a revelation to those who can understand them. He tells you of facts and experiences as real as any related by the scientists, throwing the most convincing light on hitherto obscure doctrines of the Church. Brother Ernest is no fanatic; though his views may sometimes seem surprising, he can always adduce good arguments for holding them. He is alive; he has something to tell; he has made explorations in the spiritual world as real as any related by Shackleton or Peary in the material.

He tells of a new discovery, which yet is old; and he tells

of it for no other reason at all but that he is overjoyed at what he has found.

Finally, he is certainly the only apologist for the orthodox faith—he *is* orthodox—whom the present writer has listened to for years with anything approaching conviction.

It may seem strange—and even lacking in humility—that I should care to quote words that are so full of praise. But so great have been my sufferings, and so careless has been the Church to the needs and aspirations of one who has poured out his very life-blood in her service, that I feel constrained to bring forward occasional “appreciations” from the Press, in support of the cause for which I have for so long a time been working, and for which I naturally cannot speak highly in my own words. Indeed, distasteful as it may be, I do not see by what other means I can, in a book, so suitably bring home to the reader a true idea of the effect of this work on the minds and hearts of the people.

## II IN JOURNEYINGS OFT

The North Devon Mission concluded the following spring (1911), and was followed by tours, of Concerts, Mystery Plays, Lectures and Mission work in various parts of Kent and Sussex.

At the conclusion of the summer a little temporary Retreat House was established at Felpham. From here the work went on in various parts of England—including the Church Congress at Stoke-on-Trent, and Missions in London, Folkestone, Dover, Hythe, Reading, Oxford, Bognor and other important towns.

A performance of the Mystery Play, *The Vision of the Holy Grail*, was given on Shrove Tuesday in 1912 at the Dover Town Hall in aid of the S.P.G., over £80 being taken in a single day. This amount was beaten, however, by a performance that was given in aid of a church at Boscombe in 1914, when about £120 was taken at one matinée of the play at the Boscombe Hippodrome. Yet, on this occasion, although I only received £17 for my entire company of "Pilgrim Players," most of whom had to travel from Seaford specially, there was an unpleasantness in recovering money for the programmes!

That kind of thing has been such a common experience that I feel led to relate a very striking story. When conducting my North Devon Mission, I received a letter from a well-known London clergyman saying that the writer had seen me in my scena *The Heavenly Messenger*, and feeling that its spiritual teaching would be helpful and improving to his flock, he suggested that a similar performance should be given in his parish. He

further promised to see that the financial side of things was secured. He "supposed that I would not be bringing my choir all the way from North Devon," but agreed that everything they could do at the London end should be done. Before I arrived in London, however, I was careful to secure the assistance of some of my followers there—and it was well that I did so! For, after giving an address and some music at the conclusion of the Sunday evensong, I found that practically nothing had been done, either in selling tickets or stage details. It seemed almost impossible to proceed, for the performance was announced for the following evening; but by miraculous efforts and the help of an old friend who happened to live in the parish, the whole thing was carried through somehow. The hall was packed, for the audience was admitted free, with a collection at the conclusion. The people were evidently much moved, and the good vicar—with tears in his eyes—earnestly appealed to them for funds. After I had returned to North Devon I received a letter from this good man saying how words could never thank me or adequately convey the profound spiritual value of my work, and enclosing a cheque for three guineas! On my humbly writing to point out that this did not so much as cover my personal expenses and begging that at least £5 would be forwarded, I received no reply. But in a glowing account of the performance, which appeared in the local paper, I had the pleasure of reading that the appeal had produced £304 for the Church Funds! That the performance had been appreciated also from a spiritual standpoint is evident, for in his report the Vicar wrote as follows:

Never before did I realise the power that music so exquisitely rendered could exercise. Surely such a man is to be envied who possesses so magic a power, whereby without once opening his lips he is able to transport his audience from the contemplation of the things of earth to those of heaven.

Throughout these years, services of music in the churches were, as now, a chief feature of the work, and these I have reason to believe have ever proved a source of inspiration to thousands. After one of these services a priest-organist wrote :

To all it was a revelation of the true meaning and use of music in relation to life generally, as a purifying and ennobling influence; and in particular in relation to religious and spiritual life as a means of expressing those deep, mysterious, and otherwise inexpressible feelings and longings with which men reach out beyond the narrow limits of material and passing things to spiritual and eternal things—from darkness to light—from reflection to that which is reflected—from the unreal to the real—striving to touch and to hold the everlasting truth. Would that services such as this were held more often and in many places.

And in various newspaper reports the Press speaks as follows: "He held the congregation as by a spell." "A memorable, deeply impressive, and inspiring experience." "Unforgettable in its influence and sublimity."

And yet there have been men who have denied me the use of their church!

### III

#### A NEW HEADQUARTERS

After so many years of wandering, and afflictions of every sort and kind, I now began to feel that the time could not be far distant for entering into the "promised land."

Moreover, during the winter of 1911-12, I met an Anglican priest who wished to become my colleague in the Movement, and to act as chaplain to the new Retreat House. Everything promised well for the building up of a great and powerful work provided a suitable house and grounds could be found, but alack! alack! through mistaken directions on the part of those concerned, that which I now believe to have been the Divine plan was not carried out; and in the summer of 1912, after most terrible experiences of the supernatural, fighting with the powers of darkness and against principalities and powers, I totally broke down, everyone was scattered, and the whole Movement was wrecked to its foundation.

But after nearly a year of terrible collapse, God in His infinite love and mercy raised me up again; and after the various workers had been recalled the edifice was gradually rebuilt.

Even so it was not until June of 1913 that the Movement began to be properly reorganised. The work commenced again with a Musical Service of Praise and Thanksgiving at a church in a small village (Eastergate) in Sussex; and this was followed by a performance of the third act of *The Vision of the Holy Grail*, as a Pastoral Mystery Play, in the grounds of a neighbouring vicarage. By the invitation of the Executive, I

then attended the great Student Movement Conference at Swanwick, giving a Lecture-Recital which taxed the seating capacity of the Conference Room to the utmost; and a special Lecture and Meeting for Art Students also was held.

Then there commenced a summer season of work at Bognor, extending over a period of several weeks, during which a number of inspiring Musical Services were held at St. Wilfrid's Church, and at the neighbouring Parish Church of Berstead. Speaking of these occasions one Press report says: "Holiness was the keynote of the whole service"; and another, "Such music must, in its potency, like prayer, be one of those golden chains that bind us closer to the feet of God." It is impossible to describe how often—when it seemed too difficult to go on—kind and heartfelt words of this kind on the part of the Press have cheered me and given me courage to continue—and I do indeed thank God for such help.

During the Bognor season, a series of Miracle Plays, concluding with a Mission, was given at the Queen's Hall; several lectures were given at schools; a possible house and grounds was found for the new headquarters; and, at the conclusion of the summer season, the arrangements for the tenancy of this house were concluded and the necessary alterations put in hand.

The next work of importance was a series of Musical Services and Addresses at the Church Congress, for which the Parish Church of St. Mary, Southampton, was placed at my disposal. A large gathering of professional artists, of various branches of Art, students and friends, was held in London, and many Musical Services were held in churches in various parts of England. Lectures and Meetings were held also at Oxford and Cambridge Universities, under conditions that enabled the teaching and ideals of the Movement to be brought into close touch with the undergraduate

life at various colleges, thus continuing the educational side of the work that I had inaugurated years before by occasional lectures at schools such as Eton and Haileybury.

By Christmas 1913 the arrangements at the new headquarters—Seaford Priory—were ready. Here, in addition to the Collegiate House, was a house for visitors, a private chapel, and a miniature theatre. During the first eight months some forty or more artists and others visited the College, more than half this number coming into residence for short or long periods. Several artists and others were enrolled, and consecrated their life and work to God at the Society's special Service in the chapel, and two visitors were baptised. Early in the new year (1914) special Services of Devotional Music were held in London and elsewhere, and in a Press report the writer says: "We never recollect to have heard anything more purely devotional." In April a "Grand Benedicite" was held at St. Anne's, Soho.

There were also performances of the Miracle Play, *The Vision of the Holy Grail*, in several provincial towns; and although I was far from satisfied with the artistic side of these productions, they must evidently have been very impressive, *The Church Times* describing the play as "a triumph of reverential Art."

Books, magazines and pamphlets containing the highest artistic and spiritual teaching were widely circulated; two or three new publications were issued; and at Eastertide, 1914, a small printing office was set up at the Priory. This proved invaluable in turning out much of the smaller work, such as pamphlets, handbills and tickets.

But Seaford Priory was not destined to continue; for during the 1914 Summer School the Great War broke out. This played havoc with the work, and after a Military Camp of 30,000 soldiers had established

themselves at Seaford, the Priory was found to be no longer suitable as a Retreat House, and the place was accordingly given up.

\* \* \* \* \*

At this point one may reasonably inquire as to what were my hopes for the future? Needless to say, I did not expect to reform the world! No, not even to reform the Art-world! But I should have liked to have seen a powerful uprising of "Art for the Kingdom of God." I should have liked while yet my powers were spared me to have established an Ideal Theatre, and to have staffed that theatre with Orators, Singers and Players all devoted to the Spiritual Life. To secure such artists I would have founded a School, where the children were taken quite young and trained on truer principles of education than are in vogue at the present time. But such a theatre and such a school, together with a College of Religious Art, would have needed endowment so as to be freed from commercial interests; and this, alack! was not forthcoming.

I would also have sent broadcast, all over the world, free Literature, teaching clearly and simply the inter-relation of Religion, Science, and Art. In addition Professorships might have been established for carrying on lectures and recitals through which students in all branches of Art would have been instructed in the true spiritual ideals that should govern their life and work. I would also have endowed Research Studentships through which spiritually-minded artists would have been enabled to devise new and living Art-forms, especially in Musical Scenas for the theatre, combined with experiments in "Lighting" to develop the "Colour-Music" Art.

To do all this would have required large sums of money, but it would have been money well spent. For, after all, the real value of any Art-work simply depends

upon the extent to which it enshrines the Spirit of Goodness, Truth and Beauty—which is the Spirit of Christ—the Eternal Archtypal Idea, the Divine Creative Thought, or Word of God by Whom all things were made, and in Whom all things live and move and have their being. Such a Theatre of Art as I had in mind would have been no theatre for mere play-acting, but a theatre in which all the great powers of Oratory and Music, Scenery and Lighting, Colour and Rhythmic Motion would combine—under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost—to kindle the hearts of men; a theatre of Christly and Spiritual Ideals to herald the coming of the King.

Conscious as I am of my many shortcomings both in Art and Life, I yet firmly believe that God had endowed me with the necessary powers for this work; and that my Art (hindered though it was through lack of means) was esteemed by many is evident from such opinions as the following, taken here and there—in no boastful spirit, but rather to “bear witness”—from masses of helpful Press cuttings:

“Literally a revelation.” “The whole audience hung spell-bound.” “The greatest soul-musician of the day.” “The audience listened with feelings not far removed from rapture.” “A soul-stirring power which none could resist.” “When he took up his violin he drew all hearts to him.”

And that the opinion of the general public concurred with that of the Press may be seen from extracts from letters, etc., written by well-known people who were complete strangers.

“Surely none of those who were privileged to be present can ever forget it.” “We were profoundly moved.” “He drew tears.” “I cannot find words to express my enjoyment of his superb feeling.” “Nothing will ever come up to it.”

No! It is not so much that I showed the world

nothing, but that my country was—as it ever has been—too slow and apathetic to extend the necessary support to a great spiritual work that is founded upon Eternal Truth.

#### IV

### AN ADVANCE IN THE WORK

Meanwhile, by 1917, our national affairs were in a terrible condition. The Great War was raging, no one could say which way things would turn, and England was in jeopardy. The effect upon the people at home was far from satisfactory. Working at "munitions" and other war needs, at high wages, they spent their spare time in vanity and folly. The tone of the popular amusements at the theatres and picture-houses became worse and worse, and much of the cheap literature became a menace to the nation. It was at this time that the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Randall Davidson) inaugurated the National Mission. And although the result was outwardly very poor, it made a certain impression on the Church herself.

Until now, as I have said, I had found "the Church" almost as difficult to rouse as "the world." But in 1917 things began to move in the right direction, and Churches of all kinds were throwing open their doors to me.

In this year I held an extensive mission in South-sea and Portsmouth, and was also one of the preachers for Lent and Easter at the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London. In both cases my chief work was the holding of special Services of Musical Devotion, with Addresses on "Religion and the Arts"; and these services were attended by large congregations. Most of the principal churches of the district were concerned in the Portsmouth Mission; and at St. Martin-in-the-Fields I found myself in decidedly distinguished company—for my fellow special preachers included the

Bishop of London, the Bishop of Winchester, the Bishop of Lichfield, the Dean of Lincoln, Father Adderley, Canon Lyttleton, and other well-known men. (For a layman, and a Friar at that, this was, I should imagine, a really unique experience.) Moreover, the general public became really keen. At my concluding service at Portsmouth, which was held in the famous church of St. Mary's, Portsea, some 2,000 people must have been present; and so great was the enthusiasm caused by the services at St. Martin-in-the-Fields that I hoped if possible to hold a concluding service at St. Paul's Cathedral. With this end in view, the Bishop of London kindly wrote to the authorities, and received a reply from Archdeacon H——— saying that the idea of such a service was a good one, but that he did not think it would be a success in the hands proposed. If, said he, the proposal had come from such a man as Sir B. T. or Sir G. A. (two worldly "Society" actors) the authorities would have gladly considered it.

What a world of meaning and significance is contained in this one incident!

For this kind of thing seems to have prevailed all through history: the Church has so often been ready to give her allegiance to the world, the flesh and the devil, whilst treating coldly those who—under the compelling sense of a special vocation—have abandoned the world on purpose to serve her! However, from that time onward my services at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, St. Anne's, Soho, Christ Church, Westminster, and other well-known Churches, were, for some years, a regular feature of London worship.

During these years, too, I succeeded in forming an "Angelus Choir" of ladies' voices to assist at these devotions. Robed in white albs, with virgin-blue girdles, and small quaker caps, this Choir—with its melodious singing—made a considerable impression; and I well remember how, after the first service at

Christ Church, Westminster, Mrs. R. J. Campbell said that as soon as the Choir began to sing she felt as if she must "get down on her face in the aisle," so beautiful and overwhelming was the effect of the music.

But the work was by no means confined to London. In the provinces these missions extended far and wide; from out-of-the-way churches in hamlets and villages to Sherborne Abbey and Winchester Cathedral. In the industrial centres, also, the enthusiasm was considerable. Large congregations assembled in the Pro-Cathedral in Birmingham, and in the churches of Wolverhampton, Tamworth, and many other places.

## V

## EXTENSIVE MISSION TOURS

A great feature of the work accomplished during these years was the fact that I enrolled some 3,000 Associates (or sympathisers) on the Register of the Mission; and a few of these, in later years, have proved most helpful by sending small free-will offerings towards the upkeep of the work.

Meanwhile, the strain on me, personally, was then, and ever has been, simply tremendous. What with the constant organisation, travelling, preaching, playing, and writing, what with innumerable interviews and a vast correspondence—to say nothing of editing the little Quarterly Magazine, at this time being issued under the title of *The Pilgrim*—my life became so extremely strenuous that no one—least of all a mystical and contemplative “religious”—could possibly have continued it indefinitely without completely breaking down. This, as will be seen, was what eventually happened, at the close of 1920. But I must not anticipate.

In 1916 I had published *England's Greatest Need*; and in 1918 *Religion and the Arts*—to which latter book the Bishop of Winchester (Dr. Talbot) kindly contributed the Foreword; and from this time onward the publishing of suitable literature became a regular feature of the Movement.

It must, however, be remembered that in a mission of this kind many prejudices had to be overcome; and so much ignorance and darkness had to be encountered and dispelled, that rapid progress could scarcely be expected. Yet as I look back upon the work, I cannot but see that much was accomplished in

these years which in earlier days would have been utterly impossible. And for all the wonderful experiences, and for the innumerable testimonies that have reached me as to the help and inspiration received by others through so many years of labour, I do indeed thank God!

One striking feature was the *variety* of work that was going forward at this time. Let us take, for instance, the work in 1919. It began with a Mission in the Midlands, the principal services being held at Birmingham Cathedral. Here I preached and played on four occasions. The time of year was January, and the weather on the Sunday afternoon on which the Mission began was simply terrible! Heavy snow covered the ground, and the Cathedral was enveloped in a thick fog. In consequence there were so very few people at the opening service—which is an occasion on which so much usually depends—that the prospect was far from satisfactory.

However, among those who *were* present was Bishop Hamilton Baynes; and after the service was over he asked me if I would preach in his place at Evensong, as his wife was seriously ill. I gladly agreed; and in consequence, later on, the fog having lifted and a huge congregation having assembled, a splendid opportunity was afforded of reaching the people and interesting them in the services to be held in the Cathedral during the course of the week. Further services were held at the Parish Church, Moseley, and St. Michael's, Handsworth; both Archdeacon Hopton and Archdeacon Gardner being most helpful and sympathetic. This Midland Mission also extended to St. George's Church and St. Andrew's Church at Wolverhampton; and a further Mission was held later in the year at St. Agnes, Moseley, and St. Aidan's, Small Heath.

Then, during Lent, I held a Mission, by the invitation of the Rev. R. J. Campbell, at Christ Church,

Westminster. On Ash Wednesday a Solemn Musical Devotion was held at All Saints', Norfolk Square; and the Mission extended its operations to the suburbs by holding several services at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood, and the Church of the Holy Innocents, South Norwood. A delightful Sunday at South Benfleet was also included in the programme; and I gave a lecture on "Religion and the Arts" at the "Old Vic" Theatre in London.

While all this public ministry was being proceeded with the workers at the little Retreat House (which had now been re-established amid the Surrey Hills) were far from idle. The place was rarely without visitors, a special Holy Week and Easter Retreat was held, and many were the testimonies that reached me as to the rest and spiritual help derived by those who stayed there.

The chief work of the year, however, was the Summer Mission, which extended from July 15th until the end of September. It was a wonderful time—beginning at Winchester, and concluding at Weymouth. Well do I remember the Winchester Mission: the services which I held in the beautiful Cathedral; my lecture at the Schools; and the open-air gathering which I held under King Alfred's statue in the town. The preliminary services at the Cathedral—which were held in the Choir—were very well attended; but it was the concluding service—held in the Nave—that appealed to me most. I do not know if any other layman has ever preached from that famous black-oak pulpit—probably not. But for my part, as I stood before the people in this sacred place—teeming as it is with the Legends of King Arthur and the Quest of the Holy Grail—I could not but feel strangely moved. How well do I remember the scene that evening, as, robed in my blue cassock, after pouring forth my soul in prayer and thanksgiving, I played my violin from the high stone platform at the Chancel gates and beheld the evening sunlight

streaming through the varied tints of the many-coloured windows and filling the side-aisle with reflex hues of heaven! As the music echoed through the arches of this vast and glorious building it seemed to me as if it came from another world. Dr. Prendergast—the organist of the Cathedral—had played my accompaniments at the earlier services, and very beautifully had he done so. But for this concluding service, my own gifted organist—Mr. Frederick Massey—had come down specially from London.

As to the Sermon, it is well known how very difficult it is for a preacher to make himself heard in the Nave of so large a Cathedral as that of Winchester; and when they told me that nobody ever *was* heard, except the Bishop—and one other preacher whose name I forget—it did not look very hopeful! However, I asked some friends who had come to Winchester in order to help at the Bookstall during the Mission, to sit near a certain pillar, and for one of them to hold up their hand if so be they could not hear me. My joy may be imagined therefore when no hand was held up, and when, after the service was over, and the Dean of Winchester had dismissed the congregation with the Blessing, they said they had heard every word.

This was decidedly different to an experience I had in another great building—Sherborne Abbey. There, on the morning following my mission, as I was having a quiet meditation in this truly superb edifice I happened to encounter the verger. So I said: "How did you like the service yesterday?" "Very much indeed, sir." "Were you able to hear my sermon?" "No, sir!" (Comment is needless!)

Personally I believe that this question of being "heard" largely turns on getting "the note" of a building.

Among other places that were visited that summer were Guildford, Southsea, Seaton, Lyme Regis,

Taunton, Wellington, Droxford, Churt and Froyle. Some of the services were held in the open air, whilst others were held in Churches and Halls; and by these means the Message of the Gospel and the call to a truly consecrated life in Christ went forth to thousands upon thousands. Later on Missions were held in many other provincial towns, and also in many of the London suburbs. I also held some beautiful services at St. Anne's, Soho, the congregation on the last occasion being the largest that we ever had at this Church. The service was entitled *Lo! He comes*; and the prayers, the hymns, and the other music (for Angelus Choir, and Violin and Organ), together with my sermon, were all directed to bringing home to the hearts of the people the great Advent Message.

Meanwhile the Angelus Choir was steadily improving, new publications were frequently being issued, and the Magazine was appearing regularly each quarter.

It will now be seen that the work was of a very varied character. At one time I would be presiding over fervent gatherings amid the sordid squalor of Bow; at another holding Mission services at a church like that of St. Augustine's, Fulham, with its over-crowded population of poor and destitute souls; at another pouring forth fervent gospel messages by the seashore or in the quiet stillness of the countryside; at another, holding services of Musical Devotion—"strengthening the things which remain"—in our great Cathedrals and Parish Churches; at another time hundreds would be gathering to my lectures in Town Halls, schools and theatres; at another I would be visiting the workhouse or the hospital, playing to the poor, the sick and the infirm; and at yet another time teaching the mysteries of the spiritual life at quiet gatherings in *The Sanctuary*. Nor was my work solely confined to the Church of England. It was sometimes in request amongst other bodies, also—from the West Central Mission at the Kingsway

Hall, in London, to a small, but Spirit-filled Baptist Chapel in the streets of a local town. And I believe that without in any way compromising my loyalty to the Church, the S.L.G. and R.A.S. did at least something towards promoting the spiritual reunion of divided folds.

## VI

### A STRENUOUS TIME

It was in the same unceasing way that the work continued in 1920—services being held in the earlier part of the year at St. Anne's, Soho; St. Peter's, Cranley Gardens; Holy Trinity, Kingsway; St. George-the-Martyr, Southwark, and other London Churches; with provincial missions at Bournemouth, Portland, and many another town. Well do I remember the Mission at St. John's Church, Portland! Large congregations assembled day by day at the services in Church, and on the morning of the concluding day of the mission, Sunday, January 25th (Conversion of St. Paul), I visited Portland gaol and held a service in the Prison Chapel. During my simple sermon on the Love of God I felt conscious that tears welled up in many eyes, and my violin music (accompanied on the organ by one of the convicts) appeared to stir the assembly greatly. Afterwards the Chaplain told me how much the service had been appreciated, and the Governor of the prison said he wished I would get "ten years" so that they might have me with them always!

In Lent I journeyed to Birmingham as special preacher for Holy Week and Easter at St. Aidan's Church, Small Heath. Here indeed was a Church of character; and the Good Friday services—and those on Easter Day—greatly impressed me. At the *Three Hours' Devotion* there was a large attendance; and although I did not leave the pulpit until after three o'clock many people were still kneeling in prayer when I re-entered the church later. From this time onward "the faithful" seemed to be caught up in a great wave

of spiritual devotion, the climax being reached on Easter Day when I preached and played at the High Celebration in the morning, at the Children's Service in the afternoon, and again at Evensong, when the Mission concluded. And oh! how thankful I was, when—as I set out, dead-beat, on Easter Monday—Canon Long, the Vicar, said it had been “the best Holy Week that they had ever known!” *Deo gratias!*

From Birmingham I journeyed on to Temple Balsall, a hamlet where that which has been described as “the twentieth century Little Gidding” is to be found. It is a few miles from the village of Knowle, and here I held a quiet little Musical Devotion on the evening of Bank Holiday in the beautiful “Knight's Templar” Church. Here, too, I had the pleasure of staying in “the Temple” with two other Friars of the Anglican Church: Brother Edward, a priest who was conducting a special work there, and Brother Giles, who, in cassock and cord, had long been doing a blessed work amongst the poor and outcast, tramping the countryside by day, and sleeping in casual-wards and doss-houses by night.

After further work in various districts I held a *Sursum Corda* on St. George's Day, at the Queen's Hall, in London, at which—after a rousing appeal to Church and State—I laid the British Flag at the foot of the Cross of Christ, whilst the choir and audience sang a hymn of National and Individual Dedication. This event, of which I hope to say more in the next chapter, must ever remain a landmark in the history of the Movement, and I do indeed thank God for the wonderful way in which he enabled me to carry it through in the midst of much opposition and desertion by many of my friends.

During the early part of the summer, missions were held in a number of provincial towns. August and September were specially devoted to the Isle of Thanet—many services being held at Holy Trinity, Margate, where as many as 1,500 would assemble at a single

service; and also at St. Saviour's, Westgate; the Parish Church, Birchington; St. George's, Canterbury; and St. John's, Herne Bay. Some impressive gatherings at the Town Hall, Westgate, were also included. During the autumn a Four Days' Festival was held in London at Holy Trinity Church, Kingsway. I was also booked for special services at Southend, during the Church Congress. But by this time I was so thoroughly worn out that I was obliged to cancel these, and also a number of missions in various provincial towns. Nevertheless, I remember how on a certain Sunday in October I preached and played at a church in Westminster, morning, afternoon and evening—returning to Herne Bay quite played out after the evening service—and the Vicar never so much as paid my fare!

A special ten-days Convention (for the workers in the Movement) was held at Norwood during November; an Evangelical Mission was held at St. Paul's Church, Canonbury, during Advent; and in December a week's mission was held at Norwood—the chief services being at All Saints', St. Paul's, Holy Innocents, and the church of St. John-the-Evangelist. I also held a beautiful Christmas-week gathering in London at the Kingsway Hall.

## VII

### A MESSAGE TO THE NATION

Before closing this section, it may be of interest if I say a little more about the *Sursum Corda*. For a long time past it had become more and more evident that England was fast forgetting the lessons that she should have taken to heart from the tragic days of the Great War; and the country was once again beginning to boast, and to parade her so-called greatness.

The degradation in the Arts, and the arrogance and impudence of the people, had long since reached a pitch that was almost without parallel. Whether it was from this cause alone or from others, also, I do not know—but I certainly felt conscious of a great and irresistible call to give a special message to the nation. And so it came to pass that on the afternoon of St. George's Day 1920, when "the world" was preparing to attend public dinners, and to hear its favourite speakers discourse on the glories of England in general and the genius of Shakespeare in particular, a scene of a very different character was taking place at the Queen's Hall. For even as a child is unconsciously admitted into the Kingdom of God at Baptism, so—in another sense—was the nation re-dedicated to our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by a symbolical act which I performed for that purpose.

After music for violin and organ, solo singers and an Angelus choir of *voix celestes*, I gave a brief oration in which I dealt with the prevailing degradation in our popular literature, drama, music, and pictures, and the godless indifference of the people to the higher and nobler issues of life. I pointed out that the expression of

taste and character in the popular arts had ever been the test of a nation's soul, and that when we—as a Nation—were so tested, the “handwriting upon the wall” was against us. Truly we were “tried in the balance and found wanting.” “That which should be the Handmaid of Heaven had largely become the Handmaid of Hell”; we had become “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”

What, then, was my message to the British nation on this National Festival of St. George? “Behold, I come in the Name of the Lord! My message is brief: Repent! for the Kingdom of God is at hand!” “To the Church I cry: Behold! the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him! Gather together the faithful in every place, that they may wait upon God with one accord for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit! Through *that* power alone can right guidance be given.”

“To my King and Country I cry: Surrender your title-deeds to Jesus Christ, that the coming crisis may be met in accordance with His Word and Commandment. In the simplicity of the Gospel we shall go forth to conquer: in departure therefrom we shall suffer defeat.

“Therefore,” I continued, “as a symbolical act on behalf of our nation I will lay the British flag at the foot of the Cross of Christ.”

The audience then stood and sang a HYMN OF DEDICATION, which I had composed for the occasion, whilst I unfurled a Union Jack and wrapped it around the foot of a large Cross which stood at the back of the platform.

“Lift up your hearts!” I cried. “We lift them up unto the Lord,” replied the audience. “Yea, we lift them up unto Thee, O Jesu!” I continued, “for Thou only art Holy, Thou only art the Lord, Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the

Glory of God the Father! Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy Glorious Name, evermore praising Thee, and saying (here I raised my bâton, and the white-robed choir sang), 'Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts! Heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory! Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high!'"

The gathering then concluded.

But in connection therewith I was confronted with an astounding fact—a fact that makes one gasp with astonishment. I had hoped that by means of the Press reports of this gathering my message of re-kindling would go forth to all the world. But it was not so.

When I worked *in* "the world," living for my "own" interests, my simplest and least striking public work was duly reported in the public Press, from a leader or double-headline article in the London dailies to countless columns in the provincial Press. But after the gathering we have just described—a gathering to which the entire Press were invited—the papers next day were absolutely *silent*.

Nevertheless subsequent events have shown how greatly the message was needed.

Soon after this my health began to fail. But I struggled on until the end of the year, and then, weary and worn, disappointed with my years of effort to rouse "a stiff-necked people," deserted by friends, and attacked by enemies, I travelled to the North for a mission in mid-winter—and unable to stand any more strain and discomfort I totally collapsed.

Over the trials and sufferings that I endured during the years of illness which followed I can only draw a veil. No words could ever express the affliction and difficulties of such a time. Yet, after drifting on in agony, with no proper care or treatment to aid me, I gradually, by a miracle of God, slowly began to recover; and at Christmas, 1923, a kind Parish Priest, who had

visited me where I lay ill, most kindly got up a testimonial on my behalf. It was subscribed to by over 150 people, including the Bishop of Winchester, the Bishop of Lichfield, Archdeacon Gardner, J. M. Hickson, and other well-known people, and also by a number of the Associates of the Movement; and as I was passing through the convalescent stage of this long and terrible illness, I determined that if, by God's mercy and grace, I ever again became capable of resuming work, I would rebuild the Movement on even more far-reaching and all-embracing lines than before. It should cover the whole of life; and it should cover the whole of life under the government of the Spirit of Christ.

Book III

THE PURPOSE OF THE MISSION

*We will now consider some of the spiritual principles involved in a work of this kind.*

# I

## THE MODERN BABEL

The re-organisation of the Movement in 1925 proved no easy task. It had never been a "Society" or "Organisation," in the formal sense; but rather a personal work, to which various followers had gradually become attached. In the past, under the general title of *The Society of the Love of God*, it had been grouped under seven different headings, as follows:

1. *The Mission of the Holy Spirit*. A Musical Evangel visiting towns and villages, in churches, halls, and the open air.
2. *A Prayer Fellowship*. For Intercession, Meditation and Contemplation.
3. *A Retreat House*, with its own Chapel, under episcopal sanction, for those in need of rest, and a suitable environment for progress in the spiritual life.
4. *The Religious Art Society*, for encouraging the consecration of Art in all forms—Music, Drama, Literature, Painting, Architecture and the Crafts—to the highest service of God and man.
5. *A Hospitality Fund*, for helping those in need.
6. *Literary Publications*: including Books, Magazines, Tracts and Leaflets.
7. *The Sanctuary*. A Mission for the development of the Interior Life.

My wish now was to simplify matters as much as possible, and yet at the same time to make the Movement an all-embracing effort towards promoting the ideal of bringing life in all its departments under the sole Sovereignty of God.

Meanwhile Christendom had largely fallen into a

state of chaos. In the Anglican Church, Modernism had become rampant, and what with the Modernist Party, the Anglo-Catholic Party, the Evangelical Party, and many another Party, one could not but long for a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit that would bring into living manifestation a Party that at present seemed conspicuous by its absence: namely, a Christian Party.

It is the same now. Everywhere we find Babel. One has a Theological Christ; another an Ecclesiastical Christ; another a Mystic Christ; another a Historical Christ; another a Divine Christ; another a Humanitarian Christ. But Christ Himself is *not* divided, and none of these different aspects of Christ can ever by themselves represent Him wholly, or truly make manifest that *Jesus Christ* (that *Saviour Christ*) which this perishing world so sorely needs.

Yet perhaps this division is necessary—or at least inevitable. It is certain that the Body *must* be “broken.” Only so can the Life-forces be liberated—set free—for our Redemption. It was on the same night that He was *betrayed* that He took bread, and “brake it”; and maybe His Body will not cease to be divided until His coming again? One thing at least is certain: in all our efforts for re-union we must aim at re-union *from within* rather than at agreement (falsely called re-union) *from without*. Maybe it will not be until “the manifestation of the Sons of God”—those reduplicas of Jesus Christ—that He will “come again” and complete His blessed work of restoration. It is the mission of the Church to bring forth such Sons of God—it is the *magnum Opus* of the Holy Spirit. But the Church seems to be sadly forgetful of this mission. Even in my own “Mission of Re-kindling” my message in the past had been “general” rather than “particular,” and I now began to see that in future it must be a definite call to professing Christians to enter upon

a New and Vital Discipleship: a discipleship that includes the whole of life. We need, indeed, such a complete transmutation of our entire Being, in and with the Holy Sacrifice itself, that we come to know Christ not only as "our Lord," not only as "our Master," not only as "our Friend," but as "our Beloved." We need an inter-change of Being so total and all-embracing that the Lover and the Beloved become One. So only shall the Redeemer come to Syon.

But easy as it apparently seems for some people to sing "Jesu! my Lord, my God, my All," it is not so easy to *make Him our "All"* in the every-day relationships and activities of life. And so I found in my endeavour to reconstruct the Movement.

## II

### THE MISSION IN 1925

The work was resumed on Ascension Day 1925 at a quiet little Service of Praise and Thanksgiving at the Parish Church of St. Mary-the-Virgin, Letchworth. This service was held at 5.30 p.m. while the early summer sunlight was flooding the surrounding countryside. It was followed by a big Mission Service at 8 p.m. at the Parish Church of Hitchin (a place three miles distant) at which some 1,000 people must have been present; and it was with joy that I heard the magnificent peal of bells ringing people to the Service as I entered the town—for it seemed almost incredible that I could really be at work again. Prior to this “re-beginning,” several helpful things had taken place: the Bishop of St. Albans had called on me and had a long talk about the work and its future; my *Interior Prayer* had been published by the S.P.C.K., and during the previous winter the Rector of Letchworth had given a Public Lecture entitled *Ernest Newlandsmith: the Man and his Mission*—supported by the Rev. Cecil Grant, M.A. (Headmaster of St. George’s School, Harpenden), who read selections from some of my books. It was delightful to me to find that Mr. Grant still remained so staunch a friend and sympathiser; for I had always greatly admired his unique educational work at St. George’s School, where I had frequently lectured in the days gone by, and where I had ever found a vital Christian spirit prevailing. After the Mission had begun again on Ascension Day, further services were held at Hitchin Parish Church at Whitsuntide; while on Trinity Sunday, after preaching and playing at the

Choral Eucharist at Stotfold Parish Church, I began a Mission at the Parish Church of Baldock—which Mission was continued in a number of country villages in the Hitchin and Baldock Deaneries. An extended Mission at Cambridge followed a little later on, the principal gatherings being held at the Churches of Holy Trinity, St. Giles', and St. Edwards—the latter church being so crowded at the concluding service that numbers were unable to obtain seats. For this visit to Cambridge I was chiefly indebted to Miss Hort, daughter of the famous scholar; and her ready help and that of Mr. Jameson (Vicar of St. Edwards) and Dr. Murray (Master of Selwyn) proved invaluable. On August 1st—at the invitation of the latter supporter—I paid a visit to St. Augustine's College, Canterbury—during which one service was held in the College Chapel and another at the Parish Church of Kingston, where the Bursar of the College was Rector. At the beginning of this visit I had also a long talk as to my future work with Bishop Knight, the Warden of the College; and after leaving Canterbury journeyed (via Rochester and Southend) to the Essex Coast, holding Missions at Frinton-on-Sea, Great Holland and Brightlingsea. This brief tour was followed by a return to the St. Albans diocese, with a Mission at Holy Trinity Church, Stevenage, and a series of Lectures on "Is England a Christian Country?" at Letchworth. Meanwhile my book, *The New Humanity*, was published.

On October 21st a special Musical Devotion, which I had composed under the title of *Pax Dei*, was held at the Church of St. Clement Danes in London; and this was followed by a series of Saturday Afternoon Devotions at the same church in November and December. Other gatherings included a *Musical Meditation Service* at St. George's School, Harpenden; a Mission Service on the evening of Advent Sunday at St. Augustine's Church, Fulham; a Mission at Wimbledon; and

a "Musical Oration" at the Kingsway Hall, London. I also preached and played at two of the Sunday evening services at St. Clement Danes (on November 15th and December 20th), when—drawn by the musical activities of the Rector—some 1,200 to 1,500 people filled the great church.

In public work of this character the strain on the brain and general physique is very great. Nor are such missions easy to work from a spiritual standpoint. There is a certain "resistance" felt when preaching Christ to the unconverted. And it would probably astonish most people if they came to know how many souls in modern Christendom *are* as unconverted as the heathen. Whilst thousands are without any sound or reasonable knowledge of the Christian Faith at all, few of those who do hold the Faith have ever seriously considered the revolutionary effect on life and character that is bound to result when anyone enters upon a vital and consistent Christian discipleship. Is it not a fact that even to the majority of regular Church-goers the Christian Faith is nothing more than a matter of form?—a mere unthought-out "assent" to certain doctrines and beliefs in which these people have been brought up, without any real grasp of the profound nature and significance of such doctrines and beliefs in their practical application to individual and social life?

It is to such as these, as well as to the ever-increasing number who—feeling spiritually starved and ill-fed—are longing for a fuller understanding and a more satisfying reception of the Word of Life, that *The Mission of the Holy Spirit* ministers. I have already held missions in over 120 Anglican Churches, and from the many letters that reach me it is plain that by music's appeal, evangelistic preaching, stirring addresses, and careful instructions regarding the mysteries of the spiritual life and the bearing of Christ's commandments on the social conditions of the day, thousands of people

have been helped, aroused, and vitally stirred to a deeper desire for the Kingdom of God.

In all this work of spiritual revival the Music, I feel sure, has ever been a powerful factor.

### III

#### THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

There is, as I have already mentioned, an old tradition in some of the great Religious Orders of the Catholic Church—certainly in the Franciscan Order—that towards the End of the Age the Spirit of David will be recovered, and that *inspired* music will become one of the chief means through which the hearts of the people will be kindled anew in the Love of God and Man. Dr. John Pulsford—a Nonconformist minister, whose writings have always appeared to me to be those of a prophet—held the same opinion; although I should doubt very much if he had ever heard of the tradition we have mentioned.

In any case the idea seems reasonable enough. For what, after all, is so powerful a medium as music through which to touch the hearts of men and quicken our souls to higher issues? What language is there so universal in its appeal, so capable of reaching the soul, and so far-reaching in its message to every nation, colour and tongue? It is the most subtle and the most unifying power on earth; and, as the late Professor William James (of the University of Harvard) said, it is through music, rather than through words, that the mystical consciousness, the immediate sense of the Divine Presence, will be engendered. And is it not just this realisation of "the Presence" that is so much needed in our Church worship to-day?

Through the voice of music—that greatest music of all, the Voice of the Eternal Creative-Word—the world itself was called into being. The Divine Fiat went forth, and—as the Book of Job tells us—"the

morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Whilst Shakespeare tells us that :

*There's not an orb around us,  
But each in his motion like an angel sings.*

Yet he is careful to add (speaking of our dense physical envelope) :

*But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close us in,  
We cannot hear it.*

And as it was at the dawn of the Old Creation, so it was at the dawn of the New Creation; for we read how the shepherds of Bethlehem as they "watched their flocks by night abiding in the fields" suddenly heard the sound of music as the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men." And as it was at the beginning so will it be at the end, when

*The Trumpet shall be heard on high,  
The dead shall live, the living die,  
And music shall untune the sky,  
And the heavens burst to fill the earth with  
song.*

And in the Book of Revelation we are told how that Dreadful Day will usher in that Glorious Day when the Saints of God will sing "a New Song," which none but the redeemed can learn.

By the power of music the walls of Jericho were broken to pieces; by the power of music David cast the evil spirit from the heart of Saul; and by the power of music many a wanderer, weary and broken-hearted, has been brought safely home to the Fold of God. Certainly I have found it so in my own experience.

How well do I know in my own life the power of music to heal, to comfort, to inspire and to bless! I

have travelled miles to play to the dying. I have played to the maimed, the halt and the blind; to the sick, the insane, the beggar and the outcast. I have played to the poor and I have played before the King; but, above all, I have played before the King of Kings in the Sanctuary of the Church of God.

This Ministry of Music in the Churches is practically a new field of work: new, that is, to modern times. It was, of course, familiar enough in the days of old, when music formed so prominent a feature in the ancient "Schools of the Prophets," and in the "Temple Worship" of the Hebrew people. We read that when the one hundred and twenty musicians "sounded," the glory of the Lord so filled the Temple that the people could no longer continue to worship therein. Would that we might once more enter upon so transcendent an experience! For it was an intense case of material sounds being used as the sacramental vehicle through which to manifest spiritual reality.

Most of us have known something of this spiritual power of music; at all events in its more elementary aspects. But in these mundane days many people would be inclined to scoff at the idea of music being capable of so powerfully affecting material conditions as to be able to break down the mighty walls of Jericho. Yet, in addition to the Scriptural and historical witness to the fact of this astounding event having taken place, we shall find that the principles involved in such an extraordinary phenomenon are thoroughly in accord with the laws of science. For if we ascertain the exact "note" of a fine glass, or electric bulb, and play this note continuously on a powerful-toned violin, we shall find that the laws of sympathetic vibration will shatter the glass to pieces. It is said that the sundering of rocks in difficult mountain-passes is effected by some of the Eastern adepts by similar means: by the use of a powerful Monochord. Moreover, it is well known that the order

to "Change Step," which is given to soldiers when passing over a bridge, is due to the fact that continuous rhythmic motion, caused by the re-iteration of an unvarying set of vibrations, is liable to make a bridge collapse. The sudden collapse of the Pickwick Club at Boston was attributed by experts to the uniform rhythm set up by the dance known as "The Charleston."

When we think of these things it would surely be but reasonable to conclude that many of the super-normal phenomena that go by the name of "miracles" are due to the operation of laws connected with vibrations of a higher order than those which are "natural" to this planet under its present conditions, and that these laws may therefore be called, quite correctly, super-natural, i.e., above nature as we normally know her in this terrestrial sphere. Such superior laws would "naturally" suspend, or at least counteract, the so-called natural laws; these latter laws in the examples given being those of gravitation and cohesion.

Now if music has such a power as this over material conditions, is it a cause for wonder that it can break up "the heart of stone" in human souls and replace it with "a heart of flesh"? As Byron says:

*My soul is dark; O, quickly string  
The Harp I yet can brook to hear,  
And bid thy gentle fingers fling  
Their melting music on mine ear;*

*I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,  
Or else this heavy heart will burst.*

Or Shelley:

*I pant for the music which is divine,  
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower.*

*O! it loosens the serpent that care has bound  
About my heart to stifle it.*

"Give me a harp that I may prophesy," cried David of old. And it was of this same "sweet Singer of Israel" that it was said that "when the minstrel played the Spirit of the Lord came upon him," and "the evil spirit departed" from the heart of Saul.

In my own life, also, I have had similar experiences, and have received letters from all kinds of people testifying to such spiritual help. "Sir," wrote a down-trodden working man, "when I hear you play I long after God."

But the point I wish to emphasise is that if these things are possible through a special ministry, they ought surely to be much more frequent in the regular ministry; that enormous section of the musical world that is made up of organists and choirmasters.

But perhaps the simplest way to arrive at a right understanding of the Special Services of Music to which I have devoted so much time, and which I have ever tried to make into living acts of worship and devotion, will be to compare the idea we have in view with the more customary organ recital. Many organists will no doubt claim that these latter *are* acts of worship; and in one sense—when they are rendered in the right spirit—the claim may be true. But no amount of "pious dedication," no mere rendering of a recital to the glory of God, will ever, of itself, make it into an organic act of musical worship such as I am striving to introduce into our churches. Moreover, it is to be feared that in many cases an organ recital is a mere "performance." Sometimes, indeed, it seems even to have points of resemblance to the double-bass player in the village church orchestra, who, when the Psalms arrived at the words, "Who is the King of Glory?" cried "Gi'e me the resin, Ned, and I'll soon show 'em 'oo's the King o' Glory!"

However this may be, it is probable that the best way of making my meaning clear to those who have not had an opportunity of attending anything of the kind

will be first to give an outline of a very simple "Order" of Service, and then to indicate various ways in which such a service can be elaborated until we arrive at a Solemn Service of Music such as is only possible in churches with fine organs, spacious sanctuaries and full ceremonial.

For a simple service I have found that the following "order" is extremely successful. It also requires so little preparation that it can be held almost anywhere. Begin, after a few moments' silence (kneeling), with the "Veni Creator," said very slowly, pausing after each two lines; followed by a special prayer and the Lord's Prayer. Then, as the choir and congregation are rising from their knees, let the music begin with some soft strains on the organ, leading into simple soul-stirring arias, or other suitable music, for violin and organ, or organ alone, for about twenty minutes in duration. Then a hymn, followed by a brief and living address: then a further hymn, with a collection if wished: another item of music; a brief period of silent prayer, and the Blessing.

Neither before nor after the service should a sound of music be heard. Indeed we wish that this rule could be observed at all services of the usual kind. For surely music is too sacred a gift to use "to play people in and out of church." Also, its introduction at these times is often an annoyance to those who wish to be quiet. To perpetrate such a thing in the concert-room would be considered to be a preposterous desecration—derogatory alike to the artist and to his art. Is it not yet more derogatory, and yet more of a desecration when it takes place in the House of Prayer?

This rule, however, need by no means exclude some special music from the organist even at the regular services. For if the organist and his instrument are of suitable capacity it will be found most uplifting and effective occasionally to introduce an interlude of organ

music at some point in the service: such as in the place of an anthem at Matins or Evensong, or after the "Offertory" in the Choral Eucharist. Such a plan will pave the way, also, for a "special" service such as we have just outlined.

These Special Services of Music can, of course, be subjected to many variations. Vocal items, for solo or choir: *faux bourdons*; solo voices accompanied by a choir of *voix celestes*; all these can be introduced. The opening prayers can be replaced by a sung Litany—such as the Litany of the Holy Ghost in "Hymns, Ancient and Modern"; and on suitable occasions a Procession may be introduced effectively, immediately before the Blessing; and such a Procession can sometimes conclude by the choir, on their return to the chancel, lining up around the sanctuary, singing the *Te Deum*, or Psalm CL, or a vesper hymn, according to the type of service. For the whole service may suitably be designed for some specific end—such as penitential devotion during Lent, meditation and rest at various seasons, or Praise and Thanksgiving on the occasion of a Festival. Peace, quiet meditation, and a helpful sense of the "Presence" at such services is often much enhanced by having two or more lights in the sanctuary, and the rest of the church in semi-darkness.

Services of this character have proved so helpful to thousands in almost every kind of church—from tiny village churches to great cathedrals—that musicians whose lives are consecrated to God may now surely take courage and go forward in the glorious field of work which it has been my privilege to pioneer.

#### IV

### THE NEW LIFE MOVEMENT

The time indeed certainly seems to have arrived when all men (especially those who—like artists—have a powerful influence in the building up of character) must needs decide once and for all if they mean to prepare the way for the Coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God or merely continue to uphold the present diabolical "World-order."

As I have said in my preface to *The New Humanity* many are feeling "an urgent call to new expressions of life that are more in keeping with Christian ideals." Unfortunately, however, these people so often make the mistake of spending their time and energy in efforts to improve and patch up "the devil's kingdom"—our present civilisation—in the vain hope of making it Christian. But the fact is, no such thing can be done. Christ's Kingdom—the Kingdom of God—is *another order of life altogether*. It does not require brain-spun theories of economics or endless grappling with the innumerable problems that must ever arise in trying to put right a Satanic edifice. Christ said: "My yoke is easy, My burden is light." He told us to "consider the lilies." And if we really carried out His teaching all other things would automatically fall into place.

For the Kingdom of God is ever "at hand," waiting for every individual soul to enter it. It cannot be constructed by any re-arrangement of the *present* World-order, and needs to be entered *individually* before it can obtain acceptance *generally*.

What, indeed, is the use of enthusiastic people—with all their Leagues and Societies and Conferences—feverishly trying to promote the building of the King-

dom of God with the untempered mortar of unregenerate humanity when all the time the said Kingdom is before their very faces patiently waiting until they themselves have the grace to enter it and live out their lives in accordance with its principles? If these same people would break away from the present World-order and *individually act on the principles of the Gospel*, following Christ literally in childlike simplicity and faith in His "New" Order of Life, men would once more see Him made manifest in their midst and perchance be encouraged to do likewise. These people would then really be *doing* something to advance the Kingdom of God instead of merely *talking about it*. The great question therefore for every Christian is this: Am I ready to live on lines that are in conformity with Christ and His Kingdom *in the face of the present World-order*, without waiting for improved "conditions" that will make it easier to do so?

Surely there must be *some people somewhere* who are willing to free themselves from the yoke of bondage and cut themselves adrift from all the conventional absurdities, superfluities, follies, and non-essentials of modern life, and who—after making sure that they have received that "new birth" from above (without which a man cannot even see, still less *enter* the Kingdom of God)—will determine to live out their lives in the freedom and simplicity of Christ?—and that without entering a monastery or a convent?

It was on the basis of ideas such as these that the Mission began to be re-ordered, in 1925, under the general title of *The New Life Movement*. There was no longer any Retreat House, or even a permanent Headquarters, connected with the work; but the Mission included three distinct spheres of activity—representing, as it were, its spirit, soul and body. These three spheres were public gatherings to kindle the new spirit, publications to pro-

vide needful instruction, and an "advice" department regarding the provision of daily needs. Over 1,000 Church Services, Lectures, Recitals, Music-Scenas, and Miracle Plays had already been held in various parts of England, and there seemed no reason why such work should not in time become international, with inter-connections throughout the world. For wherever the spiritual message had gone forth there had almost invariably been signs of re-awakening life, no matter whether the place visited was an industrial centre, a rural district, or a fashionable holiday resort. Such public gatherings had mostly been free and open to all—rich and poor alike—without money and without price—the Mission being entirely dependent on free-will offerings: and this method has continued up to the present time.

In regard to the second sphere of work, it may be said that as it has ever been with the public ministry so has it been with *The New Life Publications*. They have ever been of a character that is calculated to bring home to those who possess them that "man does not live by bread alone." My own earlier books, *The Temple of Art*, *The Temple of Love*, and *The Temple of Life*, are generally acknowledged to enshrine the highest ideals in regard to these far-reaching themes; and in my more recent book, *The New Humanity*, the mirror has been held up to modern life (with its vanity, folly, pleasure-seeking, worldliness, injustice and social disorder), and a concise statement of Christian doctrine has clearly been set forth. Therein also is shown how largely the Church (which is the divinely-appointed medium through which the Christian life should be made manifest) has become corrupted in Faith and Practice, and the book sounds a clarion call to a new and vital Christian discipleship. An *Epilogue* has recently been added, giving an outline of the mystic pathway to the heights of the Divine Union.

In regard to the third sphere of the Movement it need only be said that its ideal is to see the Spirit of Divine Love and Beauty made manifest in "things"—even in such simple things as food, clothing and shelter—as well as in thoughts, feelings, ideas, words and deeds. That is to say, we need that the ordinary objects of daily use, and the practical routine of every-day life, should be of like character—in their inward spiritual essence—to the ideals enshrined in the books we have mentioned.

How often do we see Christian teaching set forth in the form of printed books, cards and leaflets, the type, paper and pictures of which reek of deformity, sordidness, sweating and commercialism! Such a contradiction is nothing less than a crucifixion in outward "forms" of the inward Spirit we wish to propagate through our words. And how often it is the same with our injurious, badly-prepared food, our insane fashion in dress, our hideous and useless "ornaments," our inharmonious and ugly buildings, and our grotesque and unnecessary household furniture. Reeking of poison and banality, and often far more costly than simple and artistic things, they crucify "the Word" afresh almost as much as do falsehoods uttered by the lips! Such travesties of the truth would be impossible in any Society that had ever caught even some faint far-off glimpse of the Heavenly Vision.

For it is certain that nothing in life ought to be even merely mundane—still less false or ugly. It is certain that we must ever use the *material* as the sacramental vehicle through which to manifest the *spiritual*—a thing which can only be done through an harmonic accord with the Divine Simplicity. Surely it must be self-evident that it is by this all-inclusive method alone that we can ever hope to bring into complete realisation that "Kingdom of God" for which we are so continually praying, and which is now so terribly obscured by the

widespread divorce between the "inward" and the "outward"—between Christian "profession" and the *application of Christian principles to the every-day relationships of life*. "Sir, we would see Jesus!" is the cry of the human heart—even though we are often unconscious of the fact. But more often than not those who proclaim Him with their lips dethrone Him by the actions of their lives.

Let us, then, enter upon a *new* order of life—and that in the face of an alien and often hostile world. Let us adopt a new orientation of will and mind and heart—working to this one end of enthroning God's Sovereignty over all activity, and living solely for the extension of His Kingdom in Christ Jesus.

IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR MODERN  
CIVILISATION?

In a work of this character, however, one can at best only hope to influence a comparatively small section of the population. For all prophecy proclaims that mankind as a whole, in this present dispensation, will reject such a message. Meanwhile we must await the rapidly approaching day when modern Babylon will be overthrown for ever by Divine intervention.

The Great War might reasonably have taught us a practical lesson, but Modern Civilisation has utterly failed to learn this lesson, and few people realise that a yet greater Cataclysm is even now over-shadowing us.

The time indeed would seem to have arrived when we need to cry, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not a partaker of her plagues!"

For, if we study the matter dispassionately and strive to view all things with the Eyes of Christ, we shall soon perceive that Modern Civilisation—with all our boasted progress—is naught but an abomination in the sight of God. It is, indeed, an offence to the susceptibilities of all God-fearing men. We should therefore rejoice in the fact that Modern Civilisation *will* shortly be judged; and that it will be judged by the one true standard—*Jesus Christ*. He, indeed, is the only Just Weight or Measure of Man. And when weighed in the balance with the Holy One of Israel where will most of our present methods find themselves? Whilst the test of all people will be their likeness to Christ, how hard it is to discover His Face amid the appalling conditions of modern life!

How divorced is Christendom to-day from the life and teaching of Christ Himself!

Christ said: "This is the first and great commandment: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God!'" Why, then, is all reference to God so largely absent in most of our discussions?

Christ said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Why, then, do professing Christians live in luxury and pleasure whilst millions of the poor are on the verge of starvation?

Christ said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." Why, then, are the highest honours and positions given to those who have most flagrantly disobeyed this commandment?

Christ said: "They which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them. But so shall it not be among you." Why, then, do we uphold a "House of Lords," and why is a Bishop addressed as "Your lordship"?

St. Paul said: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor Scythian, bond nor free; but all are one in Christ." Why, then, do we not add, in our terrible "class" struggles, there is neither Prince nor pauper, Duke nor docker, Marquis nor miner, but all are one in Christ?

In the face of such utter unfaithfulness to Christ's teaching, can we wonder at the fate that is overtaking Christendom? "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches!" Hear the cry of doom from the pen of that Holy Prophet and Apostle St. John the Evangelist: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." "And the kings of the earth . . . shall bewail her, and lament over her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning." "And the merchants of the earth . . . which were made rich by

her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to naught." "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, 'Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.'" *That* is to be the end of our boasted progress!

There is no hope for Modern Civilisation! Her day is over! Her doom is sealed!

## VI

### WHERE, THEN, IS OUR HOPE?

Where, then, *is* our hope? Are we to put our trust in some new teaching—in some new policy? I think not. Nor do I think we are likely to do much good by efforts to revive the movements of earlier ages.

This year in which I write is the 700th anniversary of the death of St. Francis. The papers have been full of the fact and have given us his life-story. They delight to relate how, brought up in idleness, ease and luxury, he left his father's house at the call of Christ and went forth into the highways to preach the Gospel to the poor. They tell us how much we need his spirit in these days. In fact, St. Francis, for the moment, has become quite popular. He is popular in the most elegant drawing-rooms of Mayfair; and people whose souls are wedded to riches travel to Assisi on Franciscan Pilgrimages. They travel *de luxe*, and stay in sumptuous hotels, to do honour to a Saint who was wedded to poverty! Whereas if the Saint, himself, were to appear in our midst they would in all probability shut their door in his face.

For my part I feel a great interest in St. Francis; for though by no means a saint I have shared some of his experiences ever since the day that I abandoned our present anti-Christian society to become a wandering Friar of the Love of Jesus. From that day to this no man on earth has been my master; for I have striven to make One my Master—even Christ. From that day to this no man has been my servant; for truly I have tried to be the servant of all.

For this I certainly claim no merit. As a convinced

Christian I could not have acted otherwise. For, as was prophesied by Christ and His Holy Apostles, our latter-day civilisation has become the stronghold of Antichrist, and it is almost impossible to work in the "world" except you allow yourself to wear "the mark of the Beast."

Yet he who dares to go counter to the world will not find life at all easy. The life of a Friar in the twentieth century is a very hard life indeed. It is a life in which you come to know the meaning of "journeyings oft," hunger and cold, weariness and privation of every sort and kind. It is a life in which you are brought into contact with all sorts and conditions of men: high and low, young and old, rich and poor. At one time I find myself in some mansion of the rich and powerful, at another time in some cottage of the poor and humble, and at yet another time—like the Master—with nowhere to lay my head. At one time I find myself preaching and playing in some great Cathedral, at another time in some fine old Parish Church, at another time in the Market Square, and at another time on the Village Green. Add to these things occasional ministrations in the Hospital, the Prison, the Workhouse or the Asylum, and it will be seen that such a life provides an opportunity for the study of Humanity which must, one would think, be almost unique.

There, around one, is the great busy world—a multitude of people of every sort and kind. Some are merely pursuing pleasure—ever striving to enter more fully into what, in their folly and blindness, they are pleased to call "seeing life." Some are striving for place and power. Some are rapidly losing their heads—and their ideals also—amidst the glitter and confusion of worldly success. Others—the great majority—toil wearily onwards, day after day, in order to provide themselves and those dear to them with the barest necessities of daily life. Whilst yet others live out their days

in such squalour and wretchedness that the miracle is how they come to live at all.

And as one looks out on this great multitude the thoughts naturally arise, "Whither are they bound? What is their destiny? For what purpose do they live? On what basis do they attempt to direct and fashion their lives?"

It would often seem as if they *had* no ultimate purpose. It would often seem as if they *had* no basis for their life. And life without a basis becomes meaningless and void. Moreover, "unity is strength," and without a common basis men cannot hold together. Without a common basis they split up into factions and their work is ruined.

It is true that there are any number of "notions" afloat. Men and women repeat the latest catchwords of their party—if indeed they belong to a party—they read the biased utterances of the Press, and they catch up any chance idea that may be sprung upon them by the particular individual that happens to capture their fancy at the moment, but *of a sound basis of Life they appear to know little or nothing.*

Truly and indeed the bulk of the world seems to be engaged on some mad and monstrous St. Vitus Dance—some great chaotic struggle—in which Humanity is gradually being hustled along a perilous highway without the least hint or warning being given that this highway ends suddenly in a black and yawning precipice over which many will eventually go crashing to their doom. Such is life as it appears to-day! It ends in chaos—for there is no sound basis!

VII  
CHRIST OR CHAOS

Is there, then, no Eternal Principle that will bring order and permanence out of all this confusion? Is there no effectual remedy that will resolve this conflict into a coherent harmony? Is there no basis on which *all* can build?—which, by its own inherent power, will bring our life into unity?

Can Religion do what is needed? Very often it is quite the opposite. Some of the greatest crimes in history have been perpetrated in the name of religion. Can Science do what is needed? Very often it is quite the opposite. Science has given us many wonderful inventions, and made marvellous discoveries in the realm of phenomena, but her latest war-resources for dealing out death show how hopeless she is as a guide to life. Can Art do what is needed? Very often it is quite the opposite. Instead of kindling our hearts with the highest and noblest ideals of life, our popular literature, drama, music and pictures have so largely fallen into the hands of the enemy that they are helping to degrade rather than to ennoble and uplift.

No! essential as the three great powers of Religion, Science and Art may be—being indeed the God-given instruments of all human progress—not one of these, in itself, can provide the basis that we seek; for these powers require a true basis for their own operations before they can be relied upon to serve mankind aright.

Where, then, can we find a true basis for our life? Is it indeed possible to find such a basis?

O people of England, and of every country in the globe! After studying humanity in every sphere of life—after studying its religions, its sciences and its arts—I am still convinced, nay, more than ever certain, that

there is only one true Basis for our life, and that Basis is Jesus Christ. He alone is the Basis that we seek! He, in Himself, provides a Basis for all men!

As we look out to-day at the struggling masses, striving to throw off the yoke of bondage, at the class antagonism and the political upheavals, we may well call to mind the words of that great Labour leader, Keir Hardie, who said in one of his last speeches:

My friends and comrades, I often feel very sick at heart with politics, and all that pertains thereto. If I were thirty years a younger man, with the experiences I have gained during the past thirty-five years, I would, methinks, abandon house and home . . . if need be, to go forth among the people to proclaim afresh and anew the full message of the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth. We are all of us, somehow or other, off the track.

Let us re-echo his words! O that men could be brought to realise that Christ is the One true King! King of Kings and Lord of Lords; King of Religion, King of Science, King of Art; aye, King of Love, and therefore King of Life!

For if Christians, generally, would *enthron*e Him as their King, and make "Christ and Humanity" their watchword, the powers of hell would go down before us and we should go forth conquering and to conquer. But this can only come through the action of the individual. I therefore cry:

O People of England—whether you have or have not become caught in the tangled jungle called Modern Civilisation—resolve henceforth not to make *any* compromise with Truth! Refuse to become involved in the Devil's Kingdom! Decline to subscribe to the Spirit of the Age! Have the courage to break loose from the thralldom of Mammon and follow Christ *literally* in a New Discipleship!

Mark my words, "in a *new* discipleship!" Do not attempt that fool's task of trying to "stand for Christ" when all your holdings are in the present world-order.

“Come out” from among them, though it land you in the gutter! Let your Kingdom be the same as His Kingdom, and leave the present order of life to perish—seeking to save all such as will hear, and calling upon all men to follow “Jesus only.”

Who else, forsooth, *should* we choose as a Leader? Even the unbeliever usually admits that Christ is the perfect man of history. And, even on a purely reasonable basis, Whom should we choose as a more fitting Leader than the perfect man of history?

But we who are Christians know Him as something very much more. We know Him as our Saviour, our Lord and our God, the very Word Incarnate. “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life!” “I am the Light of the World,” saith He. “He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life!”

In Him alone is the solution of all life’s problems; in Him alone is Salvation for the individual; and in Him alone is Salvation for the Race!

Let us then proclaim throughout the length and breadth of the land that *there is no salvation out of Christ!* Let us recognise that it is mockery to profess our devotion to Him whilst giving our allegiance to the Spirit of Mammon. Let us insist that our Religion and our life shall become *one*; that the divorce between the two is the cause of all evil; and that *only as they become one in the bond of Christ can we rightly advance God’s Kingdom.* In this way we may hope at least to “gather out a people.” In this way we may hope to create at least the nucleus of a new spirit in our midst; a spirit which, hitherto, has been conspicuously lacking; a spirit that is utterly without “respect of persons”; a spirit that stands solely for God and Humanity: in other words, the “Christ-Spirit”—that All-embracing Power, Which, as the Universal Solvent, will at the return of our Master Himself dissolve all else in the Fire of the Love of God!

OTHER WORKS BY  
**Ernest Newlandsmith**

---

**THE TEMPLE OF ART**

An Outline of the Artistic Vocation

*Crown 8vo, Art Boards, Price 3s. 6d. net.*

*Third Edition.*

“Impassioned and eloquent.”—*The Scotsman.*

“This highly-cultivated musician puts forward a plea for the higher realization of the artistic vocation.”—*The Morning Post.*

“Will repay the time taken to read it.”—*The Pall Mall Gazette.*

---

**THE TEMPLE OF LOVE**

An Outline of the King's Highway

*Crown 8vo, Art Boards, Price 3s. 6d. net.*

*Second Edition.*

“A plea for that higher love that loses all sense of self.”—*Literary World.*

“He who reads it will wish to re-read and pause by the way.”—*The Churchman.*

---

**THE TEMPLE OF LIFE**

An Outline of the Mission of the Arts

*Crown 8vo, Art Boards, Price 3s. 6d. net.*

*Second Edition.*

“His argument is conducted throughout with convincing eloquence.”—*The Nation.*

“Cannot be too highly commended.”—*The Living Church.*

Published by  
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO., 39 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

# The New Humanity

By Ernest Newlandsmith



AN ARRESTING VOLUME THAT SHOULD BE  
READ BY ALL WHO WOULD BE PREPARED FOR  
THE COMING CRISIS

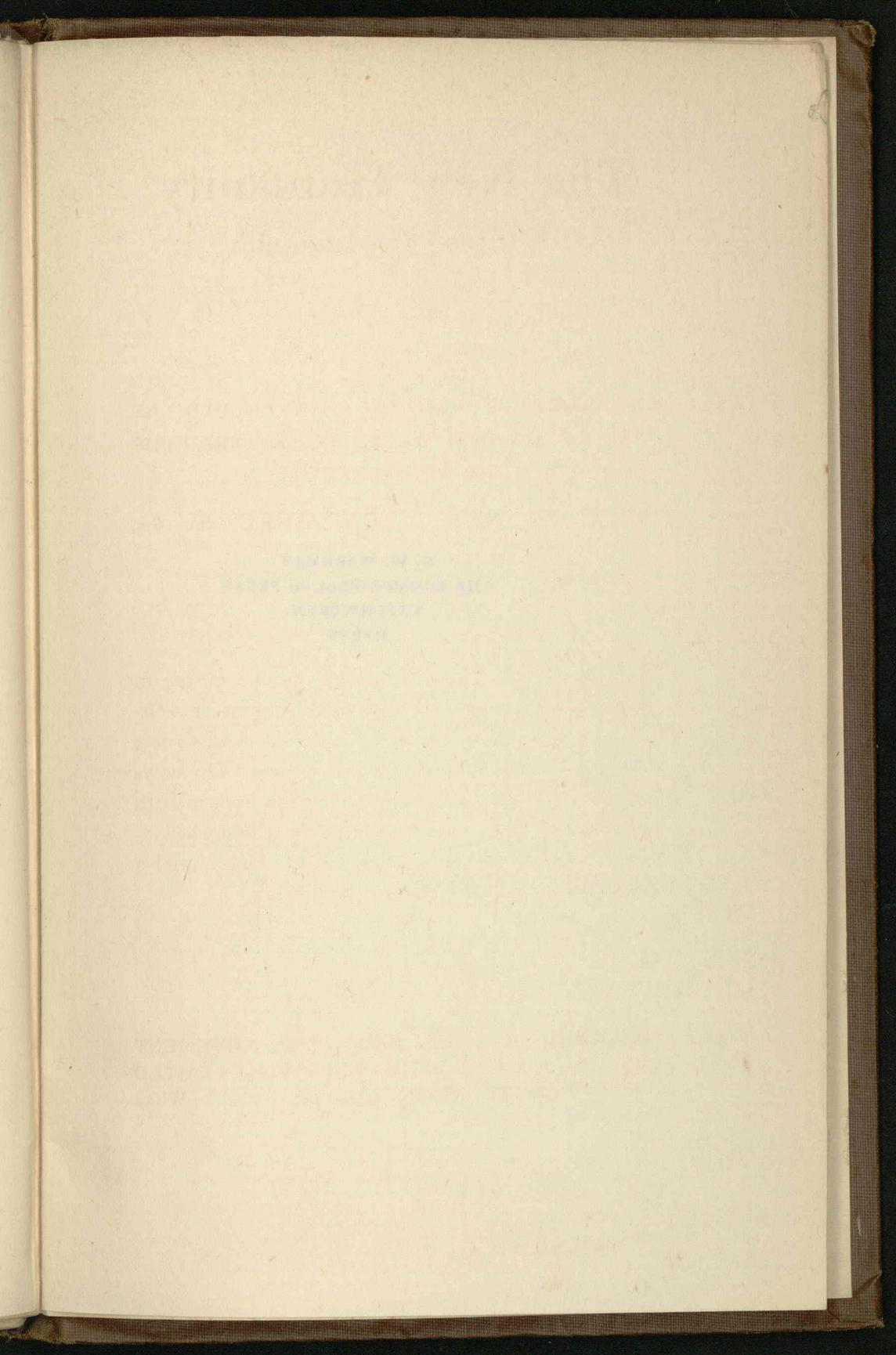
PRICE : 5s. NET ; POST FREE, 5s. 4d.



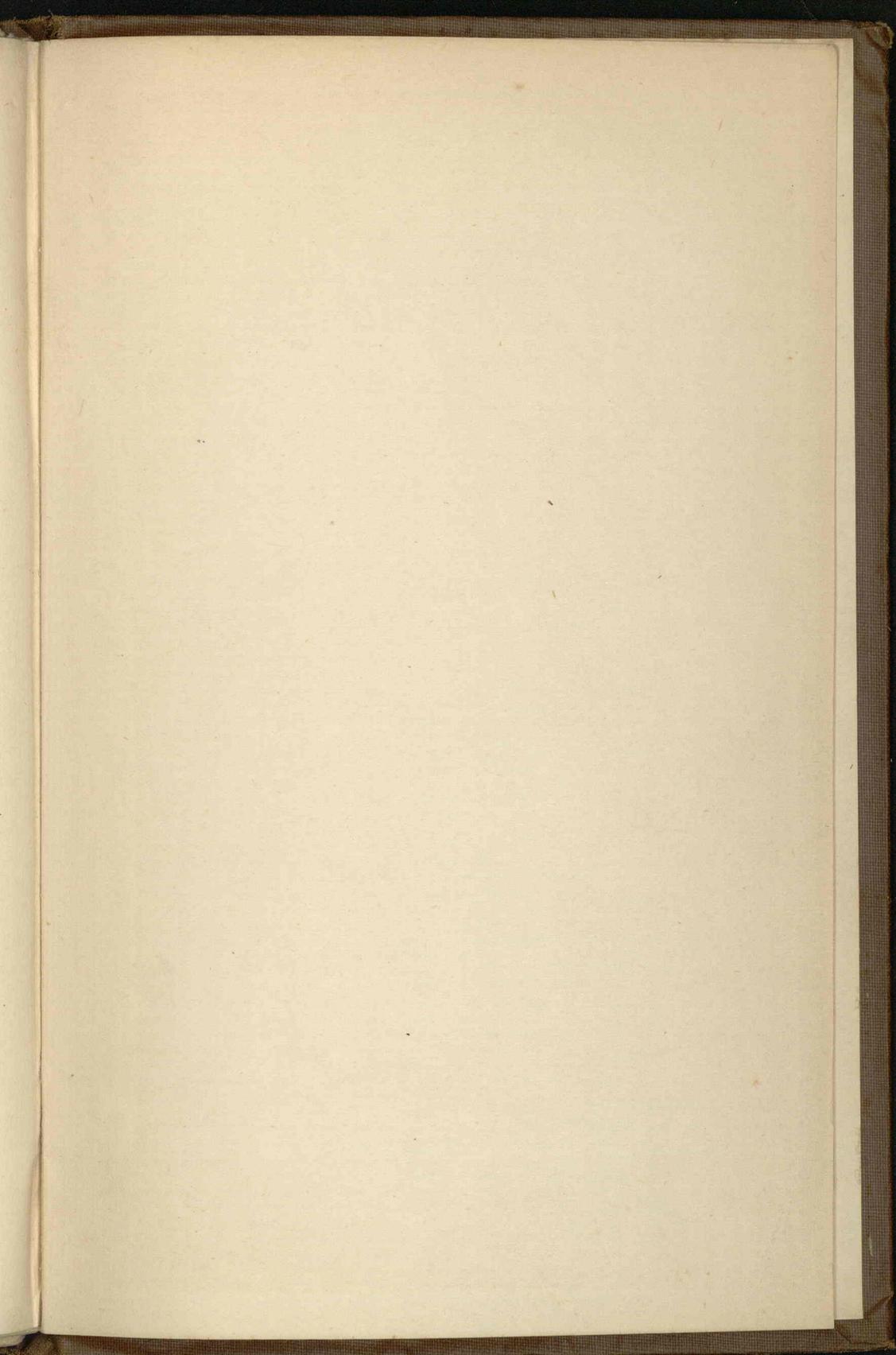
**I**N this book the author holds up the mirror to modern life—with its vanity, folly, pleasure-seeking, worldliness, injustice and social disorder; shows how the Church, which is the Divinely-appointed antidote, has become corrupted both in faith and practice; and concludes with a searching elucidation of the foundation principles of the Gospel and a clarion call to a vital Christian discipleship.



PUBLISHED BY THE NEW LIFE MOVEMENT  
LONDON AGENTS: W. & G. FOYLE, LIMITED  
121-125 CHARING CROSS ROAD : : : W.C.2



G. W. WARDMAN  
THE COMMONWEALTH PRESS  
LETCWORTH  
HERTS



4-

