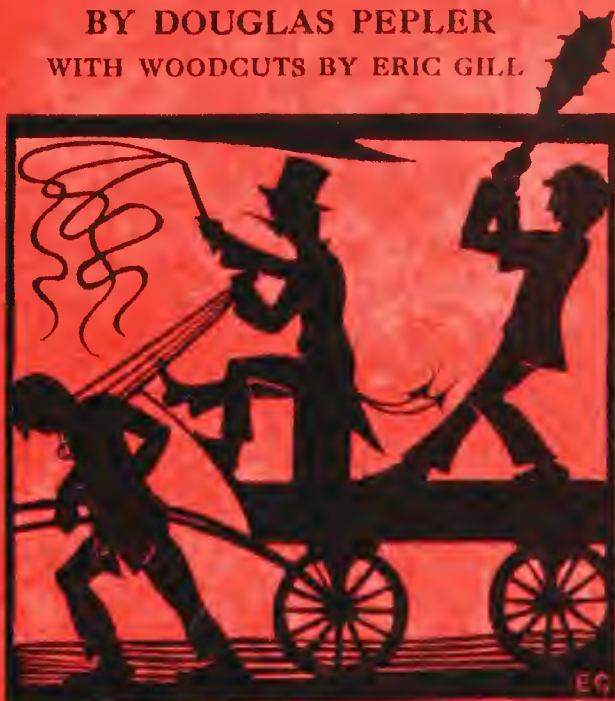


THE DEVIL'S DEVICES OR CONTROL *versus* SERVICE

BY DOUGLAS PEPLER
WITH WOODCUTS BY ERIC GILL



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THE DEVIL'S DEVICES

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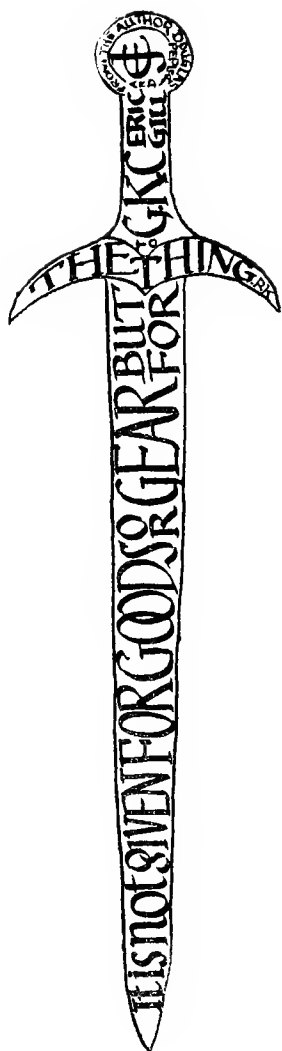
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THE EMBLEMS

TITLE PAGE. "Dumb-driven Cattle." A working man is seen harnessed to a *DEVIL*-driven cart. The Author is discovered in the act of clubbing the *DEVIL*, whom he would exterminate as he would any other vicious beast. It is to be observed that the Author is also in the cart.

PAGE 3. "No. 27." A picture of the garden referred to in the "apology." No. 27 can be seen in a chair enjoying his pipe and his flowers and "making the best of it."

PAGE 31. "The Money Bag and the Whip." The money bag is a well-known device of the *DEVIL* ; in his efforts to seize it the working-man hardly notices the whip.

PAGE 54. "The Purchaser." The *DEVIL* is holding up the bogey of the General or purchasing Public ; it has money in its hands tempting the working-man

The Emblems

and his companion to prostitute themselves to its make-believe authority.

PAGE 82 "The Happy Labourer." A brick-layer building his own house is seen dancing on the *DEVIL*, whom he has put under his feet.

PAGE 123. The sign or symbol of CHRIST
WHOSE SERVICE IS PERFECT
FREEDOM.

Hoc signum vincit.

NOTE: The illustration on the cover is printed from an electrotpe of the wood engraving appearing on the title page.

AN APOLOGY

THERE is one Court in Hammersmith which is called a Street by the map, a blind alley by the passer-by, and a slum by everyone except the residents therein. Until certain closing and demolition orders were issued the Court consisted of 32 two-storey houses of four rooms and a cellar each. At a pinch it was possible for three families to live in one house. I know a coal heaver with nine children who, at one time, "managed" in the basement, but now he has spread not only to the ground floor but to the garden at the back. The odd numbers have gardens, the other side yards.

The gardens make all the difference. It is worth paying a bit more rent to be able to walk down 30 odd feet of garden, even though the strip is not wider than 14 feet, and the neighbours on one side are always upsetting their fruit baskets into it. Not many gardens run to flowers, but a few do ; I have

The Devil's Devices

just seen a row of asters in No. 27, with some chrysanthemums ready to follow. The gardens have various uses, one is generally a drying ground, two are chicken runs, though the rats hinder the development of this industry, others are a medley of rabbit hutches, coster's barrows and baskets, while No. 11 keeps a donkey in nightly and close confinement. It is only possible for the tenant to reach his garden by going through his house, as a wharf walls in what were once the back entrances.

No. 27 is the one person in the Court I know well. He recited those verses about parlours, which you will find on page 44. I have known No. 27 for nearly as many years ; his father died of delirium tremens, his mother of worry and overwork, but his four brothers and three sisters are married, happily married I think, and live, with one exception, in the neighbourhood. No. 27 has a wife and three young children, he is a builder's labourer, more or less permanently employed by the Borough Council. He lives

An Apology

at No. 27 because his parents did so before him, and he was the last to marry. No. 27 has



a distinctly literary turn of mind, and, though his library consists only of *Rob Roy* and the Bible, he is always reading it. I cannot understand why his familiarity with such literature should never appear to have any influence on his own most cockney language ; most people would think him illiterate. He refers

The Devil's Devices

to his wife always as "mate," and he has succeeded fairly well in hiding from the world his intense affection for her and his really inordinate pride in his snub-nosed children. It is my privilege occasionally to have Sunday tea with No. 27, the most contented family in London. I do not say in England, because the one married brother, who does not live in Hammersmith but in Sussex, must dispute that title with him. He is ten years older than No. 27, and he has got on: he is a blacksmith and his own master.

Until writing this I have never thought of him as "the village blacksmith," because I meet him most often in the village public-house. Longfellow's blacksmith may have taken his pint when the day's work was done, but I have an uncomfortable feeling that he was a teetotaler. Besides, my smith can hardly read three words and can write none; though you wouldn't guess this if you met him.

Whenever I think of what England was and of what England might be I see these two

An Apology

men, their wives and children, multiplied over the land. I see what is honest, pure and steadfast overcoming what is weak, self-pleasing and ephemeral. And it is because I love these men that I write this book. It is their freedom which I see menaced, theirs are the children whom I see driven to useless schools to be taught useless things, it is their money which I see stolen by the rest of us, their work tempted by ignoble aims and their energy prostituted to shameless ends.

There is an ugly sound about the word prostitution, but what other describes the transaction in which a man hires himself out to do shoddy, machine-minding work for wages when he could, if he would, become a creator, a maker of things bearing the impress of himself? Shall a Man offer his work, his service to his fellows with the faith in which a Woman gives herself to her betrothed, or shall he "hire himself out," being indifferent to what uses his energies are put by others

The Devil's Devices

provided that the fee be forthcoming? On page 54 the Engraver shows one of the *DEVIL'S* devices for misleading us in this awful direction. The *DEVIL* is holding up the bogey of the General or purchasing Public which has money in its hands tempting the working-man and his companion to prostitute themselves to its pretended authority. "They have their reward."

One lesson military writers have taught us about the war is the importance of the "initiative." I do not say that No. 27 and his brother have "lost the initiative," but I do say that too much has been done which is calculated to lessen their chances of developing it.

Certain of the Socialist and Trade Union leaders may look upon their movements as attempts "to wrest the initiative" from the employing classes. I warn them that the methods they employ and the demands they make may lead in exactly the opposite direction.

An Apology

They demand better conditions of employment or rather, more pay, but little effort is made toward providing their own employment or the attainment of responsibility for their own work. They accept the capitalist system as an unpleasant necessity, which has either to be made more pleasant or to be converted into that still more impersonal and nebulous system called State ownership ; they do not show any desire to be their own masters.

Motor 'bus drivers complained before a Royal Commission that accidents could not be helped while the time schedules remained unaltered ! They could strike for higher wages, why in the name of goodness could they not strike for the safety of the public, or at least for their own ?

The Engraver, reading this "apology," here interpolates a remark on his own account. The Author agrees with the Engraver :
" You see the man must obtain the power *and*

The Devil's Devices

the will, as he has the right, to do his job as *he* thinks it should be done—not as his employer thinks, and not as his employer's employer, the public, thinks. The employer doesn't matter, and the public can always refuse to buy. There must be a 'top-dog'; let it be the producer, all other 'topdoggishness' is irresponsible."

Trade Unions have funds. Should these be invested in Midland 4 per cent., that is, be handed over to the care of the masters, or be risked in Trade Union enterprises? Which course is the more likely to secure the initiative? A Union has sometimes nervously and unsuccessfully attempted to manage a mine or business for itself, but the rarity of the attempt proves that the security of *others-control* is more acceptable to the Unions than *self-control*. It goes to show also that a group of men will not run counter to the prevailing usage. *It is possible that the group ought not to do so.*

An Apology

But if the individual consider the prevailing usage to be harmful he has the power to withstand it ; he has no right, I suggest, to expect his Union to do what he will not first do himself.

What is wrong with the movements, falsely described as democratic, is FUNK. The members fear themselves even more than they fear their masters. This ailment is the peculiar property of the *DEVIL*.

In asking the reader to thread the paths of Hell, where the effects of this disease are to be seen in their more naked forms, I hope to lead him out of, not into, the abyss. But he would do well to note that we can tread on no new path : the Book of Directions we can study if we will, it has the authority of more than the centuries behind it.

CHAPTER I

THE BROAD ROAD TO HEAVEN

A CINEMA COMEDY [SATAN'S CIRCUIT]

WHEN the *DEVIL* entered into the Gramophone and Cinematograph business I do not know, and where he prepares his films I may not disclose. But I can give a description of one of his most popular plays—The Progress of EVERY-MAN—which comes in what he calls “The Broad Road to Heaven” series.

The play reminds us that the *DEVIL* moves with the times ; he has progressed, he has climbed on stepping stones of his dead self, and he is thoroughly “up-to-date.” But the stuff he offers is the old stuff. He still tempts us with knowledge, with liberty, and even with goodness. Man wants to be wise, to be free, to be good, and the *DEVIL* sets his snares accordingly. He offers a means of escape from the restraints and handicaps

The Broad Road to Heaven

which are irksome, he promises us the liberty of the gods.

I attribute my privilege in being invited to the first performance of "The Progress of Everyman" to the fact that I was at that time a public official. Now I have little time to spare for such entertainments. As an official it was difficult not to waste time, especially in doing things of no importance, as it is. No, I will not reveal my longing for the sour grapes of a regular and rate-paid salary. Our business is with Everyman.

The titles of the five Acts appear on the screen for a few seconds in the midst of an impressive firework display of false starts. In the meantime the gramophone, not having a tune appropriate to five acts at once, announces :

"Grrr. . . . ic. ic. ic —. — ! ? — — £ !
A. zzzz pif—wow. wow. PROD
. zzz. IRIS. ISRTIME— !
z ! z. VERSA — z— wow. wow REC-
AWARD. . z. ic. rrr. DOLLARRS. . . .
spit. buz. wow. wow. wow."

The voice is nasal and not always distinct.

The Devil's Devices .

THE PROGRESS OF EVERYMAN

- Act i. Everyman is presented with facilities for obtaining knowledge.
- Act ii. Everyman invents a machine for the saving of time, trouble and labour.
- Act iii. Everyman propagates the cause of his machine.
- Act iv. Everyman invests his savings in efficiency and organisation.
- Act v. Everyman, having an assured income, is crowned by success.

Dogology by the Gramophone.

In the first Act we are introduced to Everyman as the student. The *DEVIL*, disguised as a Professor, hands him cheap editions of the classics, the 100 best books and a handsomely bound Bible. The gramophone recites selected copybook maxims and proverbs as the Student disposes himself to the acquirement of knowledge.

ACT II. indicates at once that Everyman has turned his knowledge to some account.

The Broad Road to Heaven

He is shewn making the final experiments with the time, trouble and labour-saving machine as applied to any industry which may be popular at the moment. His invention leads Everyman to a post in the Government as the head of the Board of Infant Growth. His machine has solved the great departmental difficulty of the child under school age. It is now possible to remove the baby from its proletariat mother.

The baby is placed on a scale which, while recording every variation in its weight, acts as its support. Every two hours the nurse in charge presses a lever which tips the baby gently out of this scale into another, in which the baby is sprayed with heated water, and then is dried by hot air. The baby wears no clothes as it lives in a kind of incubator kept at a temperature which makes garments superfluous. All the babies in one incubator are fed at the same time from a large bottle fitted with the necessary number of teats. Three nurses, a stoker, a charwoman, three clerks, one inspector and a messenger boy

The Devil's Devices

(10 persons) can rear 100 babies, thus saving 100 mothers of much time and trouble, and allowing a net gain, after deducting the number of the staff, of 90 women for the labour market.

This illustration is usually given in the THIRD ACT where Everyman demonstrates, chiefly by advertisement, that his invention is the solution to all the social and economic problems of the age. He promotes the cause of his machine by floating companies, by founding Societies, by joining Boards of Directors, and by educating the masses to put their faith and their money into IT.

By the FOURTH ACT he is passing middle-age, and displays in every line of his countenance the fact that he is making the world a better place than he found it.

On the occasion of my visit the gramophone was almost violently interrupted at this point by a man of Chestertonian size who had, more than once during the performance, uttered loud and ominous guffaws from the front row. He whirled a large wideawake hat

The Broad Road to Heaven

round on the end of his stick and bellowed these verses :

That Eden was a happy place—

Who knows ?

Perhaps the apple was a “ fake ”

And Adam had a belly ache,

And Eve was bitten by the snake,

And then they fell into disgrace

With blows !!

'Tis said Jehovah called it all

So good.

Now no MACHINE saved Adam then,

Yet he begat the race of men,

He named all things both great and small,

And is the father of us all—

'Tis good !

More would have followed had not the hall porter and gramophone operator removed the disturber.

The chief burden of the fourth Act falls on the gramophone, it has to state the principles

The Devil's Devices

which guide Everyman in the investing of his money. He admits that it is not his money, in a primary sense, indeed he glories in the fact that it was once the property of somebody else and is now, more or less, a by-product of the machine. The gramophone also repeats chapters from the best known books on Economics, and ends with a peroration by a recent Chancellor of the Exchequer. The principles which Everyman follows in his investments are, if I can trust my note book, as follows :

1. INSURANCE. He shows how he has enough money invested in this and other countries to secure a big income to himself even were his machine to fail.

2. EFFICIENCY. He holds that as a man becomes machine-like, so he becomes more dependant, and more to be depended upon to produce dividends regularly. The "intensive culture" system as applied to fowls furnishes an example of the methods Everyman expects to find organised in the business in which he invests his money.

The Broad Road to Heaven

3. ORGANISATION. He instances, as an example of the need of organisation, a case in which two men were found to be minding machines which could be attended to, practically as well, by a woman and a boy.

He also quotes the case of a widow with two babies who was receiving doles from ten charitable societies which were sufficient to keep her from working in his factory ; “ overlapping or, as a late divine said, underlapping must at all costs be avoided.”

4. PROFITS. These can be accelerated by forestalling* the market. A market cannot be forestalled unless you know what is to be sold. Everyman would often sell 500 shares quickly and circulate rumours of an impending crisis before he secured 5,000 shares at the market's convenience.

When the play was rehearsed for the first time I am given to understand that the actors indicated at this point that they had had

*See Note on page 27.

The Devil's Devices

enough. They said that this kind of thing would not interest the audience who would be more entertained by knowing for what purposes Everyman wanted the money than in being instructed as to the methods of its acquirement. Consequently a diversion is introduced: we are suddenly transported to a palmy grove on the Euphrates.

The audience is informed that the next thousand feet of film are reproduced from Everyman's pocket camera as used during one of his pleasure cruises. A fountain splashes in the sun, women emerge from the shade to fill their pitchers at a Soda fountain, one of them begins to dance, her lithe and sinuous grace arouses the passion of one of the slaves, he dances with her, and so on and so forth. At the first trial of this scene the palm trees fell forward, and an English-looking scene shifter ran in front to put them up again; this interlude now appears, alas, only as an extra display of stars. During the scene the gramophone sings: "A Little Grey Home in the West," "A Pair of Blue Eyes,"

The Broad Road to Heaven

"The Lost Chord," and other oriental and appropriate ditties.

The FIFTH ACT opens with the Lord Mayor's Show as a prelude to the final pageant in which the audience is introduced to the Coliseum by moonlight. The moon wanes in about 50 seconds as the sun appears in spasms of red and yellow on the north side of the arena.

Then a long procession of classically clad maidens enter with cymbals and dulcimers, and other instruments of music which the producer was able to copy from old records, but which the gramophone is unable to accompany from new. It is content with Rule Britannia and the Marseilles, using Deutschland Uber Alles for the more regulated movements. SUCCESS flies down into the arena on a bi-plane, which is wheeled off as she ascends to her position by the throne. A note is supplied to the audience setting forth the cost of producing this scene, as well as the salary paid to Success and the value of her jewels. As Success reaches her place Everyman drives

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up in a motor car, not an ordinary car but a "seeing London" with four seats instead of fifty, and a private buffet at the back with two waiters. He is smoking a cigar. As the car stops, Everyman, now a portly and substantial personage, is assisted to the dais and so to the throne. A Cabinet Minister makes a speech. A thousand elementary school children, in white pinafores, sing "Dulce far (sic) niente, in B flat" to the accompaniment of the massed bands.

The scene ends in a blaze of stars and stripes.

But the show is not over. We are introduced without any warning into the interior of a humble cottage, in which everything is neat and clean; the cupboard door is open to show that its shelves are empty, the table is laid but there is no food, the fireplace has no fire. An aged couple enter, the old man says, according to the notice on the screen, "We have lost all, my wife, our children are all dead. I was too old at forty, and you have at length received your

The Broad Road to Heaven

dismissal from your kind employers." They weep on each other's necks. At that moment the door opens and Everyman struts in : he hands them a £5 note with these words, I again quote the screen : " Shall Everyman forget a noble servitor, God forbid, you Henry have been a second father to me ; it was your brain that thought out the great machine, but how useless would that have proved had I not been there to exploit, explain and extol it, your children were the first to be weighed, washed and weaned in it." Everyman takes out his handkerchief and blows his nose. " What better end than theirs in shewing us its faulty parts, have not thousands of infants prospered since in its material and maternal arms ? Henry, you and I are the fathers of the race and all men do me reverence. I am no niggardly master, when that £5 is spent, there is another. Quarterly it shall be paid to you until you reach the age of plenty, I mean seventy, when the State itself shall recognise your worth and all your years of toil on its behalf."

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The old couple curtsey to Everyman and cry, presumably for joy.

During this scene it will be observed that Everyman is undergoing a partial transformation. He entered the cottage as a Managing Director, almost imperceptibly his frock coat changes into a white robe of oriental design, whilst wings are fastened to his back by unseen hands. Some may consider that it is a mistaken notion of the producer to allow him to retain his top hat, trousers, spats and patent leather boots, but this is, I understand, done deliberately so that no one shall suppose heaven to be anything but respectable. The now resplendent figure of Everyman is not left in the humble surroundings of the cottage. These change likewise. The deal table becomes a richly carved and gilt piece, of the time of Louis XIV, the cupboard is covered by a handsomely mounted mirror, the fireplace glows with lighted logs under an Adam mantelpiece. Pallas Athene, in marble, usurps the place of the mangle, and the aged couple themselves are replaced

The Broad Road to Heaven

by two scantily attired maidens, who kneel before Everyman offering him an empty goblet and a cornucopia overflowing with wax fruit.

AND THEN as the gramophone crashes out the final thumps of Tchaikowski's "1812" the *DEVIL*, disguised as the Business Manager, steps before the screen. After the applause has subsided he makes the following speech :

Ladies and gentlemen,—You see Everyman in Heaven. S. Peter had no difficulty in recognising the Manipulator of Man : he wore his blue ribbon, for he had always been a temperance reformer and frequently an abstainer ; his other decorations were not forgotten. You can imagine his joy when he learnt that there were 365 heavenly quarter days in the year and that no dividends had yet been passed. But I am not before you to make a speech nor to praise Everyman ; the film tells its own story. I have simply to announce that on Sunday next there will be a special performance for

The Devil's Devices

those poor prejudiced persons who still labour in their ignorance after what they call the "narrow way." German professors of theology have reduced their number considerably it is true, but to the remainder we must appeal. The title will be changed to

THE NARROWEST ROAD TO HEAVEN

A scene will be added to the second Act to show Everyman's invention of an escalator or moving staircase. This staircase is six inches narrower than the standard gauge established by that delightful caricaturist Bunyan in his famous farce entitled the "Pilgrim's Progress." The staircase provides the shortest and quickest and narrowest route to Heaven yet patented. Parts of it are of extreme age, having been used by Jacob. Each passenger is provided with a speedometer, which automatically registers his progress upward. The safety of the route is guaranteed, all lions, devils, giants, rivers and quicksands have been removed or reformed. Once on, you are safe. It has a strong appeal for the Calvinist as it eliminates every possibility of free will :

The Broad Road to Heaven

you cannot jump off, you cannot run back because of the crowd, you simply are shot to bliss at 4 cents. a second.

For the convenience of Sunday school teachers there will be an afternoon performance at which children will be admitted at half-price.

The *DEVIL* withdraws, the vibrating click of the cinematograph comes to an end, the gutterals of the gramophone grate no more, the red lights of the palace are switched on, lovers sit on separate seats, mothers collect their children, fathers light a final cigarette, and the audience slowly disperses. The last performance of the day is over.

As I left I observed the giant form of the man who had been ejected leaving the public house opposite ; his wideawake hat was whirling on his stick, and he shouted as he went. He seemed to have some outlandish song in his head, which could only be expressed at the top of his voice. It ran like this :

The *DEVIL* has a set of Slaves,
A set of comfortable knaves,

The Devil's Devices

To organise and regulate,
To systemise and tabulate,
And many times manipulate
The figures on the slate.*

The *DEVIL* has a set of slaves
To manufacture human travest†
To hold us fast, to force our feet
To wear the shoes he thinks are meet,
In which to brand us " while you wait "
Dependents of the State.

The *DEVIL* has a set of slaves
To watch the cradles, dig the graves,
To find the home and choose the wife,
To give man an efficient life,
And dope him with an opiate
To tolerate his state.

The *DEVIL* has a set of slaves
To drive us, goad us with his staves,

*He referred doubtless to some contretemps in the place he had just left.

†" TRAVE—A wooden frame or stocks to confine a horse or ox while shoeing."—*Dictionary*. So much for the Dictionary. I did not know oxen were shod, but I do know that this contrivance has lately become popular for the benefit of the cow—when she is milked by machinery.

The Broad Road to Heaven

To catalogue and classify
And frequently to falsify,
Reform, destroy, adulterate
The statements of the State.

NOTE FROM PAGE 17.

In the Middle Ages the "forestallers," who bought up goods before they could reach the market, and the "regrators," who made a "corner" in the market itself, were not only denounced as "manifest oppressors of the poor," but were severely punished by the municipal authorities (*vide* Professors W. J. Ashley and E. Lipson). The *DEVIL* holds that a Barony is a more suitable reward to the successful forestaller. The Author would prefer to see a revival of the older custom.

CHAPTER II

UTOPIA

TO say that I was profoundly impressed by the cinematograph performance would be an exaggeration ; but my curiosity was aroused sufficiently to send me calling upon the *DEVIL*. I would ascertain, if I could, in what kind of Heaven the escalator would land us.

My official card obtained me an immediate audience. I was taken into the little room, overlooking the Thames, in which he has his office, a chart of precedence hangs upon the wall, a few books are on a shelf, among them I was surprised to find one written by myself. The telephone and bell table* were the only things to notice besides the hat rack and umbrella-stand.

I will omit the preliminary conversational

* A Table with some 80 or 90 electric bell pushes connecting, I noticed, with his 80 or 90 principal assistants, each of whom is much swifter than an ordinary office boy in answering his own push.

Utopia

skirmishes for we were not long in coming to the point.

DEVIL : If you wish to have the essence of my doctrine in a few words I cannot do better than borrow a sentence from Nietzsche—
“ A higher culture can only originate where there are two castes of society : that of the working class and that of the leisured class who are capable of true leisure ; or, more strongly expressed, the caste of compulsory labour and the caste of free labour. Slavery is of the essence of culture.” Nietzsche knew what he was talking about ; as we are not on a public platform we can agree that this is true, eh?

I agreed. I did not add that higher culture was the last thing I wanted for myself or desired to see in anyone else, and that, therefore, from my point of view, it was a truth to be avoided. Cyanide of potassium is a similar kind of truth. But I went on : “ How do you propose to maintain and increase this division of two castes in Society ? ”

DEVIL : In many ways, but ultimately by law.

The Devil's Devices

AUTHOR : “ But law means the recording of customs, the register of what is ? ”

DEVIL : *It may have meant that at one time, now it means the decision of what should be. You must remember that the law is being reformed. Men are recognising that human customs are in fact no less than human compromises.*

AUTHOR : “ So the lawyer begins with the compromise in order to make sure of his custom ? ”

DEVIL : *Hmm. I am not sure that I follow you. When man obeyed the tribal law he was without the assistance of a lawyer.*

AUTHOR : “ Yes ; he obeyed law which had been arrived at by experience, by common necessity and consent.”

DEVIL : *Er, yes, er, er, but it didn't work, you know. The progressive man had to wait for centuries before his tribe, his township or his State arrived at the point of registering the custom he desired—progress was unknown. I imagine a modern Moses called to manage twelve unruly tribes ; would his laws be*

Utopia

written on tables of stone? Would he follow clouds about in the wilderness? Or would he,



knowing his own mind and the way to impose it on others, adopt a more tangible device? He would hardly tolerate the veiled and uncertain hints at

The Devil's Devices

punishment in the Ten Commandments ; the fixed system of labour laws which he would introduce would need more definite support.

A modern Moses would have the labour of the tribes sub-divided and organised so that output should be maintained at its maximum, to this end there would be a daily tent inspection to discover shirkers, babies would be cared for in the crèche, so that their mothers might work, and the older children would either have to learn lessons or go to work, as no one could be spared to supervise them in their tents. He would organise all the essentials allowing some license in the non-essentials, as a safety valve is necessary even in a reformed boiler. His broad modern mind would not find any cause of offence in the calf episode. . . . The manna would be sterilized, and stored. . . . You have but to consider our present system to see that we are moving forward from the old-fashioned past ; but the slow, inconclusive and experimental method of law-making dies hard.

AUTHOR : " But are there not customs which

Utopia

are being silently consolidated into law in much the same way, for example, as men have agreed to the law of the road? No experts were called in to decide, no laws were passed to settle the regulation of the road until after we had discovered a system for ourselves."

DEVIL : Yes, until after men had toiled through collisions, accidents and confusions they did not learn that regulation was necessary ; even now the regulations they have reached are not uniform ! It is impossible to estimate the number of lives which would have been saved, and the trouble which would have been avoided, had the rulers arrived at a theoretical system to be enforced early enough.

This is a simple illustration of the principle of law-making. The Eugenists wish to apply it to the regulation of race, but as yet the stupidity of man binds him down to the uncontrolled method of matrimony and child-bearing which usually leads to disaster.

Those who share with me a suspicion of

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doctrines advocated by the *DEVIL* will see from the above how easily men might be misled. The fundamental truth that a man cannot have the freedom of the road until he obeys the law of the road appears to receive Satanic recognition. But is it not only an appearance? Does he not actually mean that the law of the road is greater than its freedom, or, in other words, that man is made for the road, not the road for man?

The difficulty of space, it is a difficulty of living together, presumably has a natural and right solution; we may hold that it is each man's business to discover or, perhaps, rediscover this solution; the *DEVIL* says it is the business of the rulers to invent and to impose one in order that the people may be saved the pain incident to discovery.

He next spoke of the *lesser laws*, but I do not propose to report more than his last few sentences as we are familiar with *the exigencies of red tape*.

DEVIL : *Bye-laws are followed by explanatory rules and regulations. Laws, bye-laws*

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and regulations are all of a piece, and those of one civilised country differ but slightly from those of another. Note the similarity in tone and expression of the great book which the German authorities issue as a guide to their soldiers and the orange-covered instructions issued by the L.C.C. to their care-committees.

AUTHOR : “ Some people consider that such books deal with the tithing of mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God.”

DEVIL : *You do not see that judgment is reserved for the breaker of the law, and that these regulations are the outcome of organized charity, that is of organised love. Let me sum up what I have said : Law is the engine or machine which creates the standard of national life. It is the instrument for imposing the will of the right-thinking minority upon the non-thinking majority. Nevertheless it is nearly always popular to attack the law, especially if one is anxious to secure some additions to the law. Thus, if it were desired*

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to compel all girls attending the State Schools to have their hair cut—a quite desirable compulsion in view of the number infected with vermin—an attack should be launched against, say the laws of private ownership in land. The hereditary principle of the House of Lords should be denounced in order to secure the democratic vote, and then the girls' hair may safely be removed. Before launching these attacks it is well to see that the lawyers are on the right side.

It must be remembered that the lawyer is no longer the servant but the maker of the law. It is his business to initiate a new standard of life, not to compile a dull register of existing standards. But by lawyer I do not simply designate those gentlemen who watch over the private interests of the well-to-do, I mean the law-makers, the politicians and their servants the officials who see that the law is administered. Lastly, law must be closely allied to organisation.

The whole plan of the *DEVIL* seemed clear to me at the moment. I saw his work in

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the legal provision of public elementary schools, insurance cards, labour exchanges, pensions, free meals and medical treatment, and the other Prussian gifts for the advance of man which we have so earnestly copied. I saw the law deciding that one set of persons should mind the business of another set and be generous with the goods which are not its own. I saw organisation as the mechanical force without which this kind of law would be but paper and ink signifying nothing.

Rage began to tear at my heart. Fortunately, perhaps, a disturbance in the street outside sent us both to the window. The big man who had been ejected from the Cinematograph performance, and who again reminded me strangely of MR. CHESTERTON, was excitedly addressing a small crowd.

But his verses again showed a sad inferiority to those of the author of the *Flying Inn*. He was singing :

The lawyer picks the deadeast bones
And names their rightful heir,
But cannot say why Missis Jones

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Insists on wearing black for Jones,
Insists in loud and raucous tones
That she's the wife of the said Jones
Whose seven sons she bare.

As the crowd was dispersed by the police
his tone became less, what shall I say, vindic-
tive, but no less loud. He went on :

The law the lawyers know about
Is property and land ;
But why the leaves are on the trees,
And why the waves disturb the seas,
Why honey is the food of bees,
Why horses have such tender knees,
Why winters come when rivers freeze,
Why Faith is more than what one sees,
And Hope survives the worst disease,
And Charity is more than these,
They do not understand.

As we resumed our seats I knew that my
anger was effectively subdued, and as there
were some other questions I wished to put
to the *DEVIL* I did not move, though he
summoned fifty principal assistants, one
after the other, to receive instructions with

regard to the disturbance we had witnessed. The reader should know what passed in my mind before I put my next question :

I always hold that with man's response to the factory bell he began to submit to the regulation of his life. He sold his strength rather than the production of his hands ; then, rising to the bait of the franchise, he subordinated his capacity to rule. In the dim past a man with a trade was on the way to government : the management of the affairs of his craft and the control of his city through the mystery of his Guild. The franchise was the simple means by which a man delegated his share in government to others.

Now I concluded that the Devil was not likely to approve the old-fashioned guild system, and that he would favour the franchise and any extension of it. So I assumed that he was in general agreement with our present so-called elective system, and I wished to find out whether he set any limits to the control of the slave class by the leisured class. I

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forget the question I put to him, but his answer was decisive.

DEVIL : A ruler must decide personal matters such as education, insurance against unemployment and sickness, hours of labour and rates of pay.

AUTHOR : And you see no objection to the rulers being of one class whose habits and thoughts are necessarily very different from the class they rule ?

DEVIL : Certainly not, the rulers should be selected from one class so that the entire administration of national life is in their hands. Judges, magistrates, governors of provinces, ambassadors, archbishops, admirals and commanders-in-chief, insurance commissioners, lawyers and lords lieutenants, should be all appointed from one social class. But we have reached this point, the Church of Rome is the only institution left in which the post of greatest responsibility is open to a peasant, and there is no need for me to say how parlous a position it is in. The democratically minded should be given a number

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of subordinate but comparatively well paid posts in the official army which serves the ruling aristocracy. In this way the democratic attempt to substitute a different quality of government from that which prevails is weakened by the transfer of many of its leaders into the machinery of the existing order. For every democrat in office there will be ten others ready to go over on the same terms.

It should be a fixed rule that the children of the ruling class do not mix or go to the same school as the children of the ruled.

With this he summoned another assistant and ordered a file of correspondence, from which he extracted a newspaper cutting.

DEVIL : You may like to see an article which I sent to the press. It indicates the care with which those of us in positions of responsibility regard the condition of the working classes. We are doing our best to reduce overcrowding, and the chief reason for this evil is the way in which the poor will keep one room, which they call the parlour, uninhabited except at

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funerals. It should not be long before the Local Government Board recognises that other rooms are often superfluous. There should be one kitchen and dining-hall, managed by the County Council, for every hundred families, then only bedrooms would be required, many of which could be large dormitories.

He then handed me the following :

DOOMED

“ The parlour of the poor family, for so long a holy of holies, has had its day. As an institution it has been firmly established for years. A courageous decision, however, has been come to by the estate office of the Duchy of Camwell, who are about to build cottages with kitchens, scullery and bedrooms, but with no parlour.

“ Reformers and housing experts have agitated for years against the existence of the parlour as an unnecessary evil and expense in a poor man's house. But it seemed sacrilege to interfere with one of the greatest of

Victorian traditions—the front room, with its angular furniture, stuffed canary, wax fruits, those china dogs with the fixed stare, the plenitude of antimacassars, and the abundance of wool mats. On a table under the window was the heavy Bible, a cherished register of the family births and deaths.

“ ‘ If the choice is between a parlour and an extra bedroom,’ said an architect to our representative, ‘ there should be no hesitation in choosing the bedroom. But the poor man, who cannot afford much rent, will choose the parlour, and crowd a family of six or seven into two small and stuffy bedrooms.

“ ‘ The percentage of men rejected by the recruiting authorities indicates how much more seriously we shall have to think of the health of the home. Instead of the little kitchen and a small parlour crowded with purposeless things, the poor home of the future should have a good-sized scullery, with a gas stove for cooking and a decently large living room, with two or three bedrooms.

“ ‘ The Local Government Board has recognised that the parlour is very often a

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superfluous room. In their memorandum on the provision of houses for the working classes they give five plans of model types. In three of these there is a living room and scullery, but no parlour. Just now there are economic reasons for abolishing the parlour. The cost of building materials and the scarcity of labour have so much increased the capital outlay necessary that economies in building and design will have to be effected to keep rents within the reach of the people for whom the properties are intended.' ”

As I read this I remember some lines which No. 27 had once recited to me, but, though I reproduce them here, I did not repeat them to the *DEVIL* :

PARLERS.

“ We wunce ad a parler fer tea on Sunday,
John cleand is bisickle ther on the Monday.
Charles and is fren Hamelia Rite
Sat in the dark ther on Toosday nite.
An Wensday bein erly closin,
It sooted me to ave a dose in ;
On Thursday it were used fer nowt,

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Bekors the missis scrubed it out.
On Friday it was clean an tidy,
Redy for the Vicar's lidy ;
Feelin extry ale an arty,
On Sattiday we ad a party.

“ But ther aint no party now—ow—ow,
The L.G.B.
E ses ter me,
You giv up this ere luxeree,
Tis not the likes ov you ses e
As shud be avin cumpernee—
Besides you av a skuleri.
Wots rong wiv you e ses to i,
Is that your wiges is too i.”

I regret to say that my interview was brought abruptly to a close by the departure of the *DEVIL*. Some matter of urgency had arisen, the telephone bell had rung. Six assistants and two typewriting girls had appeared as it were from out of the floor, and the room became a turmoil of excitement.

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I retired. As I was leaving, one of his assistants flew after me with a small bundle of pamphlets and an apology from his chief for the disturbance of my interview.



CHAPTER III

AN INDUSTRIOUS AND MUNICIPAL *DEVIL*

AS I descended into the Underground I looked through the parcel of books and pamphlets which the *DEVIL* had sent after me. There were two advertisements of his "Universal Library on Serious Subjects" and "The Encyclopædia of Interplanetary Knowledge," three pamphlets :

"Sex, a cellular attraction in the Pleiades."

"The essential chastity of the Greek Gods,"

"The Higher Metaphysic of Mud," and, lastly, a volume entitled,

"The Poor and Progress, or an introduction to the Study of Industrial Economics."

I put the pamphlets in my pocket and opened the book.

The Preface is headed "Responsibility."

"*It is reprehensible in the extreme,*" he writes, "*to blame a man for his own faults, to pillory him before others as though he were some*

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dangerous specimen of an alien race. But blame him, if you can, for your own troubles of which you know something, and do not doubt that he will pass on the complaint to some one else, to a system or to an ancient institution, and thank you for having given him the luxury of an easy escape or defence. Adam will always find Eve at his elbow. Eve will point to the serpent—and collective responsibility will lighten the burden of the individual. The Eden affair was the first successful experiment in collectivism—how unfair it would have been to the others had one alone taken the blame.

“ The human race is interdependent, it is impossible for one man to be solely to blame for any one fault. If he fails in business, it is right, and usually within the facts, that he should accuse his rivals for lack of principle or that he should attack the ‘ competitive system ’ ; if his advancement in the office is not sufficiently rapid, it is almost certain to be due to the short-sightedness of his chief, if he lives in a slum he should denounce his landlord, if his wages are small let him pillory the employer, if he drinks

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it is the publican who is responsible ; if he is a successful broker let him take shelter behind the ' system ' when accused of rigging the market. The ' system ' is indeed a most useful abstraction, it is a heaven provided buffer against ' the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.' Do not be disturbed if, from time to time, an ancient and crusted Tory denounces the Tenant or the L.C.C. rather than the landlord, and the Trades Union instead of the employers ; for in so doing he will help to remind us that in considering the responsibility of others we should not be guided by narrow dogma nor circumscribed by effete tradition."

This introduction leads naturally to the first chapter in which he shows how the system of " collective responsibility " is superior to all others.

" Men rejoice in the collective tendency in trades which were once essentially individual because it makes the ' brotherhood of man ' easier to realize and to attain. But there are still men in ignorance of this tendency and its truth. It should not be difficult to convince

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them. Let them take up an ordinary matchbox, they will notice the names of two persons upon it, but though they may be uncertain as to the number of people who were employed in its manufacture they may be quite certain that neither of the gentlemen named on the box has touched it. It is the product of a group of persons—the office boy, the managing director, the men, women and children engaged in the factory and the men and women shareholders who lend their money to the firm in return for a small ‘dividend.’ ”

It is surprising that the *DEVIL*, having put his case so far correctly, fails to see that there is no vital distinction between the man who lends his strength to an enterprise for wages and the man who lends his capital for interest, for both live on the proceeds. They are inter-dependent, no one would lend his money to a firm in which men permanently refused to work nor would he work in a business lacking the capital necessary to pay wages. But the *DEVIL* wants a directed collectivism, and

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always assumes that the capitalist is not of the same race as the operative. He goes on :

“ The circle of collectivism is completed by the purchaser. The system is obviously still capable of improvement ; it can never be absolutely relied upon until there is more compulsion used to guarantee that the employee shall work, whether he wants to or not. Happily there are signs of this beneficent coercion. The Munitions’ Act was a step in the right direction if but a halting one. But England is still behind Germany in these matters, and is proverbially slow to learn. Men living on the same island have no excuse for not seeing how inter-dependent and collective they are and how urgent it is to regulate and organise themselves.”

It will be noticed in this quite lucid summary of the construction of an industrial society that the *DEVIL* manages to avoid the fundamental issues. He does not see that the men and women engaged in the manufacture of matches have not chosen their occupation from a passion to make matches, but from the need to earn money. It is this

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decision of theirs which deprives them of initiative, and the initiative once lost is hard to regain. The *DEVIL*, as we shall see, does not want man to recognise his power of initiative, his power to create.

The remainder of the first chapter is given up to an examination of the principle of supply and demand, showing how a collective system must mean a centralized administration. In this way he leads up to the second chapter, entitled "Government and Progress."

It opens with an explanation of the system of government adopted in Germany :

" In this State, or collection of States, the ruling power is vested in a few persons of exalted rank. They are the State, and they remain the State by adhering strictly to the rule of taking the line of least resistance. In this way they save themselves much useless annoyance. The people, being imbued with the doctrines of facility, naturally demand everything which shall make life easier for them. Thus the young men, finding that the cost of keeping their aged

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unemployable parents an inconvenient strain upon their resources, asked for relief from this burden ; the request was immediately granted ; parents complained that the cost of schooling for their children was heavy, especially for those with large families, so the rulers took over the schools and charged nothing for admittance.

They went further and said that the children should be compelled to attend the schools, for, they argued, there could be no surer way of training the young in the obedience and discipline which would afterwards be required of them in the factories. Parents then declared that owing to the precarious nature of their employment they could not afford to feed their children nor to secure to them adequate medical attendance. Then, having received relief in that direction, they explained that economic pressure was still so great that they could not keep themselves during illness nor find the means of subsistence if they were out of work. The rulers promptly provided medical attendance, insurance against sickness and unemployment, and organised these things so well

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that soon they were the admiration of the world. Foreign States, less used to the System, would copy these wise laws and insist that their peoples should have these benefits even before they had demanded them."

He then quotes the passing of the English Insurance Act, and dwells at length on the development of Secondary and Technical Schools, the advent of the Pianola and the use of celluloid. He favours "government from above downwards," and has some useful hints on the necessary system of finance, which he says :

" Being collective or common to everybody would quickly become unpopular, and perhaps intolerable, were it not possible to disguise the enforced contribution so that whenever the people purchased anything the price was made to include a bonus to the government. In this way a centralized system of finance can be administered and the people be persuaded to part with their wages without being conscious of loss. If they drink tea or beer they pay for tea and beer, and at the same time earn dividends

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and pay taxes. What simpler method could be devised ? ”

The third chapter is on “ Simplification.” He shows how extravagant the working man is in his diet, how he could live on peas, beans and corn and save half his wages, or, as he suggests in a paragraph on “ altruism in business,” how he could work for less wages in order to show his affection for his employer. He shews how the factory system has simplified production so that a working man of the present day has many more luxuries than ever before ; he instances chocolate, cheap books, prints and newspapers as indications of this progress. His treatment of the factory as an agent of the simple life will have a wide appeal.

“ *The factories supply, he says, “ all the daily wants of man—bread, margarine, jam, ready-made clothing, household furniture and houses.”* But here again he does not stop to consider whether we really get what we want or why men work in factories. Why does a wife choose to buy factory jam rather than

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to preserve fruit for herself? She can buy fruit and sugar and make jam at a less cost, but she prefers the shop article—why? Is it a better jam? No, it is not so good as home made. Is it cheaper? In bulk yes, in quality no. *Does it save her the trouble of making it?* That is the point which the DEVIL avoids. The first jam factory paid because the owner persuaded his neighbours to give up making jam in order to buy a slightly inferior article which could be had at any time, in any quantity, for the payment of cash.

The DEVIL can always obscure the issue, for instance, he writes :

“ Progress, advancement, success wait upon the man who secures as many necessities and luxuries as he can afford without the trouble of producing them himself.”

He omits to mention that most men cannot afford anything without labour, and that many of them take up some single part of the process of industry at which they can work for wages in order to buy what they have lost the power to produce. A man used to develop

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by industry his own peculiar capacity, he exchanged what he alone could produce for the necessities which others alone could provide. The factory system has done away with that more stable condition of society. But the *DEVIL* thinks “ *society previous to the industrial reformation was entirely unstable. Imagine the self-centredness of one of its members, his contentment in his own work, and his general presumption of the dependence of others upon him for what he could make rather than his present knowledge of his dependance upon the State for what it can organise.*”

His next point tells rather badly against those who still live in what he calls “ the middle of the muddle ages.”

“ *The proof that the collective system of industry is the best system is most readily found in the men who organise it. These ‘ captains of industry ’ are not, as a certain caricaturist maintains, gross and fat, they are lean and efficient. The distinction between the seller and the sold, if I may be permitted to joke, is*

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that the one takes trouble in order to save trouble to the other. This is philanthropy, this proves that business is even more Christian than Christianity."

The fourth chapter is headed "Specialization." At first I wondered how he could reconcile a plea for specialization with his disapproval of the development of individual capacity, but it becomes evident that the two ideas are quite distinct in his mind, for he says :

"That a man can presume to say he has a gift for carpentry is absurd, he has the universal gift for doing work, which he will do more efficiently if he is properly organised and controlled than if he is left to his own devices ; and any man can do anything if he is made to do it and not allowed to change from one job to another. The aim, then, is to secure the immobility of labour and the mobility of the labourer. It is the system adopted in Prussia through the complete organisation of Labourer Exchanges. If the student will but grasp this point he will see how necessary it is to have

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specialists in each department of labour; specialists provided by the ruling class, or routine and regulation will go by the board."

Later on he says :

" The specialist must be the ruler, a man with driving power and the will to drive. A wise ruler isn't chosen by the people, he chooses them. There are two means open to the ruler, he can either induce men to follow him by promises of reward or he can drive them before him with the fear of punishment. The former method is not to be commended, and is only allowable on emergency when the ruler is weak or in a tight place, the latter only sounds cruel ; there are so few who will rebel that there will be few to be punished, and the majority will proceed contentedly in the right direction. I have put this a little crudely perhaps, but we are discussing what is practical, not what might be dreamt of in an imaginary Utopia ; in short, we are discussing humanity as it is."

In the fifth chapter the *DEVIL* writes on " the organisation of the poor." He approves of the collective tendency in works of charity

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which he finds as encouraging as the collective growth in industry." "*The unfortunate are better cared for under the administrative machine of the government and municipalities than under the capricious and isolated efforts of individualism. It is better for a man to become dependent upon the State than to be degraded by even temporary dependence upon a friend or occasional dependence upon himself. The municipalities are ably assisted by a large number of persons who have private incomes to enable them to devote their energies to the well-being of the lower classes.*"

This is true, they have developed a kind of industry which consists in the founding of societies and the forming of committees, of which they are the chairmen or secretaries. These persons are, as it were, company promoters, they entice men and money from personal occupations and responsibilities into wider and more ambiguous avenues of development.

I fear the *DEVIL* is not inaccurate when he says : "*The chaotic system in which*

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a man gave what he liked to whom he liked is slowly being destroyed." The charitable person has discovered that the easiest way of not minding his own business in charity is either to pay a Society to mind it for him or to insist upon the Government making charity compulsory on all.

Many will be interested in his attack on the Charity Organisation Society, a Society which has had its full share of abuse for many years. I admit that I am biased in its favour. I still hold to the belief that it is better for a man to give as a person to a person rather than to be forced to give through an official to a crowd. The C.O.S. does not attempt to organise charity but to direct, if it may, the humble and generous in the path of charity. Organisation is one of those words which has recently lost dignity ; it used to mean the placing of things in the position from which they could move most freely, it now means the fixing of things where they cannot move. The C.O.S. stands for the older interpretation, the *DEVIL* for

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the modern. He writes : “ *There is one collection of individuals which refuses to recognise the danger of the old-fashioned notion of personal charity. It may surprise some to know that the Charity Organisation Society is far from progressive ; though its title is so full of encouragement its works are otherwise. It opposed Old Age Pensions, School Meals, Insurance, and is the chief opponent to the properly organised Charity of the Municipalities.*”

The DEVIL seldom misses an opportunity to praise the work of the municipal authorities. He continues :

“ *The Councils, under the direction of powerful Government Departments, do fortunately organise charity. Consider their work in the elementary schools. Having achieved, what at one time seemed too Utopian to be dreamt of, the creation of collectively managed elementary schools they have now widened and broadened, if not deepened, the collective charity shown to the children of the poor. They have organised committees to befriend the children, to visit their homes and parents, to provide food, medical*

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treatment and advice as to their future careers. At present certain of the rather more reactionary councils still refuse to spend public money in boots, clothing, and spectacles, but even in such cases their committees can organise a supply from the discarded wardrobes of the rich. Generally speaking, however, the organisation is very creditable."

I am tempted to point out that even the money to pay for these gifts is secured from the ratepayers and taxpayers by the most approved modern system in which not one person in a thousand knows for what he is paying nor how much he pays. The right hand is organised to do what the left hand knoweth not !

The *DEVIL* continues : " *The success of municipal charity depends upon the officials who organise the committees ; if they can persuade a voluntary worker to fill up forms in triplicate, which is the officially provided occupation for the volunteers, and if the statistical reports show an increasing number of children who have been reformed in one way*

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or the other, their services receive instant recognition."

He betrays an uneasiness at the presence of voluntary labour in the State machine, but concludes that, for the present, it is unavoidable. He even goes the length of suggesting Study Circles for the better training of the volunteer.

"The Study Circle having been formed everything depends upon the leader. As many leaders will be ignorant of the subject, these hints may be of use. Take a blackboard, draw a carrot in the centre, let each member of the class be blindfolded and a small prize be offered to the one who will first draw a saucepan round the carrot. After the merriment has subsided you can proceed with the lesson. Everyone wants the carrot, each will hinder the other from obtaining it by rushing at it and no one will be successful. Hence the need for organisation is at once demonstrated.

The carrot is then likened to the dole of the rich man for which there are many applicants ; in order to bring this lesson home, let each member of the class take it in turn

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to be the donor while the rest are the applicants. It will usually be found that the donor wishes to give the carrot to the first person who applies without waiting to hear the tales of the others, unless he select according to some standard of personal appearance. From this experience it can be shown that no person can decide which is the most worthy to be the recipient, whereas the group of them, after discussing the cases, can do so. The leader can then make his point in favour of collective administration.

The ignorant may occasionally suggest that it is not an invariable rule that the poor are beggars for the bounty of the rich ; he can be silenced by my or any text-book on economic law. The class can then be taken by easy and weekly stages through the remainder of the course. It should be made plain to them that, 'compulsory collection,' is not necessarily opposed to 'voluntary contribution' ; voluntary effort discovers by brave experiment the nature of the remedy to whatever social ill you may be talking about, then, by virtue of its success, the work is passed over to the official system

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which alone is wide enough to cover the ground."

How frequently the *DEVIL* appears to be satisfied with width, broadness of view and vague generalisations of the same inclusive kind when the real question which he avoids is one of height and depth. He concludes :

"It is important to keep the class in a good humour with itself—to make it attractive. At its conclusion many of its members will have qualified for official positions."

FORMS

The number of forms which appear in the various guide-books to his Study Circles are almost without number. I do not pretend that the two I have selected are the best, but they are certainly as suggestive as any. They come in his notes entitled "Aids to Education," but it seems suitable to introduce them here.

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“ There is little prospect of successful organisation unless it begins with the young. It is the first use of the public elementary school that it should accustom the children and their parents to the idea of regulation in its best sense. In order to do this efficiently, the officials must be trained in the use of forms. It is, for instance, already established that each child should be regularly inspected by the school doctor. If that inspection is to be fruitful a form is necessary. What could be more simple than the following, which has, I am gratified to learn, already been adopted by one prominent local authority in England.

MEDICAL TREATMENT FORM

“ It will be apparent that when this form is filled in for every school child the ruling authority will possess many vital [if inaccurate, I would add] details about the child's parents. The cards will be invaluable to the statistical expert who deals with unemployment as well as to the economists who explain the meaning of rent.”

B**MEDICAL FOLLOWING UP CARD****STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.**

(TO BE FILLED IN BY REPRESENTATIVE OF SCHOOL CARE COMMITTEE.)

Name _____ Date of birth _____ School _____ Dept _____

Address (i.) _____

(ii.) _____

*** OCCUPATION—**

Father _____

Mother _____

Other wage earners _____

No. of children living at home _____

Home { No. of rooms _____ Is the child fed at school? _____

Rent _____

General observations _____

ARRANGEMENTS SUGGESTED FOR TREATMENT—

Aliment.	Hospital or treatment centre included in the Council's arrangements (give name).	Other institutions (give name).	Private doctor.
(1) _____	_____	_____	_____
(2) _____	_____	_____	_____
(3) _____	_____	_____	_____

Treatment Voucher Card issued (enter "Yes" or "No") _____

Signed _____ Visitor. Date _____

Agency. _____ Date. _____

† Treatment commenced ... (1) _____

(2) _____

† Discharged from Treatment (1) _____

(2) _____

Reasons for—

(a) Failure to commence treatment _____

complete _____

Signed _____ Visitor _____ Date _____

Further Notes—

* If not in regular work, state cause.
 † In cases treated at Hospital and Treatment Centres included in the Council's arrangements, all this information will be filled in by Organizer

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT FORM

“ This form is not quite so intelligible to the inexperienced as the one prepared for the medical or family history of the child. This is designed to enable the official to trace any child after he has left school. At present the practice of attempting to regulate the lives of children after they have left school is in its infancy, though, as I have shown elsewhere, the idea is developing so hopefully that, by the time this is in print, it may be true of the English that they are all indexed and tabulated, ready for the final step in compulsory happiness.

“ It should be observed that the town, country or other address of the child is to be noted so that he can be found wherever he may choose to live. ‘ S.L.F.’ stands for ‘ School leaving form,’ it is No. C.C. 41e, and contains information on the following points : Conduct, 1 line ; Ability, 2 lines ; Health, 2 lines ; Sort of employment recommended, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lines ; Home circumstances and father's occupation, $2\frac{1}{2}$ lines ; Parents' wishes as to employment, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lines ;

JAN.	FEB.	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
Name.						School.			Electoral Area.		
Addresses		Date of Birth.		Date of leaving School.		PLACING FORM.					
						Date.		Employer and nature of work.			
		S. L. F.		Date.							
		Received from C. C. " "									
		Sent to									
		J. A. C.									
		For action " "									
		For filing " "									
		Sent to other placing agency									
		Sent to R. T. " "									
Name and Address of Supervisor:											

15,000—(72035—210 D)—15.115—25502

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Scholar's inclinations, $\frac{3}{4}$ line. Also the 'name and address of suitable individual or institution (if any) to keep in touch with the child' and 'Name of Exchange to which this form (or copy) is sent.'

"The S.L.F. should be sent to the Juvenile Advisory Committee (J.A.C.) for each child leaving school, but without the parents of the child being made acquainted with its contents." [Otherwise, I suppose, they might consider that an unfair handicap was being placed upon their child]. *"The part entitled 'placing form' is for the record of the employments followed by the child. The 'supervisor' is the person appointed by the local authority to see that the boy behaves himself. Unfortunately he has not any special powers to compel the child to obey him. A 'placing agency' is a public or private—for there remains a few of such anachronisms—enterprise for the finding of labour, it is usually the Labourers' Exchange."*

"'R.T.' stands for 'Responsible Teacher,' a man of whom I hope to hear more, for he is responsible for the 'continuation schools' in which every facility is provided for the

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attainment of knowledge by children over 14."

It is fair to tell the reader that, knowing a little about the use of such forms, I can assure him that they harm no one, while they give employment to a considerable number of people, paid and unpaid. I am indeed rather surprised that the *DEVIL* should set such store by them.

The reader may possibly sympathise with me when I say that I am bored beyond endurance by this *DEVIL'S* mixture. I cannot go on with it. If the reader wants further enlightenment on the subject he must go to the *DEVIL*. I detest the picture which the *DEVIL* draws of the future none the less heartily because it is so uncomfortably similar to the present. The Municipality will soon be mothering all of us. I see the creature, surrounded by her domestic staff, I hear her sneering at

**The Parents' prime responsibility
Asserted freely in the four-ale bar.**

I hear her unctiously setting forth her gospel :
**Payers of Rates, Councillors and Gents,
What I have done appears in my report ;**

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Take note of that which I intend to do
In my great battle against fell disease,
Sleek independence and the fools who cry
For freedom with no language but a cry.
I am no parasite, but harbinger
Of that Utopia called th' Dependent State,
Where none may be irregular or free,
No one be born, married or give birth
Without the due inspection of my staff.
A child is born, maternity I claim,
Bed, blankets, bath-tub, ay and breath
itself,
Imported from the borders of the sea,
Shall be provided at the lying-in.
And if the babe be bastard, all the more
Shall I rejoice; a soul saved from the
burning,
Snatched from parental infamy and crime !
THEN AS OUR CHILD BECOMES
OF SCHOOLING AGE,
Able to learn, to take delight in forms,
To hear condensed wisdom from my books,
It shall be washed by nurses, dressed and
combed,

An Industrious and Municipal *Devil*

**Fondled and nurtured to the very door
Of proper manhood or of womanhood.**

INSPECTED each first Monday of the
month,

By men and women doctors D.P.H.,

It will be ordered treatment for each day.

The Tailor will be summoned twice a term

To measure—stay, how I o'erstep the mark,

Nay, not to measure shall the clothes be made.

For measureless and boundless the supply,

Stitched in my shops, the cloth and pattern one,

The same fine cut for trousers or for skirt

Shall mark the clothing of the race to be !

THANK of the ranks of well-cleaned young-
sters then,

No ears, no adenoids, but shining boots

Branded, to save them from parental pawn.

Observe the mark of knowledge on each
face

(The women call it “crow’s feet,” but the

A regular attender at the fount [child,

Of Wisdom, knows it spells success !

success !)

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See how they line before the J.A.C.*
To each the Secretary doles a job ;—
The factory door is opened and is
closed.

|| || || ||

My children take their wages from
the Rich,
The State insures their regulated
lives,
And at the end will freely bury all—
What further can be thought of or
desired?

When I had reached the end of this nightmare, which the reader, being alliterative, may be disposed to call the balderdash of Beelzebub, I must confess that my feelings were slightly disturbed. So much so that, living next door to a public-house, it occurred to me that I might talk over the matter with the rural public which congregate there of an evening. When I had finished reading the above extracts I observed that only the publican and my

*See page 72. J. A. C. stands for the Juvenile Advisory Committee of the Labourers Exchange.

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Chestertonian friend were left. "Well," I said, "what do you think of it?" "I've no patience with these Socialists," the publican replied. I explained that Prussia, the State chiefly used to demonstrate the *DEVIL'S* theories, was not usually called a socialistic state. "I don't know what it's called," he answered, "but if it has all the things going on in it that the I.L.P. wants to go on here, and, mind you, has got 'em going on in bits already, what's the odds what it's called?" I didn't know the odds, but I said something about "doing it for our good." "Yes, and what's good about it? You talk of progress here and reforms there and down with the public-houses and up with the rates—but what's it all for? What's it all bally well for? To give me and you and the rest of the village motor cars? To give us more work?" I hazarded that it might be to make us better men. "And who can make me a better man or a worse one but myself?"

Indeed who can make him a better man or a

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worse but he himself? The leader he was loyal to would have some influence, but who is to choose his loyalties or his leader for him?

As I ruminated on these things there was silence in the bar. The publican glared at me, and was, I think, upon the point of expressing his individualistic views more forcibly when our mutual friend, ordering another pint of No. 1, said :

“ What’s wrong with the world is that it doesn’t know it was right—once, and as to poverty this is what I say ” :

Poverty’s a parable which every man
should read,

It is the damned Economist who turns it to
creed, [greed.

Who proves by his Statistics that poverty is

It is the damned Economist whose figures
are of men,

Who treats man’s sweat and labour as the
product of a hen,—

Supplies to feed the market at the bidding
of his pen.

An Industrious and Municipal *Devil*

Hear the damned Economist betray his
poultry mind

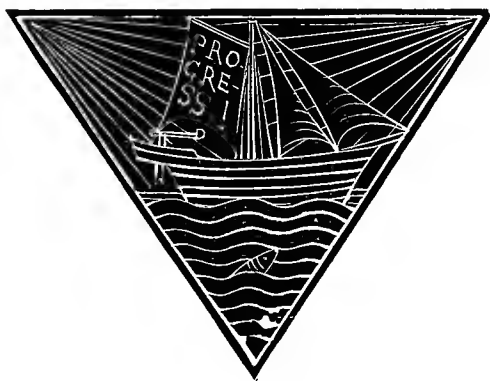
To those in outer darkness eugenistic'ly
inclined !

The poor may surely hope again when
blindness leads the blind.

There's Poverty in Paradise, so do not be
dismayed,

There eve'ry Saint is penniless, for all his
debts are paid.

A truth the damned Economist has some-
how overlaid.



CHAPTER IV

THE *DEVIL'S* DISCIPLES

THE *DEVIL'S* knack of disguise is naturally confusing. In these days we should be suspicious of a talking snake, and he never attempts to appear in that rôle, at any rate in Europe. We have caught him as a producer of plays for the cinematograph and as an authority on social conditions, but this probably does not exhaust the number of his aliases. I cannot find out, however, that he has run the risk of appearing personally in the Business World. The conduct of business is so carefully watched by the community that he would certainly be discovered if he appeared, say, on the Stock Exchange or in the Metal Market. He has, therefore, to promulgate his doctrines through such business men as are open to receive ideas from his writings or may be tempted by the substantial rewards which he still

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contrives to offer to the successful. The *DEVIL* has few avowed, but many unconscious, disciples. He does not ask for open allegiance, for he knows that he would not obtain it; he is satisfied to see his ideas carried out without desiring the "credit" of authorship.

I had a little difficulty in making a list of people in the world of commerce who might be ready to submit to a short and friendly cross-examination. I set out to secure all the details I could of the manner in which they conducted their businesses and lived their lives. Naturally I did not begin my enquiries in this country; I went indeed far afield. Somewhere in Arabia I came upon a modern inscription painted on the portals of a chicken farm.

"It hath been said by them of old time, put not all your eggs into one basket, but I say unto you put all your eggs into one basket—and, watch that basket."

I quote from memory, but I would assure the reader that these unpleasing words are



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not mine. I called at the palace of which the farm was merely an adjunct. The owner, MR. SMITH, was unable to give me more than a two minutes' interview, but in that time I was able to secure his photograph, the address of his workshop or factory, which was in another continent, and some particulars of his income and expenditure.

Many of us have had an eye on the particular egg-store which he has watched so closely, some may have read reports of the condition of life of the men and women who assist in filling his basket, one such at least has appeared in an English monthly Review, and some may have sung hymns to the accompaniment of an organ provided by his munificence. So, even in England, there may be a few who have a nodding acquaintance with MR. SMITH. One of his thousand operatives with whom I struck up an acquaintance is called Smith. He is also on my list. His two-roomed home is described as a "back to back," and he has a wife and seven children.

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The next person on my list is a MR. BROWN, jam manufacturer of Tokyo, who said, when shewing me over his factory : “ *You cannot understand my business until you grasp the fact that I am God Almighty in this place.*” (I regret to say that this sentence is not an invention ; it was used to me in unhappy seriousness by a knight of industry now living.) Next on the list is a pregnant woman, called Maria, whom he employs for 56 hours a week in stacking 14lb. jars of pulp in pyramids in his stock cellars.

To this strange company comes the benevolent figure of an Argentine philanthropist, whose name of Robinson appears on all hoardings and most subscription lists, whose factories provide not only wages but swimming baths, libraries, and model dwellings for his “ hands,” and whose juvenile workers only work half-time in the shop, being compelled to attend the factory school for the other half. He is accompanied by a Miss Packer, a white-aproned and industrious female, taken haphazard from the many

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hundreds he employs ; she spends her days in neatly packing sweets into cardboard boxes.

My friend, Miss Buyer, has consented to represent the purchasers of the kinds of things which these ladies and gentlemen produce. Let us assume that they make all the things which Miss Buyer buys and knows to be not so good as they should be, namely, jam, bread, clothes, sweets, many small household utensils and tools, possibly beer, and almost certainly butter. Her great grandparents did not buy these things, they made them. Of course she buys other things, such as cocoa and enamelled baths, with " hot and cold " taps, which her great grandparents had no use for. But Miss Buyer cannot obtain the Georgian beer which was as much home brewed as the Georgian tea, and the bread which came from the same oven as the roast beef, and the jam for which Georgian fingers once picked the fruit. She buys the inferior article of the factory to save herself the trouble of producing a better one,

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Now let us look carefully at the faces of these ladies and gentlemen ; not at their pass books, not at their rent books, but at their eyes, with a passing glance at their mouths and the colour of their skins.

We have probably read of the misery of Maria, of the greed of MR. BROWN, of the saintly conduct of MR. ROBINSON, of Smith's drinking habits, and of MR. SMITH'S magnificent estates. Not a little has been written about Miss Packer, though she figures less dramatically in the history of the time. Miss Buyer has always been elusive and rather shy. And yet, if our reading has been supplemented by social intercourse with them, we shall know of occasions when Maria has been merry, MR. BROWN prodigal, MR. ROBINSON in a bad temper, Smith sober, MR. SMITH worried, and Miss Packer positively flighty.

Smith fills many parts ; he is the standing example for those who prove Poverty to be caused by drink, and he is also used to demonstrate that drink is the result of Poverty. We will

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not remember these things for or against him, Smith's past shall be forgiven him, Smith's clothing and cleanliness shall not be compared with MR. SMITH'S clothing and cleanliness ; we will merely ask ourselves what we see in his eyes. Does he not share with the others the dull submissive look one would expect to find in the eyes of more or less humanly treated slaves ? The eyes of MR. BROWN, who likened himself • unto God, are indeed so expressionless that they might be of glass, but for the rest none looks miserable and none looks happy ; if any may be said to look contented they are Smith, Maria, and Miss Packer.

We wonder whether these people ever play, whether they can be merry and dance on occasion. Smith told me that he had to have a glass or two before he could forget himself, and he has a legitimate grievance against the police for locking him up at the moment a new life was opening out before him. I have listened to MR. ROBINSON addressing a P.S.A. and I believe him when

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he tells me that his work on the first day of the week makes him more Mondayish even than his employees. Miss Packer likes to put on her smart clothes and go to the music hall or picture palace, Miss Buyer whispers to me that she does the same, though preferring church or the theatre. Maria, having forgotten the days when she cared for fine clothes, still enjoys the black which she gets for her babies' funerals, and the gin which enables her to shine in argument with the next flat. MR. BROWN, who is also an advertiser like MR. ROBINSON, tells me that he must keep a yacht, a stable and several motor cars as success depends upon creating an impression.

There is one peculiarity common to the pleasures of all ; each of them expects to buy his amusement. Most of them also expect to be entertained by other people, and hardly ever dream of entertaining themselves. The drinkers do expect the fun to come from within, they take alcohol to unlock the door of self, but otherwise our friends seem ever

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dependent on the work of others for their recreation, that is they look upon their pleasures not as their own business but as the concern of somebody else. Pleasure has its price.

So much for their recreation—what do we find about their work? The first noticeable fact is that they do too much of it. They work as though human labour were something to be reduced to the common denominator of the machine. Miss Buyer continues to encourage them, through her purchases, in doing what she believes to be idle, foolish and wasteful work. “Wasteful,” she suggests, “because the creative faculty of man is hardly used in it. In any one of the firms here represented the initiative, the creative impulse is confined to one or two, while from the hundreds it is neither looked for nor wanted. There is surely something wrong in the man who refuses to recognise the divine capacity of other men to create? Surely in a normal human society each one would be able to have some business to mind, each would be able to create something with

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his hands in which he could express himself and give himself ? ”

Miss Buyer, you perceive, is distressed about the “ system.” I sympathise with her. Last year Smith’s brother, who is a cabinet maker and a Trade Unionist, was out of work for two months. I happened to call upon him at the end of that time ; I was shown into the front parlour. “ What business, Smith,” I said, “ have you to furnish a room on the hire purchase system ? ” Beyond some neat repairs in the kitchen dresser and sitting-room table there was no sign of his calling in the house. “ Your tables, chairs, bedsteads, washstands, sideboard are of the cheapest and most unsuitable and unstable kind which the factories produce.” We had quite a row about it, but I am still convinced that if he had known his own business or been his own master he could not have been idle for two months in the same house as that furniture. He had never thought of his own business in his anxiety to be hired to mind the business of somebody else.

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But if Smith and his brother have forgotten their own business, much more has MR. SMITH forgotten his. He used to mind his egg-buying and selling and, according to the standard of his contemporaries, he did this successfully ; he now turns his hand to another business altogether—the disposal of money, and at that he is not successful.

MR. SMITH and the other employers did at one time mind their businesses. The trouble began when they found it more profitable to mind their overseers.

My judgment of master and man in this matter of work is that they would have naturally done good and useful work, that they would have found their own capacities, and used them, had they revered the thing which they desired to make, or if they had revered the person for whom their work was designed. I see no sign of reverence in their work, I see only signs of haste—when there is no hurry ; of skimping, while the forests of the world are still growing ; of imitation and pretence, when the straightforward

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article would be more useful. So that even if I agreed that it were necessary for them to work at the work they do, I should hold that they do it badly.

In their work and their recreation there is no essential difference between these various creatures of modern progress. But there is an essential difference in their interpretation of charity.

MR. SMITH gives to big things like Town Councils, and collective institutions like the Church, he does not dispose of his wealth to individuals and, in a sense, is hardly influenced by individual appeals. He will give according to certain conditions and for certain types of things like organs and public libraries.

MR. ROBINSON is more open to the personal appeal, but, again, as he can give in large amounts, he gives to institutional rather than to personal concerns, and he gives to causes and supports propaganda. MR. BROWN gives when he sees an opportunity for advertisement, and then not willingly. But Smith

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gives money and food to his neighbours, if they are destitute, and drink at any time. Maria will act as midwife, at a nominal fee, for the women who normally compete with her for the small wages of the factory. Smith and Maria never give to collective institutions, except to the Saturday Hospital Fund for personal benefits, but they will give, on occasion, half their possessions to a friend fallen on evil days.

We have briefly considered Smith, Brown, Robinson and Co. from three aspects, that of their leisure, their work and their charity. These considerations do not indicate to me that one man is more responsible than another for the dull lives all these people live. Dull from the outsider's point of view ; I have no doubt that each has his reward. I deny that MR. SMITH is responsible for Smith, that MR. BROWN'S 9s. a week to Maria give him any responsibility for her moral or material welfare, that MR. ROBINSON is responsible for the pure or the vicious thoughts of his employees any more than he

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is responsible for Miss Packer's magenta hat band. I deny that Miss Buyer is responsible for the way in which the goods she buys are produced. But I assert that none of these people is without responsibility, and woe to them in so far as through them the offence cometh.

I assert that MR. SMITH is an ass in so far as he has produced bad things and encouraged the production of bad things, in so far as he has sought and found his reward in the things of this world, and in so far as he thinks he can benefit anybody by giving him a library or an organ. I assert that Smith is an ass for hiring himself to MR. SMITH. I assert that the world has no real use for MR. BROWN, and would be richer without him and his jam ; and when he takes the hint I hope he will be joined by MR. ROBINSON. As to Maria . . . I have so great an affection for Maria that I fear my judgment may be unduly biassed, but I assert that it is her mistaken altruism which has landed her in the jam factory, and I do

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attach some blame to her for the discomforts which are consequent upon a district visit to her room, though, of course, it is partly the fault of the visitor for going there.

Miss Packer and her like are an unmitigated nuisance, and I have no more to say about them. I am sorry for Miss Buyer ; I think that she would make so much more use of her life if she bought fewer and better things, and if she made something herself ; incidentally she would become a new woman if she would only scrub out the scullery twice a week and polish her own silver.

But has she any business to mind the business of others until she has minded her own ? Has she any right to give money to an unemployed charwoman while she wears cheap clothes ?

She “ buys cheap ” and not little, in order to be charitable ; it does not seem to have occurred to her to “ buy good ” in order to be just.

* * * *

Arising out of the last and other paragraphs

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the following conversation may be recorded :

AUTHOR : I don't rule out all idea of one man doing good to another. After a man has done his job to the best of his ability, which is his first contribution to the well-being of others, he may have a little time in which to preach the gospel.

ENGRAVER : That is my feeling, but I am not sure that you have made it clear.

AUTHOR : Possibly not ; my chief concern is to remind men that their gospel must be manifested in their work.

ENGRAVER : I agree, at the same time a man may be better than he knows without being half so good as he thinks he is. He can always cheer himself with the prospect of some margin of energy for altruism !

AUTHOR : There is always time to help a lame dog over a stile.

(The rest of the conversation, having to do with priests, pumping stations and shop-keeping, may be incorporated in another edition.)

CHAPTER V

AN INTERLUDE

NO. 27 dislikes the Insurance Act ; I fear we have often denounced it to one another, wondering whether in passive resistance we should find a legitimate relief to our feelings or whether we should continue to grin and bear it. We usually conclude that even conformity with the Insurance Act need not deprive us of personal freedom. It is odd that one should be able to obey commandments of men, which seem to give wrong directions, without allowing oneself to be misdirected. So we do not withhold tribute from Cæsar ; let him take what he will. . . . yet there are some services he might demand which we should feel unable to give. Where is the line to be drawn between obedience and opposition ?

A man may hold that the ten commandments are more binding upon him than any

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enactment of Parliament, and be cheerfully ready to suffer the consequences. In fact there is a point for every man beyond which he will not go, no matter how insistent Cæsar may be. He will not murder his mother, he will not desert his wife, he will not steal, he will not bear false witness. It is fair to say that most men recognise a law of God which is above the law of the State.

Cæsar must demand of his subjects all that he considers it is necessary for the community to have, it is also inevitable that a few will not be able to respond. Conscription for military service is a case in point. Conscience is not the only difficulty involved in the matter of conscription, but it is the most important.

Cæsar goes to war, are we to be compelled to take up arms ?

No matter how popular the battle, there will be two distinct minorities against it : the minority which cannot respond for conscience' sake, and the minority who will not

An Interlude

because of their fearfulness or greed. The compulsory presence of either of these groups in the field would surely hinder and not help the man of war. The "coward" group is of no use to anybody at any time, it may be left to enjoy the press which caters for it. The "conscience" group has obviously no right to interfere with the conscience of others. If it is not meddlesome, why meddle with it? If it became the majority Cæsar could not wage war, unless he used the instrument of conscription when he would be attacking the conscience or life of his own people.

The *DEVIL* does not condescend to mention such difficulties ; he disposes of conscription in his usual assertive style. He writes :

"No one having survived the first shock of the Great War but will regret that England had not previously copied her neighbours in having a conscript army. I have never been able to understand why a nation so advanced as to be able to compel her citizens to go to her schools, to submit to inspection, to pay taxes for personal services such as those rendered by the Insurance,

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Employers' Liability, Public Health, Old Age Pension and Minimum Wage Acts—so advanced in the art of conscription for home requirements, should not have applied the principle for her defence.

But, O *DEVIL*, perhaps the men who have successfully forced their will upon the poor in domestic matters, who have advocated compulsory cleansing, compulsory abstinence, compulsory education, in short, compulsory happiness, may feel a little uncomfortable at the thought of compulsory training for war! They see that a certain amount of pain, suffering and death will attend the use of arms and they feel as though they were being asked to institute compulsory unhappiness. But it is strange that they feel so alarmed at an extension of their favourite principle of compulsion. The *DEVIL* continues :

“ It is impossible to maintain that while the difficulties of war exist they should not be forced on the community as a whole. The older military man who held that he could make better use of an army which was composed of men who had chosen

An Interlude

the practice of arms as their profession, who claimed that in such a class he would be sure of initiative and resource, bravery and dash, is condemned out of his own mouth. These virtues are not wanted in the rank and file ; their practice would cause endless confusion and lead inevitably to disaster. The issue of war is determined by the number of lives which the successful side is prepared to lose and therefore by the number of men it can put into the field. If group A. has ten million men to the fifteen million of group B. it is merely a question of time before the smaller number is defeated. The appliances of war have become so international that the equipment of A. and B. is virtually the same, it is frequently provided from the same factories."

"E's a bit sawcastic at times," said No. 27, "but e don't si abaht the noospipers tykin the plice of th' Army."

I was able to show No. 27 that he was not altogether correct. The *DEVIL* does not indeed rely upon the newspaper as wholeheartedly as is often supposed. He says, for

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instance : “ *The daily press cannot always be trusted, for, in order to sell, a paper must please the public, and the public can never be absolutely relied upon to desire the right things.*”

This is a handsome concession to democracy. But the *DEVIL* is not without his ideas about the use of newspapers : “ *It is all very well to select the news the public wants to read and to report the events in which it will be interested, but this is but an elementary use of the power of the press. Let the editor entertain the public, let him supply competitions, such as sleeping in paper bags or eating pea cakes, let him be a purveyor of news—but let him not forget that the power he will thus acquire over his readers must be used to further larger ends.*”

This is another illustration of the *DEVIL'S* desire to replace the idea of service by that of control. He would amuse his public so that from obedience in harmless ways it might be encouraged to submit to further organisation and, at the right moment, be ready to worship at the “ right ” altars. The *DEVIL* would be gratified to find a newspaper

An Interlude

proprietor dictating to the government, appointing its ministers and exercising other prerogatives of the Crown without having the burden of the Crown's responsibilities, for in such would he recognise the Superman who is to act as his vice-president.

I am not inviting the reader to follow the intricacies of the conversation between No. 27 and myself, of which the above is a kind of summary. But No. 27's last remark on this occasion was to the following effect :

“ An oos ter spot these ere soopermen ov the press. It's loike the Burry council, there's someone as gives the orders, but Gawd knows oo. We ave to back the oss not knowin is pedigree nor oos up.”

On my way to the station I purchased a copy of the *Daily Mail*, a large part of a page of which was given up to an advertisement which invited the public “to promote the cause of the Motor Omnibus.” This seemed so suitable a comment on the namelessness

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of these days, the matter which had troubled No. 27, that I sent it to him. I implored him as a public servant to befriend the despised 'bus, to rescue at least one from the perils of the street, and tend it in his garden. I hinted that he might invest, say 5s., in a company with such worthy objects. To which he most suitably replied by sending me a florist's price list with a cross against the following advertisement :

Perpetual Flowering Malmaisons.

PERPETUAL FLOWERING MALMAISON CARNATIONS.



PROGRESS.

New times demand new measures and new men. The world advances, and in time outgrows the laws that in our fathers' days were best: and doubtless, after us, some purer scheme will be shaped out by wiser men than we, made wiser by the steady growth of truth.

The progress we have made in raising new varieties of Perpetual Flowering Malmaisons, will be welcomed by all growers of the old-time honoured Souv. de la Malmaison. The difficult task of flowering this old class of Malmaison at all seasons (contrary to nature), has proved one of great uncertainty, whereas with the new perpetual Flowering Malmaison it is natural to flower perpetually, producing during an average season, 9 to 12 blooms per plant, whereas the old Malmaison only produces one flower the first year.

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This appeal was enforced by the declaration :

“ We entertain no personal obligation to you or us, solely striving to further the interests of the flower.”

Whether one decide to help on the poor carnation or the blundering 'bus, he will be perfectly aware that the solicitude of these unknown philmechanists is chiefly for their own pockets.

But I was on my way to the Tube, where I want you to accompany me that you may share the pleasure I had in recognising my big Chestertonian friend as I ascended in the Holborn lift. He was leaning on his stick, gazing in rapture at an advertisement. Looking under his shoulder I read :

.
: H A V E Y O U H E A R D :
: T H E R E V . J . J O N E S :
: E V E R Y S U N D A Y 11 A N D 7 :
: C o m e a n d s i t w i t h u s & b e :
: S A V E D . :
.

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There was some quotation from Shakespeare, Lamb, or Wordsworth which I have forgotten :

“ It's rather rum,” said my friend, “ when parsons begin to advertise in the lift.”

“ That depends upon the direction of the ‘ lift , ’ ” said I.

“ And here they have it both ways,” said he.

Next morning I received a postcard with the following lines carefully inscribed upon the front, while the back was occupied with a drawing of a reverend gentleman supplying “ pass in ” checks to a queue at the vestry door.

A MAN IS NOT KNOWN BY HIS WORKS BUT BY HIS ADVERTISEMENT

Have you heard the Reverend Jones,
Sunday mornings at eleven,
Force, in sweet and tear-dimmed tones,
The sinner into Heaven ?

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Kings rent our pews, vacate their thrones
On Sunday nights at seven,
Queens and princes flock to Jones
(No government would float its loans
Without a word from Mr. Jones),
He's leading line in gramophones,
And IT for reaching Heaven.

FOR SITTINGS APPLY

To _____



CHAPTER VI

THE FIRE OF THE FUTURE

IN his book called *The Fire of the Future* the *DEVIL* pictures the race of man entering its final heritage. The old order is consumed; superstitions, associations, prejudices, nationalities, boundaries of all kinds, narrow personal affections, trouble, pain, sorrow and all difficulties are swept into the furnace.

The *DEVIL* has no use for restraint, he recognises no law of limitations. I am inclined to think that his expulsion from Paradise may be attributed to this lack of perception. He might have seen, one would suppose, that no man could be free until he had learnt the limits of his freedom, that an infant could not be born without being confined first in the womb, that children could not play without definite things to handle or definite ideas to express, that craftsmen could not be free of or in their trade until

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they had mastered their tools ; that even then a carpenter might seldom be free to use his chisel as a screwdriver. The tradition of any craft or trade is the tradition of respect for limitations, not of an escape from them. Yet the *DEVIL* writes :

“ No wonder the world is in chains when so many refuse to open their eyes to the gifts which Science has laid at their feet ; the elements are still unharnessed, the powers of the universe are there to save the use of tools, to abolish labour, to sweep away drudgery—and they are allowed to run to waste.”

His whole mind is set upon what “must be” when we are finally alive to his teaching

“ The Future is full of promise, the lumber of tradition has been destroyed, the curse of precedent and the shackles of the past have rusted away, already man opens his eyes to the new age. But ere that arrives he has yet more things to destroy and more to reform.

“ The sentimentalist is so often on my side that it sounds ungracious to warn him that there is no room for sentiment, no room, that is, for

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petty and conflicting personal sentiments. How many men who might have lived efficient lives have handicapped themselves with a wife and family, how many women who might have been mothers have been deprived of their chance through a sentimental prejudice in favour of matrimony, how many have remained poor merely through a sentiment in regard to the so-called property of others. Property is good, marriage is often necessary and desirable, but neither should stand in the way of progress, neither should hinder organisation, neither should be more than conveniences either to make the road of life more easy or to accelerate the rate of progress.

“ There is much rubbish then to be burnt before the broadening future is conjured into being. But the day is much more near than ever yet in the world's history save during a few brief years of the Roman Empire. The day will dawn when a man shall be compelled to do right from the cradle to the grave. That is the object of all progress and social reform. Man has to decide whether he will do this democratically,

The Fire of the Future

that is, whether he will elect the controlling forces in the new Utopia by ballot, or whether he will do it autocratically and rear a permanent official or organising class for the purpose. I am not prejudiced in the matter, he can make his own choice ; in fact, a compromise between the two would perhaps work most efficiently.

“ The stupendous truth is at last within man’s reach that the many can compel the one to do what is wanted of him. The uncertainties of the past are well nigh over, the poor harassed mortal obeying first this instinct and then that, following this prophet one day, swearing fealty to another on the next, struggling with his miserable little codes of selfish honour ; suffering hardships and enduring pain which he need not have suffered, agitating himself over what he flattered himself to be his responsibilities—for him the golden age, the age of certainties and success has come.”

He then descends to our human level again, and explains some of the difficulties which yet have to be escaped :

“ There will be clashing between conflicting

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interests for a time. For instance, men want Peace, universal peace and prosperity. A laudable aim which some seek to further by the short cut of The Hague or Norman Angel, some by State control of armaments, some by a thousand submarines or as many Zeppelins, some by conscript armies, some by conscript labour, and some Socialists by conscript capital. Again, it is of no moment which of these systems be adopted as all their advocates are agreed upon the main principle, which is to force their wishes on other people. Much time and trouble would be saved if this common aim could be understood as men would have merely to decide who was to enforce the compulsory peace they all desire."

He avoids the question of evil rather dexterously ; in all his writings he pretends to uphold what is good—but at the end of this book he finds that he cannot altogether escape some statement about it. It is coupled with a veiled and pathetic excuse for himself which may be missed by the reader in the maudlin sophistry of the final verses.

" The battle in the world is not between good

and evil but between efficiency or progress and inefficiency or reaction, between the would-be powerful and the acquiescent.

“ There is no sin, evil is a delusion, a myth which Science has answered and dispersed. Even members of the religious organisations have appreciated this fact, they do not attack evil, they denounce the occasional evidences of weakness in some of their fellow citizens.”

If the *DEVIL* had missed out the words “ they do not attack evil,” this last sentence of his would have been a correct statement of a present weakness in many churches. The business of the Church is to attack evil, and it is still her business, but among a few of her members there is a dangerous habit to confuse the evil in a person with the place in which or by which that evil may be expressed. We are told, for instance, that there is evil in ^{the}drink, ⁱⁿ public houses, in money, and in environment. Social reformers are thought to be wise when they seek to regulate wages, food, drink, housing accommodation, and so forth, when they would be

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considered foolish if they began to remodel the kennel of a mad dog. Because we can so often hide evil by regulation we are apt to forget that we can only overcome it with good.

But it is time to dispose of this "fire" to which the *DEVIL* is looking forward so eagerly. I have quoted enough to indicate its high explosive qualities. As you consider the tragedy of the closing paragraph, remember that the *DEVIL* has nowhere stated either the object of the heaven in which he is so anxious to be reinstated, or the reason which makes him desirous of driving us into it. A witless and aimless *DEVIL*—and yet he beats the best of men at times.

"The day is not far distant when I shall come into my own, when I shall no longer need to shelter behind aliases nor hesitate among abstractions. I shall be acclaimed as the long-lost leader of mankind; man will be in the heaven which I shall have won for him and through him. I know the road, for I have travelled by it. I came along the length of it without a halt, knowing not where I should arrive, never

The Fire of the Future

dreaming that I should happen on this Kingdom of the world. A great English poet has already worded the glory of my return.

“ ‘ Out of the strain of the Doing
Into the peace of the Done ;
Out of the thirst of Pursuing
Into the rapture of Won ’ ”

“ But let us not waste time and energy, the road is broad and easily to be found. Come, brother man, come——

*“ Register, organised brother,
Fit to the Regular Plan,
Obey your Municipal Mother,
You are the first superman.”*

!!!!

CHAPTER VII

A CONCLUSION

THE reader may imagine my surprise when my wife came in to tell me that the *DEVIL* was in the front garden. I was chiefly surprised because no one seemed at all alarmed about it. He might have been the postman. But it was the *DEVIL*, and in two minutes he was on the opposite side of my table as unconcerned as he was in his own office. I quite forgot about Dunstan, and there are no inkstains on my wall as a record of the visit. I have, however, notes of our conversation. He held up a press copy of this book.

DEVIL : You are very clever.

AUTHOR : Not at all ; the book is more full of your cleverness than mine.

DEVIL : I mean in taking advantage of the war with Germany to publish a few pickings of my stuff. It may put people against me.

A Conclusion

AUTHOR : I hope so.

DEVIL ; *I knew it was merely spite.*

AUTHOR : Or distrust.

DEVIL : *And when have I let you down ?*

AUTHOR : Is there any advantage to be gained by this conversation ?

DEVIL : *We ARE on a high horse ! None. At least not to me, but to the few people who will read the book—yes.*

AUTHOR : How so ?

DEVIL : *If you will put your own case they can judge between us.*

AUTHOR : That is easily answered—I haven't a case.

DEVIL : *Ah—as I thought ! . . . But you have left an impression of one.*

AUTHOR : Of what kind ?

DEVIL : *A most unpleasant kind. An ordinary reader would suppose that you did not approve short-cuts, facilities of any kind, organisation, beneficence in our rulers and obedience in ourselves. He would think that your idea was to put difficulties in his way, lengthen his*

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journeys, disorganise his city, and legalise every kind of insubordination.

AUTHOR : And if he will suppose that, what harm will the book do to you ? Where does Germany come in ?

DEVIL : *It comes in because the reader will vaguely attribute to me the distasteful impression for which you are responsible.*

AUTHOR : Perhaps we differ as to the intelligence of the reader ?

DEVIL : *You know as well as I that a reader never has any intelligence.*

AUTHOR : If it comes to that, has the author ?

DEVIL : *Enough to be fair to me if he quotes my works.*

AUTHOR : (naturally relenting) : My dear DEVIL, do you not see that I have not made a case but asked a question ? It is this : Is the State, or the employer, or the workman, or the consumer, or the foreigner, or the climate, or God, or you, responsible either for the job or the mess which a man makes of his life ?

A Conclusion

DEVIL : But you have an idea of the answer you would give ?

AUTHOR : Well, my answer is MAN.

DEVIL (looking pleased) : So you are an Atheist.

AUTHOR : To cut this interview short, I will say this much of my belief :

I. Man did not, I think, make the world, so I conclude that a power which is not man did so. I say that God has supplied the world to man and man to the world.

II. The things I find in the world are jolly good things—which is not true of many of the ideas floating round.

III. The things are partially hidden and have to be discovered before they can be used ; in other words, a man must work for his living.

IV. There isn't a thing, not even a blade of grass, which is not full of directions in the observance of which a man will discover its right use.

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V. It is clear that some men use and others abuse the things of the world ; there are not only good and bad men, but each man may do good as he may do evil.

VI. You may remember an episode in which a Man chose to do good and was subsequently crucified—yet He had had the opportunity to acquire lordship over the dominion of the world.

VII. Though this must have seemed to you inexpressibly foolish there still remains in most men a preference for the risk and adventure of the Cross and a contempt for dull and material prosperity.

DEVIL : In brief, you believe in free will and crucifixion—is it not a ridiculous view of the universe to suppose that the Creator would offer any goal to his creatures except an attractive and pleasant one ?

AUTHOR : It is possible we may differ on what we mean by an attractive goal.

DEVIL : I don't know ; health for instance. Christ cured men of their diseases.

A Conclusion

AUTHOR : But not all men, only those who came to Him believing that He could give what they wanted, which was perhaps not health but life.

DEVIL : *Don't begin another sermon.*

AUTHOR (a little heated) : I am not. Christ didn't cure all the lepers in Palestine or give sight to all the blind beggars of Jerusalem. He wasn't a walking clinic. He didn't organise a society to prevent leprosy or any other physical defect. He allowed another Society to organise itself in His name to overcome spiritual defect, but He never *compelled* the most miserable sinner either to join that Society or to be saved otherwise. He never prevented any man from doing evil, perhaps because it might also have prevented him from doing good, but He offers all the fun of fearlessness, all the enthusiasm and excitement of life, and you offer all that is dull, morbid and dreary with your stuffy organisations and flabby efficiencies.

DEVIL : *That is a matter of opinion.*

AUTHOR : It is NOT.

The Devil's Devices

The *DEVIL* he rode across the earth.

In that hour

Wherever he passed, the song of mirth,

The sorrow at death, the joy at birth,

The labour of people on the earth,

Turned sour.

The *DEVIL* he rides, and Christ He rides

“ an ass.”

One to “ success ” where sin resides,

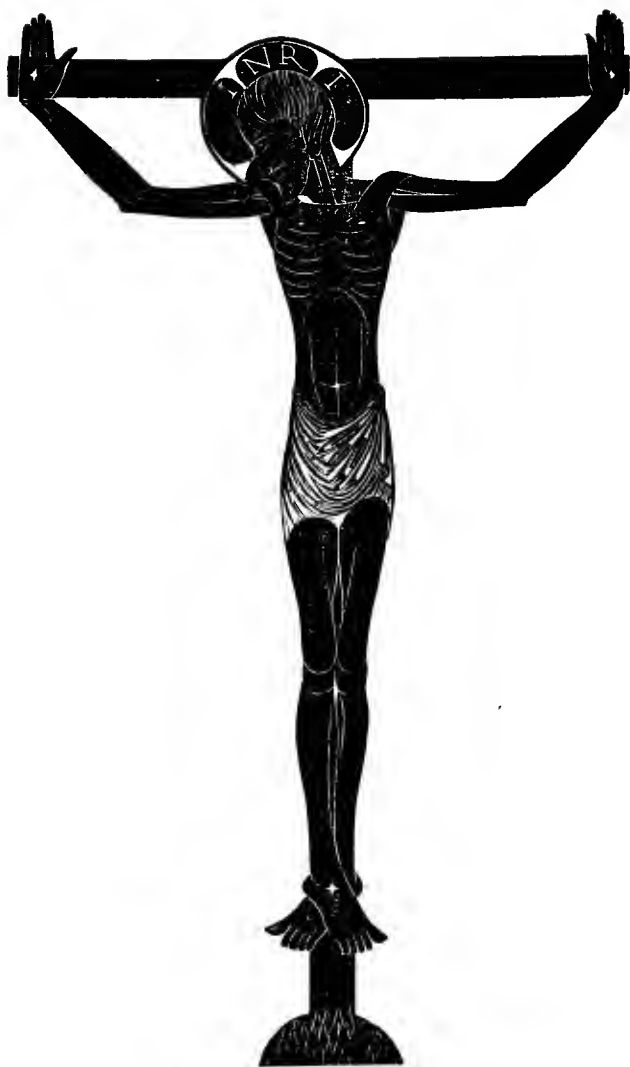
ONE to a Cross where gladness hides,

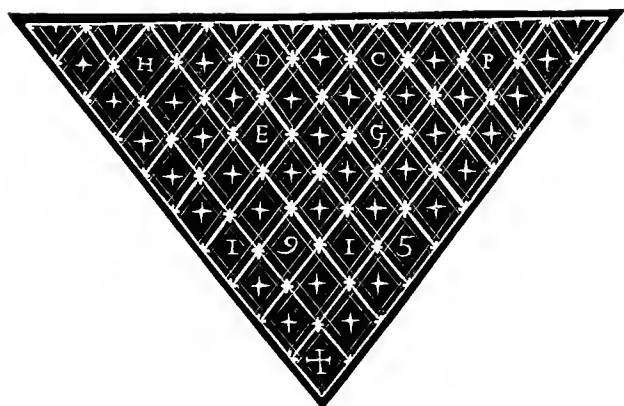
And we are busy taking sides,

Alas,

That man should doubt in his choice of
guides.







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Trade Agents : Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co.,
Ltd., 4 Stationers' Hall Court, E.C.

*Printed by The Westminster Press
411a Harrow Road, London, W.*

