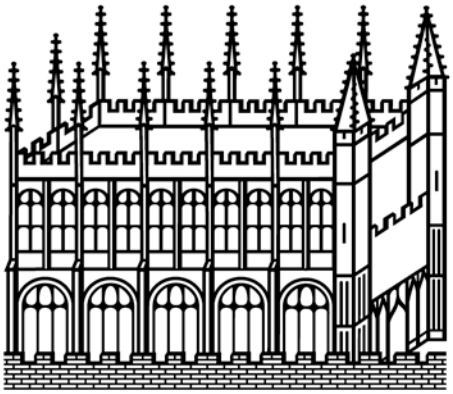
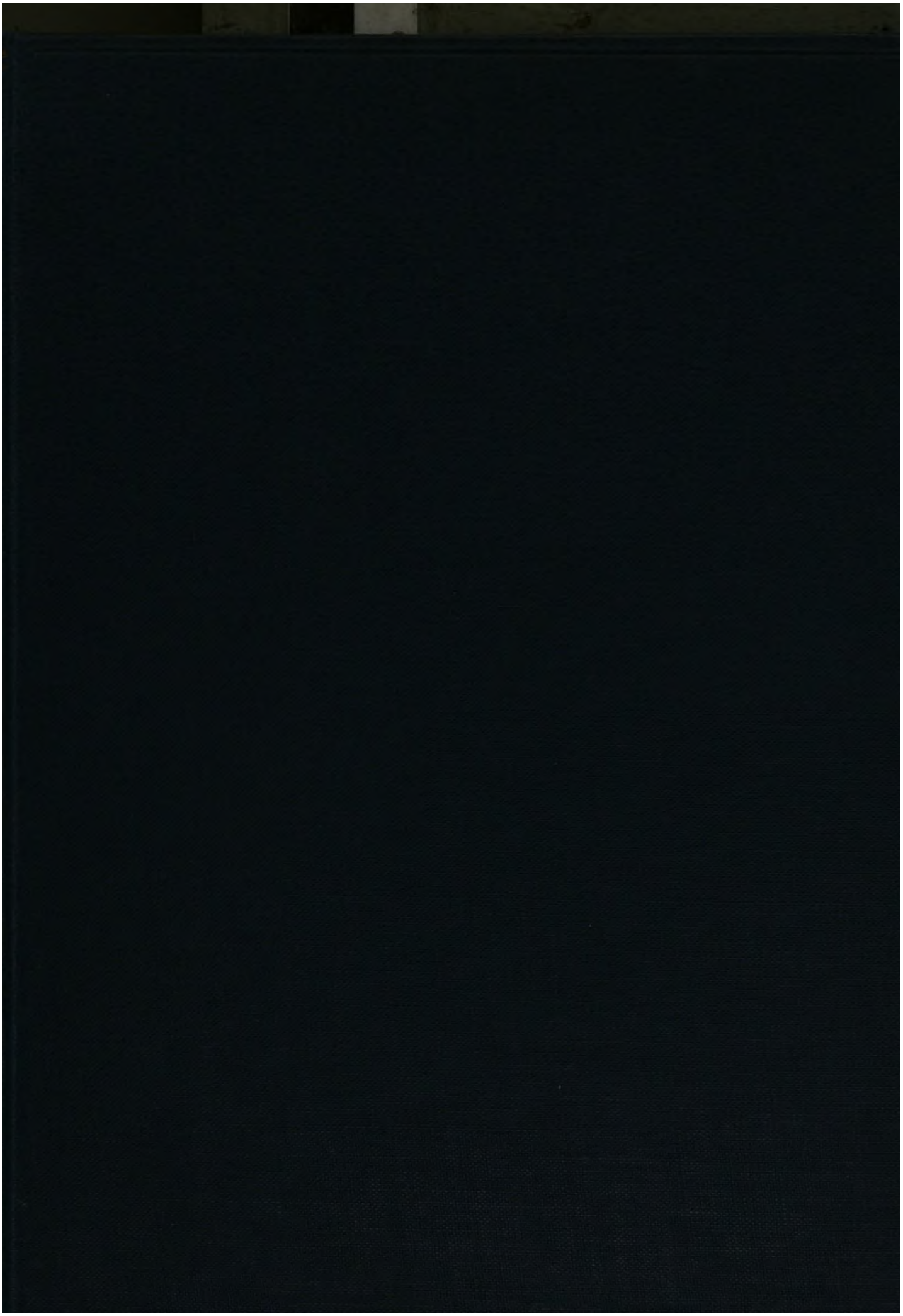
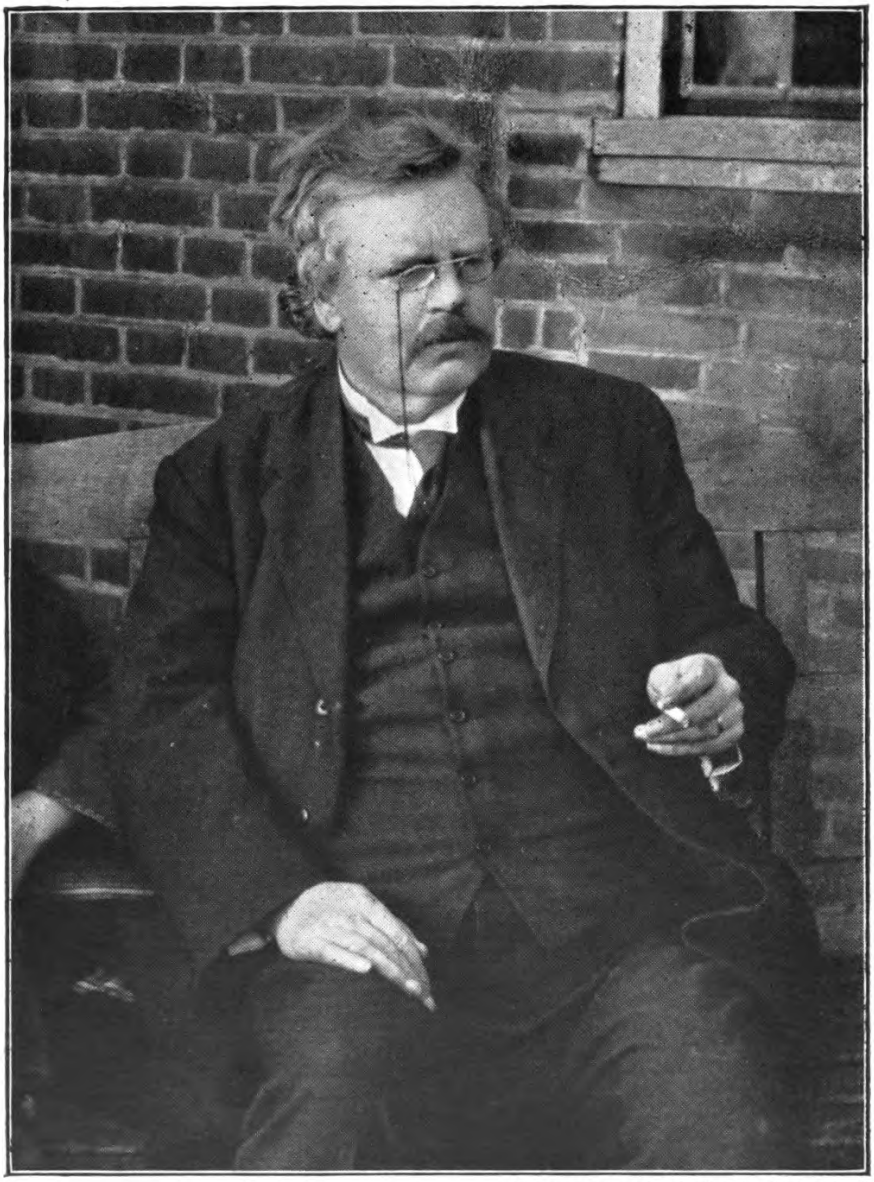




A CHESTERTON CATHOLIC ANTHOLOGY



Camera Portrait by E. O. Hoppé

G. K. CHESTERTON

A CHESTERTON CATHOLIC ANTHOLOGY

Compiled and Edited by

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Author of "G. K. Chesterton," etc.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

FATHER OWEN FRANCIS DUDLEY

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DEDICATION

TO

THE MONKS OF MOUNT MELLERAY,
CO. WATERFORD,

AMONGST WHOM I SPENT ONE OF THOSE FEW DAYS
WHICH ARE NOT QUITE FORGOTTEN

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE aim of this Anthology is a simple one. It has been my endeavour to select a number of quotations from certain of Mr. Chesterton's prose and verse which deal with religious subjects, and thus obtain some indication of the trend of his thought in matters of religion.

It is sometimes urged that a book of selections is unfair to an author in that his work undergoes a somewhat violent and damaging disintegration. But it should not be forgotten that, though this objection has a good deal of truth in it, there is another aspect which should not be ignored. A carefully chosen book of selections can present a number of thoughts that are in themselves valuable and complete, and which at the same time do not in any way misinterpret the main outlook of the author from whose work the quotations are taken.

In the prose selections chosen here I have selected those which contain a complete thought and which lose nothing by being separated from their companion thoughts. A title has been given to each

selection, with the hope of making it quite clear what, in my opinion, is the essence of the thought expressed by the selected quotation.

At the end of this volume there are appended a few notes which, I hope, may add to the interest and also to the value of the Anthology.

I have to thank Mr. Chesterton for kindly allowing this Anthology to be compiled and also for his interest in personally approving every selection used.

I am grateful to Father Owen Dudley for his courtesy in writing a Foreword to this volume.

My thanks are also due to the various publishers who have so readily allowed me to use the selected extracts.

PATRICK BRAYBROOKE.

GLOUCESTER HOUSE,
TETBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.
Summer, 1928.

FOREWORD

IF we criticise, disagree with, see red at what he says, or tie wet towels round our heads to read him, we are probably the very people Mr. Chesterton would prefer to write for—people to tantalise. Not that his intention is to tantalise, in the sense of annoy; rather to provoke fearless thinking and straight thinking. Most of us have to be provoked to think.

Mr. Chesterton is a successful provoker. Even when he rouses us, he does it in such a delightful, lovable and human way, that we forgive him—and love him. For people who do not love him (if such there are) there is no hope.

Forgive this preamble, and remember that it is not easy to write a Foreword to an Anthology without a knowledge of the accepted methods, of which I have none. An Anthology, the dictionary informs me, is a " choice collection of passages " from an author. If so, this collection of passages from Mr. Chesterton admirably fulfils the definition.

Mr. Braybrooke is to be congratulated on his choice.

The selection brings out the various facets of Mr. Chesterton's versatility. I understand that the main intention is to show his serious side. I may be wrong, but is not Mr. Chesterton often most serious when is he most humorous? Some of the passages quoted appear to bear this out.

The passages chosen, whether short or long, seem to me to be always of the right length. They convey, in each case, a complete idea. For this reason the Anthology is a dish of Chestertonian ideas, served up most appetisingly. Somehow, too, ideas extracted like this are more digestible. Our modern intellectual stomachs appreciate what can be gulped easily.

There is another value attached to the selection as well. Mr. Chesterton's penetration into the deeps of things is emphasised. Perhaps there has been deliberate choice for this purpose. Here is an example (from " Saint Francis "):

" The mystic who passes through the moment when there is nothing but God does in some sense

behold the beginningless beginnings in which there was really nothing else. He not only appreciates everything, but the nothing of which everything was made."

In places this Anthology makes excellent spiritual reading, especially where Mr. Chesterton's poems are quoted. It is gratifying to note the inclusion of his "Regina Angelorum"—one of the finest spiritual conceptions of Our Lady we could desire. It is splendid to have in our midst an eminent Catholic layman who can unburden his soul so unashamedly of lofty thoughts to the edifying of all who love the Faith.

"*Ad multos annos!*"

OWEN FRANCIS DUDLEY.

CONTENTS

VERSE SELECTIONS

APPENDICES

PROSE SELECTIONS

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI
WILLIAM COBBETT
THE EVERLASTING MAN

QUOTATIONS FROM "ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI"

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THE STIGMATA

TO represent Mount Alverno as the mere collapse of Francis is exactly like representing Mount Calvary as the mere collapse of Christ. Those mountains are mountains, whatever else they are, and it is nonsense to say (like the Red Queen) that they are comparative hollows or negative holes in the ground. They are quite manifestly meant to be culminations and landmarks. To treat the Stigmata as a sort of scandal, to be touched on tenderly but with pain, is exactly like treating the original five wounds of Jesus Christ as five blots on his character. You may dislike the idea of asceticism; you may dislike equally the idea of martyrdom; for that matter you may have an honest and natural dislike of the whole conception of sacrifice symbolised by the Cross. But if it is an intelligent dislike, you will still retain the capacity for seeing the point of a story; of the story of a martyr or even the story of a monk. You will not be able rationally to read the Gospel and regard the Crucifixion as an afterthought or an anticlimax or an accident in the life of Christ; it is obviously the point of the story, like the point of a sword, the sword that pierced the heart of the Mother of God.

ST FRANCIS: THE TRUE LOVER

A MAN will not roll in the snow for a stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being. He will not go without food in the name of something, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness. He will do things like this, or pretty nearly like this, under quite a different impulse. He will do these things when he is in love. The first fact to realise about St Francis is involved in the first fact with which the story starts; that when he said from the first that he was a Troubadour, and said later that he was a Troubadour of a newer and nobler romance, he was not using a mere metaphor, but understood himself much better than the scholars understand him. He was, to the last agonies of asceticism, a Troubadour. He was a Lover. He was a lover of God, and he was really and truly a lover of men; possibly a much rarer mystical vocation.

THE INEVITABILITY OF ROME

TO write history and hate Rome, both pagan and papal, is practically to hate nearly everything that has happened. It comes very near to hating humanity on purely humanitarian grounds. To dislike both the priest and the soldier, both the laurels of the warrior and the lilies of the saint, is to suffer a division from the mass of mankind for which not all the dexterities of the finest and most flexible of modern intelligences can compensate.

THE BROADENING OF BELIEF

MEN will not believe because they will not broaden their minds. As a matter of individual belief, I should of course express it by saying that they are not sufficiently catholic to be Catholic.

A PARADOX OF THE GOSPEL

THERE is a bias in man like the bias in the bowl; and Christianity was the discovery of how to correct the bias and therefore hit the mark. There are many who will smile at the saying; but it is profoundly true to say that the glad good news brought by the Gospel was the news of original sin.

CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM

NOTHING distinguishes paganism from Christianity so clearly as the fact that the individual thing called philosophy had little or nothing to do with the social thing called religion. Anyhow, it was no good to preach natural religion to people to whom nature had grown as unnatural as any religion. They knew much better than we do what was the matter with them and what sort of demons at once tempted and tormented them; and they wrote across that great space of history the text: "This sort goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

ST FRANCIS AND THE LEPER

IT was while St Francis was drifting, one may even say mooning, about the streets of Assisi and the fields outside the city wall, that an incident occurred to him which has not always been immediately connected with the business of the dreams, but which seems to me the obvious culmination of them. He was riding listlessly in some wayside place, apparently in the open country, when he saw a figure coming along the road towards him and halted; for he saw it was a leper. And he knew instantly that his courage was challenged, not as the world challenges, but as one would challenge who knew the secrets of the heart of a man. What he saw advancing was not the banner and spears of Perugia, from which it never occurred to him to shrink; not the armies that fought for the crown of Sicily, of which he had always thought as a courageous man thinks of mere vulgar danger. Francis Bernadone saw his fear coming up the road towards him; the fear that comes from within and not from without; though it stood white and horrible in the sunlight. For once in the long rush of his life his soul must have stood still. Then he sprang from his horse, knowing nothing between stillness and swiftness,

and rushed on the leper and threw his arms round him. It was the beginning of a long vocation of ministry among many lepers, for whom he did many services; to this man he gave what money he could and mounted and rode on. We do not know how far he rode, or with what sense of things around him; but it is said that when he looked back, he could see no figure on the road.

THUS that inverted vision, so much more bright and quaint and arresting, does bear a certain resemblance to the world which a mystic like St Francis sees every day. But herein is the essential part of the parable. Our Lady's Tumbler did not stand on his head *in order* to see flowers and trees as a clearer or quainter vision. He did not do so; and it would never have occurred to him to do so. Our Lady's Tumbler stood on his head to please Our Lady. If St Francis had done the same thing, as he was quite capable of doing, it would originally have been from the same motive; a motive of a purely supernatural thought. It would be *after* this that his enthusiasm would extend itself and give a sort of halo to the edges of all earthly things. This is why it is not true to represent St Francis as a mere romantic forerunner of the Renaissance and a revival of natural pleasures for their own sake. The whole point of him was that the secret of recovering the natural pleasures lay in regarding them in the light of a supernatural pleasure.

ASSISI UPSIDE DOWN

IF a man saw the world upside down, with all the trees and flowers hanging head downwards as in a pool, one effect would be to emphasise the idea of *dependence*. There is a Latin and literal connection; for the very word dependence only means hanging. It would make vivid the Scriptural text which says that God has hanged the world upon nothing. If St Francis had seen, in one of his strange dreams, the town of Assisi upside down, it need not have differed in a single detail from itself except in being entirely the other way round. But the point is this: that whereas to the normal eye the large masonry of its walls, or the massive foundations of its watch-towers and its high citadel, would make it seem safer and more permanent, the moment it was turned over, the very same weight would make it seem more helpless and more in peril. It is but a symbol; but it happens to fit the psychological fact. St Francis might love his little town as much as before, or more than before; but the nature of the love would be altered even in being increased. He might see and love every tile on the steep roofs, or every bird on the battlements; but he would see them all in a new and divine light of eternal danger

and dependence. Instead of being merely proud of his strong city because it could not be moved, he would be thankful to God Almighty that it had not been dropped; he would be thankful to God for not dropping the whole cosmos like a vast crystal to be shattered into falling stars. Perhaps St Peter saw the world so when he was crucified head downwards.

THE JOY OF ST FRANCIS

IT is commonly in a somewhat cynical sense that men have said, " Blessed is he that expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed." It was in a wholly happy and enthusiastic sense that St Francis said, " Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall enjoy everything." It was by this deliberate idea of starting from zero, from the dark nothingness of his own deserts, that he did come to enjoy even earthly things as few people have enjoyed them; and they are in themselves the best working example of the idea. For there is no way in which a man can earn a star or deserve a sunset. But there is more than this involved, and more indeed than is easily to be expressed in words. It is not only true that the less a man thinks of himself, the more he thinks of his good luck and of all the gifts of God. It is also true that he sees more of the things themselves when he sees more of their origin; for their origin is a part of them, and indeed the most important part of them.

THE SAINT AND THE GOOD MAN

THE transition from the good man to the saint is a sort of revolution; by which one for whom all things illustrate and illuminate God becomes one for whom God illustrates and illuminates all things. It is rather like the reversal whereby a lover might say at first sight that a lady looked like a flower, and say afterwards that all flowers reminded him of his lady. A saint and a poet standing by the same flower might seem to say the same thing; but indeed though they would both be telling the truth, they would be telling different truths. For one the joy of life is a cause of faith, for the other rather a result of faith.

THE RICH POVERTY OF THE FRANCISCAN

THE mystic who passes through the moment when there is nothing but God does in some sense behold the beginningless beginnings in which there was really nothing else. He not only appreciates everything, but the nothing of which everything was made. In a fashion he endures and answers even the earthquake irony of the Book of Job; in some sense he is there when the foundations of the world are laid, with the morning stars singing together and the sons of God shouting for joy. That is but a distant adumbration of the reason why the Franciscan, ragged, penniless, homeless and apparently hopeless, did indeed come forth singing such songs as might come from the stars of morning, and shouting, a son of God.

THE IMAGINATION OF ORDINARY LIFE

THAT we all depend in every detail, at every instant, as a Christian would say upon God, as even an agnostic would say upon existence and the nature of things, is not an illusion of imagination; on the contrary, it is the fundamental fact which we cover up, as with curtains, with the illusion of ordinary life. That ordinary life is an admirable thing in itself, just as imagination is an admirable thing in itself. But it is much more the ordinary life that is made of imagination than the contemplative life. He who has seen the whole world hanging on a hair of the mercy of God has seen the truth; we might almost say the cold truth. He who has seen the vision of his city upside down has seen it the right way up.

ST FRANCIS AND PLEASURE

THE whole point about St Francis of Assisi is that he certainly was ascetical and he certainly was not gloomy. As soon as ever he had been unhorsed by the glorious humiliation of his vision of dependence on the divine love, he flung himself into fasting and vigil exactly as he had flung himself furiously into battle. He had wheeled his charger clean round, but there was no halt or check in the thundering impetuosity of his charge. There was nothing negative about it; it was not a regimen or a stoical simplicity of life. It was not self-denial merely in the sense of self-control. It was as positive as a passion; it had all the air of being as positive as a pleasure. He devoured fasting as a man devours food. He plunged after poverty as men have dug madly for gold. And it is precisely the positive and passionate quality of this part of his personality that is a challenge to the modern mind in the whole problem of the pursuit of pleasure.

THE PERSONAL POWER OF ST FRANCIS

I HAVE said that St Francis deliberately did not see the wood for the trees. It is even more true that he deliberately did not see the mob for the men. What distinguishes this very genuine democrat from any mere demagogue is that he never either deceived or was deceived by the illusion of mass-suggestion. Whatever his taste in monsters, he never saw before him a many-headed beast. He only saw the image of God multiplied but never monotonous. To him a man was always a man and did not disappear in a dense crowd any more than in a desert. He honoured all men; that is, he not only loved but respected them all. What gave him his extraordinary personal power was this: that from the Pope to the beggar, from the Sultan of Syria in his pavilion to the ragged robbers crawling out of the wood, there was never a man who looked into those brown, burning eyes without being certain that Francis Bernadone was really interested in *him*, in his own inner individual life from the cradle to the grave; that he himself was being valued and taken seriously, and not merely added to the spoils of some social policy or the names in some clerical argument. Now for this particular moral and religious idea there is no external expression except courtesy.

THE FREEDOM OF THE FAITH

NO man who has been given the freedom of the Faith is likely to fall into those hole-and-corner extravagances in which later degenerate Franciscans, or rather Fraticelli, sought to concentrate entirely on St Francis as a second Christ, the creator of a new gospel. In fact, any such notion makes nonsense of every motive in the man's life; for no man would reverently magnify what he was meant to rival, or only profess to follow what he existed to supplant.

CHRIST AND ST FRANCIS

THE difference between Christ and St Francis was the difference between the Creator and the creature; and certainly no creature was ever so conscious of that colossal contrast as St Francis himself.

THE MIRROR OF CHRIST

ST FRANCIS is the mirror of Christ rather as the moon is the mirror of the sun. The moon is much smaller than the sun, but it is also much nearer to us; and being less vivid it is more visible. Exactly in the same sense St Francis is nearer to us, and being a mere man like ourselves is in that sense more imaginable.

THE HUMILITY OF ST FRANCIS

THE objection to an aristocracy is that it is a priesthood without a god. But in any case the service to which St Francis had committed himself was one which, about this time, he conceived more and more in terms of sacrifice and crucifixion. He was full of the sentiment that he had not suffered enough to be worthy even to be a distant follower of his suffering God. And this passage in his history may really be roughly summarised as the Search for Martyrdom.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CREDIBLE

EVERYBODY knows by this time that science has had its revenge on scepticism. The border between the credible and the incredible has not only become once more as vague as in any barbaric twilight; but the credible is obviously increasing and the incredible shrinking.

THE RATIONALISM OF MIRACLES

THE fixed points of faith and philosophy do indeed remain always the same. Whether a man believes that fire in one case could fail to burn, depends on why he thinks it generally does burn. If it burns nine sticks out of ten because it is its nature or doom to do so, then it will burn the tenth stick as well. If it burns nine sticks because it is the will of God that it should, then it might be the will of God that the tenth should be unburned. Nobody can get behind that fundamental difference about the reason of things; and it is as rational for a theist to believe in miracles as for an atheist to disbelieve in them. In other words, there is only one intelligent reason why a man does not *believe in miracles*, and that is that he does believe *in materialism*.

THE DEATH OF ST FRANCIS

A MAN might fancy that the birds must have known when it happened, and made some motion in the evening sky. As they had once, according to the tale, scattered to the four winds of heaven in the pattern of a cross at his signal of dispersion, they might now have written in such dotted lines a more awful augury across the sky. Hidden in the woods, perhaps, were little cowering creatures never again to be so much noticed and understood; and it has been said that animals are sometimes conscious of things to which man, their spiritual superior, is for the moment blind. We do not know whether any shiver passed through all the thieves and the outcasts and the outlaws, to tell them what had happened to him who never knew the nature of scorn. But at least in the passages and porches of the Portiuncula there was a sudden stillness, where all the brown figures stood like bronze statues, for the stopping of the great heart that had not broken till it held the world.

QUOTATION FROM "WILLIAM COBBETT"

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SAINTS AND MARTYRS

THE imperfect martyr may be judged by the perfect martyr, but not by anybody else; and the perfect martyr will probably have the charity as well as the patience of the perfect saint.

QUOTATIONS FROM " THE EVERLASTING MAN "

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TWO REMOTE IDEAS

ANY agnostic or atheist whose childhood has known a real Christmas has ever afterwards, whether he likes it or not, an association in his mind between two ideas that most of mankind must regard as remote from each other: the idea of a baby and the idea of unknown strength that sustains the stars. His instincts and imagination can still connect them, when his reason can no longer see the need of the connection; for him there will always be some savour of religion about the mere picture of a mother and a baby, some hint of mercy and softening about the mere mention of the dreadful name of God.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON

IF the world wanted what is called a non-controversial aspect of Christianity, it would probably select Christmas. Yet it is obviously bound up with what is supposed to be a controversial aspect (I could never at any stage of my opinions imagine why)—the respect paid to the Blessed Virgin. When I was a boy a more Puritan generation objected to a statue upon a parish church representing the Virgin and Child. After much controversy they compromised by taking away the Child. One would think that this was even more corrupted with Mariolatry, unless the mother was counted less dangerous when deprived of a sort of weapon. But the practical difficulty is also a parable. You cannot chip away the statue of a mother from all round that of a new-born child. You cannot suspend the new-born child in mid-air; indeed, you cannot really have a statue of a new-born child at all. Similarly, you cannot suspend the idea of a new-born child in the void or think of him without thinking of his mother. You cannot visit the child without visiting the mother; you cannot in common human life approach the child except through the mother. If we are to think of Christ in this aspect

at all, the other idea follows as it is followed in history. We must either leave Christ out of Christmas, or we must admit, if only as we admit it in an old picture, that those holy heads are too near together for the haloes not to mingle and cross.

THE LEVELS OF LIFE

CHRIST was not only born on the level of the world, but even lower than the world. The first act of the divine drama was enacted, not only on no stage set up above the sightseer, but on a dark and curtained stage sunken out of sight; and that is an idea very difficult to express in most modes of artistic expression. It is the idea of simultaneous happenings on different levels of life. Something like it might have been attempted in the more archaic and decorative medieval art. But the more the artists learned of realism and perspective, the less they could depict at once the angels in the heavens and the shepherds on the hills, and the glory of the darkness that was under the hills. Perhaps it could have been best conveyed by the characteristic expedient of some of the medieval guilds, when they wheeled about the streets a theatre with three stages one above the other, with heaven above the earth and hell under the earth. But in the riddle of Bethlehem it was heaven that was under the earth.

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE CHURCH

I DO not know what Confucius would have done with the Bambino, had it come to life in his arms as it did in the arms of St Francis. But this is true in relation to all the other religions and philosophies; it is the challenge of the Church. The Church contains what the world does not contain. Life itself does not provide as she provides for *all* sides of life. That every other single system is narrow and insufficient compared to this one—that is not a rhetorical boast; it is a real fact and a real dilemma. Where is the Holy Child amid the Stoics and the ancestor-worshippers? Where is Our Lady of the Moslems, a woman made for no man and set above all angels? Where is St Michael of the monks of Buddha, rider and master of the trumpets, guarding for every soldier the honour of the sword? What could St Thomas Aquinas do with the mythology of Brahmanism, he who set forth all the science and rationality and even rationalism of Christianity?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHURCH

THE philosophy of the Church is universal. The philosophy of the philosophers was not universal. Had Plato and Pythagoras and Aristotle stood for an instant in the light that came out of that little cave, they would have known that their own light was not universal. It is far from certain, indeed, that they did not know it already. Philosophy also, like mythology, had very much the air of a search. It is the realisation of this truth that gives its traditional majesty and mystery to the figures of the Three Kings; the discovery that religion is broader than philosophy and that this is the broadest of religions, contained within this narrow space. The Magicians were gazing at the strange pentacle with the human triangle reversed; and they have never come to the end of their calculations about it. For it is the paradox of that group in the cave that while our emotions about it are of childish simplicity, our thoughts about it can branch with a never-ending complexity. And we can never reach the end even of our own ideas about the child who was a father and the mother who was a child.

THE VERSATILITY OF CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS for us in Christendom has become one thing, and in one sense even a simple thing. But, like all the truths of that tradition, it is in another sense a very complex thing. Its unique note is the simultaneous striking of many notes: of humility, of gaiety, of gratitude, of mystical fear, but also of vigilance and of drama. It is not only an occasion for the peacemakers any more than for the merrymakers; it is not only a Hindu peace conference any more than it is only a Scandinavian winter feast. There is something defiant in it also; something that makes the abrupt bells at midnight sound like the great guns of a battle that has just been won. All this indescribable thing that we call the Christmas atmosphere only hangs in the air as something like a lingering fragrance or fading vapour from the exultant explosion of that one hour in the Judean hills nearly two thousand years ago.

THE CHURCH'S PICTURE OF CHRIST

WE have all heard people say a hundred times over, for they seem never to tire of saying it, that the Jesus of the New Testament is indeed a most merciful and humane lover of humanity, but that the Church has hidden this human character in repellent dogmas and stiffened it with ecclesiastical terrors till it has taken on an inhuman character. This is, I venture to repeat, very nearly the reverse of the truth. The truth is that it is the image of Christ in the churches that is almost entirely mild and merciful. It is the image of Christ in the Gospels that is a good many other things as well. The figure in the Gospels does indeed utter in words of almost heart-breaking beauty his pity for our broken hearts. But they are very far from being the only sort of words that he utters. Nevertheless, they are almost the only kind of words that the Church in its popular imagery ever represents him as uttering. That popular imagery is inspired by a perfectly sound popular instinct. The mass of the poor are broken, and the mass of the people are poor, and for the mass of mankind the main thing is to carry the conviction of the incredible compassion of God.

THE CHURCH'S PICTURE OF ST PETER

THE Peter whom popular Church teaching presents is very rightly the Peter to whom Christ said in forgiveness, " Feed my lambs." He is not the Peter upon whom Christ turned as if he were the devil, crying in that obscure wrath, " Get thee behind me, Satan."

OUR VENERATION OF CHILDREN

FOR various reasons we have come nowadays to venerate children; perhaps partly because we envy children for still doing what men used to do, such as play simple games and enjoy fairy tales. Over and above this, however, there is a great deal of real and subtle psychology in our appreciation of childhood; but if we turn it into a modern discovery, we must once more admit that the historical Jesus of Nazareth had already discovered it two thousand years too soon. There was certainly nothing in the world around him to help him to the discovery. Here Christ was indeed human; but more human than a human being was then likely to be. Peter Pan does not belong to the world of Pan but the world of Peter.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

IF Christ was simply a human character, he really was a highly complex and contradictory human character. For he combined exactly the two things that lie at the two extremes of human variation. He was exactly what the man with a delusion never is: he was wise; he was a good judge. What he said was always unexpected; but it was always unexpectedly magnanimous and often unexpectedly moderate. Take a thing like the point of the parable of the tares and the wheat. It has the quality that unites sanity and subtlety. It has not the simplicity of a madman. It has not even the simplicity of a fanatic. It might be uttered by a philosopher a hundred years old, at the end of a century of Utopias. Nothing could be less like this quality of seeing beyond and all round obvious things, than the condition of the egomaniac with the one sensitive spot on his brain. I really do not see how these two characters could be convincingly combined, except in the astonishing way in which the creed combines them. For until we reach the full acceptance of the fact as a fact, however marvellous, all mere approximations to it are actually further and further away from it. Divinity is great enough to

be divine; it is great enough to call itself divine. But as humanity grows greater, it grows less and less likely to do so. God is God, as the Moslems say; but a great man knows he is not God, and the greater he is the better he knows it. That is the paradox; everything that is merely approaching to that point is merely receding from it. Socrates, the wisest man, knows that he knows nothing. A lunatic may think he is omniscience, and a fool may talk as if he were omniscient. But Christ is in another sense omniscient if he not only knows, but knows that he knows.

THE WANDERING CHRIST

WE often hear of Jesus of Nazareth as a wandering teacher; and there is a vital truth in that view in so far as it emphasises an attitude towards luxury and convention which most respectable people would still regard as that of a vagabond. It is expressed in his own great saying about the holes of the foxes and the nests of the birds, and, like many of his great sayings, it is felt as less powerful than it is, through lack of appreciation of that great paradox by which he spoke of his own humanity as in some way collectively and representatively human, calling himself simply the Son of Man; that is, in effect, calling himself simply man. It is fitting that the New Man or the Second Adam should repeat in so ringing a voice and with so arresting a gesture the great fact which came first in the original story: that man differs from the brutes by everything, even by deficiency; that he is in a sense less normal and even less native; a stranger upon the earth. It is well to speak of his wanderings in this sense and in the sense that he shared the drifting life of the most homeless and hopeless of the poor. It is assuredly well to remember that he would quite certainly have been moved on by the police,

and almost certainly arrested by the police for having no visible means of subsistence. For our Law has in it a turn of humour or touch of fancy which Nero and Herod never happened to think of—that of actually punishing homeless people for not sleeping at home.

SOCRATES AND CHRIST

NO two things could possibly be more different than the death of Socrates and the death of Christ. We are meant to feel that the death of Socrates was, from the point of view of his friends at least, a stupid muddle and miscarriage of justice, interfering with the flow of a humane and lucid, I had almost said a light philosophy. We are meant to feel that Death was the bride of Christ as poverty was the bride of St Francis. We are meant to feel that his life was in that sense a sort of love affair with death, a romance of the pursuit of the ultimate sacrifice. From the moment when the star goes up like a birthday rocket to the moment when the sun is extinguished like a funeral torch the whole story moves on wings with the speed and direction of a drama, ending in an act beyond words.

THE FALSE STRENGTH OF THE WORLD

ALL the great groups that stood about the Cross represent in one way or another the great historical truth of the time: that the world could not save itself. Man could do no more. Rome and Jerusalem and Athens and everything else were going down like a sea turned into a small cataract. Externally indeed, the ancient world was still at its strongest; it is always at that moment that the inmost weakness begins. But in order to understand that weakness we must repeat what has been said more than once: that it was not the weakness of a thing originally weak. It was emphatically the strength of the world that was turned to weakness, and the wisdom of the world that was turned to folly.

THE DAWN OF A NEW WORLD

ON the third day the friends of Christ coming at daybreak to the place found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realised the new wonder; but even they hardly realised that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener God walked again in the garden, in the cool, not of the evening, but the dawn.

THE DOOR OF LIFE

WE are Christians and Catholics not because we worship a key, but because we have passed a door, and felt the wind that is the trumpet of liberty blow over the land of the living.

THE EVERLASTING ENERGY OF CHRISTIANITY

THERE are people who say they wish Christianity to remain as a spirit. They mean, very literally, that they wish it to remain as a ghost. But it is not going to remain as a ghost. What follows this process of apparent death is not the lingering of the shade; it is the resurrection of the body. These people are quite prepared to shed pious and reverential tears over the Sepulchre of the Son of Man; what they are not prepared for is the Son of God walking once more upon the hills of morning.

THE AMAZING TENACITY OF THE FAITH

THE faith has not only often died, but it has often died of old age. It has not only been often killed, but it has often died a natural death, in the sense of coming to a natural and necessary end. It is obvious that it has survived the most savage and the most universal persecutions from the shock of the Diocletian fury to the shock of the French Revolution. But it has a more strange and even a more weird tenacity; it has survived not only war but peace. It has not only died often, but degenerated often and decayed often; it has survived its own weakness and even its own surrender.

THE ETERNAL WORDS

"HEAVEN and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The civilisation of antiquity was the whole world: and men no more dreamed of its ending than of the ending of daylight. They could not imagine another order unless it were in another world. The civilisation of the world has passed away, and those words have not passed away. In the long night of the Dark Ages feudalism was so familiar a thing that no man could imagine himself without a lord: and religion was so woven into that network that no man would have believed they could be torn asunder. Feudalism itself was torn to rags and rotted away in the popular life of the true Middle Ages; and the first and freshest power in that new freedom was the old religion. Feudalism had passed away, and the words did not pass away. The whole medieval order, in many ways so complete and almost cosmic a home for man, wore out gradually in its turn: and here at least it was thought that the words would die. They went forth across the radiant abyss of the Renaissance, and in fifty years were using all its light and learning for new religious foundations, new apologetics, new saints. It was supposed to have been withered up

at last in the dry light of the Age of Reason; it was supposed to have disappeared ultimately in the earthquake of the Age of Revolution. Science explained it away; and it was still there. History disinterred it in the past; and it appeared suddenly in the future. Today it stands once more in our path; and even as we watch it, it grows.

THE PARADOX OF THE CHURCH

WE might sometimes fancy that the Church grows younger as the world grows old.

VERSE SELECTIONS

THE BALLAD OF ST BARBARA
THE QUEEN OF SEVEN SWORDS
POEMS
THE WILD KNIGHT
THE COLLECTED POEMS
THE ENGLISH HYMNAL

SELECTED POEMS FROM "THE BALLAD OF ST BARBARA"

By kind permission of Mr. Cecil Palmer.

A SECOND CHILDHOOD

WHEN all my days are ending
And I have no song to sing,
I think I shall not be too old
To stare at everything
As I stared once at a nursery door
Or a tall tree and a swing.

Wherein God's ponderous mercy hangs
On all my sins and me,
Because he does not take away
The terror from the tree,
And stones still shine along the road
That are and cannot be.

Men grow too old for love, my love,
Men grow too old for wine;
But I shall not grow too old to see
Unearthly daylight shine,
Changing my chamber's dust to snow
Till I doubt if it be mine.

Behold, the crowning mercies melt,
The first surprises stay;
And in my dross is dropped a gift
For which I dare not pray:
That a man grow used to grief and joy
But not to night and day.

Men grow too old for love, my love,
Men grow too old for lies;
But I shall not grow too old to see
Enormous night arise,
A cloud that is larger than the world
And a monster made of eyes.

Nor am I worthy to unloose
The latchet of my shoe,
Or shake the dust from off my feet
Or the staff that bears me through,
On ground that is too good to last,
Too solid to be true.

Men grow too old to woo, my love.
Men grow too old to wed;
But I shall not grow too old to see
Hung crazily overhead
Incredible rafters when I wake
And find I am not dead.

A thrill of thunder in my hair:
Though blackening clouds be plain,
Still I am stung and startled
By the first drop of the rain:
Romance and pride and passion pass,
And these are what remain.

Strange crawling carpets of the grass,
Wide windows of the sky:
So in this perilous grace of God
With all my sins go I:
And things grow new though I grow old,
Though I grow old and die.

SONNET

HIGH on the wall that holds Jerusalem
I saw one stand under the stars like stone.
And when I perish it shall not be known
Whether he lived, some strolling son of Shem,
Or was some great ghost wearing a diadem
Of Solomon or Saladin on a throne.
I only know, the features being unshown,
I did not dare draw near and look on them.

Did ye not guess . . . the diadem might be
Plaited in stranger style by hands of hate? . . .
But when I looked, the wall was desolate
And the grey starlight powdered tower and tree:
And vast and vague beyond the Golden Gate
Heaved Moab of the mountains like a sea.

THE CONVERT

AFTER one moment when I bowed my head
And the whole world turned over and came upright
And I came out where the old road shone white
I walked the ways and heard what all men said,
Forest of tongues, like autumn leaves unshed,
Being not unlovable but strange and light;
Old riddles and new creeds, not in despite
But softly, as men smile about the dead.

The sages have a hundred maps to give
That trace their crawling cosmos like a tree.
They rattle reason out through many a sieve
That stores the sand and lets the gold go free:
And all these things are less than dust to me
Because my name is Lazarus and I live.

SELECTED POEMS FROM "THE QUEEN OF SEVEN SWORDS"

By kind permission of Messrs. Sheed and Ward.

A PARTY QUESTION

THE golden roses of the glorious mysteries
Grew wild as cowslips on the common land:
Hers who was more humanity's than history's
Until you banned them as a badge is banned.

The silver roses of the sorrow of Mary
And the red roses of her royal mirth
Were free; till you, turned petulant and wary,
Went weeding wild-flowers from your mother-earth.

Mother of Man: the Mother of the Maker,
Silently speaking as the flowering trees,
What made of her a striker and a breaker,
Who spoke no scorn even of men like these?

She named no hypocrites a viper race,
She nailed no tyrant for a vulpine cur,
She flogged no hucksters from the holy place:
Why was your new wise world in dread of her?

Whom had she greeted and not graced in greeting,
Whom did she touch and touch not to his peace;
And what are you, that made of such a meeting
Quarrels and quibbles and a taunt to tease?

Who made that inn a fortress? What strange blindness
Beat on the open door of that great heart,
Stood on its guard against unguarded kindness
And made the sun a secret set apart?

By this we measure you, upon your showing
So many shields to her who bore no sword,
All your unnatural nature and the flowing
Of sundering rivers now so hard to ford.

We know God's priests had drunken iniquity,
Through our sins too did such offences come,
Mad Martin's bell, the mouth of anarchy,
Knox and the horror of that hollow drum.

We know the tale; half truth and double treason,
Borgia and Torquemada in the throng,
Bad men who had no right to their right reason,
Good men who had good reason to be wrong.

But when that tangled war our fathers waged
Stirred against her—then could we hear right well,
Through roar of men not wrongfully enraged,
The little hiss that only comes from hell.

REGINA ANGELORUM

OUR Lady went into a strange country,
Our Lady, for she was ours,
And had run on the little hills behind the houses
And pulled small flowers;
But she rose up and went into a strange country
With strange thrones and powers.

And there were giants in the land she walked in,
Tall as their toppling towns,
With heads so high in heaven, the constellations
Served them for crowns;
And their feet might have forded like a brook the abysses
Where Babel drowns.

They were girt about with the wings of the morning and evening
Furled and unfurled,
Round the speckled sky where our small spinning planet
Like a top is twirled;

And the swords they waved were the unending
comets
That shall end the world.

And moving in innocence and in accident,
She turned the face
That none has ever looked on without loving
On the Lords of Space;
And one hailed her with her name in our own country,
That is full of grace.

Our Lady went into a strange country
And they crowned her for a queen,
For she needed never to be stayed or questioned
But only seen;
And they were broken down under unbearable beauty
As we have been.

But ever she walked till away in the last high places
One great light shone
From the pillared throne of the King of all that
country
Who sat thereon;
And she cried aloud as she cried under the gibbet,
For she saw her Son.

Our Lady wears a crown in a strange country,
The crown he gave.
But she has not fogotten to call to her old companions,
To call and crave;
And to hear her calling a man might arise and thunder
On the doors of the grave.

THE WHITE WITCH

THE dark Diana of the groves,
Whose name is Hecate in hell,
Heaves up her awful horns to heaven
White with the light I know too well.

The moon that broods upon her brows
Mirrors the monstrous hollow lands
In leprous silver; at the term
Of triple twisted roads she stands.

Dreams are no sin or only sin
For them that, waking, dream they dream;
But I have learned what wiser knights
Follow the Grail and not the Gleam.

I found One hidden in every home,
A voice that sings about the house,
A nurse that scares the nightmares off,
A mother nearer than a spouse,

Whose picture once I saw; and there
Wild as of old and weird and sweet
In sevenfold splendour blazed the moon,
Not on her brow, beneath her feet.

THE TRINKETS

A WANDERING world of rivers,
A wavering world of trees,
If the world grow dim and dizzy
With all changes and degrees,
It is but Our Lady's mirror
Hung dreaming in its place,
Shining with only shadows
Till she wakes it with her face.

The standing whirlpool of the stars,
The wheel of all the world,
Is a ring on Our Lady's finger,
With the sun and moons empearled
With stars for stones to please her
Who sits playing with her rings
With the great heart that a woman has
And the love of little things.

Wings of the whirlwind of the world
From here to Ispahan,
Spurning the flying forests,
Are light as Our Lady's fan:
For all things violent here and vain
Lie open and all at ease
Where God has girded heaven to guard
Her holy vanities.

ST PATRICK OF IRELAND

MINE eyes were alive with anger; for the gag was in my mouth.
They bound me to a broken tree, with my face towards the south,
And hucksters watched and betted when would the great heart break,
And pygmy pedants whipped me, for thy name's sake.

Thee, though the myrrh be bitter with the crushing of all sweet things,
Though we fed upon hope and hatred, and the pride of the ragged kings,
And the two-edged sword of the spirit that wounds the hand,
Torture could not take from us; this is thy land.

O smitten, O dolorous Mother, if the cross fall thwart of the crown,
If thy rose grew dark in our garden, thy moon on our wrath went down,
If too close be the cloud on Kiltartan, too deep the debt,
Forgive us when we forgive not; let us forget.

ST ANTONY OF ITALY

MINE eyes were blind with splendours; I have stood too long in the sun,
The heat and the light and the laurels, in the days when the world was one,
And merry where all was ancient, and careless where all was known,
We dwelt in the gay glass houses that beckon the booby's stone.

The force of the foolish peoples, that herd, that follow a king,
On the light-winged thought came crashing with the weight of a thoughtless thing;
And the Virgins, the high Republics, that were wed to the Vision and free,
Inperial clowns took captive, holding in harlotry.

Lady of lilies in heaven, thy lilies on earth burn red.
We built and the wide world ruined; we wove and they rent the thread;
We carved and the whole world shattered; we bound and the world disbands.
In the day I arise for requital—hold thou mine hands.

SELECTED POEMS FROM "POEMS"

By kind permission of Messrs. Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd.

A CHRISTMAS SONG FOR THREE GUILDS

To be Sung a Long Time Ago—or Hence.

The Carpenters

ST JOSEPH to the Carpenters said on a Christmas Day:
"The Master shall have patience and the 'prentice shall obey;
And your word unto your women shall be nowise hard or wild:
For the sake of me, your master, who have worshipped Wife and Child.
But softly you shall frame the fence, and softly carve the door,
And softly plane the table—as to spread it for the poor,
And all your thoughts be soft and white as the wood of the white tree.
But if they tear the Charter, let the tocsin speak for me!
Let the wooden sign above your shop be prouder to be scarred
Than the lion-shield of Lancelot that hung at Joyous Garde."

The Shoemakers

St Crispin to the shoemakers said on a Christmas-tide:
" Who fashions at another's feet will get no good of pride.
They were bleeding on the Mountain, the feet that brought good news,
The latchet of whose shoes we were not worthy to unloose.
See that your feet offend not, nor lightly lift your head,
Tread softly on the sunlit roads the bright dust of the dead.
Let your own feet be shod with peace; be lowly all your lives.
But if they touch the Charter, ye shall nail it with your knives,
And the bill-blades of the commons drive in all as dense array
As once a crash of arrows came, upon St Crispin's Day."

The Painters

St Luke unto the painters on Christmas Day he said:
" See that the robes are white you dare to dip in
gold and red;
For only gold the kings can give, and only blood the
saints;
And his high task grows perilous that mixes them
in paints.
Keep you the ancient order; follow the men that knew
The labyrinth of black and white, the maze of green
and blue;
Paint mighty things, paint paltry things, paint silly
things or sweet.
But if men break the Charter, you may slay them in
the street.
And if you paint one post for them, then . . . but
you know it well,
You paint a harlot's face to drag all heroes down to
hell."

All Together

Almighty God to all mankind on Christmas Day said He:
" I rent you from the old red hills and, rending, made you free.
There was charter, there was challenge, in a blast of breath I gave;
You can be all things other; you cannot be a slave.
You shall be tired and tolerant of fancies as they fade,
But if men doubt the Charter, ye shall call on the Crusade—
Trumpet and torch and catapult, cannon and bow and blade,
Because it was My challenge to all the things I made."

SELECTED POEMS FROM "THE WILD KNIGHT"

By kind permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

THE Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at him,
And all the stars looked down.

THE PRAISE OF DUST

"WHAT of vile dust?" the preacher said.
Methought the whole world woke,
The dead stone lived beneath my foot,
And my whole body spoke.

"You, that play tyrant to the dust,
And stamp its wrinkled face,
This patient star that flings you not
Far into homeless space.

"Come down out of your dusty shrine
The living dust to see,
The flowers that at your sermon's end
Stand blazing silently.

"Rich white and blood-red blossom; stones,
Lichens like fire encrust;
A gleam of blue, a glare of gold,
The vision of the dust.

"Pass them all by: till, as you come
Where, at the city's edge,
Under a tree—I know it well—
Under a lattice ledge,

" The sunshine falls on one brown head,
  You, too, O cold of clay,
Eater of stones, may haply hear
  The trumpets of that day

" When God to all his paladins
  By his own splendour swore
To make a fairer face than heaven,
  Of dust and nothing more."

FROM "THE COLLECTED POEMS OF GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON"

By kind permission of Mr. Cecil Palmer.

THE DONKEY

WHEN fishes flew and forests walked,
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood,
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry,
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient, crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me; I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

SELECTED HYMN FROM "THE ENGLISH HYMNAL"

By kind permission of the Oxford University Press.

O GOD OF EARTH AND ALTAR

O GOD of earth and altar,
Bow down and hear our cry.
Our earthly rulers falter,
Our people drift and die;
The walls of gold entomb us,
The swords of scorn divide,
Take not thy thunder from us,
But take away our pride.

From all that terror teaches,
From lies of tongue and pen,
From all the easy speeches
That comfort cruel men,
From sale and profanation
Of honour and the sword,
From sleep and from damnation,
Deliver us, good Lord !

Tie in a living tether
The prince and priest and thrall,
Bind all our lives together,
Smite us and save us all;
In ire and exultation
Aflame with faith and free,
Lift up a living nation,
A single sword to thee.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

IN the year 1874 the ancient and eminently respectable borough of Kensington saw the birth of Mr. Chesterton. His boyhood must have been spent very largely in the rather drab area that constitutes so much of Kensington. To find his education Mr. Chesterton did not travel very far from home, and he has perhaps not travelled very far since. The venerable and distinguished St Paul's School now delights in the knowledge that Mr. Chesterton chose to make that school his school. Leaving St Paul's he entered the Slade School to study Art. It was not long, however, before he felt that his talent lay in the direction of a more confined art, that is the literary art. Like so many famous authors, Mr. Chesterton made his entrance into the world of literature by means of hack work that lost no dignity by being hack work. He combined the duties of reviewing books for the *Bookman* with work in the hurly-burly of a publisher's office.

But it soon dawned on Mr. Chesterton that though you can do two things at once, you cannot do them both well. Consequently in the year 1900 he took up literature as the work of his life. No living writer has perhaps more nobly adorned his profession. Unconventional, he has never sneered at convention because it was convention, but has shown that the conventional is usually the most unconventional.

For some years Mr. Chesterton lived in a top-storey flat which looked over Battersea Park and over quite a good deal of London. Later again he moved to Beaconsfield, that little Buckinghamshire town in which so many famous men have lived, famous men who would, indeed, consider Mr. Chesterton a worthy successor.

Still some distance from the beginnings of old age, he pours forth an endless succession of books of all descriptions, all of which are characterised by that most original of all qualities, which is originality.

Mr. Chesterton varies his literary life by frequent appearances in public, pilgrimages to foreign lands, and ever and again pilgrimages around his own home, where he finds ever new and increasing wonders.

Biographer, critic, essayist, novelist, theologian, poet, there is no branch of the literary art which has not gained when it has come into contact with the versatile and brilliantly sane and sympathetic mind of Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

APPENDIX B

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

THE year 1182 saw the birth of St Francis of Assisi. It is perhaps interesting to note the origin of his name Francis. His father, a prosperous merchant of the town of Assisi, having returned from a successful commercial tour in France, found that during his absence a son had been born to him. As a kind of courteous gesture to France and as a kind of thank-offering for his success in that country, Pietro Bernadone named his son Francis.

The youth of St Francis was a somewhat wild one. In modern language he might have been termed a hooligan. Taking part in a rather insignificant and vulgar feud between the towns of Assisi and Perugia, Francis found himself a prisoner. A little later a serious illness did for Francis what it has done for countless millions. It made him think. It made him conscious of a violent struggle between the spiritual and physical, which ultimately ended in so triumphant a victory for the former. The result of his thinking led him to adopt the life of a pilgrim. Attiring himself as a poor mendicant, he took a vow of poverty

and devoted himself to the dual task of energy in prayer and energy in helping the poor.

Oblivious to all the taunts of his family, he led what must have seemed to them an eccentric life, which could only lead to subsequent insanity. It was to prove to be the sanity which the world never understands.

It is interesting to observe that the founding of the Franciscan Order was due to a vision to Francis. It was while praying one day in the ruined chapel of Sta Maria degli Angeli, known as the "Portiuncula," that there appeared to him the vision which was to have not only so momentous an effect on him, but on the whole Church. The vision induced him to gather round himself eleven disciples. Determined to approach the Holy Father, Francis and his eleven followers made known their wish to Innocent III to found the order of Franciscans.

Returning to Assisi after his triumphant visit to Rome, Francis, with that military precision which always characterised his work, drew up the rules that were to be obeyed by those who were to be Franciscans. The three principal rules were the necessity of poverty, the necessity of obedience, and the necessity of chastity.

The Order immediately gathered to itself a vas

number of followers, and Francis at once sent them out as missionaries to France, Italy, Spain, and Africa.

In the year 1223 Francis undertook a personal mission to Egypt, and succeeded in obtaining from the Sultan promises of more Christian treatment for Christian prisoners.

Towards the end of his life Francis had certain difficulties with Rome, where those in authority wished to amend or expand some of the rules of the Franciscan Order. In the year 1224, according to a legend, St Francis, while praying near Assisi, received the Stigmata of the wounds of Christ. On October 4 in the year 1226 St Francis died, his last wish that he should die on the bare ground being faithfully obeyed.

The extreme romance of his life, the tenacity of his purpose, his almost supernatural love of animals, have made St Francis one of the most popular of the saints. The extraordinary change caused in him by his vision is only comparable to the transition of Saul into St Paul, and the whole character of the man was such as to make him one of those outstanding figures who have had a remarkable influence not only on his own age, but also on subsequent ages.

APPENDIX C

ST BARBARA

THE life of St Barbara is shrouded in a certain obscurity, but it is apparent that she must have lived in a period between A.D. 200 and 300. Born a heathen, she was eventually converted to Christianity, and as a reward her father had her executed. It is probable that she suffered martyrdom in Nicomedia in Bithynia in 240 or 306. She is regarded as the patron saint of gunners and locksmiths.

APPENDIX D

ST ANTONY

PERHAPS the most interesting fact about St Antony is that he was the first institutor of monastic life. Much of his life was passed in solitude. Born in A.D. 251 at Koma in Upper Egypt, St Antony was probably a contemporary of St Barbara. He embraced a life of poverty and retired to a wilderness near his own village. In the year 305 he founded his first monastery at Phaium near Aphroditopolis.

Seven of his letters, which were originally written in Coptic, were translated into Latin and are still to be found in the Bibliotheca Patrum. It is believed that the cure of the distemper which was known as the sacred fire was achieved by his intercession. In the year 356 St Antony died.

APPENDIX E

ST PATRICK OF IRELAND

ST PATRICK is, of course, the most important saint of Ireland. The date of his birth is a little uncertain, but it probably took place between 377 and 387. His parentage is again rather obscure, but it seems probable that his father was a farmer. His birthplace is yet open to doubt, and scholars are sharply divided between Boulogne-sur-Mer and a place in the estuary of the Clyde.

Adventure came to him quite early in life, for at the age of sixteen he was seized by a band of pirates and promptly sold to a petty chief in whose service he remained for six years. Escaping, his life underwent a violent change, for he became a monk, first at Tours and then in the famous monastery at Lerins.

In 431 he made his way to Rome, and there learnt that it was to be his work to be a missionary to Ireland. His mission was entirely successful. Preaching and baptising, he personally visited a large portion of that country; it is said that with his own hand he baptised at least twelve thousand persons. He is also believed to have ordained a

number of priests. After having spent twenty years in Ireland, he is said to have fixed the seat of his bishopric at Armagh. He died at a place called Saul near Downpatrick. The date is open to much controversy, but it is probable that it took place a few years before the beginning of the sixth century. St Patrick apparently did not leave much literary work behind him, and the only authentic work that has come down to us are his Confessions and a letter, both of a crude nature, but of much historical interest.

Though the life of St Patrick is so vague, his fame is such that what St Francis was to Italy, St Patrick would seem to have been to Ireland.

APPENDIX F

THE LEGEND OF THE TUMBLER OF OUR LADY

THIS legend is indeed a beautiful one and of a mixture of that romance and altruism that are attributes of so many legends. I am very much indebted to Mrs. Kemp-Welch for her courtesy in allowing me to use the following quotations from her translation of "Of the Tumbler of Our Lady," which gives the actual legend.

"Now will I tell and rehearse unto you of that which happened to a minstrel. So much had he journeyed to and fro in so many places, and so prodigal had he been, that he became a monk of a holy Order, for that he was weary of the world. He wholly relinquished his horses, and clothes, and money and all that he had, and then he withdrew him from the world, and never more did he wish to return to it."

But this tumbler felt that he had no adequate service to offer Our Lady; he felt that he had no means of doing anything, for he could but tumble. But a sudden idea occurred to him and he promptly put it into action, for he said:

"'The others do service with song, and I will do

service with tumbling.' And he took off his habit, and then stripped himself, and laid his garments beside the altar, but so that his body should not be uncovered, he kept on a tunic, the which was very clinging and close fitting. Little better was it than a shift; nevertheless was his body wholly covered. And thus was he fitly clad and equipped, and girded his tunic, and duly prepared him, and he turned him to the image, and gazed on it very humbly. Then he began to turn somersaults, now high, now low, first forwards, then backwards, and then he fell on his knees before the image, and bowed his head.

"'Ah, very gentle Queen!' said he, 'of your pity, and of your generosity, despise not my service.' Then he tumbled and leaped, and turned gaily the somersault of Metz. And he bowed to the image and worshipped it, for he paid homage to it as much as he was able. And anon he turned the French somersault, and then the somersault of Champagne, and after that, those of Spain and Brittany, and then that of Lorraine. And he laboured to the utmost of his power."

And that his service was accepted we have every reason to believe, for the legend continues that after his tumbling when he was nigh unto an overpowering

exhaustion " the Mother of God, whom he served all without guile, came to his succour, and well knew she how to aid him."

* * * * *

This legend is taken from the collection made in the thirteenth century by Gautier de Coinci, a monk of St Medard, near Soissons. The place where the events in the legend are believed to have taken place is Clairvaux.

In this Appendix I have merely given the Legend of Our Lady's Tumbler in mere outline. Those who wish to pursue the study of it further will find the legend in detail in a book entitled "Of the Tumbler of Our Lady." This book, which also includes a number of other legends, admirably translated from the French by Mrs. Kemp-Welch, is published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus. This volume has an excellent introduction by the translator, in which she deals with the relationship between religion and chivalry and the cult of Our Lady which was so much a part of the religion of France in the Middle Ages.

APPENDIX G

BIBLIOGRAPHY

RELIGIOUS

PROSE

Heretics.
Orthodoxy.
The Superstition of Divorce.
St Francis of Assisi.
The Everlasting Man.

VERSE

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