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EUTYCHUS  
OR  
THE FUTURE OF THE PULPIT

## TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

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of this Book*

# EUTYCHUS

OR

THE FUTURE OF THE PULPIT

BY

WINIFRED HOLTBY

A Short Treatise in the form of a Plain  
Dialogue, suggested as a possible epilogue  
to Fénelon's *Dialogues sur l'Eloquence*

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EUTYCHUS  
OR  
THE FUTURE OF THE PULPIT  
PART I

HOW IT TAKES THREE TO MAKE A SERMON

*Anthony. Fénelon. Eutychus.*

*Anthony :* I have just returned from the first night of that play—what d'ye call it?—by the French Catholic dramatist. I must say that I find religious dramas very tedious. How those allusions to the deity date, don't they? We've done with the ages of faith, thank Heaven!

*Fénelon :* Pardon the discourtesy of my intrusion, but is not your gratitude slightly displaced?

*Anthony :* My gratitude, sir?

*Fénelon :* Is it indeed to Heaven that we owe thanks for an end of faith? I should have looked elsewhere. Yet

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I apologize. As a stranger to this country I had no right to speak. But the subject of your remarks interests me deeply.

*Anthony* : Indeed, sir? And may I not know whom I have had the honour of interesting?

*Fénelon* : My name is François de Salignac de la Mothe de Fénelon, sometime Archbishop of Cambrai and always at your service. I am visiting England in order to collect material for my little work on *The Future of the Pulpit*, which is to follow as a fitting sequel my former *Dialogues on Eloquence*.

*Anthony* : Alas, my poor Archbishop, you come too late! The pulpit has a past now, but no future.

*Fénelon* : I must beg you, sir, to elucidate further this remarkable assertion.

*Anthony* : It might be said, of course, that in England itself the pulpit has hardly even had a past. We are, as our diplomatic representatives continually explain to an incredulous continent, a people averse to generalization. We love the concrete, the improvised, and the particular, whereas the sermon deals with the abstract, the predetermined, and the general. Englishmen are not on the whole interested in ideas. We prefer to judge by the event rather

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than the principle. We would sooner watch the bodies of men contesting for a football than their minds wrestling with a theory. Now in Scotland or Wales you might, even fifty years ago, have found sermons to gladden the heart of a connoisseur—sermons preached for an hour, two hours, three hours, congregations of men and women who had walked for many miles to listen, and discussions afterwards of point by point argued with passion and intelligence. But the Scottish conquest of English professions has been followed by the English conquest of Scottish fashions. The old battle across the border still rages: but to-day we raid, instead of cattle, each other's idiosyncrasies; and the Scottish sermon has been a casualty in the fight. I am not myself a practising churchman, but I understand that the indulgence of a modern congregation, permits a Bishop about fifteen minutes for his sermon, a Canon ten, and a Curate five; though generally all that is said could be dispatched easily in three. The Christian Scientists have abolished the sermon altogether. Even the cult of the Mohammedan faith—we have, as you may know, a flourishing little Mosque at Woking—is sub-

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stituting for the Friday sermon a repetition of short extracts from the Homilies of Ibn Nubatah ; and discourses in rhymed couplets, each lasting little above five minutes, hardly lend themselves to eloquent enthusiasm.

*Fénelon* : But to what do you attribute this misfortune ?

*Anthony* : Ah, well ! in the first place, my dear Archbishop, look at the competition. Right up to the beginning of this century there has really been very little change in the rival attractions to the pulpit since the Middle Ages. You could go to Church and remain sober, or you could stay at home and get drunk. To-day, the Baby Austin and the motor char-a-banc are killing the sermon. The Sabbath is the day when all the townspeople go into the country and all the country people come into the towns. On Sundays the well-to-do play golf and the working-classes read the Sunday papers. Once upon a time a lively picture of vice, hell-fire, and whatnot had tremendous drawing-power. To-day, what chance has the sermon against *The News of the World* ? There you can find your tales of crime and punishment, your "strong human interest", and your moralizings a hundred times more

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topical and more detailed. You can read of them in your shirt-sleeves instead of having to dress up in your best clothes. You can read in the comparative comfort of your own back-yard, instead of having to sit on a hard pew of diabolical discomfort. Compulsory education has ruined the sermon. Cheap transport has ruined the sermon. The crystal set, the golf links, the Sunday-cinema, and the back-garden have ruined the sermon.

*Fénelon* : But can the Church make no stand against this incursion of the world and the flesh upon its just authority ?

*Anthony* : Oh, the Church is undoubtedly putting up a gallant fight against heavy odds. Some preachers contrive to secure quite good publicity by writing detective stories, or going bankrupt, or acquiring a reputation for insolence. But on the whole it is a losing battle. The Church in Western Europe has, I should say, only an archæological future.

*Fénelon* : I beg your pardon, but I do not quite understand you.

*Anthony* : It is quite simple. The pulpit has no future because religion has no future. We are outgrowing this illusion of human infancy. Man, having for centuries made God in his own image,



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has grown weary of the depressing picture. These anthropomorphic theories of a God-creation may pass in Litchfield Theological College, Tennessee, or the mission huts of Bechuanaland, but I assure you that among civilized people they have had their day. The churches already stand half empty. We might as well destroy them altogether.

*Fénelon* : Is that indeed so?

*Anthony* : Of course we shall not permit the complete destruction of ecclesiastical architecture. I find it hard to imagine the disappearance of Saint Paul's Cathedral, York Minster, Ely, Exeter, Canterbury, or even Ripon. Westminster Abbey will probably become a mausoleum for the relics of celebrities. Anonymous donors, and even others not anonymous, may present additional chapels, sacristies, and cloisters, in order that room, which otherwise might not be available, may be found for their own ashes. Yes I foresee considerable extensions of the Abbey which may even progress far enough to solve the slum-problem of Westminster. Then the Guild-house, Eccleston Square, Whitefield's Tabernacle, the chief Barracks of the Salvation Army, the Moslem Mosque at Woking, and the First Church of Christ, Scientist,

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in London may be preserved as museums for the study of comparative religion. But the present site of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, shall we say? will let at admirable rents to the offices of an Insurance Company, while Liverpool Cathedral will serve as the terminus of a new Trans-Atlantic Air-Line. Perhaps a few villages will keep a ruin of the parish-church, in order to exhibit it to tourists, who will descend from their light aeroplanes on Sundays to carve their initials on the pulpit and drink beer on the chancel steps. But the churches, apart from their antiquarian value, will be allowed to disappear.

*Fénelon* : The picture which you paint is most distressing. But to what calamity do you attribute this disaster?

*Anthony* : Personally, my dear Archbishop, I can hardly regard it as a disaster. When the inspiration has gone, the institution ought not to survive. What indeed is this institution of the pulpit? A platform from which men may pronounce conclusions about the ultimate realities of which they feel certain and their hearers do not. It provides the element of personal admonition in organized religion. "Preaching", says the Rev-

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erend Samuel Hieron, pastor of Modbury in Devonshire during that painfully theological period, the seventeenth century, and one of the most successful writers upon the subject of the Pulpit, "preaching", says he "is a speaking to men to edifying, to exhortation, and to comfort"; and he upheld the sermon very valiantly against those who in his day decried its function. Surely, then, we have first to consider who are those who think themselves fitted to edify, exhort and comfort. The future of the pulpit, shall we say, depends to a large degree upon the quality of the preachers?

*Fénelon* : Certainly I admit that to some measure the preacher is important. Preaching should be the final act of piety. I do not know your Reverend Samuel Hieron, and I fear that I suspect him of some heresy, knowing the perilous age in which he lived. But the learned doctor Alanus de Insulis, in his treatise on *The Preacher's Art*, wrote: "Jacob saw a ladder stretching from earth to heaven by which the angels ascended and descended. The ladder was built for Christians who climb together from the beginning of faith to the consummation of perfection. The steps of the ladder are,

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first, confession ; second, prayer ; third, acts of grace ; fourth, reading of the Scripture ; fifth, inquiry of the Scriptures ; and seventh, preaching." Preaching, therefore, is the final step before the consummation of just men made perfect. It should be entered upon only by those who have traversed the difficult preliminaries to conviction.

*Anthony* : Then I fear that to-day you will find few preachers, and to-morrow fewer still. At the time when you conducted your famous controversy with Bossuet, there can be little doubt that the Church attracted young men of the most promising intellect and virtue. To-day we have a proverb that "The fool of the family becomes a parson". Among our most notable preachers we have a few scholars, who use the pulpit as a lecture platform from which they propound theological dilemmas incomprehensible to their congregations. We have a few humanitarians, whose sermons are devoted to theories of social reform which interest an age obsessed by problems of the community. We have a few aggressive controversialists, whose militant zeal simply happens to have fastened upon a point of ritual or dogma instead of on a political or artistic proposition, and who attract

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large crowds drawn by the hope of witnessing some disturbance. For the rest, the brilliance of the few serves but to illuminate the mediocrity of the many.

*Fénelon* : A common limitation of mere brilliance, if I may say so. True eloquence seeks rather the encouragement of virtue than the exposure of ignorance. I will allow that the case which you present is powerful ; but let us go further into the affair. The preacher alone, I think we may agree, cannot make a sermon. If all your trouble lies in some failure of intellectual quality among your preachers, we may yet take comfort. I do not despise wit. I respect the eloquence of Cicero, the eminence of Pericles. In my youth I desired with a great longing to visit the Piræus where Plato sketched his *Republic*. I even myself prepared, in French, a slight synopsis of the *Odyssey*, in order to demonstrate my respect for classical accomplishment. But human wisdom alone does not make sermons. The Greek philosophers taught many excellent principles concerning reason and persuasion. Yet these unaided only produce a lecture, a monologue, or a political address. No, it takes two to make a sermon, the human

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preacher and the Divine Authority. And I submit that this voice of authority, though not silent elsewhere, has been most clearly heard within the bosom of the Catholic Church. It may be true that even among the heathen there were some who spoke with higher knowledge than their neighbours, proclaiming morality and faith as though in the voice of a herald, giving no reasons and tolerating no argument. The Hebrew prophets spoke by the Holy Spirit, crying "Thus saith the Lord". The Greek philosopher, Zeno the Stoic, exalted Reason to the stature of a God, and issued his conclusions as though he were a preacher crying: "Thus saith Reason"; and in my journey hither I bought a book written by a German heretic who made himself a god of his own fantasy and cried to ignorant men: "Thus saith Zarathustra". These are they who become possessed of inner knowledge, unknown to ordinary men. They are compelled to speak by that which the Greeks called the *Kataleptike Phantasia*, "the impression", said Zeno, "which takes hold of us by the hair and drags us to assent". And being possessed of that which others have not, they are received with reverence. For this Authority is two-

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fold ; it instructs the preacher and it produces a state of submission in the congregation. Yet the blind mouthing of the Heathen and the arrogance of the heretic are but faint echoes of the Great Assurance of the Christian Preacher. Saint Paul, not Zeno here, must be our guide, and Saint Paul reasoned ; Saint Paul persuaded. He was fundamentally an excellent philosopher and orator. But his preaching, as he himself declared, was founded upon neither human wisdom nor persuasion. It was a ministry of which the power came from on high. The power, the assurance, my dear sir, is everything. The grace from heaven alone converts the world. It is this which distinguishes the Pulpit from the Platform. Believe me, I beg of you, that the future of the pulpit depends upon authority. Prove to me that there are no preachers ; prove to me that there is no authority ; and I will accept your verdict that the pulpit has no future.

*Anthony :* You speak of an interesting psychological phenomenon. But your definition of Authority is a trifle vague. Have we not rogues and madmen who declare themselves to be persuaded of Truth by a Hidden Power ? How

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do we know the preacher from the charlatan?

*Fénelon* : The wisdom of providence has laid discernment with the Church. "The whole body of Christian men agreeing together are wiser than Athanasius". Heresies endure but for a season. By their fruits shall ye know them. The true preacher is he whose words are proved acceptable by the grace within him working upon the minds of those who listen.

*Anthony* : I cannot help thinking that this is a somewhat dangerous argument. Nevertheless, for convenience sake we will accept it, and say that the preacher is he who can impose the effect of his authority upon his congregation. But, immediately, we realize that if so, the pulpit has no future. To-day the illusion of Authority is shattered. We are no longer prepared to listen submissively without answering back. The very claims of the preacher to be heard have destroyed his power. In a scientific age there is no room for appeals beyond logic and experiment to a vaguely defined and apocryphical Authority. The prestige behind the pulpit has vanished at a time when all intelligent men insist upon restating for themselves the problem of existence.



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We do not want to be told what to believe about the ultimate realities, if there are any, or about the salvation of our souls, if we have souls.

*Fénelon* : But if you reject the pretensions of the preacher, you will at least accept the Authority of the Church ?

*Anthony* : Least of all, the Authority of the Church, my dear Archbishop. The Catholic Faith, I regret to tell you, is a trifle passé. " God and immortality, the central dogmas of the Christian religion ", says Mr Bertrand Russell, " find no support in science." And we live to-day, as I have already mentioned, in a scientific age.

*Fénelon* : I also, sir, lived in a scientific age. The mathematicians I knew ; Descartes I knew ; I even translated certain of his theses into the spirit of St Augustine when I wrote my *Treatise on the Existence of God*. But human knowledge is the servant of divine omniscience. What new science is this which destroys Authority ?

*Anthony* : Why, to be sure, among others, the sciences of biology, anthropology, astronomy, geology, psychology, morbid pathology, and bio-chemistry.

*Fénelon* : Truly a formidable cloud of witnesses ! And it is your opinion

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that all intelligent persons to-day are convinced by biological, geological, astronomical, anthropological, pathological, and bio-chemical proofs that the doctrines of the Catholic Church are obsolete?

*Anthony* : It is indeed.

*Fénelon* : I am an old man, and have given much time and some devotion to the confuting of heresies and the instruction of Christian youth. You must pardon my importunity ; but I should deem it a great kindness if you would expound to me one of these proofs which finally demonstrate the non-existence of those doctrines which I have hitherto accepted.

*Anthony* : But these are scientific proofs requiring specialized scientific knowledge.

*Fénelon* : I will endeavour to follow your reasoning with my poor intelligence. I am myself not unaccustomed to the arts of pedagogy.

*Anthony* : But I fear that what you ask me is impossible. I am no scientist, but a literary critic, and something of a classical scholar, with a trifling knowledge about modern art. Such equipment has not prepared me to traverse the arguments of biologists, much less to explain them.

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*Fénelon* : Ah, then I mistook your meaning. I beg you to forgive me. You would have me understand that it is only scientists who reject the teaching from authority delivered in the pulpit?

*Anthony* : Oh, no indeed ! All intelligent people, writers and artists and politicians and the readers of the weekly reviews agree with me. No modern intellectual has any use for anthropomorphic fantasies about religion.

*Fénelon* : How then ? Are they prepared to accept proofs, the reasoning of which they cannot follow ?

*Anthony* : They must, indeed, but only from those whose reputations carry weight, the men of first-class standing in the academic world, for instance.

*Fénelon* : Then what you tell me now is of great interest. For it would seem that all intelligent men to-day accept conclusions on the authority of eminent scientists and academics. But if the scientists with the voice of authority cast out authority, how can we say that authority exists no longer ? May it not rather be that its aspect has changed, and that the fashion of its utterance alters ? I had admitted that the *Kataleptike Phantasia* might be older and wider than Christianity. Is it not also possible that it may become

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newer and narrower? There was, indeed, a period when the doctrines of the Church embraced all knowledge, and her authority all certitude. St Thomas Aquinas dreamed of a Holy Church existing in Mind as well as Organization, to which all arts and sciences brought their tribute. All knowledge is ultimately Holy Knowledge. Only the error of man separates the secular from the spiritual. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." All knowledge is thus known through the authority of the Word, whether we accept that authority as human or divine. Without it is nothing known which is known. The Church was once held competent to speak for science. To-day you would have us believe that the sciences have disavowed the Church. So much the worse for science. The Church was once held competent to speak for the State. What of the State to-day? Who speaks with *its* authority? The Church was once held competent to speak for art, for social order, for morality. Who speaks to-day of these affairs? Who preaches?

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Show me the man whose sentence is received by people who cannot follow all his reasoning, and I will show to you the modern preacher. Tell me the words for which men seek to-day as certain doctrine in a changeful world, and I will show to you the modern sermon. Show me the instruments by which the preachers speak, the places where they stand, the sounding-board which carries forth their voices, and I will show to you the modern pulpit. It may be that the prophets prophesy falsely ; it may be that the sermon is heretical ; it may be that the foundations of the pulpit stand in Hell. Nevertheless, given Authority and the Preacher, there also you will have the Pulpit.

*Eutychus* : Excuse me, gentlemen ; sorry to interrupt and all that, but haven't you left someone out of it ?

*Anthony* : I beg your pardon ?

*Eutychus* : Granted, I'm sure. But what I want to know is, if I may make so bold, where do I come in ?

*Fénelon* : I deeply regret, sir, that we do not know whom we have so lamentably omitted from our calculations. Will you please be kind enough to accept our profound regrets ?

*Eutychus* : That's all right. No bones

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broken. But you see, it's like this. My name's Eutychus. Very pleased to meet you.

*Fénelon* : Ah, M. Eutychus ! Believe me that I am delighted to make your acquaintance. This is indeed a pleasure. And I trust that you have now quite recovered from your little misadventure out in Troas ?

*Eutychus* : I'm first-rate, thanks. Very kind of you to inquire. Between you and me and the gate-post, I never knew a neater miracle.

*Anthony* : You know this gentlemen, then, my dear Archbishop ?

*Fénelon* : By report only ; but you, too, must at least have heard of him ?

*Anthony* : Not I.

*Fénelon* : Indeed ? Perhaps you have never encountered a plain historical work known as *The Acts of the Apostles* ? That is a pity, for it contains some admirable reading. Had you, however, read it, you might possibly recall that on a certain occasion Saint Paul set out from Macedonia to Syria, and, having reached Troas, delayed there seven days. And on the eve of his departure he went with his disciples to an upper room to break bread and preach a farewell sermon. And being engrossed by his great arguments he

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continued preaching until after midnight. Now there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep slumber; and, as Paul continued preaching yet longer and longer, this youth was overcome by sleep, and fell down from the third loft and was taken up dead. But the saint went to him and fell upon him, embracing him, and restored him again to his friends, who were not a little comforted.

*Eutychus* : That's right. Very kind Saint Paul was. A saint *and* a gentleman if ever there was one. But fancy you knowing all about it like that! Wonderful what gets into the papers nowadays. I had a cousin got into *The News of the World* the other week, but I never hoped to rise to those heights myself. *The Daily Express* is good enough for me, and the Lunch-hour Edition of the Evenings with the Major's wire; but the missus likes to listen in to the nine o'clock news bulletin. So we keep up with the times.

*Fénelon* : It would be indeed a privilege to discuss the future of the Pulpit with one who had the opportunity of listening to Saint Paul himself.

*Eutychus* : That's right. Back to our

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muttons, gentlemen. Mustn't let my tongue run away with me. Well, you see, what I thought when I listened to you two gents arguing was this. They've got Saint Paul all right, and that's as it should be. And they've got his Authority all right, and he'd have said the same himself, though what exactly he meant by it I never could quite see. But what I want to know is, Where do I come in? I'm just an ordinary chap, you know. I'm not a saint nor yet an intellectual. I'm what you might call the man in the street, man in the pew, too, sometimes. And it strikes me that you've got to get me into it. You know, it takes three to make a sermon; the preacher, the Authority, and the congregation. Saint Paul, the Voice that sent him, and Eutychus. That's me. You can't preach when there's no one listening—not what you'd *call* preaching. And, if there's a congregation ready to listen, sure enough you'll get a sermon from somebody. Supply and demand, you know, gentlemen. Demand and supply. That's business. And business is older than Saint Paul.

*Anthony*: But from your own story, Mr Eutychus, I should hardly say that



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you exactly would create a demand for sermons.

*Eutychus* : Well, you know, I shouldn't be too sure about that, if I were you. It's like this : I'm not what you'd call exactly a religious sort of chap. I haven't sold all I've got and given it to the poor—nor would either, with the missus and the kiddies, and leave them to go on the Rates. That isn't Christian, for all it's in the Bible. And I wouldn't lie on a board with nails sticking all over it like an Indian what-d'ye-call-'em. That isn't sense. But I do like a bit of religion in the right place, as you might say. I like to be told what I ought to believe and how I ought to live, and where I shall go to when I die. Life's a mystery, that's what I say ; but you do like to feel that there is someone who knows about it, saint or scientist, whatever you may call him, so that you can leave it all in his hands and get along with your own job, so to speak.

*Anthony* : Yet, forgive me ; even so it does not appear that you were greatly interested in what your saint had to tell you.

*Eutychus* : Bless you, Yes. I was interested all right. A very great man, Saint Paul, and a rare preacher. There's

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been no one like him since, not even when Mr Railton of the Salvation Army—him as started it with Booth and Cadman, you know—preached for three days and three nights without stopping. No, I was interested all right. But what I mean is, when a fellow's been working his eight hours a day he likes to have his bit of religion or whatever else is going, even if it's only greyhound racing, and then get back to his supper and the wife and a good night's rest. There are some who like a bit of religion all of the time, and some who like a lot of religion at long intervals; but it takes a saint to stand a lot of religion all of the time, and I'd say the same to the Archbishop of Canterbury himself. Why, look at the Bishop of London; even he plays tennis. Well, I'm not a saint, nor never pretended to be one. But take that sermon at Troas. I went, didn't I? And I stuck it till after midnight, didn't I? That shows I was interested. I know some who set themselves up to be religious who'd have done less. And if there hadn't been such a crush in the room, and I'd had a decent seat on the floor, I could have had my little doze and nobody would have been the wiser. I never ought to have sat

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in that window, but it's easy to be wise after the event, and I will say this for Saint Paul—he never bore any malice. Though I don't mind telling you, gentlemen, it was only through me that he got any supper that night. If I hadn't created a diversion, he might have preached on till morning and never known the difference. It's people like me who make saints possible: that's what I say. Mind you, I know we're disappointing. You'll never convert the whole world, as you might say, while a man wants to get the harvest in or to fix a new roof, or court a sweetheart. You can't always be thinking about your soul. I've been converted four times myself, and know something about it, and what I say is, if it really lasted, where would the preachers be? Out of a job at once! You can't preserve the sermon by preaching only to the converted, you know, gentlemen. It's the sinners who create a market for the saints, in a manner of speaking, and, if you're discussing the future of the pulpit, I don't think you can leave me out of it.

*Fénelon*: We should not, indeed, do so.

We are greatly obliged to you for your kind assistance. For my part, I feel strongly the truth of your contention.

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Did not even Plato say that no discourse is eloquent save when it moves the soul of him who listens? Were it not necessary to exhort, to admonish, and to teach the ordinary man year after year, where indeed would be the future of the pulpit? Could all be said to Eutychus, before he fell out of the window, the need for sermons would have been fulfilled.

*Anthony* : But, my dear Archbishop, surely you overrate the contribution of this gentleman to the discussion. Interesting though his experiences may have been, I distrust the religious theories of the untrained layman. The appeal to democracy in ecclesiastical matters has obviously overreached itself. Has the House of Commons ever exposed the absurdity of its position more than by its rejection of the laboriously achieved compromises of theological experts on the question of the Prayer Book? The position of the pulpit, my dear Archbishop, is surely a matter for the expert—the theologian, the psychologist, the sociologist, and the historian. *Vox populi* may well be *Vox dei*, if we hold that the deity is an illusion of the human phantasy. But in this case, if Mr Eutychus will pardon me——

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*Eutychus* : Pardon granted ! No offence I'm sure. But I have a little proposition to make, if you gentlemen like the idea of it. We've all agreed that it takes three to make a sermon—the preacher, his authority, and the congregation. And in order for the preacher to hold his audience, so to speak, he's got to preach about something important, the meaning of life and how to be good and so on ; and he's got to speak so that no one will answer him back—that's Authority ; and he's got to be quite certain that he's right. Very well, then. What I say is this : If the pulpit has a future, it'll have a present, let alone a past. And, if it's got a present, we can find it. All we have to do is to take a week or two off and go to look for sermons. The Archbishop can go to the Churches, because that's only right and proper. Mr Anthony's a real highbrow and he can go to all these scientists and professors and politicians and whatnot. And I'll just keep right on among my own sort and see what I can find, and then we'll meet in a week or two and compare notes, see ? I'm sure that's fair enough.

*Fénelon* : You propose a tour of inspection ?

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*Eutyclus* : That's right. See for ourselves what's going on, eh?

*Anthony* : You must excuse me, gentlemen. For any inspection which may be done without leaving London, I am entirely at your service. But I have several important engagements which—I know you can understand—will keep me somewhat preoccupied. At the same time, I shall be delighted to meet you in a week's time and resume our discussion.

*Fénelon* : This is admirable, M. Eutyclus ; I am deeply indebted to you for your suggestion ; Mr Anthony, I am grateful for your kindness.

*Eutyclus* : Well, gentlemen, that's a bargain then. What about stepping downstairs and both having one with me, to drink to our next merry meeting?

## PART II

### THE PULPIT AND THE CHURCHES

*Fénelon. Anthony. Eutychus.*

*Fénelon* : It was, indeed, considerate of you, gentlemen, to appear so promptly. My experiences during the past week have left me in a fever of impatience to resume our discussions.

*Anthony* : I trust that you have had an interesting time ?

*Eutychus* : First rate, thanks. Never enjoyed myself so much since I took the missus to Blackpool three years ago last August. But this was more improving, so to speak.

*Anthony* : And doubtless you have acquired much interesting information upon the present condition of the pulpit.

*Fénelon* : The interest of my discoveries has been unparalleled. And, though much that I have seen has puzzled me and much has caused me spiritual discomfort, I have at least collected ample evidence of the vitality, the

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popularity, and the influence of the modern sermon. Authority still, my friends, rests with the Churches. Only sad divisions, sinful heresies, and unpardonable innovations have robbed that Authority of its conspicuous grace. Nevertheless, I am delighted to inform you that the Future of the Pulpit, as its Past, lies within the bosom of the Church Herself.

*Anthony* : Now that is very curious, my dear Archbishop. For, although compassed about by many preoccupations, I have nevertheless found time to discuss this subject with several members of our intelligentsia. And while I found considerable difference of opinion, both concerning the scope of our definition of the pulpit and the present seat of its Authority, yet I undoubtedly proved beyond contention that the future of the Pulpit lies with the Scientist, the Political Philosopher, and the Artist, with some slight additions by the controllers of Big Business, and the Moralists. By the Scientists you must understand me also to include the masters of political science and administration. I have collected ample evidence by which I can no doubt convince you that the principles of Division of Labour and Differentiation



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of Function have affected the Sermon in a quite remarkable manner.

*Eutychus* : Well, now, think of that ! And just when I'd made quite sure that the future of the Pulpit lay with the newspapers, the wireless business, cinemas, sportsmen, beauty-doctors, and a whole lot of other johnnies. You know, speaking between ourselves and no offence meant, the ordinary man doesn't seem to be much interested in all your highbrow stuff. I'm more inclined to agree with the Archbishop that there's plenty of kick left in the Churches.

*Fénelon* : There appears to be some difference of opinion between us, gentlemen, and this, though regrettable in many ways, will undoubtedly add to the value of our discussion. I propose that each of us in turn should narrate his adventures and lay before the others the conclusions which he has drawn from them, in order that we may have the advantage of a three-fold experience. Mr Anthony, perhaps, you would be so kind as to oblige us ?

*Anthony* : Oh, pardon me, but I am sure that your ecclesiastical arguments will make the most fitting prelude to our talk. It is only fair that the case most

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open to criticism, if you will permit me to say so, should be expounded first.

*Fénelon* : I appreciate the gallantry of your intention, though I must strongly deprecate its implications. I believe you to be seriously misled upon this subject of the decline of the Churches. Let me tell you first that I set out upon my journey with the apprehension that, interest in religion having failed, the pulpit of the Churches must have lost its power. I was prepared for empty pews, widespread indifference, and a tendency among all educated persons to avoid discussions upon matters pertaining to theology, ecclesiastical organization, or even to morality. And what do I find? Believe me, gentlemen, that I was unprepared for the truth which I discovered.

*Anthony* : Indeed?

*Fénelon* : I am prepared to state that never before has the interest in religion been so intense, so widespread, so intelligent, and so active as it is to-day. And that the future of the pulpit depends upon the future of that interest.

*Anthony* : Oh, come now, my dear Archbishop. Permit us, please, a little incredulity. Your zeal is as respectable as your learning, but perhaps it has carried you away.

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*Fénelon* : By no means. Allow me to confirm my statements by my evidence. I set forth, according to our treaty, to discover signs of religious activity, and particularly of its manifestation in the pulpit. Following a custom which I have learned upon my visit here, I no sooner set foot in the street than I was accosted by a ragged urchin selling evening papers. Seeing the name of a high Church dignitary on the placard, I bought the paper for the small sum of one penny. Among items of news about murderers, actresses, athletes, and the vicissitudes of the Stock Exchange, I found a page devoted to the publication of what I presume to be a sermon by this distinguished doctor of Divinity, a Dean in the Anglican Church, and a Philosopher whose scholarship has, I understand, won for him a European reputation, especially distinguished for his admirable work upon Plotinus. This eminent ecclesiastic had chosen as his title : *The He-Woman, the She-Woman, and the Girl Voter of Twenty-Five*, words, I confess, incomprehensible to me, who am not a profound student of Plotinus. Its chief theme appeared, however, to be one frequently chosen by the Doctors of the Early Church, namely

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the instability and intellectual weakness of women—a subject which I should hardly have imagined popular in an age permitting women unprecedented liberties. Yet I was told that every week this gentleman is invited to contribute to the paper, which pays large sums for the privilege of publishing his opinions, that other periodicals clamour for his work, and that his written and his spoken words alike are awaited with the utmost expectation. Upon making further inquiry, I learned that this is customary with ecclesiastics. Bishops, canons, rectors, curates and others, not content with sermons delivered from the pulpit, rush into print in order that their admonitions may reach a greater congregation than any church would hold. I was shown a paper which gives weekly a list of those books for which the greatest demand has been found at the shops and the libraries; and during Lent I found that all three books with the greatest sale had contained sacred homilies. I found, moreover, that in pulpit after pulpit a controversy raged concerning suggested changes in the Anglican Prayer Book. The changes were slight; they had been agreed upon after prolonged discussion by the Church Assem-

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bly as a compromise between two extreme opinions ; they were merely permissive, authorizing alternate readings of the old Prayer Book, which might be adopted by those priests who chose ; they were not completely novel, being legalizations of quite common practices. Nevertheless, to those Protestants who found the chief motive of their religion in protesting, they afforded extreme displeasure. They were rejected by the House of Commons, which, being largely composed of Welshmen, Atheists, Parsees, Nonconformists, and women, I am told, was given a greater power than the appointed assembly of ecclesiasties and learned secular Churchmen. I found this Prayer Book and the possibilities of its acceptance, criticized word by word, in parish-churches ; I heard delicate points of verbal arrangement passionately debated in the vestry. Such dissension may be deplorable, even among heretics. I cannot think it spells indifference. An American writer, a shocking heretic and a man of mean taste, in my opinion, has published a work upon the Bible called *The Book Nobody Knows*. Yet when one of your most distinguished men of letters, Mr Arnold Bennett,

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ventured to suggest that the sale of Bibles in England was declining, the columns of all daily papers were filled immediately with indignant letters from publishers and booksellers as well as from priests, declaring that in no former period had so many Bibles been sold as at this present time. A volume of conundrums called "How well do you know your Bible?" enjoys a large circulation as an improving entertainment for wet evenings. Nor do the Scriptures suffice to gratify this hunger for religious teaching. One secular paper, *The Daily Express*, doubtless so called for the rapidity with which its contributors form opinions for which they have no evidence upon matters which they do not understand, is publishing, in place of a serial story of romantic love in high society, a biography of Our Lord Himself, written by a German historian of considerable repute. I cannot recall any previous time during which so many men, and these secular as well as ecclesiastic, attempted to retell that Story which has been written for all time incomparably by Divine Inspiration in the Scriptures. I have been shown a Life by a young literary critic, painfully

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heretical though written with great talent and sincerity, and *Lives* by an American journalist and a French philosopher. The taste of these pseudo-evangelists may be as deplorable as their theology; nevertheless, their passion and their popularity do not provide evidence of indifference. When the preachers find the sermon inadequate for their utterance, then at least we may suppose that the pulpit has a future.

*Anthony* : Might we not also suppose that because the people will no longer go to the preachers in the Church, the preachers have to come to the people in the Press?

*Fénelon* : If we made that supposition, we should be mistaken. I not only investigated the bookshops and the libraries; I went to the Churches.

*Anthony* : And you found——?

*Fénelon* : I found, indeed, an interesting situation, one not without danger, yet manifesting surely many signs of grace. In the first place I found the Churches, displaying an extraordinary variety of congregation. While in some cases the church is full to overflowing, in others the congregation consists at the most of a few elderly females, who compensate by devotion for what they lack of influence. It seemed to me

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that in the smaller towns, rather than in the villages or cities, the churches were well filled. I noticed also that the personality of the preacher, more than the Authority of the Church, appeared to attract the congregations. But undoubtedly I found signs of lively interest. The city of Hull, for instance, at one time petitioned a notable Church dignitary not to preach there, fearing lest his sermons might create disturbance, so vehement was the feeling on controversial points of ritual. In London not once nor twice, but upon several occasions, scenes of disorder took place during sermons preached by most eminent divines. These outbreaks came, not from the irreligious, the sceptical, nor the indifferent, but from a fervently devout section of Churchmen, nominally followers of the Anglican heresy, but at least yearning for a return to their Holy Mother, the Catholic Church. I do not think this spells indifference. Moreover, when travelling through Lancashire, I happened to visit a certain town of moderate proportions, and found there scenes of extraordinary excitement. The priest in charge of a Church dedicated to St Columba had ventured to describe a choral Eucharis-



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tic service as 'Sung Mass', a term identified by many ignorant heretics with the true order of the Catholic Faith. The ritual performed at this service was of a most modest character ; its institution was pleasing to a considerable number of the parishioners. Yet such was the enthusiasm of certain heretics belonging to the type known as Evangelical, that they interrupted the service with hymns and shouting, stamping their feet and raising so boisterous a clamour that the sacred rites had to be abandoned and the priest ventured outside the church at the peril of his life and safety. I do not think this spells indifference. In Birmingham we found considerable evidence of grave concern over a sermon preached there by the Bishop. Whenever he spoke, large crowds would flock to hear him, declaring that among all Anglican Churchmen he was the most enlightened and courageous. His admirers praised him particularly for his scientific knowledge, his eminence as a mathematician, and his fearlessness as a controversialist. The popular journals devoted to simple elucidation of scientific theories, and sold at low prices for the semi-educated, sought out his work and displayed his name con-

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spicuously to attract attention to their pages. Yet others heard the Bishop with profound fear and hatred, so much so that when he himself, following the fashion of the period, published a collection of his sermons, he gave to them the questionable title *Should such a Faith Offend?* A bookseller to whom I spoke declared this to be "A good selling title", and mentioned that he was amply satisfied with the commercial aspect of the sales. I do not think this spells indifference. I have seen notices outside Anglican Churches attracting attention to their Sunday Sermons by paradox or striking platitude. Upon one new church near Kensington I saw: "The Christian Duty of Hating Mother and Father"; upon another: "What Happens after Death?" It seems as though the habit of advertizing the sermon would develop. The English daily papers may contain on Sunday brief notices of the preachers appointed for the following day, but I understand that in America the system is more widely practised. Lady Adams returning from that country gave recently an account of the contemporary pulpit in the city of Los Angeles, which is not without significance even for England. On Saturday the Faithful in Los

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Angeles read the attractions offered to them by the local churches. These include sermons entitled : " Six Billion Tame Horses ", " The Woman who Painted her Face ", with a discussion on " Why do Girls Who do not Need it Paint and Powder ? " Another asks : " Do men use more Cosmetics than Women ? " An Astronomer-Evangelist speaks on " What is a Fortunate Horoscope ? " Free Lectures on Practical Psychology and Psychoanalysis include " The Psychology of Love " ; " The Power of Personality " ; " Psychoanalysis : its Relation to Business Success ", " How to get your Prayers answered " and " The Psychology of Making money ". To English ears, I understand, these titles sound a little crude. But the Power of the Poster is, I am told, continually growing, and I see no reason why the competition of which you spoke, Mr Anthony, may not be countered by successful advertizement of this kind. Upon returning to London after my provincial wanderings, I found the walls in many places placarded with a notice " Two days with God ", which advertized " an International Demonstration of the Friends of God ". When I sought out the hall mentioned on the advertize-

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ment, I found myself surrounded by a singular concourse of people. Among the crowds went men and women in an unæsthetic but serviceable uniform, who called themselves by the military titles of Captain, Major, Commander, and Commissioner, and protested that they were a chosen body of the Church Militant, known as the Salvation Army. A young woman with an earnest face rattled a box before me, requesting alms, and, upon my presenting her with a small donation, she asked me if I had been saved, and handed me a little tract entitled *Have You Found God Yet? You Ought to*. I questioned her for a short time as well as I could in that din and concourse of excited people, and, though I found her mind confused by heresies, poor child, and her manners corrupted by unseemly errors of taste, yet her sincerity and devotion were quite unmistakable, and she felt no diffidence in the pursuit of her vocation. This curious body, the Salvation Army, has carried the cult of the sermon to unusual extremes. I found, for instance, the natural beauties of one small seaside town disfigured by its notices: "Special Services for Easter—II Fire Brands from London" and "Have you come

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to God? You ought to". I heard upon one pleasant afternoon the rural tranquillity of Romney Marshes disturbed by the spasmodic utterance of one of these so-called Firebrands, a tall young man who stood upon the parapet of a bridge and shouted down a strange trumpet-like instrument called a megaphone his garbled version of the Gospel Story. Moreover, I was informed that it is not only the Salvation Army which encourages sermons in halls, barracks, fields, in public parks and at the street corners; but that a further body, holding views a trifle more orthodox according to the Anglican heresy, calls itself the Church Army. I met contingents of this Army travelling through the country by caravan, and sending out preachers through the villages by twos and threes to hold Mission Services and preach sermons among the peasant people. And though both these organizations appear to draw their followers mostly from among the humble and the poor, I do not think their presence spells indifference.

*Anthony* : I imagine that you found most of this interest among the lower classes.

*Fénelon* : Far from it, my dear sir !  
These particular forms of preaching

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appealed most to the men and women who frequent the city streets and village squares. I was invited, however, to a series of lectures which take the place of sermons in that sect known to the world as Christian Science. I found a large hall distinguished from others by the number of motor-cars waiting outside the door. Within, I found an audience crowded with women in rich furs and jewels, with delicate features and cultured voices, and the bearing of a wealthy aristocracy. Rarely since I left the French court have I seen a place of worship filled with a more elegant assembly. In this gathering the women outnumbered the men, which appeared strange to me, for among the followers of the Salvation Army I found more men than women.

*Anthony* : Would you say, then, that the men of the lower classes, and the women of the upper, appear to be most interested in the sermon ?

*Eutychus* : If you'll excuse me interrupting, I shouldn't. It's more like this. They're all interested ; but the working woman, what with babies and cooking, is pretty well busy all day, while a man, once he's knocked off work, is glad of a bit of amusement. But with the rich, the man's away working in

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his office and playing golf or something, and the women have nothing to do all day but get religion.

*Fénelon* : There may be some truth in your contention. Another development of the sermon I observed in what was explained to me as the "Service Movement". Recently, it seems, there have appeared in this country a number of curious fraternities, instituted for sociable, philanthropic, and educational purposes. Such are the movements known as the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Toc. H., Rotary, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Brotherhood, Sisterhood, Mothers' Union, Froth Blowers, Guggunnes, and the Automobile Association. I cannot pretend to have learned all particulars about them, but I am informed that all have the common appearance of religious bodies, with hierarchies, ritual, songs, traditions, and authority. And in all, I understand, the art of preaching flourishes, though the sermons may be called by peculiar names such as pow-wows, camp-fire talks, lunch-hour addresses, five-minutes chats from the heart, and other diverting synonyms. These fraternities flourish among men rather than women, but I have certainly found among many wealthy ladies undoubted signs of a

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religious interest, although, whether through idleness or through the malice of the Devil, many of them had been led into gross heresies. I was, for instance, introduced to a lady of great wealth and a high social position who took me to hear a sermon preached by the British Israelites, a misguided sect, believing that the Chosen People mentioned in the Old Testament are to be found only in the British Nation. Another lady told me that she belonged to the Order of the Star in the East, and escorted me to a great Hall in London, where a white-haired woman in flowing robes spoke with great eloquence upon the coming of a new Messiah and the dawn of a great World Religion. Though barely able to contain myself at hearing opinions so improper, I yet noticed that the hall was filled by men and women of the aristocracy, showing few external signs of poverty, or of the disease and ignorance of their misguided minds. I deplore the propagation of such doctrines; I deplore the degradation of the sermon. But I cannot believe that such a gathering spells indifference.

*Anthony* : I might suggest that it spells mere curiosity.

*Fénelon* : Then it is an inspired curiosity.



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It arises from the Grace of God, which has implanted in man a deep intuition, driving him to seek explanations of the universe, to learn whence he has come and whither he goes, an intuition driving him to seek salvation from his sins, and to find the way of righteousness of spirit. I believe that such curiosity is a holy thing. I believe it to be the essence of religion. I only regret that it should lack direction. I found, for instance, several places where a heresy called Spiritualism was practised. I attended a meeting in a great hall at which a famous and venerable scientist, a novelist, an actress from the music-hall stage, and a clergyman recited their experiences which had persuaded them of the possibility of communicating with the dead. I found another hall at which on Sunday mornings a certain Doctor declared himself to be the Apostle of a Free Religious Movement towards World Religion and World Brotherhood. He sought by his own efforts and those of a small band of humble and imperfectly-educated persons to deliver religion from all sectarianism, to prepare the way for a Sisterhood of Faiths and Brotherhood of Peoples, and to welcome everywhere the universal elements of Religion.

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I found his presumption arrogant, his intelligence confessed, and his doctrine heretical. I did not find his impulse irreligious, nor did I find his sermon and the congregation which attended it an evidence of indifference. Everywhere to-day men are seeking God. I heard prophecies of a Second Coming of Our Lord upon a given date in the late spring. At the corner of a great park I saw upon a high-raised platform a young woman holding a crucifix and answering questions proposed by a crowd of listeners. Her courage and her learning were equalled by the impropriety of her conduct. She spoke, I was informed, on behalf of the Catholic Evidence Guild.

*Anthony :* And what do you think, my dear Archbishop, of the new interference of women in religious matters?

*Fénelon :* I have always maintained the high respect due to the character and intelligence of noble woman. But I am content to accept the admonition of St Paul that no woman should lift her voice in Church. I recognize that such a command would never have been made had not women at all times wished to testify on matters of religion. I recognize the contribution made by St Catherine of Siena, St Theresa,

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St Monica, St Clare, and others to the exposition of the Catholic Faith. Nevertheless, I cannot deny the greater wisdom of St Paul. I have found indeed many women-preachers in your country. I visited the Guildhouse, Ecclestone Square, where a woman evangelist attracts large congregations. I learned that in the Nonconformist Churches several women have actually been appointed Ministers. I am told that the Sects of Christian Science and Theosophy were founded by women. This may be lamentable, but it is no symptom of indifference.

*Anthony* : What influence do you expect women to have upon the pulpit ?

*Fénelon* : I have no doubt that they will increase its popularity, not only now because the novelty of their sex creates diversion, but continually, because the peculiarity of their temperament will always be seeking fresh matter for enthusiasm. They will unfortunately also increase the strength of heresy. For women, I have observed, owing to their long exclusion from those great public functions which especially preserve the power of tradition, precedent, and ritual, have far less reverence than their brothers for those matters sanctified by custom. It

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has been said that man distinguishes himself from the brute beasts by his observance of ritual and ceremony. Woman shows herself more animal than man by her impatience with most ritual. And since ritual is dramatized dogma, women, it would seem, have less understanding than men of the value of accepted dogma. Their inclination would appear to lead them to reject the ancient ways. Few women are convinced by the argument : " This we have always done ; therefore we shall continue to do it ". Rather they would ask : " Is there no better way ? " Such a disposition leads too often on to heresy. I fear that the influence of women in the Church will be a heretical influence. Nevertheless, it is not an influence which will lead to the decay of the Pulpit.

*Anthony* : You expect, then, that women will be heretical but Christian ?

*Fénelon* : I find this hard to say. Already I find that even as the Church enters the mission-field to conquer the heathen, so do the heathen return to attempt the conquest of the Church. I saw in London notices advertizing sermons upon the Buddha. I hear that the cult of Mohammed has adherents in the suburbs of the Metropolis itself.

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An American woman recently became, it is said, a Hindu. I understand that, save in the case of the Moslems, it is the women who encourage these atrocious errors.

*Anthony* : Is your final conclusion upon the pulpit, then, that it will continue as an institution, but will be filled more and more by women, heretics, and heathens ?

*Fénelon* : It is not my prerogative to draw conclusions. Those must be left to a Wisdom greater than mine. But it would seem that the Authority of the sermon is to some extent passing from the orthodox. Men still look to the preachers for enlightenment, but their inclinations lead them no longer upon the highways of the faith, but only upon wandering paths and by-ways, into strange places where I cannot follow them. Further, it has ever seemed to me that the Atheist himself has become a preacher. In Hyde Park I have found a coloured man speaking with every appearance of profound conviction, even of inspiration. Yet his sermon concerned the monstrosity of a faith which substituted belief in another world for relief of the evils of this one. I heard lectures and read books by several of the younger writers

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denouncing Christianity, and, indeed, all revealed religion, with the enthusiasm of the prophet. An American gentleman, a certain Mr Morrison I. Swift, has written a book entitled *The Evil Religion does*, declaring Christianity to stand between the people and their true enlightenment. That Mr Bertrand Russell of whom you spoke last week has set up a school where children are educated without any encouragement to pursue the true faith. I have found quite worthy and earnest young men and women who were horrified by the suggestion that they might enter a church, regarding it with the same repulsion as we might look upon a house of ill-fame, fearing lest its contamination should assail the purity of their agnosticism. I have even learned from your newspaper *The Times* that in Russia a certain Catholic priest, the Reverend Theophile Skalsky, has been charged at Kieff with the crime of "influencing the religious masses against godlessness, which is equivalent to influencing them against the Bolsheviks themselves whose doctrine it is". It would seem as if this denial of all faith has itself become a religion. The atheists hold by Authority, derived from an illusionary Reason and an

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erring Science, that there is no God. They have acquired a new hagiology, and repeat piously the lives of their saints, prophets, martyrs, and evangelists, Tom Paine, Karl Marx, Godwin, Lenin, Freud, and many more. They have a new superstition, touching the evil influence of all ecclesiastical ritual, while accepting without question the ritual of social, sporting, and political convention. Such atheists will observe the secular ceremonial of the House of Commons, of a Committee, a ball-room, or a race-ground ; if Members of Parliament, they would bow their heads to the Speaker's chair ; but not before an altar. Such men will found an educational system, and will institute schools as strictly orthodox as those founded by the Woodard Trust under the Church of England ; but their orthodoxy will accept only the tenets and ritual of their Atheism. The children educated there will be brought up as socialists, pacifists, atheists, or vegetarians ; the pupils who desire to be confirmed, to enter the army, hunt the fox, eat roast beef, or play hockey for England, will no doubt shock their parents and schoolmasters as much as the ungodly and rebellious children of the schools which I visited

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during my life in France. National persecutions may follow private intolerance, and the State can be called in to aid the secular church of the agnostics. I hope that no such future awaits England; but, should this melancholy catastrophe occur, I must still think that there will be a pulpit. For I have seen no negligence among the atheists in propagating their nefarious doctrines, and it would seem impossible for earnest believers, in whatever creed, to refrain from the instruction, persuasion, and admonition of their fellows.

*Anthony* : Here at last we agree. For what I have seen in my investigation has brought me to a somewhat similar conclusion. I should deny the vitality which you have witnessed among the Christian Churches. Though reluctant to contradict you or dispute your evidence, I must still assert that your opinion of their survival-value appears to me more than a little exaggerated. But I am inclined to accept your contention that the religious impulse now sustains men who have rejected the childish anthropomorphism of Christianity. I can show you evidence in the fields of science, politics, ethics, art, and economics which proves the preservation of the sermon. I still



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maintain that the pulpits of the future are the desks of a laboratory.

*Fénelon* : You have been more than courteous to listen so long to my dissertation. I shall be delighted now to hear your arguments.

*Eutyclus* : Now I must say, Archbishop, that was a really interesting and improving talk you've given us—far better than the Rotary Club luncheons, or even the League of Nations Union. I've had a really good time, I consider, though I must say there are one or two of your points I don't quite agree with. But what about dropping round to the bar for a couple of quick ones before we listen in again to Mr Anthony?

*Fénelon* : Gentlemen, I am at your service.

## PART III

### THE PULPIT AND THE PLATFORM

*Anthony. Fénelon. Eutychus.*

*Eutychus :* Well, here we are again !  
Now, Archbishop, since you would not  
have a whisky and soda, what about a  
cigar, eh ?

*Fénelon :* I thank you for your kindness,  
but I have not yet acquired the habit  
of smoking tobacco.

*Eutychus :* Then you'll allow me ? Mr  
Anthony, what about it ?

*Anthony :* I thank you. No. I am  
afraid that I never smoke anything but  
Russian cigarettes. If the Archbishop  
will permit us——

*Fénelon :* By all means.

*Anthony :* Then I will ask you to bear  
with me an hour or so while I prove  
that the Archbishop is mistaken in his  
belief that the future of the Pulpit  
lies with the Churches. Though unable  
to profess so intensive an examination  
as he of existing conditions in this

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country, I am, I think I may say without arrogance, rather more conversant with its tendencies. And I maintain upon good evidence that the pulpit of the future is the platform of the intellectual.

*Fénelon* : We shall be delighted to hear all that you have to tell us, though we may not agree with your conclusions.

*Anthony* : I began this discussion, you will remember, by declaring that the pulpit had no future because religion has no future.

*Fénelon* : You did so.

*Anthony* : I still, of course, stand by my argument. I fear that I remain unconvinced by the Archbishop's charming survey of the religious interests of our present day. I think—you will forgive me, my dear Archbishop—that he attributes too great a significance to an ephemeral fashion. The Press has just discovered that the folly and vulgarity of the herd can be extended even to its desire for a Soul; and at the moment Immortality, Transubstantiation, and the Divinity of Christ share the publicity value given at other times to Standard Bread, Free Trade, or German Atrocities. This phase will pass. But there is something, I believe, which will not pass.

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*Fénelon* : Indeed ?

*Anthony* : Habit, convention, self-interest, and the sexual impulse, gentlemen, provide the motive power for most human actions. The majority of men, however, are both cowardly and idle. Their cowardice results in a desire for assurance concerning those things which are for the most part unknown to them—the meaning of death, the purpose of life, punishment, sin, and so forth. Their idleness results in a desire to be categorically instructed about these things, in such a manner that no scope is left for doubt or questioning. As Mr Eutyclus very properly said : “ Life’s a mystery ; but you do like to feel that there is someone who knows about it ”. Schopenhauer’s description of men huddled like hedgehogs together for warmth explains the human need for orthodoxy. We feel safe only if we all feel together. Heretics chill us with fear—hence our attempt to warm ourselves by the fires which burn them. We cloak our motives even from ourselves, since the first great discovery of civilization was made by Adam when he realized the indecency of his true nature. Since then we have covered fear and idleness with fig-leaves. Nevertheless, it is fear which

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makes us seek reassurance concerning our ultimate destiny and how to reach it ; it is idleness which makes the most of us submit to the self-constituted authority of the few.

*Fénelon* : But what induces the few to lay aside their idleness and preach to the many ?

*Anthony* : Arrogance, impatience, and the driving impulse of conviction—quite a strong impulse, it would seem from human history.

*Fénelon* : Your pulpit, then, would represent arrogance and impatience preaching to idleness and fear ?

*Anthony* : Equally so with your pulpit. We may call these qualities by prettier names.

*Fénelon* : I think we may. But of what nature is your pulpit ?

*Anthony* : Not my pulpit. I protest, sir, but one which I observe to be in process of development. Above all, I should say, it is a more specialized pulpit than those of previous epochs. During the earlier periods of the Catholic Church the sum of human knowledge was comparatively limited, and it was possible for a single organization to claim supreme Authority in every sphere of human thought and action.

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*Fénelon* : Most wisely so. There must be one head.

*Anthony* : But since the Renaissance, not only the quantity but the quality of our knowledge has changed. No single organization now could assume the control of everything from the width of lace round a deacon's surplice to the astronomical measurements of the stars. No one but a madman would to-day attempt a *Summa Theologie*. No, we have evolved a complex civilization, and the principles of differentiation of function and division of labour must be introduced into the pulpit as into the workshop. Aquinas must delegate his labours to scientists and moralists, politicians and theologians. Bernardetto of Siena finds his sermons preached by the Press and the platform, the fashion-gossip writers, the satirical revue artists, and the League of Nations Union.

*Fénelon* : Men still seek salvation.

*Anthony* : Of course they seek it—from starvation-wages and the income-tax collector, from old age and venereal disease, from boredom, and from military conscription. And wherever two or

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three are gathered together seeking salvation, there is the congregation. Whenever one tells them that he knows where salvation can be found, speaking from authority, accepting no criticism, there is the preacher. And whatever medium he employs to convey his message to the people, whether by the Press, the radio, the laboratory, or the theatre, there, let us imagine, is the pulpit.

*Fénelon* : Who are these preachers of Salvation if they be not the consecrated priests of the Holy Church ?

*Anthony* : The salvation which men to-day are seeking is a salvation of human personality. Its kingdom is of this world. The preachers are many, because the roads to salvation appear diverse. First, I would place the biologists, who preach the preservation of Life itself, and, with them, the school of scientists and pseudo-scientists whose doctrines to-day are justly fashionable. Next, for reasons which I will explain later, I rank the Moralists, whose doctrines are for the most part antipathetic to those of science. Next come the preachers of the Community, political philosophers, economists, politicians and pacifists, whose sermons concern the relations of men towards one another and

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towards their possessions. Finally come the Artists, who preach of beauty, of the values placed by men upon the phenomena of this natural world and their perception of them by the senses.

*Fénelon* : Pray tell us then about the Pulpit of the Biologists. Do they preach a religion ?

*Anthony* : I dislike that word : it has been so long associated with sentimentality, superstition, and ignorance. But let it pass. For the sake of convenience, we will say that they preach the religion of Life.

*Fénelon* : What are the chief doctrines of their religion ?

*Anthony* : In the first place, you must understand that they have cleared away the old confusion, common to paganism, Buddhism, and Christianity alike, between the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of value. Ethics and cosmogony are for them completely separate. There is no connection between the laws of nature and the desires of mankind. The sun does not revolve about the earth because men believe that God was made incarnate here. The thunder does not speak with the voice of God ; the deluge does not indicate his wrath, nor the rainbow his mercy. Man, by taking thought, can-



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not add an inch to his stature, although Leibniz and Mr Bernard Shaw declare that by taking thought the giraffe has added many inches to his neck. What men wish and what exists are two quite different things. As Mr Bertrand Russell says: "The philosophy of nature is one thing, the philosophy of value is quite another. Nothing but harm can come of confusing them. What we think good, what we should like, has no bearing whatever upon what is, which is the question for the philosophy of nature. On the other hand, we cannot be forbidden to value this or that, on the ground that the non-human world does not value it." Again he says: "In this world of values nature itself is neutral. . . . it is we who create values. It is for us to determine the good life, not for nature—not even for nature personified in God".

*Fénelon* : God then, finds no place in this religion ?

*Anthony* : None at all. We have no use for superstitions. The first article in the creed is, therefore, the recognition of nature and value as two separate entities. The second is the veneration for life, which leads on naturally to the rehabilitation of the biological impulse.

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*Fénelon* : What impulse is this ?

*Anthony* : The impulse towards life, richer life, more perfect, continuous, and fruitful life. And its veneration assumes many forms. We have the revival of the Primitive, which in anthropology takes the form of a research into the origins of society, in psychology an interest in the simplest expressions of emotion, and in philosophy and art a return to the infantile and the impulsive. We have next the rehabilitation of sex after its long repression by Christian asceticism and nineteenth-century convention. Hence we have a recrudescence of fertility-worship in slightly more subtle forms than those practised by the pagans : we have a pursuit of many minor cults proceeding from these major interests—cults of physical perfection, health, and beauty on the one hand, and, upon the other, reactions against all these—the cults of the Moralists, who would restrict all physical impulses and appetites, who pursue obscenity with vengeance, and seek to bind life by a chain of restrictions and taboos.

*Fénelon* : What do you mean by a revival of the Primitive, M. Anthony ?

*Anthony* : You will find, if you examine the sermons of our scientific preachers

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that most of them tend to trace all emotions, motives, and desires back to their origin. And since science has proved to us the continuity of the human race, nay more, the continuity of Life itself, it becomes obvious that this retracing is a long and complicated process, which leads us into some very odd places. There was, for instance, the almost simultaneous discovery by the Viennese school of psychologists of the origins of emotion in the infancy of the individual, and the discovery by anthropologists of the German and British Schools of the origins of custom and religion in the infancy of society. Freud, Jung, and Adler look to the babe for guidance in analyzing the neuroses of the adult man ; Sir James Frazer and Malinowski look to Mexican Indians and Trobriand Islanders for enlightenment about the capers of the modern world.

*Fénelon* : " And a little child shall lead them."

*Anthony* : Well, if you like, you may take that as their text. They study sophistication from simplicity. The man's ambition is the result of the infant's struggle. Freud, for instance, in his analysis of Leonardo da Vinci, ascribes his desire to build an aeroplane

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to his dream, when still a suckling child, of a bird which flew against his lips—a dream associated with the infantile sexual impulse of the male child towards its mother. Our anthropologists explain our reactions, our social customs, and religious ceremonies by the infantile superstitions of the earliest races which have left any record, of the most primitive which yet exist. Even bishops to-day do not disdain to draw a moral from man's humbler ancestors, and if the child is father of the man, the gorilla is possibly father of the child. Pray notice the pre-occupation with infancy. We shall allude to it again.

*Fénelon* : Your preachers follow the example of a Greater, and set a Child in the midst of the people.

*Anthony* : But their comment is "of such is the Kingdom of Earth", I rather think. Now one of the results of this return to origins has been the rehabilitation of the sexual impulse ; first, because biologists and the like are naturally concerned with life and its extension ; secondly, because the more we investigate primitive tribes, the stronger we realize this motive in society to be. The biological functions, despised by Buddhism, misused by

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Islam, and suspect by Christianity, are being restored by our preachers to their true importance. The asceticism of the Early Church, the distrust of sex, and the consequent fear and contempt for women expressed by Tertullian, Epiphanius, Clement of Alexandria, and the rest, resulted in an under-estimation of the sex-instinct, maternity, and women. To-day there is a considerable school of preachers who have taken the saying of St Paul that it is better to marry than to burn, and twisted it into their text, that it is better to burn than to remain a virgin. Thus we have Mrs Charlotte Haldane, in *Motherhood and its Enemies*, emphasizing the harm done by Intersexual Women. "The virgin may be an excellent and useful member of the community, or she may not", she writes. . . .

*Fénelon* : Might not the same be said about the wife ?

*Anthony* : It might perhaps, though not by Mrs Haldane. "Virgins", she writes, "are frequently fanatical and cranky." Their sadistic tendencies lead them, when midwives, to torture normal women in their travail. "In the past", she reflects wistfully, "when parental authority and that of the Roman

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Catholic Church were still strong, the public was protected against their activities. The 'old maid' was kept down with an iron hand." Mrs Bertrand Russell, a preacher of great vigour and writer of books called *Hypatia* and *The Right to be Happy*, is equally emphatic in her disapproval of virginity. Dr Norman Haire would have boys and girls mate at sixteen. The psychoanalysts have revealed the terrible consequences of sex-repression. Mr Havelock Ellis, Mr Langdon Davis, and Dr Marie Stopes all enlarge in different ways upon the importance of the erotic nature of man. Fanatics like Professor Weith-Knudsen, a Danish lawyer and economist, and Mr Anthony Ludovici have gone so far in their veneration of the consequences of sexual intercourse that they have made a new religion of maternity, and condemn all women who will not worship with them—thus inverting the custom of the Spartan women who thrashed unmated youths round the altar. One gallant Captain, a devotee of this religion, and a member of the Eighty Club, even went so far as once to attempt to found a "League of True Womanhood". Its membership apparently was secret, but I suspect that

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he hoped to count among his followers the Earl of Birkenhead, the Dean of St Paul's, the Headmaster of Harrow, Lady Oxford and Asquith, the Duke of Northumberland, and Mrs Elinor Glyn. Professor Weith-Knudsen, however, became led astray into a heresy which warned white men against their fatal tendency to venerate women, holding that "woman's life, at any rate in her best years, is normally claimed almost exclusively by sexual phenomena, menstruation, pregnancy, parturition, suckling and bringing up children". But apart from heretics, fanatics, cranks, and the like, the preachers of Fertility have undoubtedly acquired enormous influence.

*Fénelon* : You call them preachers of Fertility?

*Anthony* : Fundamentally, that is what they are. They worship the instinct which secures the continuity of Life. It may seem a far cry from the phallic symbols of the Zimbabwe Ruins in Rhodesia, or the beating of barren women in Békés with a stick first used to separate pairing dogs, to the sophisticated lectures of Keyserling or the advice of an old-fashioned mother to her débutante daughter. Nevertheless, I assure you, my dear Arch-

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bishop, that the original Thirty-Nine Articles of these faiths are identical. There is one Religion of Fertility, and we can trace its influence to-day in the increased public concern with maternity and child-welfare, in the international labour legislation for the restriction upon women's labour in supposedly dangerous industries. We may find it in the demands for greater freedom of intercourse between men and women in society, in the interest in companionate marriage, in the protests against celibacy of teachers, in the contempt for virgins, the interest manifested in Eugenics, and the veneration for maternity. The religion has its Preachers, like Count Keyserling, its pedagogues like the Russells, its mystics like D. H. Lawrence, its publicity agents like Marie Stopes, its statesmen, poets, artists, and the like. Psyche, the soul, has upon analysis proved to be anything but the virgin spirit we once thought her. And diverse though our preachers seem to be, their church has one foundation.

*Fénelon* : Indeed, you interest me ; yet at the same time there are one or two points in your argument which I find a little difficult to follow.



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*Anthony* : What are they ?

*Fénelon* : You anticipate, I understand, the development of a religion based upon the worship of the biological impulse of man ?

*Anthony* : I do.

*Fénelon* : This religion, already preached in various guises, implies a complete set of æsthetic and ethical as well as physical and social values ?

*Anthony* : Why not, indeed ?

*Fénelon* : But did I not understand you to affirm that the Biological and scientific school of Preachers repudiated the confusion between the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of value, and sought to sever their connection ?

*Anthony* : I did affirm it.

*Fénelon* : But if a philosophy of nature deals, as you said, with those things which are, with physical facts revealed by scientific investigation, is it not exactly this which dictates their philosophy of value to these preachers ? Is not their practice merely the inversion of the Christian doctrine ? The Church condemned Galileo's astronomical theories because of their spiritual values. Your scientists would base their spiritual values upon the theories of a Viennese psychologist. To-day it is not men

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but the unconscious processes of nature who are arbiters of value. The soul could once dictate their courses to the stars: to-day it seems as though the belly dictates its function to the soul.

*Anthony* : You mistake my meaning, I assure you. Because they respect nature instead of denying her, because they work in accordance with her laws instead of in conflict with them, our biological preachers do not, therefore, let her dictate to them. But if you believe that the Biological School offers too great deference to the laboratory, perhaps you would prefer another sect which refuses even to admit that the laboratory exists at all? You say that you met with the Christian Scientists?

*Fénelon* : I did, indeed, attend a service at the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in London.

*Anthony* : The Christian Scientists, far from permitting the nature of matter to influence their ethics, deny the reality of matter altogether, and assert that the human mind—doubtless as part of the Divine Mind—has supremacy and can control those phenomena which we commonly understand to demonstrate the laws of nature.

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*Fénelon* : I found their heresies, where they contained a grain of truth, to be borrowed largely from the Catholic philosophy ; where they were false, I found them to proceed from the presumption of our sinful nature.

*Anthony* : Quite. Well, my dear Archbishop, as I was saying, we have the two extremes, those who deny the reality of matter and those who deny the reality of anything save matter ; and in between them lie an infinite gradation of sects demonstrating the imperfect separation of natural and ethical philosophies. Each sect has its appropriate pulpit, adorned by scientists and pseudo-scientists, pseudo-theologians, and theologians. From these pulpits are preached the Health Cults, originating mostly in this country and Germany, the Hypnotic Cults, originating chiefly in India and the Far East, the Vegetarian Cults and Simple Life Cults originating in Welwyn Garden City. Sometimes all these are mingled ; sometimes they are treated in turn. Allow me, for instance, to show you this card which was sent to me free by post, advertizing one such series of mixed or transitional sermons ;

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I have not quoted the entire list, but  
it is obvious that such lectures fulfil  
in every way the requirements of the  
Pulpit as we define it. They profess to

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show a Way of Life. They speak from Authority. They address a believing congregation. They proclaim a doctrine of justification by works, in contradistinction to the Christian Science doctrine of justification by faith. This sect, like most Christian sects, seems to develop its own fashions in art, clothing, manners, habitation, morals, and politics. Further extensions of these health-and-happiness cults will certainly arise in the future ; their sermons will be given in the form of pseudo-scientific lectures, sometimes in Restaurants, sometimes in Garden-city lecture-halls and Open-air Park Platforms ; sometimes at week-end Humanitarian camps, where Vegetarianism, Pacifism, Folk Dancing, Leather-work, and Fellowship will be taught in five brief Sermons, interspersed with the singing of the folk-songs and the eating of Health-food-non-Fired Refreshments.

*Fénelon* : You spoke of the scientists liberating man from superstitions. I would have you recall that in the Church it was not the Saints and Doctors, but their ignorant followers, who were led astray after vain superstitions. I acknowledge that in this other cult the great scientists may be immune from these dark fruits of ignorance. But

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their followers do not seem to share their immunity, and are not the superstitions of the body even more gross than the superstitions of the soul?

*Anthony*: It is always easy, my dear Archbishop, to criticize that which is imperfect. But if you do not like my Scientists, allow me to introduce my School of Moralists—excellent preachers these. Some direct their attention against the Biologists. They hate the fertility-cult. The very mention of sex they call obscene. They have laid a taboo upon the human body. I have heard of women who have draped their table-legs with muslin, lest they should arouse lascivious thoughts. There are school-teachers who blush when asked to explain passages in the Bible. Councils of Morality, Purity Associations, and the like hold public meetings, raid cinemas and places of amusement, and have established a pretty vigorous preaching fraternity. I have listened to their evangelists in Hyde Park railing against the attire of women, the conventions of the theatre, and the licentiousness of the embracing couples who through the summer months disport themselves for their enjoyment in the parks. The influence of these people is also very great. They have

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established a rigorous political and artistic censorship. The Minister of Health may not permit clinics supported by public funds to give poor women information about the methods of family limitation now freely practised by the rich ; plays of undisputed artistic merit are forbidden upon the stage. Many books of great literary interest, such as the *Ulysses* of James Joyce and several volumes by Frank Harris, cannot be printed or bought in this country. Some libraries forbade the circulation of Isadora Duncan's naïve autobiography. The Home Secretary is accepted as an arbiter of taste on questions of homosexuality, as the Foreign Secretary is accounted Censor of patriotic or Pacifist Films. The sight of a naked human form is thought to be indecent, though pigs, apes, and stallions walk naked without offence. Flesh is not merely grass to them, but a poisonous weed. The delights of the senses, the drinking of alcohol, are for them tainted by corruption. The Temperance Associations have a very highly developed pulpit, and are gradually acquiring in England, as they have gained in America, a considerable political influence. If these preachers obtained their full desire, even the meaning of certain physical actions might be forgotten, and the human

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race might perish from its own delicacy.

*Fénelon* : I have known such moralists during my life in France. In countering the extravagances of your biologists, they may do well. I gather that such moralists preach both within the churches and outside them.

*Anthony* : They do so. Both Church and State contribute to their influence. And, speaking of the State, let me pass on to the second large group of preachers with whom I wish to deal—the Politicians.

*Fénelon* : By all means. But whom do you mean exactly by the Politicians?

*Anthony* : I use the word Politics in its broadest sense. There are, I take it, two types of religious mind, the solitary and the social. Opinions differ as to the worth of these. Professor Whitehead would tell us that religion is what a man does with his solitude. Mr Aldous Huxley suggests that the man of solitary religion belongs to the higher type. But Mr H. G. Wells declares that the solitary religion, with its emanations in mysticism, ecstasy, and the like, is merely a perversion of religion, and that the true religious impulse is directed towards the correction of man's natural egotism and the inculcation of the social virtues. There are two kinds of sociable religion



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—that which expresses itself in community worship, wherein a collection of individuals pursue each his own salvation, though in company with one another, and that which expresses itself in work for this community, and which uses the political weapon to achieve reform on earth. The preachers of this second type take as their text also "Our kingdom is of this world", and their energy is directed towards the Coming of that Kingdom. It has, naturally, many doctrines and many preachers. But at present perhaps the most interesting and representative pulpit of Politics as a Religion is that of the Open Conspiracy, under its Chief Priest, Mr H. G. Wells. The Bible of the Open Conspiracy is in the course of construction. Its Old Testament includes the *Outline of History*, *The Science of Life*, and *The Conquest of Power*, together with *The Open Conspiracy*, *The Way the World is going* and other books written by Mr Wells. The New Testament, not yet even planned, will doubtless contain the biography of the Teacher, and the history of the early achievements of the moment. The principal features of the doctrine are :

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1. The complete assertion, practical as well as theoretical, of the provisional nature of existing governments ;
2. The resolve to minimize the conflicts of these governments ;
3. The determination to replace private, local, or natural ownership of at least credit, transport, and staple production by a responsible world directorate serving the common ends of the race ;
4. The practical recognition of the necessity for world biological controls, for example, of population and disease ;
5. The support of a minimum standard of individual freedom ;
6. The supreme duty of subordinating the personal life to the creation of a World directorate capable of these tasks and to the general advancement of human knowledge, capacity and power.

The religion already has its preachers : it is contemplating an organization, or rather a union of many diverse organizations ; its Sabbath, for religious instruction and corporate consideration of the faith, is to be the Christian Sunday ; its ideas are fermentating in scattered and unrelated minds in different parts of the world. In short, it has every characteristic of an excellent religion with a quite remarkable pulpit. *Fénelon* : Every characteristic of religion except one. I do not see that it is in any way religious.

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*Anthony* : That is a matter upon which I can only refer you to my friend Mr Wells and his disciples. The main religious ideal of Mr Wells lies in the union of human society all over the world, and in the centralization of control and organization. He desires sympathetic efficiency. But there are other preachers. We happen at the direct opposite of Mr Wells and his Open Conspiracy to find Mr G. K. Chesterton and his Distributism, which is the name for a certain Closed Conspiracy, most interesting in its detail. Distributism stands for the rights of the Small Proprietor, for Local Custom, for the detached Independent citizen or producer. Where Wells would unite, Chesterton would separate ; where Wells looks first at the whole world, Chesterton looks first at the small shopkeeper ; where Wells seeks Efficiency, Chesterton seeks Liberty. Both are admirable Preachers. Both take religion seriously. As with all other successful preachers, their faith does not touch only the central tenets of religion : it affects all tastes, prejudices, and antipathies. The Open Conspirators hate Roman Catholics, Kings, processions, individualism, superstition, and soldiers ; the Distributists hate Open

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Conspirators, birth-control, amalgamations, feminism, vivisection, and teetotalism.

*Fénelon* : I fear that I hardly know these gentlemen of whom you speak.

*Anthony* : Well, if you fail to recognize these preachers, then let me remind you of the evangelists of more orthodox political religions. I need not direct your attention beyond this country, though I could show you most interesting examples of the Sermon preached by the Communists of Russia, the Fascists of Italy, and the Hundred-Per-Cent-Americans of the United States. Moreover, in every State there are some preachers of the almost universal religion of Nationalism. Patriotism, beyond all other social creeds, has its evangelists, its ritual, and its traditions. Its priesthood lies for the most part with the Army, though in some cases among the Politicians and the Poets lay-readers of peculiar power have been found. Who has preached the Italian Doctrine better than D'Annunzio and Mussolini? —who the English, better than Rudyard Kipling and Winston Churchill? The Flag, the Bugle, even the Holy Place, such as in England the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, are not lacking

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from this creed. The patriotic sermon happens to be under a slight cloud at the moment in England. When, for instance, the present Secretary of State for India attempted a year or so ago to revive the ancient cult, he was sharply reproved not only by the national Press but also by his own colleagues in the Cabinet. But this is merely a passing shadow. The popularity of Patriotism cannot be permanently dimmed. We have vigorous missionary societies such as the Primrose League, the Navy League, the Junior Imperial League, the British Fascists and certain branches of the O.T.C., Territorial, Boy Scout, and Girl Guide Movements, which will preserve the sacred fire of eloquence. Then the political parties have each a school of preaching. The Conservatives tend to mingle with the Patriots. Sometimes it is not easy to distinguish the sentiments and ritual of the one from the other. The Socialists, like the Conservatives, have their Authority, their Way of Life, their Ritual, and their fellowship. The Socialist sermon, perhaps, fulfills more than that of any other sect the complete characteristics of the Religious Pulpit. For to the Socialist the realization of his political ideal does not mean

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merely a change of power ; it means a change of personality. Under the Socialist State, as under the Kingdom of God, man shall be regenerate and born again. I will not refer you to the more doctrinaire treatises of Marx and his disciples. I will take you to meetings addressed by Bernard Shaw, H. M. Brailsford, Clifford Allan, J. A. Hobson, Fenner Brockway, George Lansbury, James Maxton, or even Ramsay Macdonald. Listening to their prophecies of a new heaven and a new earth, of a new relationship between man and man, I will ask you : " Is this a political speech or a sermon ? Is this a platform or a pulpit ? Is this an economic doctrine or a new religion ? "

There can be only one answer.

*Fénelon* : Ah ! but our friend Eutychus seems to have something to say.

*Eutychus* : And what about the Liberals ?

*Anthony* : Before the Great War, the Liberals also had a religion. Their political creed became largely identified with a certain phase of Nonconformist protestantism, and their preachers stepped quite easily from the pitch-pine pulpit of a Congregational Chapel on to the rough boards and trestles of a Free-Trade Hall platform. They were always at a certain disadvantage in the

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matters of ceremony and authority, since temperamentally they were averse to Ritual. They waved neither the Union Jack nor the Red Flag. Their year culminated neither in Empire Day nor in a May Day. They had not even any martyrs. Intellectual latitudinarianism makes a dry pulpit while the critical individualism of the Liberal doctrine made appeals to authority suspect. It was almost part of the Liberal creed that it should not become a Religion, that a man might argue ; but he must not preach.

*Eutychus* : But what price old Gladstone and Campbell Bannerman at the time of the Boer War ?

*Anthony* : Gladstone, when speaking upon Bulgarian atrocities, preached sermons, as a humanitarian, but not as a Liberal. Campbell Bannerman and the Little Englanders brushed near enough the flame of persecution to warm their cold words with the sacred fire—but only for a short period during the war in South Africa.

*Eutychus* : And Lloyd George ?

*Anthony* : Lloyd George becomes a preacher whenever he is a Rebel, a Humanitarian, or a Patriot.

*Eutychus* : And when he is a Liberal ?

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*Anthony* : He never was a Liberal, to my knowledge. At the same time, to a few men upon certain occasions the desire for intellectual liberty becomes a passion, and the doctrines of John Stuart Mill became a Gospel. Should the State ever destroy the rights of the individual, it is quite possible that Liberalism may become a great religion, and that the Liberal sermons may surpass all others. Mussolini could make of Liberalism a religion.

*Eutychus* : And what about the Bolshie ?

*Anthony* : Communism as a politico-economic doctrine has few real adherents now in England, but certainly among its followers are some earnest preachers. And Communist Sunday Schools with Communist hymns are among our places of regular Sabbath Worship. Nor must we forget the Individualists, who run a bookshop, a paper, and monthly Luncheons, and who count among their most eloquent preachers such men as Sir Ernest Benn and Harold Cox. Their creed is one of sturdy independence, anti-socialism, and the right of private refusal to be vaccinated.

*Fénelon* : To be—— I beg your pardon ?

*Anthony* : Vaccinated—— Ah yes ! An invention you may not have en-



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countered, for the conquest of small-pox infection.

*Fénelon* : Indeed. And the individualists object to the prevention of this scourge ?

*Anthony* : Only to its compulsory prevention. Their objection is against legally enforced vaccination ; therefore they declare that vaccination is scientifically unsound and does more harm than good—a common twist of human reasoning.

*Fénelon* : Common, indeed, though hardly reasonable.

*Anthony* : Hardly. However, enough of the Individualists. Their numbers are as few as their zeal is great. We must proceed to the consideration of the Internationalists, who compose one of the greatest Politico-Religious bodies in the world. The growth in their numbers and the developments of their creed have been among the most noticeable consequences of the Great War, and their cult of the Sermon has indeed been unsurpassed by any other body.

*Fénelon* : What form does their religion take ?

*Anthony* : It assumes many forms although its God is one.

*Fénelon* : What God is this that they worship ?

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*Anthony* : They call it Peace ; but many of them worship only one member of the great family of Peace-deities, International peace. Some are, for instance, exceedingly averse to economic peace. Some are still more suspicious of religious, intellectual, and sectarian peace. However, on the whole, they are peace worshippers, and, in the course of their worship, they have established a considerable Pulpit.

*Fénelon* : Pray tell me more of a pulpit dedicated to so respectable a God.

*Anthony* : The Archbishop of this Church is one Sir Austen Chamberlain, a government official who can speak French. He is quite self-appointed, and, having both invested and consecrated his own person, he goes from time to time to a Swiss city called Geneva, and preaches admirable sermons to representatives of many European and non-European nations about the blessings of Peace, and the remarkable services wrought in its name by the British Empire.

*Fénelon* : Does he make many converts ?

*Anthony* : He has converted himself, which is more than many preachers accomplish, and he is a sincere believer in his own sermons. Unfortunately most of his congregation being them-

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selves evangelists, he has the difficult task of preaching to the converters.

*Fénelon* : Has he then no followers ?

*Anthony* : He has, indeed, many who belong to his party, but they do not follow ; some of them try to lead him ; some of them push behind ; some obstruct his path ; but he sees nothing except his own virtuous nose and the enigmatic door of the Colonial Office.

*Fénelon* : I do not quite understand you.

*Anthony* : Nor do Sir Austen's followers. Among them, however, are many excellent preachers belonging to a Church called The League of Nations Union. This is the established Church of peace, being founded under royal charter, and always a little afraid of dis-establishment.

*Fénelon* : What is its purpose ?

*Anthony* : Its purpose is to preach the Gospel of the Covenant to the people.

*Fénelon* : The First Covenant of Sinai, or the Second Covenant of Christ ?

*Anthony* : The Third Covenant of Washington, Paris, and Geneva, called the Covenant of the League of Nations. Being an established church, the League of Nations Union attracts ladies and gentlemen of great distinction and respectability, including prime ministers, dukes—though not the Duke of

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Northumberland, of course—bishops, headmasters, and colonels. It preaches in Churches, Chapels, lecture-halls, and in the open air.

*Fénelon* : Upon what texts are its sermons generally based ?

*Anthony* : Its most popular text is drawn from the sayings of the worthy Dr Pangloss : “ That all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.” Its churches are decorated tastefully, but simply with white-wash and the flags of all the nations. Its first Commandment is : “ Thou shalt honour thy government and thy cabinet ”, and the second is this : “ Thou shalt not offend thy weaker brethren.”

*Fénelon* : Are there other churches of peace ?

*Anthony* : There are indeed. There is, for instance, the Union of Democratic Control, a Nonconformist church with preachers of great vigour.

*Fénelon* : And what are its commandments ?

*Anthony* : Its first is : “ Thou shalt not honour thy government, which is almost always in the wrong ”, and the second is : “ Thou shalt offend thy weaker brethren, for from offence cometh much good publicity.” Then there is the Society of Friends. This, being a

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religious besides a politico-religious body, has preachers upon more subjects than that of peace. There are also the London Council for the Prevention of War, the No More War Society, the Arbitrate First Bureau, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the War Registers, the Signatories of Ponsonby's Peace Letter, the Women's International League, and many more. All these send preachers up and down the country, exhorting, encouraging, and challenging the people, and instructing them in the horrors of war, the virtues of peace, the short-comings of their own nation, and the merits of their neighbours. Besides the peace-makers, however, are other political religions. Among the most important of these we find the pulpit of the Femininists, who have had a distinguished career as preachers in this and other countries.

*Fénelon* : What do they preach ?

*Anthony* : They preach the humanity of human beings, declaring that men and women are alike possessors of souls and intellects as well as bodies, and that sexual difference does not affect the whole of life. Their doctrine is the antithesis of that preached by Professor Weith-Knudsen and his friends. It is based upon a belief that mankind

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cannot be categorically separated into sexes, for all purposes ; just as another creed, that of the Racial Equalitarians, protests against the arbitrary classification of all men according to race. In fact, the preachers of these two cults have many basic principles in common, however widely the sermons of Marcus Garvey may differ from those of Dame Millicent Fawcett and Viscountess Rhondda.

*Fénelon* : But what exactly is Femininism ?

*Anthony* : It is defined in Webster's collegiate Dictionary as " the theory, practice, and cult of those who hold that the present laws, conventions, and conditions of society should admit of and further the free and full development of women." But for its further definition allow me to refer you to the Six Point Group, the Open Door Council, the Women's Freedom League, or other Femininist Churches. I must pass on to consider the Pulpit of Prosperity. This takes two forms. One form stands for the religion of business itself. Its God is Mammon, but a highly respectable and elevated Mammon. Some preachers of this school, like Sir Ernest Benn and Mr Henry Ford, sincerely hate poverty

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and believe that they can remove it completely by Efficiency, Rationalization, Mass Production, Americanization, and the Unfettered Activity of our Captains of Industry. The pulpit of such preachers is usually established in a banqueting-hall, or on the platform of a company-meeting. Their best orators eschew rhetoric, and many show a nice sense of realism and honesty, though the foundations of their faith rest ultimately upon the flimsy fantasy of Physical Comfort.

*Fénelon* : And what is the other form of this religion ?

*Anthony* : The other form is rather hypocritical. Certain devotees of Big Business believe that the best safeguard for company securities lies in the unquestioning Religious Faith of the Lower Orders—a commonly held belief, my dear Archbishop, in many previous centuries. For instance, a certain Roger Bateson, a statistician and guide to Big Business men from America, addressed not long ago a "special letter" to the Press in which he said : " What, is our real security for the stocks, bonds, mortgages, deeds, and other investments which we own ? The safety of all we have is due to the Churches. . . . By all we hold dear, let us from this

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very day give more time, money, and thought to the churches of our city." It has also been observed by other philosophers that God is cheaper than a living wage. Therefore such of the Wealthy as believe this doctrine encourage preachers who are often quite simple, though deluded, men, to preach Christianity and other religions to comfort the poor.

*Fénelon* : Evil motives sometimes, by grace, may serve worthy ends.

*Anthony* : Well, let us hope so. Though we may differ in our estimation of worth. It appears necessary, however, to mention here the pulpit of the Artists. Now art is a religion as solitary as mysticism ; but mystics inspired, they would say, by God, have preached to men, and artists also sometimes may be found among the most didactic and insufferable of preachers.

*Fénelon* : Here I agree with you, for have not the great painters, the musicians, and architects, by consecrating their talents, raised up the very stones to honour the God of Abraham ?

*Anthony* : I did not mean that sort of second-hand preaching, wherein art is merely used as a pulpit for the expression of religious theories and the



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exploitation of irrelevant emotion. No, rather I mean a dogmatism about art itself, a sermon preached upon the meaning of that vision, that intuition, which is reflected in all artistic creation.

*Fénelon* : What is art ?

*Anthony* : " Said Jesting Pilate " . . .

Art, my dear Archbishop, defies all definition. I am myself an agnostic about art as about religion. But I will say like Benedetto Croce, that art is vision or intuition. The artist perceives a vision, an image, a phantasmagoria. The better his technical reproduction of that vision, the more perfect the understanding by the beholder of that which the artist himself perceived. The pulpit of the artist is the pulpit from which he utters dogmatically, as one having authority, his conclusions concerning art itself. He may, like Wyndham Lewis, organize an entire periodical for the chastisement of heretics ; he may, like Roger Fry, preach verbally to crowded congregations in the Queen's Hall ; like E. M. Foster, he may lecture at Cambridge on the novel ; like the wireless instructors he may broadcast his sermons upon Music ; or, like Gertrude Stein, he may simply produce artistic works of

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such challenging technique that their mere publication constitutes a sermon.

*Fénelon* : And what does the artist preach ?

*Anthony* : The modern tendency in art follows the lead of the biologists and psychologists, the humanitarians and the legislators. Our artistic preachers are concerned with the significance of infancy : they return to the primitive, the impulsive, the unsophisticated. What else, indeed, meant the impressionist revolution in painting ? Instead of the technical photographic excellence of the pre-Raphaelites we have the violent emotionalism of the modern French painters dominating our schools of art. The passionate sunflowers of Van Gogh, the colourful childish decorations of Gauguin, the windy landscapes of Cezanne preach to our young students of the Slade, the London Group, and so forth. Form and colour seen with the fierce integrity of the child's vision, unmarred by sophistication and adult association, these inspire our flaming Still Life groups, our distorted photography, our wild, unrecognizable portraits. " Separate form from its human associations ; go back to the untouched beginnings of perception ; set a little child in the

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midst ! " cry our painters, our sculptors. And so our poets argue : so our novelists write. What is the significance of Sitwellism but an attempt to recapture the clarity of the childish vision, and to reproduce its intensity of perception by appropriate word-sounds, colours, accents ? Gertrude Stein, James Joyce and their disciples, shaking words free from their didactic associations, as a baby shakes them, crying, " Ga, ga ! " " Dad, Dad " irrelevantly in its pram, are our modern preachers. Our musicians, whose liberation from the shackles of harmony and tune has set them free to build new forms of sound, awaken new emotions, return to the primitive ecstasies of birth and of love. What else does Scriabin's music mean, save the biological impulses of sex ? Have the modern Spanish composers not a deep fellowship with James Joyce ? His sense of pain, of chaos, of dark ecstasy, and the inarticulate emotions of the unweaned child reduced to form and sound and pattern ?

*Fénelon* : I fear that much of what you say is unintelligible to me. I do not know these works of art mentioned by you.

*Anthony* : Perhaps, however, you have

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grasped my main contention—that the chief dogma of modern art is a return to infancy.

*Fénelon* : I understand that.

*Anthony* : The tendency can be observed even in artistry. Craftsmen copy the childish naivety of primitive forms ; peasant-work of all kinds is in great demand. Folk-songs and negro-music, the primitive sexual implications of African jazz, even the return of the dance to the unsophisticated motions of the negroes, all indicate preoccupation with infantile perceptions.

*Fénelon* : What are the congregations of the artists ?

*Anthony* : Their immediate congregations consist for the most part of other artists, but their influence spreads over the whole community, until even the servant-girl buying a sixpenny gramophone record in Woolworth's store, the young man taking his sweetheart to the movies, are affected by the dogma of the artist. The altitudes of Aquinas may have seemed far remote from the lowliness of the Breton peasant ; the intellectual transports of Ravel may seem irrelevant to the hurdy-gurdy. Nevertheless, mankind cannot escape the infection of an idea. And one thing more. You would not

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accept Bertrand Russell's contention that the philosophy of nature should be separate from the philosophy of value, and that in the world of values human intelligence ruled supreme. But I think that you will grant that the artist is absolute arbiter of his own values. He builds his own world, fixes his own standards, and snaps his fingers at the laws of nature. Measurement, gravitation, and relativity do not affect the vision which is art. Here at least men can do what they choose.

*Fénelon* : Under the Providence of God perhaps they may. But what is the future of this pulpit ?

*Anthony* : Its future alone is unpredictable. Since in the world of artistic value man and not nature is supreme, there is no telling what his wayward fancy may dictate. I might suggest that we should grow more infantile, that our galleries should be hung only with the incomprehensible scribblings of the infant, our tunes rapped out by a spoon against a chair, and our first gurglings, analyzed by a psychologist of the Viennese school, published as the only literature worth reading. But in another year the fashion may have changed : it bloweth where it listeth. Extreme elegance, classical sophistica-

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tion, and emotional restraint may return to rule us. Who can say?

*Fénelon* : Not I, indeed. What says our brother Eutychus?

*Anthony* : It appears that the gentleman has succumbed to his characteristic weakness, and is asleep.

*Fénelon* : Then you, sir, share the honour of St Paul. Come, let us rouse him, for I am anxious to learn his conclusions concerning the pulpit and the common man.

*Anthony* : For my part, I suggest that we postpone the pleasure. The hour grows late. As this is my club, my dear Archbishop, may I suggest that you should be my guest for the night? We might resume this discussion at a convenient hour.

*Fénelon* : You are more than kind. Shall we then say to-morrow morning?

*Anthony* : You will excuse me. I could not bear Eutychus at the breakfast-table. I never leave my room until after noon. May I not have the pleasure of your company at dinner to-morrow night?

*Fénelon* : I shall be quite delighted. And our friend here?

*Anthony* : I will ask the hall porter to bring him a rug. If necessary, you shall fall upon him and embrace him in the

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morning. Meanwhile, allow me, my dear sir, to conduct you to your room. Have you a toothbrush?

*Fénelon* : I beg your pardon?

*Anthony* : No, no, no. I beg yours. An anachronism. Forgive me! This way then, and please mind the step.

## PART IV

### THE PULPIT AND THE CONGREGATION

*Eutychus. Fénelon. Then Anthony.*

*Eutychus* : Well—here we are again ! And very nice too. Where's Mr Anthony ?

*Fénelon* : Our host, I regret to say, has been delayed. Or possibly we have come too soon. I trust you slept well last night, M. Eutychus ?

*Eutychus* : Like a top. First rate. I hope you gentlemen didn't take it amiss that I dropped off a bit while you were talking. Forty winks, you know. To tell the truth, our highbrow friend with the side-whiskers is a bit too much for me sometimes. All these biological impulses and so on. I'd sooner have a glass of beer myself, if you get my meaning. *However* : everyone to his taste, says I. I'm broadminded myself. Live and let live. And I will say this for you, sir, that for an Archbishop you're very broadminded yourself. Why, some of these chaps will talk about *anything*, won't they ?



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*Fénelon* : I beg your pardon ?

*Eutychus* : Well, what I mean is, they won't talk about anything else. I'm sure I don't know what we're coming to.

*Anthony* : Good evening, gentlemen ! Good evening. I apologize profoundly for having kept you waiting. But I was compelled to go round to the New Aeon Theatre and run over the cuts in Lunacharski's *Vasilisa*. They are producing it for three—er—special matinées. A bore, these Russians, but one has to do them.

*Eutychus* : Russians ? I wouldn't trust 'em. Not an inch. Look what *The Daily Express* says.

*Anthony* : Er—quite. I suggest perhaps that we go in to dinner, shall we ?

*Fénelon* : I shall be charmed. I have been anticipating with great pleasure a discussion upon the Pulpit and the Congregation, which M. Eutychus so kindly promised to introduce to us.

*Anthony* : We are at your service. But first shall we discuss for a moment the menu ?

*Eutychus* : Well, if it's all the same to you, gentlemen, a cut from the joint and two veg. will do me very well. These French dishes and what not are all right for the ladies, but a man wants something that he can get his knife and

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fork into. It's the same with sermons. Women like the trimmings—good-looking parson, nice voice, pretty little stories about deathbed conversions, and the like. A man likes a good, old-fashioned, straight-from-the-shoulder-cut-and-come-again talk from a man that is a man. Don't tell me that the sermon's gone out of fashion.

*Fénelon* : The warmth of your assurance cheers me. Pray tell us further which among the many subjects suggested in the course of our discussions commands the chief attention of the layman?

*Eutychus* : Well, there you have me, gentlemen. If you'll allow me to say so, you seem to be a bit off the track with all this talk about subjects. If you know what I mean, you seem to have got hold of the wrong end of the stick. It's all very well to talk about the Pulpit of the Churches, the Politicians, the Artists, and so on. Maybe from the preacher's point of view that's right enough. But I'm speaking for the congregation, and in my humble opinion all this dividing and sub-dividing doesn't matter twopence-halfpenny to the Man in the Pew.

*Fénelon* : What then, may we ask, does matter?

*Eutychus* : Well, of course, there are some

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things that we want to know. They matter. Take religion. A man like me wants a little religion. He wants to be saved. What from? That's your business, gentlemen. We only know that we feel unsafe, as it were. Life's not too simple. You jolly along all right, but you never know when the hounds are at your heels. What we want is to be made safe—saved, you know. Prayers and creeds are too cold—far away—same for everyone. It's the preacher who gets at the sore spot. He's a man, you see, like any of us. And yet he knows what we don't know. That's what does the trick. That's why all these prophets and incarnations and so on have got there when your philosophers and theologians couldn't. A man who knows—that's what we want—but a man.

*Anthony* : You speak of the need for salvation. This is interesting, though a trifle obscure. Can you give us no clearer indication of the source of your fear?

*Eutychus* : Well, there's death. That's the first thing we're all afraid of. Look what happens when a fellow loses his fear of death and does himself in. They say he's mad. "Suicide whilst of unsound mind." It's right to fear death.

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It's sane. Well, but then men don't enjoy fear. We want to be saved from it. We want a preacher to tell us "There is no death". Look at all the kick the public gets out of this "Life after Death" discussion in *The Daily Express*. Bishops and scientists and writers and all. Editions sold out every day. Why? There we had a lot of first-rate real highbrow preachers telling us something that we wanted to know. It's true they all said something different. Well, there you are! You pay your money and you take your choice. All religions are a bit like that, though. "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life in the world to come." Second Advent. Clouds of glory. Sheep and goats. Eternal heaven or hell and all that. Or else the R.C. idea. Purgatory and another compulsory education as it were. Then Paradise if you pass out in the seventh standard or Perdition if you fail. Or else the Conan-Doyle-Oliver-Lodge idea. Spirits alive now. Dancing all round in another dimension. Table-rapping. Fat ladies in pearls falling into trances and seeing ghosts in the Queen's Hall. Or the Buddhist idea. Nothingness made one with infinity. I disappear; but I exist in One Great Existence. Or the Wells

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idea. I come to an end and rot. Worms eat me. But the Race goes on. Puts a premium on children that does. I must beget a son to make my immortality, eh? A bit Chinese, isn't it? Or there's the good sound atheism, whatever you call it. I die and rot. My children—if I have any—die and rot. The world spins for so long, then gets itself tossed into a blind star and smashes. Amen. There we have them. There may be more. That's your business, gentlemen. But I tell you that as soon as anyone comes along and tells us what happens to the dead, whether it's White Robes and a Harp or the medical student's dissecting room and worms, we'll listen. Provided of course, he doesn't go on too long.

*Fénelon* : Our Holy Mother the Church has been wise in her concentration upon this matter of the Immortality of the Soul.

*Eutychus* : That's right. I'll take off my hat to your Holy Mother the Church every time. She certainly does deliver the goods. Well then. What happens to the dead? That's the first thing. And here's the second. Sin.

*Anthony* : I beg your pardon?

*Eutychus* : Sin. Sense of sin. All right, all right. I'm not taking any special case.

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But you can't deny we've got it. We want saving. The Salvation Army knows that—bangs the drum, rattles the tambourine. "Come and be saved, Brother!" Though your sins be scarlet they shall be white as snow—washed in the blood of the Lamb. The Anglican Church knows it. "Almighty an' most Merciful Father, we have strayed from thy ways like lost Sheep." R.C.'s know it—Confession and absolution. Old Calvin knew it—Sinners and Saved—predestined to damnation or the other thing, by gum. No getting over that. No wriggling round the corners, as it were.

*Anthony* : I think you will find, however, sir, that the civilized adult has outgrown this sense of sin.

*Eutychus* : Has he, now ; has he ? Not a bit of it. Don't you go making any mistake about it. What's all this talk about Divine Discontent ? What's all this psycho-analysis-to-find-repressions business ? Chasing your own tail to find that you're a monkey. What's it all about, eh ? What are you getting at ? Sin. Sound, old-fashioned, honest-to-goodness sin. Something wrong with you ? An inhibition ? Something lost beyond the ranges ? Fall from Grace ? You've had a hunch that there's a sort

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of perfection somewhere, even if it's only in a matrimonial orgasm, and you won't be happy till you get it. Anything short of that leaves you cold. Shortcoming-error-sin. Doesn't matter what you call it. It's the same thing. And what you want is a nice, wise, strong, up-and-coming preacher who'll tell you what to do about it. Salvation Army captain? : "Fall on your knees and repent, brother. Confess. Confess. Be converted. Come to Jesus. Have you found Salvation from Sin? Do it now!" Harley Street Specialist : "Can't enjoy your food? Can't play a round of golf without a stitch in your side? Get your appendix out, brother? If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut it off. It is better to enter into the kingdom maimed. . . . 'You know the game.' I can't sleep. I can't make the best of my life. I feel unclean, irritable, unsure of myself. Imperfect." Psychoanalyst : "Did your mother stop feeding you when you were six weeks old? Had you an infantile sex-impulse for your nurse? Come on then. Out with it. Purge yourself and be clean." Wash with hyssop. Go in for deep-breathing exercises or penance. Beat yourself with thongs in a monastery, or roll yourself with rubber rods in a Beauty-

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Parlour. You feel unclean, imperfect, sinful? You don't know what to do? The Preacher will tell you. Never mind if what he says does not act first time. Have you found salvation, only to lose it? Did you sign the Pledge and go on the binge again? Were you a strong man and took your pleasure only to find yourself limp and wakeful in the night? Come on. Back to the Preacher. Back to the fount of grace. "Foul I to the fountain fly!" That's what keeps the trade alive. Didn't the first dose of your patent medicine act? Buy another bottle. Come again to the Rev. Theodore Bushthwacker. Every Sunday at 11.30. Have another course of electric massage—£8 8s. 6d. Thank you, sir. If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again. Oh, the Preacher's come in on the ground-floor in this House of Business, I assure you. Man's taken out shares in perfection and nothing but the full twenty shillings in the pound will suit him. But the firm ran bankrupt long ago. Sin! I tell you, gentlemen, there'll be preachers until the end of eternity, amen, telling men how to find salvation from their sins. Because if they got perfection they wouldn't like it. Not they. They'd cease to be men. They'd lose themselves



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in Unity—splendidly null. They wouldn't like that. They'd turn round and ask to be made into men again—with all the differences and oddities that make men. Sin? Why, lost in the Light of Grace they'd cry out for darkness—each man for his own little separate individual hell—so that they might be themselves again. And the Preacher would up and tell 'em how to forsake perfection. So here we go round the Mulberry Bush, the Mulberry Bush, the Mulberry Bush! It's a good trade, gentlemen.

*Fénelon* : Now what you say is most interesting, and entirely consistent with the Catholic philosophy, though rather indecorously expressed, if I may say so.

*Anthony* : You would suggest then, my dear Eutychus, that men seek nothing but salvation from death and sin. A rather negative quest, I take it.

*Eutychus* : Not a bit of it. Why, if you want to be saved from sin, you've got to put something in its place, haven't you? "Turn again, Whittington." That's all right. But "Lord Mayor of London"—that's better. How not to die, how not to sin; but how to live. That's the question. How to make a success of life. You tell us that.

*Anthony* : Ah, you suggest this as a subject for sermons? How to succeed in life?

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*Eutychus* : Why of course. What else should we want to know? Look at the way the preachers tell us. There are all the Church Sermons. Thou shalt not. Thou shalt—commandments here, there, and everywhere. All the business of religion—thou shalt go to church. Drink this in remembrance of me. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day. Thou shalt eat the Paschal Lamb with unleavened bread and with thy loins girded and thy staff in thy hand—Thou shalt kill the infidel—Thou shalt make a pilgrimage to Mecca—Thou shalt wash in the water of the Ganges. Oh, we've never lacked preachers to tell us how to be a success in religion. Probably the easiest way to find success too. "I'm no good at business. I can't make cakes. I get left behind at dances to sit against the wall. I'm old and ugly and starved and a failure. But at least I can go to Early Service every morning. I can fast and pray and bow and communicate. I can observe all the Saints' Days. I can sleep in a hair shirt. I'm a success in life. The preacher tells me so."

*Anthony* : We have never denied the attractions of the Religious Preacher. But how do you account for the appeal of the secular pulpit?

*Eutychus* : That's all right. I want to be

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good. I want to be good. I want to feel smooth inside and pleased with myself. What shall I do to be saved? Do a kind action every day, say the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Work for humanity. Sell all thy goods and give them to the poor—or sit down like the Webbs and write about the Poor Law. Serve your country, like Sir Henry Wilson, by going into the army and shooting Irish rebels. Serve the poor—become a socialist martyr—like Lenin or the Class-War Prisoners. Look at Jimmy Maxton. “What man has to suffer in this cause, I will suffer.” The People’s Flag is painted red. The Union Jack shall wave from the Cape to Cairo. India shall be free. Up the rebels! I will sell my house in Berkeley Square and go to live in a settlement in Poplar. I will found Ragged School Unions; free slaves, save the children, prevent cruelty to animals, stop the King’s horse at the Derby to win a vote, fast like Ghandhi to save the soul of India. Oh, all you Martyrs and Patriots and Humanitarians, bless ye the Lord! Praise and magnify him for ever!—or if you don’t want to go so far, do a bit of slumming. Make red-flannel petticoats for Whitechapel children, or sell flags for hospitals, or sit on the parish

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council, or give penny-readings to the village Institute. That's the stuff to give the troops. If you can't be a martyr, be a Good Citizen. Be a Christian Wife and Mother. Be an Honest Business Man. Be a kind neighbour. Be a Loyal Socialist. Here's success. Here's honour. Here's glory, in a quiet way, which is after all as much as most of us want.

*Fénelon* : You speak of the immortal hunger of mankind for virtue, for goodness.

*Anthony* : Granted that preachers minister to this hunger, what do you make of those who appeal, shall we say, to man's ambition and cupidity?

*Eutyclus* : Make of them? I make of them just the same as you do. Same thing in the end, you know. "I want to be saved." That's the first cry. "I want to be a success." That's the second. Success at what? Well, at goodness then. I want to be good. Very well, says the preacher. This is how you can be good—and he tells you how to be good, from the church and the school and the platform, from the parade ground and the street-corner. "Righto", says you; "but that's not enough, Mr Preacher. I want to be good. Thanks for the kind information. But

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I want to be prosperous too. I want the best of both worlds. I want power. I want wealth. I want comfort." "Very good", says the Preacher; "we've got a nice little line in the way of Prosperity Sermons just now." Look at the Schoolmasters. What are they doing? Most of the time telling us how to get on. Berlitz School of Languages. Have you had a Rise in Your Salary? Have you a Commanding Personality? Can you Sell the Goods? Stockbrokers and company-directors. They're good preachers. Do you want to be rich? We know a sure certain road. Look at the Financial columns in the papers. Do they get read? What d'you think they're put in for? To give the compositors a treat? Don't you believe it. Why, after the railway accident at Darlington, *The Daily Mail* bought up a whole-page advertisement in *The Times* to say that it had paid £50,000 death insurances. Why? Good advertisement for the paper? I should say so. But they don't do that for fun. How can we get rich? Greyhound-racing, dirt-track racing, stock-exchange, newspaper insurance, Lobby Lud, business college Course. "The University is a training ground for a Director's Chair." Who's

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preaching a sermon? Why, every advertizer and lecturer, every writer of a financial column, Mr Drage, Mr Selfridge—and others—and others, I tell you. Look at the National Saving's Preacher—Thrift, they preach. It's more respectable than Get Rich Quick. Thrift is noble. Thrift is virtuous. Thrift fits in well with goodness and the Nonconformist Conscience. Why? Did you read that par. in *The Manchester Guardian* of February 13th, 1928? I cut it out. Got it here in my notebook :

" As a token of Mr Coohdge's well-known views on the subject of Thrift, the Women's Society of the Midland Avenue Presbyterian Church at Chicago has sent him a pair of pyjamas made out of flour bags. So expertly did the woman cut the bags that no visible piecing was necessary. The jacket is trimmed with lavender braid and buttons. 'It may be an unusual gift', said the members of the Society which is devoted to the idea of thrift, 'but we hope the President will accept the gift in the spirit in which it is sent and will choose to wear them'."

Can you beat it? Can you beat it?  
A1 Sermon. Couldn't have done better in Aberdeen. Wealth. There we are. That's one road to success. The other is power. Politics and all that. Here's where your political preachers

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come in, Mr Anthony. Reds, Blacks, greens, the whole damned spectrum of 'em. Do this, vote thus, fire this man, build a barricade, declare a war, make me a dictator, cry the preachers—and you shall have Power. Sometimes they call it Liberty. It's the same thing. The coin of Freedom has Power written on the reverse side. Democracy's only dictatorship for everyone. Or so they think. So they think. I'm not so sure myself. Others cry that the secret of power lies in economic control and all that. Abolish capitalism—let the State own the railways—make every man have the same income. And so on. Power—the feeling that your will is as good as any one else's will. A fellow likes that. He'll listen to a preacher who can tell him the right way to get that—in Hyde Park or Ruskin College or the Rhondda Valley.

*Anthony* : I am glad that you accept my presentation of the Platform as a pulpit.

*Eutyclus* : Platform or Press—anything will do in moderation as it were.

*Fénelon* : But what do you make of this theory of M. Anthony that the Preacher of the Biological Impulse holds the future?

*Eutyclus* : Oh, that's not so bad. If you take it in the right way. A fellow wants

## THE FUTURE OF THE PULPIT

to be a success in life. You can get that through being good—some fellows get a hell of a lot of kick out of religion and philanthropy and being a martyr and all that. Others want power and money and cocktails at the Ritz. And yet again others want to feel their bodies make good, as it were. I mean, all this love business—He-men, vamps and all the rest of it. Look at the sermons preached by the movies. Every picture tells a story, I *don't* think! Be a he-man—roll up your sleeves and show your muscle. Douglas Fairbanks, Tom Mix sort of business—and watch the bits of skirt fall for you. Sheik stuff. Don't you think Mrs E. M. Hull has preached a pretty powerful sermon with her jolly young knights of the desert seducing society girls and whatnot? What d'you think a bank clerk and a draper's young gentleman assistant feel like when they turn in after a five-reel film of he-man stuff? Sermon? You bet your life! And what about Elinor Glyn with her "It", and Clara Bow? Clara Bow advertized as *AI—first-living-authority-on-Sex-Appeal*. Pretty good that, isn't it? Picture in all the papers. Heart-to-heart talks in the chatty weeklies. "How to look lovely at thirty" by Gladys Cooper. "Charm"



## EUTYCHUS

by Evelyn Laye. *Home Chat*, *Home Notes*, every woman's journal with stories of How She won His Love. Advertisements with awful warnings of "How She Lost His Love". Ever read the adverts. for Listerine? And How to remove those Superfluous Hairs? What about the tales in *Peg's Paper* and *True Stories*? Why, there's hardly a film or an advert. or a novel or a heart-to-heart talk, round the home fire for girls that doesn't go nap on sex-appeal every time. Beauty-cults. Have either of you gentlemen met Elizabeth Arden? No, nor I. But I will take off my hat to that lady for selling the goods. Why do they want to be movie stars? What price Glory now? Glory? Why there's one kind of glory any man or woman can get hold of at some time or other. There certainly is. You give me a preacher who can tell any man how to put over the he-man stuff, and any girl to look like a cross between Mary Pickford, Isadora Duncan, and the Queen of Sheba, and I'll give you a full house, queues outside all down the streets, and no 'paper'. What do you think makes the world go round? Eh, gentlemen? Ever seen a revue at the Hull Tivoli? Well, I'm no Cupid myself, but I will say this for the

## THE FUTURE OF THE PULPIT

preachers of S.A., they certainly do know how to put their stuff across. Talk about Jesuits—I say, gentlemen, have you ever heard a middle-aged canon telling a girl's school on Speech Day that it ought to cultivate charm? "Be pretty, dears, and let who will be clever." Does he know what he's doing? I should say not. You just ask him to share his pulpit with Dr Marie Stopes, Mrs Elinor Glyn, Pola Negri, and Elizabeth Arden, and will he accept his ordination? I ask you, gentlemen, isn't it true of most religions that if half the preachers knew who were their brothers in the faith, wouldn't they stay dumb for ever?

*Anthony* : That may be true.

*Eutychus* : May be. Now I ask you! You've been telling us yourself, Mr Anthony, about your Zimbabwe ruins and all that, but you don't need to go further than Piccadilly Circus to see a good temple or two raised to the Orthodox Faith. Of course that isn't everything. Sex-Appeal and Beauty-competitions and Bathing Belles and all that come right in on the ground floor, as you might say. But there are side-shows. What about Fanny Ward and Dr Voronoff? "How to be a flapper at sixty." "He may be old,

## EUTYCHUS

but he has young ideas " all that sort of thing. Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*'s a bit rarefied and heretical—not enough body in it. His ancients stay old for the sake of wisdom and hatch their offspring out of eggs—like turtles. Now I've got nothing against turtles, but a bit cold-blooded, don't you think? I mean, if you're out to get a bit of kick from the body, as it were, personally I'd rather go in for football. And, talking of football, there you are again. Success. That's what we're after. And if you can't be a great lover, why not be a great half-back? Look at the great Pros *and* Amateurs, and the Pulpit they have. Any time you open a paper, you see " How I make my back-hand drives ", by Helen Wills, " The Half Volley ", by Tilden. Suzanne's an Archbishop in her own line. Look at the Holy Church of Tottenham Hotspurs, ready to catch a single word of wisdom from the captain. Ever been to Harrods or one of those big stores when special coaching in golf is given in a sort of rope-netting cage on rubber grass by one of the big golf aces? Talk about sermons! Why, from text to benediction you'll never get a more devout audience! Hero-worship comes into it a bit, of course; but doesn't every great

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preacher depend on hero-worship? Look at Woodbine Willie, or Wyclif, or St Paul himself for that matter. What makes Every-Punch-Hit-the-Bell with them, do you imagine? Their eloquence and logic and all that—every time? Now, I ask you! What fills the church when Dick Sheppard or Bernard Shaw or Jack Hobbs gets up on his hind legs? Arguments? Rhetoric? A reed shaken in the wind? What came you out for to see, and all that sort of thing? A Prophet. That's what gets them every time. Lindbergh, for instance. Look at the way the girls in the laundries tear his shirts to bits and wear the pieces next their hearts. The boys would chip splinters from Jack Hobbs' bat if they once got a chance. You bet your little lives they would. This sport-religion has a lot of hero-worship in it one way and another, if you ask me—same as some of the actor and actress cults—What price Tallulah Bankhead and Noel Coward? If they'd preach a bit they'd get congregations full up to the back seat and then some.

*Anthony* : In your opinion, then, the cult of sport is merely a hero-cult?

*Eutychus* : Oh no! Not every time. There's all this Keep Fit stunt in it too. The Daily Dozen, The Mercedes Gleitze

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Exercises, Serpentine swims before breakfast, and all that kind of thing ; there's no doubt that they have their public. Look at the success old Sandow used to make of it. Nearly as great a hero as Bottomley at one time. Then all these Health Foods and Rhythm Cults and so on. If you ask me, any man or woman who can get up and say " I'll show you how to keep Fit " is bound to get a hearing.

*Fénelon* : In your opinion, then, the principal subjects for the preacher are those which concern the future of the dead, and those which concern man's quest of physical love, material prosperity, and bodily perfection ?

*Eutychus* : And how to be good, of course. I put that first. There are some other nice religious subjects like Mother and Home and Children, and the Dear Old Country, and the Flag. Mothers are a real religious subject. Mother-love. " That Old Fashioned Mother of Mine " — " The roses round the door make me love mother more. " There's not a music-hall in England you can't turn straight into a church ; there's not a stage you can't turn into a pulpit ; nor a coon singer you can't turn into a preacher by staging a nice little song about Mother's Silver Hairs, and the

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Love-light in her Eyes. What holds up the crook when he's about to forge a cheque, and paralyzes the hand that holds the pen? Why—his mother's picture! What is the grandest, finest, purest force in all our far-flung empire? Mother-love. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Then children. Take the influence of children. What woman's arms have not ached with hunger for those clinging fingers? What strong man has not known the softening of his sin-crust-ed heart at the sight of a golden curl or a little shoe? There's something you might call *AI* in the way of heart-appeals in the patter of little feet and all that. Why, look at the influence for good exerted by Little Nell, Jackie Coogan, Little Lord Fauntleroy, and what d'you call him in *The Mighty Atom*! Look at the influence of a little child in a crowded railway carriage. Children! Women's love for children. Ah, there's a religion for you. There's a sermon! You'll always have a pulpit while you have a nursery. Did you ever read a book called *This Freedom*? Ah, there was a sermon for you if you like. "In mother's arms! In mother's arms!" There's a miracle!

*Anthony* : Indeed! Most interesting. I

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have however observed of children that, if they survive, they become in due course of time adult men and women, and have myself found little directly edifying in the process. However *chaq'un à son goût*. You mentioned, I think, a flag?

*Eutychus* : Why, yes. Patriotism and sacred music and flags and all that. They are sermons if you like. Why, did you see "The Somme" when it was on the Movies? With all those imitation tanks and flags and pipers and pictures of the Brave Boys at the front? Or the torchlight tattoo at Wembley, with lights thrown on the Flanders Poppies and everyone singing "Abide with Me?" Ah, that was a sermon if you like! Something to bring tears to the eyes and a lump to the throat. The Old Country will never be done in if there are still flags to wave and songs to be sung.

*Fénelon* : But, surely, sir, the presentation of a pageant cannot be called a sermon?

*Eutychus* : Why not? You've got a preacher and something behind him, as it were, and a congregation. That's in order, isn't it? Come to think of it, gentlemen, if we're going to get any idea of the Pulpit of the Future, we've got to clear our minds about a few

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fly-blown notions that have got a bit old-fashioned. The sermon's come to stay all right. And we know what it will be about, all right.

*Anthony* : You suggest that man's need for enlightenment concerning Death and Sin, success in life whether in this world or the next, the sex-impulse, the desire for wealth, power, beauty, and strength, will always dictate the subjects for the sermon?

*Eutychus* : That's right.

*Anthony* : And that the form of the sermon depends mainly upon the tastes and the endurance of the congregation?

*Eutychus* : That's right.

*Anthony* : I see. But you suggest that the form of the sermon will change considerably?

*Eutychus* : Well, we must move with the times, you know. And there's a lot of competition now-a-days. I guess that the sermon will have to get a move on like everything else.

*Fénelon* : Pray what exactly do you mean by that?

*Eutychus* : When I was a kid and we used to play at parsons, we had an old tree called the Pulpit Tree in our back garden. And if one of us wanted to be a parson he would climb up into the tree, and look down on the rest of us on the



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ground and cry out : “ Dearly Beloved Brethren, ya, ya, ya ! ” or whatever he wanted to say until we were tired of it. Now that’s what we thought a sermon was—one man in a pulpit talking to others who sat dumb below. That’s what sermons have been for long enough. Now, if you come to think of it, gentlemen, that’s a bit monotonous. I mean you can have too much of a good thing.

*Anthony* : And what do you suggest ?

*Eutychus* : Well, take this one-preacher-in-pulpit-congregation-below business. Why ? Why not two preachers in the pulpit ? Why not a debate like those they had at the London School of Economics for the hospitals ? We’re all for free play of thought and hearing both sides of a question, aren’t we ? Why not put ’em both up and let ’em out with it ? Then you’d soon draw a congregation, mark my words.

*Fénelon* : Do you, indeed, imagine that the public contradiction of one preacher by another would add to the authority of the Pulpit ?

*Eutychus* : Well, they contradict each other now, all right, don’t they ? Only it’s all criticism behind the other fellow’s back now. “ My learned friends of the Anglican movement tell me . . . ”  
“ The heretics and infidels would say,

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etc., etc." "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." Well, let the fool say it in the pulpit too, and have your first-class Christian preacher there to tell him to his face that he's a liar, and see if the Churches don't fill. With sermons, believe me, it isn't what you say ; it's how you say it.

*Fénelon* : And you believe that the future of the pulpit depends upon open argument ?

*Eutyclus* : Oh, that's just one little suggestion. You fellows are far cleverer than I am, but I want you to understand it's just the ordinary man's idea I'm trying to get across to you. You've got to advertize your preachers more. It can be done. Look at Aimée Macpherson in the States. Sister Aimée. Not but what she overdid it a bit, getting kidnapped and found in a bathing-tent and all that. It's no use scaring away the pussy-foots and sober-sides. They'll make the bulk of your congregation if you catch them in the right way. No, a good fine, understanding publicity agent, not too coarse-minded, you understand, who'd put nice little bits in *Home Gossip* and *The Daily Mirror* and so on—just glimpses of the Home Life of a Favourite Preacher, or "My Ideal Marriage" by a prime of bunch

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good-looking young reverends. That'd bring 'em in to the fold. Something homely and domestic for the women and a few good sporting items for the men. The first preacher who flies the Atlantic or beats Tilden or captains the English Cricket XI will get away with it as though he were St Paul and Mahomet and Bernard Shaw rolled into one. And, talking about Bernard Shaw, he's given preachers a good tip or two.

*Anthony* : Indeed ?

*Eutychus* : Look at that Movietone business. What I say is that the preacher has to make use of all the blessings of modern civilization. Who knows what the Archbishop of Canterbury looks like ? Jolly few of us. And who cares ? But look at Shaw. He can't bathe but he's photographed in or out of the water. If you haven't heard him speak, you've heard him broadcast. If you haven't seen him in the flesh you can see him on the cinema. And now he's been taken on the movietone you can see and hear him. Now there's an idea for preachers. Bring your favourite parson right into the home—that's what I say. Now you've got the Baby ciné and the Home Film, you can do it right away. But when you've got television, you can cut the rest right out. Who'll

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need to go to church except the parson? The rest of us can sit at home and put our feet up and take our religion as we like it and where we like it.

*Anthony*: You would attach great importance to mechanical devices for making sermons more palatable to the congregation.

*Eutychus*: Why, yes! Look at broadcasting! Look at the movies! Why, when Wesley wanted to preach Hell-fire he had to go into the fields and bring the congregation after him, wet or fine, and wet more often than fine, it was. But when Dick Sheppard wants to preach loving-kindness and all that, we just draw our chairs a bit closer and the missus goes on knitting and we turn on the loud speaker and stay as cosy as anything. Then look at the help to a sermon a little pictorial illustration would be. Look at the way that Pictures go right to the heart, as it were. Why, there are one or two films now that preach a sermon any day. "Dawn" and the "King of Kings", and "The Dangers of Ignorance"—that's for Women Only and Men Only—and you can't half get a good crowd when you put up a notice like that. Though that was a tip borrowed from the Churches. We've had services for men and women

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only for years, hoping to catch 'em when they drop in to hear something a bit sexy. Pictures go straight to the spot. Don't need so much brain work as words. Then look at the advantage to the preachers. You used to need a real all-round man to get on in the Church. Now you can do it by sections, as it were. Cinema face, Broadcasting voice, even a tennis arm and a flying eye will help you along a bit if you want to command the public. What we want is some one who will capture the imagination of the man-in-the-street—whether it's golf or a dirt-track racer or a Mussolini. A Hero—that's what the public wants. And the more you can help him forward with appropriate music and publicity and flag-wagging and the like, the better.

*Fénelon* : You think that any doctrine preached by your Heroes would be acceptable to the congregation?

*Eutychus* : Why, I wouldn't go so far as to say *anything*, though anything in moderation, as you might say, and certainly anything for a change. Though, mark my words, to say something new won't fetch 'em half so well as a new way of saying something old. And even when you think you've got your public, you'll have to keep right on

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thinking out new stunts. The Prince of Wales himself had to take up flying. Kemal Pasha broadcast for seven days—same sermon. I see in *The Times* that they've got a loud speaker in the States now that you can hear twenty miles away. Now, I call that a real good invention. You could collect the biggest congregation for the longest sermon on the greatest subject that has ever yet been preached. That would draw them. That would get them hopping. And for a good advertisement, what about this new Beacon in New York City? I saw in *The Times* for June 7th that the New York skyline is to have a striking addition in the shape of a 75-ft illuminated cross on the top of Broadway Temple. "The cross, which is mounted 694 feet above sea-level, is to be a luminous tube beacon for aircraft. It will have ten times more power than any existing beacon, and its orange glow, it is calculated, will be seen more than 36 miles away by ships and 100 miles away by aircraft. It is to cost 100,000 dollars (£20,000)."

Now I call that some advert. On a church too. And it's to be called, not the St Barnabas or the St Matthew, but the "Commander Richard Evelyn Byrd Beacon". That's right. Call it after

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the real hero of the age—the flying ace. Move with the times. Men still want saints, but they want them to be saints after their own fashion. Martyrs to-day fall into the Atlantic, or starve at the North Pole, or get burnt up overturning their cars at 120 miles an hour. They aren't martyrs any the less because they are sacrificed to gods of speed and power. Preachers to-day land from Trans-Atlantic Aeroplanes, or break world-records, or rule Middle-East Kingdoms. Look at T. E. Lawrence ! He's one of your twentieth-century saints. Your pulpits and crucifixes must be dedicated to your modern heroes if you want 'em to have any pull. And your sermons have to be preached in a way the public will like.

*Anthony* : The medium of the sermon and the reputation of the preacher are then to you all-important ?

*Eutychus* : Within the limits I set for us —those things the public will always want to hear.

*Fénelon* : And in your opinion the preachers are wisely deserting the purest and most spiritual of human organs, the ear, and appealing through the eye and any other senses to the imagination and the loyalty of man.

*Eutychus* : Why shouldn't they ? Come

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to think of it, what's to prevent this cult of Dr Voronoff from spreading? He says he can make men intelligent, and can counteract their criminal tendencies or what ever you call 'em by inoculating them with monkey-glands. Is there anything more likely than that one day we shan't need any other sermons than his to keep us good and happy and successful? We'll just send for a disciple of Dr Voronoff and get him to inoculate us with the right kind of gland, and there we are—strengthened and inspired, comforted and guided, for any cross that may be laid upon us.

*Anthony* : So the last sermon is to be injected into the congregation by means of a hypodermic syringe?

*Eutychus* : Any objections, gentlemen? Who can tell? Whatever the last sermon is you may be sure that it will depend upon just how much I and my friends can stand. Though I says it myself as shouldn't, I do feel that you've got to pay attention to what we stand for. And all I can say is, he's a bold man who can prophesy what we shall want in another thousand years' time. We certainly don't know ourselves.

*Fénelon* : I am greatly obliged to you, gentlemen, for the courtesy with which you have answered my questions, and



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for the trouble to which you have put yourselves to give me information. The virtues of generosity and understanding have not, it appears, vanished from the earth. Yet what you tell me of the pulpit troubles me. You have pulled down God from his throne, and have set up instead a vision of impersonal Good. Yet This also you have found too difficult and too remote, too flexible for common apprehension and too changeable for permanent dominion. You have destroyed Heaven and Hell, to replace them by Success and Failure. Prize-fighters and actors, adventurers and demagogues are your saints ; wealth, power, strength, and beauty your felicities. Human desires have not greatly changed, but the methods by which you seek to satisfy them are changing.

*Anthony* : We are more honest.

*Fénelon* : What is honesty without wisdom ?

*Eutyclus* : We're more democratic.

*Fénelon* : What is democracy without nobility ? I fear lest the control of the pulpit by the congregation of which you Eutyclus boasts, should stultify the preachers. I, in my sermons, sought to please God. Your modern preachers seek to please a half-civilized, half-developed, half-alive clerk in a draper's

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office, who scurries underground like a rat from his home to his work, and whose chief pre-occupations lie in the muscles of a greyhound and the physical attractions of a revue actress whom he does not even enjoy himself as a lover but merely applauds as a spectator. Virtue is stunted and vice is vulgarized. The austere altitudes of philosophical theology have been deserted for the broad popularity of the newspaper platitude. I fear lest the last stage of the Pulpit should be worse than the first.

*Anthony* : Your fears have certainly some justification.

*Fénelon* : Yet if I see any hope, it lies in this. If the thought of the democracy is shallow, it is perhaps better that men should think than that they should accept unquestioning the thought of others. If the ideals of Eutychus seem lowly, it is better to pursue with honesty a low ideal than to imagine falsely the pursuit of one higher. Perhaps one day the general standard of intelligence will be higher, the pulpit will become a Forum, and the debate succeed the sermon. Meanwhile, perhaps, even this mechanization of the medium, which enables the sermon to appeal to the ignorant masses, will be a means of

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educating Eutychus until he makes a higher demand upon his preachers. It is for the preachers to stimulate his aspiration ; it is for Eutychus to exact even finer and better sermons from the pulpit. I cannot believe that we shall permit the final word to be said from the most ignorant.

*Anthony* : And perhaps Dr Voronoff may really succeed in heightening our consciousness.

*Fénelon* : I dare not put my trust in physical phenomena, for I have seen how men have conquered the air and dug pits into the bowels of the earth, yet have not found wisdom in the clouds nor truth at the bottom of the well. Nevertheless, I see that we may use our power over nature as an instrument for good, even when preaching sermons. It is, to tell the truth, the influence of Eutychus which most alarms me.

*Anthony* : And Eutychus, it seems, worn out by the labours of his exposition, has gone to sleep again. Perhaps, after all, it is the man who can watch as well as pray who will determine the future of the Pulpit.

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