

PART III: THE COMMANDMENTS

# Haggerston Catechism



**H. A. WILSON**

# HAGGERSTON CATECHISM

PART THREE  
THE COMMANDMENTS

BY  
H. A. WILSON

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## NOTE

It may be well to repeat, from the detailed introduction to Part One, that:

(a) These instructions are intended not only for those who conduct Catechisms, but also for boys and girls of Lesser Catechism age (ten to fourteen) who for one reason or another have no Catechism to go to.

(b) Numbers in brackets refer to other instructions.

(c) Since it is good for both catechists and catechised to know their way about the Bible, such references (in italics and brackets) are frequent. Verse numbers are inclusive.

(d) Words in instructions printed in capitals are those written on the second blackboard; though these are not to be found in every instruction, since "variety is the spice of" Catechism also.

(e) The table of contents has only been drawn up for fun. It is not to be taken seriously, and may well be ignored.

## UPPER ROOM

ON my way to hear "The Dream of Gerontius" in the Albert Hall I was to lunch with a friend at Victoria. So I paid my last visit to The Chapel of the Good Shepherd in Strutton Ground, Westminster.

I suppose that one of the places most dear to a parish priest's heart is the first earthly house of God of which he was put in charge, in which he first began to learn to act on his own initiative and responsibility. One evening in 1919 M. E. Atlay, vicar of St. Matthew's, Westminster, strode into the clergy-house apartment allotted to the junior of his four curates, sat himself in the largest armchair (which belonged to him), lit another Capstan cigarette, said "Next summer there is going to be an Anglo-Catholic Congress." "Oh," replied his audience; "what in the world is that?" "I'm not quite sure, yet," he was answered; "but I am the chairman, and you are the secretary." But four years later I came to the conclusion that I would rather be a parish-priest. C. P. Hankey had become vicar of the famous church in Great Peter Street, to which I was still licensed despite my machinations and manoeuvres in Hanover Square and Abbey House. I was extremely proud when he invited me to take charge of the mission-church in Strutton Ground; and, a couple of years later, not at all anxious to obey my bishop when he directed me to go to an unknown health-resort named Haggerston.

The chapel was built in about 1890; as, in a sense was I, despite a suggestion to the contrary in the following pages. W. H. H. Jervois was its first priest-in-charge. Others who succeeded him were H. E. Simpson, A. G. Bisdee, J. A. R. Derham-Marshall. It was on the first floor, above a parish-room with a small stage on which, incidentally, was born that which has become the Haggerston Bethlehem Play. Adjoining, and under the same roof, was the house in which lived the three or more Sisters of All Saints' Community who worked in the parish. The entrance was by way of a narrow and not particularly inviting covered passage from Strutton Ground (habitat of small shops and street-barrows), up a quite impos-

ing stone staircase. Perhaps it was not a very impressive place of worship, with its white-washed walls and chairs for a hundred or so. It had one altar, on which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved; figure of our Lady; hand-blown passable organ; maybe a picture or two, I forget; nothing else. But it was very dear during its fifty years of life and service to a great many Westminster folk; for me it held a charm and atmosphere all its own, that I do not yet forget; and it was there that I began to experiment, on the luckless boys and girls of Old Pye Street, Perkins' Rents, and Peabody Buildings, this catechetical if not cataclysmic method of teaching the Christian religion.

The other Sunday services were at 9.30 and 6.30: simple Sung Mass with communion and short address from the altar (there was no pulpit); Compline (printed in full on fair-sized cardboard sheets) followed by sermon, intercessions, adoration, the whole interspersed and interlarded with A. and M. sung good and hearty. Three such services stand out in my memory; a Confirmation by Bishop Gore, nine candidates of whom the youngest was over fifty; a Midnight Mass of Christmas, half a gale blowing and rain lashing at the windows so that the upper room seemed like a ship at sea, the little place filled to overflowing by the poor who knew that they were very near to him who for them was born poor; that on the night of September 13th, 1925, when I said good-bye to my friends as I had to set out on the morrow to a strange place called St. Augustine's up a side-street off Hackney Road.

I think of some of those friends; many of them old enough to be my parents, some to be my grandparents, making their confessions to me; plain working-men and working-women of London Town (than whom I have always thought there are no finer in the world) allowing me the privilege of frequently giving them communion; their children, for whom I first drew chalk pictures on a catechism-blackboard on those distant happy Sunday afternoons. The Paul family, of which I am still not quite certain as to how many there are, though I still have and use the walking-stick they and other chapel men gave me at the end of an uproarious week together at Margate. Graves, faithful servant of the Universities' Mission to Central

Africa for many years, and prince among cooks when I took boys to camp in a fortnight's rain at Dymchurch. Old Booker who blew the organ, whose grunts all the congregation could not fail to hear when the hymns were loud and long. White-haired "Billy Hooley," not so simple as he liked many to suppose (his luggage for that Margate week comprised a spare handkerchief and an alternative necktie: after a few days pointed remarks were made during dinner about his collar, not over-clean at the outset: during tea he produced some five shillings in coppers, asked me to buy him a new one: "Alfred," I enquired, "where did all this come from?": at length he told me that he had stood for an hour outside Margate Sands Station, his cap on the pavement at his feet; he sang no song, drew no half-fish in coloured chalk on the esplanade, did not beg—but the pence and half-pence of holiday-makers showered into his cap). Fitzgerald of the large frame, large heart, gruff deep voice: on an afternoon in Holy Week three of us priests were hearing confessions in St. Matthew's: the west door flung open: there was a clash of heavy boots: building and penitents shook with the resounding question, "Where's WILSON?" The Bursts: "please, father," a maid once asked me during a clergy-house meal, "can you come downstairs and see the little boy burst?" Gentle Bill Warwick and his niece Emma Boxer, whose little home was always spotless and welcoming, who came to confirmation and first confession at well over seventy, who was my first visitor—with a vast bunch of flowers from "a barrer in the Granrds, fa'er, with luv from Emma and me"—when I inadvertently took an overdose of Haggerston and retired to a bed in Westminster Hospital. Blessings be on them, wherever they now are, on this side of the veil or on that, for their kindness to and confidence in the young raw priest who, between 1923 and 1925, did what little he could for them and learned more than he taught. It is not difficult to be at least a moderately good priest when you know that the people to whom you minister both expect much from you, and are prepared to give you and do for you anything you ask. Fortunate are they whose first "cure of souls" at all resembles mine; fortunate for the rest of their lives.

But if, as is the case, I owe much to that congregation as a whole, I owe a debt which is unpayable to that member of it who comes first to my mind—as I doubt not to the mind of every one else who had to do with her during those happy years—when I think of the chapel: Sister Isolda, sister-in-charge. She was a great lady, the soul of courtesy and kindness; but she was a greater Christian. She was practical, worldly-wise to a degree, gifted with that lively sense of humour essential to all who do effective work among the London poor, obviously born to command, yet as gentle and polite as are all whose orders are faithfully and willingly obeyed. But what impressed you first and most, what you could not fail to notice every time and under whatever circumstances you met her, was her innate goodness. And her physical courage was superb, though this surprised no one who knew from what stock she was descended. During all the years in which I knew her she was never in good health, frequently in great pain, afflicted by increasing lameness: but I remember one of her Sisters telling me that she was always at her prayers in that upper room by five in the morning, two hours before the day's Mass; and when I last saw her in a North London home in which she was looking after many who were frail and feeble, although she was obviously ill and in pain I could persuade her to say no word about herself.

St. Matthew's and its attendant mission-church have always been exemplary in their care for children. I know a city clerk who was prepared in boyhood for the sacraments by Frank Weston (subsequently Bishop of Zanzibar) when he was one of the assistant-priests: the instructions, given once a week to him alone, lasted for over a year. I think of Sister Isolda's smile as now and then she watched me trying to draw on a blackboard the following Sunday's catechism-picture; how she insisted, time and time again, that my feeble efforts were not a waste of time and labour, since nothing was too good for the children, no pains too great for the sake of the poor. I think of her sitting with the children during catechism, solemnly and seriously writing out—in order that the children might do so too—my elementary instructions. If there is anything of good in this Haggerston Catechism, it is owing in no



small degree to her. I think of her too in that comfortless small room opening on to the noisy and often smelly parish-room; standing at the head of that stone staircase smiling her welcome to all who went up it for Sunday worship; bidding me Godspeed when I set out to where I am now, saying that she would like to accompany me; asking me to hear her confession as she lay in a hospital-bed awaiting yet another operation. It was in her that I first saw my ideal of what a Religious can be. She is one of those—and, being fortunate, they are not few—for whom I thank God without a single reservation. She, like him to whom she vowed and gave all that she had (and she too had great possessions), “went about doing good.” I was one of the many lucky ones to whom she did it.

So I paid my last visit to The Chapel of the Good Shepherd, after some Hun had bombed it, before a demolition-squad set to work upon it. The passage-door stood open. I looked at Sister Isolda’s small room, and wished that I had not: made my way through piles of fallen bricks and plaster in the parish-room: climbed the dirty windswept stone staircase: glanced at what remained of the vestry, where after Mass my friends and I used to sit and chat round the fire while I drank tea, in which more than one child and I had strictly private conversations; stood in the chapel doorway. Altar, image, organ, chairs, had been taken away. The upper room, in which for half a century the Good Shepherd had come to his own, where his own had heard and known his voice, was empty, open to the wind and rain, blasted, smashed, indescribably lonely. The chapel was dead.

Out in Old Pye Street an aged woman crossed herself as she shuffled by, looking up at its broken roof. In the Albert Hall a tenor sang

Novissima hora est; and I fain would sleep.  
The pain has wearied me . . . Into thy hands,  
O Lord; into thy hands . .

H. A. WILSON

ST. AUGUSTINE’S CLERGY HOUSE  
YORKTON STREET, HACKNEY ROAD  
LONDON, E.2

January, 1943

## 48

It's a lovely holiday afternoon, even in Haggerston. You gulp down your tea, swallow almost whole the bread and marg., get your bicycle out of the shed (where it lives with the hens and rabbits), go off for a ride. By the horse-trough at the end of Yorkton Street you turn to the right along Hackney Road; past the Odeon and Mr. Levy's opposite (where you buy sweets and I buy fags); by the Cat Park (now with no railings), Mr. Pasco the chemist's, Mr. Green the watchmender's; to Shoreditch Church. There, at the busy crossroads, are two policemen managing the traffic, and so preventing accidents.

At your baptism your godparents promised for you that you would keep God's commandments (14): at your confirmation you take this promise on yourself (5). There are ten of them; in The Prayer Book Catechism they follow the Creed, because right doing can only come after right believing. They are God's orders; and were first given to the Israelites (*Exodus* 20). When our Lord came to this world to teach, not only Israelite Jews, but everybody, about God, he preached one day a long sermon on a mountain (*St. Matthew* 5 to 7, though you need not read it all at once). In it he gave the ten commandments a wider meaning; but did not change them (*St. Matthew* 5, 17 to 19). They are still God's orders to all God's people: his traffic-signals on the road of life (*St. Matthew* 19, 17).

"Stop," says the policeman's hand, as he stands in the middle of the road with his back to you; "there are two buses, four private cars, a dust-cart and a funeral coming along Shoreditch High Street past the bombed ruins of Jeremiah Rotherham's. You can't see them: but I can. Stop; or you will be the next funeral." "O.K.," says his pointing finger after a while; "you want to go to the right along Kingsland Road. It is safe to go now."

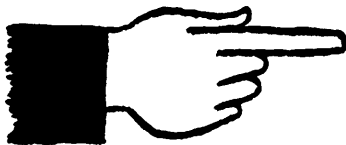
SO DO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

"Stop," they say; "don't do, say, think, that. It is dangerous." "This," they say, "is the right thing to do, say, think. This is the right and safe road to the King's land, heaven."

48



"STOP," SAYS THE COPPER



"TURN TO THE RIGHT"

## 49

Sometimes, when I am going by train into Sussex—perhaps to see Haggerston children in their holiday-home at Buxted, perhaps to be all by myself on the South Downs—I walk over London Bridge. If I have time I stop, lean on the parapet, look at the barges and tugs, watch the cranes loading and unloading ships, see the Tower Bridge open (did you know that I am four years older than it?). The parapets, or walls, are like the ten commandments on either side of the Christian's road through life; they keep him from losing his way, or falling off [I will tell you next week the reasons for 4 and 6 in the picture].

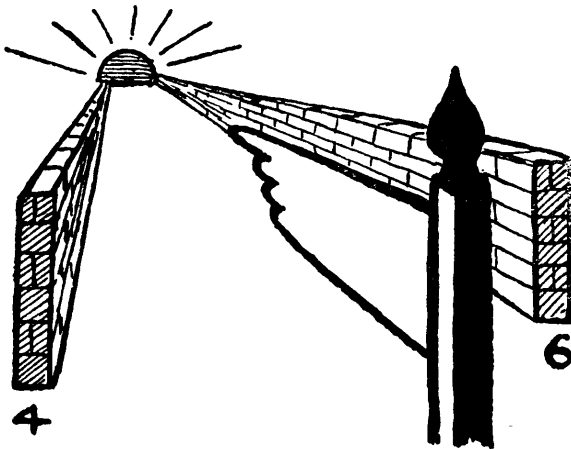
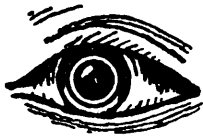
When I get out of the train, at a place with the queer name Hassocks, as though it was meant to kneel on in church, (if I am not going to Buxted), there is in peace-time a sign-post in a lane which points the way to the Downs. [But it would be no use to me if I was blind.] The ten commandments are like both the walls and the sign-post: they keep Christians on the right road, and point it out to them (*Psalm 143, 10*). There is no Christian who is blind in soul; though some, poor dears, are blind in body—like the old lady in Tuilerie Street (which you, and she, as has been said, pronounce *Too-ler-ee*) to whom I take Holy Communion every Tuesday morning [sometimes you see me, on your way to school, carrying The Blessed Sacrament through our streets, and the boys take their hats off as I pass]. For every Christian has a conscience, the Eye of the Soul to see the protecting walls and read the sign-post. (People who are not Christians also have consciences, and often wish they hadn't.)

Because of the ten commandments and my conscience

## I SEE THE WAY

So do you. But whether we keep to it, or climb over the walls, or try to find another way, depends on our Free Will (2). And it is not an easy way (*St. Matthew 7, 13 and 14*: "strait" meaning "narrow").

49



## 50

The first four commandments tell you your duty to God, the last six your duty to the people who live in the world with you (which, of course, is the reason why one wall last week was numbered 4, and the other 6). In The Prayer Book Catechism the ten are followed by "My duty towards God," and "My duty towards my Neighbour" (neighbour meaning not only those who live next door, or the boys and girls in your class at school, but everybody else in the world). So we will learn about the two together.

But before we go any further it is well to be quite clear that you, I, and every Christian, has these duties. The word "duty" means "something which is due, a debt which must be paid." We *owe* things to God and our fellowmen. We *owe* it to God to worship him in the way he wants to be worshipped. We *owe* it to other people to be kind, truthful, honest. It has nothing to do with our feelings or wishes: it is our duty, our debt that we must pay or fail to be good Christians. Sometimes grown-up people who only come to church for their weddings and the baptism of their babies (because they have to), and for their own funerals (because they can't help it), say to me (but before they get to their funerals!), "Ah! I don't need to go to church. I worship God" (in Haggerston they often call him Gord, though I'm sure he doesn't mind) "in my own way. And I don't do no 'arm to nobody. I keeps meself to meself." I don't think they are very good Christians, do you? Read our Lord's beautiful story about our duty to God and other people (*St. Luke* 10, 25 to 37; and never forget the last five words).

In Yorkton Street there are two houses larger than the others. The others are private houses. These are public houses. Each has a sign hanging outside it. One is St. Augustine's Church; God's public house for everybody who wants to find and get to know him. The other is The Duke of York; man's public house for everybody who is thirsty, and wants what I expect your father calls "a spot" (though sometimes he tells your mum he's "going out to see a man about a dog"). You can think of the coloured swinging boards as

SIGNS OF DUTY TO GOD AND MAN (like the commandments).

50



## 51

The first commandment is *Thou shalt have none other gods but me* And *My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength.* All of which you can put into fewer words by saying "I owe it to God (50) to put him first on all days and in all ways"; or shorter still by "I owe it to God to love him."

The Israelites, to whom God first gave the commandments (*Exodus 20*) because they were then his chosen race, were to be different from every other nation in believing him to be the one and only God. Other people believed in many gods and goddesses (of the sun, of the sea, of the harvest, of the rivers, of the dead, etc., etc.): they drew pictures, and made images of them, as men and women, sometimes as animals and birds (you can see some of their pictures in the British Museum): before these images of stone and wood they worshipped: the queer-looking man in the sort of chef's hat in this week's picture is the Egyptian god Amen, who was said to be the father of all the gods and goddesses. But God's first order was that all these were FALSE GODS; that he alone was the One True God.

Nowadays people do not worship Amen (or Jupiter, Mars—which isn't something you buy at a sweet-shop,—Diana, Venus): but it is possible for people to be so fond of Guinness' Stout (although it is "good for you"), playing cards for money, nice clothes, games, music, sleep, (and many other things), that they think them more important than anything else. If they do they are making false gods of them, and break the first commandment.

It is not wrong to go to The Nag's Head for a drink, to have a game of Nap, to wear pretty clothes, to be keen on games and dancing, and so on; provided you keep all these things in their proper place, put God first and love him with the whole of you (heart, mind, soul, strength).



51



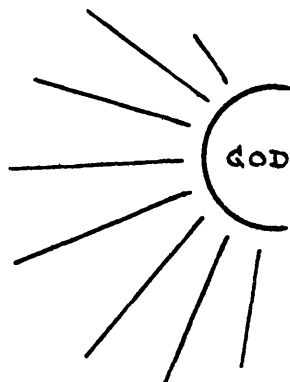
## 52

The other day I had a birthday. Between you and me and the gatepost it was my ninety-first (more or less), and it wasn't—as you might suppose—April 1st or November 5th. Somebody gave me for a present a pot of chrysanthemums. I put it on my writing-desk. The flowers looked up at my ceiling. When the sun shines on Haggerston (which it does sometimes), it is in the afternoon that its rays come through the window into my room. This particular birthday of mine was a sunny day. During the afternoon I went, as I generally do in the afternoons (for this is part of a priest's job), to see friends of mine in their Haggerston homes, and one who was ill in the London Hospital (sometimes, too, I go to see them in prison). When I got back to the clergy-house for my birthday-tea (though there wasn't an iced cake with ninety-one candles on it), I went into my room to see how the chrysanthemums were getting on. They were fine; but were not looking at the ceiling: they had turned their heads to the sun. That is a picture of religion.

If you keep the first commandment, “love God and therefore put him first on all days and in all ways,” you have religion. This does not only mean going to church, though that is part of it. It does not only mean saying your morning prayers every day, putting God first as each day begins. It does not only mean going to confession when you feel you ought to. It also means, for example, not cheating in school, not lying even if you've “got the breeze up” that you will be punished, not playing rotten secret games, not pinching things. It also means being kind, loving, unselfish, pure, obedient (unless you are told to sin). In fact religion means living the whole of your life—on weekdays as well as Sundays, out of church as well as inside it, in your school frock or suit as well as when you are “all poshed up” in your Sunday best, *and when nobody is looking at you*—towards God; like a flower turned towards the sun.

You may say that this is very difficult. It certainly is not easy. But it isn't too difficult, as I think you know already.

52



ME

**RELIGION**

## 53

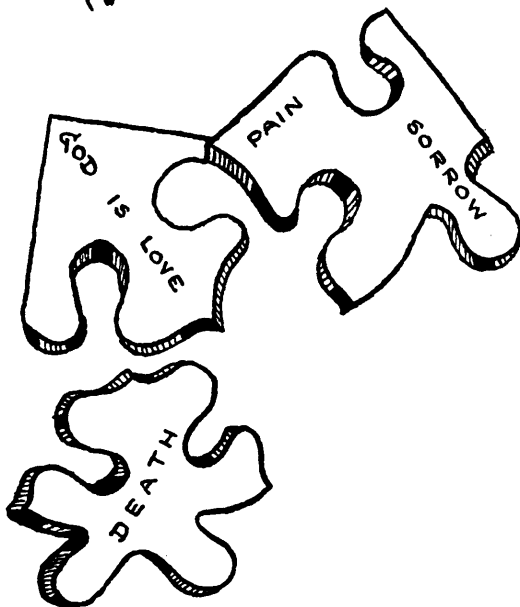
Did you ever listen to Mr. Muddlecombe on your radio? Poor old fellow: he was always puzzled and worried. There are many like him (that's why I have tried to copy his picture in this week's "Radio Times"). And, indeed, life in this world is often rather like a jigsaw-puzzle. It is hard to see how the pieces can possibly fit together; how, if it is true—as of course it is—that "God is love" (1 *St. John* 4, 8), you can fit on to this all the sadness, poverty, pain of body and of mind, illness, in the world, and the fact of death at this life's end. CAN YOU FIT THEM TOGETHER?

Not quite. St. Peter was a man who often asked our Lord why he did this, and that. You too will find that, throughout your life here, there are many things which you can't understand, lots of questions that you ask God. It will help you to remember how our Lord answered St. Peter (*St. John* 13, 7). You see, we are all really children while we are in this life (even if we have had the ninety-first birthday of which I was talking last week). This world is our School, in which we must learn many lessons. None of us will be grown-up until we reach heaven. Then—and not until then—we shall have learned all the lessons, know the answers to those questions which puzzle us now, be able to fit all the pieces of the jigsaw-puzzle together, see the whole finished picture as it is at this moment in God's mind.

But, if you keep the first commandment, if you "love God and put him first on all days and in all ways," IF YOU HAVE RELIGION, you will find, as you get older, that you can fit quite a lot of the picture together, are able to answer many of the puzzling questions of life, find a reason for heaps of things which worry those who don't know God as well as you do.

And, take my advice, don't let the other questions and perplexities worry you too much; don't become muddlecombed. Read 1 *Corinthians* 13, 12. Everything will come clear one day, in heaven. Until then, trust God: he really does know what he is doing with us all: he is never, even for a minute, muddlecombed.

53



## 54

The first commandment says that you and I owe it to God, it is our duty, to have religion. The second commandment tells us how to express (put into action and words) religion. *My duty towards God is . . . to worship him.* You love and believe in your mother; but if you never kissed her, helped her with the washing-up or the darning, sometimes scrubbed the front-door step for her, trusted her (in fact, expressed and put into actions and words what you feel for her), she would think yours was a poor sort of love. God expects you to express your religion in worship.

The second commandment is long, so I have not written it here. It is given in full in your Prayer-Book Catechism. There are some words in it which I want to explain.

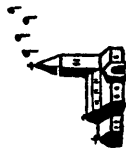
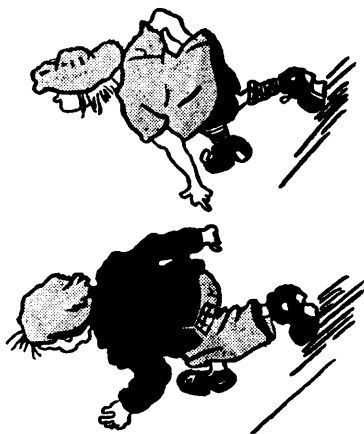
1. *Graven image; likeness of anything.* This does not mean that it is wrong to have a crucifix or figures of the saints. A crucifix is a beautiful thing, although it is a graven image and likeness of death; for it reminds us always of how much God loves each one of us (as well as of how much sin hurts him): there is one on my desk, looking at me as I write this: when I was baptised my godmother gave me one, it still hangs on the wall over the head of my bed. In church we have figures of the saints—Our Lady, St. Augustine, St. George: for they are the Church's heroes and heroines. But it would be wrong to worship them. They are only plaster or wooden things; and are only meant to help us in our worship of God, whom we can't see—yet.

2. *Jealous God.* Jealousy in us is wrong, because it is caused by our love of ourselves. Jealousy in God is not wrong, because it is caused by his love of us, and he cannot bear to see us leaving and losing him.

3. *Visit the sins.* It is a law of nature that we can't sin without hurting others (a man who goes to prison brings disgrace on his family).

And here are the twins (I expect you can fill in the two missing letters) keeping the second commandment on Sunday morning—like you, and me.

54



THE B-S-O TWINS  
KEEP THE SECOND  
COMMANDMENT

## 55

One Sunday morning a family (not, I am sure, a Haggerston one) was walking home from church. "Well!", said father; "that's the last time I shall go there. Never heard such a rotten sermon in my life!" "Yes!", said mother; "and the vicar did not speak to me after the service. I shan't go there again either." "Nor shall I," remarked Elspeth Ermyntrude the elder daughter, who had a musical temperament (if you don't know what this means you're lucky); "the singing was simply appalling." "I don't mind so much about all that," answered Angela Annabella her sister; "but I do draw the line at having to sit in such uncomfortable seats." "As a matter of fact," replied young Montague Marmaduke her schoolboy-brother; "I thought the whole service was rather a good show for a penny."

As well as being snobs (except Monty) this very superior family (as you may have guessed from their names) did not know the first thing about worship (including Monty). For we do not go to church *to get*, but *to give*. Sermons, music, High Mass, incense, banners, a clean, warm church (which ours in Haggerston during war-winters certainly is not), are good things; but they are not the chief reasons for going to church. In church we say our prayers; but that is not the first reason for which we go there. To worship is to give, not to get. As our Lord said, though he was not only speaking about worship (*Acts* 20, 35).

There are two kinds of worship, public and private. The first means "with other people," such as in church. The second means "alone," in our private prayers at home or elsewhere; about which I will tell you later. Both are your and my "duties," "debts we owe to God." In your churchgoing try to remember that you are there principally *to give* to God your presence and praise, your honour and glory, your thanksgiving, your love; because he is God, and because to worship him is the highest thing for which he made you and that you can ever do (*Psalms* 95, 6), either in this world or in heaven.

Give to God; worship him as well as you can. You will get much; for God too knows how to give (*St. Luke* 6, 38).



55



BUT  
MR B-S-O  
DOESN'T

## 56

If you were sitting in a comfortable chair in front of the fire at home reading the very latest adventure of Popeye the Sailor, the door opened, and Mother Cicely walked in, you would say, "Hullo, Mother! How nice to see you! Do sit down." If you looked up, and saw His Majesty King George in your doorway (I don't think you are likely to; but nowadays one never quite knows what is going to happen next), you would drop your book, and stand up (though I don't know what you, or I, would say). But if, standing there, was our Lord Jesus Christ; without thinking about it, you would be on your knees on the hearthrug. (And I can think of heaps of things you, and I, would say.)

As there are two kinds of worship, public and private, (55) so there are two ways in which to worship. Each of us is made of soul and body. We are to worship with the whole of us. It is our duty to do so with our bodies as well as with our souls (*Psalms* 95, 6; *Exodus* 3, 5). Through your body you express your soul, put its feelings into action; naturally, if you saw our Lord, you would kneel.

In public worship in church:—

Kneel at the proper times [*never* sit and put your head in your hands, unless you are very old and have "the rheumatics somethink cruel": the first person who, so far as we know, knelt before God was Solomon, and he was very wise (1 *Kings* 8, 54)]. Be careful about your hands, they can make a difference to the goodness of prayers (*Exodus* 17, 12). When you stand or sit, don't fidget. Never whisper or talk, unless it is really necessary. Bow your head at the Holy Name. Genuflect (kneel with your right knee on the ground) before The Blessed Sacrament.

It is not fussy or unimportant to take care how your body worships, to have a reverent outside as well as inside. Daniel knew that (*Daniel* 6, 10). So did St. Peter (*Acts* 9, 40). The angels know it too (*Revelation* 7, 11).

REVERENT SOULS HAVE REVERENT BODIES.

56



## 57

Soon after I was made vicar of St. Augustine's in 1925 I began to collect money so that I might build our parish-hall. It was hard work; for it is quite as difficult to work with your brains (especially if you haven't many) as it is with your hands. However, there are so many kind Christians in the world that in four months I had the eight thousand pounds; and our hall was built—with its stage, dance-floor, club-rooms, flat playground-roof. On the night of the day when Miss Sybil Thorndike (a famous actress) opened it, we had a dance. There were two bands; one on the stage, the other on the roof. I was looking at the merry scene from the gallery, on the wall of which, as you know, there is a crucifix. Harry Dunn, a printer and one of our churchwardens, now at rest, said to me, "I like to think of the Master looking down on us, and seeing us all so happy."

Worship is giving God, the Master, the honour due to him. Nowadays people, at any rate in England, do not make stone idols of false gods; but there are still some who break the second commandment by having wrong ideas about God (such as thinking he is very strict, a sort of giant policeman always trying to catch people doing wrong and enjoying punishing them; or saying that Christians shouldn't go to theatres or the pictures, like wearing nice clothes, be happy and play games on Sundays). Worship God regularly and lovingly while you are young; put him "first on all days and in all ways"; get to know him as he really is, in church, in good people, in your right thoughts—he is so near to you always. Before long you will find out for yourself that my old friend the printer, who learned about God in his and your and my St. Augustine's, was right; that God never wants his children, however old or young, to be unhappy; that it is quite right for Christians who go to Mass, make their confessions, say their prayers, keep the commandments, to dance, play games, have a drink now and then, wear nice clothes, enjoy life.

Those who keep the second commandment ought to be, and are meant to be, the happiest people in the world: not like camels—with perpetual humps.

57

A CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO LOOK

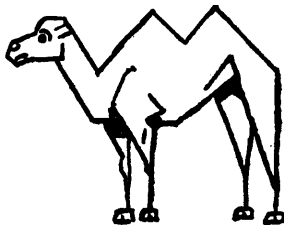
LIKE THIS



NOT LIKE THIS



OR THIS



## 58

The third commandment is *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.* And *My duty towards God is . . . to honour his holy name.* It naturally follows the second; for if we have reverent bodies and worship God outwardly as well as inwardly "on all days and in all ways," our speech will always be Christian, as God wants it to be. This too we "owe to God" (*Psalm 141, 3*).

There was once a man who talked too much, knew that he had harmed others by thoughtless words. So he made his confession. "To-morrow," said the priest, "take this bag of feathers wherever you go: every time you speak, put one on the ground: come and see me in the evening." The next evening the man returned, with an empty bag. "To-morrow," said the priest, "go and pick up the feathers." Of course the man could not find them; they had all blown away.

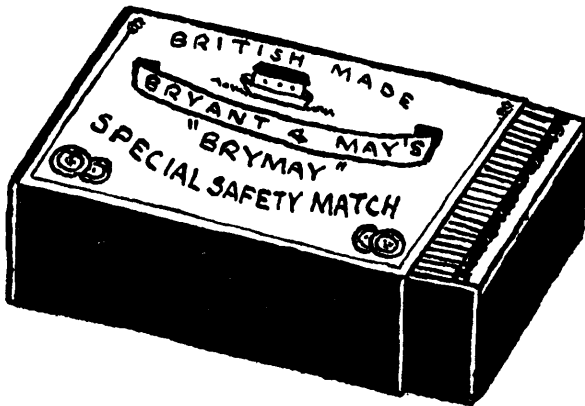
As a matter of fact, most of us talk too much. We speak all sorts of words: good and not so good, kind and unkind, words that make people happy and words that cause great and lasting misery; but none of them words that we can unsay. Once spoken, they float away like feathers, often to great distances: we can never recover them. St. James had a good deal to say about a Christian's speech: (*St. James 3, 2 to 13*).

This afternoon I was very angry. I was passing the Children's Hospital in Hackney Road, when a fat Jewess came down the steps shaking her small daughter. The child was crying: I think she had just had a tooth out. Her mother screamed at her, "Jesus Christ! Stop that 'owling, yer bloody little swine; or I won't 'arf pay yer!" I won't tell you what I said; but the Jewess was very surprised. I think St. James would have been angry too, don't you? And one who is greater than any saint.

Next week I will tell you more about Christian speech. This week, learn this: ONE WORD CAN DO GREAT HARM OR GREAT GOOD. If you can remember all your life, say every time you see a box of matches, what St. James said about your tongue and fire, and try to make all your words "safety-matches," many people will bless you; so will God.

58

A SMALL FLAME  
CAN MAKE A LARGE FIRE



## 59

The third commandment teaches us that we are never to use God's name lightly or as a swear-word. [You know why, although babies are oftener christened with the names of saints—so much nicer than with those of film-stars—a boy is never christened “Jesus.” Because it is so holy a name] (*St. Luke* 1, 49). It forbids all swearing, except taking the oath in a court of law (*St. Matthew* 26, 63 and 64).

It also forbids lying. When people lie and swear, it is generally because they are afraid (*St. Mark* 14, 70 and 71); afraid of being punished, or being laughed at. A good picture of a lie was drawn by a deaf-and-dumb boy: between two dots he drew a crooked line; for truth, he drew a straight line.

It also teaches reverence in speech about God, the Church, the Sacraments, and all holy things. It was a wise child who said, “Heaven is a place where people talk quietly”; and I shouldn't wonder if it was an East London child, for it is generally so noisy here that Haggerston children are fond of shouting.

In short, this commandment tells you and me and all Christians to be careful how we speak (*St. Matthew* 12, 36 and 37). After Sister Marjorie of St. Saviour's Priory died, somebody said about her, “Yus, she was a good 'un, she was: no one ever 'eard 'er say a wry word about any one.” (“Wry” means “crooked”.) How nice it would be if people said that about you! Well, why not? Suppose that one day, in heaven, some one whom you hadn't seen for quite a long time came up to you, and said, “I want to say Thank You; because it is due to you, as well as of course to God's grace, that I am here. When we were together in Haggerston, I noticed that your speech was always clean, true, reverent, kind. I knew you went to St. Augustine's. So I began to go there—and that's how I got here.” Wouldn't you feel pleased? Well, why shouldn't it happen?

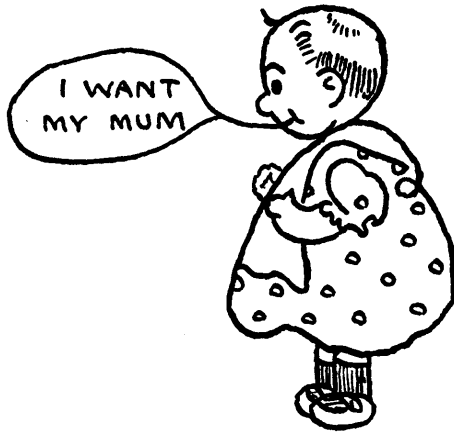
LET THEM BE GOOD WORDS.

When you were born, you cried while others smiled. Let all who know you be so grateful for your speech that, when you die, you smile while others cry.

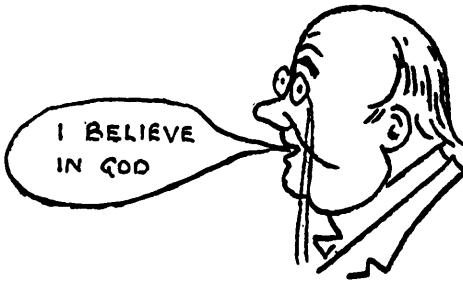


59

**FROM FIRST**



**TO LAST**



## 60

The fourth commandment is as long as the second; so I leave you to read it too in full in your Prayer-Book Catechism. Put shortly, it means that we owe God our time. *My duty towards God is . . . to serve him truly all the days of my life.*

You may find it too difficult to draw the six, or perhaps five and a half, people in this week's picture. Long ago, in the introduction to part one, I told you that I can't draw for little toffee-apples, and that I trace all these picture from other people's drawings (which anybody can do). These people are really in a queue waiting for a bus; though they *might* be going to church, and reading the Sunday paper on the way. However, you can leave them out, and only draw the church door. For the first thing this commandment teaches you is that it is your duty to go to Mass on Sundays, unless work or illness make this impossible. [As well as the 52 Sundays, there are 8 great weekday Holy Days on which you also ought to go, if you can possibly manage it. The Circumcision of our Lord (January 1st). The Epiphany (January 6th). Ascension Day (40 days after Easter Sunday). Corpus Christi, the Feast of The Blessed Sacrament (Thursday after Trinity Sunday). The Feast of SS. Peter and Paul (June 29th). The Assumption of our Lady (August 15th). All Saints' Day (November 1st). Christmas Day (December 25th).  $52+8=60$ . The 60 "Days of Obligation"; because on them we are all *obliged* to go to Mass, if we can.]

Christians "keep holy" the first day of the week, Sunday; rather than the seventh, ("sabbath"), Saturday: because it was on this day that the Resurrection happened. From the first days of the Church Christians have always given God part of their Sunday-time by going to Mass (*Acts* 20, 7); for this is the one great act of worship appointed by our Lord (*St. Luke* 22, 19). It always has been, and is still, "The Lord's Service for the Lord's Children on the Lord's Day." I will tell you much more about it later, when we are learning about the sacraments. What you must learn now is that it is by taking part in this public worship that you "serve God truly all the Sundays of your life."

60



SUNDAY MORNING

## 61

The church to which a young woman went for her Sunday Mass was some distance away; so she travelled there by bus, caught the same bus at the same time every Sunday morning. The conductor noticed that she got off at the same street-corner, where he heard church-bells ringing. One day he said to her, "Excuse me, miss; are you going to Mass?" Now she was shy, didn't like talking about her religion; so lied. "No," she answered, blushing; "oh dear no, certainly not." "Beg pardon," said the conductor; "but I'm a Christian, and I thought you were. My little son is very ill. I can't go to Mass, because of my work. I wanted some one to say a prayer for him." I meant to tell you this true story last Sunday, but there wasn't time. Never be ashamed of being a Christian, or shy about going to Mass. You may lose a chance of helping some one else; and perhaps you remember (*St. John* 18, 25 to 27).

But when you have done your Sunday duty, put God first on this his day, it is right and according to God's will that you should enjoy yourself and be happy for the rest of the day. The Jews made their Sabbath miserable: our Lord told them they were wrong (*St. Mark* 2, 27 and 3, 4). You and I and everybody are so made that we must have rest; "sabbath" means "rest." All of us too, however old we are, must have recreation now and then; for our minds and bodies would soon become worn out unless they were "re-created" by leaving our work sometimes. Holidays are necessary; and God means Sunday to be a holiday as well as a holy-day.

Ride a cock-horse (or more likely, a scooter); even if your hair wants cutting, and you don't go "To see a fine lady upon a white horse, With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes." Go to Victoria Park and row on the lake, only don't fall in. Take a 6 bus "up west" to look at the shops. Go out to tea with Auntie at Tooting. Do what you like, if there is no sin in it, all the rest of Sunday; though if you are a wise child you will go to Catechism. God means Sunday to be the happiest day in the week.

Put God first. Go to Mass. Then rest, and enjoy yourself. There is a wise old proverb, "A Sunday well spent brings a week of content."

61

SUNDAY AFTERNOON



## 62

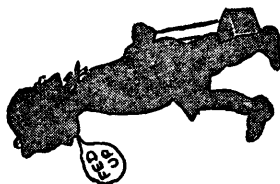
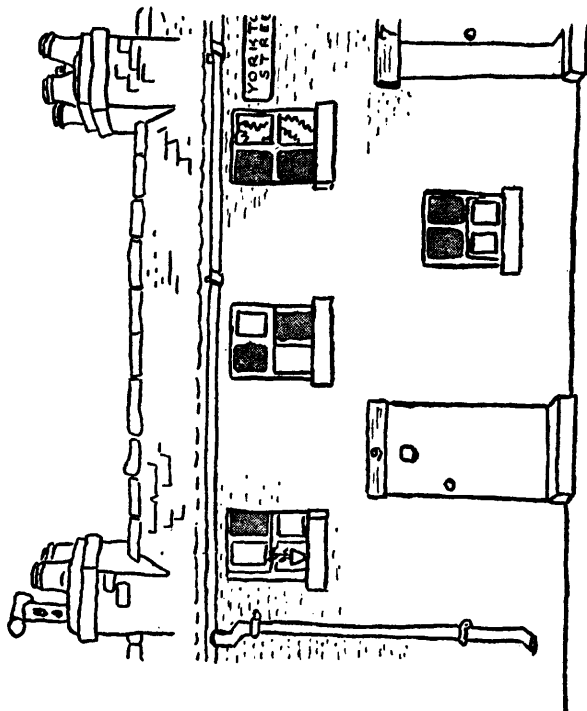
But Sunday is followed by Monday morning, on which Jennifer Jane Jelliband, who lives at Number 7 in a street where windows haven't much glass (but one geranium), is sent off to school again (with her gas-mask). Yet the fourth commandment has something to say about Mondays, as well as about Sundays. "Six days shalt thou labour." And "My duty towards God is . . . to serve him truly all the days of my life." I owe God *all* my time (60).

In the true service of God is work as well as worship; we are not to be Christians only on Sundays, or only in church. God gave Adam work to do (*Genesis* 2, 15): there is work in heaven (*Revelation* 22, 13), happy enjoyable work, for it is sin that has made it hard and wearisome (*Genesis* 3, 18 and 19). "The devil finds work for idle hands": it is when people are out of work, even if not by their fault, that they grow bored, restless, are more easily tempted. Our Lord worked in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, his mother was a working-woman: never be ashamed of being a child of working-parents, of having to work for your living. And don't be fed up, like Jennifer Jane, on Monday morning. Before she tied up her hair in that elegant bit of ribbon, she said (I hope) her morning prayers: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Is it not God's will that she should go to school? Of course it is. "Six days shalt thou labour."

I expect you will see the meaning of this story. In hospital a girl of sixteen lay dying. Her mother died when she was six; so she had to look after the twins as well as her father. All her short life had been spent working hard for others; no time for church or catechism, even the pictures or games or Guides. At sixteen she was worn out, her hands seamed and lined like those of an old woman. To her in the hospital-bed went a rather fussy woman. "Had she been confirmed?" "No, miss." "Did she go to church?" "No." "Say any prayers?" "Not very often." "But what will you do when you die, and have to tell God all this?" The girl, who had spent her life in the service of others, looked at her thin hands lying on the counterpane; answered, "Please, miss, I shall show him my hands. I think he will understand."

62

MONDAY MORNING



## 63

The ten commandments, then, were first given by God to the Jews; read what Moses, their great leader, told them to do with them (*Deuteronomy* 6, 7). Our Lord said that they are God's orders for Christians too (*St. Matthew* 22, 34 to 39). We too are to keep them, because we believe in God; this, as I have told you, is the reason why, in The Prayer-Book Catechism, they come immediately after the Creed.

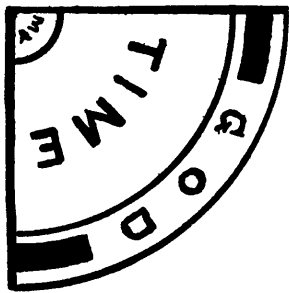
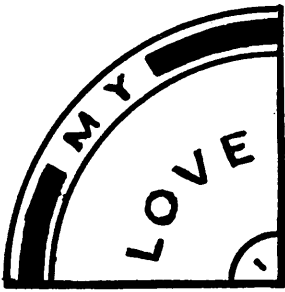
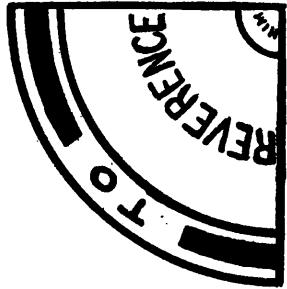
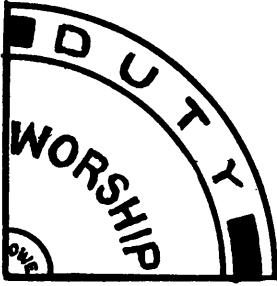
The first four tell us our Duty to God, what we owe him, the debt that you and I must pay. Four quarters make a whole. If you draw the quarters on this week's blackboard exactly equal, put them the right way up and in the right order, you will find that you have a circle (the figure of perfection) which says, "My duty to God. I owe him my love, worship, reverence, time." By keeping these four commandments you live towards God [like my chrysanthemums (52)] as he has made you to live; also, though this is not the first reason for keeping them, you will—perhaps unconsciously—bring others to him. And "Save thou a soul, and it shall save thine own."

When The Manchester Ship Canal was made (between 1887 and 1894), the engineer in charge of the Latchford section was a young unmarried man from the south of England who lived alone in lodgings in Warrington. His work-hours during the week were long. He was a Christian. Every Sunday, his only day's rest, he went to Mass. Years after the canal was finished, when he was doing other engineering work in London, a man went into his office and said, "Do you remember me, Maurice? I used to live on the floor below you in that house in Warrington; was in charge of the next section to yours on the Ship Canal. Every Sunday morning I used to hear you get up, go downstairs out to church. I knew you were just as tired and hard-working as I; but I thought that, if you could do this on our only day of rest, there must be something in Christianity. So I want you to know that I have lately been confirmed, and am a communicant."



63

FOUR QUARTERS MAKE A WHOLE



## 64

The last six commandments tell us our Duty to our Neighbours (that is, to every one with whom we share this life). For if God is "Our Father," naturally we have duties to one another (*Acts* 7, 26). The fifth is *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. And *My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me; to love, honour, and succour (help) my father and mother*.

Your first neighbours were your father and mother. To them, under God, you owe everything, even life itself. Without them you would never have known home, that place you will always love best in the world [when you get back there after Catechism, see if you can find the words which fit the tune in this week's picture, and write them under it: if you can't, I will tell them to you next week]. You can never repay the debt which you owe them, as you will realise when you are grown up and have children of your own. But you can, and must (if you are to be a good Christian), remember that it is your duty to love them all your life; to honour them by your obedience (*Ephesians* 6, 1 and 2) [unless, of course, they tell you to do something wrong, when it is your duty to disobey them], and by never speaking to any one about their faults; to help them (like a small girl called Elsie, who lives opposite me, and whom I often see washing the front-door step and going errands for her Mum), especially when they are ill or old (*St. John* 19, 25 to 27).

The time may come when your parents are dead, and the little Haggerston house now your home is lived in by other people. Of course you will still, since you are a Christian and still their child, have your duty to them of praying for their souls, of keeping their graves clean and tidy, of being the good man or woman they wanted (and, in the next world, still want) you to be. You will be happy then, if you can look back to your home-days with them; and not have to blame yourself for unkindness, rudeness, sulks, disrespect. And won't it be lovely to be once again and for ever with father and mother in their and your true home, heaven, "the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee"?



## 65

[The words to fit the music in last week's picture are "Be it ever so humble, There's no place like home"]. Your first neighbours were your parents; but you have many others, to whom as a Christian the fifth commandment also means that you owe a debt. *My duty is . . . to honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him; to submit myself to all my governors (rulers), teachers: to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters.*

It is not difficult to honour a good king like His Majesty King George; but even if he were a bad one, it would be your duty to honour him, because of his position. St. Peter wrote (1 *St. Peter* 2, 17) when the king was the emperor Nero, about as big a scoundrel as Fuehrer Hitler.

A CHRISTIAN OBEYS THE COUNTRY'S LAWS (except if they are laws which the Church and his conscience tell him to be wrong: for example, if the Government were to pass a law forbidding people to go to church, or saying that there is no need for mothers to be married). In so doing he is really obeying God (*Romans* 13, 1 and 2).

God in his wisdom has put us into different positions in the world for our good (*St. Mark* 13, 34). Some are priests and sisters; others are kings, air-marshals, prime ministers. Some are fathers and mothers; some are teachers; others are boys and girls at school [who may one day be priests or sisters, fathers or mothers, air-marshals or perhaps prime ministers]. They are so, not because some are better or worse than others; but because wise God made them so. You are, of course, to be independent, self-reliant, having a will of your own, using the brains God has given you to get on in the world, and so serve both God and England with all your power. But, as a Christian, you are to "submit" yourself ("put yourself willingly and cheerfully under") those whom God has put over you: teachers at school, foremen at work, the leaders of your country, and so on. A football team wouldn't win many matches if it had no captain: or if it had eleven captains.

65



## 66

*My duty is . . . to submit myself to my spiritual pastors and masters.*

"Pastor" is a Latin word which means "shepherd." A shepherd, as you know, is one who looks after, cares for, protects and feeds, sheep. There is one Good Shepherd (*St. John* 10, 11): the clergy of the Church (Bishops, Priests, and Deacons) are his under-shepherds, whom he appoints to look after, not their, but his sheep (you and me and all members of the Church on earth) (*St. John* 21, 16). All England is divided into parishes: each has its parish-priest (the vicar or rector), who may have other priests to help him. Parishes make a diocese (the Diocese of London, Southwark, Oxford, etc.): each diocese has a bishop as its head.

The fifth commandment also means that it is your duty as a Christian to obey your parish-priest (unless, of course, he tells you to commit what you know to be sin), for to him God has specially trusted the care of your soul (*Hebrews* 13, 17); your bishop; the Church's commandments and laws, which are binding on you as a baptised person (*St. Luke* 10, 16).

On September 14th, 1925, I was made vicar of the parish of St. Augustine of Canterbury, in Haggerston; shepherd, that is, of all Christians who live between Hackney Road, Goldsmith Row, that smelly old canal in which you (sometimes) catch tiddlers, Queensbridge Road. In his sermon on that evening (I was horribly nervous, only 35, not very old to be a vicar) the Bishop of Stepney said that we must remember the meaning of the word "parson"—"one who is to remind every one of the *person* of Jesus Christ." My first duty is to show God to people, and so bring them to him. This is not easy; for parsons are human beings, and have as many temptations (perhaps more) as every one else. So say a prayer sometimes, please, for me; and for all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

A priest is addressed as Reverend ("one to be respected"). Often he is called Father. Men and boys touch their hats to him in the street. Even if he looks like the double-chinned, inquisitive, beady-eyed clergyman in this week's picture, **HE IS TO BE RESPECTED**; just because he is a priest.

66



**EVEN IF HE LOOKS  
LIKE THIS**

## 67

The sixth commandment is *Thou shalt do no murder. And My duty towards my neighbour is . . . to hurt nobody by word or deed: to bear no malice or hatred in my heart.*

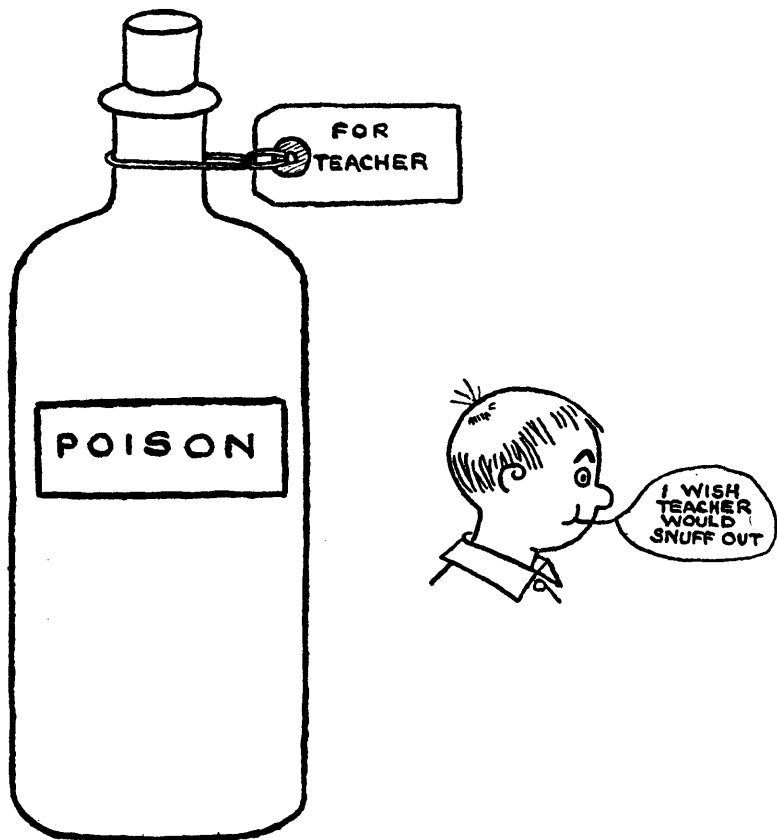
Murder is taking another's life. Suicide is taking one's own life. Both are forbidden, because all life comes from God. When God made man he gave him dominion ("rule") over all that lives (*Genesis 1, 26*); only over the life of man he did not give him dominion, as Cain, the first murderer, quickly found out (*Genesis 4, 10*). The taking of human life is, however, allowed in punishment for murder (*Genesis 9, 6*); by those who fight in a just war; and in the protection of your own or another's life [a few nights ago a pawnbroker in Hackney Road was attacked and killed by two men who broke into his shop; the two were hanged; if the pawnbroker in his fight for life, or if a policeman hearing his cries and helping him, had killed one or both of the men, he would not have committed murder and would not have been hanged]. There are no reasons for which suicide is allowed.

This commandment also forbids wrong anger. There is a right anger (*St. John 2, 13 to 16*); but nearly all our anger is wrong. Malice and hatred mean wishing harm to others; being murderers in our hearts, in will if not in deed. They are the seeds from which murder grows (*Genesis 4, 3 to 8*). Freddy Fishface is always in trouble at school, hates his teacher; doesn't buy from Mr. Cooper at Barnard's the chemist's six-pennorth of prussic acid, put it in his teacher's tea; but says, and means, "I wish with all my heart that teacher would kick the bucket, sling his hook, turn his toes up, die." WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Nations are made of human beings. If men and women, boys and girls, did not hate, bore no malice in their hearts, there would be no wars (*Ephesians 4, 31*).



67



## 68

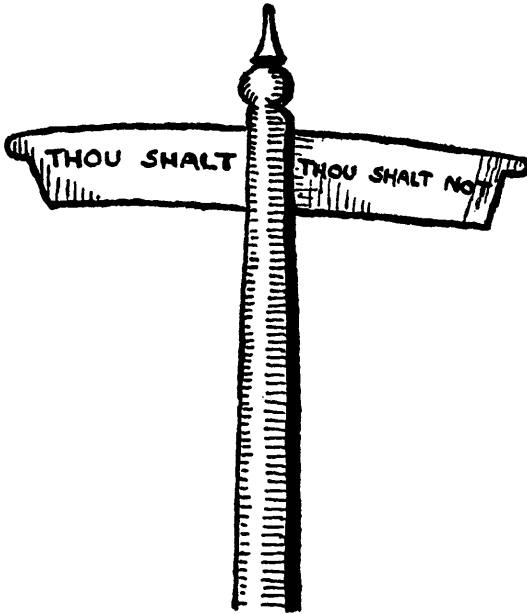
“You see those large round stones, two feet in diameter, with which women grind corn, heavier than one person can lift. I’ll tell you what should be done to a man like that. One of those stones ought to be tied round his neck. Then he should be thrown into the sea, and left to drown.” Do you know who said that; and why? (*St. Matthew* 18, 1 to 6).

To take another’s natural bodily life is bad enough. But there is a worse sort of murder; to cause another one day to go to hell, because of sins first learned from you. This is soul-murder; taking another’s supernatural heavenly life.

In Ion Square, behind The Nag’s Head, Mary Anne was born yesterday. It may be that before she came to earth God held her tiny baby body in those strong, gentle, loving hands of his which made the mighty sea and the smallest flower; between her little baby lips breathed the breath of his own unending life; gently kissed her. Then he gave her to an angel to carry to earth, and give to her mother and father to look after for him. As the angel flew from heaven to Haggerston, which may be no great distance, it is possible that the angel sang about the saints and our Lady and the baby in his arms. So in Mary Anne’s soul there is a memory of God’s kiss, and of the angel’s song before she was born. She will keep that memory until she learns sin (as she lies in her pram in the sunshine of Ion Square you will often see her smile, apparently at nothing): maybe she will never quite lose it, even in Haggerston.

Impurity: swear-words: cheating: telling lies: laughing at God and holy things: playing rotten games. Did you first learn such things from older boys or girls? I am sorry. But be most careful never, consciously or unconsciously, to teach them to younger children. There are Mary Annes all round you. If you murder their souls your sin is worse than King Herod’s (*St. Matthew* 2, 16).

68



TO LEAD ANOTHER  
INTO SIN  
IS TO BREAK  
THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

## 69

The seventh commandment is *Thou shalt not commit adultery*. And *My duty towards my neighbour is . . . to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity*.

This is a commandment for married people, so I shall refer to it when the time comes for us to learn about Holy Matrimony. But it is also a commandment for the unmarried, such as you and I. It teaches us, not only our duty to our neighbours, but also our duty to ourselves.

Your body is good, not bad (*Genesis* 1, 31). But since sin entered the world your will has been out of order, like a damaged clock, and does not control your body as it should. This is so with all of us, not only with you. So it is easy for you to let your body become too fond of things good in themselves (food, dress, drink, going to the pictures). What each one of us has to learn—and it is often hard—is to say No to our bodies, to be their bosses and masters, to keep them under control (12). The sooner we begin to learn, the better for us and all our “neighbours.”

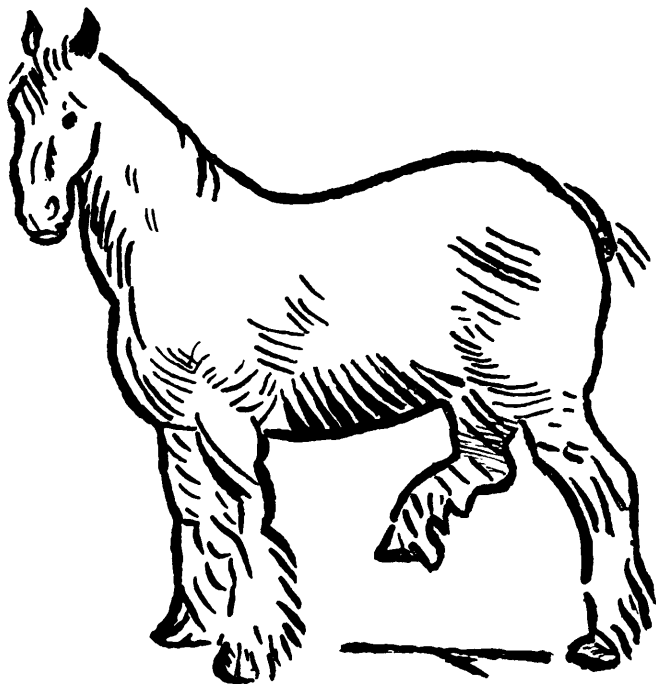
“Temperance” means “self-control”: not over-eating; too fond of sweets; too often at The Odeon in Hackney Road; liking bed so much that you are always late for school, Mass, work. “Soberness” doesn’t only mean not “having one over the eight,” being drunk (a disgusting habit); it means steadiness, reliability, mastership over your body. “Chastity” means “purity.”

This commandment means that a Christian owes it to God as well as to himself, or herself, not to let bad thoughts stay in the mind; not to look at pictures or books which suggest such thoughts; not to listen to rotten talk (if you have a friend who whispers about things you would not like your mother to hear, have done with the friend); not to play wrong games; not to do anything impure; to be clean in thought, word, deed.

Three great horses pull the dray that brings the beer to The Duke of York. Wouldn’t it be awful if they ran away? They don’t, because Bert their driver keeps them under control. A horse is A GOOD SERVANT; BUT A BAD MASTER. SO IS YOUR BODY.

Be boss, says this commandment. (*St. Matthew*, 5, 8) says our Lord.

69



## 70

The eighth commandment is *Thou shalt not steal*; and *My duty towards my neighbour is . . . to be true and just in all my dealings; to keep my hands from picking and stealing*. That is, you owe it to your neighbours to be just in deed, in all that you do with your hands.

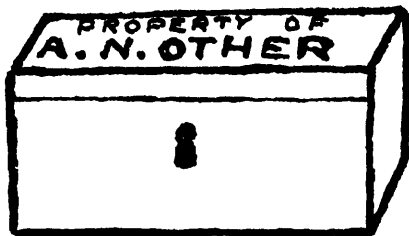
To steal is to take what belongs to another, even if it is something small and not worth much (“picking”); a lump of sugar from mother’s cupboard, another boy’s cigarette-card, another girl’s hair-ribbon. Bad habits are like weeds, start in small ways, grow quickly. Remember Judas Iscariot (*St. John* 12, 4 to 6; *St. Matthew* 26, 14 to 16); be honest in the little things, and you will not fail when big temptations come.

To steal is also to keep what is not your own; things you find (make every effort to discover the owner), things lent to you (books—I don’t know how many books I have lent to Haggerston people, which have not been returned although I wrote my name in each), money that you owe to tradesmen or friends (Christians should always pay bills promptly). And if you keep what you know has been stolen by some one else, or encourage another to steal, it is the same as if you did it yourself.

“To be true and just in all my dealings” means not copying in school, cheating in games; not wasting your employer’s time by being deliberately late at work or doing badly the work for which you are paid; not cheating in selling or buying; not idling and living on the kindness of others (2 *Thessalonians* 3, 10). In short, this commandment tells you to keep your HANDS OFF all that belongs to other people, to take care that you have hands which you are not ashamed to show to God (62).

Have a look at Psalm 24. “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place?” (That is, “Who shall go to heaven?”). “He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.”

70



## 71

You owe it to your fellowmen to be just in word, as well as in deed (70). The ninth commandment is *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour*; and *My duty towards my neighbour is . . . to keep my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering*. You are to respect, not only his property, but also his character and good name.

“False witness” is a lie publicly published or written: “slander” is a lie spoken in private, is specially cruel because it is secret, does great harm (58), and is hated by God (*Psalm* 101, 5). If I wrote to *The Hackney and Kingsland Gazette* that you are a thief, and my letter was printed in that newspaper, you could go to the police, I should be summoned to Old Street Police Court and, if I could not prove my words, I should be punished for “libel” (“a lie in print”). If I slandered you, by whispering about you to people that “I wouldn’t trust So-and-so: he’s a bit too clever with his fingers,” I might—if people were so silly as to believe me—do great and lasting harm to your character and good name. Everywhere, in war-time, you see the words “Careless talk costs lives”: you know why (though you need not bother about drawing the notice crooked or curled, unless you like: I only drew it like that for fun). If you were to unpin it, and turn the piece of paper round, you might (or might not) find on it the words **AND CRUEL TALK HURTS SOULS**.

All lies are forbidden (59) (*Proverbs* 12, 22; *Revelation* 21, 8). But, although it may sometimes be your duty to speak about others’ faults, you must also be on your guard against exaggerating, sneaking and telling tales, back-biting. Be just to others in speech; “somebody told me” is insufficient reason; the word “devil” means “slanderer.” Speech begins with thought. One day our Lord, with his disciples, entered a village. In a street they found a crowd standing round something lying on the ground. It was a dead dog. “What a hideous sight!”, said one old Jew. “It smells,” said another. “Covered with mud and blood,” remarked a third. “Filthy mongrel!” remarked a fourth. “But,” said Jesus, who always looks for the good in everybody, even in you and me, “what beautiful white teeth it has.” Think good of others; and you will speak good.



71



## 72

Just, in deed (70) and word (71): you also owe it, to all with whom you have to do, to be just in thought. For the tenth commandment is *Thou shalt not covet*; and *My duty towards my neighbour is . . . not to covet or desire other men's goods*.

To "covet" means to "wish earnestly for a thing that you know you ought not to have, because it belongs to some one else" (hating another child who has better clothes, more money; a grown-up person who is better looking, more popular, has a nicer house). It is a sin of thought; and words and deeds grow from thoughts, like plants and flowers from seeds. Read about the crimes of two men who let covetous thoughts grow (2 *Kings* 5, 20 to 27; *St. Matthew* 26, 14 to 16).

But you must never think that it is wrong to want to "get on in the world." *My duty is . . . to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me*. These words are often quoted wrongly by people who don't know their Catechism: they say *unto which it hath pleased God to call me*. Of course it is not wrong to want to get a better job, to use your brains so that you are given a higher and better-paid post (65). You are not meant to live like a cabbage (always in the same spot), or a jellyfish (with no backbone, ambition, "push," "guts"). It may be that "it shall please God to call" you to great work, greater than you can now imagine. But it is always true that "God helps those who help themselves."

Yet you are not to be a perpetual grumbler, always "fed up" and discontented, ever restless and longing for something else. That is how much of the world's misery is caused. It is your duty to God, as well as your neighbours, to be happy, cheerful, peaceful in mind (57). Haggerston isn't such a bad old place, even if it does smell a bit. Anyhow, I don't want to live anywhere else; at least, not so long as it has people like you in it.

72



HOW IT ALL BEGINS

## 73

If you want to draw a straight line the wise thing to do is to use a rule. The longer the straight line, the harder it is to draw it without a rule. Each of our blackboards is about six feet long and five feet wide. I could not have drawn the straight lines in to-day's picture unless I had used the rule (nearly five feet long) made for me by that old soldier who comes to our church, and is a first-class carpenter although—since the last war—he can scarcely use his left hand.

The way to heaven is long. The shortest way there is the straight way. That is the reason why God gives you the ten commandments. GOD'S RULE KEEPS US

S  
T  
R  
A  
I  
G  
H  
T

A young tree in Victoria Park grows straight because it is supported by a straight stake. Once a man asked our Lord how to reach heaven; he was answered (*St. Mark* 10, 19). If you do your best to keep the commandments, your way to heaven will be straight and the shortest; you will escape many of life's failures and difficulties (but not all of them). One day you will grow to be a saint in heaven (where there is no need of commandments); as the young tree grows into a mighty oak, with no need of a supporting stake.

Rule your life by God's Rule (*St. John* 14, 21). You will be safer in this world, and saved in the next one. But to do this you must have God's grace; so the next part of this queer Haggerston Catechism will be about Prayer.

73

LOVE	WORSHIP	REVERENCE	TIME	OBEDIENCE	LOVE	PURITY	JUST DEEDS	JUST WORDS	JUST THOUGHTS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

DUTY TO PEOPLE

DUTY TO GOD