

ALL FOR THE GOLDEN AGE

OR

THE WAY OF PROGRESS

BY

G. F. WATES

LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.

MUSEUM STREET

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Magic of Common Sense

Cr. 8vo.

3s. 6d.

"A sound little guide to life, as sensible in matter as it is pleasant in manner."—*Daily News*.

"Offers a broad and sane view of life and its infinite perplexities."—*Bookman*.

Published by

JOHN MURRAY, Albemarle Street, W.1.

The Religion of Wise Men

Cr. 8vo.

4s. 6d.

"Most suggestive and thought-provoking."—*Truth*.

"Mr. Wates deals many a shrewd blow, too many of which get home."—*Expository Times*.

Progress and the Past

A Glance Down the Ages

Cr. 8vo.

5s.

"An agreeable and well-informed writer."—*The Times*.

"The present volume sustains his reputation for earnestness combined with vivacity and breadth of learning added to lucidity of statement."—*Inquirer*.

Both published by

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.

All the above have been re-published in America; the last by the Oxford University Press.

First published in 1928

(All rights reserved)

*Printed in Great Britain by
Unwin Brothers, Ltd., Woking*

" It makes all the difference in the world whether we put Truth in the first place or in the second place."

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

" We are living in a new world : it is ours if we are true to the faith that is in us to seek to make it a better world."

PREFACE BY THE BISHOPS TO THE
REVISED PRAYER BOOK.

" What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it ? "

LUKE xv. 4.

PREFACE

IN following out the main idea of this book—that the Golden Age cannot come through this or that panacea, but by patient and strenuous work in all directions—it has been necessary for me to deal with many things on which I can claim no special knowledge. In these matters I am in the position of a jurymen who, not himself a specialist, has heard the evidence of those who are, and then makes his own deductions. It is also owing to the wide range of subjects that I am compelled to touch upon that, amongst them, there are a few of a comparatively trivial kind; trivial in themselves, but significant as indicating a particular outlook on life, or attitude of mind, better perhaps than some other things to which we usually attach more importance.

And for the same reason it has been necessary for me to deal with the question of personal sincerity. In doing this, it has not been my intention to adopt a censorious attitude. The power of unconscious bias is so great, and so easily leads to self-deception, that the imputation of consciously evil motives would be quite gratuitous. Of course there are cases in which, for unworthy reasons, men have deliberately suppressed or modified their views—both Erasmus and Descartes confessed as much. But we should not be too ready to take upon ourselves to decide whether the bias of other people is conscious or unconscious. It is enough, with honest introspection, to endeavour to decide the matter as to ourselves. If anywhere in the following pages I appear to have departed from this maxim, I

hope that the intention here expressed will be read into the passage.

Then it will be noticed that there is no attempt at an elaborate chain of argument ; and that there is, on the other hand, a constant recurrence of incident and narrative. This is because it has been my desire to keep as closely as possible to men and things. Is not an ounce of fact worth a ton of theory ? In any case, whether this method be, intrinsically, the best suited to the subject or not, I feel confident that it is, for me at least, the only possible way to convey my meaning.

I take this opportunity of thanking Mr. W. G. Ayres, Mr. H. E. Brown, Mr. Montagu C. Butler, Mr. E. Edmonds, the Rev. F. E. England, M.A., B.D., Captain A. J. Gray, M.A., B.Sc., Mr. C. E. Lawrence, the Right. Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., LL.B., my son, Mr. G. Leslie Wates, and the Staff of the British Museum Library for their very valuable assistance.

September 1927.

CONTENTS

PREFACE	PAGE 7
-------------------	-----------

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

CHAPTER I

TRUTH FIRST	15
-----------------------	----

A Golden Age, i.e. an age where the conditions are such as to favour the highest development of the individual and the race, can only come by a combination of good will, good sense and good guidance; and, to be permanent, must be based on Truth. Truth is not static, but developing, and cannot be dogmatically defined. It is the attitude towards life of the open and unbiassed mind, the endeavour to bring our opinions into conformity with things as they are, that will lead us to Truth and to the Golden Age.

CHAPTER II

THE PULL OF THE EGO, THE NEED OF INTROSPECTION, AND THE BANE OF EXCLUSIVISM . . .	26
---	----

Individual and group Egoisms are amongst the greatest obstacles to progress. . . . The petrifying effect of partisanship which obscures truth, and encourages feelings of enmity and contempt. There is great need, therefore, of introspection, of candour with one's self. . . . The bane of Exclusivism (undue exclusiveness) in tribe, nation, class, and religion.

CHAPTER III

CONFUCIUS AND HIS TIMES. THE GOLDEN AGE AND THE GOLDEN MEAN	41
---	----

As the spirit of moderation is one of the greatest aids to progress, this chapter deals with the great teacher who first emphasized the doctrine of the Golden Mean, and who pleaded for reasonableness, sincerity, humility, earnestness, and benevolence.

CHAPTER IV

PAGE

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN A UNIVERSAL RELIGION, A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE, AND UNIVERSAL PEACE	50
---	----

A Golden Age cannot be achieved without a common ethic, a common reasonableness, a common ideal, and a common emotion ; and the above three Universals would tend in this direction, as they all lead to the realization of common interests, and therefore to the elimination of exclusivism, and to the solidarity of mankind.

CHAPTER V

ON BEING SHOCKED	64
----------------------------	----

Moral passion, showing itself in righteous indignation, is a very important factor in progress. To be rightly shocked may keep us off the wrong path, as to be wrongly shocked may keep us off the right path.

CHAPTER VI

PROGRESS AND PROVIDENCE	69
-----------------------------------	----

The difficulty of reconciling past and present world conditions with the doctrine of a Creator who is both benevolent and almighty. Confident assertions as to a Providence, through whom comes inevitable progress, very unconvincing. Better, in any case, to act as though progress depended upon ourselves. . . . The great principle of development, and the spiritual springs of the Universe.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRESENT AGE : INDUSTRIALISM.	86
--	----

Material progress of no avail unless accompanied by moral betterment. This is illustrated by the Industrial Revolution, when the enormous increase in the production of goods, brought about by the application of steam to machinery, resulted in the amassing of great riches by the few at the expense of the misery and degradation of the many. In spite of all efforts to better the conditions

of the people, improvement was very slow—the love of gain being often so much stronger than moral passion—until the extension of the franchise put more power in the hands of the wage-earners. The memory and experience of these things accentuated the bitterness of class feeling and class prejudice, and resulted in struggles for partisan domination—for the benefit of a class rather than for the good of the whole.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRESENT AGE : NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM 108

Democratic internationalism was advocated by Baron von Cloots near the end of the eighteenth century ; but the course of events did not favour the idea. For a time, and for the most part, freedom in Europe was suppressed or “driven underground.” But later the forces of reaction began to weaken, and the idea of Free Nationalism to gain strength. . . . The Greek struggle for freedom, an outstanding example of the cruel, crude, and costly methods of the old diplomacy founded on State Sovereignty, and of the clash of noble aspirations with unworthy egoisms. . . . Re-emergence of Internationalism in the limited form of Class Internationalism, at once a uniting and a dividing force.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRESENT AGE : THE BIBLE AND THE PROGRESS OF SCIENCE 123

A limitless Universe and a limited theology. . . . The efforts of the Broad Church Party to bring the creeds into conformity with science, and the anger of the orthodox who still insisted upon the infallibility of the Bible. The idea of an infallible book creates more difficulties than it solves. . . . The lack of enough candour in many Modernists. Frankness and courage needed in those who would tread the path to the Golden Age.

CHAPTER X

THE COMMON ETHIC. VAUVENARGUES PAGE
142

Religion and ethics should be one and indivisible. Evidence of the Common Ethic in the earliest civilizations and in the lower culture. The Golden Rule and the idea of Universal Brotherhood as old (or older) than recorded history. . . . Vauvenargues, the Saint of Deism : his life and maxims.

CHAPTER XI

SOME ASPECTS OF THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY 149

The progress of thought retarded when a hypothesis becomes an obsession, and when what is limited in scope is given a universal application. . . . Many of the basic ideas of new psychologists are well founded, but they are prone to exaggeration, to sweeping assertion, and sometimes lack caution and common sense in the framing of hypotheses. As modern psychology purports to be very practical and far-reaching, and as it is so widely studied, it is of the utmost importance that these and other pitfalls should be avoided.

CHAPTER XII

INDIVIDUALISM AND SOME OF ITS FRUITS 164

Political economy, like psychology, not an exact science as it has to do with complex and unpredictable human beings. Doctrines of Individualism not universal but local and temporary. . . . The rich man out of focus with humanity as a whole. The contrast between earning and getting. The corroding effect upon character of the pursuit of wealth and luxury. The Golden Mean between Individualism and the spoon-fed brand of Socialism.

CHAPTER XIII

TO-DAY: CURRENTS AND CROSS-CURRENTS 180

The world-changes of the last hundred years have enormously increased human potentiality for good, or for evil. The greater need for clear and unbiassed thought.

CONTENTS

13

PAGE

. . . The present state of religion and the need of wider religious knowledge. The danger of payment for the advocacy of ideas and the temptation to casuistry. . . . Reason does not necessarily reject intuition, inward experience or mysticism ; but it may question the interpretations put upon them. . . . The whirl of modern life. A new trumpet call needed for the New Time.

CHAPTER XIV

TO-MORROW AND AFTER. FORWARD TO THE GOLDEN AGE	199
--	-----

Good government cannot exist without good citizens. This suggests the need of a Religion which should be mainly ethical. The Rallying-points of a Universal Religion. . . . The quest after the good and well-proportioned life is the greatest adventure possible to the human spirit.

BIBLIOGRAPHY	217
INDEX	219