

SHALL WE WEAR TOPHATS?

Now when I say top hats I do not wish to be understood to refer exclusively to that hollow <sup>erection</sup> ~~excessiveness~~ covered by black plush which a large number of highly civilized men delight to balance on their heads. I contemplate also that spiritual tophat which covers not one part but the whole ~~entity~~ individual keeping it safe say its worshippers & alike from the excessive rigours of philosophy & the smothering heats of religious ardour - safe in an equable and <sup>temperate</sup> ~~satisfactory~~ element of <sup>convention</sup> ~~the common place~~

Safe alike say the scoffers from the <sup>the scotch</sup> ~~brags~~ of nature & the sun of sympathy - but <sup>they</sup> generally become postical and must be discounted accordingly.



2/6a

This is preliminary - to indicate that if I  
discuss the actual question of <sup>whether we shall</sup> ~~donning~~ the  
~~material~~ <sup>physical</sup> body hat. it will only be as  
a particular case of the larger question  
answered once dogmatically by Christ  
~~for which I will borrow the words of~~  
~~just before by Christ~~  
~~Mr Christ~~. Is the body more than meat of  
or the soul than raiment?

Society does not hesitate to answer no.  
and sets up the Christian Church as a  
standing protest against so outrageous  
an hypothesis paying its archbishop £15000  
a year <sup>just</sup> to leave no doubt about it.

Let us my brethren putting aside alike the  
Excessive spiritual fervour of Christ if we  
happen to possess it and the ~~too obvious~~  
self-interested & bias of a Christian Society



Endeavour to answer this question <sup>with</sup> all  
~~calmness and~~ impartiality & Apostolic calm.

I find it difficult to say which is greater  
 than the other body or meat. ~~Perhaps~~ Meat  
 is potentially body and to the enlightened  
 Cannibal who has found the true Hegelian  
 synthesis body is also potentially meat.

~~But~~ Let us proceed to the second question which  
 is more proper to our subject. Is the soul  
 more than raiment.

With the exception of Professor Trufelsdröck  
 I know of no ~~one~~ philosopher who has  
 answered this question in the negative - and  
 after all his treatment of the question is  
 so shifty & paradoxical as to leave no  
 certain impression in the mind of his <sup>readers.</sup> ~~followers~~



And this is easy to explain for the mass of mankind take so readily to the doctrine of the superiority of raiment that there is no need for the philosopher to insist on it. And herein lies ~~if we look for it~~ the truth of the doctrine - that so many men care about raiment & so few about the soul. ~~By raiment~~ <sup>then</sup> I mean not that which is necessary for ~~the~~ maintaining an even body-temperature but that which Society imposes on the individual members composing that Society for no other reason than that it has a whim ~~to~~ to do so.

I will illustrate what I ~~mean~~ <sup>call</sup> by raiment by a story. Some travellers were passing down the Nile in a boat. On the bank was a woman washing clothes - naked except for a small apron. Being a Mohammedan ~~she should have had~~ it was terrible to her to have her breasts seen by a man. So she lifted up the shirt to cover it rightly thinking that more needful of covering than any other part. I should like to say a word to the nervous centres of the brain might be so educated that we should flush instinctively at having one hand covered ~~the~~ or the other uncovered.



In a contemplating every thing else is nature  
 we see as Huxley says a system as perfectly  
 suited to our intellectual as it often is to our  
 repulsive to our moral nature. But in contemplating  
~~conventions~~ the customs of society I ~~do~~ cannot  
 find any such intellectual fitness. <sup>to</sup>

Why should a collection of men all <sup>agree</sup> do a  
 number of things that are disagreeable to  
 themselves and ~~not only so~~ force others to  
 do the same with the utmost vigour.

Why does a collection of men behave <sup>as</sup> unlike  
~~any~~ <sup>no</sup> one of them would behave and force  
 each <sup>member</sup> individual from his natural course of  
 action?

Why do they agree together to do some perfectly  
 useless & meaningless thing which each of  
 them hates doing. and all for no conceivable  
 object?

And what is more why when one of them  
 endeavours to rationalize his conduct do they



~~to~~ agree together to persecute him.

These phenomena are so appallingly strange to me that I am constrained <sup>in order</sup> out of my ordinary course of thought <sup>to find any sort of</sup> ~~to account for~~ <sup>solution</sup> them. I cannot help & supposing that there

is some strange demon not good nor bad merely irrational - <sup>castles whimsical</sup> ~~one man of~~ conflicting whims & vagaries. That this strange demon has from the earliest beginnings of human society done what he pleased with men & led them <sup>into</sup> ~~through~~ the wildest ~~stranges~~ vagaries.

Each generation sees how erratic was the course of their ancestors each believes in the solemn stateliness of their own proceedings. A lady will laugh to her hearts content over the crinolines of ~~40~~ <sup>40, 40</sup> years ago but the bustles of to-day



- well they are ~~not~~ not to be mentioned thus  
flippantly or compared in ~~a~~ importance with the  
soul.

Sometimes the demon leads men to do sensible  
things sometimes the reverse - it is all  
one to him he is simply indifferent to reason  
not antagonistic. His ~~one~~ one answer to  
objectors is I wish it.

When the other day I asked an undergraduate  
from <sup>Coll. Oxford</sup> Magdalen, why he did certain things which  
were condemned to be by his ~~for~~ judgement  
and tasks and why he ~~objected~~ hated all  
those who carried out the dictates of judgement  
& tasks in this matter - his magnificent  
reply was because of course one must.  
He threw such energy into this must  
that I was convinced I felt that  
he at least must whatever course  
might be left open to others. So strong  
so unanswerable are the dictates of the



demon. But the demon does not confine himself to questions of dress though there he is preminent. <sup>he has sway</sup> ~~his~~ <sup>has</sup> ~~run~~ <sup>governs</sup> ~~worlds~~ <sup>us</sup> equally in religion, & morals. What is the use of Prometheus & Christ, <sup>Socrates</sup> endeavouring to free men from him: the great illogical is not to be answered by logic?

~~And if I fall then the~~  
Considering all this and how all rebellious ~~are~~ against his power come to nought  
~~for~~ Christ may destroy Pharisaism but Christianity rises to take its place.  
Considering ~~this~~ how this and all rebellious <sup>sometimes</sup> against him come to nought I think we should acquiesce in our fate and worship him as <sup>the</sup> ~~a~~ god <sup>he truly is</sup> ~~indeed~~. And ~~this~~  
~~most~~ then I fall down before the <sup>unmistakeable</sup> ~~potent~~ top hat as his most <sup>in</sup> ~~potent~~ incarnation & address it thus.



O top hat. ineffable and mysterious emblem  
 of the society which <sup>supports thee &</sup> ~~supports thee at~~ for ever  
 looks up to thee. Thou <sup>that</sup> ~~who~~ doest more than  
 all thought can do - ~~thou~~ <sup>thou</sup> that add'st to our  
 stature. Thou who in thy narrow circle canst  
 contain all the empire shaking brain of a  
 Gladstone, ~~all~~ <sup>+</sup> the poetic soul of a Browning.  
 God Almighty indeed hath said to the <sup>unruly</sup> ocean  
 hitherto shalt thou come & no further but thou  
 alone canst prescribe  $\phi$  limits to the ~~un~~ untamable  
~~sea~~ <sup>mind of man</sup> ~~human heart~~. Thou knowest how in time  
 past men <sup>did</sup> ~~would~~ revel luxuriously in flowing  
 turbans rejoicing in the glow of shifting colours  
 & the flash of gems. How in wind swept Florence  
 they did <sup>shelter</sup> ~~protect~~ head and neck alike in the  
~~soft~~ soft embraces of the Beckettto and in  
 innumerable ways didst sin against thy mighty  
 Canon. At all this thou didst wink conscious  
 that at last thou wouldst impose relentlessly  
 on a struggling & rebellious ~~new~~ generation the  
 intolerable weight of thy imperturbable  
 rigidity.



Justly for my sins dost thou ride triumphant over me  
Get Hear I pray thee the prayers of this thy humble  
servant and thine uncomplaining footstool. And if-  
it be possible <sup>frank to me of thy mercy</sup> some remnant of individuality some  
breath of air that I be not suffocated altogether  
beneath ~~by~~ thy weight. Or at least I pray <sup>that</sup> that  
I may have some short resting-space before  
thou descendest altogether upon me & I  
be ~~no~~ no more seen.

So far I have ~~represented~~ maintained an  
attitude nearly of astonished incredulity at  
convention and how far we are to oppose or <sup>uphold</sup> ~~worship~~  
it remains unanswered. I think ~~in the main~~  
In the main we shall oppose it I think.  
Reform is obstructed not by vice but by  
and custom <sup>lies upon us with a weight</sup>  
Convention. <sup>Heavy as foot. & such almost as to</sup> Our aim <sup>must</sup> be not so much  
to replace one convention by another & as  
to replace it by a rational position.  
Doubt is part of this question and how  
to.



I have left hitherto unanswered the question  
 of what our action with regard to convention  
 should be - how far we should resist

the Custom that lies ~~as heavy on~~  
 upon us with a weight

Heavy as food + deep almost as life.

And now I come to the question I can't  
 answer it perhaps that is so much  
 the better as brethren I will have all  
 the more to say.

I think on the whole that we should  
 resist it not by ~~striking~~ <sup>riding</sup> against  
 resisting any particular convention that  
 we object to + replacing it by another  
 but by replacing the conventional by  
 a rational attitude of mind.