

with the sights he had seen, and was depressed with the thought that the siege was no nearer an end than ever. As he trudged along in the mud knee-deep, he happened to look up and noticed the stars shining calmly in the clear sky. Instinctively his weary heart mounted heavenward in sweet thoughts of the 'rest that remaineth for the people of God,' and he began to sing aloud the well-known scriptural verses :

How bright these glorious spirits shine!  
Whence all their white array?  
How came they to the blissful seats  
Of everlasting day?

Lo! these are they from sufferings great,  
Who came to realms of light,  
And in the blood of Christ have washed  
Those robes which shine so bright.

Next day was wet and stormy, and when he went out to see what course to take, he came upon a soldier standing for shelter below the verandah of an old house. The poor fellow was in rags, and all that remained of shoes upon his feet were utterly insufficient to keep his naked toes from the mud. Altogether he looked miserable enough. The kind-hearted missionary spoke words of encouragement to the soldier, and gave him at the same time half a sovereign with which to purchase shoes, suggesting that he might be supplied by those who were burying the dead. The soldier offered his warmest thanks, and then said, 'I am not what I was yesterday. Last night, as I was thinking of our miserable condition, I grew tired of life, and said to myself, Here we are, not a bit nearer taking that place than when we sat down before it. I can bear this no longer, and may as well try and put an end to it. So I took my musket and went down yonder in a desperate state about eleven

o'clock; but as I got round the point, I heard some person singing, "How bright these glorious spirits shine," and I remembered the old tune and the Sabbath School where we used to sing it. I felt ashamed of being so cowardly, and said, Here is some one as badly off as myself, and yet he is not giving in. I felt he had something to make him happy of which I was ignorant, and I began to hope I too might get the same happiness. I returned to my tent, and to-day I am resolved to seek the one thing.' 'Do you know who the singer was?' asked the missionary. 'No,' was the reply. 'Well,' said the other, 'it was I'; on which the tears rushed into the soldier's eyes, and he requested the Scripture-reader to take back the half-sovereign, saying, 'Never, sir, can I take it from you, after what you have been the means of doing for me.'<sup>1</sup>

#### LITERATURE.

- On Tribulation.**—R. C. Trench, *On the Study of Words*, 47; D. Johnston, *Plea for a New English Version of the Scriptures*, 289; T. Arnold, *Christian Life*, 217.
- On the Text.**—W. Bright, *The Law of Faith*, 264; J. Laidlaw, *Studies in the Parables*, 271; A. K. H. Boyd, *Sermons and Stray Papers*, 139; T. T. Carter, *The Spirit of Watchfulness*, 247; G. Matheson, *Searchings in the Silence*, 77; J. Vaughan, *Sermons*, No. 1022; A. Butler, *Sermons*, 2nd ser. 78; *Christian World Pulpit*, viii. 300 (A. Mackennal), lxvii. 387 (A. Whyte), lxxiii. 97 (R. J. Campbell); *Contemporary Pulpit*, 2nd ser. ii. 211 (E. Paxton Hood); *Expository Times*, ix. 3.

<sup>1</sup> J. Macpherson, *Life and Labours of Duncan Matheson*, p. 70.

## Studies in Pauline Vocabulary.

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### 2. Of a Good Degree.

AMONG the ἀπαξ λεγόμενα of the Pastoral Epistles, one of the most interesting is the word βαθμός, which is translated 'degree' by the A.V. (following Wyclif), and 'standing' by R.V. The word is found nowhere else in the N.T. According to the Apostle a noble type of service in the diaconate secures a twofold reward—a stepping-place or vantage ground for further advance, and much boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Of these two resultant achievements we

οὐ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες βαθμὸν ἑαυτοῖς καλὸν περιποιῶνται (1 Ti 3<sup>13</sup>).

may leave the latter for subsequent treatment and turn our attention to the former.

Undoubtedly the rendering 'degree' is a literal translation of the Vulgate *gradus* ('bonum gradum sibi acquirit.'). 'Gradus' is a word which suggests a host of associations—ecclesiastical (e.g. *graduale* or service-book of portions sung *in gradibus* or on the steps of the choir) and scholastic (cp. Low Latin *graduatus*, which gives us our 'graduate'). The 'degree' which marks a distinct stage in a

University career represents the Old French *degre*, *degret*, a 'step' or 'rank' (originally a step-down, as on a staircase). Murray (*Oxford Dictionary*, s.v., *Degree*) quotes Wyclif's quaint saying, 'Degre takun in scole makith goddis word more acceptable, and the puple trowith betere thereto whanne it is seyde of a maistir'; and for the meaning of 'step' he cites an illustration from Hakluyt (vol. i. 69), 'There were certain degrees or staires to ascend vnto it'; and the more familiar words from Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* (II. i. 26), 'He then vnto the Ladder turnes his Backe . . . scorning the base degrees by which he did ascend.'

The Greek *βαθμός* (which according to Phrynichus is an Ionic form for the Attic *βασιμός*) is undoubtedly rendered quite correctly *gradus* in Latin, and 'degree' (=step) in English. It occurs in the LXX more than once, evidently with this meaning, e.g. 1 Sam. 5<sup>5</sup>, of the 'threshold' of the house of Dagon; 2 Kings 20<sup>9</sup>, of the 'ten steps' on the dial of Ahaz; and in Sir. 6<sup>36</sup>, of the 'steps' of the door of the man of understanding ('if thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him and let thy foot wear the *steps* of his door'). This meaning is also well attested by examples in such writers as Strabo, Lucian, Appian, and Artemidorus.

While we speak of a man of good *standing*, the Greeks, to represent the idea, used a word the etymology of which indicates movement and advance rather than rest and stationariness. If a deacon renders good service, his achievement instantly suggests further advance. But what kind of advance? It is certain that nothing can be further from the Apostle's thought than the idea of official promotion, or a rise in ecclesiastical office. That indeed may be the result of approved fitness; but to make it a motive of service is very far from his purpose, and quite alien to his ideal. Dr. Hort, in his *Christian Ecclesia* (p. 202), interprets the term as 'a vantage ground, a "standing" (R.V.), a little, as it were, above the common level, enabling them (the *διάκονοι*) to exercise an influence and moral authority to which their work, as such, could not entitle them.' Undoubtedly faithful service lifts a man above his fellows and puts him in a position for exercising a wider influence: and this is true of the humbler and less conspicuous services of the Church. 'He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.' But while the rise to a position of increased

spiritual influence is assuredly implied by the Apostle's phrase, it is not a throne or seat of honour or eminence of which he speaks: it is a *step*; and a step implies advance, not mere elevation. It would be well, therefore, not to exclude the personal equation from the statement. Noble service secures a new foothold for further progress on the ladder, whereby we ascend to God. Tennyson has spoken of rising 'on stepping-stones of our dead selves,' perhaps here following Augustine's words, which have been so nobly interpreted by Longfellow:

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,  
That of our vices we can frame  
A ladder, if we will but tread  
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!<sup>1</sup>

That is a different side of experience. The Apostle hints that the noble performance of a lowly duty is really an ascent of the *scala perfectionis*. Quite apart from its influence on others, the deed of love is a means of spiritual ascent for ourselves. Every conquest over slothfulness, self-absorption, and 'accidie' is to be regarded not negatively, but positively, as equivalent to the putting on of new strength and courage for the toils of self-sacrifice. The more we discover the inherent divinity of the obscure life when spent on the highest aims, the more fully are we encouraged to go on with it, to give up no noble quest, to surrender no high ideal. Each step in the steep ascent of the spiritual life is won by the patience of love: and each stage is the promise of the next. The Christian does not think so much of 'the world's great altar-stairs' as sloping 'thro' darkness up to God' (*In Memoriam*, lv.); but rather, if he follow the thought of the Apostle, of an ascent into ever-clearer light, ever-deepening vision, of a progress in which abounding love girds him with nobler might and invigorates him with increased strength of purpose.

To the Apostle, therefore, the Christian service is not primarily the securing of a stable influence, the resting with satisfaction on noble achievements, the possession of a throne from which we can quiescently contemplate the flux and cross-currents of human life. Good work done is not a means to rest, but to further progress. 'If,' he

<sup>1</sup> See the poem entitled *The Ladder of St. Augustine*, which the poet bases on the words taken from the Third Sermon *De Ascensione*, 'De vitis nostris scalam nobis facimus, si vitia ipsa calcamus.'

exclaims, 'to live in the flesh,—if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wot not.' The fruit of his work is the prolongation of opportunity. 'To depart and to be with Christ' is only 'far better,' because it will allow his energies to have fuller scope. With all his underlying mysticism, the Apostle was more Greek than Latin in his estimate of the Christian life. It was not so much *rest* within the Infinite that attracted him, as *movement* within the Infinite. The Western and mediæval type of Christian thought was fascinated more by the idea of rest than of progress. Eternity with its serene Beatific vision, unclouded by the battles of Time and its unaccomplished aims—this was the reward which dazzled the eyes of Augustine, Scotus Erigena, Bernard, Aquinas, and Dante. 'To the mediæval thinker there was no great outlook upon time: no essential message of love was borne upon its stream save that very message which it had itself retarded and was still obscuring. The evil in the world must be fought against, but could never be exterminated; it would, in some inconceivable manner, be transfigured to God and to His saints, but would never be annihilated to itself.'<sup>1</sup> But to the Greek type of thought, with which the modern world is more and more proving itself to

<sup>1</sup> Wicksteed, *Religion of Time and Eternity*.

be in sympathy, the problem of evil is not hopeless; nor does the universe bear upon it the marks of irretrievable failure. Our quickened sense of knowledge and of mastery over the forces of nature carries with it the unquenchable vision of progress. Alike in the moral and social sphere, the Christian life, while inwardly a peace with God, is outwardly a war against forces which cannot be finally impregnable. Evil, cruelty, injustice, hatred, vice—against these 'we fight to win.'

Through every grade and rank of Christian service, humble and unnoticed, conspicuous and public, there is to be seen the spirit of an unconquerable energy—unresting and unsatisfied, until the battle is won. There are moods of the soul when we cry:

I do not ask to see  
The distant scene—one step enough for me.

But when the kindly Light has revealed the way and we have taken the 'step' firmly, let us move forward in the strength of what we have already attained, reckoning every advance in wisdom and love so much clear gain for that 'upward' calling wherewith we have been called by Christ, every fresh call to duty and service a 'degree' to be surmounted as the condition of our growth in the knowledge and grace of our Lord.

## In the Study.

### A Study in the Subconsciousness of St. Paul.

DID St. Paul know Jesus in the flesh? Professor Johannes Weiss has no doubt whatever that he did.

The volume by Professor Weiss on *Paul and Jesus* has been translated into English by the Rev. H. J. Chaytor, M.A., Headmaster of Plymouth College. It belongs to Harper's 'Library of Living Thought' (2s. 6d. net each), a series which is making rapid progress. Three volumes have been issued together this month, the other two being *Revelation and Inspiration* by Professor Seeberg, and *Christianity and the New Idealism* by Professor Eucken. We shall probably have to return to Seeberg, certainly to Eucken, the great

philosophical force of the future, from whom we have another volume translated this month, *The Meaning and Value of Life* (A. & C. Black; 3s. 6d. net), both books being turned into English by the same translators, Lucy Judge Gibson and W. R. Boyce Gibson. But for the present let us remain for a little with Weiss.

Professor Weiss has no doubt whatever that St. Paul had seen Jesus in the flesh. And he thinks he knows when he had seen Him. It was during His last visit to Jerusalem. He thinks it probable that he was a witness of Christ's Passion and Crucifixion. For if he was in Jerusalem at the time it is not likely that he would omit that, being so passionately enthusiastic a pupil of the Pharisees.

Then, if St. Paul witnessed the Passion and