

the glory of the presence of the Conqueror of death ; and the unseen world is no longer a dreaded mystery, but the many mansions of the Father's house, to which, as a place prepared by His love for them, He receives all who live in Him, so that where He is and as He is, they too shall be. It is His saving and blessed will that all who are given to Him may be with Him, to behold the glory given Him by the Father (Jn 17<sup>24</sup>). Christian faith can meet the challenge of the mystery of death, the agony of the separation of the loved and loving, and the tragedy of the silence of the departed by an unshaken and unshakable assurance that all who are Christ's live eternally in Him, whether on earth or in heaven.

9. When the world is all sunshine without cloud or storm, when life is a bright and an easy path, when love is undisturbed in its joy, faith may be lightly held and easily won ; but when faith is most needed, when the world is dark and drear, life hard and bitter, and love is smitten by bereavement, then faith often becomes very difficult, appears even impossible. And yet it is then that

faith can prove its worth, by relieving the gloom, lightening the burden, and bringing comfort and companionship in the loneliness. The soul's extremity has often been faith's opportunity.

Men have fallen back on God and immortality when no other refuge remained to the soul. To believe that this seemingly unintelligible world has a meaning, and that that meaning is love, the divine Fatherhood in all, through all, and over all ; to believe that through the shadows of death gleams the glory of the eternal life in God, is a possession worth gaining, even if hard to win. Man cannot achieve this victory of faith for himself in the darkness and despair of his soul. But then Christ meets him with the victory which He achieved over the world, sin, sorrow, and death, through His faith in the invisible and the future, God the Father, and the eternal life in God ; and, inspired by His faith, man, too, can exercise faith, and become a sharer of His victory, even more than a conqueror through Him that loved him with a love which endured the uttermost of sacrifice to save to the uttermost.

## In the Study.

### Books for the Pulpit.

PROFESSOR JAMES STALKER has done a thing which, to our certain knowledge, several men have had the hope of doing, and he has done it admirably. He has shown how Psychology may be used with effect in the pulpit. It was his deliberate purpose to show this. He wished to provide 'a welcome change to hearers rather tired of the rope thrown to a drowning man or the rescue by a fireman from a burning house.' In Kirkcaldy, he tells us, and in Glasgow he taught psychology in its religious aspects to a Bible class, 'and no other subject I ever tried either drew so large a class or kept it so well together to the end of the session.' Pursuing the subject, he delivered lectures at Richmond and Auburn Seminaries in the United States of America. These lectures are now republished in the volume entitled *Christian Psychology* (Hodder & Stoughton ; 5s.).

Dr. Stalker's success will encourage other men. We believe that in this direction it is possible to

move with excellent results ; but it is a course dotted with pitfalls, and only the most wary and best equipped will avoid them. Dr. Stalker is both well equipped and wary. He has left much psychology alone ; he has used as much as could be relied upon and made intelligible. His success in turning to new uses old and discarded weapons of interest, such as dreams, habits, the heart, the memory, is his reward.

Dr. Paterson-Smyth has published a volume of sermons containing 'some lessons of the present crisis.' The title is *God and the War* (Hodder & Stoughton ; 2s. 6d. net). Four of them form a series ; and in them he has the Christian courage to deal with the life beyond in direct reference to the men who have died in battle. His courage is the greater because he holds that 'in a very real sense this life may be the sole probation time for man.'

*War and Christianity* is one of the volumes of sermons which the present time has brought into

being (Jarrold; 6d. net). It is a small volume in paper covers, but it contains sane sermons by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Knaresborough, and seven other Churchmen.

*The Reproach of War* (Scott; 1s. 6d. net) is the title of yet another volume of sermons on the present strife. It is a remarkable book. On every page the reality of war is brought home to us. Yet that reality, awful as it is, never merely disgusts us. No sermon is preached without the thought of sacrifice in its purifying power being made as real as is the hour of carnage. Canon F. B. Macnutt has *felt*; and the feeling has made the Cross more to him and sent him to make it more than ever it has been to us.

The 'Remembers' of the Book of Deuteronomy caught the attention of Professor Denney a good many years ago, and he wrote a memorable sermon on them. They have now caught the attention of the Rev. J. A. Hutton, M.A., and he has written five sermons on them. He has published the five sermons in a beautiful book called *The Way of Remembrance* (James Clarke & Co.; 1s. net).

Under the title of *In a Preacher's Study* (Hodder & Stoughton; 3s. 6d.), Professor George Jackson, B.A., has published a gathering of essays on living topics, all remarkable for the frankness of speech and forward view of their accomplished author. There are not a few who watch for Mr. Jackson's writing as they watch for the morning, and to them the book will be almost all familiar. But they, beyond all others, will hasten to buy it. For while Mr. Jackson deals always with the things of the passing hour, his work never passes with the hour. Even on so well-worn a topic as 'The Problem of Demoniacal Possession in the Gospels,' he writes an essay which will continue to be referred to by expositors for a long time.

*A Theologian's Workshop, Tools and Methods.*—Under that title the Rev. Joseph Agar Beet, D.D., issues the last volume, as he says, 'of a programme formed fifty years ago' (Hodder & Stoughton; 2s. 6d. net). What that programme was he tells us in a most interesting preface to this volume. He had become a believer in exegesis and exposition; he resolved to give his life to show what accurate exegesis and believing exposition

could do for the New Testament, and to that determination he has been faithful as to a trust committed to him. The present volume is an excellent example of his work. It will be one of the most popular of his books, for it has scholarship as much as any of them, and it has more variety and lightness of touch.

In *The Book of Answered Prayer* (Hodder & Stoughton; 3s. 6d.) the Rev. John T. Faris, D.D., has told some stories to show that God is the hearer and answerer of prayer. The answers are all immediate and arresting. Of course other explanations are possible. Other explanations are possible of everything that happens. The events here recorded are to Dr. Faris most easily and most naturally explained as direct supernatural answers to prayer. Why did he not give his authorities more fully? He condenses, for example, Dr. Hudson Taylor's well-known account of the springing up of the wind as he was journeying in China, and does not improve it. The exact quotation from Dr. Hudson Taylor's book with exact reference to it would have been better. The persuasiveness of such narratives as these often depends upon our belief in the narrator.

The Bishop of Edinburgh has published a volume of sermons for the comforting of those whom the war has made desolate. He calls it *The Gospel of Hope* (Scott; 2s. net). The chief comfort that he offers is to encourage mourners to believe that they may hold intercourse with their dead. He does not mean by spiritualism; he means by thought. He says that the presence of the departed may be realized by simply but deliberately thinking of them. There is another way—by praying for them. In the last sermon Dr. Walpole encourages prayer for the dead and gives examples of prayer to be used.

The day of the 'Lecture' is coming again. But it will depend upon the lectures. If preachers can preach 'lectures' like those which the Rev. H. Maynard Smith has published in his volume on *The Epistle of S. James* (Blackwell; 6s. net), the 'Lecture' will be found as interesting as it is instructive. For instruction there is no comparison between it and the ordinary sermon on a haphazard text. To go through a book of the Bible, almost any book, systematically, is instructive enough to

make character, if only the interest is retained. Mr. Maynard Smith retains it by being himself always interested, always in touch with the latest scholarship, and always sincere. There is no attempt at originality and no desire for it. St. James himself is original enough. It is our business to make him speak to our own generation.

*Heroic Leaders* (Partridge; 2s. net) is the title which the Rev. Dinsdale T. Young has given to a volume of addresses delivered to young men and women on some of the 'Great Saints of British Christianity.' The saints are Ken, Goodwin, Leighton, Philip and Matthew Henry, Baxter, Newton, Simeon, Keble, and Chalmers. It is a mine not worked at all as it ought to be. We do well to lecture on the Saints of the Old and New Testaments. We should do well to turn sometimes to the saints of Christian history, and especially of our own Christian history. Mr. Young gives us courage as well as example.

The Rev. Charles Jerdan, B.A., D.D., has just published his sixth volume of sermons to children, and every volume of the six is a large volume. This one contains sixty-one addresses, all of good full measure. No doubt Dr. Jerdan has the way of it. Other preachers admit his excellence and buy his books. But we hope they are given as gifts to the little ones. They are as interesting (for they are filled with well-told anecdotes) as any story of impossible adventure, and very much more wholesome. The title of this volume is *Seed-Corn and Bread* (Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; 3s. 6d. net).

The Rev. John Keddie Graham, M.A., can speak to young men. A strikingly original volume of addresses, evidently delivered to audiences of growing manhood, has been published by him with the title of *Anno Domini* (Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; 2s. 6d. net). The topic of the first address is January. It is called 'The Month of Opportunity.' The text is, 'Behold, I have set before thee an open door' (Rev 3<sup>8</sup>). forcible, memorable, uplifting things are said about the opportunities of life, all with a sense of variety and individuality. February is the Month of Purification. And so on. Some of the months are grouped, so that there are just seven addresses in all.

The Rev. David Jenks, Director of the Society of the Sacred Mission, has, under the title of *In the Face of Jesus Christ*, published a course of Meditations for the Christian Year (Longmans; 6s. net). The pages of the book have passed through the crucible of experience. Ten years ago Mr. Jenks began the practice of supplying week by week the outline of a meditation for the use of students in the House of the Sacred Mission. The slips used for that purpose are now collected and issued in this volume. There is a page and a meditation for every day of the Christian year. The text is chosen, the picture is suggested, the resolve is made, and then the words are meditated upon under three 'heads.' Take the Friday after Ash-Wednesday. The text is 'Mortify therefore' (Col 3<sup>5</sup>). The Picture is 'a non-Christian oriental ascetic.' The Resolve is 'a mortification of the will this Lent.' The three heads are: (1) 'Mortification'; (2) 'Christian Mortification'; and (3) 'Mortify therefore.' Each 'head' is subdivided into three parts. Of the last 'head' this is the last part: 'The *therefore* contains the Christian attitude towards this problem and reveals a mortification which is the way of peace and joy by the setting free from the slavery of self for the fellowship of Christ. It speaks of a will strengthened by him, and of a present reward of his life growing within. The Christian does not live for the future; he realizes a present.'

## Virginibus Puerisque.

### I.

#### An Old Valentine.

'Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.'—Mk 13<sup>31</sup>.

Long ago, boys and girls, and sometimes even grown-up people, used to count the fourteenth day of February as a special day in the year. They looked for the postman in the morning, because they expected their best friends to send them valentines.

Your impression of a valentine may be but that of a cheap, vulgar picture. But some of us have a faint recollection of the time when a valentine, instead of being vulgar, often conveyed a beautiful message. The custom of sending valentines is a very old one. It began in superstition, as early as the fifteenth century. A company of people gathered

together on the fourteenth of February, the day on which the birds were supposed to find their mates, and the names of a select number of one sex were, by an equal number of the other, put into some vessel; after that every one drew a name, which for the time being they called their valentine; and they looked upon the drawing of that name as an omen that one day they would love each other. Later, valentines became a medium simply to convey thoughts of love; and it is about a valentine of this kind that I want to speak.

I found it at the breaking up of a family house: it lay at the bottom of an old workbox. Though faded with age, it must have one day been a dainty thing. Round the edge, the paper was embossed, so that it looked like fine lace. I cannot say that the picture adorning it attracted me much; but the words, written in very delicate and old-fashioned penmanship, did:

This little tribute which I send,  
I hope you will receive;  
And keep it for the sake of one  
Who never will deceive.

They seemed to bring a resurrection of lives that had been lived long ago. The little valentine itself was apparently a treasure. One person had loved another very much; perhaps they had loved each other. They had at least been friends.

Had their friendship gone for nothing? In Asia Minor, hundreds of years before Jesus Christ was born, there was a poet called Heraclitus. In our English literature there are some beautiful verses, supposed to be a friend's farewell to his friend—this same poet Heraclitus.

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,  
They brought me bitter news to hear, and bitter tears to shed.

I wept as I remembered how often you and I  
Had tired the sun with talking, and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,  
A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,  
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;  
For Death he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

Death 'taketh all away.' Even your boy and girl friends who love you sometimes die; but Death cannot take memory away, he cannot take love.

'A friend who never will deceive.' Unfortunately there are people in this world who go by the

name of 'friend,' and who do 'deceive.' You have met them already, I know, and after being in their company, you went home with all the evil that was in your heart stirred up. You were ready to hate; you were ready to quarrel. To have made friends with a deceiver is a cruel experience, I know.

But, my boys and girls, Jesus knew what true love meant; He knew about the keeping of promises; He knew about you and me; and He left us this wonderful promise: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' When He spoke them, I believe His audience would scarcely grasp their meaning. They were just obscure, commonplace men. Jesus Himself was known as a working man. He was not learned in the ordinary sense of the term. Yet He said, 'My words shall not pass.' Think what that means, my boys and girls. The hills that we call 'everlasting' shall pass away, and our friends die, but the things that Jesus has said about Life and Death shall remain for ever and ever. There were great philosophers lived before He came to earth. They had the best education that Greece and Rome could give; but where is their influence now? As a power to make people live better lives, it is gone.

The story of the religion of Jesus Christ reads like the story of a wonderful miracle. His words have helped the very best people in the world for nineteen hundred years. And they were written for you. You have them in your Testament. They are about things that abide for ever; they are about Love and Eternal Life. Let each boy and girl think of the New Testament as being the gift of some one who loves them, and who has said that His is a love that will never change. As I repeat this old, old truth once again—in all reverence I quote the words of the faded valentine:

This little tribute which I send,  
I hope you will receive,  
And keep it for the sake of One  
Who never will deceive.

## II.

### The Sting of being Deceived.

BY THE REV. FRANK COX.

If it is difficult to preach to children, it is more difficult to preach to young men and women. There are not many things that young men and women

dislike more than preaching. For there is a time, the time when men and women are young, when preaching is always interpreted as preaching at. But so it must be. What is the use of preaching that is not preaching at? What is the use of preaching that irritates no one's conscience? And whenever our conscience is irritated, we think the preacher is preaching at us. Then there is another difficulty. The young man or young woman is predominantly intellectual, and rejects preaching that remembers the emotions. But purely intellectual preaching is 'barren as a vestal virgin,' to use Bacon's simile. How are these difficulties to be overcome? The Rev. Frank Cox has endeavoured to overcome them in his volume of addresses to young men and women called *In Life's Golden Time* (Kelly; 3s. 6d. net). Has he overcome them? You may judge by this fair example of his addresses.

Few things in life are more painful than the sting of being deceived. Young people who find themselves victims of falsehood and hypocrisy are often greatly discouraged.

It is as natural for youth to believe in human nature as it is to rejoice in the wonders of Creation. There is in every life, at the beginning, an openness and candour, a guileless simplicity and unsuspecting trust, which responds with admiration and affection wherever there is a strong appeal. This is one of the most delightful features and precious possessions of early life. It was greatly appreciated by our Lord, and should be regarded as unspeakably sacred by all those who call it forth. Those who trifle with it, who blight its beauty with the breath of falsehood, and quench its joy with heartless hypocrisy, are guilty of a sin for which Christ Himself has pronounced the judgment: 'It is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.' There is no more dastardly or inexcusable sin than ruthlessly to betray the trust of a little child, to abuse the confidence of youth, or to trifle with the affections of early manhood and womanhood. 'Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh!'

Yet, alas! in many lives, before any great age is reached, this youthful simplicity is rudely shaken, if not destroyed. It does not always happen in the

same way, nor is it equally serious in every case. For some this 'sting' is like the deadly fang of the viper and the cobra, moral death following swiftly in its track. With others it more nearly resembles a few hours' pain from the sting of a wasp, or even the lesser discomfort from the bite of a gnat, while some natures seem to be almost immune from such irritations. Nevertheless, whether the suffering be much or little, the sting is never pleasant, and in many cases the after-effects are very serious.

Unfortunate results frequently follow when young people are deceived in some prominent church officer, or leader in Christian work. In the church they attended as children there was one to whom all others looked up, who was foremost in all the church's activity, who gave generously to all the church's funds, and could pray with wonderful feeling and power. Young people delighted in his honeyed words and winning smile, and for all his goodness gave him freely of their admiration and love. Then one day, like a peal of thunder out of a peaceful summer sky, came the report that this man was missing. Soon it was discovered he had been misappropriating other people's money, and cunningly misleading those who trusted him, until he was exposed as an unscrupulous liar and rogue. The human idol was shattered before the bewildered eyes of those who had paid him homage, while the effect on their faith and moral purpose was disastrous. They were utterly discouraged in the best aims of life, and, giving themselves up to cynicism and flippancy, were soon indulging in the cheap sneer of the world, 'If that is Christianity, we want none of it!'

Others first taste the bitterness of deception through the falsity of some one who has been trusted as a personal friend. The beginning of the friendship was very remarkable; it had all the appearance of God's ordering, and for a time was a great joy. Apparently every interest and hope of life was shared, to mutual advantage. Then one day the deceiver said he was in trouble; said it in such a confiding way that the other readily promised all possible help. Or, it may be, he came with the air of one who has made a great discovery, and, as a proof of his high appreciation of the friendship, offered to let the other into his secret. Then came the proposal for a joint venture and a sharing of profits. The story told was so plausible that he soon gained all he wished. What followed is a sorry tale. The venture failed, the money was

lost, and even the good name of the other was besmirched. For the deceiver, not content with lying and thieving, did not hesitate to shield himself under the public disgrace of his victim. Such deception is most discouraging.

And what shall I say of that deception which is painful beyond all others, when holy love is blighted by a false lover? There are friends *and* friends. Some remain on the outskirts of life, delightful companions with whom we work and play; but they never cross love's threshold to dwell in the home of the heart. When love comes knocking at the door, and is admitted, then friendship passes into something far more sacred and sublime. Should that chosen one, who came in the name and guise of love, who was admitted to the heart's most sacred places and received its choicest gifts, turn out to be a traitor bent only on theft, or a mere adventurer who did not care what ruin he wrought, then the sting of being deceived becomes an agony for which there are no words. Such suffering may drive the soul back upon God and work out some larger good, or it may pass into sullenness and end in despair; but the marks of such grief are seldom lost, and life must be for ever changed by such an experience.

These are some of the ways in which young people know the sting of being deceived, and such experiences have done more to turn them from the Church and to shake their faith in Christianity than all the higher critics of the Bible on the one hand, or anti-Christian books on the other. At such hours it is not iron which enters the blood, but poison. The strong revulsion of feeling has driven many a young man to 'angrily blow out his light.'

The one sure way of finding comfort and strength in such an hour is to turn once more to the teaching and companionship of Christ. When this is done one or two exceedingly helpful things are at once apparent.

In the first place, it means much to any discouraged one to find that Christ Himself shared this experience. He knows all about it, not only because He is 'God all-knowing,' but because in the days of His flesh He, too, was deceived. He suffered much through the weakness and falsity of human nature. His brethren in His own family, who through many years saw all the 'sweetness and light' of His radiant character, did not believe in Him. The religious leaders of the day, who

ought to have been his best helpers, turned out His worst opponents. Of His specially chosen disciples one denied Him with oaths and curses, another sold Him for silver, while all of them misunderstood Him through the mouths of their following and forsook Him in the end. Listen to His cry of pain as He saw what was in the heart of Judas even in the upper room: 'When Jesus had said this he was troubled in spirit, and testified, saying, Verily, verily, I say unto you, one of you shall betray me!' A careful study of those words reveals the fact that the treachery of Judas pained our Lord more than anything else during His earthly life. Yes, He knew it all; the shock of disappointment, the sense of loneliness and desolation, the wound that bleeds in secret—these all came to Him as they come to us, and we are assured of perfect sympathy when we tell Him of this 'sting' and its discouragement.

But sympathy alone is not enough. We need guidance and strength. We cannot stand still, and everything depends on taking the right step. Something must be done, and the right thing may prove exceedingly difficult. We need the inspiration of some great example and the help of one who is strong. It is in these respects that Christ in His greatness and sufficiency meets all our needs. To company with Him is to hear, at every point, a wonderful gospel of forgiveness. He declares we must not cherish resentment, however basely we have been betrayed; that we must forgive others, even as we hope to be forgiven by God. 'After this manner pray ye. . . . Our Father . . . forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.' 'How often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.' 'Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldst not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?' 'But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High, for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.' What a gospel for a world where there is so much deception and wrong! If any should say it is impossible, let him note how consistently the Master lived it out. He never cut Himself off from those who wronged Him, never allowed His disposition to become morose and

uncharitable, never gave way to sullenness, never cherished revenge, never became unapproachable and hard. Through it all He remained tender and gracious, still believed in man, still offered His love, and those who turned to Him again found a ready and full forgiveness. So did He translate His own gospel into 'loveliness of perfect deeds,' and at the last laid down His life for those who had mocked His kindness with cruelty and returned His love with hate.

These are the things we need to remember when we are smarting under 'the sting of being deceived.' To keep our thoughts brooding on our own injury will only deepen depression and render us more impotent. To turn our thoughts Christward, listening to His great words of love, watching His perfect example, getting close to His heart in which malice never found a home—that is to be quieted, and healed, and made strong again.

In George Eliot's great book, *Romola*, there is a scene in which Romola, overcome with sorrow and despair, has fled from her home and Florence. The man she had married proved utterly unworthy of her love; every hope had been dashed, and she could endure no more. Outside the city gates she met Savonarola, who recognized her, and spoke with the tender faithfulness and irresistible authority of a noble nature. As the trembling woman listened, her bitterness abated, her purpose changed, and her heart was braced for new effort. 'While Savonarola spoke, Romola felt herself surrounded and possessed by the glow of his passionate faith. The chill doubts all melted away; she was subdued by the sense of something unspeakably great to which she was being called by a strong being who roused in her a new strength.' Yielding to that gracious influence, she retraced her steps to face the old problems with new courage and hope. With infinitely greater tenderness, with more radiant purity, with mightier authority and uplifting power, does Christ meet us in the hours when we have been deceived and would fain run away from it all. Just to be near Him, to feel the touch of His hand, to listen as He tells us the way we should take, to set our weary feet in His footprints, to open our hearts to His infinite love, is to be calmed, to be restored, to be made noble enough to forgive and strong enough to start again.

From this healing and cleansing of the heart two things at least would follow which mean very much in the days of youth. There would be a

new delight in public worship, in family prayer, and in private devotion. No one can find real gladness or liberty in these if unkind feelings are cherished towards others. I have heard young people give this as the reason why they found the services of the sanctuary tedious, or why they kept away altogether. 'How can I worship when I feel like this? How can I go to that church when the person who wronged me sits not far away? How can I pretend to read my Bible and pray while all the time I am full of bitter resentment?' Such questions are perfectly reasonable, for no one can worship with profit, in public or in private, while the heart is full of malice and the mind is planning revenge. When R. L. Stevenson lived in Samoa he had family prayers in his house, which was open for the natives also, who usually attended in considerable numbers. One night the chief, who had come in for the little service, suddenly left the room. A friend, fearing illness, went after him and asked what it was. 'It is this,' was the reply; 'I am not yet fit to say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."' He had just heard of the treacherous conduct of one in whom he had every reason to trust, and while his heart was full of resentment he could not praise or pray. To those who forgive, who put away all bitterness and wrath, who keep the heart open to love as they pray for more love, God's house will become a new place, the Bible a new Book, and worship a new joy.

More important still, if this course is taken the one who did the wrong may be greatly helped. It is easy to denounce such a person as heartless and cruel; but it may be there is something else to be said. Though he may not show any sign of repentance nor offer any apology, he may have hours of depression and grief because of what he has done. Or perhaps he is in danger of becoming reckless, feeling that it does not matter now. Since those who were once his friends have denounced him as a contemptible cad or a cruel fiend, why should he care about what happens? There may be times when he would give anything to know you had forgiven, or when your forgiveness, if made plain to him, would save him from further and reckless sin. Your forgiving love may start him on the upward way, while your continued bitterness and manifested contempt may have the very opposite effect. Peter denied his Lord with oaths and curses, but no sooner had he done it

than he would have torn his tongue out for the awful words he had spoken. What would his Master think of him? If only he could get near Him and ask His pardon! But, look, He is being taken away! They will crucify Him, and Peter's opportunity will be gone for ever! Oh, if he could but let Him know how grieved he was for that base denial! Already they had led Him away, and Peter could only rush out into the night and weep the bitter tears of a broken-hearted man. Yet before he went 'the Lord turned and looked on Peter.' That look was a token of love which Peter would cherish for ever. But it could not end there. The Master would never leave a contrite disciple in doubt as to his being forgiven and restored. So on the morning of the resurrection Peter is specially mentioned, and later in the day there was a private interview between the forgiving Lord and the forgiven denier! How like the Lord to do that! May it not be that some of us should go and do likewise? If not by personal interview, then by kindly letter or unmistakable act, we should let the forgiven one know that the matter is ended for ever. It might, and in all probability would, lift an intolerable load from that heart, and be the beginning of better days for that life.

Do you say you cannot? Ah! wait a moment. Have you really asked for and accepted *His* forgiveness of *you*? It is the joy of His forgiveness of all our base denial of Him that makes it easy to forgive others. When our hearts are filled with His peace, we cannot keep back from anything that would bring another into the same blessed experience. For His sake we can do what of ourselves we should think preposterous.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew!  
That I may love what Thou dost love,  
And do what Thou wouldst do!

### III.

#### The Unsung Magnificat.

BY THE REV. HERBERT S. SEEKINGS, HARROGATE.

'Making melody *with your heart* to the Lord.'—Eph 5<sup>19</sup>.

I suppose most young people know the chant called *Magnificat*. It is one of that group of hymns which St. Luke has collected for us in the opening chapters of his Gospel. They are all about the birth of Jesus, and this one was sung by

His mother, the Virgin Mary. It is a Bible hymn, and we often sing it during evening service in the church. Now it is about this hymn that I want to tell you this story:—

Once in an ancient monastery in the Fen country the monks met together, contrary to their usual custom, after evening worship, and a shadow rested upon the face of each. It was a shadow which came from within and told of trouble. For a while no one spoke. It seemed to them that silence was most fitting.

At last Ambrose, the oldest and most honoured of them all, began to speak. 'Brothers!' he said, 'it hath been ordained of God that praise should be rendered Him in the church. But the damp air of the Fens has taken the music from our voices and we cannot sing. Did you not notice the grief of the Abbot this very night when we tried to sing the chant which the Holy Mother gave to the Church of her Blessed Son? The music is in our hearts, but it is like a bird with broken wings; it cannot soar. I will not distress you with my words, for you all feel even as I do. Let us away to the Abbot and tell him our sorrow!' To this the brothers assented, and soon Ambrose was pouring their lament into his ears.

'My sons!' said the Abbot, when Ambrose had finished, 'you have done well in coming thus to me. There is but one remedy. We must persuade someone to join our Order to whom God has given the gift of song. Some time ago I spent a night in the monastery among the hills, and there I heard the singing of Brother Thomas. Could he but be transferred to us, or could he come but for one night to sing the *Magnificat*, all might be well. I will put the case to his Superior.'

So it was arranged that on Christmas eve Brother Thomas should come to sing the hymn of the Virgin Mother. And when the night came when the bells voice the message of goodwill to men, the young monk rose and sang the beautiful words as they had never been sung before within those walls. There was no envy in the hearts of the other monks, for they were all good men whose great desire in worship was to please God. Each went contentedly to his cell with a great joy in his heart. The *Magnificat* had been sung that night as it should be sung!

Now it happened that night that a wonderful thing occurred in that old monastery. The Abbot beheld a vision. The Cross at the foot of his



couch became dazzlingly bright, and through the brightness an angel's face appeared. Presently the angel spoke.

'Brother,' he said, 'the God we both adore  
Hath sent me down to ask, Is not all right?  
Why was *Magnificat* not sung to-night?'

Not sung! Why, it had been sung splendidly! And the Abbot told the story of the monks who could not sing, and also of the coming of Brother Thomas. Then the angel said that every night the singing of the harsh-voiced monks had been heard in heaven, but that on this night no song had been heard. And he told the reason why it had not been heard. The young monk did not sing to praise God and to please Him. He sang to please others and to get praise for himself. And so when he sang he sang, and that was all. He did not worship. And because he did not worship his song never got higher than the roof. It was not heard in heaven.

Then the angel said a really beautiful thing, and for the sake of this I have told you the story. It is a thing I want you to remember every time you sing any hymn in the church. Said he:

'From purest hearts most perfect music comes.'

Do you understand what he meant? He meant that singing in worship is not simply a matter of the voice. It is a matter of the heart. How happy ever after that were those rough-voiced monks in the old Fen monastery. Their hearts were pure, and God heard the music of their hearts. But if the heart is vain, Heaven never hears the melody. So says the legend of THE UNSUNG MAGNIFICAT.

#### IV.

##### The Reporting Angel.

BY THE REV. A. C. HILL.

Mr. A. C. Hill gets round the difficulties of preaching to young men and women by writing essays for them. He is wise. It is one of the peculiarities of young men and sometimes of young women that they will go out of their way to read a sermon in the form of an essay. Of course the essay is not necessarily religious. But Mr. Hill is well aware that a merely moral essay is as fruitless and as feckless as a merely moral discourse. So he insinuates his religion effectively. Take an

example. Take the shortest in his book entitled *The Sword of the Lord* (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s.).

When John Lamb knocked Hazlitt down for some offensive remark, the essayist, as he ruefully dusted his coat, could say that he did not mind a blow. Being a metaphysician, only an idea could hurt him. It is a fortunate constitution and the possessor of it might count himself happy, though there have been metaphysicians who failed to reach that grade of intellectual absorption. But it shows that there are persons who can be acutely pained even by such an impalpable thing as an idea. To Caliban, cringing and spitting alternately in the presence of his master, it may seem absurd that a creature capable of eating and drinking should be distressed about the truth or falsehood of a thought, and the Calibans of the world are not few in number. But there have been many men to whom Pilate's question gave the keenest pleasure and the sharpest pain they ever knew, and they are certainly amongst the saving forces of the world.

Can we trust the reason of man? Is there anything substantial and real corresponding to our mental judgments, or have men always been cheated by appearances, clutching at golden apples only to find them turn to dust in their grasp? One answer to this is at least pertinent. On the belief in the trustworthiness of the human faculties men have built the fabric of organized knowledge. The assumptions on which that mass of information has been reared may be questioned; there is a scepticism which goes below all recorded facts and sees even the Babel tower of science as no more than a winter palace doomed to melt beneath the sun, but indisputably many of the results have been good. The ideas have proved themselves workable in actual life, and man has found that by trusting to his faculties, experimenting under their direction, he has been able to create a world which ministers ever more effectively to his necessities.

The value of this world, created, or rather brought out of darkness, by the ingenuity of man, is pretty well appreciated. Swift could declare that the only persons he knew who were glad of the end of the world were a man going to be hanged and another who was to be cut for the stone, and there is an immense consensus of opinion that the net result of human ingenuity and

industry is worth while, that life offers to most men something of value.

And in that world of moral truth which is the peculiar home of man, the judgments of the deciding agency have also been substantiated by the facts of life. The peoples who have lived in accord with the higher impulses of their nature have held for the longest period the rulership of the world. To that extent we discover a conformity between moral perceptions and universal reality. Nations that have cultivated manly virtues, that have recognized the need for restraint, that have made discipline throughout the whole of life an integral part of their system, have generally been amongst the controlling forces of earth. And those nations which have allowed themselves to enjoy without continued effort, have usually been swept down by a flood of advancing manhood, trained in a school of noble virtue. It is a doubtful proposition that the rule of life is not, on the whole, favourable to the culture of the moral instincts.

In morals we deal with probable truth, since here it is not granted to us to handle absolute certitudes. Warburton has said that mathematics are bad if taken as the guide to life because they deal with certainties, whereas in the world a man must deal with probabilities. It is a true word. The careful calculations somehow do not work out the expected result. The prospectus proves deceptive, not because there is any intention to cheat, but because those who handle the affair

persist in taking figures as an index to the real state of the world in which they work, forgetting that their knowledge of nature and man is limited, and that certitude cannot therefore be guaranteed.

Moral truth is never mediated to us in this rigid form. Indeed, we are not adapted to receive it, but are so constituted that in any given case we must be prepared to accept just that which we think to be, on the whole, the more likely thing to happen. We cannot find an argument that is irrefragable. There is no surety that we may not after all be mistaken, and the best that we can do is to make an accurate conspectus of the situation, see that we leave out nothing of importance, and then come to such a decision as we can. We are obliged to do this in dealing with the world, or with anything that concerns other men, and we ought not to expect a different rule in the realm of morals. There also we must take some risks, use our faculties as well as we can, and determine on one side or the other with the implements at our disposal.

Faliero's portrait was once painted on the wall of the Consistory Chamber in Venice. That space is now vacant, offering only a dull surface to the observer; fit type of the doom that waits on those for whom in this world there is no relation between truth and life. Once determine that no link exists between our conscience and the universe, and where once a mild eye might gaze through the patined floor of heaven, there is nothing seen but a darkness that chills the soul with fear.

---

## The New Edition of Davidson's 'Hebrew Grammar.'

BY THE REV. J. A. SELBIE, D.D., PROFESSOR OF HEBREW IN THE UNITED FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, ABERDEEN.

FOR many years the *Introductory Hebrew Grammar* of the late Professor A. B. Davidson of the New College, Edinburgh, has been the recognized textbook for students not only in the Colleges of the United Free Church of Scotland but in many other

institutions. The fact that it has held the field so long and has passed through no fewer than eighteen editions is sufficient evidence of its excellence for the purpose for which its author intended it. Yet it must be confessed that the use of the book has not been unattended with difficulties. In the hands of a capable tutor it left little to be desired, but the student who with no other aid than that supplied by the *Grammar* sought to gain an acquaintance with the laws and principles of the Hebrew language was by no means always sure of

<sup>1</sup> *An Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, by the late Professor A. B. Davidson, Litt.D., LL.D., Edinburgh. Nineteenth Edition, revised throughout by John Edgar McFadyen, B.A. (Oxon.), D.D., Professor of O.T. Language, Literature, and Theology in U.F. College, Glasgow. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914. Price 7s. 6d.