

Reuben (6⁸) it is actually applied to Hyrcanus, the Maccabean priest-king, but in the Testament of Levi (18) functions which are messianic in almost everything but name are ascribed to a new priest, with more spiritual insight than even in the hundred and tenth psalm itself. The curious thing is, however, that this priest discharges no sacerdotal functions. The hymn describes his consecration, but contents itself with declaring that sin shall end in his days and that he shall

open the gates of Paradise to men. Probably this incidental and occasional fusion of messianic and sacerdotal functions was due to the passing phase of expectation that a messiah would arise from the sacerdotal Maccabees. In any case, it was not widespread. But this third source deserves special attention, since Hebrews goes back to the hundred and tenth psalm for one of its leading proofs of the sacrificial power of Christ—as we shall see.

In the Study.

Orpah.

A STUDY IN INTERNATIONALISM.

'And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god.'—Ruth 1^{14, 15}.

OVER and above the charm which belongs to the beauty, simplicity, directness, and symmetry of the story of the Book of Ruth, its interest for us lies in the fact that it sets before us the purpose of God, and His own providential working for the fulfilment of that purpose, in such a way as to bring home to us how He is still moving wonderfully for the carrying out of that same purpose in our lives. We see also how side by side with this revelation comes the further revelation that, for its due fulfilment, God asks and waits for human co-operation, and this not only in the actual response which each human will must make to the call of God, but also in the surrender of each human life to further the purpose of God in other lives.

The providence of God, working out His will and purpose, is no blind necessity. He makes an offer to our will, but that will He has made free—free to accept or to reject His offer—and He will never destroy or withdraw the freedom which He has given.

Of one thing we may be certain: the ultimate result of this great gift of freedom must be for good, else God would not have given it; and of this we have a pledge, in that we can see at once that only in this way can we enjoy the privilege of co-operating with God by the free correspondence of our wills with His.

But once more we have to bring ourselves to face the dread alternative. Our privilege is balanced by responsibility. There is the possibility of missing our opportunity, and therefore of failing to let God's purpose be fulfilled in us.

I.

DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW.

1. Orpah is a somewhat disappointing figure in this interesting story. She belongs to the class of persons who turn out differently from what one expects them to do: there is, in fact, a looking-back-from-the-plough note in the music of her life. We have very little information about her past. All we are told is that she was a Moabitess by birth, was married to Chilion, one of Naomi's sons, and had been left a widow.

Next to Ruth, the bereaved Naomi is really the one who touches our sympathies. Naomi's husband had lost his life while seeking a livelihood: he had found a grave where he sought a home. Apparently this 'judgment' fell on him at once, judgment treading on the very heels of offence. Before his sons were married he was taken away from the evil to come. For we can hardly doubt that it would have seemed evil to him that his sons should marry strange women, women of a race of which God had said, 'Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son; for they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods' (Dt 7²⁻⁴). The sin of these

young men in marrying strange women is not expressly denounced as a sin in the story, any more than that of their father in forsaking the land of promise, although it is denounced in the Targum, which commences v.⁴ thus: '*They transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and took foreign wives from among the daughters of Moab.*' But no one can read the Old Testament without feeling that they sinned against the Law: for, to the Hebrews, marriage was a religious covenant; and St. Paul does but utter an admitted and familiar truth when he asks, 'What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?' The reason of the law is given in the passage just cited from Deuteronomy: 'They will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods.'

¶ Marriages of Israelites with women of Ammon or Moab are nowhere in the law expressly forbidden, as marriages with the women of Canaan were (Dt 7¹⁻⁹). Still in the days of Nehemiah the law (Dt 23³⁻⁶) was interpreted as forbidding them, and as excluding the children of such marriages from the congregation of Israel (Neh 13^{1-3, 23-27}), an interpretation confirmed by what is said of the Edomites in Dt 23⁷⁻⁸, and endorsed by the Chaldee paraphrast, who paraphrases this verse, 'And they transgressed the decree of the Word of the Lord, and took to themselves strange wives of the daughters of Moab.' See, too, Ezr 9¹. But probably the marriages of Mahlon and Chilion would be justified by necessity, living as they were in a foreign land.¹

2. It is a mistake to think of Naomi's life as all shadow. Life never is entirely dark unless with those who have ceased to trust in God and care for man. While we have compassion on Naomi, we must also admire her. An Israelite among heathen, she keeps her Hebrew ways, not in bitterness but in gentle fidelity. Loving her native place more warmly than ever, she so speaks of it and praises it as to make her daughters-in-law think of settling there with her. The influence of her religion is upon them both, and one at least is inspired with faith and tenderness equal to her own. Naomi has her compensations. Instead of proving a trouble to her as she feared, the foreign women in her house have become her friends. She finds occupation and reward in teaching them the religion of Jehovah, and thus, so far as usefulness of the highest kind is concerned, Naomi is more blessed in Moab than she might have been in Bethlehem.

¹ *The Holy Bible, with Commentary*, ii. (ed. F. C. Cook), Joshua—1 Kings, 227.

When her two sons were taken away, Naomi felt no tie binding her to Moab. Moreover, in Judah the fields were green again and life was prosperous. She might hope to dispose of her land and realize something for her old age. It seemed, therefore, her interest and duty to return to her own country; and the next picture of the poem shows Naomi and her daughters-in-law travelling along the northward highway towards the ford of Jordan—she on her way home, they accompanying her. The two young widows are almost decided when they leave the desolate dwelling in Moab to go all the way to Bethlehem. Naomi's account of the life there, the purer faith and better customs, attracts them, and they love her well. But the matter is not settled; on the bank of the Jordan the final choice will be made.

The fact that both Ruth and Orpah were minded to accompany the destitute Naomi, when she returned to her native city, gives us a fine impression of the pure and happy family life of the household into which they had been admitted. Mahlon and Chilion must have been men of worth and character to win so sincere and steadfast an affection from these two daughters of Moab. And the gracious Naomi must have carried herself both wisely and graciously to these young wives, or she would not have inspired them with a love so devoted and self-sacrificing. But there is more than that. When once they had breathed the pure atmosphere of a Hebrew home, it is no marvel that Ruth and Orpah were reluctant to lose it. To the men of Moab women were but toys to be played with while they retained their charm, and to be cast aside as soon as some brighter toy took the eye. But in ancient Israel, as happily also in modern England, the worship of God was, as a rule, conjoined with a pure domestic life, a life made pure and sweet by chastity and kindness, by respect for women, by love for children. No doubt Ruth and Orpah were profoundly impressed by the purity and fidelity which distinguished the Hebrew from the Moabitish home, and repaid it with tenderness and a grateful attachment to the family into which they had been welcomed.

The kindness of Orpah and Ruth to Naomi is the more remarkable that ancient authors combine with modern to complain of the unhappy relations which obtain between the daughter and the mother-in-law, and in laying the blame of it on the

latter. 'The mother-in-law has forgotten that *she* was ever a daughter-in-law,' says an old German proverb; Terence laments that all mothers-in-law have ever hated their sons' wives; and Juvenal affirms that 'domestic concord is impossible so long as the mother-in-law lives.' And, no doubt, among selfish people, who confound jealousy with love, the relation is apt to be a source of irritation and discord; the mother is loth to relinquish her rights in her son, and the wife is forward to assert her rights in her husband: both are apt to forget that their common love for the same person should draw them together and make them of one heart and mind. But in lands where the home-life is pure and tender, and among persons of an unselfish and generous nature, even this relation becomes a very happy one. And, possibly, we may accept it as the weightiest testimony to the tenderness and purity of domestic life among the better Hebrews, that both the prophet Micah and our Lord Himself imply that the tie between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was as close and sacred as that between mother and daughter, or father and son; that both affirm it to be one of the last signs of utter social division and corruption when the daughter-in-law rises up against her mother-in-law.

¶ A certain man was living with his wife and her bedridden mother in a two-storeyed house when the house caught fire. The man, having thrown all the furniture of the upper storey out of the windows, was looking round for anything else worth saving. He espied his wife's mother. Seizing her in his arms, he carried her to a window and threw her down into the street. Then, rolling up her bed with care, he carried it downstairs. When he emerged, his neighbours asked him what he was hugging so tenderly. 'My mother-in-law's bed,' he replied. 'And where is your mother-in-law?' 'Oh,' said the bewildered man, 'I dropped her from the window.' It was agreed that he had done wisely.¹

¶ I doubt if any artist outside the Bible ever painted decision of character in the resolution to follow the fortunes of a mother-in-law. That is what the Sacred Gallery has done. It has taken, to illustrate female decision of character, the most unheroic form of love—the love for a mother-in-law, the devotion to an object that is often supposed to awaken jarring. The Bible always selects the discarded stones and makes them the head of the corner. We have seen how it has selected the most unromantic forms of love. In Sarah it has exhibited a wife's commonplace trials. In Rebekah it has displayed a mother's domestic annoyances. In Rachel it has painted a maiden waiting with hope deferred. In Miriam it has depicted an unmarried woman loving only the souls and not the aspects of men. In Deborah it has revealed the

love of a parish visitor manifesting itself in the rebuke of sin and the condemnation of wrong. And now in Ruth it gives us a picture of love between two females, one elderly and the other young—love in a sphere where there would seem to be no possibility for romance and from which all chance of chivalry would appear to be excluded.²

II.

ORPAH'S DECISION.

*1. While the story of Ruth has become one of the great love idylls of the world, we are told nothing of Orpah's subsequent history; but we gather that it might have been entirely changed had she acted wisely when brought to the place of decision concerning it. If she had held by Naomi—if she had made the same brave act of choice, the same great change of life and home and country and religion as did Ruth—it was the hand of Orpah that Boaz might have accepted, it was Orpah who might have been the ancestress of Jesus Christ!

She did go forth from Moab. The special occasion of her doing this was Naomi's return to Bethlehem, when the two daughters-in-law walked along the road with her. Perhaps nothing more was intended on their part at the outset than the kindness with which we usually accompany our friends a certain distance if they are leaving us for a long while. Yet questions of the gravest import have sometimes been settled by the way, and it was so then. The three women went forth out of the place where they were, and Orpah, for once at least, found herself with her back toward the old home and her face set in an opposite direction.

¶ 'Great events,' Napoleon wrote from Italy, 'ever depend but upon a single hair. The adroit man profits by everything, neglects nothing which can increase his chances; the less adroit, by sometimes disregarding a single chance, fails in everything.'³

¶ Over and over again Oscar Wilde lamented his wasted opportunities, and particularly in some lines that remind us of nothing as much as the lament of Robert Greene; but Greene's was a death-bed sigh, whereas Wilde's was made in his prime. 'Surely,' says Wilde, in one of his finest outbursts:

Surely there was a time I might have trod
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God!
Is that time dead? Lo! with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance,
And must I lose a soul's inheritance?⁴

² G. Matheson, *The Representative Women of the Bible*, 188.

³ W. M. Sloane, *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, i. 321.

⁴ T. Wright, *The Life of Walter Pater*, ii. 125.

¹ J. E. Hanauer, *Folk-Lore of the Holy Land*, 246.

2. Before Moab was finally left Naomi attempted to dissuade her daughters-in-law from undertaking the journey, or from leaving their friends and country. She told them of a blank life before her which they could not share. She released them from all ties, from all obligations. She pointed out to them that their whole chance of fortune lay in their remaining in Moab. She laid special stress on the dismalness of their matrimonial prospects in the land of Canaan, among a people who hated foreigners and held their own caste to be supreme.

¶ If we would understand the scene, and especially the stress laid on these young widows finding new husbands, we must remember that in the East of antiquity, as in many Eastern lands to this day, the position of an unmarried woman, whether maid or widow, was a very unhappy and perilous one. Only in the house of a husband could a woman be sure of respect and protection. Hence the Hebrews spoke of the husband's house as a woman's *menuchah*, or 'rest'—her secure and happy asylum from servitude, neglect, licence. It was such an 'asylum' of honour and freedom that Naomi desired for Orpah and Ruth. But, as she had to explain to them, such an 'asylum,' while it might be open to them in Moab, would be fast closed against them in Judah. In marrying them her sons had sinned against the Hebrew law. That sin was not likely to be repeated by Israelites living in their own land. Yet how is Naomi to tell them of this fatal separation between the two races? how is she to make these loving women aware that, if they carry out their resolve to go with her, they must resign all hope of honour and regard?¹

3. To Orpah the arguments of Naomi were persuasive. Her mother lived in Moab, and to her mother's house she could return. There the customs prevailed which from childhood she had followed. She would have liked to go with Naomi, but her interest in the Hebrew woman and the land and law of Jehovah did not suffice to draw her forward. Orpah saw the future as Naomi painted it, not indeed very attractive if she returned to her native place, but with far more uncertainty and possible humiliation if she crossed the dividing river. She kissed Naomi and took the southward road alone, weeping as she went, often turning for yet another sight of her friends, passing at every step into an existence that could never be the old life simply taken up again, but would be coloured in all its experience by what she had learned from Naomi and that parting which was her own choice.

¹ Samuel Cox, *The Book of Ruth*, 68.

¶ Men in general, and especially primitive men, do not reach their conclusions by any process of intellect or logic, but by emotional bent.²

¶ The being moved at a pathetic discourse is no more proof of our being in a right religious tone of mind than the crying at a tragedy is proof of a tender heart. Buonaparte could deluge the world with blood for his selfish purposes, and yet weep over the sufferings of a wounded soldier.³

III.

THE LOST TIDE.

1. Orpah must not be regarded as one of those hard, irresponsible natures, who are as pleased to say 'good-bye' for a lifetime as to greet you when you look in for a five minutes' call.

It is not an exaggeration to say that there are such persons in the world. Meetings and partings are alike to them, because they are not affected by either, and it makes the same impression whether you tell them of an earthquake or of an evening party, (whilst spiritual and sentimental are synonymous terms to them, both being despised. How difficult it is to get at the heart of people like this, or to hold their attention at a given point.

We much prefer speaking to those whose tears flow at the loss of a friend, and for whom the woes of humanity are full of pathos, and the love of God has a melting power, though they know very little about it in their lives. Hence we sympathize with Orpah, who wept at the thought of bidding farewell to Naomi. The remaining link with the past would be broken when she was gone. Orpah had often listened eagerly whilst Naomi told of the people and the home from which Chilion came, because everything connected with her husband's early life had a charm for the young widow, and to part from the only one who could rehearse all this was more than she anticipated; it was too sad.

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.⁴

² Hugh Elliot, *Herbert Spencer*, 135.

³ W. R. W. Stephens, *The Life and Letters of Walter Farquhar Hook*, i. 245.

⁴ Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, iv. iii. 217.

2. We cannot turn away from Orpah without being reminded of Lot's wife, because the record of these two women has a strange similarity; and this is the more striking when we consider that there was a connexion between them. The Moabites, we know, were descendants of Lot and his daughters who escaped from Sodom; and we cannot forget that three women went forth from Sodom then, just as three women went forth from Moab, but one of them 'looked back' and perished, and one of the latter three went back and was heard of no more. If we are disposed to wonder why the one who 'looked back' was dealt with more severely than the other who actually went back, the explanation is simple enough. The Moabites had not inherited the advantages which Lot and his wife and daughters once enjoyed; they did not know the access to the true God, which that family had known (though it was not always valued as it should have been by them). And Naomi was a very poor substitute for an angel to take the hand of Orpah and lead her out of her old surroundings: yet Lot's wife had one to take her out of Sodom. 'To whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more': and the Lord has taught us that He also will do the same. He did not hold this Moabitess responsible for the same amount as Lot's wife, seeing she had not the same opportunities, nevertheless Orpah might have used what she had to better purpose and obtained a place in the Lord's Kingdom.

But once I pass this way,
And then—no more.
But once—and then, the Silent Door
Swings on its hinges,—
Opens . . . closes,—
And no more
I pass this way.
So while I may,
With all my might,
I will essay
Sweet comfort and delight,
To all I meet upon the Pilgrim Way.
For no man travels twice
The Great Highway,
That climbs through Darkness up to Light,—
Through Night
To Day.¹

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Virginibus Puerisque.

I.

A Seaside Friend.

'And the ass saw the angel of the Lord.'—Nu 22²⁰.

'And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon'—Jn 12¹⁴.

To-day, I want to speak to you about a great friend of boys and girls. You are trying to guess who it can be; names pass through your mind—the name of some man, the name of some woman you love. Well, this is neither a man nor a woman, but the common seaside donkey that in August stands, one of a row, waiting to give you a ride over the sands. You feel happy whenever you see him, don't you?

Once I heard a clever man say that he thought boys and girls ought to be taught the history of their country backwards, beginning with the events of the present day. It would certainly make history more interesting, and I believe you would grow up with a better idea of what it really means.

Well, I remembered about this idea of teaching history backwards whenever I thought of the donkey, and I began to try to go back over the history of the poor neglected beast of the vegetable cart and the seaside to the time when it was honoured and respected.

Even now, though the donkey does look a little disreputable, we love him. Doesn't he seem patient standing among his brothers waiting for his call to give some boy or girl a ride? Don't you laugh when you see a specially obstinate one?

Have you ever tried to imitate his weird and ugly cry? You are inclined to think that the donkey has been made just to make fun for you.

I believe the ass—the donkey, to give him his familiar name—is really a happy animal so long as he is with boys and girls. But aren't you sorry for your poor friend when you see him on the road yoked into a little cart, and beaten because he won't go? He has fallen on evil days.

The ass is very often mentioned in the Bible. But in those far-off days it was a very different animal indeed from the poor stunted and often half-starved but patient beast of the seaside and the road. Our climate, and the hardships endured by the ass in this country, have told against it. It has gradually become poorer and weaker. You know the poor street donkey? One can scarcely believe that merchants in the East used to carry their riches on the shoulders of young asses. Sometimes too they were yoked with oxen in tilling the ground. But the chief service rendered by the ass was its use in riding.

In those days too the ass was reckoned a wise beast: it was, in fact, credited with cleverness rather than stupidity. Now you know that a donkey and a person who is very stupid have come to be called by the same name. But, when we think of it, both the horse and the ass have more wisdom of a kind than some men. Travellers tell us that, while men are sometimes deceived by the mirage of the desert, neither the horse nor the ass ever falls into the same mistake.

Speaking of clever animals makes every one think of dogs. I have heard a boy boast of how his dog could speak. Haven't some of you had a chance of noticing a terrier which, when his master was leaving the house, looked into his master's face with eyes that said, 'May I go?' And if you are angry with your dog, you know that he looks sad and reproachful. His eyes mean, 'Master, I know you must be right in being angry with me, but I did not really mean to do what was wrong.' When you were quite little, you never thought it strange that all sorts of animals were made to speak. Now, of course, you laugh at fables; you say they are stupid, and meant only for little children. 'Whoever heard of a fox or a crow speaking!' You all agree, however, that your dog can tell you what he means. Some people, as they grow older, go back to their love of fables: all creation speaks to them.

Luther the great Reformer had a favourite robin. 'I have one preacher,' he said, 'that I love better than any other upon earth; it is my little tame robin, which preaches to me daily. I put his crumbs upon the window sill, especially at night; he hops on the sill when he wants his supply, and takes as much as he desires to satisfy his need. From thence he always hops on to a little tree close by, and lifts up his voice to God and sings his carol of praise and gratitude, tucks his little head under his wing, and goes fast to sleep, and leaves to-morrow to look after itself.'

There was an Old Testament prophet who loved his ass as some men nowadays love their horses and their dogs. When, in spite of the solemn word of the Lord, Balaam wanted to have his own way, and set out on an unblessed journey, the angel of the Lord stood straight in the way, having his sword in his hand. Balaam did not see him, but the ass did, and would not go forward. Twice Balaam struck her, and at last she lay down under him. He was very angry and struck her again. Then we are told that the Lord opened the mouth of the ass and she spoke. Those of you who have a faithful dog of your very own will be able to understand this beautiful Bible story of the ass.

'And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now I had killed thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden all thy life long unto this day? Was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed his head, and fell on his face.' Does not that story remind you of how the eyes of a dear dog might speak?

We know that Jesus rode upon an ass's colt. In those days there was no special humility in the case. He rode upon an ass as any prince or ruler would have done when going on a peaceful journey. A clever writer of the present day, in a little volume of poems, has given us a few verses on 'The Donkey.' He makes the donkey speak and recall the New Testament story. Listen carefully while I read two of the verses:

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

I shall read the second verse very slowly: try to understand the meaning of it:

Fools! For I also had my hour!
 One far fierce hour and sweet:
 There was a shout about my ears,
 And palms before my feet.

Boys and girls, in this world there is no room for mockery, there is no room for cruelty. And surely even the 'tattered outlaw' if Jesus has touched it deserves a certain reverence from us. You love the seaside donkey; when you see its toiling brother of the street, remember the story of Balaam, and the still better one of Jesus riding upon an ass's colt.

The children of Jerusalem ran alongside crying 'Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.' He loves to hear you sing your hymns now, and if He still cares for the sparrows—and we believe He does—surely He wants you to be kind to the donkeys, even when they are obstinate. Though it be, as the poet says, but a 'tattered outlaw,' that beautiful New Testament story belongs to its family history.

I hope you will see your friend of the seaside this summer.

II.

The Right Kind of Heart.

'A pure heart.'—Ps 24⁴.

When we were speaking about the right kind of tongue, I said that we couldn't have the right kind of tongue unless we had the right kind of heart. But we can't have the right kind of ears, or eyes, or hands, or feet, or memory either unless we first have the right kind of heart.

Now I wonder how this is? Well, you see it is because the heart is the very centre of everything. It is like the mainspring of a watch—if that goes wrong everything else goes wrong. It is the heart that keeps all the other bits of the body alive. You could go on living if you lost an arm, or a leg, or an eye, but you couldn't live without your heart.

So you see the most important thing of all is to have the right kind of heart. And what is the right kind of heart? There is only one, and it is the 'pure heart.'

Now I want to explain first of all what we mean when we talk about our hearts in this way. Perhaps you have thought of your heart as the part of your body which sends the blood through your

veins. And that is quite right; but we can think of our hearts in another way. They are the bit of us with which we feel, the bit that loves and hates, the little house where our passions and desires live.

And what is it that makes our hearts black and dirty? Well, you know that. It is sin. Sin is the great soiler and spoiler in the world. God never meant our hearts to be like that. He meant them to be pure and beautiful. But sin came into the world and spoiled them. When we are quite little there are just a few faint stains upon them, but as we grow older the spots grow blacker and deeper and uglier, until at last they cover up all the whiteness and the beauty. Every time you are angry, or untruthful, or have a bad desire, a little stain goes on your heart, and these stains will increase as you grow older unless you can get your heart made pure again.

It is very sad to have our hearts growing blacker and blacker, but the worst part of it is that these stains shut us away from God, for it is only the pure in heart who see God. How, then, are we to get rid of the stains? We can never hope to make our hearts clean ourselves. If we tried every day from morning to night till we were old and grey-haired we could never hope to do it. But God can do it if we give them into His keeping. He can wash them clean in the blood of His own Son, and He can keep them clean by giving us the Holy Spirit to dwell in them. He can take away all our bad desires, all our wicked thoughts, and He can put pure, sweet ones in their place.

I read the other day of a lady who was walking over an estate with a friend. They came to an old tumbledown cottage. The thatch was in holes, the windows were broken, the garden was a mass of weeds. But the lady said to her friend, 'I wish you would let me have that cottage.' And the friend replied, 'Oh, you can have it for nothing. It isn't worth much, as you can see.' So the lady took the cottage. She turned out all the rubbish. She had the roof mended and the windows replaced. She had the walls papered and painted and hung with beautiful pictures. Then she set to work on the garden. She removed all the weeds and planted beautiful flowers in their stead. And when her friends came to see it they exclaimed, 'What a sweet place!'

Boys and girls, that is what God can do with our hearts if we will let Him. He can turn out all the rubbish and change the ugliness into beauty. But

we must let Him do it. He cannot do anything unless we give Him permission.

Don't wait to have your hearts made clean until they are so black and foul that you cannot see the whiteness underneath. Jesus loves the heart of a little child. He loves to come and dwell in it. Did you ever think why it was that Jesus loved the children so much? I think it was partly because they loved and trusted Him, but I think it was also because they were so pure. The Pharisees scorned Him, the crowds mocked Him, but the little children climbed on His knee and nestled in His arms. And that is where He wants all the little children to be to-day.

Point and Illustration.

Rabindranath Tagore.

Has Sir Rabindranath Tagore read Amiel? Listen to this (Amiel's *Journal*, i. 98): 'The centre of life is neither in thought nor in feeling, nor in will, nor even in consciousness so far as it thinks, feels, or wishes. For moral truth may have been penetrated and possessed in all these ways, and escape us still. Deeper even than consciousness there is our being itself, our very substance, our nature. Only those truths which have entered into this last region, which have become ourselves, become *spontaneous*, and involuntary, instinctive, and unconscious are really our life—that is to say, something more than our property. So long as we are able to distinguish any space whatever between the truth and us, we remain outside it. The thought, the feeling, the desire, the consciousness of life, are not yet quite life. But peace and repose can nowhere be found except in life and in eternal life, and the eternal life is the divine life—is God. To become divine is then the aim of life; then only can truth be said to be ours beyond the possibility of loss, because it is no longer outside us, nor even in us, but we are it and it is we; we ourselves are a truth, a will, a work of God.'

Now listen to Tagore. 'We are face to face with this great world and our relations to it are manifold. One of these is the necessity we have to live, to till the soil, to gather food, to clothe ourselves, to get materials from Nature. We are always making things that will satisfy our need, and we come in touch with Nature in our efforts to

meet these needs. Thus we are always in touch with this great world through hunger and thirst and all our physical needs.

'Then we have our mind; and mind seeks its own food. Mind has its necessity also. It must find out reason in things. It is faced with a multiplicity of facts, and is bewildered when it cannot find one unifying principle which simplifies the heterogeneity of things. Man's constitution is such that he must not only find facts, but also some laws which will lighten the burden of mere number and quantity.

'There is yet another man in me, not the physical, but the personal man; which has its likes and dislikes, and wants to find something to fulfil its needs of love. This personal man is found in the region where we are free from all necessity,—above the needs, both of body and mind,—above the expedient and useful. It is the highest in man,—this personal man. And it has personal relations of its own with the great world, and comes to it for something to satisfy personality.'

That is from Sir Rabindranath Tagore's latest book, *Personality* (Macmillan; 5s. net), and that is the thought which informs it and makes it a book. It is with rare beauty of language and with equally rare clearness of thinking—albeit it is so mystical—that this thought is carried through the book. But we never miss its note.

The new book is likely to be popular. It has some good portraits and other illustrations.

Father Stanton.

Arthur Stanton: A Memoir, by the Right Hon. George W. E. Russell (Longmans; 10s. 6d. net). It is the memoir of the most religious and most disobedient (to ecclesiastical authority) person of our day. Arthur Stanton was religious from his infancy; no one could recall the time when he was not. He never had experience of the crisis called conversion. If it is possible to be born religious, he was born so.

But what is it to be religious? In Arthur Stanton's case it was to find the supreme interest of life in the Church and Sacraments. His letters from school were all about the sermons he heard or the Church he heard them in; later, the letters were more occupied with ritual and adoration.

But this absorption in religion did not withdraw

him from his fellows. He was as notably a worker among the indifferent as he was a ritualist. He had clubs for postmen and clubs for boys—and there was no religion connected with them. Of the club so closely associated with St. Alban's, Holborn, where he spent his life, that it was called 'St. Alban's Club,' he says: 'We have . . . a Bar, at which will be sold to Members, Beer, Wine, and Spirits, as well as Tea and Coffee; a Kitchen, from which can be supplied Breakfasts, Dinners, and Suppers; new Bagatelle-Boards, Card-Tables, a larger Library, a Reading-room, etc.' And again: 'No religious element is to be found in it—no religious newspaper allowed. Neither do we allow Education Classes, or Mutual Improvement Classes. It is strictly a club, and not a trap to convert or educate, and all the government is entirely in the hands of the members themselves, and I am quite satisfied in seeing and knowing it keeps the fellows out of the dens of vice abounding here. Last night I had a prayer-meeting, and then went to the Club and played 2 rubbers of whist.'

Father Stanton's life was one long ritualistic controversy, of which his biographer gives us full reports. Once he trips, and speaks of Sir William Harcourt as a coward! How much better does Father Stanton himself speak: 'Harcourt has begun his tirade in the *Times* again; it is as forcible as ever. One can't help chuckling when he says the Bishops have not "peace within their walls, although they have plenteousness within their palaces." The worst of it is he has such good grounds to stand upon—for were we able to Catholicize the Establishment we should commit a political and social wrong in a Protestant country like England. But the outcome of it all is with God, and He will bring to pass what He wills. . . .'

If we would appreciate this man, we must understand that he was a great preacher and a great 'human.' These two. And these two are brought together in a very striking manner by an unnamed 'clergyman.' The passage is long, but it must be quoted in full.

'It was in the Hilary Term of 1906 or 1907, I think, that among the notices of the meetings of a society known at Oxford as the "De Rebus Ecclesiasticis" appeared the statement that on a certain day Father Stanton would speak on his

"Recollections of St. Alban's, Holborn." The "society" was a formless thing, without rules of membership or list of members; it had two undergraduate Secretaries who sent its list of meetings to graduates and undergraduates, who were supposed to be interested in Church matters. I was myself by that time a graduate and in Orders, and I remember asking one of the Pusey House clergy a day before the meeting whether he was going to it. "No, I'm not," he said; "none of us are. Stanton doesn't like clergymen at these things, and he'll be best pleased if we stay away." Undaunted by my friend's warning, I made my way after Hall to St. John's. The meeting was held in the rooms of Jack Romanes: a big, panelled room in the inner quad., and though I was in pretty good time, when I got there the room was packed with men. All the chairs and the window-seats were full. I managed to get a place on the floor where a man's boot-toe kept kicking the back of my head. It was not a comfortable seat, but I wouldn't have missed that evening for a great deal. At a few minutes before the time for the meeting to begin Fr. Stanton came in, very quickly, and sat down in an arm-chair close to the fire. There was the usual awkward pause, and then a nervous Secretary got up, and after a few halting words of introduction said we were ready for Fr. Stanton's paper. Stanton—I can see him now—took out of his pocket a well-worn Bible and said, "I wonder whether you'll mind my sitting down while I talk to you: I'm getting an old man, and it comes easiest to talk sitting down." And then he turned over the pages of his Bible and said, "I'm going to talk to you from the first chapter of the 1st Epistle of St. Peter, 18th to part of the 20th verse." I can hear him now repeating over again the last words of his text, dwelling on, rather drawling, them in that delightful way of his, "fore-ordained before the foundation of the world." I can only describe the effect of such an exordium as a most sudden and utterly unlooked-for shock. To a man, we had come to hear a shower of jokes and funny stories, accounts of his dealings with Bishops and the like—and then to be treated to a text! Stanton was apparently quite unconscious of what was expected, for he went on at once to speak of the Precious Blood as the Apostle wrote of It, and launched out into one of the most searching and impressive Gospel sermons I have ever heard in a fairly wide experience. It was a most direct and

tender appeal, passionately earnest, marked by his familiar mannerisms (so far as an arm-chair permitted), and every word of it arresting. Phrases of it, quite disconnected, linger in my mind: they are hardly worth recording, for they give no idea of the sermon's power, but here they are for what they are worth:

"Some people think our religion began with Henry VIII. Oh no" (shaking his head); "we want a religion older than that. We want the old Catholic Church. We want to go right back to the Lord Jesus Himself—'foreordained before the foundation of the world.'" Then later: "Ah well, you'll think all this that I've been saying to you is very old-fashioned Gospel. Well, you see I come from Holborn. And the New Theology comes from Holborn. Now I don't want to say anything unkind about Mr. Campbell, he's said some very kind things about me, but I do say this to you, 'No man having drunk the old wine straightway desireth new, for he saith' (and the speaker's face lighted up) 'the old is better.'" There was another passage in which he was speaking of the Precious Blood being shed *sub specie aternitatis*, and not to the ticking of a clock, and how we must get into the habit of looking at things in that way; illustrating it by the joy it was to him as he sat in his room in the Clergy House to get a glimpse of the sky, with its sense of illimitableness, and how it helped him to see things *sub specie aternitatis*. And then as he was closing, "Now, my dear boys, some of you I know are going to be priests. Now when you are priests teach your people to love the Lord Jesus. Don't teach them to be Church-of-England; teach them to love the Lord Jesus Christ."

'If the beginning had been unexpected, not less so was the end. "Now," he said, "will you all stand up while I say a prayer?" and we scrambled to our feet, and Stanton stood and prayed extempore in the most simple and moving way; prayed that we might know the power of the Precious Blood and the love of the Lord Jesus.

'It was the most amazing *De Rebus* meeting, I imagine, before or since. For myself I can only say that I was almost gasping. For he had kept our attention rigid, even strained, for more than forty minutes, and after such a sermon and such a prayer one wanted to be alone for a bit. I remember the Secretary, more nervous than ever, getting up and in the formal way at such meetings

thanking Stanton for his paper and saying that if any one wished to ask him any questions about it, he was sure Stanton would answer them. It was curiously grotesque, as if any one could ask questions in the Oxford debating-society manner about such a sermon. I remember Stanton saying, "Oh, I don't know about answering questions about Theology. If you want questions answered about Theology, you'd better go across the road to Pusey House; they know all about it there." Of course no one dreamed of asking questions, and we sat on, awkward and embarrassed, and as the prophets say "astoned," until at length some one with more wits than his fellows rose and said, "Would Fr. Stanton tell us something about his work at St. Alban's?" That worked like magic, for Stanton immediately replied, "Oh yes, I can tell you about the work at St. Alban's. I can tell you about my boys." And then he began: and once again I am powerless to reproduce the effect of that experience: he passed from the sublime to the ridiculous, from the grave to the gay, more swiftly than any man I have ever heard: at one moment a lump was in your throat with the amazing pathos of his story, at the next you were laughing at the quip of some street-Arab. Stanton began about his boys. "We meet," he said, "on Sunday evenings at six. We meet in a room underground: the sort of language we use sounds best underground. We don't play any games; the only game they know is to spit into the fire: we just sit round the fireplace. One Palm Sunday," he said, "we were doing that, and suddenly one of them said, 'Come for a 'oliday wiv us a Friday, farver'" (he reproduced the Cockney accent). "I said, 'No, I can't come with you on Friday. Do you know what next Friday is?' And they said, 'Yuss, it's a Bank 'oliday, ain't it?' And I said, 'Yes, it's a Bank Holiday, but it's Good Friday; it's the day our dear Lord died for us.' Then they said, after a pause, 'Well, what would you like us to do a Friday?' And I replied, 'Well, I should like you to come to church.' And they replied at once: 'So we will if you'll give us a 'ot cross bun.' I said, 'Oh yes, I'll give you a hot cross bun.' As a matter of fact, I got the Sisters to provide two hot cross buns each for them (I can't imagine how they managed to eat 'em) and a glass of milk, and they all turned up, clean and tidy as I'd never seen 'em before, and then they all marched into church, into a front row, and all knelt down (I can't

imagine who'd taught them; I hadn't), and one of the good Sisters who saw them said, 'Oh, look at those rough lads! That's Fr. Stanton's influence.' It wasn't my influence at all; it was the influence of the buns and the glass of milk. Then the service began, and we had that Litany of Monro's ['The Story of the Cross'], and they all sang it: and when we got to the last section beginning:

Oh, I will follow Thee,
Star of my soul,
Through the deep shades of life
To the goal,

they all sang the last word as 'gaol'—and upon my word before the next Good Friday every one of 'em had been in gaol."

The Grandson.

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ON the Punic inscription of Byblos which dates from the fifth to fourth cent. B.C. the name of Yehomelek appears as the son of Yeharba'al and then יבן יבן of Armelek.

The word for son is here duplicated. It has hitherto been taken to mean 'the son of the son,' i.e. the grandson of the person mentioned after the second יבן, 'son.' All who have discussed and commented on this inscription have been unanimous in the opinion that we have here a strictly genealogical line stretching from Yehomelek to Armelek, and that the last mentioned name was the third in the direct line of descent separated one from the other only by one generation. This unquestionably has a direct bearing on history and chronology, and unless properly elucidated might easily lead to confusion and wrong conclusions. Hence the value to be attached to this description of the relation between Yehomelek and Armelek, the assumed 'grandson' and 'grandfather,' and the proper relation which existed between them.

It is surprising that no one should have felt the obvious difficulty of translating יבן יבן as grandson. To whom does it refer? If to Yehomelek then it is unnecessary, for it is evident to the most casual reader that Yehomelek, being the son of Yeharba'al, must be the grandson of Armelek, the very next person mentioned in the inscription. And if it is to refer to Yeharba'al, then why should the name of his father have been omitted and only that of his grandfather given? If they knew the latter surely they must have known the former, and there is no reason why he should not have been mentioned. Another explanation must therefore be sought.

Neither the mason who cut the inscription nor the king who ordered it invented this way of recording the genealogy of the royal family. They merely followed what must have been the universal practice. It must have appealed to the readers and must have been clearly understood by them. Otherwise, if unintelligible or open to an ambiguous interpretation, it certainly would not have been used on a royal public monument, nor is it admissible to see in it a mistake of the mason. What then could be the real meaning of the duplication of the word 'son'?

Is it a mere coincidence that we find in the oldest Samaritan Chronicles hitherto preserved precisely the same use of the duplicate 'son' in passages containing lists of members of ruling families.

The oldest Chronicle, or what is considered to be the oldest, the Tolidah, is assumed to have been compiled in the first half of the twelfth century. This, however, is the date only of the compiler, not that of the material used by him. It is no doubt very ancient material, consisting originally of lists of genealogies jealously preserved through the ages, without any other biographical or historical detail as is the case in the 'Chain of the Samaritan High Priests' (published by the present writer in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April 1909), or other similar lists preserved with such tenacity among the peoples and families of the East. These are the skeletons for the more ample chronicles of which the Samaritans have also a goodly number. In every one of them one can find the same materials used and to such an extent that the one seems to be merely an amplified copy