

10. The 'one place' of the waters is here defined as a place by themselves distinct from the land, in opposition to the Epic which makes it the body or womb of Tiamât.

11. Once more the Epic is contradicted which states that the gathering of the waters into one place was not followed by the appearance of reed or marsh plant. On the other hand, the Sumerian poem ascribes the creation of 'grass, marsh plant, reed and rush,' as well as 'the green herb of the field,' to the demiurge after the earth had been formed.

The verse is written from a Palestinian and not a Babylonian point of view, there being no reference to the reeds and marsh plants, which would have occupied the first place in a Babylonian account of the vegetable creation. מִן, *min*, is borrowed from the Assyrian *minu*.

12. Since the herbs and trees were brought forth by the earth, there was no fresh creation by a special act of the Creator, and consequently no fresh day required for it. Hence the appearance of the land and the growth of vegetation are alike assigned to the same day.

The Pilgrim's Progress.

BY THE REV. JOHN KELMAN, M.A., D.D., EDINBURGH.

The Heart of Demas.

'COME and see,' says Demas. And why is he in so great an eagerness to get pilgrims to come and see? No doubt, in part, because his heart is in the mine, and he is keen for business. Yet behind that there lurks another reason. His conscience is not yet quite dead within him, and it is of great consequence to him to give it just this sop. The conduct of Christians is eagerly watched by a crowd of uneasy consciences. If they can but be induced to conform, then the questions and responsibilities which vex them are set at rest. The conforming Christian undertakes the burden of the dying consciences of souls almost lost, and sometimes robs them of their last hope.

The temptation of seeing—that ancient and modern temptation of 'the lust of the eyes'—is the subtlest of all temptations. Were there no connexion between eye and hand, it would be as innocent as it looks. Obviously (so says the tempter) there can neither be responsibility nor danger in simply looking on. But when sight has kindled imagination and desire, the man is no longer master of himself; and in the act of looking on he has thrown down his best defences. Marbot, the general of Napoleon, tells in his *Memoirs* of two clerks in the French War Office who had sold certain documents to the enemy. They were shot, and died cursing their betrayer, 'who, they said, had sought them out in their

garrets, and seduced them by the sight of a heap of gold, which he kept on increasing as long as they had any hesitation.' 'The love of money is the root of all evil,' said an old peasant in the north of Scotland, 'but they are right bonny flowers that grow from that root.'

It is in the light of all this subtle and pathetic weakness of human nature that such characters as that of Demas must be judged. He knows the fascination of the eyes, and the still more subtle fascination of what Bishop Blougram calls 'The dangerous edge of things,' and he deliberately trades upon these. He knows the danger, yet he will invite men to it, with all the air of careful respectability which some agent of a gambling-table company might assume, though but yesterday he had seen a suicide. His justification is that that way is 'not very dangerous, except to those who are careless.' He knows how large a percentage of men who look will go in, and how large a percentage of those who go in will come to ruin. Yet, like advocates of doubtful and dangerous things before and since, he imagines that he can refuse responsibility for their carelessness. It is their own affair. 'See thou to that,' said the chief priests to Judas.

Yet such a man hardly deceives himself. The facts are patent. George Herbert's lines are commonplace, so evident is the truth of them:

Man calleth thee his wealth, who made thee rich;
And while he digs out thee, falls in the ditch;

or again :

He that doth love, and love amisse,
This world's delights before true Christian joy,
Hath made a Jewish choice :
The world an ancient murderer is ;
Thousands of souls it hath and doth destroy
With her enchanting voice .

Demas knows all that, and yet silences the knowledge with so poor an argument that one wonders at its plausibility, even to Demas. Indeed, as we have already stated, his argument hardly convinces him. 'Their own consciences,' Bunyan had read in the *Plain Man's Pathway*, 'will not be stilled; but in the most terrible manner, rise up and give evidence against them, telling them flatly they shall be damned, how merry and jocund soever they seem to be in this world; setting a good face on the matter. For sure it is, that inwardly they have many a cold pull, and many heart-gripes. And all their mirth and jollity is but a giggling from the teeth outward: they can have no sound comfort within.' So Demas, unlike Mr. Worldly Wiseman, has still some little grain of conscience in him, that makes him blush while uttering his specious argument.

That blush is contemptible. For it finds its explanation in his later cry, that 'he also was one of their fraternity.' He had not, like Worldly Wiseman, dwelt all his life in a town off the highway. He had walked with pilgrims once, and he knows the whole question from the point of view of the pilgrim conscience which he has silenced. John Bunyan had watched the growth of covetousness in Christians. 'Two things would make me wonder,' he says, near the beginning of his *Grace Abounding*; 'the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always; the other was, where I found professors much distressed and cast down, when they met with outward losses.' As he was writing about Demas, he must have remembered Spira—'Man knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issues thereof?' Or that dreary poem in the preface to Spira's story may well have been in his mind:—

How black are quenched lights!
Quench'd joys are doubled frights;
Black days are double nights,
Heaven tasted, lost, a double hell.

In this man love, enthusiasm, pilgrimage, even

ordinary humanity and compassion, are dead, and

Who shall say what is said in me,
'With all that I might have been dead in me?
D. G. ROSSETTI.

Christian's dealing with Demas.

Here Christian shows that he has profited by past experience, and is not to be caught again. He has not forgotten the former plain, where he met Worldly Wiseman; nor yet the arbour of ease on the Hill Difficulty. It is this habit of remembering experience that gives him his insight, and makes it so quick and instinctive. He seems to know everybody, and 'has heard of' most things before. His questioning, too, manifests his intelligence and good sense. As in the case of By-ends, he conducts his cross-examination in a way that would have done him credit at the bar, and there is no higher test of mental ability than that. Before his calm and pertinent inquiry, Demas is helpless. His sophistries vanish, able to endure only when their flimsy structure is left untouched in the safety of his own ingenious mind.

Again, the lesson in straight speech which Faithful taught his friend is apparent. The side-note to the first edition reads, 'Christian roundeth up Demas.' And, indeed, he does round him up, carrying the war into the enemy's camp with the threat that he will report him to the King. No true man can be indifferent in presence of a tempter. To show nothing of the anger of righteousness is to condone the outrage, even though the impassiveness is cynical.

But the most impressive thing in the character of Christian here is just his robust and wholesome integrity. Even in times of apparent ease and safety, he will not go out of the way to however short a distance. In all this scene he never swerved one foot from the road, and his questions are 'shouted from the highway.' He is fortified against such temptations as this by 'a preoccupied heart, a mind forewarned, and a quick remembrance of Scripture.' It is these, and that wholesome integrity of which they form parts, that are a man's most useful asset in facing questions of casuistry such as this. The point often is not one of clear and absolute right and wrong, but of the attitude towards things dangerous and likely to hinder. 'I cannot call riches,' says Bacon, 'better than

the baggage of virtue ; the Roman word is better "impedimenta"; for as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue; it cannot be spared nor left behind, yet it hindereth the march.' Happy is the man whose integrity is such as to give him instinctive guidance on such questions, so immediate and so convincing that no plausibility of argument can induce him to turn from it. It is only by taking high ground in this way that a man can be safe.

The passage is specially intended for all who are under the temptation of making haste to be rich—a state of mind in which men are apt to lose all true proportion and balance in their views of things. Cheever gives a strikingly relevant passage from Coleridge—'Often as the motley reflexes of my experience move in long processions of manifold groups before me, the distinguished and world-honoured company of Christian Mammonists appear to the eye of my imagination as a drove of camels heavily laden, yet all at full speed, and each in the confident expectation of passing through the eye of the needle, without stop or halt, both beasts and baggage!' 'The straitness,' says Bunyan in his *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized*, 'the narrowness must not be understood of the gate simply, but because of that cumber that some men carry with them that pretend to be going to heaven. Six cubits! What is sixteen cubits to him who would enter in here with all the world on his back?' 'When Plutus (which is riches) is sent from Jupiter, he limps and goes slowly,' to quote Bacon once more; 'but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs and is swift of foot.'

The Silver Mine as Death-Trap.

Sir John Mandeville, in his *Travels*, describes something which may have possibly found its way into John Bunyan's imagination, and so into his allegory: 'In the Vale Perilous is plenty of gold and silver, and many Christians go in for the treasure, but few come out again, for they are strangled of the devil.' In a striking sentence, Dr. Kerr Bain describes the function of Demas and his mine in relation to the way and the pilgrims: 'The work of diverting the current of pilgrimage into the depths of this hollow hill, where it shall collect itself into a stagnant pool of living or dead.'

Besides the main tragedy of this death-trap,

there are two significant touches which are both founded on observation of the facts of human nature. The first is that of those who, though not killed outright, are yet so maimed that they are never their own man again. These have literally lost part of their manhood. The fascinating habit of money-grubbing has held them by its slavery and hallucination, until their imagination, their desires, and their judgments are all rendered imperfect and warped. Cowley (on Liberty) says: 'The covetous man is a downright servant, a draught horse without bells or feathers; *ad metalla damnatus*, a man condemned to work in mines, which is the lowest and hardest condition of servitude, and, to increase his misery, a worker there for he knows not whom.' The second suggestive touch is that of those who were smothered by the foul air of the mines. Worldliness has this peculiar power of choking the human spirit with its musty air. There is, about some lives, an appalling lack of freshness. They lose the capacity for frank and simple enjoyment, and for appreciation of nature and natural things and ways. They become blasé, and in the saddest sense worldly. Readers of George Meredith's *Rhoda Fleming* will recall the instance of the old bank servant there.

It is an ancient and a recurring human tragedy, for covetousness of this sort is ever near the highway of life. Part III. tells how several merchants from Vanity Fair turned in to work there, and how Weary-of-the-World would have done so, had he not been kept from his purpose by Spiritual Man. The whole picture is a commentary on the Saviour's question, 'What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' But it is more than that, for this is the common fate of rich and poor, and there are many who lose their own soul without gaining the world. Those who do not strike the vein of silver in the mine, may be just as worldly as those who do. In either case it is a delusion:

'Unto what is money good?
Who lacketh that lacks hardihood,
Who hath it hath much trouble and care,
Who once hath had it hath despair.'

The experience of this illusion and disillusion of covetousness is so common, that many tales and proverbs have in vain tried to convince men by striking their imagination, from the fable of the chicken which, finding a diamond, exclaimed,

'Would it were a corn-grain!' to that sad and lurid story of the Egyptian princess whose bones, and a bag of pearls beside them, were found in the desert, together with an account of how food had failed them, until at the last extremity they had crushed pearls to dust, and tried with that to satisfy the deadly craving—'but, alas, they were only pearls, and so I died.'

The fate of By-ends is but one of many wayside tragedies, seen by all pilgrims. Which of us has not shuddered at the solemn spectacle of those who drop out of life at our side—the spiritual failures we lose sight of by the way? Thus spiritually, as well as of the mere facts of physical life and death, does the old image of the Bridge of Mirza prove a true metaphor for the human progress.

Lot's Wife.

In the first edition, the lesson about covetousness ends here, but evidently Bunyan was greatly and increasingly exercised about this vice; for in a later edition he adds this new passage, putting the moral in a third and monumental form, and also reminding women (even by italics) that the sin of covetousness is not one to which men only are addicted—a temptation of business, or the markets, or the mines.

This monument of covetousness avenged recalls the ancient idea of the value of public executions, from which society has now happily escaped, having discovered that, for deterrent purposes, awful examples of this sort are, in general, failures. It makes us shudder to read, as Bunyan had read, in Spira's story, how the case of that poor wretch 'was spread over all Padua and the neighbouring country . . . so that daily there came multitudes to see him; some out of curiosity, only to see and discourse; some out of a pious desire, to try all means that might restore him to comfort again; or at least to benefit themselves by a spectacle of misery, and of the justice of God.'

The present instance may have suggested even then to Bunyan the futility of such methods. His pilgrims both observe with horror that the treasure-seekers are pursuing their dangerous work within sight of this monument, like men 'that will cut purses under the gallows.' This is a touch worthy of Hogarth. The purse then was carried hanging at the girdle, and it needed dexterity to cut it, even in more favourable circumstances than under the gallows. The words remind one of Bunyan's own

poem entitled 'Upon the Thief,' to which (in Smith's edition) is prefixed a clever little woodcut of a man with a dark lantern picking a lock, while in the distance the form of a body is seen against the sky, hanging upon a gibbet. In modern times covetousness has the same hardening effect as in ancient, and at a recent exhibition of Watts' paintings, it was remarked that a hard-faced group of speculators were seen discussing the markets right in front of the terrible picture of Mammon.

The story of Lot's wife has always been felt to be a very piteous one. It seems so hard a fate for only one poor regret. Really, however, a deeper meaning underlies the story, which puts it alongside the Greek story of Medusa as an eternal parable of life. In these two the moods of Hellenism and Hebraism are represented with a rare fidelity and pathos. The Greek story tells of those who are petrified by the sight of the horrible; the Hebrew story tells of one petrified by too keen desire for what to her seemed beautiful and dear. Each is a characteristic expression of the genius of the nation that produced it; each, alas, also tells a universal human truth.

And it is a woman who is thus turned to stone by worldliness. All that is tenderest and most womanly in her is frozen and petrified, and her whole nature is encrusted with the bitter salt of the world. No one who has seen Doré's picture of the gambling-table, still less any one who has witnessed an actual scene such as that picture represents, will forget the faces of the women. Men may become hard-hearted through covetousness, but a woman seems to cease to be a woman altogether when her heart is turned to stone.

The Character of Hopeful.

In this passage Hopeful is exhibited with an interesting fulness of detail. We note his simplicity, his trustfulness, his curiosity, and his interest in things he sees. He is not learned, and can no more read the inscription than, as Mr. Foster reminded him in his examination, John Bunyan could read 'the original Greek.' Yet, though he cannot read it, he is the first to espy the inscription, with those quick, bright eyes of his. He reminds us of the Bactrian in *A Death in the Desert*—that 'wild, childish man, who could not speak nor write, but only loved.'

Such hopefulness of a sunny, simple nature, has its danger. It is natural for Hopeful at once to respond to Demas' appeal with his 'Let us go see.' Yet, on the other hand, he is as quick and frank in his penitence as he was in his fault.

It comes natural to him at once to say, 'I am sorry,' and it draws out all the tenderness of his harder companion, who lovingly and emphatically calls him 'My brother,' in the midst even of his rebuke.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. LUKE.

LUKE XVI. 10.

'He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much.'—R.V.

EXPOSITION.

Vv.¹⁰⁻¹² give more detailed information regarding the precept in v.⁹, 'Without the specified application of the possessions of mammon, to wit, ye cannot receive the Messianic riches.' This is shown, on the ground of a general principle of experience (v.¹⁰), from a twofold specific peculiarity of both kinds of wealth, by the argument *a minori ad majus*—the faithful in the least is also faithful in much: and the unrighteous in the least is also unrighteous in much—a *locus communis* which is to be left in its entire proverbial generality. It is fitted for very varied application to individual cases.—MEYER.

MANY regard these reflexions as arbitrarily placed here by Luke. But whatever Bleek may say, is it not just the manner in which we constitute ourselves proprietors of our earthly goods, which leads us to make a use of them which is contrary to their true destination?—GODET.

V.¹⁰ is a comparison borrowed from common life. From the experience expressed in the two parallel propositions of this verse, it follows that a master does not think of elevating to a higher position the servant who has abused his confidence in matters of less importance. *Faithful* toward the master, *unjust* toward men.—GODET.

A MAXIM of great pregnancy and value; advancing now from the prudence which the steward had, to the fidelity which he had not; to that 'harmlessness of the dove' to which 'the serpent,' with all his 'wisdom' or subtilty, is a total stranger. But what bearing has this maxim on the subject of our parable? A very close connexion. 'As for me (some would say), I have too little of "the unrighteous mammon" to be much interested in this parable.' 'You are wrong,' is the reply. 'That is the speech of the slothful servant, who, because he was entrusted with but one talent by his master, went and hid it in the earth instead of using it. Fidelity depends not on the amount entrusted, but on the sense of responsibility. He that feels this in little will feel it in much, and conversely.'—BROWN.

THE SERMON.

Faithful in Little, Faithful in Much.

By the Rev. Alexander Maclaren, D.D., Litt.D.

'He that is faithful in the least is faithful also in much' seems to declare that true fidelity takes no account of the apparent magnitude of the actions in which it is employed; that fidelity is harder in the smallest things than in the greatest; and that faithfulness in a little sphere will fit for, and therefore will secure the possession of, a larger and nobler sphere in God's own good time.

Let us look at these three principles.

I. From the highest point of view, God's point of view, *true faithfulness knows no distinction between great and small duties*. The worth of an action depends only on its motive, not at all on its prominence or seeming consequences. Nothing is great, nothing is small, except according to whether it is done from obedience to God or to give pleasure to ourselves.

When we think of it, everything that a man can do is great. What *can* be little to the making of which there goes the force of a soul that can know God and must abide for evermore?

The thought that no act is in itself small binds together all acts of transgression. 'He that is unjust in the least' is unjust—and there is an end to it! But it also binds together all acts of obedience. The poor woman sewing faithfully in her garret is doing the same thing as the martyr when he dies at the stake. Should not this principle send us about our daily work with new faithfulness and power?

II. From another point of view *faithfulness in small duties is even greater than faithfulness in great*.