

be of great value to all those interested in the history of religions. Up to the present time the works in Russian on the subject were sealed books owing to that language being so little studied. Dr. Grass not only translates from books and documents, but collects a great mass of material from oral communication, magazines, and songs of the people. He dismisses at the beginning any attempts to treat the subject with reference to old forms of that gloomy superstition of self-mutilation which was known among the ancients and, indeed, in the earliest times. He confines himself entirely to its development in Russia. It seems clear that it is connected with the beliefs of the Khlists. The sect is first mentioned about 1770, and in 1772 we have a Ukaz against it in the reign of the Empress Catherine. The oldest book on the sect, entitled *An Investigation into the Heresy of the Skoptsi*, is by Nadezhdin, and was published in 1845. This was supplemented by P. Melnikov's letters on the Raskol, 1862, and materials for the history of the Khlists and Skoptsi. Nadezhdin was chosen by General Perovski to write the account, as the Emperor Nicholas I. did not like the subject being treated by Dahl, who had at first been selected. He was a Lutheran, and the Orthodox Church appeared at a disadvantage. A great deal of information is given in Kelsiev's book on the Raskolniks. This caused the doctrines to

be more familiar in the West, as Kelsiev's book was, unless our memory fails us, made the subject of an article by the late W. Ralston. The founder of the sect remains to a certain extent in obscurity. It is supposed to have been one Kondrati Selivanov. Another founder is mentioned, Andrei Ivanov, but he disappears early from the scene, having been banished to Siberia. The names of four persons are mixed up with these claimants, who were merely tramps (*Landstreicher*), as Dr. Grass calls them. The heresy rapidly spread, and the ignorant common people even supposed that the Emperor Peter III. was their patron. We know that the Raskolniks formed a very powerful adjunct to the forces of the rebel Pugachev, who was himself one. Pushkin tells us that an old woman said to him, when he was collecting material for his *History of the Insurrection*, 'You call him a rebel, but we think he is our real Emperor.'

The latter sections of this part, from p. 384 to the end, tell of the Skoptsi in the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, who had a very drastic way of dealing with these heretical questions. The popular songs translated by Dr. Grass are very curious. The work is treated entirely in an historical spirit. The adventures of the Skoptsi in all parts of Russia are investigated with minute accuracy.

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Oxford.

In the Study.

A Study in the Golden Art of Self-Encouragement.

THE Rev. Dinsdale T. Young has published a volume of sermons which he pleasantly calls 'A Book of Evangelical Cheer.' But the title of the book is curious. It is *The Gospel of the Left Hand* (Hodder & Stoughton; 3s. 6d.). That is the title of the first sermon, and the text is 'On the left hand, where he doth work (Job 23⁹). Those who buy the book will read that sermon in connexion with the 'Studies in Failure,' but it is not that sermon we are concerned with at present.

It is a sermon in the middle of the volume, which goes by the title of 'The Golden Art of Self-

Encouragement.' And the text is as good as the title: 'But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God' (1 S 30⁶).

It was that time in which David's fortunes were at their lowest ebb. Hunted by Saul from place to place, he had at last taken refuge among the Philistines. And his faithful band of adherents had followed him. It was an act of amazing hardihood. But it seemed at first to be successful. David and his men, with their wives and families, were received by Achish and settled in the town of Ziklag. Then the Philistines gathered their armies and went up to fight against Israel, and David and his men passed on in the rereward with Achish. The situation was sufficiently trying, but they could not help themselves. Fortunately, however, the

lords of the Philistines would have none of them, and they were sent back to Ziklag.

When they reached Ziklag, they found the place in flames. A band of Amalekites had raided the South, and finding Ziklag deserted of men had burned it, carrying the women and children away with them. The surprise was overwhelming. The men that were with David 'lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.' Then they threatened to stone him. But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

'He ran to his cordial,' says John Trapp. 'When he was, at his wits' end he was not at his faith's end,' is the comment of Matthew Henry. Mr. Young takes three words out of the verse to look at separately. (1) He encouraged *himself*. He had often encouraged others. He had sometimes received encouragement from others. Now he addressed himself to himself. 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?' (2) *His God*. So he had a God. He had a God of his own before the moment came when he so greatly needed Him. You cannot extemporize consolation, says Mr. Young. Have your cordial handy that you may fly to it when you need it. (3) The third word is *but*. The rest had all lost heart; *but* David encouraged himself in the Lord. That 'but' saved the situation. Everything begins with *but*, every good thing and every evil thing.

Then Mr. Young makes use of this matter of self-encouragement in God for our encouragement and growth in grace. He considers—

I The times for it.—There is the time of *personal sorrow*. David's sorrow was the deeper that he had brought sorrow upon others also. He was a lonely stricken man, and lonely stricken men were round him. Social distress is another time. What is our remedy for the ills that we see around us? Legislation? That is not enough. They need sympathy. They need our God. Another time is when the *ill effects of the past* come down upon us. Should David really have been in Ziklag? Should he have gone up with the Philistines? But we need not upbraid him. With us also has the Lord been long-suffering.

2. The reasons for it.—The first reason is that we so often find there is no encouragement in man. The next, that we have had knowledge of God's ways with us. We have found, as Spurgeon says, that 'He sometimes sends His love-letters in black-

edged envelopes.' And then there are His promises. 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure.'

3. The methods of it.—The first method is prayer. This method, says Mr. Young, is perennially efficacious; its sovereign force persists through all time. This was David's own method. 'David,' we read in v. 8, 'inquired of the Lord.' Another method is personal effort. When the Psalmist says, 'My soul wait thou with patience,' his word 'wait' is not a passive word. It is indeed very active and energetic. David *encouraged himself* in the Lord. A third method is by hunting in the Book. It was Bunyan that said he hunted in the Book 'for a word to lean a weary soul on.'

4. The benefits of it.—The first benefit is that he who encourages himself is able to encourage others. David persuaded his men, in place of stoning him, to follow him against the Amalekites. And they recovered all that belonged to them. And then there is this other benefit that we actually find the encouragement. In three days Saul was dead, and David was on the way to the kingdom. The encouragement does not always come so immediately or so literally. But it comes.

Studies in Failure.

II.

Christ's Way with Failures.

Lk 15², 'This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.'

When the King, according to the parable, filled his wedding with guests from the highways, and declared that those who were first invited were not worthy, he turned the failures of life into successes, and the successes into failures. But before we deal with this remarkable reversal of human judgment and human lot, it is necessary that we should consider how He brought it about.

Among the books of last month there was a volume of sermons by the Rev. Henry W. Clark, entitled *Laws of the Inner Kingdom* (Robert Scott; 3s. 6d. net). One of the sermons in the volume is on 'Christ's Treatment of Sinners.' In that sermon Mr. Clark says that 'it is one of the test questions in regard to any system which professes to deal with men and women as a whole, whether the

system be social, educational, or religious—what has it got to say about the failures?’ It may have nothing to say about them. It may simply pass them by. Or if it recognizes them, it may have nothing hopeful to say about them. It may have no confidence that it has found the secret of their help and redemption, and content itself with pitying words and sympathetic looks. This is a test question. And it gains in interest if among the failures we recognize ourselves—if, in short, it deals with life on its moral and spiritual side, the side on which consciousness of failure is most pronounced in us all. How does the gospel of Christ stand this test?

1. First of all, Christ makes humanity in its spiritual failure the *special object* of His ministries. He came to seek and to save the lost. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners. The specific charge made against His life and conduct was that He ate and drank with publicans and sinners.

This was a new method. It is not accepted outside Christianity yet. Mr. Clark says that the utmost that can be done by the best schemes of social progress which human minds devise is to be as lenient to the individual failures as is consistent with the good of the race. Is there room left for them? It is only after the successful have all taken their places at the table. When they have fallen, is there a chance left open to them to rise again? ‘Fix the difference in your minds between leaving another chance for the spiritual failures and *living for the spiritual failures.*’

It is an amazing misapprehension of the Christ of the Gospels which is made by Mr. H. G. Wells in his book called *First and Last Things*, when he represents the Christian’s Christ as ‘too fine’ for him. In a volume of essays, called, from the title of the first and longest essay, *The Religion of H. G. Wells* (Fisher Unwin; 3s. 6d. net), the Rev. A. H. Craufurd, M.A., has criticized this blunder with sufficient courtesy. ‘I am quite sure,’ he says, ‘that He would not have seemed too fine for the writer whom I am now criticizing, if only that writer could have been present at some of the friendly ministrations of the sympathetic prophet of Nazareth. Mr. Wells is manifestly friendly to sinners; so he would not sympathize in the least with the harsh and Judaic attack of the late Mr. Cotter Morison on the all-pitying tenderness of Jesus for the weak, the erring, and the lost. Mr. Morison’s indictment of the apparently antinomian

compassion of Christ may serve at least to show that Christ *did* thoroughly sympathize with many of the most lawless characters of His age and nation, that, in a sense, the Pharisees were right in regarding Him as a friend of publicans and sinners in a very close and very intimate way. Mr. Cotter Morison’s harsh Judaic venom was poured out on our Lord chiefly on account of his *special* love for sinners. This special and clinging love seemed to this pharisaical and dry-as-dust moralist a downright insult to morality. He even censured Jesus for pardoning the penitent thief on the cross without forcing him first to make amends to the society he had injured, as if any man with a human heart would not judge that crucifixion itself was a far *too* severe punishment for theft, as if it had been in any way *possible* for the suffering thief in his last agony to make the amends demanded there and then.’

2. The second remark to make about Christ’s way with the failures is that He counts upon some response to His appeals. He ‘believes that in all men there dwells something which can respond to a spiritual quickening impulse.’ For if Christ did not stint His ministries, neither would He have wasted them. Mr. Clark thinks that this ‘supreme hopefulness’ of Christ is not sufficiently considered. Human sin drove Christ to a cross; but the Christ whom it drove to the cross did not think that He was wasting His ministries on sinfulness so extreme. ‘As to human possibilities, He knew not a moment’s despair; and, right as we are in insisting on the supreme importance of man’s faith in Christ, something needs also to be said about Christ’s faith in man.’

There is another newly published volume of sermons by another preacher, which contains an able sermon on this subject. The preacher is the Rev. W. L. Watkinson; the volume, *The Fatal Barter* (Culley; 3s. 6d.), and the sermon is called ‘Christ and Abnormal Life.’ Mr. Watkinson occupies himself with the things which Christ saw in sinners to make Him have hope for them.

1. He saw *Reason*. By reason Mr. Watkinson means, not the logical faculty, but reason on its spiritual side, the spiritual imagination, perception and sensibility, which recognize God and the eternal universe. Men may lose sight of God and wander in the far country, but they are still conscious of the throb of the eternal. In his *Travels on the Amazons*, Bates tells of his astonish-

ment in discovering, when far in the interior, a slight rise and fall of the water in a small creek which traversed the forest. He was nearly six miles up country, and he hesitated to believe that at such a distance it was possible for the sea to make itself felt. But it was really so. 'Yes, the tide! the throb of the great oceanic pulse felt far away in a remote corner,' leagues away from the place where the sea strikes the mouth of the Amazon.

2. He saw *Conscience*. There is a terrible indictment of the Gentile world in the opening of the Epistle to the Romans. Burke said it was difficult to draw up an indictment against a whole nation, but the Apostle draws up an indictment against the race. But what immediately follows? The question of conscience. Throughout the mighty moral debasement conscience continued to do its office, and to it Paul makes his confident appeal. Christ appealed to the conscience by the warmth of His presence. He abode that day at the house of Zacchæus, and salvation came that day to his house. In the far North the quicksilver freezes in the thermometer, which, of course, ceases to register, and whilst the cold continues even for months and years the instrument remains useless; but let the temperature rise, and the quicksilver becomes at once nimble and indicative.

3. He saw *Affection*. We speak of heartless people, but it is a figure of speech that is never wholly applicable. A city missionary has stated that what impressed him most in prosecuting his work in dark neighbourhoods was 'the goodness of the bad.'

4. He saw *Will*. It often seems as though men had utterly lost will-power to all that is good. If the will is the centre of personality, it looks as though some in human shape were only phantoms. But our Lord always assumed that the most impotent of men possessed will-power, however long it had remained unused. 'I will arise and go to my father,' said the prodigal in his deepest degradation; and Christ did not put that word into his mouth without purpose.

The French record a striking story respecting a peasant girl who was repeatedly found guilty of stealing flowers, and, in consequence, condemned to one of the prisons of Paris. Touching this form of crime the culprit was manifestly insane and incorrigible. A director of prison-labour set the convicts to make artificial flowers, and this

demented girl among the rest. She was delighted, enthusiastically making roses from morning to night. As she continued her joyous task her mental maladies ceased, and she was discharged from prison sane and happy, to become one of the most successful florists in Paris.

3. The third remark is that when Christ turned failure into success, there was no mistake about the success. His faith in man and man's faith in himself are a great contrast. What is the loftiest spiritual hope we are still content to cherish? To be not quite shut out from the heaven of good; to find at least standing-room just within its gates. Christ sat down beside the sinners, not that they might be driven to despair by the contrast, but that they might be lifted to the same height of holiness. He believed that in contact with spiritual perfectness lay the sinner's hope. The darkened heart and the soiled nature and the lame deformed humanity found their best impulse in having near them the contrast of a Christ.

Two Studies in Biography.

I.

Blaise Pascal.

It is difficult to estimate the ordinary book as it comes. It is difficult to prophesy its future. Books are like poets: only posterity can put them in their place. Yet occasionally, though it be only once in a season, the great book comes, and the critic turns into a prophet without fear. It comes when a man has given himself wholly and whole-heartedly to a subject; and when he has ability, industry, and earnestness enough.

Viscount St. Cyres is identified with Pascal and Port Royal, so that those who know either cannot help thinking of the other. He has made the whole Jansenist movement his own. After particular inquiry we are able to say that there is no higher authority on the subject in any country at the present time.

And then we can read his book with such abounding pleasure. Not that it is well written, as the word is commonly used. There are felicities of style, but there are also idiosyncrasies, and the author would not be chosen as a model of composition. But a very little experience of it makes one sit back satisfied that the style is suitable to the subject, and that altogether this book is to

mark an event in one's experience. The title is simply *Pascal* (Smith, Elder, & Co.; 10s. 6d. net).

Two things may be touched upon. Let the first be Pascal's conversion.

What is conversion? Viscount St. Cyres is ready for his part to adopt the definition of Professor William James. 'To be converted, to receive grace, to experience religion,' says Professor James, 'are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self, hitherto divided and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy.' But this is to define conversion by its results. What is it that brings conversion about, and how does that thing operate in bringing it about? Again, Viscount St. Cyres seems content with Professor James. 'Perhaps,' he says, 'the best answer will be found in modern theories of subliminal consciousness. Much of our thinking is done without our knowledge. Ideas lodge, strike root, and ripen in the mind without attracting more than our most casual attention, until they suddenly spring on us full-grown, as did Minerva from the brain of Jove. Nay, in certain exceptional persons whole networks of ideas and desires—a second character, in fact—may form beneath the usual self, much as the new skin of a snake grows up beneath the old. In due time the old skin cracks, rends, is sloughed off, and the animal emerges fresh and glossy in his summer dress. So is it with the convert.' In another place he even goes the length of saying, 'There is nothing mysterious about it. It may be expressed in terms of physiology, and Pascal himself would not have objected to have it so explained'—but he immediately adds—'so long as physiology added that the last term in the series was the grace of God, adapting itself to the natural workings of the human machine.'

What, then, is the grace of God? The phrase in Jansen's day was 'irresistible grace.' Jansen accepted 'irresistible grace'; but he said that irresistible grace was only a technical academic name for irresistible love, and a Christian's love for God was just as 'natural,' just as much a part of himself, as Romeo's for Juliet. And it was 'irresistible' in precisely the same sense as the love that drove Antigone to disobey the orders of her king was resistless in the fight, ἀνίκατος μάχαν. But how or why the love arose—why it called one and not another—neither Sophocles, nor

Shakespeare, nor Saint Cyran could explain. All the Jansenist convert knew was that the love was there. All in a moment he was 'touched by God.' He was caught up into the grip of a mysterious Power; some strange, spiritual chemistry blotted out his former tastes and inclinations, and left him a new being. What could he do but render grateful thanks to God? And with all that Viscount St. Cyres seems to agree.

The other subject is Jesuitism. Two words make the sum of its meaning—obedience and casuistry. First obedience, 'How was a man to know for certain what God expected of him? Let him join the Society, and he would soon find out. There a perpetual ladder of communication ran between earth and heaven. The individual Jesuit obeyed his Superior, who obeyed the Rector, who obeyed the Provincial, who obeyed the General, who obeyed the Pope, who took his orders straight from God Almighty. Thus obedience became the pivot of the Jesuit system, although it was far from being a Jesuit invention. Ever since the days of St. Benedict it had ranked, together with poverty and chastity, as one of the cardinal virtues of monasticism; and even Loyola's famous simile, *perinde ac cadaver*—like a carcass in the hands of the superior—comes from the Franciscans. But in the Society obedience soon cast its companion virtues into the shade. "We heard comparatively little of poverty or chastity," writes a former novice, "but every hour of the day we were reminded of obedience. No boundaries were set to this virtue; it was infinite space for ever enlarging."

Next, casuistry. But to understand what Pascal made of Jesuit casuistry, to understand what Viscount St. Cyres makes of what Pascal made of it, one must read the two great chapters on the Provincial Letters. It was not original to Loyola, any more than was obedience. He adopted it to checkmate that 'spiritual sense' upon which the Reformers relied. Viscount St. Cyres has just introduced the subject when he gives as good an example of the use of it as will be found. He takes it from the Memoirs of Madame de Motteville, the very orthodox lady-in-waiting to Queen Anne of Austria. 'Like most Spaniards, Anne was fond of the play. But in the summer of 1646, the curé of St. Germain, a pious and austere divine, wrote to point out that she endangered her soul every time she set foot within a theatre. His

letter rather troubled her conscience, and she consulted several bishops, who thought that listening to Corneille was not necessarily a sin. But the curé persisted all the more, and sent her a written opinion against the lawfulness of the play countersigned by seven doctors of divinity. Thereupon she consulted the young King's tutor, the Abbé Beaumont de Péréfixe. Off posted Péréfixe to the Sorbonne, and soon came back with at least ten signatures on the other side. Seven from ten left a majority of three in favour of the play, and the Queen's scruples were at once appeased; though her lady-in-waiting indulges in a mild lament over the degenerate laxity of modern times. But neither Anne, nor Madame de Motteville, nor the curé, nor the tutor saw anything odd in deciding an important case of conscience by votes casually lobbied in the Sorbonne.'

II.

Ignatius Loyola.

This life of the founder of the Jesuits has been written by Francis Thompson the poet. Its title is *Saint Ignatius Loyola* (Burns & Oates; 10s. 6d. net).

Now anything whatever written by Francis Thompson will receive attention. This book will be looked into by many. Few of those who look into it will fail to read it to the end. It is not a large book. It is handsomely printed, and yet more handsomely illustrated. But most of all, there is an individuality about the style of the writing, an individuality which gives the book real distinction. It will afford sincere pleasure to those who know Francis Thompson only from his poetry to find that he was also a master of prose.

Take one isolated paragraph as evidence: 'This man [the man is Loyola], as we have said, held native kindred with the Raleighs and Sidneys, the poet-soldiers and statesmen of our own sixteenth century. Nay, the little imaginative strain, so

scorned of our petty day, inhered in all the lofty souls of that age. It is in the English martyr, bowing his head to the axe of Elizabeth: "Though I shall have a sharp dinner, I trust in Christ I shall have a most sweet supper." It is in his brother-sufferer, pointing at foot of the scaffold to his last sun: "I shall shortly be above yon fellow!" The splendid familiarity of the utterance recalls Falstaff's arrogant terming of the stars "the cinders of the element." Poet, Saint, and Martyrs shared the noble imaginative elevation of their era, in which the spirit of the Goth and the whole once-barbaric West culminated alike for good and evil. Even the Saints of our day speak a less radiant language, and sanctity shows, "shorn of its rays" through the black fog of universal utilitarianism, the materiality which men have drawn into the very lungs of their souls.'

But now to Loyola. How difficult it is to do justice to the founder of Jesuitism. And to come to the book, as we have done, from revelling in a great life of Pascal, doubles the difficulty. But it increases the interest. Especially when we find that this whole-hearted adorer of 'the Saint,' as he devotedly calls him, is able, without driving us off, to rejoice in the very features of Jesuitism which have made it a byword and a hissing. It is in our power to explain the acceptance of these things by a man like Francis Thompson on the supposition that he never really had the opportunity of studying Jesuitism as a system, never the opportunity of knowing what its doctrine of obedience meant to the soul of the man who obeyed, or its doctrine of accommodation to the soul of the man who had sinned. For it is Loyola himself and not his order that caught the imagination of this poet; and the books he read (and he read many books), were read in order that he might know more of 'the Saint,' and let the world know. We may therefore read this book with pleasure without learning to love Jesuitism any more, though we shall probably be unable to read it without learning to love Saint Ignatius Loyola somewhat.