

Point and Illustration.

By Nile and Euphrates.

THE traveller's book of the month is surely Mr. H. Valentine Geere's *By Nile and Euphrates* (T. & T. Clark; 8s. 6d. net). It is an ideal gift-book also, with its flowing style and its fascinating pictures. It carries even the experienced reader of travellers' tales into fresh fields.

This curious character-sketch recalls an incident in the hunting of David by Saul—

A very different character was Suleiman, who visited our camp on New Year's Eve of 1900. He robbed only the rich, and was generous to the poor. Full of dash and of reckless bravery, he was greatly admired by the Arabs, and certainly some of his exploits were remarkable. On one occasion, with the merest handful of followers, he ambushed an official, who was proceeding to take up a Government appointment, accompanied by his wives and a numerous retinue. The great man's flotilla was stopped by Suleiman's party at a point not far from Daghara; the boats were carried by assault; the official himself severely wounded; and the robbers got clear away with a large sum of money and a quantity of jewels. Another time, he broke into the house of the governor of Koot el-Amarah at night, and made his way to the room where the governor was asleep, intending to kill him. Shortly before this, the over-zealous officer of the Government had been very active against the robber, and had actually succeeded in capturing him and sending him a prisoner to Baghdad; but Suleiman escaped from prison, and lost no time in making his way to Koot el-Amarah to pay off the score. Nor did anything but his own chivalry hinder him from taking his revenge; for he easily made his way to the governor's room, and there his enemy lay at his mercy; but the sight of the husband and wife lying side by side touched his compassion and he spared his foe. To prove that he had been in the room he took a revolver from under the officer's pillow, without waking him, and then, having secured a bag of gold, he went off as he had come, unobserved. Next day he sent a message to his enemy, saying, 'Why did you seek to destroy me? Last night I had it in my power to kill you, but God stayed my hand, and I spared you. Now, if you want me, come and take me, man to man.' As proof of his story he returned the revolver; and it is said the governor was greatly impressed at his own narrow escape and his opponent's magnanimity.

This is Mr. Geere's description of a Mesopotamian 'Beauty Bath'—

From the vicinity of the springs the little town (the 'City of Pitch' on the Euphrates) looks most effective. The mound upon this side is quite precipitous, and the buildings rise abruptly from its edge. Several tombs of departed sheikhs are scattered over the desert, perched upon isolated rocks and mounds; and the *saptihs* point out to you a minaret lying some two or three miles distant, saying that

it is a remnant of 'the old town.' To the south of the village, and not far from the river lies another spring, of a different character. It produces no bitumen, but is said to possess wonderful medicinal properties. Said my *saptihs*, 'If you are sick, *effendi*, bathe here and you will be cured. If you are well, a bath will still improve your skin and soften it.' He had just told me that camels and other animals were brought there to be dipped when they were sick, and that the water was efficacious in curing them also. I looked at the pool. It was not attractive, and I decided to dispense with a beauty bath.

But all you can notice for some time is the pitch. It permeates the place and defies you to ignore it. Turn where you will you are met by the smell and sight of it. The houses are daubed with pitch; the water-jars which the women bring from the town to fill at the river are made of reeds and covered with pitch; the *magwarr* that every man has thrust through his girdle is headed with pitch; the very children make clumsy little dolls and figures of animals from pitch; and on all sides of you are coppers for refining the stuff. These coppers or furnaces are built of stone, and consist of one, two, or three boiling pans over an arched fireplace. The fireplace has a door at one side, and a chimney at the other, and the fuel used in it is camel-thorn, vegetable refuse, and a small quantity of inferior pitch. During the process of boiling, the bitumen is well stirred and slightly skimmed with short hooked sticks, and when it is ready for use it is ladled into bowls and baskets and taken off to the yards.

The Making of a Philanthropist.

It is one of the things that still perplex the student of science, why one man turns out a hater of his species and one a lover. For it is a problem that deals with life, and the problems that deal with life are the most perplexing. We cannot tell by science what makes a man a philanthropist. But Christianity helps us. Quintin Hogg became a Christian first and a philanthropist after. Is this not the solution? It was not heredity, but conversion; not birth, but the new birth.

Miss Ethel M. Hogg has published a biography of her father, *Quintin Hogg* (Constable; 12s. 6d. net). It is an unconstrained, open, joyful story. There is nothing to conceal, and nothing is concealed. In this respect the biography of a philanthropist is better than the biography of a politician, or even a king. It is largely the life-history of the Polytechnic. And the Polytechnic deserves to have its history written. But for the present we are concerned with this interesting problem, on which it casts so much light, the making of a philanthropist.

Here is an early glimpse. The philanthropist can laugh—

It was about this time, too, that his solitary meeting with Ruskin occurred. He rushed into a room where his sister Florence was copying a picture of Turner's, and, not noticing a gentleman who was watching her, ran laughingly up to her with some little joke. 'You had better laugh while you can,' suddenly observed a lugubrious voice behind him, 'for every year you live you will become more and more miserable.'

And the philanthropist can play pranks—

During one of his summer vacations some of the family went to Switzerland, taking Quintin and Charles Nicholson (John's brother) with them. They found their Benjamin anything but a restful companion! On one occasion, having possessed himself of a horn similar to the guard's, he succeeded, to his huge delight, in starting the train, and his joy increased tenfold when the infuriated railway officials attacked the party with much vituperation, declaring that 'ce garçon Anglais c'est un veritable diable.'

And the philanthropist believes in conversion. He had just left Eton when he wrote to a chum still there—

As to the use of the word 'converted,' I must say that I fully believe that there is a time in a man's life when he passes from death unto life; nor do I think it stronger to say that a man is converted than that he is born again. Surely there can be no word too strong to express the saving of an immortal soul. We 'have passed from death unto life,' and, moreover, that very idea of substitution, which is, of course, the foundation of our faith, implies doing something by proxy. God requires *my* death for *my*

sin, and so Jesus steps in and pays the penalty which I should otherwise suffer. So when a man sees this and accepts the Substitute of God's providing, I regard it, as I am sure you do, as the greatest conversion or change which a man can undergo.

And the philanthropist can be touched with a feeling for our infirmities. Let him tell this story himself—

Years ago, when I had a class among the flower-girls at Charing Cross, I succeeded in persuading one of them to promise to lead a new and better life, but she wished to postpone her amendment; she promised to give it all up six weeks later, but not just then. In vain I tried to persuade her, thinking it was but a subterfuge and an excuse to avoid making any immediate decision; but the girl stood as firm as a rock—she would do what I wished in six weeks' time. Seeing I could prevail nothing, I desisted, very discouraged, and feeling almost sure that her excuse was only offered in order to be quit of my impotency. Imagine my feelings when at the promised time the girl came, neatly dressed and ready to carry out her promise. And then it leaked out, bit by bit, that at the time when I spoke to her, the friend with whom she lived was on the verge of being confined. It fell to her lot to support her friend in the hour of her weakness, and repugnant as her life had become to her, she actually carried it on for six weeks, till her friend was up and about again, sacrificing herself and imperilling her chance of a new life, out of loyalty to her friend. You can imagine how humbled I felt when this story came out. I had been judging her as one who was giving excuses, but in very truth she had been making a sacrifice of self, which might well bring into my cheek the blush of inferiority and shame. Verily she loved much: to her the Master could say, 'Go in peace.'

The Theology of St. John.

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II. Jesus the Son of God.

THE knowledge of God imparted by Jesus Christ was largely new in its contents: 'for the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.' It was altogether new in its authority, since it came through the person of His Son, the Word who 'was God in the beginning'; it is such knowledge as He alone could give. 'The world hath not known thee'—so spake Jesus to the Father—'but I knew thee.' The specific mark of the Christian revelation is given in the words of our Lord cited by St. Matthew (11²⁷): 'No one knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.' But the

revelation of the Father by Christ raised from the first the question of His own status and origin. In making God known, Jesus was compelled to assert Himself. The Christological problem arose immediately out of the theological, as things appear in St. John's Gospel; the two were interwoven. 'The words which thou gavest me,' says Jesus to the Father respecting His disciples, 'I have given unto them'; accordingly, he who 'denies the Son has not the Father either,' while he who 'confesses the Son has also the Father,'—as John puts it in the Epistle (2²³).

In no single instance in the Synoptic Gospels is