

really not of the slightest consequence which volume is chosen. They are all heroic and they are all dripping with blood-curdling adventure.

Perhaps Captain F. S. Brereton deserves the honour of introducing the list. He has gone, as many a boys' author has gone before him, to the Franco-Prussian War. His book is *A Hero of Sedan* (6s.). And he is a hero. The average schoolboy will follow his fortunes with unflagging interest from the beginning to the end. And as he goes he will learn not a little about the history of the period and the geography of the place.

The other two boys' volumes are by Macdonalds. Alexander Macdonald writes *Through the Heart of Tibet*, and Robert M. Macdonald *The Rival Treasure Hunters* (6s. each). The Rival Treasure Hunters has to do with British Guiana, not an absolutely new field, but fresh enough to be attractive for its own sake. The story is of the usual ad-

venturous favourite, but it is perhaps told in better English than usual.

Mr. Alexander Macdonald has been the better of having Sven Hedin before him. We hope the average English boy will not pronounce the book rot; the adventures are certainly impossible enough to be almost incredible.

But the girls' books are brighter than the boys'. They are very well done indeed, delightfully fresh and wholesome stories. There are two of them—*Saturday's Children*, by Winifred James (6s.), and *Clarinda's Quest*, by Ethel F. Heddle (5s.).

Yet, without gainsaying, the best of Blackie's books this year is *Blackie's Children's Annual* (3s. 6d.)—an old favourite which this time beats itself all to nothing. The story called 'Jock's Stepmother' is alone worth the price of the volume. And there are many other excellent stories and wonderful pictures in colour.

## The Life of Faith.

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### The Issues of Life.

WE have seen that the life of love is also a life of faith, that is, a life of fullest communion, the divine analogy of which is to be found only in the depths of the divine nature. We now have (Jn 15<sup>11-27</sup>) what may well be called 'the Issues of life.' Few Scriptures are so full as this. Every phrase is charged with suggestion, and there is not one that is superficial, each carries us to the very centre of things; each introduces us to some elemental phase of life. In such a case it is not easy to concentrate thought upon the salient points of our Lord's teaching. In mountainous regions where every peak is some gigantic upheaval of the earth, it is not easy to pick out the peaks which are highest: the general elevation makes distinctions difficult.

But as we dwell upon the words gradually, we come to see that one or two ideas stand out from the rest, and the first of these is 'the fulfilment of joy.' In the teaching of Christ there is nothing that frowns upon our common human gladness of heart, but there is no mistaking the positive claim that He makes when He tells us that our joy needs for its fulfilment the joy which is peculiarly His own. In speaking of it He uses an expression

which is constantly repeated.<sup>1</sup> This fulfilling joy is not that which He Himself feels in any one moment of His experience; neither is it the joy which He has it in Him to create. It is the joy which is of His own nature; that which is so truly His own that if it were removed He would be less in Himself than He was before. There is a joy, as there is a love, which is of the very Being of God. What is that joy? Can we describe its qualities? How shall we recognize it if at some time or other it shall touch our lives to make them glorious? The vine, Christ's chosen emblem, teaches us again. If it fulfils its life in sacrifice, then in some way, which 'in hours of insight' we can dimly see, both the love and the commandment, both suffering and its concomitant joy and peace, belong to, are bound up in, the sacrifice for which Christ stands. Is there any joy in sacrifice? Do we not commonly use the word to indicate pain and loss? The answer will depend entirely

<sup>1</sup> ἡ χαρὰ ἡ ἐμή. This form of expression is one of the most strongly marked characteristics of St. John's Gospel. As distinguished from ἡ χαρὰ μου it means the joy which is essentially Mine,—'answers to My nature' (Westcott). Moulton, however, quoting Thumb, suggests that this may be a dialectic use peculiar to Asia Minor (*Grammar of N.T. Greek, Prolegomena*, pp. 40, 41).

upon what we mean by 'sacrifice.' If it means nothing but a sense of loss and privation, then, of course, there is no room for joy. But if it means, as it should do, the making life, with all it holds, sacred by holding it in trust for God,—if it means that moved by love we lay upon the altar all that we have, all that we are,—then the perfect joy which goes with every expression of love is ours, and the greater the gift the more perfect the joy, until when we make the greatest gift of all, and life itself is offered up, there comes to us the fulfilment of joy, the joy which Christ embodied in Himself. It will be no wonder when the life is shared that the joy should be the same.

There is another effect of this shared life to be found in the perfect intimacy which is always the unmistakable gift of love.<sup>1</sup> 'I have called you,'—the relation is established for all time,—'I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.' Then, lest the familiarity should breed contempt, the disciples are reminded that this was 'of grace'; 'ye did not choose me, but I have chosen you.' Not servants, but friends, chosen friends of Christ, sharing with Him the 'all things' which He has known from the Father! This is a description of Christian privilege which 'stops the heart beating and the lips are dumb. Can it be true the grace He is declaring?' Let us note that the knowledge here suggested must be the knowledge of a person; for it is that which comes by love. It means communion; it indicates the committing of oneself to another. When the heart of either lies open to the other, and thought and purpose lie clear, and we know the things we have heard.<sup>2</sup> We are familiar with this in the blessed processes of human friendship. Our Lord shows that it is possible for us to realize the same certainty 'in the heavenly places.'<sup>3</sup> We may know that which belongs to Him, even as He knows the many things that belong to the unplumbed depths of the divine nature. Such things are in the gift of love alone. They came to us as the dear pledges of a perfect fellowship. To love even the heart of God lies open, and man may know its contents.

<sup>1</sup> ἡμῶς εἰρηκα φίλους, where the full force of the perfect will be as indicated.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Matthew Arnold's 'The Buried Life.'

<sup>3</sup> ἐν τοῖς ἐπουράνιοις. This phrase, so characteristic of the Epistle to the Ephesians, is explained as 'the sphere of spiritual activities' by the Dean of Westminster.

There follows upon this perfect intimacy conferred by love, this deep vision into the heart of God, another effect of the life we share with Christ, and we indicate this by the phrase, 'effectual prayer.' The question of the efficacy of prayer has given rise to endless discussions, and we cannot pretend to remove here all the difficulties that gather round the subject. But we may at least claim that relief seems to lie along the line of thought which is being followed in these chapters.

Our Lord holds out to us the largest hope. There is no limit to the promise contained in such words as 'whatsoever ye shall ask,' and 'ye shall ask what ye will.' So far as these words go, those who expect a full answer to their largest petition have abundant ground for confidence. But too often we exclude or forget the conditions laid down by Christ Himself. Those conditions are, in the one verse, 'if ye abide in me,' and in the other, 'if ye ask in my name.' Strange as it may appear, the two phrases mean the same. For the 'Name' means in the Bible what we more often call the nature; and it is IN that nature, made one with it, finding our life in it, and abiding in it, that we shall receive whatever we may ask. The words are as true as they are fraught with blessing to the hungry hearts of men. Ever we come with our petitions, sometimes clamorous enough, sometimes too deep for words: sometimes we ask for the little things of life, sometimes we seek those revelations of God to our souls which go beyond all that we can ask or think. But if we truly live our life with Christ, there will be no petition on our lips other than that which is already in His holy will. That which we ask will always be that which He wills, and His will is that which will be done. 'Thy will be done' is the true prayer of our Lord. It is the type of a perfect petition. We offer it too when we pray 'in his name,' when we 'abide in him.' Made one with Him by faith, we bring to Him our many petitions; we spread before Him our lives empty, hungry, aching, passionate; but never once that we may change His mind; rather that we may seek the more perfect fulfilment of His will. In this, as in everything, we make ourselves one with Him, and if we ask in His name our prayer is certain to be answered.

Joy; the intimate knowledge of perfect friendship; the prayer which marks our oneness of will with the Eternal,—these are manifest issues of

that common life for which vine and branch, and generous fruitage stand. Is there any other? Or have we now exhausted the figure? One other indeed there is. It is the 'fellowship of suffering.' In the words which describe the hatred of the world there is no rancour, no bitterness. Christ recognizes that the hatred of the world comes upon Him because He is what He is, and that it is 'for his name's sake.' His concern is not for Himself, but for His disciples. He strives to make them see that a common life means common suffering; that if men have hated Him, they will also hate them, that the servant is not greater than his Lord. Will the answer spring into vividness within them—'It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Lord'? that is His one concern. In later days Paul prayed that he might know 'the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable to his death.'<sup>1</sup> In these words the ardent spirit of the great Apostle recognized how true to the facts of spiritual life were the words of his Master. He knew they were true because they awoke in him the answering desire. He at any rate could say, 'It is enough for the disciple.'

We know the exaggeration of the truth in such teaching. It is not by the flagellations and the hair shirts of other days that we best fulfil the Lord's purpose. He never bids us seek the suffering, the miseries of physical privation, torture, death. But if these things come to us by reason of our relation to Him, if they are true issues of that life we share with Him, then He calls upon us to accept them, to recognize the pain as the inseparable part of the life, 'to rejoice inasmuch as we are partakers of His sufferings,' to 'think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to prove us, for even hereunto were we called.'<sup>2</sup>

This view of suffering, whether it be that which we are called to bear for righteousness sake, or whether it be that which comes to us by way of

<sup>1</sup> Ph 3<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> 1 P 4<sup>13</sup>.

service, redeems the pain from bitterness. The spirit of complaint, even of self-consciousness, departs from the suffering Christian, and he moves to the life of self-denial to which he is called, or to the actual pain of life, or even to the climax of the hatred of the world and the death it may inflict, with a perfect joy springing up within his heart as he sees that every pain he bears becomes to him the pledge of the reality of that life which he shares with Christ.

In that hour of realized rejection our Lord turns from the weakness of this world's malice and rejection to declare His own power to be manifested presently in the sending of the Spirit of truth, and He calls upon His followers to join that Spirit in bearing witness of Him.<sup>3</sup> The word 'witness,' as used by St. John, is peculiar to him. He uses it of the testimony borne by the Father to the Son, and by the Son to the Father. It stands for 'the absolute coincidence between the will and works of the Father and the will and works of the Son.' In the same way the witness of the Spirit to the Christ, and the witness of His followers, is more the reproduction of the life that is shared than any distant outside testimony that may be borne by word of mouth. And so again, in the closing words of this wonderful chapter, we come upon the idea which runs throughout it, and binds into one great unity the truths that flash out upon us in its words. *One life*, in Him, in us; He the vine, and we the branches. He that abideth in Him beareth much fruit, and every branch that beareth fruit comes under the pruner's knife, and suffers that it may be fruitful. So shall we become His disciples; in joy, in knowledge, in love, and in suffering shall we recognize the life we share with Him, and the reproduction of that life shall be the truest witness which our human can bear to His Divine.

<sup>3</sup> Jn 15<sup>27</sup>. The verb should be taken as imperative, as the R.V. indicates. Westcott, however, prefers the indicative.

## Contributions and Comments.

### John ii. 19.

'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'

THE difficulty of this saying of Jesus lies in the fact that the words bear, and were intended to bear, a double sense. To the listeners they meant that Jesus could rebuild the temple of Herod in three days (Mt 27<sup>40</sup>, Mk 15<sup>29</sup>): what the Speaker meant by them was that His own

'body' would revive after having lain in the grave for a time sufficient to ensure death having certainly occurred. It is not an adequate explanation to say that Jesus used the word 'temple' in a metaphorical sense: in order that the double meaning may stand, the word for 'temple' must, in the language used by Jesus, have actually borne the two distinct senses. The Greek word *naos* is in the LXX the regular equivalent of the Aramaic or Hebrew *היכל*. The original sense of this word is, as we learn from Arabic, 'something colossal,'