

Mrs. A. J. Penny was a student of Böhme for about forty years of her life, and an expositor of the same for at least thirty years. She wrote no books but many magazine articles. Now these articles, contributed either to 'Light' or to 'Light and Life,' together with one article contributed to the 'New Church Independent' of Chicago, have been republished in volume form under the title of *Studies in Jacob Böhme* (Watkins; 6s. net). They make a large and handsome octavo, for there are nine-and-thirty of them, and some are of considerable length.

The resolution to issue Mrs. Penny's articles in this way was wisely taken. There are few ex-

positors of Böhme, almost shamefully few, and even if they had been ten times as numerous as they are, Mrs. Penny would have taken a place among them. So few are they that the editor of this work can name for the use of the student only the article by Mr. G. W. Allen in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, some papers by the same author in the *Seeker*, and Dr. Whyte's monograph entitled *Jacob Behmen, an Appreciation*.

Does the preacher who has not yet discovered Böhme doubt of his practical worth? Let him read the chapter in this book on 'The Doctrine of Vicarious Suffering.'

## The Pilgrim's Progress.

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

### The Second Part.

#### The Characters.

In this part Christiana and Mercy recede somewhat into the background. Mercy finds the Valley of Humiliation congenial, and Christiana shows a fine sympathy with Mr. Fearing, which includes the confession, so true to human nature, that 'she had thought nobody was like her.' That short sentence sums up many volumes of doleful Christian experience. The loneliness of depression is one of its worst elements. Escape from sin comes when we realize that we are only bearing the common lot.

The boys sustain their parts. Matthew has much humility to learn, and much pertness to unlearn. Samuel is a boy who thinks out things, slow but sure. James is irresponsible and old-fashioned and lovable as ever, with his 'No fears, no grace'—a phrase which reminds us absurdly of James' royal namesake and his 'No bishop, no king.'

*Honest* is a splendid piece of portraiture. He is Old Honest, or Father Honest, representative of the bed-rock virtues. It is a vivid scene in which we meet him first, asleep beneath an oak (surely the very tree for Honest to shelter under!), with his clothes and his staff and his girdle all befitting

pilgrimage. He is suspicious and defiant at the first awaking, and has no polite address for unknown folk. Had they been enemies he would have fought as long as breath was in him. And his view of the issue is simple—he would have won, for a Christian is invincible.'

There is a touch of real genius in his disclaiming the name of 'Honesty' and claiming not to be Honest in the abstract but only Honest in the particular; and there is a touch of far more than genius in his being reluctant to tell his name, but confessing that his town had been Stupidity. 'Stupidity is a worse place than Destruction itself; further off from the sun,' says he. And in this we find another of those instances of far insight which are so frequent in John Bunyan. Just as uneducated Mercy is dangerous, as we have seen, so uneducated Honesty is clownish, and indeed further from salvation than the less consistent and more impressionable City of Destruction. There is a word here for the wise regarding present-day reversals of old moral ideals. Certain popular novelists and playwrights are for ever canonizing Honesty as the one all-covering and all-atoning virtue. It would seem that so long as a man will but truly speak out what is in his mind, it does not matter how dangerous or

even brutal a thing it may happen to be. If Bunyan were speaking of such honesty he could not find a more clever description of it than just this, 'It lieth about four leagues beyond the City of Destruction.'

Honesty, however, has the stuff in him of the best kind of manhood. We find him certainly one of the most suggestive and interesting of all our characters. His longer speeches, indeed, tend to platitude, but his descriptions of Fearing and Self-will are most vital pieces of literature. He is a plain blunt man with little or no imagination, but, as he tells us, experience of many kinds of men. He goes straight to the point, and most of what he says is memorable.

### Mr. Fearing.

Mr. Fearing is known to us only by the account given of him by Honest. The main point about him at first sight is that he is 'troublesome.' It is a world in which we all need our courage, and every timid man who will not face his troubles without revealing his fears is an unwarrantable nuisance to other pilgrims. The type of timidity which Mr. Fearing stands for is a peculiarly interesting one. He is endowed with a singular amount of physical and moral courage, but almost destitute of what we may call spiritual courage. He made no stick at the Hill Difficulty, nor did he fear the lions. He went down the Valley of Humiliation so well that it was evident there was sympathy between that Valley and him. He would lie down and kiss the flowers there and be up by break of day for it. In Vanity Fair he would have fought with everybody, so that even Great-heart confesses that he was afraid they would all have been knocked upon the head. On the Enchanted Ground he was wakeful, and indeed in such matters as these he seems to have outdone even the champion in courage. On the other hand, he was in a state of chronic terror about himself and his spiritual condition and final salvation. He lay roaring at the Slough of Despond for long, and Bunyan, playing with the idea of the allegory, knows that he had a Slough of Despond in his own mind. He stood long at the gate of Good-will seeing other people go in but feeling himself unworthy, and at last Good-will had to step out for him if he were to get in at all. Similarly he lay outside the Interpreter's door with

water in his eyes, until Great-heart saw him from a window and had hard work to entreat him to enter. When he saw three men hanged by the wayside he immediately thought that he would be hanged in course of time. Similarly, at the House Beautiful, though the nights were long and cold, he was got in almost before he was willing. In the Valley of the Shadow of Death, although things were specially quiet there, yet he was continually crying out that the hobgoblins would have him. Finally, when he came to the River, he was sure that he would be 'drowned for ever,' and it almost surprises us that he managed to end with the brief words, 'I shall, I shall.' Such natures are particularly trying to strong and courageous people. We have all our own dangers to face and our constant risks to run, and it is apt to irritate us when we see a fellow-pilgrim subjective and self-conscious, as if it mattered more what happened to himself than to all the other pilgrims on the road. In all epidemics there are certain people who cannot realize the widespread misery for the nervous presentiment of their own probable illness and death. Such people are not only poor company, loving to be alone, but they are very provoking. If it be pled that after all they are the worst sufferers, from their unfortunate disposition, one is very much tempted to reply, that they deserve all they get. Nobody is of so much importance as to justify this kind of pusillanimity.

In view of all this there is nothing so striking in the whole allegory as the tenderness with which this troublesome and disagreeable character is treated. Great-heart's tenderness with him is one of Bunyan's finest passages, and the quiet humour that runs through it all only reveals more plainly the great sympathy and gentleness within. Great-heart, indeed, can very well bear with such a troublesome one, for he is well accustomed to them. The Lord at the Interpreter's House carries it very lovingly towards Fearing, and gives him many tit-bits, 'for my master, you must know, is one of very tender compassion, especially to them that are afraid.' The Lord had quieted the Shadow of Death specially for him, and had actually held in check the hobgoblins of which he was in such terror. The explanation must be that, in this particular instance, spiritual cowardice springs from a very great tenderness about sin, a scrupulous and burdened conscience. While

it is true that 'folly and fear are sisters twain,' yet it is also true that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and still less than Bunyan can we afford to lose any instance of a sensitive conscience, however crude and exaggerated it may be.

This is one explanation of Great-heart's kindness to him. In the Puritan mind there was a great trust in conscience, and any man whose fear sprang from that source was congenial and honoured. But another reason for Great-heart's kindness is that, as Renan says, 'No one is so tender as the austere man.' The truly strong man knows, as no one else can know, how great the strain has been. Like the Herakles in Browning's *Balaustion's Adventure*:

So long as men were only weak, not bad,  
He loved men.

So Great-heart passes, in one of the finest passages in the book, into a discourse about Fearing. At the worst it had been the weakness of his mind that made him liable to annoyance from the 'things that were his troublers,' and not weakness either of conscience or of spirit. The whole-hearted rashness of Fearing in *Vanity Fair*, while it endangered Great-heart's head, had strongly enlisted his sympathy; so in this musing he falls into that curiously exquisite passage about the music of life, and the bass as the ground of all music. It is a word to all wise optimists, and a true and memorable one. To ignore sorrow and danger is no true courage. To see the sad side of life and to realize the tremendous powers of evil and of sorrow is indeed the beginning, not only of wisdom, but of all courage worth the name.

### Self-will.

Self-will is the other character discussed by Mr. Honest—the 'High Bass' contrasting with Fearing's 'Low Bass.' He was a man who never came in at the gate, and who was a law unto himself all through, caring neither for man, argument, nor example. He represents that antinomian type which has been curiously associated with pilgrimages all through time. It is notorious that in the Crusades, the vices as well as the virtues of pilgrims were let loose upon the world. One may see the same fact in the conversation of Chaucer's *Canterbury Pilgrims*, and at this day

there is an Arab saying in regard to the Mecca Pilgrimage of the Haj: 'If a man has been to Mecca once, be careful; if he has been twice, cut him dead.' For all such people, the main thing is to be a pilgrim, not to be a good man—pilgrimage standing instead of all the other virtues. Self-will backed his opinions by Scripture, quoting freely such names as David, Solomon, and Sarah. He would have been better of a little of the Higher Criticism, had that been known in his day, to give him a sense of the development of moral conceptions, and to assure him that all Scripture is not given for our following the example of the lives recorded in it. Yet even upon the old lines it might have occurred to him that while David was a great sinner he was also a great repenter—a distinction not without a difference.

The distinction here drawn is between sins of infirmity and sins of presumption; between the child who falls down, blown over by a blast of wind, and him who wallows in the mire like a boar blinded by the power of lust. The point that he raises is this, that if you have the virtues of pilgrims you may have their vices, and they will not be accounted against you. If you are a David you may commit adultery, and so on. The immediate allusion is doubtless to the Ranters, those wild Antinomians of the seventeenth century; and the list of opinions such as, 'it is time enough to repent when you come to die,' is doubtless borrowed from them. It is a very subtle and persistent illusion and danger. The whole moral of Goethe's *Faust* is just this, that a man is safe as long as he strives against his sin, however much he commits; but that to settle down in sin and be satisfied with what Mephistopheles can give you is the final and only damnation. As to the other point which Self-will raises, it is one which recurs continually in such biographies as those of Nelson and of Wellington. It is extremely difficult, in judging others, not to allow their supreme services to the State, or their otherwise lovable character, to entirely excuse any private vices which they may have cherished. The reply is that, after all, we have little to do with the judgment of other men, but that in judging ourselves one thing must be kept absolutely clear. Vice is vice, and sin is sin, and must be judged as if it were the only quality of the life, and not in connexion with other condoning and compensating characteristics. Virtue is a

seamless robe, and to break one commandment is to break the whole of the law, to nullify the effect of character.

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?  
None of the sins,—but this or that fair deed  
Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.<sup>1</sup>

Honest's remark about Self-will is significant. 'Why,' says Self-will, 'to do this by way of opinion, seems abundant more honest than to do it and hold contrary to it in opinion.' Here is the opposite doctrine from that of Faust justified on a plea of honesty. Honesty, in fact, has become a devilish habit of calling a spade a spade, and then asking no question as to whether you may not be digging with it your own grave or some other man's. It is not enough that it should be a spade. It is demanded that it should be a spade used for right ends. But this false honesty which prefers bluff to failure in every case, then and now has a habit of whitewashing vices and imagining that by honestly so doing it has changed them into virtues. If Mr. Fearing played upon the bass and found it the ground of all music, here is a man whose ground is the treble of the Venusberg, which is ultimately the ground of all discord.

### Great-heart.

In this whole passage the hero appears in a more genial light, letting himself go freely, with a frequent gleam of good-humour and even of banter. It seems to be in the company of his own sex that he thaws and shows his more natural side. There is a great deal of subtlety in the portraiture of this character, and it is notable that while he is very much pleased with Honest's sage counsels to Matthew and the rest, he never talks like that himself. The conventional platitudes of religion were the proper thing to be pleased with, and neither Great-heart nor Bunyan enters any protest against them; but when they are free to talk their own language it is seldom conventional.

The joy that hailed Great-heart's coming, and indeed the whole passage, presents an interesting parallel to the wonderful story of Herakles in *Balaustion's Adventure*. His type of religiousness is deep, and yet broadly human; and his saying about Christian is characteristic of himself,—Christian 'was beloved of his God; and also he had a good heart of his own.' He is essentially a

<sup>1</sup> D. G. Rossetti, *House of Life*, lxxxv.

fighting man, who loves to look upon the 'bright face of danger' and enjoys a brisk encounter. He reminds us of Captain Good's saying in Africa, 'That a row is good at any time.' Like all true fighting men he is always on the alert, looking well to his feet. He has learned from Luther a certain braggadocio of faith, and 'is not afraid of all the Satans in Hell.' He is a sort of Oliver Cromwell as he sings, 'Until that I, Great-heart, arise, the pilgrims guide to be,' etc. He is a sort of Philip Sidney in his chivalrous fair play to Maul, when he lets him get up that he may be refreshed before he fight him again. His tenderness to all faults is most touching, as we have seen in regard to Fearing. As to Christian, he explains his failures in the Valley of Humiliation, 'but we will leave the good man, he is at rest, he also had a brave victory over his enemy; let Him that dwelleth above grant that we fare no worse, when we come to be tried, than he.'

It is as a man of experience that Great-heart impresses us most of all. There is a splash of his own blood upon him at all times. He is personally with us, and takes us into confidence about his own life. He also, like Fearing, finds the Valley of Humiliation congenial, for he has found that the only real greatness comes through Humiliation. Nor is his experience kept merely for his own ruminations, still less for boasting. It is to comfort others that he says, 'I have often gone through this Valley,' the Valley where a man has to pray and fight at the same time. As to the end, his is too simple a nature for modern subtleties about duty for duty's sake, and he frankly hopes for a reward at last.

His humanness and humility are, however, not a matter merely of disposition. Duty is the bottom rock of life for Great-heart, and even these interesting and attractive temperaments are due to a sense of it. 'It is my duty,' said he, 'to distrust my own ability,' and so on. And if, sometimes, the strain of the life tells even upon him, duty supplies the answer immediately. 'Some have also wished that the next way to their father's house were here, that they might be troubled no more with either hills or mountains to go over, but the way is the way, and there is an end.'

### The Valley of Humiliation.

Before closing this section, we must revert for a moment to the 'Valley of Humiliation' with which

it began. It has been supposed that this Valley was suggested by the very steep descent to Millbrook,<sup>1</sup> which lies a few miles to the south-west of Bedford, and with which Bunyan must have been familiar. It is only a mile or two distant from those Ampthill Heights on which the supposed House Beautiful is built, and while under certain atmospheric conditions the descent appears exceedingly ominous and gloomy, it is a singularly beautiful place of lush green grass and thick woods. The point that is emphasized here is the difference between the appearance of the Valley to different people. While Christian had found it so dreadful a place, Mr. Fearing was happier there than at any other part of the journey. In any cross section of literature the same phenomenon may be found. James Thomson and Robert Browning will sing you songs of precisely the same experiences, and one will be an Ode of Triumph, and the other the dirge of the City of Dreadful Night. The obvious explanation is the difference between the mental and moral life of the writers.

But in Great-heart's discussion of the Valley of Humiliation we are brought down to still more minute detail in the analysis of character. Mr. Fearing takes humiliation gently and rejoices in lowliness, because of his gentle and unassuming nature. Christian is essentially a proud man. Accordingly, he is much blamed for those slips which he encountered in going down from the House Beautiful to the Valley. In the First Part the slips

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Foster, *Bunyan's Country*, chap. iv.

were quite casually mentioned, but now attention is entirely fixed upon them, and we are told that he would have found nothing too hard if it had not been for them. There is indeed an amusing little touch of what might almost be called rationalism in this connexion, where we are told that the reason for the hard name which this Valley has got is that 'the common people, when they hear that some frightful thing has befallen such an one, in such a place, are of opinion that that place is haunted with some foul fiend or evil spirit; when, alas! it is for the fruit of their doing that such things do befall them there.' The Valley of Humiliation is indeed a fat land, and fine in summer-time, but Christian is in the winter of his discontent, and carries his climate within, just as Mr. Fearing carried a Slough of Despond within him. Christian is that sort of man, and in this is very different from Hopeful as well as from Fearing. His pride, together with 'Forgetful Green,' explains the whole trouble. 'It is when they forget what favours they have received, and how unworthy they are of them, that pilgrims meet with Apollyon there.' For the mind free from pride, and making no great demand or claim for itself, the Valley is a wholly delightful place of luxury and rich gifts, free from the noise and hurrys of life, and full of the sound of singing. In this fact the new Christian grace of humility vindicates itself, and, bringing a peculiar blessedness, outwits the pagan joy of pride.

## Contributions and Comments.

### The Parable of the Mustard Seed.

HOLTZMANN, in his *Life of Jesus*, says of this parable: 'The Parable of the Mustard Seed was evidently handed down incorrectly from the first. The little mustard seed does not grow into a very large bush, nor is the mustard seed smaller than all the seeds of the earth. But the Parable of the Leaven shows clearly what the original version was. As leaven leavens a great quantity of flour, so the little mustard seed has a very sharp and pungent taste; in like manner, a short exhortation by a preacher may produce a powerful

revolution in the hearer.' Holtzmann thinks the motive for the alteration is to be found in the saying of the Lord in Mt 17<sup>20</sup> = Lk 7<sup>6</sup>, where the mustard seed is contrasted with a mountain or a mulberry tree (*σικάμινος*). As far as Western ideas are concerned, a nut or an apple-pip would have served the purpose of the figure equally well.

Bruce, in his *Parabolic Teachings of Christ*, alludes to the possibility of the parable being susceptible to the application of the individual, the mustard seed being made to represent the same thing as the leaven; that is, not the in-