The Fraternal.

Vol. VIII. MARCH, 1914.

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IN MEMORIAM.

NEWTON HERBERT MARSHALL, M.A., PH.D.

We are Christians, and therefore assured that both for him and for ourselves all things work together for good. Nevertheless, our sense of loss is overwhelming as we think on the removal of the beloved, trusted and most capable leader who was in truth the father, founder and guiding spirit of the B.M.F.U. Biographical Sketches have appeared elsewhere, and we have reason to anticipate that a complete description of our friend's achievements and character will in due course be given to the public. But we have our point of view, and we gratefully pay our own tribute to Newton Marshall.

He was passionately devoted to the idea of the fraternity of fellow-workers for the Church and the Kingdom of God, and already in his student days at the Midland College, strove to give expression to it. It was on his initiative that a conference of representative students from Regent's, Rawdon, Manchester, Aberystwyth and Bristol was held at Nottingham in May, 1896.

This conference called into existence the Baptist Students' Fraternal Union, with the *Collegian* as it its Organ, "edited by N. H. Marshall, B.A." Its early numbers contain some characteristic contributions from his pen, and his strong editorship made the magazine exceedingly welcome. Who can forget the vigour and audacity of "College Chat, recorded by the Editor's Blotting Pad," in which the doings in our various seminaries were cast into the form of a conversation in the editorial sanctum? The deeper matters were not forgotten: *e.g.*, a most suggestive and helpful meditation on prayer headed, "The Spirit Himself" (unsigned), came from his pen.

The ideas and experiences of college days found a wider field of application in the founding of the B.M.F.U., of which he was the first chairman, and in the editing of the *Fraternal.* What Newton Marshall has been as an inspirational force in connection with our Union cannot be told. It was inevitable—in view of the range of his outlook and the special training he had received—that other claims should compete with ours. The European work had a special fascination for him, and the Free Church Council and the Swanwick Fellowship; but in these, too, his sense of the fraternity of the ministry guided much that he did and attempted. Not a few of our fellow-ministers on the Continent were in constant correspondence with him, and his sympathy and counsel were unfailing. In many ways (to name but one, by arranging for the regular sending of the *Baptist Times* to a large number of men working abroad) he wrought for the closer and wider union of the ministry, and the same ideal was always present in his leadership of the Baptist group associated with Swanwick. Best of all, a gracious brotherliness found expression in his personal attitude to his brethren. He permitted his wide learning and his great gifts to form no barrier to his intercourse, and counted no service small or despicable. Private papers left by him reveal many a kindly

deed on behalf of men working in hard conditions, and of impoverished Churches; and we marvel that he was able to spare so much time and thought amid his literary activities and the responsibilities of a leading London Church.

We attempt no eulogy; he needs none. We cannot express our sorrow at his removal. The memory of him will always be cherished, and the inspiration of his life will abide. We thank God for Newton Marshall.

J.H.R.

The Human Side of Ministerial Life.

By ALLAN M. RITCHIE. M.A.

There is a human side of the ministerial life to be lived, seen, appropriated and enjoyed. There is a humanity which is moral dynamic, and which has tonic properties of a mental and physical kind. A minister can miss being his real self, to the detriment of his work and influence, and with loss to his congregation. There is a "buttoned-up," frock-coated, condensed sort of existence, out of which the real man only peeps now and again. But the religious sanities are embedded in the humanities. There is no offensive humour, or laughter, in the New Testament; but there is the constant and persuasive appeal of a rational and reasonable humanity. The offending of those sectional religious cults and schools, who "ride to death" some single aspect of Christian teaching, lies in this, that they have, somehow, done despite to the organic humanity of the whole. The aspect of Truth which they have seized on is there, the specific doctrine. But only a twig of the bush is burning: the whole bush is not

ablaze! The spiritual beauty is lost, because the human perspective is "out of joint." The surprise of Jesus was the surprise of His Humanity. It was the "setting" of the Divine that exasperated; "Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? They were ready for the "sign from heaven," but not for what was seemingly so explicable, so near — "nearer than breathing, closer than hands and feet." It was all too life-like. It was too immensely human to be real. The contact was too close, too severe, too searching, too realistic. "We will not have this Man to reign over us."

We are ministers of this same insistent Humanity with its fine hold and grip upon life. The servant is not above his Lord even in this, in a certain faithfulness to himself, in insisting upon the fundamental claims of his own genuine self. We have "the treasure in the earthen vessel" for the sake of "the excellency of the power." The message is in the man.

Our ministerial work and experience turns its human side upon us a species of test of our "make-up." The unvarnished humanity of our people looks out at us now and again with manifest intent to cheer and hearten; or some one, with happy daring and with a twinkle in his eye, "gets at us," in some criticism or banter, just to see if we are "the right sort"—human, indeed, like himself! This irresistible anxiety to get behind the "parson," at the man, is no doubt a salutary discipline for us. It suggests the human levels of approach, and insinuates the way to conquest. It seems to say, "We rather like you, and we want to *believe* in you; you are a capital 'Guide,' and we give you all the credit of your philosophy; but have you the primal qualities of human comradeship? Can you cast your vessels in the clay ground?" By the way, where were we first called "parsons?" The distinctive garb alone did not do it! Something must have been "put on" with it. True, the harmless epithet is often used

in a happy and affectionate way; yet, hidden often in its heedless use, there is the half-flash of a protest, a half cynical demand for the man! "You should play with the Rev. Mr. X," said a golfing enthusiast to a friend the other day, "he is different from the ordinary parson." "But he *is* a parson," replied his friend. "Oh, yes! but he can talk about anything." I hasten to add that the compliment had no reference whatever to the aforesaid gentleman's behaviour "through the green."

Then again, there are occasions in the minister's experience which demand the grace of a robust and almost invulnerable humanity. We are compelled to turn the big human side upon a situation. There is an accommodating saintliness which is sheer waste on some folk. There are good people who will walk in triumph for many days after having "criticised" the minister, provided, I mean, he has taken it as a minister, and not as a man! Here is some "pet scheme" we have launched. Our deacons have blessed it, and foreshadowed its success. By and by, it takes its place among the other organisations of the Church. And then we go in and out among the people in tentative but expectant mood to enjoy the universal commendation, when lo, and behold, some comparatively obscure member pours contempt on the whole thing! It is the hour of our testing. Have we the courage to own the strange but common mistake we often make of imagining that everybody must be enthusiastic and ready to applaud? How do we take it? Have we the humanity to admire the daring of the "obscure one," and his scorn of those who have not the courage of the negative? Have we "grit and gumption" enough to appreciate the fine humanity of the chastisement?—and, of course, plod on our way rejoicing! Or, why should we not console ourselves with the reflection that in every Church there is a coterie of critics, an "opposition" which ensures discipline in the humanities, and that, as a rule, the edge of their opposition is somewhat blunted by over-devotion to their

art! They have unlearned the art of mingling praise with blame. They make the mistake of becoming a "school." To be labelled "agin the government" is the sad end of some! There would seem to be an apotheosis of contrariness.

Do not imagine that I am advocating any light-hearted conception of the ministerial office. No Baptist minister, at least, can come near to wearing the motley and live. But he should be able to sleep o' nights, and enter into life neither halt nor maimed during the day. No article these days is complete without some reference to the Sustentation Fund. And there are human freedoms implicit in the scheme; the liberation of the real man from a material bondage which often stunts the self. Henceforth there will be some margin for the play of human faculty. The yoke will still be there; but it will fit the neck better—the burden will be eased and lightened. Can it be supposed that a man can be his real self on £60 a year—a slave to none, and a free bond-servant of his Lord?

I seem to have sadly digressed—the obsession of Sustentation! But the Fund has been responsible for many a digression. My thesis, if I may so dignify these ramblings, includes the art of detachment. We need to stand back a pace or two, and survey the scene, and watch the play of light and shade, the little humours and conceits. We need time and distance to laugh or play ourselves into good humour, into companionable mood. Our work should contribute something to our sheer humanity, whether it be in Switzerland, or at the fireside, or on the golf links. "Remember you are not made of iron," said a friend to a busy minister, I mean a busy, busy minister. The machine is human, a subtle organism, with even subtler inter-actions. It has all the unities, all the cohesiveness, the mutualities of an organism. This sounds rather grand, but for practical purposes it means that for the sake of the "minister," the "man" must be organised. If the minister is to preach, the man must think: if he is to run, the

man must rest. The cure of souls includes the care of self.

And now that at last I have struck a really serious note, let me sound it to the end. The demands thicken upon us, the strain increases, engagements multiply, and we make *resolutions*. Yes, we do; and in the face of a convicting diary! Some day soon, of course, we intend growing the courage which leisure for work demands. We are to end this slavery to the affirmative! There is to be a quiet submission to Home Rule. Meanwhile, however, the atmosphere of mild domestic mutiny continues. It seems to be the inevitable contradiction of the ministry, that we should preach and extol the virtues we are unable to practise. We advance with conviction the necessity of a weekly Day of Rest, and our Mondays are "booked" for months ahead! We boldly "out-do" the Scriptural injunction of the second mile. But —the danger of the third, the self-imposed "extra," is this: something may give way! As Geoffrey Palmer put it to his ministerial son, "Something may snap." Is it wisdom to exceed the "speed limit?" All the authorities of the Law and the Humanities are behind it! But, I am preaching. Let me end with my text—

"*To thine own self be true.*"

"They sweetest sing who see aright
A beauty in the darkest night,
And hear some music ringing still
O'er bitter waste and barren hill;
Whose hearts are with each lonely thing.
They sweetest sing!"

The Morale of Mirth.

By ETHEL M. FORBES.

"E'en as he trod that day to God, so walked he from his birth,
In simpleness, and gentleness, and honour, and clean mirth."

In a clever article in the *New Statesman* on "Christmas," the writer refers to the decline of the old-fashioned sort of Protestantism—the sort of Protestantism for long rife in Scotland—which saw the Pope behind every bush, including every holly bush. In the same way we might write of the decline of the Puritan temper in its first austerity, which looked askance at mirth. Puritanism made its bid for acceptance, and failed in its latter end because it did not allow for diversity in the complex nature and variety of man. It did not persuade the worldling that the joy of the Lord could counterbalance the pleasures but for a season—

"Dost thou think because thou art virtuous
There shall be no more cakes and ale?"

was the unregenerate retort. And the presentation of a Christianity, even at this good hour, that can only make a Scotch stable lad, being approached on the matter of personal religion, bleat: "But I'm awfu' feared, mum, I could na' keep it up," has surely not struck the right note.

In differing flavour, mirth knows nationality, but is free of age and custom. We are familiar with tne current conception of the Scot, for instance—hard-headed, argumentative, requiring a surgical operation to get a joke into him. He ranks in the popular estimate with Dr. John Brown's historic terrier, whose "life was full o' sairiousness to him—he just never could get

eneuch o' fechtin'." But I should like at the same time to remind my readers of the hymnal perversion of our Old Hundredth Metrical Scotch Psalm:

"Him serve with mirth."

Who, south of the border, took it upon himself to substitute "fear" for "mirth?" as though Jehovah were ill-pleased at religious hilariousness, the Father frowning down the mirth of the child-heart, which His Son urged as the temper of the twice-born—those worthy to enter the Kingdom. There is a time for mirth and a time for soul solemnity. There is no unfitness in the Christian scheme of things in lively mirth, except we let it defraud the supreme hours of reverence which life, which experience, demand of us. The attitude of negation to mirth receives no commendation from Christ when mirth is seemly. In the playground of the soul, "We have piped unto you, and ye did not dance," was said in rebuke of older children who should have known better. There was no virtue in the restraint.

It is perhaps because our imagination cannot sanctify much of what we call secularity, that the Christian is often incapable of seeing the balance of things. It needs unwarped vision, a certain venturing outside the accepted verdict, not knowing whither we go. Here and there a soul has it. In my daily portion lately, I woke to a sort of deprecating surprise that some verses in ii. Kings should suggest a fecund mind like Chesterton's. "He spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." Chesterton has evolved some daring thoughts, too daring perhaps for the orthodox concept of a sanctified man. Take the concluding words of the last essay in "Orthodoxy"—"In reverence," he writes, "there was something that Christ covered constantly, by abrupt silence or impetuous isolation. There was one thing that was too great for God to show us when He walked

upon our earth; and I have sometimes fancied that it was His mirth." Is it, after all, more daring for a modern man so to speak than the Psalmist who affirmed that "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh?" Has up-welling mirth no part in the Creator, who made man in the Divine Image, and evolved in him springs of involuntary laughter? If the God we worship can indulge in ironic laughter at man's folly, would it be less divine that He should smile with His children's saving sense of humour in the stress of things?

It was no purveyor of mere pleasantry who wrote: "I will say boldly that no man feels himself master of his work unless he can afford to jest about it: and that a frolicsome habit of mind is rather a token of deep, genial and superabundant vitality, than of a shallow and narrow nature, which can only be earnest and attentive by conscious and serious effort." It was Kingsley, on whose heart lay the problems of the poor—whose sword slept not in his hand for the cause of the sweated—who went up into the pulpit with the burden of preaching so heavy on him that he wished he was dead, and coming down wished he was 'deader.' The man, moreover, with such child-like hilarity of mind, that the same pen which wrote "Yeast," and "Alton Locke," produced the "Water Babies," to the undying gratitude of the generations.

In the stress of campaigning, when soldiers are on the march, it has been found that to feed them on a larger percentage of sugar increases their staying power. And for man girded for the greater fight against principalities and powers, laughter, "the sweet of life" can ease a strain which otherwise might meet the fate of the over-taut bow.

I contend that world-wide anomalies, national injustices, blind prejudices, individual peccadilloes can often be brought home to the seat of judgment in man by the ironic pages—picture and letterpress—of our national mirth magazine, *Punch*, in a way that moral appeals and serious argument sometimes fail to achieve

for lack of illuminating power. Is it altogether perversity on our part that the *bon mot* lingers with us when the abstract principle tends to fade from memory?

In the City from which we go no more out, the Prophet promises us p aying children in the streets, and so I look for mirth in heaven. For is not play just mirth in action—the soul's laughter in lip and limb?