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And the mendicant orders still retained their influence; the people trusted them both in temporal and spiritual matters.

Speaking generally, the laity were not hostile to the Church. Many men of the higher classes would have been glad to lay hands on its property, and in the towns there were causes of friction between the citizens and the clergy. But there was no breaking away from the established religion. Its external observances were diligently followed. Dr. Fueter lays stress on the popularity of the pilgrimages. Perhaps something might also have been said about the large number of fine churches which date from the fifteenth century. Many of them must have been built mainly by devoted parishioners. Leland writes concerning one with which we are very familiar that 'Abbot William made the east ende of the Church. The parishioners had gathered a £200, and began the body of the Church, but that summe being not able to performe soe costlie a worke, Rafe Boteler, Lord Sudeley, helped them, and finished the work.' This is stronger evidence than many journeys to the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

One of the most remarkable facts which come out in these pages is the failure of the Lollards to win a strong position in England. No doubt the explanations here given are conclusive. Wickliffe's followers contented themselves too readily with denunciations of the things they disliked. They lacked a strong, positive programme. And as soon as the ecclesiastical authorities were convinced that the sting of the movement had been drawn, they were astute enough to leave it alone. We have in this essay a good account of that remarkable man, Reginald Pococke, no Lollard, yet one of the few bishops deposed for heresy. The book ends with a Latin sermon, prepared for delivery before the Convocation which met on 18th July 1483. This discourse, which, for some reason or other, was not delivered on that occasion, and is now printed for the first time, tells strongly in favour of Dr. Fueter's general view of the situation. The preacher evinces considerable alarm lest the laity should interfere in drastic fashion to terminate scandals: 'Si quis habet, quod ad emendationem status clericalis ususve ecclesiasticae jurisdictionis in publicum ferre expediat, veniat ad ecclesiam, proponat, quae sibi proponenda videntur, in hoc coetu praelatorum et cleri, habemus hic aptissimum auditorium remotum a laicis, in quo Chain [a misspelling, doubtless, of *Cham*] filius nequam, qui patris verenda non celat, neque sedem neque vocem habiturus est.'

JOHN TAYLOR.

Winchcombe.

The Pilgrim's Progress.

BY THE REV. JOHN KELMAN, JUN., M.A., EDINBURGH.

Obstinate and Pliable.

IT is a curious fact this of the neighbours meddling with a man's religious life. One would think it easy for people to mind their own business, but in this matter it never is. The sudden earnestness of a companion makes him a living conscience, irritating other consciences around him.

This is the first of those couples, or small groups, in the choice of which Bunyan shows himself so great a master of antithesis. Passion and Patience, Evangelist and Worldly Wiseman. Timorous and Mistrust, etc., are all significant and suggestive. Here as elsewhere the names are simple English words, in striking contrast with the fanciful names of the Euphuists, or even those of many religious writers (cf. William Law's Fulvius, Caelia, etc.), Obstinate and Pliable are two opposite and common types. They appear in Lord and Lady Macbeth, and many other instances. Here, seen in extreme form, they show the worst products of what Matthew Arnold has called the Hebraic and Hellenic tendencies, detached from religion. These are deep-seated elements in human nature and permanent factors in history. Here, therefore, we are at a point of peculiar interest and importance, watching Christianity touching these, and seeing the various effects produced, as a powerful chemical produces different reactions in different substances it touches.

It is to be noted that first these two resolved to fetch Christian back by force, but that later on they

changed their minds, Christian being the sort of man to make them think twice before attempting it.

Obstinate.

There was enough in Bunyan's own experience to let him know Obstinate from within. 'In these days I would find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against His holy word; I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door, to keep Him out' (*Grace Abounding*). Here, however, we have the type full-drawn and unrelieved.

1. *A narrow man*, and therefore unintelligent. In the 'narrow forehead' of this fool there is room for only one idea at a time. He knows not the width of the world nor the manifold height and depth of human experience. The only use that he makes of his mind is, as Dr. Kerr Bain happily says, to make it up. He is all will and no thought, though indeed this is rather an animal habit of *staying put* than anything that ought to be called will. The object of this stupid persistency may be either some trifle which has chanced to become his hobby, or it may be a blind attachment to the present order, or a worship of consistency, according as the man is vain or servile or self-conscious.

2. *A self-conceited man*, for this Obstinate is of the vain class as well as of the worshippers of consistency. He cannot bear to confess that he ever made a mistake. He will not revise his course of conduct, but will carry it on after he sees it to be foolish or bad, simply because he has made it his. This is cleverly shown by his estimate of others. They are 'craz'd-headed coxcombs.' The twelfth juryman, alone in his opinion, finds the others the eleven most obstinate men he has ever met. It is a characteristic view of others, whether they are seen in books or persons. To advise him is to alienate him. Like a Brahmin, he finds the place on which your shadow has fallen defiled by it. He will oppose everything in which he has not had a hand, or rather he must be all or nothing.

3. *A bad-tempered man.* His arguments are interjections and bad names. He hates arguments, because he cannot bear to be opposed. Any one who knows the subject well enough to argue about it, seems to be doing him a personal injury. The silence of Christian towards Obstinate is wise. Temper like this shows a weak man. Obstinacy to the shallow appears strength, but really it is often a kind of instinctive trick of self-protection for the weakest characters, just as its refusal to argue is an instinctive cover for the conscious ignorance of the most poorly equipped minds. Yet this man will persist in it with determination to the very last. He is 'obstinate in destruction.' Like the athlete who knows that the overstrain of his race is killing him, like the man of whom Professor Drummond used to speak, who deliberately sacrificed his eyesight to his vice, this man goes conscious to his doom. To put down your foot firmly is a good habit; but to put it down firmly on thin ice over deep water spells death.

The chief reason for such fatal obstinacy lies in the region of conscience. To know the better and do the worse embitters a man. Misery of temper is the effect of rejected truth, and hardness of heart is the penalty of experience ignored or repudiated. There may be a hint of this in his reference to the 'company of these craz'd-headed coxcombs.' Had he, one wonders, been of that company himself? At all events, fewer people fall upon bitterness like this through native disposition than through turning their backs to the light. 'A little grain of conscience made them sour.'

Pliable.

This splendidly drawn character epitomizes himself in the inimitable touch, 'I begin to come to a point,' just as Mr. Blindman, the foreman of the Vanity Fair jury, says, 'I see clearly that this man is a heretic.' Bunyan knew Pliableness as well as Obstinacy by experience, for indeed the changes of mood in *Grace Abounding* become almost monotonous. But Bunyan, like Peter, had his originally pliable nature tempered into fine steel.

It is the picture of a slight, impressionable, easily influenced character, of the sort which affords such sport in the plays of Shakespeare and Sheridan. He is a man without backbone, failing in will and decision, just as Obstinate failed in intelligence and feeling. He has neither conscience nor faith nor sense of duty of his own. He is one of those feeble fellows whom R. L. Stevenson describes as 'creatures made of putty and packthread, without steel or fire, anger or true joyfulness in their composition.' A man like this has, properly speaking, no character at all. The spiritual vision of faith and the moral sense of duty are the secrets of a steadfast soul. They are the rudder of the ship in motion, and the anchor of the ship at rest.

On the whole, Obstinate is a better and more hopeful man than Pliable. Perverse though he be, and boorish beside this other, yet there is character in him, and more can be made of him.

Pliable appears to be a gentleman, and rebukes Obstinate for reviling. Indeed, as Dr. Whyte says, 'Obstinate's foul tongue has almost made Pliable a Christian.' What is the worth of gentlemanliness? Much, every way, and Ruskin states a truth well worth attending to when he says that taste is morality. From the days of Chaucer's 'verray parfit gentil knight,' the ideal of the English gentleman has been one of God's greatest gifts to England. But morality is more than taste, and it is not without significance that George Herbert introduces his great picture of the English gentleman, not in the Church but in the Church porch. Morality is more than taste, and to be a Christian is more than only to be a gentleman. Dr. Whyte quotes Thomas Goodwin's saying that 'civil men are the world's saints,' and in truth a well-mannered man is forgiven almost anything. Pleasant manners may cover very bad character, and it is character that counts. True gentlemanliness, it has been aptly said, is only polished manliness.

1. What affects Pliable? Unlike Obstinate, the spiritually stupid man, he has a nimble imagination. But it is a wrong sort of imagination, a faculty of day-dreaming, which is the slave of a sensuous and pleasure-loving nature, while the will meekly follows it down the line of the least resistance. Here we see this imagination revelling in the purely spectacular. For British people, the spectacular is an acquired taste, and any branch of art is degenerate in which that is substituted for deeper and more serious sources of interest. There has, however, been one curious exception to this, in the conceptions which religious people of many sects have borrowed and materialized from the apocalyptic visions of heaven. It is such a spectacle that fascinates Pliable—a mere celestial show, thick with tinsel. What he takes for religious fervour is but a refined form of the lust of the eyes. What would this man have done if he had reached heaven? He had no character, no faith nor love, to give him enjoyment in its real joys. Imagine him talking for five minutes with one of the prophets, and you shall see the small soul of him shrivel up until like the greater Lippo Lippi, 'mazed, motionless, and moonstruck,' he cries for 'a hole, a corner to escape.'

2. What persuades him? Persuasion is a very serious matter, for it means that a mind has given itself over to another's influence. When St. Paul says *I am persuaded*, which he seldom does, we feel that we are looking on at a tragic crisis. One sentence will show us the quality of Pliable's persuasion. 'And do you think,' says he, 'that the words of your book are certainly true?' 'Yes, verily,' is the reply, 'for it was made by him that cannot lie.' There is no argument there but mere statement, but it is characteristic of the man that he is satisfied. In the main he listens, and his questions are not searching. He is the sort of man who is fond of confidential talk, who likes to whisper in a corner where 'there are none but us two here.' But he has nothing intelligent to add to the conversation. In fact, he has no more learned the use of his mind than Obstinate has. If Obstinate's mind was only there to be made up, Pliable's was only there to be handed over. The dangers of reason in religion have been often dwelt on. From the time of Newman onwards there has been a persistent modern fashion of setting up faith in a fallacious rivalry to it. But the want of reason is a greater danger to religion than reason ever can be. The refusal to think fosters a slim faith which is nothing more than the desire to believe, and the faith of Pliable is pilloried beside the faith of Obstinate as an equally dangerous example of a man who does not know the use of his mind.

Pliable's deepest fault was what Professor Drummond has called *Parasitism*. 'Trust thyself,' says Emerson, 'every heart vibrates to that iron string.' Not Pliable's heart! He leans on others and needs company. His characteristic question is, *And what company shall we have there?* Like all irresolute men he is bad company for himself and hates to be alone. The love of company is in some men simply the escape from ennui, the interest of life needing the stimulus of converse. But this is a worse case, where a man leans upon others not as a stimulus for his mind's action but as a substitute for it, that he may 'borrow their purposes.' It is a true commonplace that all the greatest acts of life have to be done alone and on our own responsibility. Matthew Arnold's great verses on *Self-dependence* are indeed but one side of the truth, yet they are a necessary counteractive to such a character as this which gives itself up in blind trust to every stranger at first sight.

It was a sure instinct that led Bunyan to make Pliable hurry Christian on, with his 'Come on, let us mend our pace.' Nothing could better show the slightness of this restless creature. It is one of the youngest of temptations, this impertinent enthusiasm to put all the world right. In true pilgrims, indeed, life soon corrects the well-meaning folly; but this is no true pilgrim.

Note.—There is another kind of Pliable with whom one meets at times. Some men in virtue of the very clearness of their vision and the vividness with which they see every detail of a situation, find much to attract them on both sides of the question. Some of the great Trimmers of history are in this class. For them there is a very different verdict from Bunyan's on Pliable; but they do not concern us here.

The Character of Christian.

In his intercourse with these two Christian does not show at his best. Bunyan has left room for his growth, and one of the chief marks of greatness in the allegory is the steady and sustained development in the character of Christian, as well as in his wisdom and tact. He hardly ever seems to miss a lesson of experience. One thing, however, he has already acquired, and that remains with him throughout. Here, as always, he is *a man with a book*. One remembers the story of Erskine, whose saying became historical for controversy, 'Moderator, rax me that Bible.' So every man that faces Christian has to face his Book also.

1. *Christian and Obstinate.* It seems that we have two Obstinates and one Pliable here, and Greek has met Greek. It is not quite so, however, for the general character of Christian shows us that such doggedness as his has to be fought for. The trial to such a man in meeting Obstinate is not his bad temper or his rude manners. The real trial is his certainty. To meet any man who is absolutely certain of what you deny, or to read a book written by such a man, is a staggering difficulty for many minds. It is here met by an enforced doggedness which is a match for Obstinate's own. Both men are dogmatic, but this blessed obstinacy pronounces the other 'dogmatic and wrong.' Bunyan knew the secret well, and had resisted Satan for days together with a text that 'stood like a mill-post at my back.' Cf. St. John's frequently recurring 'We know' in his First Epistle, and Whittier's—

> Yet in the maddening maze of things
> And tossed by storm and flood,
> To one fixed stake my spirit clings,
> I know that God is good.

What are we to say to this obstinacy of Christian's? Must a man be narrow-minded in order to succeed? It has been said of Petrarch that 'he who discerns is conquered by him who wills.' Yet he who discerns and wills both conquers him who only wills without discerning. It is true, as we have said, that wide discernment showing both sides of every question is apt to slacken will; but that is not necessary, and the combination is the secret of religious success.

The strength of will is evident in Christian throughout this passage. 'If we be truly willing to have it, he will bestow it upon us freely'—that is the keynote of all his thinking. The one question for each of the men is, Does he really want it? But behind this strong will lies a vision clearly discerned. 'Had even Obstinate himself but felt what I have felt,' he says. In his speech to Obstinate there are no day-dreams, but a strong man's view of facts, both of glory and of fear. Thus the obstinacy with which he meets Obstinate is of the right sort. He does not say, You go your way and I mine; for a Christian in whom will and vision have met must proselytize.

2. *Christian and Pliable.* His treatment of Pliable is distinctly inferior to his treatment of Obstinate, and Dr. Kerr Bain is right in pronouncing him at this stage a poor evangelist. This may possibly be intentional on Bunyan's part, for his Christian is usually a good judge of character. Some of his arguments and appeals are poor, but perhaps they are given as good enough for Pliable. And what strikes us above all here again is his great power of vision. Much is spectacular, but a deeper vision lies behind, of things that he can 'better conceive of them with his mind than speak of them with his tongue.' He has been both in heaven and in hell, and the vision struggles in vain for adequate utterance. Discounting the spectacular element, that which appealed to him most in heaven was his thought of the holy dead, the victors in life's conflict, and the King. There is also a touch of deep pathos in the saying that there 'none of them are hurtful, but loving'—words that remind us of Bunyan's England with the many hurtful men of whom we read in *Grace Abounding*.