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brooke Extension Committee, Croydon; 1s. 3d.), for example, is written deliberately for the use of the teacher, and never wanders from its purpose. Every sentence has a suggestion, and the book is bound up with writing-paper, which the teacher will know how to make use of when further suggestions occur to him.

Among the Magazines.

The International.

The International is a monthly review of the world's progress. It is edited by Dr. Rodolphe Broda, and the English edition is published by Mr. Fisher Unwin. It is published also in French and in German. A large section is occupied with *Religion*, and it is religion of a very advanced order. Certainly this section could be improved. Account could be taken of movements on other lines, and the writers could go a little deeper into them. But we must see more of the magazine before we can say more.

The Sunday at Home.

The first and best article in *The Sunday at Home* for April is an article by Mr. George A. Wade, on 'The Social Missions of the Public Schools.' But a series of geographical articles begins on Kadesh-Barnea and Petra, which promises something more than a repetition of the things we learn in the Sunday School. The author is Mr. A. Forder. Mr. Forder was accompanied in his investigations by Professor G. L. Robinson, of Chicago, one of the most careful and accomplished of Palestinian explorers, and the articles are to have the benefit of his revision.

The Atlantic Monthly.

There is an article in *The Atlantic Monthly* for March on Browning's 'Old Yellow Book,' an article which the student of Browning must by no means miss. It tells the story of the discovery by Browning, among the 'odds and ends of ravage' that strewed San Lorenzo Square, of that formal dry record of a long-forgotten trial which gave him the inspiration and the materials for *The Ring and the Book*.

The Pilgrim's Progress.

By the Rev. John Kelman, M.A., D.D., Edinburgh.

Doubting Castle and Giant Despair.

When Christian shuddered at the agonies of the man in the iron cage in the Interpreter's House, he little thought that this chapter would have to be written in his own biography. As little did he think it a day or two before it happened. For not the least remarkable and significant feature in this incident is its suddenness. It seemed but an hour since these men were walking on the highway, but they were, to all appearance, lost for ever within that hour. Yet they slept, for they were wearied out with wandering and misery. Montaigne quotes the instance of the young Marius, who on the day of his last battle with Sylla gave the signal of battle and then lay down and slept under a tree throughout the engagement, being 'so extremely spent and worn out with labour and want of sleep, that nature could hold out no longer.' Marius woke to find his troops in flight; these pilgrims to look upon 'the huge evil face, like a nightmare, of Giant Despair.'

It is not without significance that this first sight of Despair comes in the story on their first awaking. The evening view of life is often too rosy. Imagination is free, and the feelings do the work of the mind then. But here is the other extreme. Sin, wandering, and folly never look so wretched as when seen in the cold and passionless light of early morning. Often that is as far from a true view of things as the evening firelight view. On the whole the wisest, sanest, and most reliable aspects of life are those which we see in hours of honest daylight through which we walk between sunrise and sunset.

Yet, bitter though the wakening be, it is best to be awake. God has many ways of wakening His children. Now it is by some touch soft and tender as the waft of an angel's wing; sometimes

it is by the thin white hand of Christ laid at the gate of Gethsemane on a disciple's shoulder; sometimes it is by the rough foot and cruel eyes of Giant Despair. Yet, even at the worst, it is best to be awake.

The Giant's indictment, in which there is a distinct reminiscence of the legal forms of speech heard in criminal courts, is unanswerable. Had they not trespassed in his grounds he would never have found them. So, at least, they thought, and for them the accusations of conscience were salutary enough. Yet the mysteries of temperament, and the hidden borderland between body and soul, are such as hardly to permit of any such general principle. It is not well, in judging either self or others, to be quick to find a moral cause for each fit of mental suffering. Quotations might be multiplied from *Grace Abounding*, from *Francis Spira*, and from the early stories of John Bunyan's life, in which there were obvious physical and mental causes for the desperate condition described. Yet it is but too true that there is a large enough actual background of sin in every life to justify a man in any dark mood running straight back upon conscience, and finding a more than sufficient explanation for his sufferings in his sins. Nor will physical and mental science, however salutary and true in their work of reducing the terrors of the human mind to a minimum, ever be able to remove those tragic facts and connexions to which conscience bears witness.

The Giant.

It is often said that John Bunyan 'built a style, and a literature,' as well as 'a religion and a faith, on the Bible alone.' Such a view becomes more and more untenable as we discover ever new points of contact with the literary forms of his contemporaries and predecessors. He is original in the highest sense, but he is also assimilative as few writers have ever been. Sir Bevis of Hamptoun might alone have supplied him with his giants, who do not in any way differ from the conventional giants of the older romance. They stood for mere bulk and brute strength, and were the bullies and terrors of the average man. They were neither brave nor intelligent, but always cowardly and preposterously stupid and gullible. It has been noted by physiologists that abnormal stature, while it carries with it greater weight and force of muscle, yet indicates a radical weakness rather than strength of physique. Anyhow, this giant of Bunyan's is quite in the line of English giants. The most striking parallel to the entire passage is that wonderful description given in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, I. ix., of that

> Man of hell that calls himself Despair
> . . . . . .
> They find
> That cursed man low sitting on the ground,
> Musing full sadly in his sullen mind, etc.

But Bunyan's giant is the truer to the romantic type. Spenser's has too much character and is too interesting. Bunyan's does not fascinate us with his aspect of 'greasy locks,' and 'hollow eyne' and 'raw-bone cheeks' that looked 'as he did never dine.' On the contrary, he is a great mass of stupidity, with only intelligence enough to carry out the very obvious directions of his wife, a far more strongly drawn character. This is interesting, in view of the fact that it reverses the usual order, Spenser being as a rule by far the finer in his scene-painting, Bunyan the more vivid in his character-drawing.

The less defined character of the giant is, as we have noted, more in keeping with the typical ancient giant-figure. In neither is there much of the 'energy of Despair.' Nothing could be in stronger contrast to the Greek stories of the Titans, or to Dante's giants of the Inferno, than those heavy footsteps which we here have heard trudging their morning round. And in this, the portraiture is truer to experience. Titanism is not Despair. There is, indeed, no such thing as 'the energy of despair.' So long as there is energy, however desperate, despair has not yet come. But he has come upon these pilgrims with a vengeance. It is a mood in which all is heaviness and languor. It is inaccessible (apparently) either to reason or to will—a listlessness as of a soul paralysed. It will be noted that part of the explanation of their escape is given in that perfect touch of genius—'for he sometimes in sunshiny weather fell into fits.' That is a matter of weather—characteristically capricious, and not due to the action either of the Giant or his prisoners. Only it will be noted that those intervals of sunshine are the prisoners' opportunity. When energy and the brighter aspect of things return, though but for an hour, much may be done for escape that will be permanent.

The Wife Diffidence.

We hear little of this lady, but we know her better than her husband. She is full of resource, expedient, and hypothesis—although it must be confessed that this giant is singularly lacking in a knowledge of his own business to require her prompting as he does. The strange pair live on terms of admirable endearment and comradeship, —perhaps because this giant so sorely needs a wife. Is it pressing the allegory too far, to see in this relation the hint of a something ever behind despair, that explains it and gives to it its power? It is a significant fact that in Part II. it is the wife that is first killed; and, if there be any truth in this fancy, it may be worth while attending to. The passages referring to her were an afterthought, inserted after the first edition, and it is quite probable that a very subtle piece of analysis of experience may be indicated here.

Her name is Diffidence, and the word had a stronger meaning in Bunyan's time than in ours. It meant *suspicion* or *mistrust*, words which remind us that in Puritan theology doubt was regarded always in connexion with sin, and indeed as in itself sinful. Here then we discover the voluntary element, behind. It is the action and voluntary element in doubt, the will *not* to believe, the spirit which loveth and maketh a lie. The modern conditions are different, and yet the Giant's wife Diffidence still has more responsibility than is often realized. The new Doubting Castle is that habit of doubt, that paralysis of faith, which besets so many minds among us now. It is not so much a question of specific perplexities, as one of a general lack of clearness and capacity for faith. George Eliot has expressed it well—'I feel as if there must be goodness and right above us, but I can't see it, I can't trust in it.' Mozley has stated as one of the characteristic defects of his time the loss of faculty to trust an argument when you have got one. Such irrational and chronic doubt may have become involuntary, but in many cases at least there is behind it a history in which the will has turned consciously away from faith. It is the boast of the new times that Despair is dead. Unfortunately the widow Diffidence lords it but the more in Doubting Castle.

Doubting Castle.

Bunyan knew the inside of a prison, and whether this description be taken from Bedford Jail or not, it is true enough to the dungeons in which our fathers dealt out to one another their Spartan measures. Dr. M'Crie, in his *History of the Bass*, speaks of those 'living sepulchres, from which both light and air were systematically excluded, and where damp and cold, the *squalor carceris* and every species of discomfort, were considered essential parts of the confinement.' Such was no unusual type of dungeon in the days of Bunyan. The 'grievous crab-tree cudgell' has long been classical: it is to be feared that it was far from an imaginary element in the prison life of those days.

The whole picture stands for a general and universal state of depression, aggravated in the early hours of the morning (for it was then that the Giant visited and beat them), and extending over four days. Is it a touch of memory that particularizes that Wednesday and Saturday? Looking back on such times, though they seem years as they pass, one remembers the details of time in this fashion.

As for the *doubts* out of which the castle of Despair is built, most of us will be inclined to think only of introspective ones regarding a man's own spiritual state. These certainly are intended, and perhaps were most prominent in Bunyan's thought. Yet in *Grace Abounding* and in *The Holy War* we can see continually how purely intellectual doubts are ranked along with these—doubts as to the Scriptures, as to the character and history of Christ, as to the worth of Righteousness itself. No critical questions had as yet been raised, nor was it imagined that any departure from the entire mass of orthodox belief could be taken without sin. Yet Descartes was the inevitable product of the Reformation, and John Milton's *Areopagitica* was a product of this very period. As yet the consciousness of Christian men had not cleared itself by the distinction between innocent and sinless doubt. Nay, even such depression as threatened the lives of these men may sometimes be found in cases when it cannot be traced directly to sin. Dr. A. B. Bruce, in his *Parabolic Teaching of Christ* (Parable of the Blade, Ear, and Full Corn), deals wisely with this subject in connexion with John Bunyan himself. 'It is quite possible that there may be very little sin in the whole experience, but only the morbidity inseparable from the stage of development in which it happens.'

The main features of Doubting Castle are imprisonment and helplessness. It comes late in the pilgrimage, as such moods often do come, amid the depressions of advancing age. It comes after sin, but in itself has become too morbid to have much moral quality one way or another. And it comes, thank God, in order to be escaped from into the sunshine and the highway. Yet much is to happen before we come to that.

Suicide.

The question might be asked, Why Giant Despair did not do what he threatened to do? The answer is that he, like the rest of the universe, works within limits, and often seems much more powerful than he is. Also, his aim is to work, not directly, but through the spirit of his prisoners. He will break their spirit if he can, or drive them into sin and madness. But there is generally a long struggle between the vital forces of the soul and absolute despair, and in this Bunyan is, as usual, true to experience.

The temptation to suicide is again parallel with Spenser's description—

> He pluck'd from us all hope of due relief
> That erst us held in love of lingering life:
> Then hopeless, heartless, gan the cunning thief
> Persuade us die, to stint all further strife:
> To me he lent a rope, to him a rusty knife.

The different bearing of Christian and Hopeful in this passage is very striking. In it, for some reason of his own, Bunyan reverses the usual order. Normally, Hopeful, whose brightness is partly emotional and temperamental, should have fallen lowest into the depths, and been kept up by Christian. But here, as later on at the River, Bunyan seems intentionally to show the failure of the strong and steady man in an emergency, and supplies him with an unflinching optimist for companion, who thus becomes at these parts rather more allegorical than human. Yet both characters retain in spite of that their charming humanness, and no one would have this passage away for any stricter accuracy to the conduct usually to be expected in such types as these.

Christian is soon hurt by forced idleness. Here he feels lonely and in need of society—a need which never appears when he is actively employed on the journey or otherwise. Hopeful is better company to himself, with an unfailing inner spring of vitality and good spirits. Accordingly, the idea of suicide is welcome to Christian, and repugnant to Hopeful. Bunyan had felt it, and Spira had 'seen a knife.' Here we are dealing with matters on which our author had a right to speak. Perhaps Bunyan intended us to note a further thing, which would justify his unusual treatment of these types of character. Granting that Christian is the better balanced of the two, yet once he falls over the edge into despair he will face things more uncompromisingly than Hopeful—will be thorough in Despair. But the very thought of suicide startles Hopeful, and recalls him from the depths to his brightest mood again. Nothing could be finer, nothing more buoyant and exhilarating than his long speeches at this juncture. As a mere problem of reason, suicide has much that can be said in favour of it. It seems the logical outcome and indeed the inevitable course to a strong mind reasoning in the dark. But Hopeful has his finer instinct and his happier disposition to set against it, and these find a surer and directer way to truth.

Hopeful's Speech.

At the darkest, Hopeful's light is never quite extinguished. He still speaks of 'the country to which we are going,' comforting himself with the possibilities of the future, until these become positive certainties of hope. If he cannot slay Despair, or win at once his companion over to his own brighter way of thinking, he can at least tide over Christian's darkest hour, and interest him with some fine passages of speech and argument, thus drawing off his attention from the thought of suicide before it has become a fixed idea.

The reasons which Hopeful urges against suicide are ten—

1. God's command and His entrusting us with the charge of our own bodies. The mention of God is meant to act in the same way on this tempted man as Pippa's 'God's in His heaven' does on Sebald, in Robert Browning's poem. It is the ultimate and silencing reason for all believers.

2. The thought of the soul—for Despair is utterly materialistic, and makes no account of the soul at all.

3. The fear of hell, which was a much more powerful deterrent to the Puritan with his unflinching certainty, than to Hamlet, with his *great perhaps*.

4. The law is not in the hand of Despair. He protests against the Giant as a usurper, even though their conduct had put them for the time being at his mercy. From the great natural law of Retribution, he appeals to the still higher law of Mercy. He protests against Despair and disputes his right to rob him of his life and his inheritance. He will remember his royal birthright. He will say, 'This is mine infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.'

5. Others have escaped—the great argument both of good and evil being that one is 'not the first.' In the devil's usage it is of deadly potency, as when Mephistopheles seeks to comfort the conscience of Faust with it. Its use for good is as great as its use for evil. In the hour of any temptation, and of this among the rest, we are doubly tempted if we imagine that we are alone, and all nature and the facts of life against us. The saving memory that there are countless men and women near us in the world, handicapped more heavily it may be than ourselves, who have already fought and endured until they won the victory — that memory has been the salvation of all who have any self-respect remaining to them.

6. The chance of deliverance. When we are very young, every experience seems final and every trouble without remedy. But as life advances, and we see again and again how infinite are the possibilities of any situation, and how rich life is in surprises, we have to temper our conception of finality with a never-failing last hope in the off-chance. That is mere worldly wisdom, and the common-sense lesson of experience, which has already found something to turn up in emergency after emergency. But he who retains a firm faith in God knows of a better ally than the off-chance. God has an interest in His pilgrims after all, and He that made the world may see it better to lose a giant than a pilgrim.

7. The heart of a man. Even if the worst came to the worst, the fight is in itself worth an effort. If we are to die, we may at least take it standing, and fighting to the last. And it is in this spirit, and in this alone, that we shall be quick to notice and take advantage of any opportunities that may present themselves. The courageous man is in the end the clever one, and the victims of Despair grow stupid as their tyrant.

8. How valiant thou hast been. This beginning of the second speech is characteristically tender and generous when spoken to the poor-spirited and despondent Christian. Hopeful has too great a heart to forget a man's noble past because of his unworthy present mood. And such charity is as wise as it is generous. It will be remembered that Robert Browning, in a famous passage of his 'Saul,' makes David take precisely this expedient to recall Saul to manhood from despair.

9. I am in the dungeon with thee. This is an appeal at once to the fact of companionship used already (No. 5), and to the personal friendship and love between the two. The words are very humbly spoken, as by the younger and weaker to the older and stronger man. They are among the most delicate and tender of all Bunyan's sentences. 'When all the world goes against one, another shall say "You and I."' In these words of Olive Schreiner's we have the same sentiment expressed more briefly if not more beautifully.

10. The shame that it becomes not a Christian to be found in—another of those great sayings of John Bunyan, spoken in the grand manner, and impossible to any but one of God's gentlemen. The Christian is a man upon his honour, and *noblesse oblige*. Neither suicide nor any other matter can possibly be regarded as affecting only the man himself. It affects the religion he has professed, and touches the honour of his God. It is well for every Christian man to remind himself from time to time of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, to regard 'the style and manners of the sky,' and to face plausible temptations in this aristocratic frame of mind. It condemns despair as an essentially vulgar and unworthy thing. 'To despair,' says Mr. W. T. Stead, 'is a moral desertion, and not even to the oldest is given the right to desert.'