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gance of much analytic criticism of Acts, his method is timely and valuable. But he has plied it to excess. Thus the problem of the Pentecost story is at least as explicable, on some source-hypothesis, as upon the rather vague theory of Harnack (p. 125) that Luke used his own freedom here. The ordinary sources postulated by critics are as sadly reduced by Harnack as King Lear's returns of knights, but reduction in this direction may be carried too far.

On matters of detail, one significant change of opinion is to be noted. With charming candour, Harnack admits that G. Resch has now converted him to believe that the original form of the decree in Ac 15 lacked πνικτῶν, and was a moral set of regulations (pp. 188 f.). He gives detailed, if not persuasive, reasons for his new faith.

The monograph, it is needless to say, starts a dozen questions for every one, which it solves, but its sane, vigorous pages will help to dominate the criticism of Acts for years to come. Their penetration and first-hand results are a perpetual stimulus to the reader. JAMES MOFFATT.

*Broughty Ferry.*

# The Pilgrim's Progress.

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

## The Escape from Doubting Castle.

IF elsewhere John Bunyan is indebted for adventurous suggestions to Sir Bevis of Southampton, here, at least, he invents his own story. Nothing in the earlier romance is more racy than the story of Bevis' escape from his prison in Damascus. He watches for the descent of a man with his food, kills him, climbs up the rope, and, killing the two jailers, rushes forth shouting that Bevis had escaped, and putting every one in such a panic that Bevis actually does escape! It is a characteristic and tempting adventure. But Bunyan's genius is at once simpler and more subtle. And we find in this one more effect of writing with his 'eye on the object'—true, point for point, to experience. There is another story, of a prisoner who lay languishing for long in his dungeon, watching the spiders and scratching inscriptions on the walls in the most approved fashion, until one day—well, he just opened the door and walked out! That is the true story of the escape of souls from their imprisonment, and John Bunyan's variant upon it only adds the Christian's secret of deliverance—prayer and promise, which reveal to the soul its freedom.

First there comes *Prayer*, yet not until the Saturday night. It would be interesting to know how far this touch is intentional, 'on Saturday about midnight they *began* to pray.' If it is implied that they had not prayed earlier, no one familiar with *Grace Abounding*, or, indeed, with his own heart, will be surprised. 'But oh!' says Bunyan, ''twas hard work for me now to have the face to pray to this Christ for mercy, against whom I had thus vilely sinned: 'twas hard work, I say, to offer to look Him in the face, against whom I had so vilely sinned; and, indeed, I have found it as difficult to come to God by prayer, after backsliding from Him, as to do any other thing.'

Then comes *Promise*, and in close connexion with the prayer. For, as one commentator (MacGuire) says, 'Every prayer is founded on a promise, and every true prayer discovers this foundation.' This prayer is promptly answered by a quickened memory and the discovery of the appropriate promise. The metaphor here is of a key, as formerly it had been of stepping-stones. And, as the stepping-stones were sometimes slippery with the mire of the slough, so here the key does not turn every lock easily. In our nicer modern editions we read that the lock of the iron gate went 'desperately hard.' That is not the word which John Bunyan wrote, but 'damnable hard'—and the expression, too strong for modern ears, was not at all stronger than the experiences of which it was a reminiscence. This backsliding had touched the very promises of God with rust. Well for them that Giant Despair had not stolen the key altogether. Had sceptical distrust left them without any assurance that God had spoken, it would indeed have been all over with their souls. For secular attempts to escape

from that dungeon are but leaden keys, and in these rusty locks they will not turn at all.

Here, then, we have another rescript from much experience, the record of which may be found in all John Bunyan's writings. His *Pilgrim's Progress* begins with the Man with a book, and that book is never out of evidence on any page of it. His *Grace Abounding* is just one long record of thrust and parry between devils' thoughts and texts of Scripture. Dr. Whyte, in his chapter on Giant Despair, gives a fine selection of the promises that helped him most. It is an exercise that will richly repay its trouble, for any one to complete the list for himself from that extraordinary little book. Such a list of promises may stand us all in good stead in some of those undevotional and desperate times when our own Bible gets out of print, and we can find nothing in it for ourselves.

So, on the Sunday morning, all was changed. It was in strong contrast from the mornings of late days, which brought the Giant with his club to them. They 'had endorsed Despair's accusation, but it was a forged bill.' Despair is powerless against a Sunday morning heart. It was with a thought similar to this that Goethe brought in the chorus of disciples while Faust gloomed apart in his study on Easter morning. Had he been out among them, entering into the common gladness of the day, his story would have been very different. Yet is this 'glorious morning face,' of which Stevenson sings so beautifully in his *Celestial Surgeon*, not wholly out of the reach of will. With the promises of God in his bosom, it only needs energy, and such energy as any man may exert, to achieve it.

But there is here also a delicate word spoken in honour of the Sunday. The passage reminds us of Herbert's familiar and beautiful lines, 'How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean, Are thy returns,' and of his still more famous Sunday hymn:

> O Day, most calm, most bright, . . .
> The week were dark but for thy light.

We are reminded, too, that it was a sermon on the observance of the Sabbath day that formed the earliest and perhaps the most critical of all Bunyan's own spiritual turning-points. The Puritan Sabbath has been subjected to much ridicule, and Watts' line about that heaven where 'sabbaths have no end' has provoked some rather obvious merriment. But there was something in those Sundays of an earlier generation which our emancipated times will find it hard to match. When,

> In dwellings of the righteous
> Is heard the melody
> Of joy and health,

that 'grave sweet melody' will sing its tune for ever to the heart that once has heard it.

## The Sequel.

Doubting Castle was demolished by Christiana's troop, and an old picture in Bagster's edition shows it coming down with a vengeance, the artist having caught the spirit of the book more than the principles of engineering. As a matter of historic fact, this demolition has actually taken place. The Doubting Castle of Puritan days is almost as much a thing of the past as the *Mysteries of Udolpho*. Except for a small percentage of neurotic persons, within and without our lunatic asylums, such instances of violent religious depression are rare.

That is very good and natural, the result of happier times and a healthier habit of thought corresponding to them. Yet unquestionably it is not well that so many of our generation find it difficult or impossible to form any adequate conception, or to feel any adequate shame, of sin. It has been finely said that 'The sin of a soul that is conscious of God is the wrong done by that soul to all which it reveres.' It cannot be safe to lose the realization of the enormity of such wrong. The life of one who values and needs the companionship of that nearest of friends, a good conscience, must ever be a vastly nobler thing than that of one who can reconcile himself to do without it and still not be miserable. In his clever parody, Nathaniel Hawthorne has spoken but the truth when he described the renovated castle, slight and dangerous, which our Flimsy-faith has erected on the site of the ancient fortress. In every way, despair was better than the insensate silliness which has replaced it. If there be some who have been tormented with an evil spirit of hopeless sorrow for their sins, they may take comfort in the answer of an old German theologian to a child. The child had asked him, 'Why does not God slay the devil?' and the answer was, 'From love to thee.'

In the pillar which the Pilgrims set up, with its

warning to those that followed, we see Christian's incurable, undiscourageable need and impulse to evangelize. Neither the shame of his own late fall, nor the joy of regaining the highway, can hinder him from preaching to others and warning them. For deep in the man's heart there is a great compassion. It is a dangerous world, and he remembers other travellers in it, and sets up his pillar. Of lighthouses it has been finely said, 'It is compassion that lights their lanterns round our coast, the nation's sense of danger.' And the spiritual lighthouses also—the confessions and warnings of good men—are due to the same source.

The author of Part III., forgetful of the text about removing his neighbour's landmark, has appropriated this pillar for his own uses, in that Pillar named History, hard by the cave of Pope and Pagan, which is looked after by the middle-aged man Reformation. It must be confessed that the passage is a striking one, and Bunyan would hardly have grudged it even to so shameless a successor.

## The Delectable Mountains.

It would be an interesting exercise to draw, from what materials the book affords, a contour line showing the elevations of the various points of this journey—its valleys and plains, hills and mountains. Such a line would, we may presume, show a broken but yet in the main persistent ascent. From each point, some higher and further point is visible, luring on the eye and foot. These mountains, for instance, were visible from the Palace Beautiful; and what the eye then saw, the foot now gains.

Thus, as in *Paracelsus*, the way is shortened by the assuring vision of future truth and experience. So the long journey is broken up into manageable stages—a great secret in wise pilgrimage. It will be noted that Heaven is not visible from the Palace, but from the Delectable Mountains. It is later life rather than earlier which has heaven for its normal vision. The youth who dreams of heaven, and takes 'O Paradise, O Paradise, I greatly long for rest,' for his favourite hymn, is effeminate. Surely in a world like this there is much for young vitality to do before it talks of rest; earth has claims on it which it were better to fulfil than to dream of heaven. Yet, on the other hand, the progress on this journey is measured by the visibility of the heavenly light. At first seen faintly, it has now become a vision of clear outlines of a city gate. This is that path of the just that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And, though in youth the heavenly light is but a far-off point of guidance, yet even then it has its effect, like star-light, on the pilgrim spirit.

These Mountains, like the Palace, are an allegorical representation of the Church, though now in another aspect. The former was elementary and preparatory, this is advanced enlightenment and guidance among spiritual heights. It is the place of Contemplation such as is possible only after ripe experience. Part III., which habitually transfers to another stage of the journey the incidents which it borrows, puts the place of Contemplation in the middle of the Hill Difficulty—surely an unfortunate exchange. Such contemplation, which rests and looks peacefully out upon the facts of this world and the next, is meant to mark a high level of spiritual experience. Froude, writing of ordinary, respectable, right-minded persons, admits that they may be 'amiable in private life, good neighbours, and useful citizens,' but he adds with much insight that they could not 'ever reach the Delectable Mountains, or even be conscious that such mountains exist.' But John Bunyan's holy women of Bedford knew the place: 'I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold.' Such experience generally comes with age, if it comes at all. It is not, like the Palace, what the Church can do for one in the moment just after overcoming some great difficulty in a single burst of heroic toil. Its heights are gained after a lifetime's progress with its many varieties of experiences. It is, transferred to the Church, the mood of *Rabbi ben Ezra*, rather than that of the *Grammarian's Funeral*. Both are high; but this is a restful elevation. Readers will recall that singularly beautiful passage in *The Everlasting Yea* of *Sartor Resartus*: 'To me also, entangled in the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and sound, it was given, after weariest wanderings, to work out my way into the higher sunlit slopes—of that Mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only.' The passage recalls some fine

lines of Mr. Alfred Austin's, in which he describes the Mountains of Carrara, and which seem ever to remind one of Goethe's words, 'Over all the hills is rest.' But by far the finest and most suggestive thing to read along with this description of the Delectable Mountains, is the last study in Professor George Adam Smith's *Four Psalms* (Psalm 121), in which the physical elevation of hilltops is made to reveal its secret of moral and spiritual elevation to all whose hearts are pure enough to know that secret.

## The Shepherds.

Here, as in other passages concerning the Church, ministers are introduced, and a view of the ministry is presented. This aspect is in keeping with the aspect of the Church which the Mountains offer. The Shepherds are feeding their flocks on lofty ground, dealing with high things on the heights above the world. It is an exalted view of the Church and its life—far above all pettiness and gossip of the valley. The air is pure and bracing, and the horizons sweep out wide and free from all narrowness of sectarian or theological exclusiveness.

The conversation is opened by Christian in a series of sharp, short, pertinent questions, which show how fully his late sufferings have recalled him to his alert and keen self again. In their answers the Shepherds show a reserve which at first almost amounts to taciturnity. In Part III. their speech is prosy, and strikes the reader as something between a dull sermon and the advertisement of a watering-place. Here, the answers are enigmatic, throwing back upon the Pilgrims all the responsibilities of the journey, and insisting that all such matters as its length and its safety depend upon themselves. Very different this from the conversation of the people of the Palace, for which there may be several reasons. The Palace dwellers were women, these are men; and the difference between the affectionate tenderness and the earnest truth is characteristic. Again, the Pilgrims are now further on their way, and no longer need such stirrup-cups of comfortable encouragement as they needed earlier. And then, they have sinned lately and very grievously, and are still, in a sense, upon probation—a circumstance borne out further by the fact that warning predominates over any other element contributed by their stay on these mountains.

The whole description is graphic. Such a casual touch as 'leaning upon their staves (as is common with weary pilgrims when they stand to talk with any by the way)' is a curious and unconscious touch of artistry, possible only to one who in his imagination followed his story with his eyes. Similarly the gradual melting from the first austerity to a gentler mood in the Shepherds is a fine achievement in narrative. From answering they turn to questioning, yet not as confessors but as fellow-Christians only. Their very questions are gracious, and convey a compliment on the perseverance of the travellers. Here as elsewhere the important question is, How they had got into the way. But this last question shows the tenderness of the hearts that beat beneath the apparent austerity. In it there is the sad consciousness, so inevitable in any minister's mind, of the small number of those whose pilgrimage fulfils the early promise of its outset. Along with the following paragraphs it would be well to read Professor G. A. Smith's description of the Shepherds' Tents in Psalm 23.

## The Three Hills.

Each of the three hills which they now ascend stands for a particular view of life to be had at this ripe stage of Christian experience. Two of the three indicate danger, the third the brilliant spectacle of Heaven—a proportion significant of the grave and serious view of life held by the author, and so often illustrated in his book.

### 1. Error.

This seems to stand for the moral element in faith or unbelief, which we have already discussed in connexion with Doubting Castle. The hill slopes upward innocently enough, but its further side is a precipice. Men climb that hill to get a wide view of earth and heaven, and the fate of the climbers is a terrible commentary upon a certain kind of wide view. The New Testament instance is of two who had erred out of curiosity as to an apparently trivial, or at least non-vital question—a mere side issue of the faith at best. The doctrine of the Resurrection is a great doctrine, but it lends itself more, perhaps, than most, to over-curious speculation, in which there is always a serious danger to faith. Who does not know of some who have spent their spiritual strength upon such researches, until they have lost touch with

the central matters of the Christian life, and eventually (it may be) have repudiated all faith whatsoever? Once again we are reminded of Bunyan's *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized*—'You have some men who cannot be content to worship in the temple, but must be aloft; no place will serve them but pinnacles, pinnacles; that they may be speaking in and to the air, that they may be promoting their heady notions instead of solid truth; not considering that now they are where the Devil would have them be; they strut upon their points, their pinnacles; but let them look to it, there is difficult standing upon pinnacles; their neck, their soul is in danger. We read, God is in His temple, not upon these pinnacles.' 'What is God doing?' asked such a curious one of an old divine. 'Preparing rods for them that ask such questions,' was his reply.

## 2. Caution.

There is as little uniformity of method in the naming of these hills as in that of the geographical names of actual mountains. The first and third are named from their own characteristics, the second is named rather from the effect it is meant to produce in the climber. In such matters John Bunyan is too much in earnest about the lessons he has to teach, to take much pains over the niceties of consistent nomenclature. Caution is both a vice and a virtue for Christian men. The venture of faith forbids it, while the dangers of life demand it. No one, *e.g.*, is further from the road to heaven than the calculating, cautious person who has a scheme of his own for making the best of both worlds. Yet here we have passed from dangers of intellect to those of conduct, and the moral life is unquestionably beset with dangers. Describing a rash time of his own life, when he 'was not conscious of the danger and evil of sin,' Bunyan in *Grace Abounding* adds, 'Thus man, while blind, doth wander, but wearieth himself with vanity, for he knoweth not the way to the city of God.'

This passage, with its double horror of blindness and death, is described vividly in Dr. Kerr Bain's second volume—a passage which reminds one in parts of Maeterlinck's *Les Aveugles*. Hawthorne rather infelicitously runs his railway through this graveyard, and nearly has an accident owing to a tombstone maliciously placed upon the rails—an incident whose grotesqueness does not appear to be justified by any very obvious significance.

Who, then, are these victims of rashness, whose fate is this blind and aimless wandering in the precincts of the grave? Surely it was an inspiration that suggested to John Bunyan the device of making the Shepherds describe their own late adventure to the Pilgrims. These victims were Christian and Hopeful, as they might well have been that day, but for the grace of God. It is no wonder they said nothing, but looked through tears upon each other's faces, when they saw others going to perdition by the very same sins and follies from whose consequences God had rescued themselves just before it was too late.

This blindness is often the work rather of Diffidence than of Despair. It is a subtler form of cruelty than the heavy-witted Giant is capable of conceiving. But, if we have read his wife's character aright, we can detect her handiwork in it. Doubt that rises from a deliberate act of sin against conscience, sometimes ends in this. That modern chronic diffidence of any faith, that irrational but mastering habit of unbelief, leads many to just this fate. Lacking the exhilaration of former faith, they wander aimlessly about, in sympathy rather with decay and dead things than with the clean and bright calls of life for useful labour. Hope and result die within them. In helpless cynicism they see nothing, go nowhere, do no useful thing. The *macabre* element inseparable from such decadence is indicated with sure insight in the introduction of the tombs. These are they who 'have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.'