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In the Study.

Chinese Sidelights upon Scripture Passages.

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V.

Blood-Covenant.—In Gn 15 we have a record of Jahve ratifying His promise to Abram by a blood-covenant. In He 10^{29} we find the phrase 'blood of the covenant,' and in 13^{20} 'blood of the eternal covenant.' To Hebrew minds the early covenant with their forefather was renewed in the divinely appointed Passover; and to Christian minds the Passover was, in the end, transmuted into what has been called the 'Sacrament' of the Lord's Supper—from *sacramentum*, a thing set apart as sacred, a military oath of allegiance, or any solemn obligation of alliance. In the Chinese Annals the blood-covenant often merged into the *sacramentum*.

The earliest recorded instance of a blood-covenant in China happened in the year 772 B.C. (between the Marquis of Lu and the chieftain of Chü, in the second paragraph of Confucius' *Spring and Autumn Annals*), but there is a definite written character for 'blood-covenant' which was probably formed ages before that date. It consists of the signs *dish* (or perhaps originally *blood* —there being only the difference of a comma-like stroke between the two) and *intelligence*, which the Imperial Dictionary (1716 A.D.) explains by saying:

> 'In ancient blood-covenants an ox was slain, the blood poured into a dish, and the spiritual intelligencies invoked to witness that if either of the contracting parties violated the terms of the covenant, they were willing to meet a fate like that of the slain animal.'

From other authorities we learn that, in process of time, the two parties swearing the oath of community of purpose opened their own veins, and let the blood mingle in the dish. They thus vowed to defend each other to the death, for they were now 'of one flesh and one blood.'

An interesting variant of the military *sacramentum* was once quoted by a Manchu general, from a Chinese work whose title has not been identified. The fourth son of the Manchu chieftain Nurhachu succeeded his father in 1626, assuming the Chinese name of T'ien-t'sung (Heaven-granted discrimation) with the conquest of China in view, and captured all the Chinese territory north of the Great Wall (thus preparing for his son to found the Manchu dynasty in China, in 1644). In the year 1631 he was sitting one day with his officers, discussing the campaign, and said:

> 'I am not like the Ming (Chinese) ruler. . . . All my officers sit down with me, speak freely what they think, and eat and drink in my company.' Then, entering the tent called 'travelling library,' he read from a Chinese book which said: 'In ancient times when a good general led his forces to battle, he arranged his troops on the bank of a river, and threw into the water some rice and wine, whereupon the whole army drank of the water together. This was to signify that all were bound together in a common cause. . . .' Thus did he encourage his officers.

Betrothal Covenant.—In several passages of Scripture the covenant of God with His people is represented as a betrothal. Some of these passages (as Hos 2^{19-22}; cf. Jer 2^{2}, etc.) are obvious to the English reader; others, to be mentioned, are not so easily recognized.

The ancient Hebrew and ancient and modern Chinese customs of betrothal so far correspond that, in both cases, the essentials were (or are) a covenant undertaken by the parents of the youth and maiden, often when both were of early age—the covenant being of an important and absolutely binding nature. In both cases we find a dowry presented on the part of the future husband (compare the 'bride-price' in the laws of Hammurabi). This, in China, is regarded as an earnest of the undertaking to provide for the future maintenance of the betrothed maiden. Further, in China, the great essential of the betrothal ceremony is the exchange of two documents, each containing the *personal name* of the youth or maiden, together with the year, month, day, and hour of birth. They thus 'know each other by name' (cf. Is 43^{1}, 'O Jacob . . . O Israel . . . I have called thee by name, thou art mine'). In China also the

betrothal is the legal marriage, and the youth speaks of his betrothed as his 'wife' (cf. Mt 1^{20}, 'Mary thy wife'). The essential of the actual marriage ceremony is that the pair drink wine from the same cup—another instance of the *sacramentum*, in the broad sense of the word.

There are various polite expressions for 'betrothal' in China, but the common term, everywhere used, is just the word 'spoken.' 'Is that little girl spoken?' always means 'Is she betrothed?' With this fact in mind, the writer once spent an evening in the company of an educated native of Palestine, from the college at Beyrout. His mother-tongue was Arabic, and he had studied Hebrew and Syriac. On being asked the Arabic for 'betrothal' he gave a word that resembled the Hebrew דִּבֶּר, 'to speak.' I asked if the two words were connected. He replied that they were practically identical, as was the Syriac word 'to speak'—used in the sense of 'betroth.' Then I told him the common Chinese idiom, and said, that Ps 87 read to me like a Song of Betrothal. 'Undoubtedly so,' he said, 'in the Hebrew, but not in your English Bible.'[1]

But reading the Scriptures in the light of Arabic, Syriac, and Chinese parallels, and in the light of the Hebrew parallel: 'What shall we do for our little sister in the day that she shall be spoken (for)?' (Ca 8^{8}), we find Isaiah, on behalf of the Divine Lover, 'speaking up around the heart of (the daughter of) Jerusalem,' speaking 'wooingly' as to one betrothed to God. And thus, surely, in Ps 87, we may read:

> 'A glorious thing is thy betrothal,
> O city of God';

and gain a new Psalm, as we hear the friends of Zion (like the chorus in a Greek play) quote her old enemies by names of contempt, and call her envious neighbours to behold her felicity. It is now a glory to belong to the betrothed city. The census is taken on earth and in heaven. And a song adopted in a great historic revival of later days:

> 'My God, the spring of all my joys,
> The life of my delights,'

was but an echo of the song of the jubilant minstrels and dancers of old, who sang:

> 'All my springs are in Thee.'

In the chief verse of the above Psalm there is another idiom common to Hebrew and Chinese, and of very frequent use in both languages. The word 'glory' or (elsewhere) 'honour' is in reality the simple word 'heavy'—used metaphorically as the opposite of 'light, trifling, unimportant' or 'lightly regarded.' Another Psalm (45^{13}) says of a betrothed princess: 'All heavy is the king's daughter within,'—which in English might convey the idea of sadness, but never in Hebrew or Chinese. When the word 'heavy' is used in metaphor, its suggestions are derived from the weight and solidity of genuine treasure. And thus we might render the passage:

> 'Majestic is the king's daughter in the inner recesses (of the palace).'

The words would be recalled to mind by the writer and earliest readers of the apocalyptic vision of 'the holy city, new Jerusalem . . . made ready as a (royal) bride adorned for her husband . . . having the glory of God' (Rev $21^{2.\ 11}$).

As a postscript to this subject it may be pointed out that, in Mt 22, in what is usually called 'the parable of the marriage feast,' where to our Western minds the man 'without a wedding garment' seems to have been treated with unnecessary severity, the parable is in reality one of a royal marriage. In every Oriental marriage feast the poorest guest is in duty bound to come in a long robe (easily borrowed or hired for the occasion, if not possessed by the man); and to appear at a royal marriage feast in the Orient without a long robe would be suggestive of intentional insult and uttermost disloyalty.

[1] One might have added: 'Nor in any Chinese version,' for the reason that the translators were under a bond to take the English version as the basis of their interpretation. The learned Bishop Schereschewsky, of Hebrew descent, translates 'Words are spoken of promise, promising thee a matter of much glory,' as an intermediate rendering.

Virginibus Puerisque.

I.

August.

HOLIDAYS.

'And they journeyed from Marah, and came unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve springs of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they pitched there.'—Nu 33^{9}.

The children of Israel would, I feel sure, be very thankful when they reached Elim. They had had

a long weary journey—mostly wilderness. They were tired; at times they had been discontented. Their leaders must indeed have had a trying time. Did you ever think what the long marches in the wilderness must have meant for the boys and girls? Did you ever picture their joy when they arrived at this place of fountains and palm trees?

You know how you enjoy a beautiful day of sunshine after a spell of bad weather. Those children, we may be sure, forgot about the long dry road. I believe they danced for sheer joy and chased each other about as the tents were being pitched at Elim. On the march their fathers and mothers were querulous: 'Don't do this, don't do that,' they kept saying. It was not good to be going to the land of Canaan, the children thought. Now, a delightful break—a holiday—had come. Their mothers spoke to them once more as they were in the habit of doing in the old days, when at first they set out from Egypt. They told them again of the Land of Promise, and the God of Israel. I am going to read to you two verses from a children's book. One can almost imagine them to be the words of an old Hebrew, who had been a little boy at Elim:

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
And sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissed me,
And pointing to the East, began to say:

Look on the rising sun: there God does live,
And gives His light, and gives His heat away,
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

Think of Elim with its palm trees. The palm is one of the most beautiful trees of the East. It was the badge of Judæa, just as that of England is the rose, that of Ireland the shamrock, that of Scotland the thistle, that of France the lily. The palm was the emblem of Judæa; and when the Romans conquered the Jews, they struck a medal in memory of their victory: that medal had the figure of a woman weeping beneath a palm tree. You must have seen a palm tree in a hot-house. You will have noticed that it grows straight, and tall, and its feathery leaves spring out of the top of the trunk without any branches. They form a shape like a huge umbrella. Where there were so many fountains we may be sure there was luxurious green undergrowth. In this holiday month, does not Elim suggest a place for a picnic? The troubles of the Hebrew children now seemed to be quite over, the boys could talk to each other of the old days in Egypt. They would recall, we may be sure, the wonderful things they had seen, and the many dangerous adventures they had come through.

Robert Louis Stevenson has a delightful holiday paper which I hope you will one day read. One of the great experiences of his group of boy friends was to crouch together in some hollow of the links at the seaside, and delight themselves with what he calls 'inappropriate talk.' Then we know that he himself must at some time have had dreamy holidays in a place where there were trees and green grass. Listen to this little poem from his *Child's Garden of Verses*:

When children are playing alone on the green,
In comes the playmate that never was seen,
When children are happy, and lonely, and good,
The friend of the children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him, and nobody saw,
His is a picture you never could draw,
But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home,
When children are happy or playing alone.

I spoke of picnics. Don't we all love them? A girl was at a picnic one wonderful day in August. It was held at a lovely spot, where there was a lake, soft green grass, trees, and an old castle. There was a happy and hungry party—so hungry that they could scarcely wait for dinner. When at length a gentleman stood up to say grace, the girl hoped he would not say a long one. Well, he did say a pretty long one, but somehow she could not help listening to it. His words made her feel that 'the friend of the children' had indeed come out from the woods, and was at the table. It turned out to be a delightful picnic: afterwards one of the guests wrote a number of verses about it.

But holidays pass. The Hebrew boys and girls had to take the road again. Then, day after day it was tramp, tramp, tramp, until soon their little feet were as tired as ever. Your holidays will soon be at an end. But you will go back to school with stronger muscles; you will be clearer headed; you will have better memories. We get holidays just that we may be the better able to

'peg on,' over the road of life. Sometimes it is rough and the skies are grey. But the children of Israel were bound for the Land of Canaan.

Long ago children in the Sunday school used to sing about the Land of Canaan. They thought of heaven when they sang: they were meant to. But God has sent us into this world to live. Often enough that means tramping over hard, rough roads, and under grey skies, but there are rests by the way. You are meanwhile having one. Are you getting ready for the march again? The 'Land of Canaan' is in front, and through God's help you will reach it.

II.

A Nail in a Sure Place.

'I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place.'—Is 22^{23}.

Have you ever seen cups hung on nails or hooks along the edge of a shelf? Quite a number of people hang up their cups like that because they look so nice and tidy and take up less room. But suppose the nail were not driven securely into the shelf, what would happen? The weight of the cup would bring it out, they would both fall down together, and the cup would probably be smashed.

The kind of nail that is spoken of in our text is not the iron or brass nail we are accustomed to think about. This nail was a sort of wooden peg. It was driven into the soft mortar in the wall of the house and it served two purposes. Sometimes it was used to make the house more firm, to help to keep it together, and sometimes it was employed to hang up beautiful garments, or fine ornaments of silver, and gold and brass, or some trophy of war such as a helmet, or a sword, or a shield. The people of the East were very proud of their treasures and very fond of displaying them where all their friends could see and admire them.

You can understand how important it was to find a good place for the nail. If it were driven into a soft piece of plaster, the first thing that was hung on it would bring it out. It could neither stay in itself nor bear the weight it was intended to carry. The surest place to put one of these wooden pegs was between two stones which were close together. The stones would hold it firm and keep it from falling out.

Now in our text somebody is spoken of as 'a nail in a sure place.' That somebody was a man called Eliakim. He afterwards had a very important position in King Hezekiah's household. He was put over all his household, just as Joseph was put over Pharaoh's household. He held a post much like that of our Prime Minister, and had great power in the land. Eliakim was to be fastened as 'a nail in a sure place.' He was a good man himself, and one on whom other people could depend and to whom they turned for help.

I want you to try to think of yourselves as nails this morning. Let us pretend we are all nice, bright, new nails. None of us are rusty, of course—we wouldn't have anything to do with rust, we leave that to the lazy people—and none of us are crooked—we take a pride in keeping straight. We are all the right kind of nail, because there's no use being a nail unless you are the right kind. But nails, you know, are no good at all when they lie about idle. They must be stuck in somewhere. Would you like to be a wobbly nail, hardly able to hold on itself, far less hold anything else up, or would you like to be a firm nail on whom other people could depend?

I want to speak about some of the wobbly nails. And the first wobbly nail is the boy or girl who doesn't do his or her work thoroughly. There are a good many wobbly nails of this kind in the world, and the worst of it is that they do a great deal more mischief than they intend. For they are often quite well-meaning, but rather thoughtless and careless. It's the wobbly nails that are responsible for a great many of the railway accidents and shipping disasters of the world.

The girl who is set to dust a room and who skips the dark corners because she thinks the dust won't show is a wobbly nail. Nobody can depend on that kind of girl. The boy who merely glances at his lesson book so as to have a vague idea of what the lesson is about is a wobbly nail. When the time comes that he has to work in good earnest, he may discover that he hasn't the necessary elementary knowledge to carry him through. Remember the only nails that are of any use are the kind that 'stick in.'

You have all heard of David Livingstone, the great missionary explorer of Africa. He was a man whom every one trusted and honoured. When Livingstone was a boy he lived in a little village in Lanarkshire. His people were very poor and he had to work very hard. Sometimes he helped his mother to sweep the room and tidy up, and she used to say of him that what David did was

always thoroughly done and that he 'even swept under the mat.' I've known some people who swept all the dirt under the mat because they were too lazy to sweep it up. But they never became the David Livingstones of the world.

People say that the watchword of the late Lord Kitchener was 'efficiency.' That is just another way of saying that he was 'a nail in a sure place.' Whatever he undertook he did thoroughly. He always went to the bottom of everything. And you know that his name will go down to history as the man who saved Britain in her great hour of peril. He was a man on whom people could depend. If we want to be worthy of Lord Kitchener, we must do our best to be firm nails, and then Britain will rise to still greater glory.

The second kind of wobbly nail is the boy or girl who is lacking in steadiness or perseverance. Some boys and girls put their whole heart and soul into a thing so long as it is new, but when the freshness wears off their interest flags. It doesn't matter whether it is a new game or a new lesson, it's all the same. And some boys and girls get along all right so long as things go smoothly, but the first difficulty they meet shakes them badly, and the second bowls them over altogether. Well, both those kinds of boys and girls are wobbly nails. Nobody can rely upon them, and they are sadly wanting in pluck.

Have you ever heard the story of the two frogs who fell into a bowl of cream. The first one said, 'I'm going to take it easy,' and he sank to the bottom. But the second one said, 'I'll never give in,' and he went on working his legs to keep himself afloat, until presently he found himself seated on a good-sized piece of butter! That's the kind of person who always comes up top.

The last kind of wobbly nail I want to speak of is the boy or girl whose word can't be relied on. I'm not thinking so much of the people who don't speak the truth—although, of course, they are very wobbly nails indeed—but I'm not thinking of them, because I would count them amongst the nails that aren't straight. No, the boys and girls I mean are the ones who can't keep a promise and the ones who can't keep a secret.

The first kind never do what they say. If they promise to meet you at three they will likely turn up about four, and if they promise to mend your bat they will forget all about it. And the second kind do what they've said they won't do. If you trust them with a secret they go and tell it to the very next boy they meet.

I want to tell you about a little girl who was only six, but who knew how to keep a secret. She was the granddaughter of Oliver Cromwell, and her grandfather was very fond of her and often had her on his knee during his Cabinet meetings. By and by the Ministers began to object. They thought that perhaps it was not safe to have even such a little girl at their meetings, and that she might repeat some State secrets. Cromwell knew that he could trust his granddaughter, but he wanted to prove to the Ministers that he could. So one day he whispered something in her ear and told her not to repeat it. Then he set her mother and grandmother to try to make her tell it. But no threats or bribes—not even a whipping, could make her reveal the secret, and at last they had to give up trying. After that the Ministers were not afraid that the little girl would tell any State secrets.

Well, boys and girls are not told State secrets nowadays, but it's a great matter to learn to keep a secret, no matter how small it may be. And if we can keep small ones, some day people will trust us with big ones.

Lastly, if we want to be good firm nails we must be driven in to a 'sure place,' and the only really 'sure place' is Jesus Christ. He is the only one on whom we can safely rely.

Some boys and girls *rely on others.* They are quite steady so long as they are with good companions, but when they get with bad companions they just wobble and shake and no one can depend on them.

Some boys and girls *rely on their parents.* So long as they have their support they can keep up pretty well, but when they go out into the world they often collapse.

Some boys and girls *rely on themselves.* They have strong wills and think they can keep steady. But when the day of testing comes they find that a strong will is not enough.

The only 'sure place' is Jesus Christ, and if we take hold of Him, He will keep us securely and prevent us from falling.

III.

A School Homily.

The second volume has now been published of Mr. Arthur Sidgwick's *School Homilies* (Sidgwick & Jackson; 3s. 6d. net). The whole number of Homilies preached by Mr. Sidgwick when Assistant Master at Rugby (1864–1879) and now published is 104; this volume contains the second 52. They are nearly all ethical, as they ought to be. But again the ethical is informed of the Spirit and so becomes a force acting on the conscience. But there is only one way of criticizing such a book; we shall quote the homily on

Success.

It may have often occurred as a wonder and a puzzle to many here, that the language of the world and the common talk of men seems to be in many ways diametrically opposed to the teaching of Christ. Are we a Christian country, really guiding ourselves or trying to guide ourselves by Christian principles, or are we only covering with a varnish of religion an age of grasping, and ambition, and selfishness?

Take, for instance, the question of success in life.

On the one hand we are always hearing success talked of as if it were a fit thing for a man to aim at; we congratulate our friends who succeed, and we pity them when they fail; we study the life and doings of public men and note the causes of success and discuss its methods; we admire successful men, and admire them up to a certain point without any misgivings in doing so; and for ourselves, we lay our plans and take our thought and set our lives to win success in whatever line we adopt, and feel that we are right to do so.

On the other hand we have Scripture solemnly ringing its warnings in our ears: 'Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?' 'Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.' 'I have chosen you out of the world.' 'He that loseth his life shall find it.' 'Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted.' All through Christ's language there runs the strain of one who says, 'This world is nothing, and its successes: set your affections not on earthly things, for the inner life, which alone can bring peace, lies in other realms apart from these.'

And we cannot put these questions aside, as some would have us do, by the thought that there are rules for the religious life and other rules for dealing with our worldly affairs. No, 'we have not so learned Christ.' If religion is not to be to us the key to all the puzzles and the light to all the glooms and mists of life, then away with it; for it is a sham. Religion is to make our standard higher and our living nobler, not in some acts or on some days, but in every corner of our being and every moment of our time. There can be no other question for us, when any difficulty arises, than 'What would the Master whom we learn from and the principles we follow prescribe for us?' for then, that once known, we cannot be in doubt about our duty.

Now, of course, it is evident at once that all success is condemned which is won by any unlawful means. Wealth or power or distinction which is won by cheating or sharp practice, by sacrifice of one's own principle to the popular air, by falsehood or suppression of the truth, by any of the many forms of truckling or cowardice; these things are on the face of them reprobated as wicked, and are such as no man who is trying to live the nobler life could consent to win, or having won consent to hold.

But it is not this case that offers the difficulty. The difficulty is in the innocent ends attained by innocent means. Are these the 'world' against which Christ is so often warning us? and if so, is it possible, or is it our duty to withdraw therefrom as much as may be?

The answer seems to be, that it is not so much any special aims or objects that are unchristian (apart, of course, from wicked aims or aims compassed by wicked means), but rather the spirit in which our aims are followed. It never tells us what to do or what not to do; but it penetrates our spirits, and lifts up our eyes, and widens and enlightens our hearts, till we can feel and see for ourselves what is wrong and shrink from it by instinct. Thus it is with the question of success which we are considering. It is right, quite right, that in whatever walk of life our duties be, we should aim at success in those duties. The learner should strive for success in his studies, the business man in his business, the professional man in his profession, the governor in his rule. But all these, although our aims, must not be our only aims, or our highest aims. If so, then this is the

world we have chosen, which Christ has bidden us fly; then the light that is in us is darkness. These lower aims must be quite subordinate within us to the higher rule of duty, and the eternal principle of unselfishness and love.

This view makes clear to 'us what is the real truth about success spoiling a man. There are doubtless many cases of men who as they win success, seem year by year to be withering and not growing spiritually; seem to have less noble aspirations, less sensitive honour, less earnest energy, less ready belief in goodness, less prompt and generous affections; and we say success has spoiled them. But it is not the success that has been amiss; that was but the natural crown of steady perseverance, and in itself can no more spoil a character than the fruit can spoil the plant. But what has spoiled them is the setting the lower above the higher, the wrong estimate of values of the various ends of life, the devotion of energy to success alone, and the relaxing hold of all the higher aims, the finer issues of the soul; or, in the noble words of the Roman poet, this is 'to lose for life's sake all that makes life worth living.'

For once more, if this be our view of success, though we shall work and hope for it with unfailing energy, as the work we are appointed to do, if we do not win it, we shall never be wholly cast down. If we strive for learning, and our minds seem unable to reach the height we aim at; or for producing some real change for good among our surrounding fellow-men, and cannot seem to advance; or for the crown of the artist or the writer, and are not strong enough to win it; or in humbler but most useful walks of life, if we set ourselves to do our part and service with all our energies, and yet the work is barren or our career is broken in the midst; then shall we find that strength and consolation in the spirit of our work, if the spirit has been true, which God has not granted us to find in its fruit. In any case we have got the training, the strength, the self-control, the industry, which have slowly but surely been produced in us by the effort, and which are always a great part of the success, if not the greatest. And if the rest be wanting, we have a gain far more than our loss, in having been true to our higher aims and calling, in having kept alive in ourselves and others that higher standard, and firmer hold on life's larger truths, which no temporal success can equal.

For, in a word, this high-mindedness, which solves our difficulty, not by despising success, but by putting duty first and success second, this high-mindedness is not a visionary, impulsive, fanatical power, that leads man astray from sense and truth. Rather is it the eye which sees the deeper and wider truths of life, the loftiness of love, the sacredness of duty, the eternity of the difference of right and wrong. For these clear and simple natures are the babes of whom the Psalmist speaks from whom praise cometh, and to whom much is revealed that is hid from the wise and prudent.

Point and Illustration.

'I am.'

The Hulsean Lectures were delivered before the University of Cambridge in 1915–1916 by the Rev. Herbert A. Watson, D.D. The subject was *The Mysticism of S. John's Gospel*; and under that title the lectures (revised and enlarged) are now published (Scott; 3s. 6d. net). First the lecturer says what he understands by Mysticism. And those who are collecting definitions of that word may add this to their collection: 'Mysticism is the belief in an intimate relation between man and God, and the practice of this belief.' Next he gathers out of the Fourth Gospel its Revelation of the Nature of God. Then he explains the Symbolism of the Incarnation. And finally he makes a Practical Application of the Incarnation. Can we condense the four lectures into a sentence? The mystic recognizes God's immanence, and God's immanence is made perfect in the Incarnation.

So it is with the Logos made flesh and dwelling among us that we have to do. He knew that He was God. One title alone proves it. 'There are certain occasions on which our Lord describes Himself by the significant phrase "I am." In His conversation with the Samaritan woman He answers her reference to the coming of the Messiah by the words "I am." When He appears to the disciples on the Lake of Galilee, He announces Himself in the same terms "I am," counselling them not to be afraid. In speaking to the Jews He warns them, "Unless ye believe that I am, ye shall die in your sins" (viii. 24). And He adds, "When ye shall have exalted the Son of Man, then ye shall know that I am" (viii. 28). In supporting His claim of Abraham's acknowledgment He maintains, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before

Abraham was born, I am" (viii. 58). In disclosing His impending betrayal to His disciples, He adds the warning, "From henceforth I tell you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye may believe that I am" (xiii. 19). And at the betrayal He announces Himself in the same words "I am," and the instant effect upon the followers of Judas was that they went backward and fell to the ground. There is evidently an idea of majesty attaching to the phrase, a claim of Messiahship, a revelation of Divine nature, an assumption of eternity and reliability and power. We are reminded of the contention in a song of Moses, "See now that I, even I, am, and there is no god with Me" (Deut. xxxii. 39), and of the same contention in Isaiah, "That ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me" (Isa. xliii. 10), both constituting a declaration of Divinity.'

Archdeacon Wilberforce's Creed.

'During the last thirteen years, Archdeacon Wilberforce has published on an average one volume of sermons each year.' It is not a record, but it is noteworthy. The last volume is entitled *The Purpose of God* (Elliot Stock; 2s. net). To it the Rev. H. Mayne Young, M.A., contributes a short memoir, the outpouring of real affection and well-balanced admiration. This is Archdeacon Wilberforce's Creed. Mr. Young quotes it from the preface to one of his volumes of sermons.

'I believe in one universal, omnipotent Parent-Source, of whom, and to whom, and through whom are all things, and in whom all live and move and have their being, whose name is Love, and whom no man hath seen at any time. And I believe in Jesus called the Christ, or the Anointed One; the revealer of God to man, and the interpreter of man to himself; the specific embodiment of the moral character of the Parent-Source, and the archetypal specimen and perfect representative of the sonship of humanity; the peculiar incarnation of that Divine Word or Logos, or eternal reason of the Parent-Source which is immanent in all men.

'He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; tested and made perfect by exposure to the divinely-ordered resisting agency, which is called moral evil; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hades; the third day after His crucifixion, He showed Himself alive to His disciples, and after forty days He withdrew from limitations and returned, by what is known as the Ascension, to universal life and authority; from thence He is ceaselessly coming in judgment, or discernment, upon the character and attainments of His brethren of the race, both while they are alive and when they stand, small and great, before God at the close of the education of this age. (For all judgment or discernment hath been committed to the humanity of the Parent-Source revealed in Jesus.)

'And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the atmosphere or influence, or ceaselessly outflowing life of the Parent-Source, and of Jesus the manifestor of the Parent-Source. He is the lord, the life-giver, and the sustainer of the universe; the inspiration of art, science, literature, prophecy, aspiration, holiness, prayer. Though limitless, dateless and universal, He is revealed as discoverable and accessible in the Holy Catholic Church. He is the invisible bond between souls that are sundered; He assures of pardon, convinces of the non-reality of death, and of the endless continuity of individual life.'

Joshua Rowntree.

A short and most enjoyable biography of *Joshua Rowntree* has been written by S. E. Robson (Allen & Unwin; 4s. 6d. net). If it had not been written great blame would have been theirs who knew him and could write it. For he was of the salt of the earth, having the influence for good which that title originally signified, as well as the play of humour which has been so properly added to its first signification. Find a good Quaker who can laugh at himself, and you need not seek further for the man God meant you to be. 'He possessed the gift, denied to some, of being able to laugh at himself, and at certain characteristics which he shared in common with the family from which he sprang, as, for instance, when he spoke of "the Rowntree twist which is so hard to unkink," and of a distant relative, met for the first time, "Being one of us, he sees exactly where the world is wrong!"' And then with that, how he gave himself to set the world right—with what sacrifice, with what sympathy, with what humility!

Joshua Rowntree was much interested in the Adult School Movement. He tells this tale of it.

'S. was, as we all thought, a very unpromising scholar. It was difficult to see why he had joined a set of men with whom he had so little in common. He came out of a poor street and was a poor specimen of it. He was a bricklayer, who could neither read nor write, a fuddler, whose views were beery; his politics were hopeless and his life seemed purposeless. As he once sadly and secretly confessed to a friend, he had learned all that was bad before he had learned anything that was good. His home was a home of vice, and he had grown up in it anyhow. On the better side, he had preserved a kindly nature, and a certain tough doggedness—these seemed to have saved him from going altogether to destruction, but there was no visible sign of any power to arrest the drift to leeward. He was across with the leaders of the class on almost everything. He doubted their assertions, their beliefs, their assumptions, yet he had nothing to put in their place save a sort of pot-house idea of good-fellowship. This was trying for them, and not always profitable for the silent men who look on and listen. And yet he stuck to the class and became very slowly a part of it. To those who have a plan of salvation always ready, like a pocket road-map, he was and must be still a sore problem. He seemed hardly ever to get out of the questioning stage, even by chance, and yet he was undoubtedly going through a slow, steady process of renovation. He clung to the old appearances from very fear of outside white-wash. He said less than he thought, and he looked, in his ordinary clothes, less than he said, but a change began in deeds. He supped less and then gave up supping altogether. He began to lay bricks on his own account and became known as a man to be depended on, whose drainage work out of sight was as good as any work to be seen above ground. The change came about so silently, steadily, and surely, it suggested rather a geological than a spiritual process, but it was to be seen and known of all men who had watched him. Then came the tidings that S. was stricken down by a mortal complaint, cancer in the stomach. There was no hope. I went to see him one dark night, pondering how any light or any comfort could be shed on this ever-pressing mystery of pain. When ushered into the silent chamber and left, as it seemed, alone, the sight of his form in the bed reminded me of the figures from Pompeii in the Museum at Naples—as if lying in pain. "I'm afraid, Sam, you're in pain?" I said, and waited. He waited a little, and replied, slowly and clearly: "Oh, I am so comfortable; they keep me so nice and clean and get me every-thing I want. I only wish I could give half my comfort to those who don't know what comfort is." A little after he added: "I have pain pretty hard sometimes, and then I think of Him who bore a lot worse than this for the like of me." He could not look much, but there was that in his voice, in the very air of the room, which made one feel that one was in a holy place. I need not have feared to go there, our positions were reversed, as I dare say they really ought to have been long before. I was not there to give comfort; I was there getting more faith, learning more of the power of the victory of Christ on the Cross from the one man in the town who seemed least able to teach anybody anything worth the having a few years before. Slowly, but very clearly, he continued to pour out to me his desire that we at the School should care much more for the fellows doing no good and getting no gladness. All that he was and had he said he owed to the Adult School, and there were so many for whom no one cared. . . . His two requests were that he might be buried by the Adult School, and that it would not forget the folk who had to get on without any real comfort in their lives. Not a murmur seemed ever to occur to him. When the time came, a large number mustered at his grave, and heartfelt praise arose for his victory through his Saviour.'