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Browning suggests) that was given and later proved a star, some fragment of a prayer from the Master's lips that was overheard and remembered by a disciple, some actual warrant for making Jesus use that amazing 'We.'

And just such a warrant is found in the conversation between Jesus and Judas (not Iscariot) which is recorded in Jn $14^{22.23}$. Was Jesus the Christ not to show Himself to the world? asked Judas; was He not to appear in all the pomp and circumstance of kingship, dazzling men with His glory and by His power sweeping them into His Kingdom? No, replied Jesus; His Kingdom was not of this world but a kingdom of the spirit, and therefore He would force Himself on none, but enter only where hearts were opened from within to receive Him. But to all such as were willing to receive Him He would not only come but grant the closest intimacy. 'If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him' (Jn 14^{23}). And that Divine 'We' is unforgettable. Over against men who are creatures and sinners Jesus ranges Himself with God who creates and forgives. Over against human spirits which are but finite He makes Himself one with the Divine Spirit who, being infinite, is able to dwell in many hearts at once and to satisfy them to the very depths. Here, as in all the great words of Jesus, we catch at once the accent of authority and the note of grace. With Him is all power, and His promise is not only of succour or of forgiveness, but of an abiding and loving Presence. His voice is as the sound of many waters.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

'Nuff said.'[1]

'The time past of our life may suffice us.'—1 P 4^{3}.

The other day I was reading about a Kaffir wedding. Were you ever at a marriage? They do queer things at marriages, you know: pelt the couple with rice, hang things behind their motor, throw slippers after them—all kinds of funny things. And the Kaffirs, too, if the man whom I was reading is to be believed, have odd ways at their weddings, and do daft-like things, as well as we. Here's one of them. At one point in the long day the bride all at once blazes out into a dreadful fury of temper against the man she is marrying. She calls him the most awful names! She says the nastiest and unkindest things about him! Does she know what she is doing? Can she mean all that, or any of it? What has gone wrong? A minute ago she was happy and laughing and having a good time. And now, all at once, she's flown into the most horrible rage you ever saw. She's stamping her foot, she's shaking her fist, she's screaming at the top of her voice. Listen to her! She's saying she wonders any self-respecting girl would marry such a lump of a fellow, the ugliest she ever saw, so ugly that if he were only a very little worse it would make her sick to look at him; she's shouting at him that he's the meanest and scrimpiest of wretches who grudges his wives every penny; she's bawling that he has the vilest temper in all Africa, that he is nothing but a mass of selfishness, that his mother ought to have choked him when he was young, and rid the world of such a creature.

Did you ever hear the like? And all in a moment too. What has gone wrong? Nothing's gone wrong. But she's spoiling the whole party. No, she isn't. It's the custom. Look at the people all laughing; and the man himself smiling more and more the worse she gets. What does it mean? Well, it's this way. Over there a wife isn't really a wife: she is more like a slave, in some ways. She's not supposed to answer back, or to hint that her husband is a bit mean or selfish, even when he is. And because they know she'll often feel like that, they give her this chance to say it once and for all, to get it off her mind, to call him all the bad things she would ever be at all likely to want to say, to get out her temper once and for ever. And so she is allowed to go on and on, and get worse and worse, till she stops for breath. But that's the end of it, ''nuff said.' No more. Never again. For her sulks and temper and crossness are over and done with and finished. If she says anything like that after this there will

[1] By the Reverend A. J. Gossip, M.A., Aberdeen.

be no smiles then, but she'll be apt to get knocked about a bit. The time past of her life is sufficient for all that kind of thing. Once she is married, that is left behind.

And there is some sense in that, more than in bursting open a man's bag and filling it with confetti, or loading his umbrella with rice, so that when in London or Paris or somewhere, he puts it up in a hurry, down the rice will tumble in a shower, and make him feel foolish. Oh yes, there is sense in it!

Well, what about you? You're getting quite big, and it's time you were putting away childish things like temper and selfishness and all the rest of them. When you were small, nobody minded very much if you flew into a passion, for that's a baby's way. When a baby is not pleased, it opens its mouth into a huge round O, and tells the whole world about it. It wants every one to hear about this horrible thing. Here is a poor baby that wants to sleep and can't sleep! Did you ever hear of such a thing? It shouts, quite furious over it! Or, if it's hungry, it speaks to its parents in a way that's simply shocking. It calls them dreadful names. At least they sound dreadful, for I've forgotten the language. Until Dad says, 'Oh, for any favour give that child whatever it wants and let us get some sleep.' And when it gets it, it sticks it in its mouth and chuckles over it and croons to it, and tells it a great many times, 'They thought they could beat me; well, they didn't!' And no one minds that very much. For it's so small, and that's a baby's way. But you're getting quite old now. It will never do for you to carry on the least like that. The time past when you were tiny is enough for that, and you must leave it all behind you now. You've had your day for that and it's over. Some of you girls are getting on. You know you once wore clothes away down past your feet, far past. All babies do. I don't know why, unless the mothers are ashamed of their size and try to make us think they are about three times longer than they really are. Suppose you had to wear clothes like that now. Why, you just couldn't! 'I'm not a baby,' you say, quite hot and angry at the thought of it. No, you're not. And why do you still have a baby's sulks, and a baby's rages, and a baby's temper? That's all over long ago for you, like the Kaffir girl when she gets married. Or you big fellows, do you know that you once played with dolls? Oh, but you did, when you were babies. But if Mother gave you a doll now and sent you out among the other fellows, you would die of shame—it would be much worse than that patch in your trousers you can't forget. But it's far, far worse to be as old as you are, and peevish and cross still. How old are you? Six! But this'll never do! The kiddies in the class below you might carry on in that babyish way, but not you. The time past is enough for that, and we must make an end of it, like the Kaffir girl when she gets married, and puts away all childish things, and first among them her bad temper, her cross nature, her ill-humour, her hot tongue.

'Many other Things.'[1]

'And there are also many other things which Jesus did.'

I wonder if you girls and boys know where in the Bible these words come. Well, if you will turn to the last verse of the Fourth Gospel you will find them. Here is the whole verse: 'And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.'

Of course the writer was exaggerating a little about the world being too tiny for the books, but it is a kind of exaggeration that helps us to understand what he was feeling and meaning. It is quite clear that he knew many more stories about Jesus and what He said and did, and that he had to leave out a great deal he would like to have put in. Don't you think he was a fortunate man? I think everybody wishes sometimes that we had more information about our Master. What the Bible tells us is enough and more than enough to 'guide our feet into the way of peace.' But all the same, it must have been splendid to have been there, to 'have seen His kind look,' and to have watched His many other lovely deeds. And so at times we long to know more and to have a fuller story of that wonderful life.

Now it is not always understood that there are other tales told about what Jesus did, and other accounts of what He said. And though we do not feel as sure that they are absolutely accurate as those in the Gospels, yet it is not wrong to read them and to learn lessons from them.

People have often wished there was a fuller

[1] By the Reverend R. Dunkerley, B.A., B.D., Cambridge.

description in the Bible of the boyhood of Jesus; we are told so little about it and it would be so interesting to know more. One way in which we are able to picture it to ourselves is by finding out all we can about Nazareth and the places near by. There are some splendid books written about Palestine, and they help us to understand the sort of life He must have lived—the famous places He must have visited and the varied scenes He must have watched. How do you think He felt and what do you think He thought when He tramped to the Hill of Gilboa for instance, where Saul and Jonathan died, and David mourned for them? Perhaps He had His brothers or friends with Him, and they all picnicked there, and maybe He told them the old story and spoke of the great love David and Jonathan had for each other, and all the interest of those far-gone days.

Then too there are quite a number of tales about Jesus as a boy; but most of them unfortunately are stupid, and we know at once that they are untrue. Just here and there we come upon one that may quite likely be genuine. For example, there is

The Story of the Harvest Gifts.

It is said that one year when the time of sowing arrived, Joseph went out to sow wheat on the little field or allotment he possessed near Nazareth, and Jesus went along with him. And when Joseph scattered the seed on the land, Jesus also took as much wheat as He could hold in His little hands and sowed it Himself—no doubt in one little corner of the field, which I dare say He proudly called 'My wheat field.' How eagerly He would watch it grow! And when harvest-time came and Joseph reaped his corn, Jesus came also and collected all the ears which had grown from the seed He had scattered. How astonished He was at the abundance which had come—some seed had yielded thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold! What did He do with it? He took it and gave it away, the story says—to poor folks, and widows, and orphans.

I like to think this actually happened. Surely it is certain that as a boy He was fond of Nature and the wonderful ways of God's great open-air world! Surely too it is true that He was generous and kindly, and that the needs of other folks seemed ever a chance for Him to help!

Have you a little garden of your own? Soon, when spring-time comes again, you will be getting seeds for it and sowing them and watching them creep through the earth and presently becoming splendid flowers or vegetables or fruits. What will you plant? Mustard, cress, carrots, geraniums, strawberries? Well, why not have a little 'Harvest Thanksgiving' of your own, and when you have any of these marvellous results of God's bountiful work, instead of just keeping and using them yourself, give them away to some whose need is so much more than yours? There are heaps of people round about like that, you know. And you will be following Jesus' splendid example, remember.

Generosity is the way to find joy. 'To give is happier than to get,' Jesus said. Have you ever heard that lovely story of old Thomas Carlyle, the famous writer, when he was a boy? One snowy day, he was alone in the little cottage where they lived, and a poor ragged cold beggar came to the door. 'I had saved up,' Carlyle writes, 'in a small earthen thrift-pot all the pennies I had given to me, and kept it safely on the high shelf over the fireplace, and I well remember climbing up and getting it down and breaking it open that I might give all its contents to the poor wretch; and I never knew before what the joy of heaven was like.'

Here is another story about Jesus which is quite worth knowing and studying. We may call it

The Story of the Happy Invalid.

Jesus, we are told, one day passed by a man who was very ill, sadly diseased in many ways, but who was nevertheless praising God, and saying: 'Praise be to God, who has kept me free from that wherewith many of His creatures are afflicted.' When Jesus heard this, He stopped and asked the man, 'What form of affliction is that which has been kept away from thee?' And the man replied, 'I am better off than those into whose hearts God has not put that knowledge of Himself which He has put into mine.' And when Jesus heard it, he said, 'Thou hast spoken truly—give me thine hand.' The man stretched out his hand, and Jesus grasped it, and immediately he was healed, and followed Jesus rejoicing.

Don't you think that a beautiful little story? And it is certainly true that if we know God is our Father we are better off by far than those who do not—even though ill-health should come to us, or other affliction. A cannibal or a criminal may have a much healthier body than yours, but a far

less happy life, if you are living as a child of God and he is not. How tremendously grateful we ought to be that we know of God's Fatherly love, which is the brightest and best knowledge it is possible to have.

This story hints also at another big idea. I believe we are more likely to receive God's healing and helping power if we are thankful to Him and constantly remembering His mercies to us. I have just heard of a little girl I used to know, who was so very ill that the doctors said she would never walk again, and now she is able to skip and play like other children. How has it happened? Through the power of God—and a bright, confident faith in Him. 'With God all things are possible.'

The Christian Year.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

In the Heavenlies.

'In the heavenly places.'—Eph 1^3 2^6 3^{10} 6^{12}.

'In the heavenly places'; more simply and more literally still, 'In the heavenlies'—it is the refrain to which this Epistle to the Ephesians returns again and again.

It is a wonderful tribute to Christ and Christianity that a prisoner should live, and move, and have his being 'in the heavenlies.' When he wrote the Epistle, Paul was a captive in Rome, confined to his own hired room, watched over day and night by the legionaries of Cæsar, his left hand fettered to the wrist of one of Nero's guardsmen. But the narrow little chamber could not shut him in. It seemed as if its solid and rigid walls dissolved into thin air, and he walked at liberty through a spacious land, with wide horizons and fruitful fields and a thousand beauties and grandeurs. Its citizens crowded round him. Its Golden Prince was his intimate Friend. From the restrictions and discouragements of his surroundings he escaped to the freedom, the dignity, and the power of the heavenlies, and none was so rich or so glad as he. And that is what Christ has done, and is doing still, not for royal souls like Paul's alone, but for multitudes of humbler men and women.

St. Paul gives us four pictures of the heavenlies, where a Christian man is to spend his history in the present.

1. The heavenlies are a *home*. 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' Paul says and sings, 'who hath blessed us, in every blessing of the Spirit, in the heavenly places, in Christ.'

Once we were outside the threshold, but the Father pitied us, and led us, through the persuasion of His Spirit, and in the grace of His Son, from our exile without to the light and heat and provision of plenty within. For this is no ordinary home in which we find ourselves. It is amazing, incomparable. Its foundations were laid in eternity, and our place in it was appointed then: 'Ere suns and moons could wax and wane, God thought on me, His child.' And as for the riches we discover waiting within its walls for our appropriation, an inventory of these is next to impossible. Paul attempts the catalogue, but it is like to baffle even his capacious soul and his tumultuous pen. Adoption and sonship, acceptance and God's favour, redemption and the forgiveness of sins, membership and inheritance in the mighty family Christ is gathering to Himself, the seals and the tokens and the foretastes of glories yet in front: thus the great thoughts and the kindling words chase each other in rapid succession. And all this is yours and mine, when the Father blesses us, through the Spirit, in Christ.

2. But, next, the heavenlies are a *king's throne and centre of government and authority*. 'God,' Paul writes, 'being rich in mercy, hath quickened us, and raised us up, and made us sit in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.' And, a few sentences before, he had defined these heavenlies more exactly. They are where the Father has placed His well-beloved Son, now that the obedience and the Cross and the sepulchre and all the humiliation are past—'at his own right hand.' They are the seat of supremest majesty and highest rule. Christ is there, wearing the crown, wielding the sceptre, invested with undisputed dominion; and—wonder of wonders! can we believe it? are we living as if it were true?—we are intended to be there also, side by side with this risen and prevailing and victorious Christ.

It means a marvellous nearness to God. The Son is with the Father, at His right hand, close to Him as He can be; and we, the younger children, share in this friendship and intimacy which our Elder Brother knows so perfectly and rejoices in without intermission or break. So far as our finite souls can receive what His infinite soul welcomes in its fullest measure, His communion with God is our communion; and that spells liberty and kinghood and peace. And it means a quite purposeful,

triumphant sovereignty. Once the waves and billows went over Christ; but now He sits Master and Monarch, and the floods do His bidding and execute His behests, and actually help forward His cause. And this, when we are united with Him, is our position and our rest and our reign. We are not at the mercy of men and events, even when these seem unfriendly. We are not the sport of winds and storms. We should cherish the calm conviction that they are working together for our good. We should be more than conquerors over them, refusing to let them hurt us, and extracting a positive blessing from them.

3. Let us come to a third picture. The heavenlies are *a drama, an exhibition, a spectacle of endless and enthralling interest.* 'In the heavenlies,' Paul declares, 'the Church makes known to the principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God.' They are the scene where, in age after age and land after land, the Church has played its part and spoken its message and fulfilled its mission. The angels, cherubim who know and seraphim who burn, are watchers and students of the scene. The Church; but where is the Church? Not in venerable councils and assemblies alone, nor in splendid cathedrals, nor in the throng of vast congregations. It is where two or three meet in the name of Jesus Christ, and are taught by His Word and Spirit. So in us, the Church may be summed up, the whole drama of the heavenlies may be enacted, and the angels may behold in operation the manifold wisdom of God—His righteousness joining with His love to redeem us, His ingenuity and His patience training us into the likeness of His Son, His skill and resource and strength put forth without cessation and without stint for our perfecting. Surely we would reverence ourselves more, and would let God have more unfettered scope within us, if we recollected habitually that we are a lesson-book and spectacle to the principalities and powers of the unseen world.

4. Last of all, the heavenlies, as the Christian knows them, assume still another character. They are *the field of fierce, keen, hot battle.* 'Our wrestling,' Paul writes, 'is not against flesh and blood, but against the world-rulers of this darkness, and against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies.' Paul sees in every redeemed and new-created soul a kind of irresistible magnet which draws to it all the inhabitants of the invisible world. There are pure and radiant principalities above, but there are also dark and malignant principalities who crowd round us with the intention of spoiling and wrecking the Divine life which the wisdom of God makes our own. The Apostle is sure of their existence. Demonic and Satanic beings are very real to him, very subtle, very pitiless. They want to sap our intellectual belief, insinuating doubts into the mind of the most central facts and truths in our Christian faith. They try to spoil our devotional experience, suggesting some querulous complaint or some corrupting imagination when we are kneeling at prayer or reading God's Word or sitting at the holy table of our Lord. They are eager to drag down and besmirch our practical godliness, to trap us into inconsistent and unworthy conduct, to mar and weaken our witness to our Master. Let us not be ignorant of their devices.

But there is no reason why they should succeed. Once we were subjects of those evil powers. But now we are ourselves part and parcel of the heavenlies. The spiritual hosts of wickedness are not at home there. They do certainly invade its precincts. They approach us. They tempt us. They strive hard to seduce us from our dwelling and our Lord. There is no victory over which they would more rejoice than that. But the victory never need be theirs. Let us pause to recollect the safeties and the liberties and the glories of the dwelling, and it will be an utter impossibility to part with them. What is more essential still, let us cast ourselves afresh on the Lord, and He will undertake for us against the adversary. 'We wrestle,' Paul says; but our wrestling is our trust in Christ, our cry to Christ, our confidence that Christ is more than all who are against us.

I sink in life's alarms,
When by myself I stand,
Imprison me within Thine arms,
And strong shall be my hand.

God bring every one of us into the heavenlies through Jesus the Door.[1]

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

'The Christ of all the Ages.'

'They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.'—1 Co 10[4].

In a sense the few words comprising this sentence contain one of the most arresting, and at first sight

[1] Alexander Smellie, *Sunset Glory*, 66.

one of the most perplexing, sayings to be found within the covers of the New Testament. The main purpose of this portion of the letter was to make plain to the members of the church in Corinth that no outward connexion with a divine society, no formal bond of attachment, was sufficient to ensure their soul's welfare. The Apostle is warning them against the peril of thinking that, because they are converted and baptized and members of a church, no further effort is called for. He does that in a curiously roundabout way. He takes an illustration from the early Israelites. They too in a sense were under the cloud of sin, they were baptized by following their leader through divided waters of the sea, they too had spiritual meat and drink for their needs, *i.e.* a kind of sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But in spite of the connexion with a Divinely guided and blessed society, many of them fell by the way and suffered punishment for sin. The formal bond of union did not prevent such things from happening, and the whole point of the illustration, as St. Paul used it, was to enforce the same lesson on the members of this church.

Now glance back to see the place in the argument occupied by the text. It occurs simply in the illustration when the Apostle is describing the privileges of Israel. 'They did all eat the same spiritual meat,' he says, 'and did all drink the same spiritual drink.' No doubt the reference is based upon the manna which was sent to Israel for their food, and the water which flowed from the smitten rock. But besides the material food and drink, there was a sustenance of which these, like the elements in the Lord's Supper, were but the symbols. The people had a spiritual food and drink. 'They drank,' he says, 'of that spiritual Rock that followed them.' Or in other words there was a Divine Presence with them in their journeyings, of which the rock from which the water flowed was a symbol. Then comes the arresting word. 'That Rock was Christ.' It was not a similitude of Christ. It was Christ.

Jesus had revealed the nature of the Christ to them—He had taken flesh to do His supreme work—but the birth of Jesus was not the birth of the Christ, nor the Cross His death. He had always been. There was never a time without Christ. You can trace the beginning of this larger thought in the New Testament. To St. Paul as to St. John, Christ was the name of that aspect of God's nature, that manifestation of His being, which had gone forth in love to create, which had come down in love to redeem, and which held continued fellowship with men. So they said the worlds were created by Christ, and wherever God had held fellowship with men Christ was present.

Jesus Christ—we do well to join the names together—because for us every thought of Christ, of His nature and work, is derived from Jesus, and depends absolutely upon Him. What should we know of Christ if He had not come down to the world? It was necessary that the light should shine before the eyes of men, that they might behold His glory. And from that earthly life—what has been called the human life of God—the light shines both back and forward. 'The Christ is the same both yesterday, to-day, and for evermore.' What Jesus revealed in the few years of His life and ministry did not begin to be with His birth or cease with His passing. His days on earth are as it were a picture thrown on the screen of time, illuminating the eternal purposes of God and the nature which has never changed in its relationships with man. What St. Paul is doing here is using the light of Christ's incarnate life to illumine the past pilgrimage of mankind. These children of an earlier age knew little enough about the real nature of the Divine, but they were all unknowingly supported and strengthened by the self-same Spirit who, in later ages, took flesh in Jesus.

Now it may seem to us to matter but little how we interpret the far-off past. Our interest is in present needs, and the answer to them. In a sense that is true. But the larger our thought of God's ways in history, the wider our vision of His workings, the fuller faith shall we find to be ours in the present. We are led to see that whatever men's creed may be, whether formed in the darkness of ignorance or the light of knowledge, all the strength and comfort which they find have the same source as our own. They may never have heard the name of Jesus, they may have lived before He came to earth at all, but nevertheless the spiritual rock from which they drank was none other than Christ Himself. This larger vision of Christ's work in the past must result in making more real His presence with us to-day. One of the subtlest perils of the religious life is to think that God's resources freely offered to us, depend upon the clearness of our intellectual apprehension, or upon the warmth of our feelings.

And because we cannot realize the Presence of Christ we are in danger of thinking He is absent from us. That mood often comes over the spirit of faith. It helps us, in the grip of such a mood, to gain the larger vision of the Christ. Israel did not know Him or feel His nearness. In some dim and disordered way they felt that God was helping them, but nevertheless the rock from which they drank was Christ. So too with other men and nations.

Must it not be the same with us? We think we must realize Him as a Person, and because we do not possess that power of vivid recognition, we begin to doubt whether He is indeed near. That is a vast mistake. Somehow we are helped in life's battle—girded with mysterious strength to meet its demands—supplied day by day with new hopes; we, too, drink from a spiritual rock that follows us—that is Christ's Presence, that is our communion with Him. Unseen, unrealized, He is still there, and nothing can remove Him from us. 'The angel of his Presence saved them, and he bare and carried them all the days of old.'

We in the midst of to-day's life are in touch with that same Presence, for nothing divides us or can divide us from that all encompassing Spirit. To us is given the larger opportunity, for He has been revealed to us in Jesus, and every invitation which comes from those gracious lips, beckons us to know and trust, and enter into the joys of a certain fellowship. Enter into the joy of His fellowship, dare to count upon it, to lean upon its strength, and in the light of the truth as it is in Jesus—we too, like countless generations before us, shall drink of the spiritual Rock which follows us, but we shall know that Rock is Christ.[1]

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Courtesy.

'Be courteous.'—1 P 3[8].

This is the only time the word occurs in Scripture. 'I am glad,' says Dr. Rendall, 'it was employed that once. For it brings the Bible into touch with that gracious chapter in English history, the age of chivalry, links us with the sentiment and romance of the Middle Ages, and gives Christian consecration to the virtue which was one of its fairest blossoms.'

In Chaucer's Prologue the first of all the characters is:

> The Knight . . . who lovèd chivalry,
> Trouthe and honour, freedom and curteisie.

It comes amidst a list of virtues like itself, which set forth the ideal of Christian social grace. 'Be all like-minded, sympathetic, loving the brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.' A Carthusian pen, in the pages of the old *Spectator*, set itself to trace the lineaments of courtesy. Hear Addison's description: 'Courtesy, the true considerateness which will infringe no right of another . . . which recognizes all individuality and pays homage to all just claims, is self-suppression in action as well as concrete sympathy.' He is right; it certainly included these three constituents—humility, fairness, sympathy.

1. *Humility*, that must be ours if we would attain the kindly-heartedness which makes up so large a part of courtesy. Disdain and self-assertion are ruled out. When, where, with whom was Christ disdainful? Indignant? Yes. Stern and unsparing in reproof? Yes. But disdainful, never. He did not embitter a rebuke by sarcasm. His lips never curled into a sneer.

(1) What does courtesy of manner mean? It means attentiveness to others; attention to what they have to say, making the most and the best of it; listening with respect and interest; not contradicting, but trying to encourage and to understand. It means putting others forward, keeping oneself in the background; yielding to them the better place; seeing that they get their share of good things; all the hundred and one little ways that go to make up good manners. It may be a thin and superficial veneer, but at least we know the face that it puts on.

(2) And what is courtesy of spirit? The counterpart, the temper that gives sincerity and value to these outward expressions of politeness. It means rising above small motives of jealousy and envy and spite, ceasing to be captious about trifles and quick to take offence where no offence is meant. It means the capacity and the will to overlook defects of manner or of accent; that honest friendliness and kindliness of heart which will preserve us from feeling hurt or brooding over trifles, and that will give us the generosity of temper which is able to forget and forgive. We are often afraid of humility of spirit. We fear that it may impair our dignity or wound our self-respect, and bring us into unwelcome and what we call humiliating positions.

[1] Sidney M. Berry, *The Crucible of Experience*, 95.

There is no humiliation in humility. Pride far more often inflicts the real humiliations. Yes, and feels their smart, and shows it in the prickly and self-conscious irritations which we know so well. There is a fine text in Proverbs—was it present to St. Peter's mind? He uses the very word which occurs there and nowhere else in Holy Writ: 'A man's pride shall bring him low; but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.' Humility of spirit is part of all true courtesy, and of St. Peter's admonition, 'Be courteous.'

2. And again, *Fairness*, the readiness and the wish to count for one and not more than one, to give to each his due place and honour. The true gentleman 'forbears his own advantage.' His desire is fair play for all, and above all to play fair himself. That is the courtesy of games. And in the give and take of life he will never wish to score an extra point by outwitting an opponent, or by any questionable trick that some advantage of training or station or position puts within his reach and denies to his antagonist or friend.

3. And deeper still lies *Sympathy*, the enviable gift of entering into the feelings of others and feeling with them. Unconsecrated to the service of Christ, its charm is felt. We have often met some one in whose society we at once expand and feel at our ease. We own the charm of his geniality. We talk to him naturally and openly of things which we withhold from others, with whom perhaps we have in a sense much more in common. We value his friendship; we are tempted to overlook and to extenuate his faults, perhaps even to compare him mentally with some one else who has higher aims and principles, and lives up to them consistently, but who yet does not somehow carry the weight we would expect, or exercise much influence. For what is missing? Is it not sympathy, the power of entering into others' claims and feelings? So that the higher type repels or freezes, while the lower type is able to attract and influence. Sympathy gives him the geniality, the glow, the kindliness, which are parts of Christian courtesy. That single gift transfigures him into the mind of Christ. If we find it hard to be spontaneous, frank, friendly-minded, let us take sympathy for our ally against shyness. The love of Christ will help us to it, for 'love seeketh not her own' but the things of others. 'Love as brethren, be tender-hearted, be courteous.' [1]

[1] G. H. Rendall, *Charterhouse Sermons*, 256.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

Jordan or Abanah?

'Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean?'—2 K 5^{12}.

Many voices are lifted up to-day in praise of Abanah and Pharpar. People protest that the old ways of religion are narrow, and that the claim that they alone lead to God is extravagant. The world has other streams in it than Jordan, why should they not wash in one of them? There are Greeks in history as well as Hebrews—why should they not make their choice of teacher? People say, 'We get more good from Wordsworth, from Ruskin, from Emerson. These men really help us, raising and purifying our thoughts, why should you always drive us back upon the Bible as the one authority?'

1. Let us speak first to the advocates of Jordan. Here we must be candid, and admit that a good deal of the protest is due to faults of our own. The Church in the past has been unjust to much that is supremely excellent. It has been so anxious to exalt the grace that is received by faith that it has been far too willing to make over to Abanah and Pharpar all the achievements and even all the good qualities of the natural man; because they do not save, they have been spoken of with a kind of impatience as if they had no significance at all. And yet, what treasures are discovered in that region! Courage, chivalry, truth, the trust of children, the ungrudging tenderness of women, the unflinching loyalty to truth of people who yet, in a technical sense, are not religious. It is not surprising that men of resolute morality should sometimes say, 'These are the things for which we care; and if they belong to Abanah and not to Jordan, if these are mere secular moralities and not a part of religion, our choice is quickly made.'

And there is another injustice of which the Church has been guilty. After all, Abanah and Pharpar are God's rivers too, and His people have been far too slow to recognize what of His power and thought is in them. Think what books are. Our literature has grown out of a Christian civilization, and is rich in actual Christian ideas. But beyond that, there are seeds of truth and of thought in writers who were before Christ or apart from Christ. The early Greek Fathers spoke of 'a scattered word'; they felt that, in their measure, Plato and his fellows, whenever they touched their highest, became prophets and witnesses beforehand of the Christ. It

was only in later days that this unwisdom appeared which inclined men in a mistaken zeal to draw the line too closely, which separates the sacred from the secular. It is never safe to say what books cannot achieve; Emerson speaks of their 'genial, miraculous force.' One great writer confesses that it was Wordsworth who re-created his supreme divinity, giving him a new and living Spirit in place of a Deity who had hardened into an idol; and that is a testimony which might be repeated by many.

2. But now let us turn to those who are advocates of Abanah. People who express their preference on this side are in danger of forgetting what the question really is about. When a man makes a comparison of Jordan or Abanah, of Scripture or poetry, of evangelism or ethical discourse, he is apt to lay stress on what is not the point. I find this more interesting, he says, fresher and more original; I prefer this man for his style, for his wit and charm. But that is not where the matter is decided, and he who thinks of Christ and of Christian preaching only in that way has not really faced the question.

The great French preacher Ravignan said to Lacordaire, 'I hear that you have had such a crowd at your last sermon that the people were sitting even on the top of the confessionals.' 'Ah! perhaps,' said the other; 'but you manage to make them go into the confessionals.' That is a real distinction. There is the one interest—of a spectator, who admires from outside, and there is the entirely distinct and separate interest of the man who wants to possess. The one preacher had the people clustering like bees on every vantage-ground in the cathedral, and they admired and preferred—and, by his own admission, they went away unaltered. The other armed his words with hooks and stings, and when the people—far fewer this time—left the church the word went with them, and wrought in them. In which case would you say that Christ was truly preached? Is it a message for admiration, or a message with result?

Now, when we talk of Jordan and Abanah, let us make the point of contrast clear. Emerson says: 'People imagine that the place the Bible holds in the world it owes to miracles. It owes it simply to the fact that it came out of a profounder depth of thought than any other book, and the effect must be proportionate.' But that does not yet bring us to where the matter must be judged. Here was a man stricken with leprosy—a sort of living death; it had begun, and for all that the skill of his time could do, it was bound to run on to the end. Leprosy had none of the grace which gives a man, at least, a speedy quittance from his pains; slowly it wore life out, darkening, in the meanwhile, every prospect. Nothing had taste or savour, nothing was cheering; horror and strange loneliness waited for the victim. And it was in view of that the choice had to be made. A thousand things might be said for Abanah, but if a man wants healing, other considerations are irrelevant. His crowded and varied life is narrowed to the one consideration—I am a sick man, a lost man. Love of country might have its word, the memory of the glint of pools which he had known in his boyhood, and the sense that, in comparison, Jordan's turbid waters were unlovely. But then, scattering all such memories, the other thought drove in, Could Abanah at its fairest give a leper health? The Christian faith is nothing less than 'a casket of precious remedies,' and what sets it above all systems besides, is its power of bringing health and hope to a desperate creature. It claims that it can do something, that it can bring back purity of heart, and the settled peace, and the joy of reconciliation. If you are to judge between Abanah and Jordan, it is there that the judgment must be made.

In our choice between Abanah and Jordan we have nothing to do with preference, but with *effectiveness*. If we wish for stimulus, interest, debate, we may find them also within the Church of Jesus, but these are not its office. It speaks of salvation.

'What meets us in the Gospels,' says Estlin Carpenter, 'is not so much novelty of teaching in the sense of the announcement of truths unknown before, but newness of being, originality of character, a fresh outlook upon the world, an unexpected demand for action, a closer walk with God.' 'Newness of being'—that is what Christ claims to give, a clean heart, a heart which hopes and which receives; and 'an unexpected demand for action'—He says to you who have lived for twenty years impotent and futile, Arise and walk.

Much of our preference for Abanah is due to our human unwillingness to meet God. We have our own thoughts about Him, and we welcome new thoughts, with which we can play for a while and then lay them aside, when serious matters of

business intrude. But nakedly to see Him and 'to hear Him as the heart heareth,' so that there is no room for doubt, to lie naked and open in His sight, how many of us shrink from that! And that is what the Bible lives for; 'for the end of the Scripture is not merely to give us new thoughts of God, but to bring us unto human communion of love with Him.' Christ shows us what God is, but more than that, He helps us to Him, and makes our relation with Him simple and childlike. Looking to these desperate conditions of our mortal life, where men often have to cry aloud for help, He says, 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' [1]

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Christ and a World of Pain.

'And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son.'—Mt 17^{14}.

The Mount of Transfiguration was apparently not a lofty mountain. It was high enough for Christ when upon it to be out of the world, and to feel the presence of His Father only, and thus for His brief earthly life to vanish, and the glory which He had with God before the world was to meet the glory that was to be His for ever, and so make His existence one continuous line of glory. It was high enough for this; and yet not too high for Him immediately to descend from it and enter among men—to see their sorrows and afflictions, and the impotence of all besides Himself to cure them. And in this way that mount of glory, and this scene of sorrow and weakness at its foot, might be taken as symbols of something much larger—of Christ's glory now in the heavens, and of the sick world lying beneath them. Though Christ may seem far in His unapproachable glory, He is indeed near, and can immediately descend in all His power to heal.[2]

When we read the story of the epileptic and devil-possessed child, we find that we are reading an epitome of the pain of humanity. There is the torture of the writhing body and the disorder of the mind whose sweet reason is overthrown. There is the spectacle of a soul held and driven by the dominion of evil. There is the shadowed home of the child, with those long years of broken-hearted shame and agonizing exposure. There is the despairing father, loving his child the more tenderly for his affliction, and wounded in the marrow of his heart. There is the wonder and crude pity and bewildered questioning of the multitude. There are the baffled would-be healers of the distraught boy. All, that can be packed into the word pain, of torture, and anguish, and perplexity, is summed up in this graphic picture of the gnashing child and the father's tears and the multitude's wondering sorrow. Let us see how Christ bears Himself in a world of pain.

1. Mark, to begin with, *Christ's keen consciousness of pain.* He never came to a multitude without being touched by its sorrow. His portrait as He looks out on any crowd of men has been drawn for us in a single line, 'Jesus, moved with compassion.' Here He comes to this multitude, marks the surging of the crowd, sees the taunting scribes, looks with vexation and weariness on His powerless and downcast disciples, and He has His keen consciousness of pain. So Christ moved in a world of sorrow. He saw the leper by the wayside and never ceased to bear his disease. He heard the cry of the blind when others passed them by. He felt the touch of the woman in the thronging crowd. He stood, to gaze upon the man blind from his birth, at the door of the temple with a sigh in His heart. He marked the widow weeping by her son's bier. He saw the hungering, wistful, wandering crowd as sheep without a shepherd. He looked upon a city hasting all unaware to its doom, and was moved to tears. He saw not merely the pain and sorrow which all men's eyes might have marked. He saw into the depths of men's souls, away behind their callous faces and high looks and stoical pose. He saw how surely the bravest and proudest come to the hour of agony, and how universal is the crown of sorrow. Never did morning wear to evening but Christ's heart did break.

2. Mark, in the second place, *Christ's acceptance of pain.* To see Jesus moving in the midst of a world of pain, keenly conscious of it and yet forbearing to heal, is, at first sight, both a marvel and a mystery. There were many widows in Israel who mourned for their children, but the Son of man did not regard Himself as sent to them. There were many lepers who prayed for cleansing, but Christ did not heal them. There were more sisters than Martha and Mary who wept beside their brother's grave, but Christ had no word for them. There were lame and halt and blind in every village

[1] W. M. Macgregor, *Some of God's Ministries*, 78.
[2] A. B. Davidson, *Waiting upon God*, 163.

through which Jesus passed, but they were lame and halt and blind to the last chapter of their lives. The mystery of pain which burdens so many tender minds to-day is darkest when we think of Christ. When we think of the silent and nameless sorrows of men and women who dare not tell us why they suffer, we cry, 'My God, my God, why——?' But Christ has no outcry at pain. He did ask, once, and once only, 'My God, My God, why——?' but it was why God had forsaken Him, not why He suffered. To Christ there was neither marvel nor mystery in sorrow. He was marked by a quiet acceptance of pain.

3. Mark, in the third place, *Christ's deliverance from pain.* 'They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away,' sang the Old Testament prophet, and the New Testament poet made his response: 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.' The day is coming when God shall no longer need the ministry of pain. But that day cannot come until all the causes of pain have been removed. Christ came not to cleanse the leper's scab, nor to make every lame man walk, nor to call back the dead from the grave, nor to wipe the tears from all the faces that He met. He would not have forgone His own hours of weeping. He came to deliver men from pain by quenching the bitter sources from which its streams issued. He came to redeem the world from that curse, of which pain is only one consequence.

He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.
He comes with succour speedy
To those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong.
To give them songs for sighing,
Their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying,
Were precious in His sight.

He came to vanquish the wrong, and to cancel the long inheritance of evil which lies behind all pain. When every wicked passion has been cast out, when men are living in a willing obedience to the law of God, when every wilful thought has been brought into captivity with Christ, when no prejudice can keep us back from knowing God's will, and no passion from doing it, then pain, which is but the sting of sin, shall be no more. Mark Jesus, in the light of this ruling truth, dealing with this tormented child. What lay behind this writhing and foaming and gnashing of teeth? What lies, either immediately or remotely, behind every torture that flesh or spirit have known? It is surely some spirit of evil. 'Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I charge thee come out of him.' When the spirit had departed, the pain had passed. That is how, then and always, Christ delivers from pain. When Christ has cast out from men's hearts the evil spirit of greed, the sweating den, the mean street, the miserable home, the drink trade, the opium traffic, and all the wrongs which have so constant and so awful a consequence of pain shall all have passed away. When Christ has cast out the evil spirit of lust, the wrongs of womanhood, the curse of manhood, the tell-tale marks on the bodies of little children will no more be known. When Christ has cast out the evil spirit of ambition there will be no tale of the victims of the war to count, and the widow and the orphan of the soldier will no longer be seen. When Christ casts out of men's hearts the evil spirit of gluttony and drunkenness, fewer women will weep, fewer men be racked with disease, fewer babes be born in shame, to live brief lives of weakness and misery. When Christ has cast out the evil spirit of pride and envy and jealousy, scorn will no longer make men bitter, and callous contempt no longer make them sad. Christ delivers from pain not by any anodyne; He robs it of its keenest edge, He quenches it by casting out the evil spirits who cause it.

4. Mark, in the fourth place, *Christ's commission to His people of a ministry to pain.* One of the first commands given by Christ was to heal the sick. It is plain that He expected that His disciples would have cast out this evil spirit. His reproach to them is the measure of the keenness of His disappointment at their failure. It reveals that the reason of their impotence was the ebbing of their faith. They could not cast the spirit out because they had lost the assurance and conviction that God was with them. That reproach of Christ smites us all. There are evils we could combat and overcome. There are wrongs we could redress. There are curses we could remove, if only we be-

lieved. The pain of the world could be lessened at least by one-half in a single week if only Christian men faced the ill-doing of our time in the strength of self-denying faith. The Greathearts of our time who have freed the slave, rescued the lost, dried the widow's tears, and cared for the orphan, have all been men and women of invincible faith.[1]

[1] W. M. Clow, *The Secret of the Lord*, 271.

Jesus and John the Baptist.

By the Reverend H. M. Treen, B.Sc., Weston-super-Mare.

A REMARK in the review of the late Canon Scott Holland's *The Fourth Gospel*, in the number of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for last September, suggested that it might be worth while to examine what we know about the relationship of John the Baptist and his followers to Jesus and the early Christians. 'His (*i.e.* Christ's) towering supremacy over the Baptist' is true ultimately and in reality, but it hardly gives a true outline of the historical position.

We have two accounts of the opening ministry of the Baptist. St. Mark (1^{2-9}) describes him as one fulfilling the old prophecy, 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord,' preaching repentance and baptizing the multitudes moved by his message; he was expecting the coming of One mightier than he, who would baptize with the Holy Ghost. According to Mark, John expected that Messiah, when He came, would be One just like what Jesus actually was. The second account, which is from Q (Mt 3^{1-12}, Lk 3^{1-17}), gives a different view. While he expects the coming of Messiah and is sent to prepare His way, John looks forward to One who would come in judgment; 'now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire (perhaps with wind and with fire). Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor.' When Jesus came He did not so come in judgment, separating the evil from the good. The Q account is probably the older, and Mark softened Q because no great judgment came. This seems to be borne out by the story of the Baptist's question sent to Jesus later on: 'Art thou he that should come?' For John was expecting Messiah, but Jesus did not fulfil his expectations; was he mistaken? Could this Jesus really be the coming One? The floor was not being thoroughly purged, no wind and fire had cleansed the country in a terrible catastrophic judgment; could Messiah come as this Man came?

It was John who baptized Jesus, and this was an act of far-reaching importance. In later controversy, as we shall see, this was brought up, for did it not show that Jesus Himself was a disciple of the great Baptist? John and Jesus did not minister at the same time. Mark tells us definitely that the public ministry of Jesus began after the imprisonment of John: 'Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God.' Further, we have an undesigned, simple remark made by Herod which shows they did not minister together. When Herod heard of the works of Jesus, he explained it by saying 'that John the Baptist was risen from the dead,' showing that Jesus succeeded John.

From St. Matthew (11^{1-20}) and the corresponding part of St. Luke (7^{18-35}) several points of interest arise. John here suggests that Jesus is the One who should come, and, owing to the importance of the school of John the Baptist, that was a great matter for the early Christians; if the disciples of John claimed the superiority of their Master over Jesus on the ground of His receiving baptism at John's hands, the Christians could reply that John himself acknowledged Jesus as Messiah. Some critics think this passage of the Gospels grew out of the controversy between Christians and the Baptist's followers. The criticism contains an element of truth, viz., that the sayings of Jesus were written down in many instances because of their practical importance, but there is no reason to think this passage does not represent the feeling of our Lord at the actual time of His ministry. Jesus explains His attitude to the ministry of John; it was so far a greater thing than that of Jesus.