

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

Entre Nous.

SOME TOPICS.

Friendship.

Miss Maude Royden has collected ten sermons and published them with the title *The Friendship of God* (Putnam's; 3s. 6d. net). The idea of friendship runs through all the sermons. First comes a talk on the need of men for friendship, 'Without a friend thou canst not live well.'

'People have over and over again said to me, "I only want to be loved; I only want to be of use." Is that a small thing to ask? What on earth could a man want *more* than to be loved? "I only want to be loved." He that seeketh love shall lose it, because there is some strange quality in that desire for love, that desire to *get* rather than to *give*, which isolates him, which makes him lonely. I speak of what I know. I do not think that there is anyone here who desired friends more than I did when I was a girl, or had them less. And I am persuaded that it was because I was more concerned with my desire to be loved, my desire to be wanted, than I was conscious of other people's desire to be loved and to be wanted. And the first thing you have to do (and, indeed, it is the hardest thing of all) is to forget your hunger and thirst for love, and to remember that all the world is hungry. You, perhaps, can *give* even when you cannot *get*.'

The second sermon in the volume is on 'The Friendship of God.' 'If Jesus be not above all thy friend thou wilt be very sad and desolate.' The very first sermon Miss Royden preached is in this volume, and though its title is 'The Laws of Life,' it also is on friendship, for 'faith in the trustworthiness of God—in the fact that He is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever—is surely the very foundation of friendship with Him. He could not "call us friends" if He were capricious or uncertain, for we should be in fact His slaves.'

Even the untheologically minded will find an appeal in these sincere quiet talks. But do not be misled. These are not moral essays. They are sermons suffused with passion for the winning of souls.

Public Worship.

'I do not think that we ought to begin a public service of worship by confessing our sins. I do not think that is the way that penitence really arises

in the human soul. I always feel the right place for a confession of sin is that in which it comes in the Holy Communion Service of the Church of England; not at the beginning, but just before the climax, for it is when we are closest to God that we are most sorry for what we have done wrong. When we compare ourselves with one another we shall always find someone a little worse than ourselves; but when we come near to God, that cry of St. Peter's, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man!" breaks from our lips. And so at the Holy Communion Service, when we are just approaching the altar, then is the moment when penitence breaks over us like a flood.'¹

Women and the Ministry.

The one hundred and fifth volume of the *Christian World Pulpit* (James Clarke; 7s. 6d. net) has just been issued. It contains as excellent and as varied matter as usual. First comes a sermon by Dean Inge, and there are six others by him scattered throughout the volume. Towards the end we come to one by Miss Maude Royden, to whose volume on 'Friendship' we have drawn attention above.

Miss Royden's sermon was preached in the City Temple in connexion with the Jubilee of its opening, and so it is natural that she should speak of the decisive step which the City Temple took when they invited a woman to be joint minister there.

There are as yet very few women preachers in this country, whereas in America there are about seventy-five ordained women in the Congregational Ministry alone. But now there are signs of movement here, as, for example, the Report on 'Women and the Ministry' at the last Wesleyan Conference. But the actual movement is slow, and so we should consider attentively what Miss Royden has to say on the subject. To her this struggle 'is the last, and goes deepest of any struggle that is made by women to claim equality of opportunity with men.'

'I want to make it understood by those who do not realize how tremendous its importance seems to some of us—I want to show just why it is that this thing goes so deep. You see, for a man to say that women have not sufficient physical endurance or physical strength for certain kinds of work, or perhaps for public life, may be a misconception,

¹ A. Maude Royden, *The Friendship of God*, 126.

but it is not an insult ; it is simply a statement of what such a man believes to be true. Even to say that a woman lacks intellectual power does not go so deep. It may be wrong ; I think it is wrong, but it does not hit the very nature of a woman. But to say, as it is said to-day, that a woman may have the capacity to speak and the power to speak and the intellectual ability to speak ; that she may even speak as well as a man, but that she must not speak in a church because it is a consecrated building, is an insult to the very depths of a woman's nature. It means something far more than intellectual inferiority or physical inferiority ; it means that there is something in the very nature of a woman which desecrates a holy place.'

Miss Royden then goes on to ask whether the world has anything to gain by the coming of women into the spiritual office of the Church, beyond what is gained by an act of justice. She believes that it has : that women will bring something new to Christianity—something which was implicit in the teaching of Christ in the beginning, but which is new in the sense that the world has not yet realized it. And the new apprehension which she believes women will bring is that the world is not a battlefield, but a home. 'And the nations not enemies but brothers, and God in the last resort not a Judge, or Sovereign, or a Lawgiver, but a parent.'

The only Gospel in which the parable of the Prodigal Son is found is St. Luke, and scholars agree that the Evangelist was almost certainly indebted to a woman for it. It was she who remembered that Christ had said, God is your Father, and the world is not a battlefield, or a law court, but a home. 'Is there in all religion a lesson that the world needs more at this moment ? Is there in all the realm of man's imagining a conception of God, which perfectly received, could do more to bind up the bleeding wounds of the world, reinstate civilization, and bind together once more the nations in that brotherhood which Christ proclaimed than this conception—that God is our Father and our Mother, and that, because He is so, the law of which He is the giver is a law of love and this world a home ?'

The Sport of Climbing.

The Rev. E. W. Shephard-Walwyn has published another volume of 'Chats with Boys and Girls.' His title is *Be a Sport* (Allenson ; 3s. 6d. net). Mr. Shephard-Walwyn is always forceful and direct, and never dull. This is how he deals with the sport of Climbing :

Now when we get to the top of a thing we always get a stunning surprise. We never find there what we expected.

A master climbed the school bookcase, and found there piles of musty bread and butter, which the boys had thrown up during the morning 11 a.m. interval. That was hardly what he expected ! . . .

The surprise that awaits most people when they reach their 'top,' takes the shape of an ugly, long word called Disillusionment.

If you reached so high a 'top' of popularity in games, that the others chaired and cheered you after every match, singing, 'He's a jolly good fellow,' you would soon be sick of the very sound of their voices.

Many, when they have obtained everything that money can bring to them, wave about in the air in a helpless flabby way, like the caterpillar at the top of a flower-stalk.

They are at their wits' ends to think of new excitements, new ways of amusing themselves. They invent things like the silly 'freak' dinners that are given in the West End of London.

I hope what I have said so far will lessen your zeal for the unsatisfying ordinary 'climbing' of most people.

And yet this climbing must be done to a certain degree. You must stick to your work at school, and do your best in business. That is all right as long as another kind of climbing is going on in your heart at the same time. I mean the climbing up to the Steep Path of Doing Right against inclination.

About this kind of climbing Mr. Shephard-Walwyn has five things to say, and he hangs them on the five letters C, L, I, M, B.

C is 'Choose your Guide.' For there is no safer Guide up the steep path of doing right, and it was of Him that St. Paul said, 'I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.'

L is 'Looking up.' For in fighting sin we must never look at it, but always *up* into the glorious face of Jesus Christ, and He will pull us up out of danger.

I is 'Impediments.' These are the things which, though not actually sinful, weight us down in climbing to Heaven. One of them is getting up late.

M is the 'Map of the Way.' The Bible is our Map of the way up the precipitous path of right doing.

B is 'Bringing Others.' In climbing the Alps tourists are roped together, so that if one slips the others can help him to right himself, and so in climbing the heavenly way it is easier and safer for us if we are helping others along.

'Christ in me.'

In 1899 the foundation of the Student Christian Movement in Russia was laid. From that year until the time of his death in 1919, Baron Paul Nicolay led the movement. A short account of

his life and work has been written by Greta Langenskjold. The title is *Baron Paul Nicolay* (Student Christian Movement; 6s. net). The biography has been very well translated by Ruth Evelyn Wilder.

The following letter is Baron Nicolay's answer to a young person who told him that she did not know if she could work with other Christians, as she had difficulty with the doctrine of the Atonement:

'I remember what it cost me spiritually to "stand on my own feet," to be "under the law of Christ" but free from "the law of men." I wanted to be faithful and conscientious in my relation to God and His Word, but without letting men put their stamp on me, forcing me to imitate them in dogma or phraseology. . . . To me "Christ in me" has meant more than "Christ for me," as my experience has been more along that line. That does not mean that the other concept is unnecessary or superfluous. He reveals Himself to one person more from one angle, to another from another, and we gradually realise that the different ways do not contradict but rather complement each other.

'But what makes you think that you must feel isolated among Christians? He who says of Christ "my Lord and my God" he is certainly a Christian. It is wonderful that the Christians' unity does not consist in unity of forms and expressions, but in the unity of the Spirit. Christ loves His flowers, not wanting them to imitate each other but that each in his own special way should try to resemble Him—that there might be "unity in diversity." "One is your Master—Christ," not men. That makes us *free*, but *yielded* to Christ.'

A TEXT.

1 Kings xix. 3: 'He arose, and fled for his life.'

The title of Mr. Boreham's latest volume is *Wisps of Wildfire* (Epworth Press; 5s. net). It was suggested to him by a swagman. The night was dark and the swagman had a long trudge before him. Suddenly the sky became pyrotechnic with wildfire, and he set out sure that 'a few wisps of wildfire would light things up.'

The volume is in Mr. Boreham's old manner, and there are many things in it that will light up the traveller's path. One of the chapters deals with the flight of Elijah. It is headed 'A Nervous Breakdown.' Had it been a spiritual, rather than a nervous breakdown, the treatment, Mr. Boreham says, would have been different. It would not have been companionship, nourishing food and drink, a glowing fire and the boon of sleep.

But the pity of it was that the breakdown might have been prevented had Elijah not thought—and he had reason so to think—that he was standing alone against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Francesca Alexander has a poem in which she

tells of a hermit who dwelt in a cave among the mountains. He fasted and prayed, and endeavoured by every means in his power to purge his soul of all evil and adorn it with spiritual beauty. He fancied that he alone cared about such things; and as, from his cave, he sometimes saw at night the twinkling lights of the cottages about the pineclad valleys, he wept that the people dwelling in them had no love for higher things. One day, however, he was commanded to set out on a journey among the towns and hamlets round about him. All sorts of unlikely people were moved to open their hearts to him. He was astonished at the world's wealth of hidden goodness. He returned to his cave, and, of an evening, found a new delight in contemplating the valley that lay below. He thought, as he

... saw the twinkling star-like glow
Of light, in the cottage windows far—
How many God's hidden servants are!

'When a minister is depressed by the dearth of conversions, he should indulge in a little arithmetic. He should carefully count his converts and put down the number on a sheet of paper. He should then read the story of Jesus, culminating in the record of the day of Pentecost. He should then multiply the figure on the sheet of paper by three thousand; and it will not be far out. Or, if this does not produce the desired effect, let him read the story of Elijah. He will then multiply the number on his sheet of paper by seven thousand. The secretaries who compile the ecclesiastical returns, and the statisticians who tabulate the official figures, may shake their heads and decline to admit the result of these computations among their elaborate and carefully-prepared returns; but never mind! They strain out the gnat and swallow the camel. The figures that they reject are at least as accurate as many that they embalm and immortalise. If the Old and New Testaments mean anything, they mean that my suggestion is perfectly sound.

'There is such a thing as the Church outside the Churches, the Church that is three thousand or seven thousand times as strong, in point of numbers, as the Church within the Churches. There ought, of course, to be no such Church. If, in Elijah's day, the Church outside the Churches had displayed the courage of its convictions, the prophet's faith might have been saved from shipwreck. He could never, then, have lifted to heaven that bitter cry, "I, even I only, am left!"'

Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, Kings Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.