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to her through the symbols of art and culture, and in the expression of her distinctive life her deepest debt is to her great prophetic personalities.

Lenz<sup>1</sup> emphasizes the importance of recognizing the power of religion as a factor in social life,

<sup>1</sup> *Die Bedeutung des Protestantismus für den Aufbau einer allgemeinen Staatslehre*, von Dr Georg Lenz (Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen ; Mk. 1).

and, in particular, the close connexion of religious dogmas with political ideas—a connexion which was much more clearly recognized in the period of the Reformation than to-day; and he summons Protestantism to a better appreciation of its task and of its potential influence.

JOHN E. McFADYEN.

Glasgow.

## Contributions and Comments.

### Colossians ii. 23.

THERE is a passage in the Epistle to the Colossians (2<sup>23</sup>), which has been a constant difficulty to the translators, and which Professor Rendel Harris considerably relieved by an article in your issue of January 1923, pointing out that it contained a reference to the 'Clouds' of Aristophanes and to Socratic teaching. It curiously happens that the 'Clouds' supplies another key. St. Paul has been deprecating Socratic asceticism—'Touch not, taste not,' etc., and in the last words of the sentence writes that these things are *οὐκ ἐν τιμῇ τινὶ πρὸς πλῆσμονήν τῆς σαρκός*. Reading the 'clouds' again, the keyword suggests itself irresistibly. Strepsiades has it much on his mind, and his repeated *ἐπιλήσμων* fits exactly into St. Paul's thought. He himself uses the word as a verb, 'forgetting the things that are behind'; and now he urges that asceticism 'is of no value to the forgetting of the flesh.' Maybe it is no chance that the 'Clouds' suggests the word. If St. Paul was thinking at all of this play he must have had before him poor Strepsiades and his 'forgetfulness.' This may also count as supporting Professor Rendel Harris's original argument that he had this play in his mind.

BERNARD G. HALL.

Knutsford.

### Romans ii. 18.

Thou 'approvest the things that are more excellent.'—A. V.

Thou 'provest the things that differ.'—R. V. margin.

In this passage the R. V. simply omits the 'more' of the A. V., but as the marginal reading shows there is no reason to translate *δοκιμάζεις* as 'approvest' rather than 'provest.' The word is used in both senses elsewhere, and the same phrase recurs in the infinitive in Ph 1<sup>10</sup>. As Sanday and Headlam and Denney point out, there is a double ambiguity in the Greek, as *δοκιμάζειν* may mean (1) to distinguish, or (2) to approve after testing, while *τὰ διαφέροντα* may mean (1) things which differ, or (2) things which being proved are found to excel. It is pretty obvious that St. Paul does not mean to exclude either meaning of either word. He means both 'weighing' and 'deciding,' and 'things really different,' some better than others.

Dr. Moffatt paraphrases 'with a sense of what is vital in religion,' but this loses the sense of deliberation in *δοκιμάζεις*. Fortunately we have in English a word with a similar ambiguity, to 'appreciate,' which means both to distinguish and to approve or value after due deliberation. I suggest, therefore, as an exact translation: 'Thou dost appreciate real differences of value.'

W. R. FORRESTER.

Roslin.

## Entre Nous.

### The Speaker's Bible.

FIVE volumes have now been issued, and the sixth volume on *Job and Psalms* is ready (Speaker's Bible Office, Aberdeen; 10s. 6d. net). It would not be easy to select any of the reviews when all

have been so favourable, so we will quote the last two which have come to our hand. One of these happens to be a review of the fourth volume from the *Watchman Examiner* of New York:

'The fourth volume of this series of matchless

commentaries, edited by the world's famous Biblical and theological encyclopædist, covers the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. The three preceding volumes dealt with Hebrews (one volume), and the Gospel of Luke (two volumes). The name "Hastings" has been one with which to conjure. Its mention brings before our minds the picture of one of the most stimulating and suggestive periodicals in the English language; presents to us the greatest dictionary of the Bible, the greatest dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, the greatest dictionary of the Apostolic Church, the greatest encyclopædia of religion and ethics, as well as the choice volumes on the *Great Texts of the Bible*, *The Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, *The Children's Great Texts of the Bible*, and *The Great Christian Doctrines*. Surely these volumes were enough to make the name of any one man forever famous, but not content with these contributions, Dr Hastings sought to bring his life to a glorious climax by editing *The Speaker's Bible*. The minister who uses these volumes of *The Speaker's Bible* will find a new charm creeping into his pulpit messages, as all the best sermons, essays and other literature of all the ages will be made to contribute to the message in hand. We marvel at the inclusion of the cream of the latest books in these pages. We prize the latest volume so highly that it is scarcely ever on the shelf, being almost continually on our working table. We eagerly and anxiously await the coming of the other volumes of the set.'

The *Scottish Congregationalist* commends the fifth volume in this way:

'The Speaker's Bible. Edited by James Hastings, D.D. First and Second Peter, and Epistle of Jude. It will be many years before anything will be published that will take the place of these volumes of the Speaker's Bible. For scholarship, insight, and suggestion there is nothing to equal them. It is an encyclopædia of thought and ideas on the leading texts of the books dealt with, and enriched by telling illustrations drawn from many fields, and illuminated by the poets. It is an amazing piece of work. But Dr. Hastings was an amazing worker. For the ordinary work of the pulpit the average preacher would be well advised to spend his money on these volumes rather than on Commentaries. The introduction discusses the authorship of the Epistle, where it was written, and to whom, and when and why it was written. The introduction to Jude deals with the characteristics of the letter, who were

the heretics against whom the writer warns, and who the writer was.'

Bound volumes may be had either direct from the Speaker's Bible Office, Aberdeen, or through the booksellers. There is also a serial issue at 2s. per month, or 11s. for a half-yearly subscription.

#### The Peace of Self-Control.

Those who have not read Stopford Brooke's Sermons should certainly get his daughter's selections from them. She gives the volume the title *Die to Live* (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s. net). Her husband, Dr. L. P. Jacks, has written a foreword. Towards the end of it he speaks of those who knew Stopford Brooke as 'now a diminishing band.' Stopford Brooke's message is such a living one for to-day, it is hard to realize how many years it is since his human voice was stilled. Here, on the 'Peace of Self-Control,' he might well be speaking to the restlessness of 1925:

'In how many of our lives is there any temperance at all? Or any desire to work for it? Who among us realizes, before we plunge into some excitement, or into any unbridled thinking of ourselves, the meaning of that image of Giotto—where the noble Virtue of Temperance stands binding the hilt of her sword to the scabbard, lest she should draw it too quickly, even when she is righteously distempered? Who, when a wild desire cries for satisfaction, has the habit of turning it out of doors? Who, when life is dull, and a fresh pleasure offers itself, restrains himself until clear answers are given to these questions—"Is this right in the eyes of Love? Will it sow sorrow in some soul, or disturb some life?" It is wise, even at the risk of checking noble impulse, to ask these questions now, when self-indulgence is so much the mistress of society, or the mistress of our own lonely, self-devouring heart. It is wiser now, in this life of doing or thinking our own pleasure, to make self-control, for love's sake, the governor of the soul. For the want of this temperance is the curse of modern life. Men and women cry for peace, but they will take no trouble for it. They will renounce nothing. Peace will only be ours when we have mastered self-desires for the sake of love; when in temperate government of the soul by One Law of Love, we have won the self-forgetfulness of Jesus Christ. Then the soul, having unity in its diversity, having passion subdued to whiteness by self-control, having power because all its qualities radiate to one point where

burns the Love of God for man His child—has Peace within, deep as the seas of eternity.'

— — —  
NEW POETRY.

In November Mr. A. A. Milne's volume of delightful children's poems was first issued in book form. The same month a second edition was required, and in December there appeared the third, fourth, and fifth editions—*When We were Very Young* (Methuen; 7s. 6d. net). The illustrations are by Mr. Ernest H. Shepard, and they are as delightful as the poems :

VESPERS

*Little Boy kneels at the foot of the bed,  
Droops on the little hands, little gold head.  
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!  
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.*

*God bless Mummy.* I know that's right.  
Wasn't it fun in the bath to-night?  
The cold's so cold, and the hot's so hot.  
Oh! *God bless Daddy*—I quite forgot.

If I open my fingers a little bit more,  
I can see Nanny's dressing-gown on the door.  
It's a beautiful blue, but it hasn't a hood.  
Oh! *God bless Nanny, and make her good.*

Mine has a hood, and I lie in bed,  
And pull the hood right over my head,  
And I shut my eyes, and I curl up small,  
And nobody knows that I'm there at all.

Oh! *Thank you, God, for a lovely day,*  
And what was the other I had to say?  
I said, "Bless Daddy," so what can it be?  
Oh! Now I remember it. *God bless Me.*

*Little Boy kneels at the foot of the bed,  
Droops on the little hands, little gold head.  
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!  
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.*

— — —  
**Orde Ward.**

Out of the very large number of poems written by the Rev. F. W. Orde Ward, a number have been selected by his daughter, and published by the Swarthmore Press (5s. net).

The title of the volume is simply *Selected Poems of F. W. Orde Ward*. The volume contains also a short account of Mr. Ward's life from the time when he became Vicar of Pishill in 1883 until his death

in 1922. The poems are very varied in subject. We quote one of the religious poems :

THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD IS WISER THAN  
MEN (1 Cor. i. 25).

Dear Father, all the wisdoms vain  
Of all the ages are but dross,  
And idle work and weary pain,  
Before the Wisdom of the Cross;  
For now even death is made Divine,  
And wonderful it is to see—  
That this sweet Foolishness of Thine  
Doth win so many hearts to Thee.

We build great arguments on high,  
Babels of thought like lofty towers,  
To bring Eternity more nigh  
And mimic thus Thy God-like Powers;  
But as in empty pride they stand,  
They pass like breath upon the breeze  
And perish—for, O Lord, Thy grand  
Simplicity is more than these.

Ah, teach me then the better lore,  
And let me thus unlearn the old,  
Till with the instructions in Thy store  
I shall be very wise and bold;  
And may the Knowledge that is Life  
Show me the Cross alone can bless,  
And he who loses in the strife  
Is Conqueror in Thy Foolishness.

— — —  
**Carey Bonner.**

It is not easy to select either prose or poetry. The Rev. Carey Bonner has shown a nice and assured discrimination in the *Devotional Meditations and Poems* in his new volume for use in the 'Quiet Hour.' The title of the volume is *Up to the Hills* (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s. net). The passages are undated, but the book is planned in weekly sections. This is the selection for one day:

'How manifest is this kinship of life in the time of spring! Brother Lawrence—the seventeenth-century saint of Lorraine—received this "singular favour" of God, in that he was converted, at the age of eighteen, by seeing a tree in winter, and considering that, in the closely approaching spring, it would be bursting into new life. The fact of God flashed upon his soul, and remained clear and vivid throughout his life. "My God," he cried, "Thou canst make me also to live."

'Why should that be "singular"? Is not this the marvel, that there are so few such cases! What are the trees but Evangelists of God? 'Tis only

the blindness and deafness of the congregation that accounts for the lack of conversions.

'I would crave the insight of the Wiltshire peasant in Miss Bunston's poem :

UNDER A WILTSHIRE APPLE-TREE.

Some folks as can afford,  
So I've heard say,  
Sets up a sort of cross  
Right in the garden way  
To mind 'em of the Lord.

But I, when I do see  
Thik apple tree  
An' stoopin' limb  
All spread wi' moss,  
I think of Him  
And how He talks wi' me.

I think of God  
And how He trod  
That garden long ago ;  
He walked, I reckon, to and fro  
And then sat down  
Upon the groun'  
Or some low limb  
What suited Him.  
Such as you see  
On many a tree,  
And on thik very one  
Where I at set o' sun  
Do sit and talk wi' He.

And, mornings too, I rise and come  
An' sit down where the branch be low ;  
A bird do sing, a bee do hum,  
The flowers in the border blow.  
And all my heart's so glad and clear  
As pools when mists do disappear :  
As pools a-laughing in the light  
When morning air is swep' an' bright,  
As pools what got all Heaven in sight,  
So's my heart's Cheer  
When He be near.

He never pushes the garden door,  
He left no footmark on the floor ;  
I never heard 'Un stir nor tread  
And yet His hand do bless my head,  
And when 'tis time for work to start  
I takes Him with me in my heart.

And when I die, pray God I see  
At very last thik apple-tree  
An' stooping limb,  
And think of Him  
And all He been to me.'

ANNA BUNSTON.'

A TEXT.

Mark x. 32.

What is the supreme moment of our Lord's ministry ? The Rev. James Black, D.D., says that it took place outside Jericho, 'And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem ; and Jesus went before them : and they were amazed ; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him.'

Some amazing thing happened. As Jesus strode out in front, these disciples, for the only time in their lives, were stricken with sudden panic.

'What accounts for it ? It must have been something in Jesus—some sign of agony, some mark of uncontrollable emotion, some drawn look—that startled these loving hearts. I have no doubt that His face became fixed and drawn. I have no doubt that He evidenced emotion. . . . After a moment or two, having relaxed from His overmastering feelings, He turned back to His astonished disciples, and said quietly : "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem." Here, on this bit of white road outside Jericho, He had finally decided to go to Jerusalem, knowing what it meant.

'When you think of it, a man's greatest agony always lies in his deciding. Just to know what to do, amid the balancing of "Pros" and "Cons," in the wrangle of possibilities, with the fear of false decision, with the haunting horror of a fatal foolish step, just to make your mind up finally to face some dreadful thing, that is always a soul's greatest agony.

'Any of us who has been faced with some momentous decision knows the agony of this moment. When one's whole life hangs on a single act, the decision is compressed passion. There may be people who jest about their decisions, or who can shut their eyes and leap ; but these are not people who look at life seriously. Where there is a soul like Jesus, faced with issues like Jesus, the decision is an agony of perplexity.

'On the other hand, once the mind is bent and the die is finally cast, a man may quietly face anything.'

This incident Dr. Black calls the 'Dilemma of the Cross-Roads.' At the morning service at St. George's, Edinburgh, he has been dealing with the Dilemmas of Jesus, and he finds that they were twelve in number. His treatment in every case is suggestive. The sermons have now been published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton—*The Dilemmas of Jesus* (7s. 6d. net).

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