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There is no language of prayer that has the moving appeal of Bible language. Pulpit prayers that are redolent of Scripture are extraordinarily uplifting. And, therefore, the Rev. David T. Patterson has done a real service in bringing together, and publishing, *Great Prayers of the Bible* (Williams & Norgate; 2s. 6d. net). The book is divided into two parts: (1) Personal Prayers, and (2) Community Prayers, and there are clear sub-divisions in both parts—Praise, Confession, Intercession, and for certain human conditions like trouble. Ministers who do not actually use these prayers (and they might do worse) might, at least, fill their minds with them, and go to their pulpit or prayer-desk with the

aroma and the language of them in their memories. An admirable book.

If any readers are interested in conventual life, or wish to see its best side, they can do so in *The House of Refuge*, by Miss E. Hamilton Moore (Williams & Norgate; 3s. 6d. net). The book is really a mystical picture of the soul's rest and peace in a retreat where kindness and piety mingled make the retreat a real refuge. The charm of the book is its simple and loving spirituality, and it is probable that there are many worried souls who would find a 'refuge' in its pages.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Television.¹

'Their speech has never a word, not a sound for the ear, and yet their message spreads the wide world over, their meaning carries to earth's end.'—Ps 19^{2,4} (Moffatt).

Do you ever read the papers, except that Hammond's made another century, and Yorkshire are beaten again? Well, did you notice a wonderful thing that happened the other week—how some people in Glasgow saw some others in London? 'O-o-oh,' you say. 'That's a big one.' Yes, but they did! They saw a boy, a London boy; and they in Glasgow, speaking over the wireless, asked him to do things, and he did them. 'Put out your tongue,' they said, and out it came, and they, hundreds of miles away, saw him. How? Well, they tell us it's quite simple; but it's too clever for me. Did you ever get stuck up in a sum, and take it to the teacher, and she said, 'Oh, that's an easy one. You see this, and that, and something else (and you didn't!); so that's quite simple, isn't it?' And you said, 'Ye-es'; and went back more puzzled than ever. Well, this is like that. I'm more puzzled after they are done explaining than before. But it seems that everything makes a sound—everything. So Mother needn't be so down on you for being noisy! Everything's noisy. A cabbage looks pretty sleepy. But it's screaming away all the time. And a chair, and a

table, yes, and your face. No, not your mouth, your face. And your face makes one sound and my face quite another sound. Got that? Well, it seems that all sounds are really little waves that go rippling along. And what they have done is to make an instrument that turns that London boy's face into its own sounds and directs these to (say) Glasgow, and then in Glasgow there is another instrument that catches the sounds when they arrive, and turns them back into the face again. Do you follow? No. Good. Neither do I; not one bit. So you and I will go and sit at the foot of the class, and talk about something else.

Suppose we speak about this—What sound does your face make? No, no, I don't mean that. I know baby's always crying; and that you are always racketing about and getting into trouble for it. I know you can sing and whistle. Can you do the kind with two fingers—the long, shrill one? I never could. All my life it's been a great disappointment; but, of course, you can't have everything. But what sound does your face make? For we've always had a kind of television, we've always been sending out sounds, though we didn't know it, and people far away turn them back into our faces, see these quite clear beside them there half across the world. There are boys at the other end of the earth up against things, tempted, going to give in and do something horrid. And suddenly they see their Mother's face! But, you say, she's hundreds and hundreds of miles away. Yes. But as she runs about the house at

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

home, doing little kindnesses, and putting through the daily tasks, her face is sending out sounds that go right across the world and grow into her face again out yonder. And her boy sees it, sees how vexed she used to look when he did something mean or wrong, sees how vexed she would be now if he gave in to this temptation. And 'No,' he says, and sticks to it. 'No, I will not.'

That's how Jesus Christ helps people. You remember that once Peter was doing very badly, and through the crowd he caught a glimpse of Christ's face looking at him—oh, so sadly; and that pulled him together. Well, it's like that. It's hundreds of years since Jesus lived on earth; and it was far away even then. But even yet when people feel greedy and grabby and selfish and cross, and their tempers are rising, and their mouths are opening to say horrid things, the way He used to live calls up His face, and they just can't do it, not with Him looking at them clearly there. Do you never see Him? It would help you, too, when your fists are doubling and your passions flaming up.

Your face is making some sound too. But what kind is it? Does it help others, or does it tempt them? Does it make them better, or does it make them worse? Is it easier for them to go straight when they think of you, or do you lead them wrong? There is no voice, says the Psalmist, there are no words heard! Yet always, always, we are sending out sounds round about us, and these grow into our face; and, when they see it, are the boys and girls that you know helped or tempted? Do they do better, or worse?

Drowning Nenuphars.¹

'I am . . . the lily of the valleys.'—Song 2¹.
'And he that seeketh, findeth.'—Mt 7⁶.

What is a drowning nenuphar? Perhaps you don't all know. I can't blame you. Perhaps not many people do know. The words are found in a lovely poem. It is by our Poet Laureate, Mr. Robert Bridges, and it is called, 'There is a Hill.' This is the first verse:

There is a hill beside the silver Thames,
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine;
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
Steeply the thicket to his floods decline.

Straight trees in every place
Their thick tops interlace,
And pendant branches trail their foliage fine
Upon his watery face.

¹ By the Reverend Cecil Nicholson, Darwen.

In the fourth verse the poet speaks of a place—

Where spreading crowfoot mars
The drowning nenuphars.

What is a drowning nenuphar? I want to tell you two things that it is.

1. It is *something to find out*. It is always interesting to have something to find out. To have things to find out is sometimes better than to have the things. When you see a word you don't know, try to find out what it means. When you see a fresh sight or hear a strange sound, find out what it is. Do it always. It is often more interesting to find things out than to watch a game. You must, of course, be careful how you try to find out. Don't be like the boy whose father brought him a drum from a fair, and who burst it open to find out where the sound came from; or like the girl who planted seeds in her garden, and who, three days afterwards, went turning up the soil to see how they were growing. Don't be like that, but do find things out. You can all be detectives and discoverers. The world is full of a number of interesting things. Why has a cat whiskers? Why do frogs croak? How do blue-tits hang on a string?—just tie up a piece of fat and try them. Even in the house there are many things. How does the water boil? How does the vacuum clean? How does the loud speaker speak and sometimes squeak? You will find the world getting 'curioser and curioser' as Alice said in Wonderland. Life will be far more pleasant and far more useful if you find out things.

The whole of school life is a process of finding out, and it is always better to find things out for yourself. Don't expect the teacher to tell you everything. School is like that because life is like that. Some of the greatest men have been boys who tried to find out. Watts, who invented the steam-engine, found out what steam could do by playing with a kettle. Benjamin Franklin found out about electricity by playing with a kite. Edison and Marconi are great inventors because they have all their lives been trying to find things out. That is what great explorers and travellers do: David Livingstone crossing Africa, brave men climbing Mount Everest, and the men who set out in wonder ships and aeroplanes to explore the icy lands and seas that lie about the poles. They go to find out, as Kipling says:

Something hidden, go and find it, go and look
behind the ranges;
Something hid behind the ranges, lost and waiting
for you, go!

It is just the same when you want truth and beauty and goodness and love. As long as ever you live you can go on finding. You will never in this world find all, but there will always be the joy of seeking: the joy that Jesus had when He was twelve years old, when He sat in the Temple in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. One of life's best joys is like the first thing about a drowning nenuphar. It is something to find out.

2. It is *something beautiful when found*. There are some things in the world which are not worth finding. It is not so with 'drowning nenuphars.' They are beautiful when found. I know, because one day I found some. I was walking in a park and I came to a little side path. It was narrow and winding and shrub-bordered, and it tempted me. I strayed into it. I found it led downward, and at the bottom there was a shallow pond, and in the pond some drowning nenuphars—Water-lilies. Water-lilies, beautiful when found. You had to seek them, but they were worth seeking.

As I said, not all the things we seek are worth finding. For some things it is better to wait until they come to us. There is a curiosity which brings a sting, but lilies are always worth finding, because, when you find them, they are beautiful.

Our Lord Jesus has been called a Lily, and He is best worth finding of all the things that we can seek. 'He that findeth Jesus findeth a good treasure, yea, a good beyond all.' We must seek Him until we find Him for ourselves, and when we find Him we must cling to Him and love Him. Then we shall know Him to be the fairest and sweetest and best of all that lives or is upon the earth.

The Christian Year.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Spiritual Freedom.

'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'—
2 Co 3¹⁷.

The City of Destruction has been left behind, but the pilgrims' way to the City that hath foundations is not only long, but wearing. Still, they toil and aspire and strive to attain, but are sorely hindered in the way, and the one thing they have not, as they expected to have, is freedom. Rousseau opened his *Contrat Social* with the famous words, 'Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.' The Christian's inheritance is real and substantial, but to some it seems to be so encumbered with debts and

mortgages that they fail to enjoy and to benefit by it.

1. Few words have been more abused than that of liberty. Madame Roland's often quoted exclamation, 'O Liberty, what crimes have been committed in thy name!' may really have run, as we are now told, 'How thou hast been played with!' Both are true. But even worse than playing fast and loose with a sacred name is that its very meaning is so continually misunderstood.

Often liberty implies absence of restraint from without, at the hands of some state or community, or of some lord or master, or in relation to certain regulations and restrictions. The civil and religious liberty for which men have had sometimes so long and so earnestly to contend means the removal of all unjust restraints upon citizens as regards their beliefs or actions. Many can think of no other 'liberty' than this. The chains to which Rousseau referred were those of unrighteous laws, of injurious privilege, of proud oppression, or the artificial restraints of an iniquitously constituted social order; and he pleaded with enthusiastic rhetoric that these might be removed, and then the primeval reign of liberty would return. The men of the French Revolution of 1789 believed him, and shouted, 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,' only to find themselves under the dominion of a harder tyrant than ever.

Such freedom should never be undervalued. Its attainment is worth many a sore conflict, and those martyr souls deserve immortal honour who have lived and died to obtain it for their successors, if not for themselves. But when this liberty has been obtained, man has not yet begun to live. All just opportunity has been provided for each to think and act for himself, so far as state or society can provide it—no more. What will a man do with that 'free hand' he has been so anxious to secure?

2. What man really wants in his craving for 'liberty' is power; power for himself, as a living creature with certain faculties, to be himself—in thought, word, and deed, to work out his own nature without let or hindrance. Power to be himself, but what is himself? Each man has so many selves. It is sometimes said that in each is a higher and lower self, but, if we think of the moods and changes, the varying conditions without and within, of one individual life, it is hard to say what the real self is. If full scope is given to lower impulses, what is to become of the higher? Hence arises an inner conflict, of which every son of man knows something, and the best know most. When Racine read his play of 'Esther' to Louis

Quatorze, and came to the passage which describes the cruel civil war between higher and lower natures within the soul, the Grand Monarque interrupted him, 'I know that war very well.' (Epictetus, the crippled slave, stood in an upper form of the school of humanity in which kings and sages have often proved themselves dunces and dullards.)

To realize the highest Self—if this were but as easy as men have dreamed! 'We needs must love the highest when we see it,' but we soon find how impossible it is to make it our own.

One word has thus far been obviously and intentionally omitted—God. It is because He is left out of the calculation that so many in their search for happiness, and others in their endeavours after self-realization, utterly fail. Direct attempts to secure these high ends always fail. The only way to secure happiness is not to strive after it for its own sake, but to take the course that leads to it, the path where it will always come in by the way. The only way to secure true realization of Self is not to concentrate thought upon self in attaining the great ends of being. God, who is Spirit, has created spirits in His own image, and we are so made that true self-realization is possible only through harmony with Him who has made us and the Order of which He is the centre and the goal. The truth of the gospel is made known, the message uttered and reiterated, it may be with eloquent lips, but it is of no avail till the Holy Spirit brings it home to the heart and enables the penitent believer to make it his own. Thus it is *that* moment which makes the epoch in a life, as the soul 'finds Christ,' or 'enters into liberty.' Henry Ward Beecher describes in a passage of autobiography 'that blessed morning in May when I found out that it is God's nature to love man in his sin for the purpose of helping him out of it, as my mother loved me when I was in trouble that she might help me out of it. Then I found God.'

3. The pity is that the brightness of the morning fades away so soon. The infant Church found it so when Pentecostal joys were over. The religion of the average member of the Christian Church to-day is far removed from the spontaneous activities, the unfettered exercise of powers in sheer delight, of those who ate their bread in gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people.

When the early liberty of the enfranchised soul is in danger of being lost, is not one reason that men lose the keen sense that they are not under the law, but under grace? Having begun in the Spirit, they would fain be perfected in the flesh.

At the moment of first forgiveness it was the astonishing and overwhelming sense of undeserved grace that transformed the whole landscape. Later on, the message of grace may seem too good to be true. The fact is, it is too good not to be true, because it is God in Christ with whom we are dealing, God the Spirit who brings into liberty. Law brings into bondage, love delivers. Law restrains, prescribes, prohibits; love spurns hindrances, prompts, impels, renews, exhilarates; one animating and dominating energy gives the secret of all glad effort to those who are freed from law and constrained by grace. Such servants of God are sons indeed; they do not toil in walking, but fly straight to their mark like the eagles and the angels. 'The lover flies, runs, and rejoices,' says Thomas à Kempis; 'he is freed and cannot be held. Love feels no burden: counts no pains, exerts itself beyond its strength; talks not of impossibility, for it thinks all things possible and all permitted.' 'Love and do as you like,' the doctrine propounded by Luther, sounds dangerous enough, and the maxim has often been shamefully abused. But it is the safest of all doctrines, the only abidingly safe doctrine, provided the love is pure and supreme. He who loves is free. Then shall I run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt set my heart at liberty.

4. All this is not inconsistent with a considerable measure of conflict, else the doctrine would miss its hold of actual life. So far from being inconsistent, it is in and through conflict that liberty is reached, that power is realized, developed, increased. It is in conflict that the lessons of love are learned, the meaning of love understood, the capacities of love unfolded, applied, multiplied. Conflict may be sharp and painful, and yet welcomed because of its results; conflict becomes joy when enemies are base and triumph is assured. Temptation itself, like unbelief, may be—

Kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michael's foot,
Who stands calm, just because he feels it writhe.

But it is well to face the facts. A man who walks by the Spirit is not freed entirely from the tremendous power of past habits. He is not freed entirely from the conflict of desires, recognized in Gal 5¹⁷—a verse which contains a graphic description of many a Christian life.

One single false strain in the character may be of itself sufficient to bring into bondage the whole of an otherwise emancipated life. It is possible to be held to earth by only one band. It may sound hard when St. James says, 'If a man keep the whole

law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' But put it another way: how if one course of disobedience be enough to show the hidden mischief that is at work and bring all the rest of the life to ruin? One quivering tongue of flame is enough to show that the house is on fire. One spot of tubercle in the lung frightens the physician and the patient. One crack in the wall of the reservoir may let loose a flood that will sweep away whole villages in its train. Lancelot, so noble and chivalrous, fell by one fault, all that was pure and good in him clinging

Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower
And poisonous grew together, each as each,
Not to be pluck'd asunder.

And when all the facts of our difficult life are taken into account, it might seem as if spiritual freedom were impossible.

5. Liberty is attainable only through the Holy Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit are not under the law. So it comes to pass in the course of Christian experience, as at its happy beginning, a Breath comes from above which we can hear, but not see, and does its own work of enfranchisement in the struggling soul. The breath of our own spirit is not nearer or surer, but with an infinite energy which mocks our puny endeavours the Divine Power lifts, wafts, bears the spirit on and up, far beyond the regions of conflicting desire and the cramping fetters of inveterate self-love. If these things are so, it might be asked, why should a Christian ever be defeated in spiritual conflict? The answer is that there is no question concerning the amplitude of spiritual resource, but Christians fail to realize their privileges. Of what use is it that all provision is made for a great campaign—ammunition, arms, accoutrements, down to the last button on the soldiers' uniform—all the plans of a Von Moltke skilfully elaborated, so that it is clear that the enemy has been outwitted, outnumbered, out-generalled, if all the time the rank and file of the army are discouraged, supine, inert, or half sympathize with the enemy? 'If we live by the Spirit,' runs the timely apostolic counsel, 'by the Spirit also let us walk.' Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free: stand fast first, and then go forward. So victory shall be realized here and now in a bloodless war, and perfect triumph be reached at last—

The ultimate, angels' law
Indulging every instinct of the soul
There where law, life, joy, impulse are one thing.¹

¹ W. T. Davison, *The Indwelling Spirit*, 122.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

**Harvest Thanksgiving.
The Thankful Spirit.**

'In everything giv thanks.'—I Th 5¹⁸.

A hard saying to some of us, who think that some leav shou'd be left for complaining. How can a man giv thanks honestly, when, for example, some heavy blo has fall'n upon him? In spite of the example of Job: in spite of his great words, 'The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: Blessed be the name of the Lord': in spite of this many a man wil say, 'No, it is too much to call on me to giv thanks: the thing cannot be done; and I must not make a pretence of doing it.'

We must take this objection seriously, for we know that God wil not bear with hypocrisy. Let us remember too that St. Paul himself said, 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.' The precept, 'In everything giv thanks,' must be spiritually understood.

But now it is needful to be honest all round. To say that a passage of the Bible must be interpreted 'spiritually,' does not mean that we may giv it any explanation which seems to us sensible and religious-sounding, nor may we feel that we hav said 'Good-bye' to the 'letter' of the passage. The 'letter' is to be retained to be our help in reaching the 'spirit.' Just as the clothes of a man ar not the man himself, but yet can tel us a good deal about the man, so that often we recognize him by his clothes, so the letter—the actual words—of any text wil supply the key to the inner meaning of the passage. If St. Paul says, 'In everything giv thanks,' we must not simply leav out the words 'in everything'; we must not say that the spirit of the text is just 'be thankful'—'sometimes'; we must face the words and ask, 'What did St. Paul really mean by so strong an expression as "In everything giv thanks"?'

St. Paul does not content himself with saying, 'Be thankful to God for your blessings, when your blessings come.' He means 'Let thankfulness be a permanent element in your life.' In truth it is not enuf to say to us, 'Be thankful for your blessings,' for we do not see far enuf to recognize all our blessings as they come. As those of us who ar older look bak over life, we see many gifts of the Heavenly Father for which we felt no gratitude when we receiv'd them. God sent us experiences that were ruf, disappointments that were bitter, losses which it seem'd cou'd never be repaired. And yet now, counting up loss and gain, and tracing the thred of Providence thru all the years, we see that our

Father was blessing us even in those experiences. Reflection teaches so much now, but Faith would have taught us years ago and saved us many bitter hours, had we but cherished Faith. Certainly in this St. Paul is our example. We remember how at Philippi his hopeful work was suddenly interrupted, and he and Silas were cast into prison. Hardly matter to give thanks for, we should say; but it is written, 'About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God.' And again, when the Apostle at last arrived in the neighbourhood of Rome, a prisoner in a far land to be tried for his life, it is written, 'He thanked God and took courage.'

This exiled prisoner thanked God! Why? Only because a few fellow-Christians, persons of no consequence, who could do little for him, had come to meet him in Rome. But he saw the Hand of God. Does not this incident, coupled with his previous conduct at Philippi, show us exactly what St. Paul meant, when he wrote to the Thessalonians, 'In everything give thanks'?

Of course there was Faith and a good understanding of the ways of God behind the Apostle's teaching. He was steadied by a great experience, by the recollection of the fact which he described in the words, 'God was pleased to reveal his Son in me.' He remembered how God had converted him on the road to Damascus. That tremendous experience had assured him for ever that God is good; and so he faced life in faith, and was fully convinced that the other main experiences of life were likewise controlled by God and were good. So he was ready not merely to give the Heavenly Father occasional thanks, but also to use and maintain a thankful spirit through the whole of life. We, as Christians, ought to aim at going as far as St. Paul. We should set ourselves to live a life of thanksgiving in which we are ready to recognize all God's fatherly lovingkindness.

No harvest thanksgiving should be merely a giving thanks for harvest. We have to thank God not because He comes into our life once a year in September or October and gives us stores of food: we owe Him thanks rather because He is our life from the beginning of the year to the end. This is one of the lessons which life itself teaches us: few of us can learn it thoroughly while we are young. But as life develops before us we discover two great facts: (1) that events which seem'd once to be all against us turn out in the long run to be true gifts of God, helps for further stages of life: (2) that blessings which we dread in advance are softened when they fall by the hands of God's good angels.

And so we come back to St. Paul's noble exhortation so full of faith: 'In everything give thanks.' Let the whole attitude of our mind and heart be thankful! It is in fact the only true attitude, the only attitude which corresponds with the ultimate facts of this world. The present awful facts of a world which cannot properly recover from the War after all not permanent. They pale before the Vision which the Son of God has given us; they cannot hold us, as we look for the Resurrection of the Dead and the Life of the World to come. Yes, though the War did its work and the Flood of calamity overtook us and has not yet abated, we know that the Lord sitteth above the water Flood, bringing order again and a New World; and so, even now, we give thanks to the Father through Our Lord Jesus Christ, not for one particular blessing or for two, but for His love and care, which do not pass away, but continue with us through all the changes and chances of this mortal life.¹

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Son and Heir!

'Thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.'—Gal 4⁷ (R.V.).

'Son' and 'heir'! So that is how our position and prospects are described! Would the world recognize our status when it looks upon us? Is there anything kingly or queenly about our very walk and conversation? If we have the consciousness of sons and heirs, that consciousness will get into our faces, on to our lips, into our courtesies, into our handgrips, and there will be royal significance in all the issues of our life. But perhaps the consciousness is not present and reigning in our lives. Perhaps we are Christians who have not yet claimed or even recognized our kingdom. Perhaps we are moving about in depression and poverty, and our vast inheritance lies untraced and unexplored. Perhaps we are hugging the title-deeds, and we have never realized the unspeakable value of our land. Perhaps we have sat down on the inside of the gate, like a waiting slave, and we are not striding over the estate like the 'son and heir.' 'Thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir!' To some it has been said, in words of awful disillusionment, 'Thou knowest not that thou art poor!' To others there may be equal need of the awaking and inspiring evangel, 'Thou knowest not that thou art rich!' 'Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where

¹ W. Emery Barnes, in *Twenty Harvest Homilies*, 86. (Older forms of spelling adopted by Dr. Barnes.)

thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it. . . . Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.' Thou art the son and heir.

1. Where does our impoverishment begin? Perhaps it begins in an imperfect sense of sonship, which leads to an imperfect realization of our inheritance. Let the one be starved, and the other will be impoverished. Exalt the one, and we shall enlarge the other. What do we think, then, of sonship? What are its primary characteristics?

(1) We shall begin with *Reverence*. That may appear to be a very grey element, but it is the groundwork of all the rest. There can be no true sonship when there is flippancy at the core of the life. At the very centre of the life there must be a little chapel, serene and untroubled, where the wings are quietly folded and the soul is prostrate in ceaseless adoration. In the great chapter which tells the story of a prophet's call and ordination, the seraphim are described as creatures with six wings; 'with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.' We can claim kinship with the seraphim in that we are in possession of the pair of wings with which to fly! Never were Christian people more busy in flying about than they are to-day! But can we claim kinship with the seraphim in respect to the other wings? It seems we are gravely lacking in those folded wings which suggest an amazed sense of the Highest, and which betoken reverence, awe, silence, and reserve. Reverence never hinders service—it enriches and perfects it. Perhaps if we had the folding, covering wings, our very flying would have more serviceable results.

Henry Drummond once went out alone into the high Alps. He was there in the early morning. The stupendous heights encompassed him on every side. He was awed by their majesty. His soul was bowed in reverent worship. And, then, what happened? He broke out into loud and exuberant laughter! The succession was not accidental, it was the fruit of a hidden root. The man who begins with the reverent recognition of the holiness and majesty of God will rise into a buoyancy of spirit in which all the merry-making powers will have free course to be glorified. Our Lord's Prayer teaches us that before we can pass into the gracious liberty of forgiveness and conquest, we must begin with the awed and reverent stoop: 'Our Father, which art in heaven, *hallowed be Thy name.*' In the heart of a laughing, exuberant, and healthy

sonship there is a quiet and retired retreat where the incense of adoration rises both night and day.

(2) Surely one of the primary elements in sonship is the *privilege of intimate communion with the Father*. And is it not the wonderful heritage described to us by Jesus Christ our Saviour, 'No longer do I call you servants but friends, for all things that I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you'? Such is the rare and secret intimacy to which we are invited by our Lord. Have we seized upon this privilege of sonship?

Has not the biography of Mr. Gladstone revealed to us that he had a way of sharing the intimate secrets of his life with the Lord? He had 'a word with his Father' before he rose to speak in the House of Commons. He entered into the secret place before he appeared to the public eye. He consulted with the Almighty before he formed his Cabinets. Such constant communion soon deepens into a wonderful intimacy. The restricting reserve passes out of the life. The unnecessary shyness wears away. The soul and the Father are one.

(3) And so we may regard it as a very prominent characteristic of sonship that it is endowed with large and wealthy liberty. But sonship is not only distinguished by liberty of communion in the secret place, but by an *emancipation from many kinds of bondage* and restriction with which the world is burdened and oppressed. Sonship is conspicuously and radiantly free. The sons of God ought to fascinate and win the world by the range and grandeur of their freedom. The real son is free from the bondage of sin. His life is delivered from the haunting wail of sunless and hopeless dejection. The real son is free from the tyranny of self. He is not imprisoned by a small, exclusive, all-absorbing, egoistic, enslaving self. He has 'a heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathize.' The real son is free from the enslavement of the crowd. He is not daunted by the presence of the great and threatening multitude. God's sons are free and bold, and stand alone!

They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

Slaves indeed! 'But now thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son,' and because a son thou art free to defy the crowd and be alone! One with God is in the majority. And the real son is free from the fear of death. His life moves on, not to expected defeat, but to ultimate triumph. The approaching shadow does not mark a terminus, but a point of transition into the larger and immortal life.

2. 'And if a son, then an heir.' The coming to God is the regaining of our estate. And our estates are not all beyond the river we call death. That is where we make an impoverishing mistake. We are not only heirs of 'great expectations,' but of great possessions. Superlatively rich are our expectations, but we have more than a competency by the way. Devonshire is a peculiarly rich and fruitful county, but it overflows into Somersetshire, and we are in the enjoyment of some of the glory before we reach the coveted spot. And so it is of heaven and ultimate glory.

There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign ;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

But the glory overflows ! There is something of the coveted country even in the highway of time.

The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets,
Before we reach the heavenly fields
Or walk the golden streets.

Are we in possession of the estate ? 'Having nothing,' we may yet 'possess all things' ! How is it, for instance, with the night sky ? Have we any sense of sonship as we gaze upon it, and do we regard it as a part of our inheritance ? When we contemplate some spacious panorama from an Alpine height, or from the hills of our own neighbourhood, do we thrill in the joy of possession, in the privileged sharing in the sonship of our God ?

And here is another portion of our estate. Let us listen, as Paul in one sentence defines it. 'Ye are my joy and crown.' Where was he gathering those delights ? He had found them in other people's well-being, in the triumph of his fellow-men. He had discovered the well of unpolluted joy in another man's success. Have we found it ?

Let us lift the thought still higher. Let us lift our heirship up into the light of the burning bliss. We are 'heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ !' That is wonderful and overwhelming ! We are heirs to the Lord's inheritance ; His possessions are ours ; we may sit with Him in the heavenly places. We may inherit His strength, His joy, His peace, His triumph. We are joint-heirs with Him in all the spiritual satisfactions that came to Him as He dwelt in the ways of men. And what did He inherit in the land of glory ? 'Nor pen, nor tongue can tell.' 'Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive

the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.'¹

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Intellect and Faith.

'When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me ; until I went into the sanctuary of God.'—Ps 73^{16, 17}.

The poet is here concerned with a problem which only emerged at a relatively late period in the history of Israel. The difficulty of believing in God's righteous government of the world, in face of the apparent prosperity of the wicked man and the adversity of the good man, seems not to have pressed itself upon men's minds with any special cogency, until a severe crisis in the national life had made separation between class and class, and tested Jehovah's servants in the glowing furnace of affliction.

In the early and middle days of the Judæan monarchy, when the power of the nation was at its zenith, and men enjoyed, upon the whole, happy and prosperous times, it was the commonly received theory that in this life Jehovah rewarded the righteous and punished the wicked ; prosperity was regarded as an immediate mark of His favour ; adversity—especially if sudden and overwhelming—as a sure sign of His displeasure.

But the period of decadence which preceded the fall of the kingdom of Judah was marked by grave, social abuses and growing indifference to the spirit of Jehovah's religion, coupled with bare formalism or the definite introduction of foreign cults. Upright and pious men formed a despised, if not a persecuted, minority ; justice and virtue seemed to bring, not success, but loss and failure in their train.

And during the Babylonian Exile this condition of things appears rather to have been accentuated than diminished.

Nor was the return from Babylon by any means a restoration of happy and prosperous times for this faithful remnant. Though those who availed themselves of the decree of Cyrus belonged, in the main, to the body who held by the hope of Israel, and were, as a whole, animated by a common aim, yet the hardships to be contended with were enormous. It was in times such as these that men turned to review their ancient position, and to perceive its partiality and insufficiency. Righteousness certainly no longer appeared uniformly to bring its reward, nor wickedness its due punishment. We must recollect that at that stage of

¹ J. H. Jowett, *The Transfigured Church*, 73.

thought quick returns were looked for. The view that righteousness would be rewarded after death, and that present hardship might form a training for a future state, so far from being generally held, was, in fact, the outcome of thought which appeared *later on* as part of the answer to the difficulties which the anomalies of the present life excited in men's minds.

The mind of the writer of our psalm was seriously exercised and, for the time being, the position of his faith was critical.

But as for me, my feet were almost gone ;
My steps had well-nigh slipped,
For I was envious at the arrogant,
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

But even in his misery it comes upon him that this is not the attitude which a member of the true Israel ought to adopt.

If I had said, I will speak thus ;
Behold, I had dealt treacherously with the
generation of thy children.

Therefore, when faith seems weakest, he determines to make the severest trial of faith. He takes his difficulty into the sanctuary of God. And it is here that a solution offers itself to his mind, and he meets with perfect satisfaction.

When I thought how I might know this,
It was too painful for me ;
Until I went into the sanctuary of God,
And considered their latter end.

Let us glance for a moment at the Psalmist's explanation. It is briefly this. The prosperity of the ungodly is, after all, more apparent than real. There is a Nemesis who is waiting in their path. Even while they stretch out their eager hands to gather life's flowers, the solid rock gives way beneath their feet, and they go down quick into the abyss.

Now it must be observed that this solution is not in any sense final and altogether satisfactory. It represents a small advance in thought upon the old opinion ; but is in fact merely a partial and fragmentary contribution to the truth, and was destined soon to be merged in a larger view of God's dealings with men.

But this is not the Psalmist's real gain during his visit to the sanctuary. We find it rather in that conviction which seizes him of the great reality of his communion with God—a conviction which calls forth from him such a confession of trust in God as forms, when we consider his partial light

and uncertain knowledge of the future life, a passage as remarkable and splendid as anything in the pages of the Old Testament.

Nevertheless I am continually with thee :

Thou hast holden my right hand.

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel,

And afterward receive me to glory.

Whom have I in heaven but thee ?

And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

My flesh and my heart faileth :

But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

It has been much questioned whether the Psalmist is here formulating any definite statement of belief in a life of blessedness beyond the grave. This does not seem to be precisely the position which he takes. Rather, in the fullness of the sense of his communion with Jehovah, he ignores or overlooks the fact of death ; feeling that he possesses all he needs, and that, in any event, he is entirely in the hands, and under the special care, of his God.

There are two other positions which the Psalmist might conceivably have taken up. He might have argued that the question was dangerous, as striking at the foundations of belief, and so have determined to preserve his faith by ignoring it. Or, on the other hand, he might have reasoned that, until such a difficulty had been set at rest, belief reposed upon too precarious a basis, and that it was better therefore to suspend his judgment, together with the worship of a God whose dealings with mankind were so mysterious and obscure.

He did neither. Rather, while maintaining and exercising his right to rational investigation of the question which harassed his mind, in the light of the facts which lay to his hand, he trusted that beyond this there was something *supernatural* which God alone was able to grant in response to an act of faith ; and that this latter, so far from being antagonistic to the results obtained by the exercise of reason, was indeed intended to condition and to set them in a right direction.

And so he betook himself to the place where God's mysterious Presence was believed specially to be manifest, and staking all upon an act of faith, he obtained, not merely a rational solution of his difficulty, but, what was of far higher value, such an inward sense of Jehovah's Fatherly care and protection as secured him for ever in his faith, and ended him with perfect peace.

And this is surely the way in which we ought to

meet the doubts and difficulties which so frequently assail us. We are not likely to place them on one side and to ignore them, but we must feel bound to subject them to the searching light which the advancement of knowledge has placed within our reach. Rightly so. But let us not forget that we are members of a Church which believes in and proclaims the supernatural Presence of her Lord in her midst, and that He has promised to give *Himself* to those who seek Him, in order that He may

guide them into all truth. And let us be willing at least to *make trial* of the act of faith, coming to Him that we may cast our burdens upon Him, and receive for ourselves out of His fullness.

Not alone the Hebrew poet, but ten thousand others in all ages, will assure us that we shall not be disappointed; for these all have sought God in His sanctuary, and have set to their seal that He is true.¹

¹ C. F. Burney, *The Gospel in the Old Testament*, 207.

The Holy Spirit in the Individual.

BY THE REVEREND A. H. MCNEILE, D.D., DUBLIN.

MANY Christians can state from living experience what the Holy Spirit has done in their hearts. And this kind of knowledge of Him is such that nothing can equal it in value. No article in a periodical is needed to teach it to them. But it suggests problems which are worth discussing. If (as all will admit) His activity was seen in the inspiration of good-minded Israelites, the prophets for instance, and if (as most will admit) it is seen in good-minded pagans to-day who are serving God, as they believe Him to be, to the best of their lights, what do we mean when we say that the Holy Spirit *came*, as a new experience at Pentecost? Again, if it were asked of those who have steadily advanced in holiness of life, Is it the Holy Spirit that has done this, or the indwelling Christ? many would find an answer difficult.

A preface is needed dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit in the evolution of the individual. God's eternal purpose, as St. Paul calls it, was to produce creatures akin to Himself who would perfectly love Him. But love must be voluntary; it must be free, or it is not love. Therefore, for the fulfilment of His purpose, He had to create conditions out of which man could *win* freedom. To create him free would have been to force him to be free, which is a contradiction in terms. Man must win freedom freely, which means that he can refuse to be free if he chooses. But he can win it only because God, for the fulfilment of His purpose, puts Himself, His Spirit, into the world, as a carver throws himself into the block of marble of which he purposes to make a statue. The carver's idea or purpose is, in himself, complete, but in the statue it is, so to speak, imprisoned, and wants to emerge

and win its true self as the statue progresses from the block. To put it more technically, the Spirit of God is purely immanent in inanimate matter, and becomes less and less so as the process goes on. In life, and then in mind, His work is seen at a continuously higher level; and the process culminated in man. This growing freedom is such that man, and no lower life, has reached the power of voluntarily placing himself in union with God. That is the work of man's free will, but it is equally the work of the Divine Spirit emerging from immanence. When *all* men are *wholly* in union with God, His eternal purpose will be accomplished.

Now look at man's religion. At the first emergence of mind at the human level of self-consciousness, man's power of voluntary union with God was very small indeed. From a stage, probably, even lower than animism he slowly rose, through fetichism and totemism, to polydæmonism and Nature-worship. And then in the Semitic branch of the human family a special line of advance was seen. They conceived, first, the idea of monolatry; and then that of pure monotheism. Led by the inspired teachers whom we call the prophets, Israel became convinced that only one God in heaven or earth was possible or conceivable. The comparative study of religions is the thrilling continuation of the study of biology. The immanent Spirit was coming more and more into freedom as man drew nearer and nearer into voluntary union with God. It is impossible to say, very often, in biology why particular lines of descent strike out new features, except that it is according to God's method of furthering the general advance. And the only explanation of the great moral and spiritual