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Entre Nous.

A Monument in Stone.

Footprints in the Snow contains twenty-three children's addresses. In our opinion they should make a wide appeal, but in nothing perhaps does individual liking play a greater part than in sermons for boys and girls. So we have quoted one. It is slightly abridged, but it will be found quite representative, and from it readers may make up their own minds whether it suits them. The author is Mr. H. L. Hemmens, who will be remembered for his excellent short life of George Grenfell which he prepared a few years ago for the series of missionary biographies published by the Student Christian Movement. *Footprints in the Snow* is also published by the Student Christian Movement (3s. 6d. net).

'There is rising in Liverpool a great and noble cathedral. When it is finished it will be the third largest Protestant cathedral in the world. A short time ago, I was conducted over the unfinished building by one of the officials, and, in the course of the journey, he told me an interesting story about its architect.

'For many years men and women had talked and dreamed of a cathedral for the great northern city, and at the beginning of this century they made it known that they were ready to receive plans for the building from any architect who was prepared to submit them. When the plans were received, they were examined by a committee of three experts. These men spent a long time examining them, and at the end they were unanimous that one set of plans came the nearest to the ideas of the authorities, and would ensure that this House of God should be a worthy one.

'They next ascertained who the successful architect was—the plans were signed with a *nom de plume* only—and, to their surprise, they discovered that he was a young man, only twenty-one years old. At first some said, 'It is impossible to entrust so great a task as the building of this cathedral to such a youth. A more experienced man must be found.' Others said: 'No! We have given our word that the man whose plans are the best shall be awarded the prize and entrusted with the work.'

'The building of the cathedral has been going on for about twenty-five years, and it is expected that the cathedral will take another twenty years to finish. It stands on a hill and towers already above the clatter and grime of the city. Already

thousands of people may worship within its walls, receive inspiration from its glorious organ, and hear God's messengers speak in it.

'The young architect must first have heard of the idea of this cathedral when he was a boy at school, and during the years he was serving his articles in an office, he was dreaming his dreams and making his first rough sketches of the building that was to be. He often worked late at night to perfect his designs, carefully thinking out each part so that together they should make a complete whole. When he was still young, his plans were accepted, and through all the long years so far, the major task that has occupied him has been the building of this temple of God. There is good reason to hope that he will live to see the completion of the task. And so he will have the satisfaction of knowing that his life has been spent in the one effort of providing a building in which people can worship, which will speak to multitudes of the best and most important things. It is all according to the plan.

'It is not the privilege of many to design a cathedral or church or other house of God. But you have long years stretching before you, and you can make of them what you will. You can resolve that they shall be spent in the service of God and for the building of His Kingdom. And He will show you how it may be done. For He has a plan for your life, and day by day you may ask Him how it may be carried out. As you do this and act upon it, you will know that your life will speak to people about Him, and you may be sure, that long after your life is finished, the record you leave behind you will go on speaking of Him.

'One other fact I learned from my guide. Liverpool Cathedral is to have its Roll of Honour, on which will be inscribed the names of all who have taken any part in its creation. Of course, the architect's name will be there, and the firms of builders, as well as the organ-builders and the men who carved the beautiful woodwork. But it will also include the men who hewed the stones from the quarry and those who mixed the mortar and, for all I know, those who carried the bricks up the ladders. Not one name will be missing.

'That reminded me of another Roll of Honour. It is called the Lamb's Book of Life. The names of all who serve God are there. It contains famous names like those of Paul and Bunyan, Carey and

Livingstone, Grenfell and Timothy Richard; but it contains hosts of names of those who are forgotten here but remembered there. There is a place for every one's name, including yours. I wonder if yours is there?'¹

Fire Kindleth Fire.

Fire Kindleth Fire (Blackie; 6s. net) is an autobiography, for the experiences described are true and the opinions and convictions are those genuinely held by a headmistress. It differs from the ordinary autobiography because the actual name of the headmistress is not given. She appears as 'Marion Cleeve,' and the locality of the Municipal Secondary School for Girls that she was head of is concealed under the name 'Snellham.' This plan has disadvantages, but it has also advantages enabling her to write with directness of recent incidents and living persons. Marion Cleeve, though she pictures herself as a prim person, short-sighted, and lacking in presence, is a great headmistress, full of idealism, sanity, and humour.

She herself was educated in a school where there was a sort of spiritual tyranny, and she had it borne in on her that there is such a thing as reaction in the moral sphere. The ideal that she worked her way to in Snellham was that of free growth. 'I annexed it from a passage in the second book of Samuel, which runs as follows: "One (R.V.) that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain." These words are descriptive of one of nature's beautiful transformation scenes, and there can be no finer ideal of the effect of influence. I have known characters whose influence was as "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," and rested gratefully under such. But with the young—not rest but growth.'

On the day she was appointed a friend said to her, "You will have to face many difficult situations, and encounter much that is hard to bear. That is inevitable in public life. Remember that, speaking generally, men appreciate right doing. You may meet with exceptions, but the generality of men admire righteousness even when they do not practise it." . . . One result of my friend's emphasis on righteousness was that the word stuck to me, and I came to admire the virtue it connotes as strong and practical—one which allows of no hedging and is free from sentimentality. This ideal I passed on

¹ H. L. Hemmens, *Footprints in the Snow*, 36.

to my girls. (Is it possible for a head to have any sort of ideal and not pass it on to her school?) For more than twenty-five years, I never opened school without reading the Collect for Daily Grace, and, as I prayed "that all our doings may be ordered by Thy governance, to do always that is righteous in Thy sight," I felt I was asking the best and safest for the young people whose bowed heads were before me.

'The same friend went further with his kindly advice. "If ever you are hesitating," he said, "between two courses of action, the one being more merciful than just, the other more just than merciful, decide on the former. Your mistake, if you make one, will then be on the right side." This counsel served me in good stead hundreds of times.'

The scope of this excellent autobiography can be gathered from the titles of the chapters: 'Snellham: The Scene of my Life Work'; 'Methods and Principles of Management'; 'Discipline'; 'The Curriculum: Religious Instruction'; 'The General Curriculum'; 'My Experience of the Municipal Control of Education.' Her chapter on Religious Instruction bears the closest reading. Here are some of the points which she touches on. The aim in religious instruction is to lay a foundation for future study and teaching. Religious instruction extends beyond the 'Scripture period' for 'all subjects have a theistic background when taught by those who believe—believe *à fond*—in God.' The most important result of Scripture teaching is the apprehension of the spiritual. The difficulties in the way of spiritual teaching are considered and the necessity of eliminating non-essentials from the syllabus. Her own ideal was of orderly knowledge of the Bible content, not neglecting its literary quality. In class she and the girls read in turn. Open Bibles were always allowed in question time. Her outline of a one-period weekly course extending over six years is given, and she shows how she gradually introduced such ideas as the following: Anthropomorphism, Progressive Morality, the 'Fosdick idea,' the Jewish Advance in Conceptions of God, Legend. The last point which she deals with is 'My Indebtedness to Sunday Schools.'

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