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Entre Nous.

An Evening Prayer.

O Thou who art from everlasting to everlasting, I would turn my thoughts to Thee as the hours of darkness and of sleep begin. O Sun of my soul, I rejoice to know that all night I shall be under the unsleeping eye of One who dwells in eternal light.

To Thy care, O Father, I would now commend my body and my soul. All day Thou hast watched over me and Thy companionship has filled my heart with peace. Let me not go through any part of this night unaccompanied by Thee.

Give me sound and refreshing sleep :
 Give me safety from all perils :
 Give me in my sleep freedom from restless dreams :
 Give me control of my thoughts, if I should lie awake :
 Give me wisdom to remember that the night was made for sleeping, and not for the harbouring of anxious or fretful or shameful thoughts.
 Give me grace, if as I lie abed I think at all, to think upon Thee.

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness ; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips ; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

To Thy care also, O Father, I would commend my friends, beseeching Thee to keep them safe in soul and body, and to be present in their hearts to-night as a Spirit of power and of joy and of restfulness. I pray for . . . and . . . and . . . I pray also for the wider circle of all my associates, my fellow-workers, my fellow-townsmen, and all strangers within our gates ; and the great world of men without, to me foreign and unknown, but dear to Thee ; through Jesus Christ our common Lord. Amen.¹

Edward Stuart Talbot.

In January 1934, Bishop Talbot died at the long age of eighty-nine. His biography has just been written by Gwendolen Stephenson, and published by the S.P.C.K. (10s. 6d. net). Lady Stephenson's task was one of no little difficulty and her achievement is very considerable. She has passed briefly

¹ J. Baillie, *A Diary of Private Prayer*, 11.

over what had merely historical interest but no permanent significance while dealing in detail with important movements and events and with what illuminates the personality and mind of the Bishop. The title of the biography is *Edward Stuart Talbot, 1844-1934*.

Bishop Talbot himself thought that his South London years were the best, and his son, Neville, speaks of that as the 'summer of his life.' They stretch from 1895 to 1911 when he was Bishop of Rochester and Southwark. Bishop Talbot, Lady Stephenson says, had a certain directness and simplicity of outlook which led him to wish quite simply to serve in the highest office of his Church. He loved being a Bishop. The Church of England was his Church and his spirit was at home there. And this for two reasons which at first seem opposed—it represented to him a kind of comfortable homeliness, and, on the other hand, it welcomed a spirit of adventurous breadth. 'He always dreaded loneliness and gauntness ; great spaces, solitary heights in Nature, the great thinker's solitudes, the mystic's stark experience of God, all gave him a sense of fear. He loved the familiar, sober, dignified language of the Prayer Book ; for his personal devotions he needed the orderly and traditional framework of words. . . . Then, too, the unbroken Catholic tradition appealed to his historical sense ; and the actual fabric of cathedral or country church dignified by centuries of devotion was to him the most appropriate setting for the restrained and reverent worship that he loved.' But it was in the Church of England, too, that he found the freedom that his spirit needed. Preaching before the Church Congress in 1896 he said, 'In that word definite is there not something which jars a little perhaps on ourselves and more on others ? Definite, clear-bounded, within outlines firmly and plainly drawn, accurately weighed and measured out : are these quite words to be used without anxiety and without careful sense of risk about that which is from above, divine, tintured with infinity and eternity ? Is it so that we can plumb with our little lines the things which come out of the unfathomable depths of God and enter into the deep heart and mysterious life of man ?'

He had been Vicar of Leeds for six years when he accepted the See of Rochester. When he went to

Leeds there had been some misgivings, especially in the minds of the Evangelical Party, but when he left there was very general and deep regret and a feeling well summed up in the remark of an old parishioner, 'Nay, it's a bad business is this o' t'owd Vicar goin'. He's gotten a hold o' this place, sure enough.' The Rev. J. G. Simpson spoke of his work as Vicar of Leeds: 'He has taught us by word, example, and leadership to combine loyalty and liberalism, steadfastness and comprehension.'

Bishop Talbot was an Anglo-Catholic by early training and also by inclination. His father, the Hon. John Chetwynd Talbot, Q.C.—a son of the second Earl Talbot—was a member of the Tractarian Party, and his mother, the Hon. Caroline Stuart-Wortley, was like-minded with her husband. Then at Oxford he came under the influence of Edward King and Richard Church, and, of course, Dr. Pusey, and it was the latter who offered him the Wardenship of Keble. Though his work probably reached its summit in the South London years, it was during the Keble years, before he went to Leeds, that his pioneering was done. There was not a little opposition to the founding of this new College, and its rapid progress in numbers and its acceptance as standing for the finest type of education was chiefly due to its first Warden. As one of his students wrote: 'We of the first thirty may give hearty thanks that our failure to live up to ideals was counterbalanced by the singular gifts vouchsafed to Edward Stuart Talbot.' Another speaks of 'the wisdom of his religious charge of us.'

Talbot's closest friends were found among the High Church Party. Canon Bickersteth says: 'My first sight of Talbot was in 1876. . . . As I turned the corner into Park Road, I saw Talbot, Aubrey Moore, H. S. Holland, J. R. Illingworth, Charles Gore, swinging out of the lodge of Keble College, arm in arm as they marched down the middle of the road, talking and laughing.' But Talbot himself had an instinct towards moderation and towards some of the more advanced of his party he felt impelled to say, 'we must be watchful of our reformed Catholicity.' He strove to do justice to the many-sidedness of truth and this with 'laborious balancings' which were characteristic of him.

Bishop Talbot was a man without diffidence or self-consciousness. He had great social gifts and was rich in friends. His valuable social and political contacts brought undergraduates in the early days, and later his colleagues, into touch with men in the highest positions in Church and State. During

the years when he was Bishop of Winchester, 1911-1923, Farnham was a centre of hospitality. 'I wonder,' Principal Cairns wrote, 'if a noble old house, rich in historic memories, has ever been put to finer spiritual use than Farnham was during his and Mrs. Talbot's tenure of it?'

In her epilogue Lady Stephenson admits that Talbot was not an original thinker, nor a great preacher, nor a great master of the spiritual life, but 'we are right to call him great. And if it be asked wherein his greatness lay, the answer would seem to be: "In the wholeness of his life and character." From early childhood, right on through the long crowded years into extreme old age, one purpose was set before him: loving, faithful co-operation with the Purpose of God.' It made him a man of austerity of life, of a humble spirit, and with an 'abiding sense of reverence and awe in the presence of the unseen.'

Faith.

Bishop King, from whom Talbot, like so many others, sought guidance as from a master in the spiritual life, answered: 'I have always regarded one's *Faith* as one of the things one trusts to God. It seems a slender risky thing, so does one's life. But I have used courage with regard to both and with a *ruat coelum* gone ahead, and I have found it answers. I believe great soldiers like General Gordon and others have often felt more of what we call fear than some people fancy, only they don't run away. For me I have always regarded the feeling of the slenderness of the thread of Faith to be a warning that one must hold on with the *whole* being. If I could have got such a hold with my mind I might have trifled with my heart and body—as it is, there is nothing for it but an absolute *aufzugeben*. Then there is sufficient restfulness and strength for all practical purposes—for this part of our life.'¹

Humility.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, once Talbot's curate in Leeds, tells this story: 'Just before I left Leeds I was talking to a typical downright good-hearted self-made business man who kept his Yorkshire speech. "I can't make nowt o' that Vicar [E. S. Talbot]. He's a good man right enoof, and a clever, I suppose; but he's too 'oomble for the likes of uz; we want a strong man i' Leeds.'

¹ G. Stephenson, *Edward Stuart Talbot, 1844-1934*, p. 116.

I merely said, "Wait a year or two and you'll change your mind." Returning to Leeds just before the Vicar's departure for Rochester I met my friend again. He had no recollection, though I had, of our previous conversation. But he said, "Nay, it's a bad business is this o' t'owd Vicar goin'. He's gotten a hold o' this place, sure enough. He's taught *me* summat I never thowt, that it's the 'oomble man that's strong.'" ¹

A Bengali Experiment in Religious and Social Service.

We are all interested in experiments in Christian service whether in England or in other lands, and in the July number of *The International Review of Missions*, Mr. Frank Ryrie describes a fine effort of the Bengali students, and one which met with considerable success, to reach the Indian in his village. And it is not an easy thing to do, for the Indian villager, though he is approachable and quite willing to discuss his affairs, still remains inaccessible. You do not get under his skin. And so the students in the teachers' training school decided on their experiment. During the time that they were at their annual camp, instead of following the usual obvious and useful methods of evangelistic work, they decided to 'seek another way of love.' They would try to teach simple village occupations to the people—preach the gospel while trying to help in this practical way.

In other years the second-year men who were going up for the Government final examination had never gone to camp, for to Bengali students examinations are the be all and the end all of life. But this year they gave up a week from their examination work—the other students remaining three weeks. 'The second-year men, nine in all, went to a village with a Christian community and a church. Rightly they felt that they should first call on the padre, and they hoped to get some encouragement. The gloomy old scoundrel forthwith wet-blanketed the whole thing. What could they teach the village people? And who was going to learn anything from them? . . . Nothing could have been more poisonous and unchristian. Fortunately the poison was enough of an irritant to produce a resolution that they would make the job a success, and they did. In their one week they roped in nineteen people in the two villages where they worked, and eighteen different small jobs were completed, in addition to six others

begun. The things made were two pairs of children's shorts, three cotton vests, eight hand-fans, three manure pits made and filled with water-hyacinth (a pest in that village) and two manure pits for cow-manure. So far the second-year men in their one week's work. The quality of their work was seen in the remark of a big Muslim farmer whose home I visited at the end of that week. One of the students who was keen on gardening had helped him with his young cabbage plants. "Look at these," he said; "I did not know how to care for them and have never got good ones. Now I have learned from these young men, and already you can see how the plants are coming on." "

Taking all the students together, one hundred and twenty-two pieces of work were done and seventy-eight pupils were taught some form of work. Besides, the work gave the students something of the right kind of confidence in their approach to people. "Can I help you to learn something to your advantage?"—is not only one of many but a very Christian approach and sets the right attitude, that of service, from the beginning.' The experiment also gave the men a special contact with individuals—they often got to know their pupils quite well. And as in an Indian village nothing is done in a corner, the young men and their doings were the village gossip, and in answering, Why are you doing this without hope of reward? they were led on to speak of Christ and His example and command.

The International Review of Missions (quarterly 3s. net) never lacks interest, and Mr. Ryrie's article is only one of the good things in the July number.

Ralph Connor's Loss.

Mr. George H. Doran, the founder of the George H. Doran Company of America, has written a record of his forty years in the publishing world. It is a most interesting and racy book, with accounts of all the notable personalities in the U.S.A. and in this country that he was so closely in contact with. The chapter on Sir William Robertson Nicoll is excellent, as is that on Sir Ernest Hodder-Williams, and on H. G. Wells, Hugh Walpole, and the Huxleys. The title is *Chronicles of Barabbas, 1884-1934*, and the publishers, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York. So far as we know there is no English edition yet, but we hope that may come. One of the authors whose books Doran published was Dr. Charles W. Gordon (Ralph Connor). He gives an account of a serious business

¹ G. Stephenson, *Edward Stuart Talbot, 1844-1934*, p. 80.

loss the latter sustained and how finely he behaved—a story which reminds one of Sir Walter Scott's difficulties and his indefatigable writing of the Waverley Novels to meet his losses. Dr. Gordon served in the War, and it was after demobilization that the tragedy happened. 'In the law firm in charge of Dr. Gordon's affairs there were three partners, Colonel Thompson and two others whose names escape me. One of these two was also an officer in the Forty-eighth Highlanders and went to France with his Colonel and his regiment. In one of the engagements round about Ypres when Canadians fought so valiantly and triumphantly, both Colonel Thompson and his fellow-officer and law partner were killed, the Colonel exposing himself to what appeared to be unnecessary and unwarranted risks. Dr. Gordon went into his business affairs with the remaining partner. And such a revelation! Such deception! Such duping of a trusting and honoured friend! It is not necessary to schedule the harassing findings; the result was staggering and tragic. Instead of being worth from \$750,000 to \$1,000,000, as he supposed, Dr. Gordon not only found himself and his family penniless, but by reason of certain covenant arrangements entered into by his counsel, agent, and attorney-at-large, Dr. Gordon had to face an actual indebtedness of just under \$100,000. We were together in Toronto when the full force of the blow fell. He was Scot enough to regret the money loss, but only because of his family of six daughters and one son. His great grief was that his Colonel had suffered. It seemed almost impossible to convince Dr. Gordon that he was the victim of criminal mismanagement or worse. When it partially dawned upon him, his charity was almost too Christlike and forbearing, and to this day, even after the hard and bitter struggle he has had to liquidate all his debts, you cannot persuade him to join in condemnation of his traitorous friend.'

The Face of Jesus.

What was the origin of the conventional likeness of Jesus that has appeared in the world's great pictures, and has persisted through the ages, the likeness that is familiar in countless reproductions? Professor J. A. Robertson, in his recent book, *Studies for a Portrait of Jesus*, says that it comes from a letter, supposed to have been sent by one Lentulus, 'president of the people of Jerusalem about Christ's time, to the Roman Senate, in which Christ is described.' 'There has appeared in our time a man of tall stature, beautiful, with a venerable countenance which they who look on it can both

love and fear. His hair is waving and crisp, somewhat wine-coloured, and glittering as it flows down over his shoulders, with a parting in the middle after the manner of the Nazarenes. His brow is smooth and most serene; his face is without any spot or wrinkle, and glows with a delicate flush. His nose and mouth are of faultless contour; the beard is abundant, and hazel-coloured, like his hair—not long but forked. His eyes are striking, brilliant, and change their colour. In denunciation he is terrible; in admonition calm and loving—cheerful but with unimpaired dignity. He has never been seen to laugh but oftentimes to weep. His hands and his limbs are beautiful to look upon. In speech he is grave, reserved, modest; and he is fair among the children of men.' Of this letter Professor Robertson says, 'Though it is only a literary composition of the twelfth century, it is a beautiful picture, and perhaps closer to the reality than is sometimes supposed.'

A Tree.

'When I was at school in Surrey,' writes the Rev. J. S. Whale in *The Christian Answer to the Problem of Evil*, 'we used to go sometimes to a large natural amphitheatre in the sparsely-wooded chalk hills. The white road entered it and ran straight up over the great concavity of grass and thorn-bushes until it climbed into the sky at the top and there vanished from sight. And on that hard horizon-line of the ridge there stood a tree, a beech which seemed to have disengaged itself from the other trees, and to stand solitary. We called the place "the end of the world"; as we went up the steep road to that tree, it seemed like coming to the very edge of all things and preparing to look over into the abyss. Well, the ultimate fact in human history is a Tree; beyond it there is and can be nothing. God Himself can do nothing more; greater love is impossible; the uttermost even of the infinite grace of God is there. The Cross is not only a scandalous fact of history; it is the triumphant act of God. It is not only man's deed of sin but God's deed of grace. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'

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