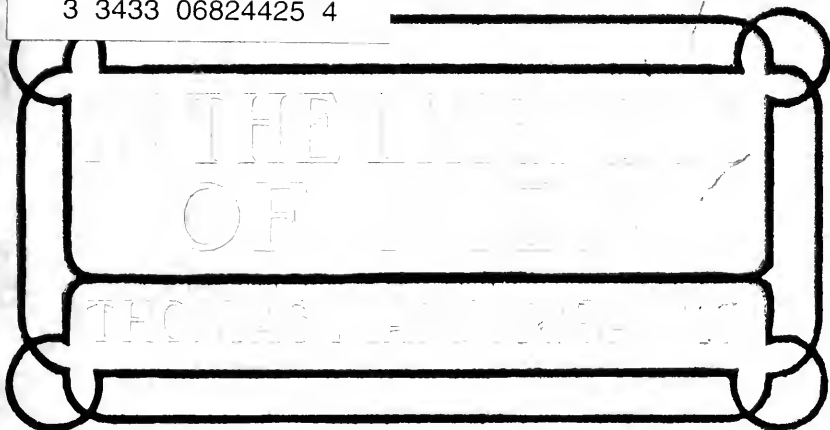


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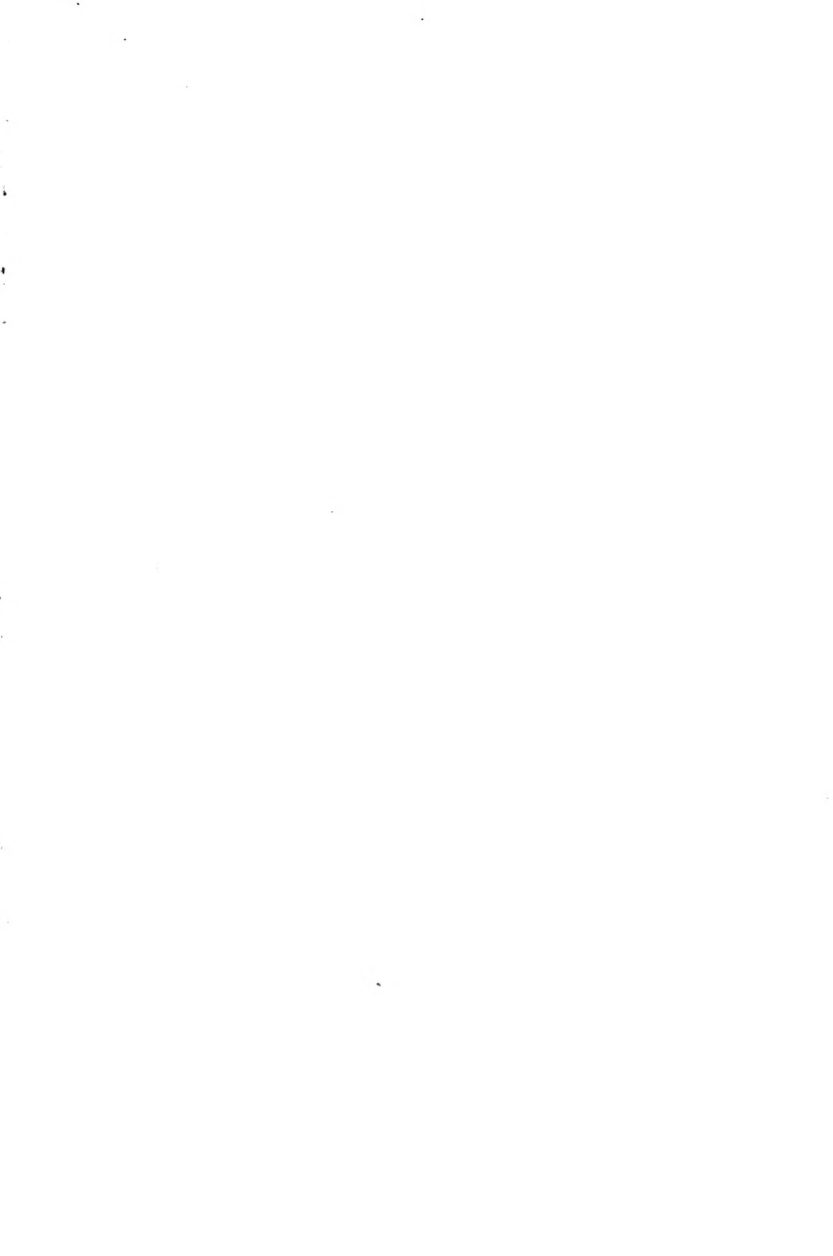


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IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN



"COME UNTO ME."

IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN

SHORT STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF
OUR LORD ON EARTH

BY THE
REV. THOMAS MARJORIBANKS, B.D.
COLINTON

"Christ Jesus, Who . . . was made in the likeness of men"

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY
150 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK

1911
7

Printed in Edinburgh, Scotland

FOREWORD

IT has been said that many, possibly most of us, idealise our Lord to such extent that we fail to catch His true likeness as He actually appeared when living among men. In this volume we enter into His life and experiences, are invited to companion with Him, and accompany Him to the home and the market-place, to the fields and the mountains, to look into His face and study His features, and also to listen to His voice, hearing His gracious words of love and pardon. We are present when He addresses in endearing terms those He loves, and condemns in most vigorous language the pharisaical and insincere. We are with Him both in His joys and sorrows, we recline with Him at the meal, and behold Him among His friends and social companions. Journeying with Him in the way we see what manner of apparel He wears, and our hearts burn within us as He reveals the deep and precious things of God. We also follow Him to His resorts of prayer, where He spends the hours of meditation and communion with His Father and finds peace.

There will be found in this book both strength for work and rest for weariness.

JUDSON SWIFT.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. HIS LOOKS	13
<i>"He looked round about."</i>	
II. HIS HANDS	19
<i>"He stretched forth His hands."</i>	
III. HIS WORDS	26
<i>"Never man spake like this man."</i>	
IV. HIS SILENCES	32
<i>"Jesus held His peace."</i>	
V. HIS TEARS	39
<i>"Jesus wept."</i>	
VI. HIS JOYS	45
<i>"Jesus rejoiced in spirit."</i>	
VII. HIS MEAT AND DRINK	52
<i>"The Son of Man came eating and drinking."</i>	
VIII. HIS DRESS	59
<i>"Being found in fashion as a man."</i>	

	PAGE
IX. HIS FRIENDSHIPS	66
<i>" I have called you friends."</i>	
X. HIS ANTIPATHIES	73
<i>" Ye are of your father the devil."</i>	
XI. HIS WALKS AND WAYS	79
<i>" Jesus . . . went about doing good."</i>	
XII. HIS RESTING-PLACES	87
<i>" Come . . . and rest a while."</i>	

IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN

I. HIS LOOKS

“ He looked round about.”

A BIOGRAPHY never seems quite complete without a portrait. However much we know about a man's character and work, we wish also to know something of his bodily presence and aspect. Even in the case of our Lord, men's ignorance of His appearance has not prevented many attempts to represent His features, and there has thus come to be a traditional portrait of Him with certain recognisable outlines.

The interest of a face lies, however, even more in expression than in feature or complexion. Of many of the best faces we say that they cannot be photographed, as they are always changing. Not one look or expression, but many, are needed to make the picture complete. We may be sure that this was true of our Lord, and that any real idea of His countenance must be formed not only from His general expression but from some of the different “ looks ” which He is recorded as having given.

The Gospels do give us at least a suggestion as to some of these different looks. Sometimes only

the fact of His looking is recorded. Thus, "He looked round about on them which sat about Him." Ere He blessed the loaves and fishes He "looked up to heaven." He "looked round about" as He spoke to the disciples of the danger of riches. When He entered the Temple He "looked round about on all things." He "looked up" and saw Zacchæus in the sycamore tree. He "looked up and saw rich men casting their gifts into the treasury." Without making too much of such incidental references, we may gather from them that His glance was at once a searching and a comprehensive one; a look that missed nothing, and was not easily forgotten.

In some cases, however, a further hint is given, bearing on the nature of the particular look. These indications, slight though they be, are worth examining in somewhat closer detail.

St Mark tells us of a look given by our Lord during one of His works of healing. A man was brought Him who was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech. Ere Jesus cured him, He "looked up to heaven and sighed." The look and sigh together indicate His "fellow-feeling of our pains," even in the act of removing them. Though Son of God He was Son of man. Though He had power He felt weakness. In that He suffered He was able to succour. So identified was He with all our sorrows and pains that He could not raise the dead without a tear, nor heal the sick without a sigh.

It is in connection with another work of healing

that the same evangelist tells of a different look. We see our Lord one Sabbath in the synagogue, and before Him a man with a withered hand. Knowing that His enemies are watching, He anticipates their criticism by asking whether it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil; to save life, or to kill. They were unable to answer, and He then "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." He was both angry and sorry; angry at their unreasoning opposition, and grieved at the hardness of heart that occasioned it. Wilful blindness was the sin of all others for which He had least sympathy. Yet His anger was never merely petulant or irritable. In Christ, anger at sin was always accompanied by pity for the sinner.

Yet another look is recorded by St Mark, where he tells of the young man who came wishing to know how to inherit eternal life. Our Lord has counselled him to keep the commandments, and he has replied that all these have been observed by him from his youth up. Then, we are told, "Jesus, looking on him, loved him, and said, One thing thou lackest." It is the look, rather than the words, we think of at present, and we can almost fancy we see it. It was a wistful look. It told of genuine liking, irrepressible sympathy. Yet it told, too, of misgiving, of apprehension, of fear lest the world should gain and God should lose that bright young life. To many a lovable soul, trembling on the brink between evil and good, Christ is directing that same yearning

look. May all such have grace to look up in return, and meet His smile of welcome and His word of pardon.

It is St Luke that tells us of that most significant look of all, bestowed on St Peter in the hour of his greatest sin. Thrice has the apostle denied that he is a follower of Jesus. "And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered . . . and . . . went out, and wept bitterly." That look bore to Peter a twofold meaning. It showed the man himself; and it showed him Christ. It was like the magic mirror in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, which would present a man one way in his own features, but turn it about another way, and it gives you the Prince of the pilgrims Himself. It showed the apostle his own sin, but it also showed him where he could find forgiveness. It showed him One who, though denied Himself, would never deny His followers. Amid His own sorrows He could spare a look for His erring apostle, lift up a prayer for His murderers, offer a place at His side to the penitent thief. Not only those on the brink of failure, but those who have actually failed may be arrested by the look of Christ and helped to rise.

Have these and other looks of Jesus any common features that we can put together so as to help toward our portrait of Him? I think they have. Sorrow, for one thing, is common to them all. If we sometimes think "Man of Sorrows" too one-

sided a name to apply to our Lord, a study of these various looks may change our view. No real portrait of Him can be wholly unlike that which St Veronica is said to have seen on her napkin after she had wiped His face on the sorrowful way. In the wistful look of appeal to heaven, in the look of pity for the rich young ruler, in the look of disappointment over St Peter's apostasy, and even in the look of anger directed to the hard-hearted Pharisees, we see sorrow for the sins and griefs of the world.

There is love as well as sorrow in our Saviour's looks. It is when these two are combined that we have compassion—His most characteristic attribute. His countenance, like His character, was "full of grace and truth." His looks remind us, by contrast, of a touching incident in our Scottish ballad history. Armstrong, the Border outlaw, comes to King James to ask for his life. Long and eloquently he pleads, but the king's face remains hard and unmoved. Then at last the Borderer sees how useless his quest is, and exclaims :

" I have asked grace at a graceless face,
But there is none for my men and me."

Those who came to Jesus never "asked grace at a graceless face." Sympathy was expressed in every line of His gracious countenance. He loved the young man on whom He looked. He loved His faltering apostle, and bade him prove *his* love by feeding His sheep. Even His anger was the anger of love—a love strong by its very holiness.

And His looks had power as well as love and sorrow. He taught as one having authority. His presence was enough to expel evil spirits. He could drive out the traffickers from the Temple. There was something in His very presence that made the men sent to capture Him fall backward to the ground. The father of the lunatic boy needed but to say "Look on my son," knowing that in His look there was power to heal. His face, "stedfastly set to go to Jerusalem," had a look of determination which nothing could disturb. The look bestowed on Peter had power to alter the man's life. It is a great mistake to forget His power in thinking of His tenderness. There was strength in Him as well as lowliness: there was Godhead shining through the manhood. He was the "Strong Son of God, immortal Love." "A flame of fire and starry brightness," writes St Jerome, "flashed from His eye, and the majesty of the Godhead shone in His face."

Are not sorrow, love, and power the very qualities we associate most with a Saviour? No one, no two of them are enough; we need them all—sorrow for the pain and sin, love for the sufferer and sinner, power to heal and save. Our study of His looks has led us to find in His countenance an expression of His character. In the one as in the other, "Saviour" is the word that best sums up all.

II. HIS HANDS

“ He stretched forth His hands.”

IN describing a visit to our Lord of His mother and brethren, the different Evangelists give different details of the event, and of its effect upon our Lord. St Luke merely records His words ; St Mark speaks of the look that accompanied them ; St Matthew tells of the gesture by which they were enforced : “ He stretched forth His hands toward His disciples.” The effect of a speaker’s words may be helped as much by the motion of his hand as by the glance of his eye. Demosthenes, when successively asked what were the first, second, and third parts of oratory, replied in each case “ Action.” And not only as an illustration of His words, but in many other ways, we may find the working of our Lord’s hands no less instructive for us than His looks.

We may begin with the gesture referred to above. Our Lord is sometimes spoken of as “ stretching forth His hand.” In this instance it was done to enforce His argument, and perhaps to indicate the men of whom He was speaking. But the act usually denoted something more : it meant help, rescue, succour. When St Peter began to sink in

the water, Jesus "stretched out His hand and caught him." When the apostles are met together after Pentecost, they pray, "Grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word, by stretching forth Thine hand to heal." Eusebius, writing in the fourth century, shows how the tradition of this very attitude had remained fixed in the memory of Christendom. He tells of a statue of Christ, still extant in his day, representing the Saviour standing erect, clad in a mantle, and stretching out His hand to heal the woman who had touched His garment. Whatever this tale be worth, it shows Him in a characteristic posture. The stretching out of the hand is the typical saving act. It is what we should naturally do to save a man from drowning or falling. It is what Goodwill the porter does to Christian at the gate, to save him from the enemies that threaten his life. And we best follow and help our Saviour when we stretch out the helping, saving hand.

"O strengthen me, that, while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea."

Again, our Lord is often referred to as laying His hand on some one, or touching him. He touches a leper and says, "Be thou clean." He is bidden come and lay His hand on the daughter of Jairus, that she may live. He lays hands on sick folk and heals them. He touches the eyes of the blind,

the ears of the deaf, the tongue of the dumb. At His touch one woman is cured of fever, and another who was bowed down is made straight. Nor was it only in healing that His loving hands were laid on others. When the disciples fell down in fear on hearing a voice from heaven, Jesus touched them, and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." When children were brought to Him, He laid His hands upon them. If the hand "stretched out" denoted power to save, the hand "laid on" bespoke power to soothe and heal, to encourage and help. The "laying on of hands" has been associated in the Church with peculiarly solemn acts, such as the ordination of ministers, or the confirmation of the baptismal vow. And though we do not possess His gifts in the same form and measure, there is a great deal in the touch of a hand still. The medical science of our own generation has testified to what the pressure of the human hand can do in relieving pain. The strongest hands may be the gentlest hands too. Those are likest Christ who have the gentle touch as well as the powerful arm.

"The man most man with tenderest human hands
Works best for man—as God in Nazareth."

Sometimes, again, our Lord not only touched but "took by the hand." He took the daughter of Jairus by the hand and lifted her up. He took Simon's wife's mother by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her. He took by the hand the young man from whom He had cast out the evil

spirit, and he arose. When children were the objects of His regard, it was not enough even to take them by the hand ; He took them up in His arms. " Hand in hand " is the symbol of concord and of friendship ; and in giving the hand He emphasised His brotherhood with those He helped. But there was more than this in the act. To take by the hand is to lead, to rouse, to encourage towards effort, to help a man to help himself. Thus it means more than the mere laying on of the hand. The one act heals, comforts, soothes ; the other stimulates, rouses, incites to action. For many this rousing hand is even better than the soothing one. What they need most is moral support and encouragement. We cannot give help in a more Christ-like way than this. When He took any one by the hand it is always added that He " lifted him up," or, as we should say, " set him on his feet again." The Epistle to the Hebrews gives the same counsel to His followers : " Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees."

One other act in which we find the hands of our Saviour employed is that of benediction. The very last act of His earthly ministry is thus recorded by St Luke—" He led them [the apostles] out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them." The lifting up of the hands has from very early times been associated with prayer, intercession, and blessing. In the war against Amalek, when the hands of Moses were held up, Israel prevailed. At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon " spread

forth his hands toward heaven." The acts of prayer and blessing in divine service are still accompanied with the lifting of the hands. "I will therefore," says St Paul to Timothy, "that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." We cannot always stretch out our hands to help others. We cannot always lay hands on them, or take them by the hand. But we can always help them by lifting up our hands in prayer and blessing, and remembering their needs before the throne of God. It was to his young scholars at St Paul's Grammar School that the good Dean Colet wrote, "Lift up your little white hands for me." None are too humble to help in this ministry.

All these actions bring vividly before us our Saviour's tireless industry. He was always busy, never idle. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day." These words are a rebuke to our idleness and sloth. At one time it was thought beneath the dignity of any one but a slave to work with the hands. Manual labour was despised. Pen and sword were deemed the only honourable implements for the hand. But we never hear of our Lord's making use of either. Even in our sense of the word He was a "working man,"—"Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth." And whether engaged at that trade or otherwise, whether praying, or feeding, or healing, or "casting out devils with the finger of God," the hands of Christ

are ever active, ever calling us to labour, ever exhorting us to be "not slothful in business."

Those hands were, moreover, always at the service of others. Never was the phrase, "a helping hand," better illustrated than in Jesus. His hands could perform the most exalted or the most lowly services. He could raise them to bless His disciples, or lower them to wash their feet. In all the acts we have named He appears as one who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. And the Christian spirit will always show itself in the same way. Be willing to be of use. Be glad to do a service. Count it a privilege to help others.

There came a time when these blessed hands were powerless. They were bound, pierced, stretched on the Cross. The Saviour was delivered into the hands of wicked men. The hand of him that betrayed Him was on the table. The false disciple dipped his hand with Him in the dish. Cruel men smote Him with the palms of their hands. His judge washed his hands of Him. Soldiers' hands scourged Him and nailed Him to the tree. Zechariah's words came true: "One shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends." Yet He proved Himself our Saviour in standing still and suffering evil, even more than when He went about doing good. He that can suffer is He that can succour; He that can bear is He that can save. And

until we too learn that final lesson for ourselves, our hands are not like His. We must bear on our body the marks of the Lord Jesus. We must have, as St Francis deemed he had, the sacred stigmata. To work, as Christ did, for others, is a great thing. To suffer, as Christ did, for others, is a greater thing. And our hands must be ready for both.

III. HIS WORDS

“ Never man spake like this man.”

WE sometimes call a good portrait a “speaking likeness.” Michel Angelo paid the highest compliment to Donatello’s *St George* when he said it wanted nothing but the gift of speech to make it perfect. If our portrait of Christ, then, is to have any value, it must give us some idea of how He spoke as well as of how He looked. It is true that many books have been written on our Lord’s teaching. Every word of His has been carefully and critically examined. But our present aim is a humbler one. It is to gather up, from the slight indications which the Gospels afford, some idea of the nature and effect of His words, the way in which they were spoken, the impression they left upon men.

The words, “Never man spake like this man,” were not uttered by friends of Jesus, but by men whom His enemies sent to take Him. When asked why they had not brought Him, they give this as an excuse. They simply could not touch Him; the spell of His presence was such as to render them powerless. Their testimony—all the more valuable as coming from such a source—is to the effect that



"NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN."—PAGE 26.

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as a speaker and a teacher He stands alone ; no one else can approach Him. And many since their day who have not been professed Christians, nor been able to see in Christ the Son of God, have given an equally strong testimony to the uniqueness of His teaching.

Truth should always, if possible, be taught in a way that will attract and not repel. "Why," asked a preacher of an actor, "do people listen to you and not to me?" "Because I," was the answer, "speak fiction as if it were truth; you speak truth as if it were fiction." This was not so with Christ. "Grace and truth," so often divorced, were combined in Him. Even His reading of the Scriptures was such that "the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him." And when He went on to comment on what He had read, "all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." This same "gracious" quality—so well named "sweet reasonableness"—is apparent in all He said. The highest oratory is that which attracts men of every sort—learned and unlearned, old and young; and of Christ we are told that "He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all." Scribes and Pharisees could not keep away from Him. Publicans and sinners drew near to hear Him. On two classes of people the effect of His words was specially marked. "The common people heard Him gladly." As in later days Wesley and Whitefield attracted thousands of simple folk who were

only bewildered by the teaching they got in church, so did Christ's gracious invitation to rest and peace comfort many a labouring and heavy-laden soul. And it was the same with children. Dean Colet was right when he placed over the master's chair in St Paul's school the image of the Child Jesus, with the words, "Hear ye Him," graven beneath it. His word to the children, like His word to the heavy laden, was "Come unto Me." And they came, with the child-instinct that knows and loves a kindred soul.

Our Lord's words were authoritative as well as attractive. They were words of power. Canute might command the waves, and they would not recede. But when Christ said "Peace, be still," men noted that even the winds and the sea obey Him. Any one can "call spirits from the vasty deep," but it is a different thing to make the spirits come. Yet "with authority commandeth He the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." The centurion, telling Him of his servant's sickness, deems it enough to say, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." And besides the power to control nature and heal disease, there was a yet higher authority in His words which men could feel rather than express: "They were astonished at His doctrine, for His word was with power." "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The scribes, be it remembered, were great worshippers of authority. They could cap every assertion with a hundred texts, and cite

the authority of a Rabbi for every act they performed. But Christ brushed all that aside, and spoke with the authority that came straight from God. His words rang true ; they needed no proof : they bore a divine stamp. Men asked what were His credentials—where He came from—by what authority He did these things. But he received not testimony from men. His very word had an authority of its own. He bore a message written with the very finger of God.

Nor did His words merely attract or compel. They thrilled and they moved men. They were not useless seed ; they sprouted and grew. To vary the metaphor, we might apply to them what Isaiah says of the word of God : “ As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater ; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of My mouth : it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Even when He was a child, the doctors at Jerusalem were astonished at His understanding and answers. When He asked the disciples whether they would leave Him, as the multitude had done, their reply was, “ Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” When He left the two friends He had met on the road to Emmaus, one said to the other, “ Did not our heart burn within us, while

He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" The most valuable words are surely those that make the heart burn; for if the heart be really touched, the life will be touched also. And what He Himself said of His words our hearts surely confirm:—

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

"The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

It may be that we sometimes feel it difficult to put ourselves in the place of those who first heard our Lord's words in all their living force and freshness. We feel, perhaps, that the printed page moves us less than the spoken voice would have done. We are tempted to say, like the children's hymn, "I wish I had been with Him then." But let us always put against this the fact that we know more of Him than even those who heard Him speak. Great though His words are, to us He can never be merely the Teacher and Preacher. We must think not only of His words but rather of Himself as The Word—the human expression of the Godhead. Those who "preach the word" must not merely emphasise His words or those of Scripture, but rather present Him in all the fulness and richness of His Person and work. In His great sacrifice, even more than in His teaching, He reveals to us the love of our Father in heaven. That was needed

to set the seal to His words. Many of them would have no meaning but for that. He is our Prophet, but He is also our Priest and our King. Never man spake like Him, because never man was nor is nor shall be like Him, save with the likeness borne by all who believe on Him and love Him and keep His words.

IV. HIS SILENCES

“ Jesus held His peace.”

ONE of the defects of our modern life is its want of silence. Every one wishes to speak; few are willing to listen and learn. Men invent universal languages, devise means for talking to the ends of the earth, or for reproducing the voices of the very dead. “Looking round,” says Carlyle, “on the noisy inanity of the world, words with little meaning, actions with little worth, one loves to reflect on the great Empire of Silence—higher than the stars—deeper than the kingdoms of Death.”

It has been instinctively felt that silence is a solemn thing. The Egyptian priests taught that the Deity must be invoked in silence, and Homer makes Ajax bid the Greeks pray to Zeus in silence. Even Job’s comforters began well when “they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.” Of Tauler, the German preacher and mystic, we are told that he withdrew into solitude during the height of his popularity, and remained silent for two years. It was said of Von Moltke that he was



HE WITHDREW TO A SOLITARY PLACE, AND THERE PRAYED."
— PAGE 33.

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“ silent in seven languages,” and Oliver Cromwell has been called “ the prophet that could not speak.” The founder of the Dutch Republic had the best possible tribute paid to his power of keeping counsel in the name he still bears—William the Silent. “ No one,” says Thomas à Kempis, “ is safe to speak, but he who would rather hold his peace.”

There is something to be learnt, then, from the silences as well as from the words of our Master. “ Silence,” says Ignatius, “ is characteristic of God, speech of mankind. The acts which Christ has done in silence are worthy of the Father ; and he that truly possesses the word of Christ is able even to hear His silence.”

A long silent preparation was needed for our Lord’s public ministry. So far as the world without was concerned, by far the greater part of His life was spent in silence. The prophet had said, “ He shall not strive nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets.” Three years of speaking demanded for Him thirty years of silence. Only once during these silent years is the veil lifted, and even then we find Him not teaching but learning and asking of those who taught. Even after His ministry began it had long intervals of silence. He would go up to a mountain to pray, and continue all night in prayer to God. In the hour before His agony “ He withdrew to a solitary place, and there prayed.” And he impressed the need of a like

silence on His disciples. He warned them against anything like ostentation. He bade them give alms in secret, fast in secret, pray in secret. The lesson is one for us all. True religion has always recognised the need for silence. In some religious communities men have placed themselves under a vow of silence, some not opening their lips for years. Friends or Quakers are sometimes known as "children of silence," from their practice of sitting dumb till the Spirit moves them to speak. These are extreme examples; but it is not to any one's credit that he must always talk and will never listen. We miss a great deal by reason of our much speaking and our vain repetitions. We would all do well to spend some part of our day in silence, and in thinking of things other than our business or our pleasure.

Sometimes our Lord could teach better by silence than by speech. His silence had a testing effect; it brought out force that would otherwise have lain dormant. To the woman of Canaan, for example, who came beseeching Him to heal her daughter, He at first answered not a word. But this perplexing silence had the effect of trying her faith, and making her persevere till her object was won. It is in some such way that we often have to wait for His answer. To our most earnest prayers His first reply is often a silent one, and we think His ear deaf and His lips dumb. Yet this silence of His may be very helpful. We do not always answer

a child's question at once, but often wait to draw out a better. And without such silence on God's part there were little room for faith on ours. In a life that had everything made clear and plain, interest and aspiration would cease. Nor does God remain silent for ever. Our prayers are answered as surely as Christ answered the woman of Canaan, "Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Another effective use which Christ made of silence was as a means of rebuke. It is, no doubt, a form of rebuke which must be used sparingly. As a rule, it is best to answer a question courteously, even though we think the question unnecessary. Yet there are offences for which silence is the only sufficient rebuke. Impertinent curiosity is one of these, and it was by silence that our Lord met it. "When Herod saw Jesus," we read, "he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned with Him in many words; but He answered him nothing." It was the only way to deal with a man of such coarse fibre. Herod wanted to see a miracle, not for any good it would do him or any one else, but simply to gratify his vulgar curiosity. And for that very reason our Lord would show him no miracle, nor deign him one word. There are people who must be treated in the same way; questions and letters

that deserve no reply ; actions on which the only comment must be silence.

Indecent conversation, too—coarse or profane or blasphemous talk—is best met by silence. When men brought to Jesus a woman who had sinned, and eagerly asked His opinion on her case, “ Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote upon the ground, as though He heard them not.” As the author of *Ecce Homo* was the first to point out, He was ashamed of listening to a foul story. He could not meet the eyes of either the crowd, or the accusers or the woman. He turned aside, therefore, and made as though He had not heard. That is the best way to meet all similar conversation. Open rebuke may do more harm than good ; but we can at least be silent. We can refuse to smile at a coarse jest, or follow up a doubtful line of talk, or cap one bad story by telling another. Indecency, like impertinence, should be met, as Christ met it, with silent contempt.

Most impressive of all is our Lord’s silence under suffering. “ He was oppressed,” says Isaiah, “ and He was afflicted ; yet He opened not His mouth : He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” We commiserate the dumb animals who must suffer silently, or the infant who cannot understand his pain.

“ The child’s sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath.”

But the sufferer who could speak, yet does not, moves us still more. The condemned nun in *Marmion* strikes a high note when she says—

“ Now, men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still.”

Epictetus, when his cruel master was beating him, warned him that if he struck so hard he would break his leg, and, when the leg was broken, calmly said, “ I told you so.” The heathen writer, Celsus, told this story in opposition to the Christians, and asked, “ Did your leader, under suffering, ever say anything so noble ? ” “ No,” was the fine reply, “ but He did what was still nobler— He kept silence.” His silence speaks more loudly than words, and shows us at least one way in which we may enter into the fellowship of His sufferings. When reviled, we can revile not again ; when afflicted, we can wait patiently for our release. We are all too fond of complaining of our wrongs ; we like to “ have a grievance.” But no sacrifice can be very real if we are continually talking of it. Suffering has no merit in itself ; the important thing is that it be well borne. The more silently and uncomplainingly we bear our cross, the more are we made “ conformable unto His death.”

Learn, then, from the silences of Christ as well as from His spoken words. Learn from them, among other things, the value of the quiet hour ; the power of a silent rebuke ; the need of waiting

for God's answer. Above all, learn the nature of the sacrifice He asks all who follow Him to make. Be less ready to strive and cry, and cause your voice to be heard in the street, that you may better hear, in the silence, the still small voice of God.

V. HIS TEARS

“ Jesus wept.”

THE description which the Book of Revelation gives of heaven contains no more welcome assurance than that “ God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” For tears and pain and weeping are found wherever human life is found. The infant begins to cry as soon as it begins to live ; and the close of life, too, means sorrow for those who are left behind. We are wrong, of course, to speak as if life were all a vale of woe ; yet sorrow forms some part of every human life, and the higher we rise the greater is the capacity for pain.

Tears are not all of the same value. A child will cry for the moon ; Alexander wept because he could find no more worlds to conquer ; many weep because they have nothing better to do. On the contrary, the tears of those who weep but seldom are precious. On the morning after Waterloo the surgeon who had brought the Duke of Wellington the casualty list noticed on his smoke-begrimed face “ two white streaks under the eyes.” These were traces of tears shed for his lost soldiers—

tears the more prized because so seldom seen. Now we do not often read of our Saviour weeping. We read of no tears shed on the Cross, or at His parting from the apostles. Indeed He often discouraged weeping. To the widow at Nain He said, "Weep not." In the house of Jairus He said, "Why make ye this ado?" The daughters of Jerusalem He bade weep not for Him but for themselves and for their children. When He did weep it was for something worth while; His tears were not idle tears.

Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus. There, too, He "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." Herodotus tells us that the Persian king Xerxes, as he surveyed the great fleet and army he had brought together at Abydos, first pronounced himself the happiest of men, and then burst into tears. Being asked the reason of this sudden change of mood, he confessed that the thought of death had suddenly come upon him, and that he wept to think how, in a hundred years, not one of all that host would be alive. We can understand the tears of Xerxes; it is a little more difficult to understand those of our Lord. Why should He weep at the grave of one whom He was about to bid come forth? The answer would seem to be this, that even in the moment of lightening the world's sorrow He felt deeply what that sorrow was. The thought of death was far more real and painful to Him than to the Persian king. "It is not with a heart of stone that the dead are raised."

He could not remove our grief as He does, did He not know the pain of it. In that He suffered, He is able to succour. The man who truly sympathises is the man who gives himself.

There are times when our Lord's tears for His friends' sorrow come as a great help to us. For, while we believe we shall see our loved ones again, all partings are sad, and the parting of death is saddest of all. It is a comfort, then, to know that the Saviour is with us in our grief. He said, "Blessed are they that mourn"; He Himself mourned for the departed. The Christ who weeps is the Christ who raises the dead. The Man of Sorrows is the Resurrection and the Life.

Jesus wept, again, over His beloved city of Jerusalem. Coming up the slope of the Mount of Olives, "He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

We have seen our Lord weep over His people's sorrow; now we see Him weep over His people's sin. It is sin that causes, or should cause, the deepest grief of all. The writers of the Psalms often tell of their tears of penitence. The woman who was a sinner washed Jesus' feet with her tears. St Peter, after his denial, "went out and wept bitterly." St Francis is said to have shed so many tears that they affected his power of vision. Of a certain St Abraham it is recorded that no day

passed after his conversion without his shedding tears. Bishop Andrews' *Devotions* were so blistered with tears that his editors could scarcely read them. Of an old Scotswoman, turned from a life of great sin, it is told that she actually "wept her eyes out." From all such tears, of course, our Saviour was free. No one could convince Him of sin. Yet, though sin left no taint on Him, He felt the reality and the burden of it. One of the Greek sages, Heraclitus, was called the "weeping philosopher," because he grieved over the folly of man. The prophet Jeremiah wished that his head were waters and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people. But deeper than either was our Saviour's sorrow over the city and people He loved. He had wept silently over the sorrow of Martha and Mary, but the sin and callousness of Jerusalem make Him cry aloud. He feels even more acutely for the sinners than for the mourners.

Sin is worse than sorrow. A lost opportunity is a worse privation than a lost friend. A man will bear the pain of losing his children rather than that of seeing them fall. The worst of Jerusalem was that it did not realise its sin; and until we realise what sin is, we never can be saved from it. There can be no forgiveness without acknowledgment of sin. "There comes a time when even the tears of Christ cannot save us; when even He can do no more than weep." But

that time is not yet, for any of us. Let us join our tears to His, and we shall find Him one who can save as well as weep.

Jesus wept, yet again, in the hour of His agony in Gethsemane. This is probably what is referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews—"He offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared."

A recent philosopher has argued that when we weep it is only out of compassion for ourselves. Even when we weep for others, he says, this only means that in their sufferings we imagine our own. This theory does not explain all tears; certainly it does not explain the tears of Jesus. There is, however, this much of truth in it, that His tears over sorrow and sin came from a deeper source than mere pity for mankind. He Himself felt the power and pain of these two great mysteries of humanity. He had wept silently over sorrowful Bethany, and sobbed aloud over sinful Jerusalem. But in Gethsemane the world's sorrow and sin pressed yet more closely on Him, drawing from Him "strong crying and tears"—cries of agony, drops of blood. In the very removal of sorrow and sin He was bound to feel their power. Yet "He was heard in that He feared." The prayer, "Remove this cup from Me," was answered by the strength given Him to drink the cup. He conquered suffering by bearing suffering; He con-

quered sin by bearing sin. He “saw of the travail of His soul, and was satisfied.”

It is easy to talk about the tears of Christ in an emotional or sentimental way. It is much more difficult really to be sorry in His sorrow, and to weep with Him. Yet that is what will do us most good. Many hymns, stories, and pictures of the Passion try to work upon our feelings in order to fill us with pity and horror for the sufferings of Christ. But in this there is apt to lurk a danger. Let us not forget His own words—“Weep not for Me, weep for yourselves.” Let us rather weep with Him than for Him. Let us weep for what He wept for; let us “hate what made Him mourn.” As George Herbert says :—

“These drops, being mingled with a sinner’s tears,
A balsam are for both the hemispheres.”

VI. HIS JOYS

“ Jesus rejoiced in spirit.”

PAIN and pleasure are not so far removed from one another as we are apt to suppose. A pleasure intensified or prolonged beyond a certain point easily becomes a pain; and natures the most susceptible to keen sorrow are often found as capable of intense joy. Our Lord had a nature extremely sensitive to both sorts of impressions. If the words, “ Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow ” be true of Him, equally true are these others: “ Thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.” “ To Jesus,” says Phillips Brooks, “ there was no joy which had not in it the power of sorrow; there was no sorrow which had not at its heart a beating possibility of joy. I think there can have been nothing which He did, and nothing which He saw, in which both were not present.” Even throughout His life of humiliation there is abundant proof that He was capable of sincere and intense joy.

Happiness, as has been often remarked, comes best when not directly sought. It is a *fruit* of the

Spirit : one of the things " added unto us " when we seek something better first.

" Follow pleasure, and then will pleasure flee ;
Flee pleasure, and pleasure will follow thee."

A man's chief happiness, again, ought to centre in the work of his life. A life cannot be happy unless busy too. It is those that have nothing to do who have time to vex themselves with questions as to whether life is worth living.

Once more, real happiness comes from within rather than from without. It depends much less upon circumstances than upon character, disposition, and state of mind.

These thoughts, taken together, give us some clue to the source of Christ's joy. He did not seek happiness for its own sake ; yet He found it in His sense of inward union with God, and of successful accomplishment of God's purposes. The keynote of His joy is well given in two sentences from Isaiah's fifty-third chapter : " He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." " The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." Hence He speaks of " My joy," like " My peace," and " My love," as a very precious and sacred thing, differing utterly from such counterfeit joys as the world had to offer. This joy manifested itself in various forms, but in them all we find this same note—fellowship with God and success in His work.

One form which His joy took was the joy of the Martyr and Victor. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of Him as One "who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God." The highest joy has always a background of sorrow; it is a "joy that seeketh me through pain." Victory after a hard struggle, or deliverance from deadly peril, brings a joy far deeper than the light-hearted gaiety of childhood. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Christ Himself called them blessed who mourned, because they would be comforted, and instanced elsewhere the mother who "remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world." As Langland writes:—

"After sharp showers most sheen is the sun;
Is no weather warmer than after watery clouds."

So it was with Jesus. The joy of Easter depended on the sorrow of Good Friday. On the resurrection morning He was the "Man of sorrows" no longer. His tears were wiped away. His word to Mary was, "Why weepest thou?" The joy that had been all along "set before Him" was now His, not in anticipation only, but in actual realised experience.

He could feel, too, the joy of the Teacher—the joy of realising that His message was sinking into the minds of men, and being understood and

acted upon. If a man be a real teacher his soul will go out to the scholar who understands him. The presence of even one appreciative and sympathetic pupil may atone for the dulness of an entire class. Our Lord was often disappointed by the slowness of His disciples; yet this was varied by unexpected gleams of intelligence, and such always gladdened His heart. Thus He replies in glowing terms to St Peter's acknowledgment of Him as the Christ—"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." And in another hour He "rejoiced in spirit (or, to be accurate, "in the Holy Spirit") and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

But still more intense in Him was the joy of the Saviour. His special mission to the world, as He put it Himself, was "to seek and to save that which was lost." Throughout His whole life this was His ruling passion. There are indeed few joys comparable to that of finding what had been lost. The words, "He rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray," would ring true in the ears of every shepherd that heard them. Every one who has tried to save and win a lost soul can in some measure feel this joy, and Jesus assures us it is felt in heaven itself. "Verily I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." This joy of recovery is another

instance of the truth that the highest joy has a background of sorrow and anxiety behind it.

The joys of Jesus were never selfish joys. He loved what He could share with others. Joy is a mutual, a contagious thing; the art of being happy is learnt from the art of making happy. Our Lord was anxious that those who had shared His temptations should also share with Him the joy of God's approval, and of success in God's work. "These things have I spoken unto you," He says, "that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." And in the prayer which follows He asks "that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves." It is never impossible for any servant of Christ to enter into the joy of his Lord.

Hence we find Him often speaking of joy and its nature. The word was no uncommon one with Him. He speaks of the joy of those who receive the word, of the man who found the hid treasure, of the shepherd over the sheep, of the woman over her piece of silver, of the father over the long-lost son. Several times He bids His disciples rejoice. Speaking of their persecution He says, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." When the seventy return from their mission with joy, declaring that even the devils are subject to them through His name, He bids them rejoice not so much in this, as rather in that their names are

written in heaven. He speaks indirectly of joy as the natural consequence of His presence, saying that they cannot be expected to fast while the Bridegroom is with them. Even when about to depart, He half rebukes them for their sadness, saying, "If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I go unto the Father."

Jesus has been in all ages an infinite source of joy to His people. Even far-off Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and Isaiah spoke of Him as giving "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." A burst of joy marked His coming to this world. His mother rejoiced in God her Saviour; the angels sang of glory and peace; the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God; Simeon gave thanks that he was spared to see the day; the wise men rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Nor were such signs wanting even during His life of sorrow and poverty. His forerunner declared his own joy fulfilled in His appearance; the common people heard Him gladly; little children ran to praise Him; Zacchæus received Him joyfully. His entry into Jerusalem was such as to recall Zechariah's words, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, Thy King cometh unto thee." And the more lasting joy over His resurrection fulfilled what He had said before His death, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." None can measure what the joy of Christ's presence

has meant to many a soul whose life would otherwise have been cold and loveless. Christ has brought Joy to the world. "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

VII. HIS MEAT AND DRINK

“The Son of Man came eating and drinking.”

THERE are two distinct points of view from which spiritual men have regarded the whole question of meat and drink, and the bodily life generally. Some have tried to rise above the life of the body. They have ignored meat and drink so far as this was possible. They have crushed down their physical nature and tried to devote themselves entirely to the life of the spirit. In the *Imitation*, for example, we read the following: “O that thou didst never want to eat or drink or sleep, but couldst always be praising God, and be employed solely in spiritual exercises! Would to God there were no such necessities, but only the spiritual refreshments of the soul! . . . Behold, meat, drink, clothing, and other necessaries for the support of the body, are burdensome to a fervent spirit.” Now we ought not to scorn such words. Better far be an ascetic than a glutton or a drunkard. Better cut away hand or foot or eye than let any one of them play havoc with the whole body. Penance and abstinence have formed a useful protest against an age too entirely given up to the things of this life.

Yet, say others, there is a better way of treating such things as meat and drink. Rather than rise up above them, let us raise them up. Make the body a willing servant, not a crushed slave. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, not a dead one. The temple of the Holy Ghost should be consecrated, not mutilated. Eating and drinking, in themselves merely animal acts, may be dignified and made even noble. The giving of meat and drink may be an act of piety and charity. To eat and drink together is a seal of friendship. Many of the highest pleasures and graces of social life—gatherings of friends, bright and interesting talk—are associated with the table of our daily food.

There is something to be learned from both points of view. The first is good; the second is better. The first reminds us that “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink.” The second bids us, “whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God.”

Of these two positions, St John the Baptist represented the first, our Lord Jesus Christ the second. The Baptist came “neither eating nor drinking.” His was a plea for a simpler life; a protest rather than an example. But our Lord’s way was still better. He did not, it is true, ignore what the other had emphasised. He bade men not be anxious about food or drink. He bade them labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life. He

quoted from the Old Testament the reminder that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. He declared that He had meat to eat that others knew not of, and that His meat consisted in doing His Father's will. Once He fasted forty days and nights; once at least He was so busy as to have no leisure to eat. Yet in His own words He "came eating and drinking." In sending out His disciples He bade them eat and drink such things as were given them. He attended to men's bodies first and their souls afterwards. Many of His best parables and sayings refer to weddings and feasts, and He often attended these Himself.

We find Him, for example, at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, where He turned the water into wine. As St John puts it, He "manifested forth His glory" in this act; not only by its wonder, but by its gracious purpose. It is always worth while to do a kindly act, even if the end be nothing more than the brightening of a wedding feast. We are grateful to the host or hostess who can put people at their ease, or to the guest who can talk well or keep a company in good spirits. And it was for just such a humble purpose that our Lord wrought this miracle. Whatever He touches He beautifies. In many other ways besides this He has sanctified the institution of marriage, and made even its commonest things precious.

We find him, too, a guest in the houses of publicans and sinners. Thus Levi, whom He had called

from the receipt of custom, "made Him a great feast in his own house," and our Lord accepted the invitation. In the case of Zacchæus, another publican, He went further, and offered Himself as a guest. In doing so He knew that He was throwing down the gauntlet to the Scribes and Pharisees. But he valued such gatherings because they brought Him into touch with the very men He wished to save. "They that are whole," He said in Matthew's house, "need not a physician, but they that are sick." Before we can help others we must find common ground on which to stand. We must not speak to them as from a platform, but enter into their lives. And as a means of achieving this, the common meal is not to be despised.

Less pleasant for our Lord was His reception at the houses of the Pharisees themselves. He felt that they had an ulterior object in asking Him, and were inclined to be critics as well as hosts. As He went into the house of one of them on the Sabbath day, they watched Him to see if He would work a cure. Another of the same class was scandalised because He had not washed before dinner ; while a third was yet more horrified because He allowed a sinner to touch Him. But their attitude does not disturb our Lord. He goes quietly on His way, answering the objections they offer, and doing the good He had meant to do.

Of a more intimate and agreeable character was our Lord's social intercourse with His three

friends at Bethany. Even in that happy circle there were little sores He could heal, and quiet words of counsel He could speak. There are things more needful, as He reminds Martha, than even the most zealous preparation for her guests' comfort. To sit at His feet may be better than much serving of Him in other ways. Nor can a costly gift, such as Mary's ointment, be reckoned as "waste" when it proves the love of the giver. Lessons such as these, suggested by the feast or meal, and given familiarly rather than formally, were all the more likely to strike home and be remembered.

Jesus was sometimes Host instead of Guest. Twice at least He fed a multitude in the wilderness with loaves, and it was one of these occasions that led to His speaking of Himself as the Bread of Life. Nor can we omit, even here, that Supper in the upper room, where, after partaking of the Passover, He institutes the Holy Communion of His own most precious Body and Blood. To that Feast, of course, we must attach far more than a merely social meaning. Yet we cannot hold such a meaning to be entirely absent from His thoughts of it. He had already wrought "signs" with bread and with wine. He had called Himself the living Bread and the true Vine. In employing these very same elements for the holiest purpose, He teaches us, amid yet greater lessons, that the humblest meal may be hallowed by His presence and blessing.

We cannot help being struck by the breadth of our Lord's social sympathy. We cannot look over these different meals and feasts without realising how varied they were—a village wedding, dinners with Pharisees, feasts with publicans and sinners, gatherings of thousands, suppers with two or three chosen friends. These all help to show how universal His mission was. And it was at one of these gatherings that He gave the best of all advice to both hosts and guests. Guests He bade not push themselves into the highest place, but be ready to take a lowly one. Hosts He recommended not simply to invite those who could ask them back again, but those who could make no recompense. Christians may well take a lesson from their Master here. Even churches are often accused, with more or less reason, of being divided into sets and classes. But while we naturally prefer the company of our own friends, our Christianity should widen our social sympathy. We should not find it impossible to be kindly and considerate towards all with whom we are one in Christ Jesus.

Not less marked than the breadth of our Lord's social sympathy is the purity of His social influence. It is not hard for some men to be friends with everybody. They adopt a fresh suit of manners for each company, are refined with the refined and coarse with the coarse. But that was not our Lord's way. His presence was a holy influence. His "blessing" over food was never a meaningless

ceremony. He made common things precious and small things great. Without aggressively "improving the occasion," He said many things by way of table talk that could not well have been said otherwise or elsewhere. Nor should His followers ever be less than Christians, wherever they are. We are not to take off our Christianity even in a company where it may be unwelcome. In this as in all things we are to walk worthy of our vocation. We are to seek the things that are honest, pure, true, lovely, and of good report.

Our Lord's social life was an essential part of His mission to the world. He made life at once wider and higher. He was at once the Bridge between man and man, and the Ladder between man and God. It was for this end that He came to the world. It was for this end that He instituted the Sacrament that speaks at once of communion with God and communion with one another. It was for this end that He died—to make us all one, to break down the middle wall of partition, to give us all access by one spirit unto the Father. Even in our very meat and drink we can forward the end for which our Saviour came. Even these may speak to us of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God.

VIII. HIS DRESS

“ Being found in fashion as a man.”

SOMETIMES a man's very clothes become part of his personality. In forming a mental picture of him we see the dress as well as the face and hands. How much poorer, for example, would our portrait of St John the Baptist be did we not know that his raiment was of camel's hair, and he had a leathern girdle about his loins? The oriental races, as a rule, think more than we do of garments as indicative of a man's position, and even as symbolic of his character. Thus in Scripture a man in grief immediately rends his clothes, or wears sackcloth and puts ashes or earth on his head. We read there of garments of salvation and a robe of righteousness. We must be “clothed” with humility; must have our feet “shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace”; must “above all . . . put on charity,” as “the bond (*i.e.* girdle) of perfectness.” In our portrait of Christ, then, we cannot neglect even the clothes He wore. He was “found in fashion as a man,” adopting the speech, habits, dress of His time. And though His dress may not tell us very much, it may help

towards a clearer idea of Him as "made in the likeness of men."

Our Lord does not say much about dress, and what He does say warns us against making too much of it, or fancying it of supreme importance. The rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, is in His view morally inferior to Lazarus, the half-naked beggar at his gate. The apostles are forbidden to take more than one coat with them on their missionary travels. In speaking of St John the Baptist, Jesus at least hints at his superiority to men clothed in soft raiment. He forbids men to be "anxious concerning raiment," bidding them rather consider the lilies of the field, whose array surpasses that of Solomon in all his glory. Nor has He any sympathy with the elaboration of costume for purposes of ostentation or ritual. He blames the Scribes and Pharisees who "make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments," and "love to go in long clothing."

Yet the moral significance even of dress is not lost sight of by our Lord. The clothing of the naked, like the feeding of the hungry, He regards as an act of service to Himself. Among His precepts as to returning good for evil we find, "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." The man whom He restored to sanity is referred to as sitting "clothed," as well as in his right mind. The uselessness of trying to blend the new life with the old He compared to that of patching an old

garment with a piece of new cloth. To come to a wedding without wearing the proffered garment was an act of unpardonable discourtesy to the host. Clothing was thus often suggestive to Him of ideas belonging to the spiritual side of life, and He would probably have agreed with the saying that "the apparel oft proclaims the man."

What did our Lord Himself wear as He went about doing good? His two chief garments were probably the "coat" or tunic, and the outer "cloak" or mantle. These, with turban, girdle, and sandals, formed the ordinary dress of a Jew of the time.

Of the turban no mention is made in the Gospels, and most pictures represent His head as uncovered. This, however, is unlikely, the fierce glare of the sun rendering headgear almost a necessity.

Sandals are mentioned in His missionary charge to the apostles, and His own use of them is to be inferred from what He said in the house of Simon the Pharisee. There He rebukes the discourtesy of His host for not providing water to wash His feet before the meal, and for omitting the other civilities of common hospitality. These attentions He valued, less for what they were in themselves than for what they showed as to the heart of the giver.

The coat, or tunic, has been described as resembling a clergyman's cassock, or loosely drawn dressing-gown. An old tradition has it that the one Jesus wore was woven (like Samuel's) by His

mother ; and there is nothing improbable in the suggestion. Of this coat we are told that it was without seam, woven from the top throughout. It was this fact about it that struck the soldiers as they divided His garments among them. Grudging to tear it, they cast lots whose it should be—unconsciously fulfilling the Psalmist's words, " They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots." It is at least a coincidence, if nothing more, that His very vesture suggests that unity which was so dear to His heart.

Over the coat was worn the band or girdle, under which, when any active work had to be done, the lower folds of the tunic were gathered up. This is what is meant by the oft-recurring phrase " to gird up the loins." The oriental, as a rule, is not fond of hard work. " Among the trades a work loses in public respect in proportion as the worker has to take off clothing when engaged in it." This helps to explain the apostles' surprise when their Master " laid aside His garments, and took a towel, and girded Himself " to wash their feet. The act was one of marked significance, and was meant to be remembered and followed. It recalled words He had already used of the master who found his servants faithful ; " He shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth, and serve them." By no act could our Saviour have more graphically enforced the lesson of mutual service, so essential a part of His spiritual teaching.

Uppermost of all came the "cloak" or mantle, without which a man was not regarded as fully dressed. As worn by orthodox Jews this robe had a tassel or fringe at each corner, to remind the wearer that he was holy to God. It was probably one of these fringes or tassels that the woman laid hold of who came in the press behind and touched His garment. "If I may but touch His clothes," she said, "I shall be whole." Though her faith may have been mingled with superstition, our Lord rejoiced in its strength. So assured was she of His power to heal, that the outermost corner of His upper garment was enough for her. Her prayer was granted: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

Even the dress of our Lord's everyday life thus serves in more than one way to illustrate His teaching and work. What He wore helps to show us what He was, and to remind us of the spirit of unity, of service, of faith, in which He would have His followers live.

There were garments other than these, which our Saviour had to wear—put on Him by other hands than His own. He once said to St Peter, "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." This was true even of Himself. We see in Him not only the active Worker but the patient Sufferer.

Does not the *Incarnation*, for example, become more real to us when we think of Jesus as wrapped in the "swaddling-clothes" of infancy? In the East a newly born child is confined more closely than with us, a napkin being folded over him so as to keep in both hands and feet, and the whole then made secure by strips of cloth wound round. A little child's helplessness, a little child's need of care, and even of restraint, are suggested by the Infant Saviour's swaddling-bands.

The *suffering* Christ, again, stands out before us more vividly as we see Him in the dresses bestowed in scorn—the "gorgeous robe" in which Herod arrayed Him, or the military cloak, with reed for sceptre and thorns for crown, with which the soldiers ridiculed his pretensions to be a King.

"As the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth in the meanest habit."

As we look, we say with Pilate, though with a deeper reverence, "Behold the Man!"

How real, again, does His *death* become to us as we think of Him taken down from the Cross and "wound in linen clothes with spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury." After the horrors of the Crucifixion there is something restful in the account of His burial. The winding-sheet was of "fine linen," such as He probably never wore when alive, but which was gladly given by the rich and devoted Joseph as befitting His Body in death.

Infancy, suffering, and death—in all these we,

too, are helpless, and utterly dependent on others for the care we receive, and for the very garments we wear. We are at the mercy of our fellows, who can be kind to us or cruel to us according to their will. But in suffering as well as in working, on the passive as on the active side of life, our Saviour is with us. We may see His image, too, in everything that is weak and helpless and suffering, and try to deal gently with it for Christ's sake.

When our Lord was glorified, the radiance of His presence seemed to communicate itself to the very clothes He wore. At the Transfiguration, for example, the Evangelists vie with one another in trying to convey an impression of its brightness. It was "white as the light," "white and glistering," "shining, exceeding white as snow, so that no fuller on earth can white them." On what He wore after His Resurrection the records preserve a reverent silence. But it is in raiment of the same celestial purity that He promises to array His redeemed. "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."

IX. HIS FRIENDSHIPS

“ *I have called you friends.*”

“ GREATER love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

“ Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

“ Henceforth I call you not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth : but I have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you.”

It is not often that we find our Lord's teaching on any one subject in so compact a form as here. Amid all that has been written on friendship in ancient and modern times, these few words must still hold a foremost place. Nowhere else are the essentials of friendship more exactly and tersely expressed.

Take, for example, what our Lord says here as to the mutual *sacrifice* which friendship involves. The test of a friendship is, “ What will it give ? ” Jonathan, we are told, “ stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.” These were the best

things he had, the things he knew best and valued most. Sacrifice of some kind must accompany every friendship. It may be sacrifice of worldly goods, of time or trouble, of talents, of patience ; there are a hundred ways in which we can thus serve our friends. Above all, we must offer *ourselves* with our gifts. " I seek not yours," says St Paul, " but you : . . . and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." Thus the supreme sacrifice of friendship comes to be life itself. " Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Damon of Syracuse pledges his life for the appearance of his friend Pythias. Alcestis dies to save her husband's life. Antigone braves death that she may pay the last rites to the body of her slain brother. Sydney Carton mounts the tumbril, glad that he has been mistaken for Charles Darnay. All these stood this highest test of friendship ; but Christ transcends it. " If, when we were [not friends, but] enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." He died for enemies, He lives for friends. Thank God, there have been sacrifices on the other side too ; men and women who " loved not their lives unto the death," and suffered for the Christ who suffered for them. It is true we can sacrifice our life in other ways than by laying it down. But in whatever way we show it, one of the marks of our friendship with Christ, as of His with us, must be that of sacrifice.

Or, again, take what He says of the mutual *influence* which is so conspicuous a fruit of friendship. Men have done extraordinary things at the bidding of friends. Jonathan says to David, "Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee." The influence, especially, of a strong over a weak friend, is incalculable in its power for good or ill; often so strong as to command obedience. "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." This is a great claim to make, and it has often been unjustifiably made. "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend," was the threat held over Pilate by the Jewish mob. "The King's friends," in George III.'s day, were those who voted just as the king wished. But Christ's claim on His friends' obedience is justified. We are safe to accept His conditions; for His new commandment is, "Love one another." And even in such a friendship as His, the influence is not all on one side, but is mutual. Strange though it seem, the friends of Jesus can influence Him. "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Once more, look at His recognition of mutual *confidence* as a necessity of friendship—familiar intercourse founded on implicit trust. Such confidence is always valuable, and never more so than in deep sorrow or great joy. "This communicating of a man's self to his friend," writes Bacon, "works two contrary effects; for it re-

doubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves." Nor is it less helpful when we are in doubt as to some course of action; we often learn, as the same writer says, "more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation." Accordingly our Lord makes confidence one of the chief marks of His friendship. "I have called you friends, for all things which I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." This was a great confidence, yet it was not misplaced. These men—slowly and diffidently, perhaps—gave Him their confidence in return. And this all His friends must do; confidence, like the other marks of friendship, must be mutual. "This," writes His chief friend, "is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us."

In the light of this our Lord's interpretation of friendship, we may glance at a few of the friendships He actually formed while on earth. As examples, let us take two men and two women, representing somewhat contrasted types: St John and St Peter, Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene.

At the head of His friends stands St John the apostle. No one else seemed to have with Jesus so close a spiritual affinity. Throughout their intercourse the head of the one rests on the bosom of the other, and the affection between them was strong on both sides. Our Lord loved St John. We are expressly told that He did, and any possible doubts on the matter are set at rest by Christ's

final proof of loving confidence in entrusting His mother to the apostle's care. Nor is it less certain that St John loved Christ. Impetuous and fiery "Son of Thunder" as he was at first, under Christ's influence he becomes the very apostle of love.

In Mary of Bethany we have the companion picture to St John; she too was "a disciple whom Jesus loved." If the one leaned on His breast, the other sat at His feet; both were very near Him. In no case are the confidence, the influence, the sacrifice of friendship better exhibited than in Mary and her choice of the good part. She reminds us that the attitude of Christ's friends should be one of reverence. It is at His feet we must sit; at His feet we must offer our gifts. Yet with the reverence there is to be confidence; our humility is not to prevent our coming very near Him. Like Mary, we must get all we can from Christ. Like Mary, too, we must give all we can to Christ.

Quite a different friend is found in St Peter, the most prominent and interesting of all the apostolic band. He speaks and is spoken to more than any one else, gets more praise and more blame, makes the boldest of confessions, the meanest of denials. Amid his many strange inconsistencies there is a human loveliness that wins our heart. This man, with all his extremes and all his failings, was a friend of Christ; and that surely is matter of comfort to us. It was for his soul that good and evil had a deadly pull: Satan desiring to sift him

as wheat, and Christ praying that his faith might not fail. The shifting sands of his character were welded into the Rock on which the Church was built. To him, of all others, were the commands given, "Strengthen thy brethren," "Feed My lambs," "Tend My sheep."

Mary Magdalene may stand as St Peter's companion picture. She belonged to the group of women of whom St Luke tells us that they had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities; and by many she has been identified, though without much reason, with the "sinner" described by the same Evangelist. Her love for Jesus had all the ardour of gratitude to a Saviour and Healer. She was the first to reach His empty tomb, nor did she leave it till their mutual recognition had been sealed with the words "Mary!" "Master!" Her friendship with Him has for us the blessed reminder that a past of sin and shame does not stand in the way of our yet becoming His friends.

These features and examples of our Lord's friendship show how unaltering that friendship is, yet how different in character His friends may be. We see how anxious He is to be the Friend of all, and how none of us is incapable of being His friend. Let us form this best of friendships now, if we have not done it before. As the *Imitation* says:—

"Be humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee.

"Be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee.

“Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus be not thy Friend above all, thou wilt be exceedingly sad and desolate.

“Jesus Christ alone is to be singly loved, who alone is found good and faithful above all friends.”

X. HIS ANTIPATHIES

“Ye are of your father the devil.”

DR SAMUEL JOHNSON once remarked, “I like a good hater,” and the saying is not to his discredit. The man of strong affections has also strong antipathies; he who cannot hate cannot love. Some of us are apt to interpret the Christian law of love in too weak and watery a sense; to say “to understand all is to forgive all.” We are shocked, for example, at the fierce expressions of hatred with which some of the Psalms abound. But “Ye that love the Lord, hate evil,” can never be superseded. God Himself is represented in Scripture as capable of genuine hatred. “These six things,” says the Book of Proverbs, “doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

The objects of our Lord's hatred were those He regarded as belonging to that kingdom of darkness which it was His special business to oppose. “For this cause,” says St John, “was the Son of God

manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." Between these works and His own there was an irreconcilable antagonism. Though the devil "departed from Him for a season," he was never far off, and had to be constantly watched and repressed. Christ speaks of him as instigating the traitor Judas, as attempting to seduce the other disciples, as "binding" afflicted persons, as catching away the seed sown in the heart, as sowing tares among the wheat. When accused of "casting out devils by the prince of the devils" He indignantly repudiates the charge, asking, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" and claiming to perform the exorcism by the finger of God. He is exalted or depressed according as His enemy is defeated or exultant. Once He beholds "Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Another time He says, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." On the other hand, we find Him saying to His captors in Gethsemane, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness," and a similar depression comes over Him during the dark hours on the Cross. Any interference with His work or plans He regards as a suggestion of the Evil One. Thus He meets St Peter's rebuke with an angry "Get thee behind Me, Satan," and to the unhappy disciple who turned traitor He does not hesitate to apply the names "devil" and "son of perdition." In short, whenever He sees evil glaringly manifested, He has no hesitation in pointing straight to its source. "Ye are of your father the devil, and

the lusts of your father ye will do : he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own : for he is a liar, and the father of it."

The two names applied here to the author of evil—"liar" and "murderer"—give us some further insight into the nature of our Lord's two chief antipathies, which we may call respectively sins against truth and sins against love.

All sins against the truth came in for our Lord's sweeping condemnation. He detested hypocrisy, falsehood, insincerity, of whatever kind. The very names He gives His enemies—"that fox," "wolves in sheep's clothing," "serpents," "generation of vipers,"—are all suggestive of deceit or pretence. Such, too, is His strongest indictment against the scribes and Pharisees. "They say, and do not." They bind burdens on others which they will not touch themselves. All their works they do "to be seen of men." They make long prayers "for a pretence." They quibble about nothings and neglect what is great. They make the outside of the cup and platter clean while they leave the inside foul. Whited sepulchres, they appear beautiful outward, but are full of all uncleanness. "How," He asks them, "can ye escape the damnation of hell?" May these terrible words arouse in us all a sense of the diabolic nature of deceit. Every lie is a victory for the kingdom of Satan, the father of lies.

Among other forms of falsehood our Lord censures wilful or obstinate blindness. "Men loved darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil." Those who will not see are "blind guides," "blind leaders of the blind." The healing of a blind man He uses as an object-lesson to the spiritually blind. Some of the cities in which He had ministered—Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum—He upbraids for their indifference to works that would have made Tyre and Sidon repent in dust and ashes. Of such cities He bids the disciples shake the very dust from their feet, adding the warning that they will fare worse at the judgment day than Sodom and Gomorrah. We must not belittle the force of these words. Wilful blindness and "obscurantism" have been too often sins of the Church rather than of the world. Let us see that we welcome light from whatever source it comes, and make it our endeavour to be always on the side of truth.

Equally diabolic in our Lord's view were sins against love—the conduct of those who injured their fellow-men by violence, temptation, or neglect. The devil is murderer as well as liar, and cruelty of whatever kind falls under Christ's lash as surely as falsehood. The Pharisees, for example, He denounces as devouring widows' houses, shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men, shedding innocent and righteous blood, making their proselytes twofold more the children of hell than themselves. He points out the sin of leading others

astray and teaching them to break God's commandments. Of the man who dare make a little child go wrong His words are especially severe—"It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Offence in word may be as bad as offence in deed. "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Nor are sins of omission any less blameworthy than sins of commission. It is to those who have not actively injured, but merely persistently neglected their poorer brethren, that the awful words are to be spoken by the Son of man in glory—"Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." He points again to the supreme author of all injury in bidding men not fear those who can only kill the body, but "him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell." Very far-reaching is Christ's application of the sixth commandment, and emissaries of "the murderer" may be found in very unexpected places.

Of these two main forms of evil—sins against truth and sins against love—Christ is Himself the chief opponent. The two purposes of His manifestation on earth are, in His own words, to "bear witness to the truth," and "to save that which is lost." These, taken together, counteract the work of the liar and murderer—"destroy the works of the devil." And we are furthering these

purposes when we, in the apostle's words, "Speak the *truth* in *love*."

Christ's antipathies show us how a holy hatred is an indispensable part of a holy love. If His hand can soothe and heal and bless, it can also wield the fan to separate wheat from chaff, and the scourge of small cords to drive evil from every holy place. Yet He is ever the Lord of grace as of truth. He is merciful as well as holy. It is because He so loves the sinner that He so hates the sin. Let us put from us, then, all that is hateful to Him, and say with an old saint of His—"Lord, I offer to Thee all my sins and offences, on Thy propitiating altar, that Thou mayest burn and consume them all with the fire of Thy love, and mayest blot out all the stains of my sins, and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me Thy grace, which I have lost by sin, by fully pardoning me all, and mercifully receiving me to the kiss of peace."

XI. HIS WALKS AND WAYS

“ Jesus . . . went about doing good.”

ONE of the schools of philosophy in Greece derived its name from the fact that its teachers walked as they lectured. One of the greatest charms of such a book as the *Pilgrim's Progress* lies in the fact that it tells of a walk, and of conversation suggested by objects on the path, or people met by the way. Now one of the most noticeable things about our Lord's work and teaching was that a great deal of both took place as He moved from one spot to another. Like many of His best followers He was an itinerant Evangelist, meeting different people on their own ground, and entering into their several experiences. Some of His parables and sayings, too, illustrate how this conception of life appealed to Him. He called Himself the Way, without which no man cometh to the Father. He compared the godly life to a strait and narrow way leading to a definite goal. We see from the Book of Acts that very soon after His Ascension the religion He founded came to be called “ The Way ” ; and one of the earliest Christian writings is named “ The Two Ways.” When we try to picture our Lord, we almost invariably think of

Him as in motion. With Shakspeare, we think of the Holy Land as containing—

“ those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter Cross.”

The phrase “ went about doing good ” may mean either or both of two things. It may mean that He went about *to* do good, making that the end and aim of His wanderings. Or, again, it may mean that He did good *as* He went about, using even the casual incidents of a journey as means of doing God’s will and helping others.

Both of these are true of our Lord. In the first place He went about with the distinct purpose of doing good, and was glad to go wherever He was summoned for that purpose. “ He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people.” When, for example, Jairus sends for Him to heal his daughter, He sets out for the house at once. When Lazarus was dead, He said “ I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” He walked on the sea to come to the aid of His disciples. He was deeply conscious that a great work was before Him, and that the time to do it was short. “ I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day ; the night cometh, when no man can work.” “ I do cures



"JESUS... WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD,"— PAGE 80.

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to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following."

Equally ready was He to do good when the opportunity presented itself in an unexpected or seemingly casual way. As He was going to the house of Jairus He stopped to heal a woman of her disease. It was because "He must needs go through Samaria" to reach Galilee that the opportunity occurred to help another woman in a different way. An awkward incident at a wedding—the failure of wine—was the occasion of His first mighty work. It was "as He passed by" that He saw and healed a blind man. Walking through the cornfield, an act of His disciples (the plucking and rubbing of ears of corn) enables Him to teach some home truths about the Sabbath. His incidental good deeds remind us that there can be no inappropriate time for sowing a seed. It is told of Admiral Collingwood that on his travels he carried a bag of acorns, and dropped one in wherever there seemed a likely spot for an oak to grow, that England might never lack ships. In some such way did our Lord do good as He went about. Even such an important act as the calling of the apostles took place "as He was walking by the sea-shore."

Most people have their favourite walks—haunts to which they resort again and again—and even our Lord had His. One preference He seems to have had was a love for the mountains. A mountain-

top always had a fascination for Him, as it often has for others. His most remarkable code of spiritual precepts will always be known as the "Sermon on the Mount." Often would He go up to a mountain to pray—the solitude of the hills doubtless appealing to Him as He sought the ear of His Father. Works of healing, too, were performed by Him on a mountain top. On a mountain He ordained His disciples, and on a mountain He was transfigured. To the Mount of Olives He went with His disciples on the night on which He was betrayed, and from the same mountain, when His work on earth was done, He ascended to heaven.

Our Lord's love of the mountains bids us look high, aim high, climb high. A mountain-top has been described as "a moral as well as a physical elevation." It gives us at once the ideas of a nearer approach to God, a position of greater influence over our fellows, and a fresh view-point from which to regard the world. Lowly though our Lord was, His thoughts, aims, and views were always of the highest. Long years before, Isaiah had seen on the mountains the beautiful feet of Him that brought tidings of peace, of salvation, of the kingdom of God. Something of the same feeling must have inspired the men of Chili and Argentina when they erected on the mountain ridge between the two states a colossal statue of Christ, with these words on its pedestal, "Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than

Argentines and Chilians break the peace which at the feet of Christ the Redeemer they have sworn to maintain." Let us go to the Highest for all the graces we want ; for help, for holiness, for peace.

Another preference our Lord had was for Galilee—" His own country," as He called it—the land where He had been brought up. So identified was He with the town where He had lived as a child—" His own city"—that He was known as " Jesus of Nazareth," or " Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." That country, it is true, was not in great repute. Slighting remarks were apt to be made of it by its southern neighbours, such as, " Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ? " " Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." But if this had any effect on Jesus, it was to make His patriotism all the stronger. " He walked in Galilee." " When He was come into His own country." " He walked by the sea of Galilee." " He went about all Galilee." He was quite aware of the indifference, even the hostility, with which His countrymen regarded Him. He would quote the proverb, " A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house." It was in a Nazareth synagogue that He was more fiercely attacked than anywhere else. Yet this did not sicken or sour Him. Galilee still meant more to Him than any other land. By far the greater part of His ministry was spent there, and the followers He chose were Galileans.

As a general rule it is among the men of his

own country that a man can do most good. The worth of his influence abroad will depend very much upon the worth of his influence at home. Even the Son of man felt the special claims of his own country and kindred. It was among the rough-spoken north countrymen of Galilee that Jesus the Galilean loved to dwell and to work.

“Him evermore I behold
Walking in Galilee ;
Through the cornfield’s waving gold,
In hamlet or grassy wold,
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.”

But perhaps the place our Lord loved best of all was the Temple at Jerusalem—“His Father’s house.” This, be it remembered, was the centre of the religion and worship of Israel. It meant even more to the worshipper than our churches can mean to us. It was the one spot in all the land to which his eyes turned with longing, and in whose courts he loved to dwell. Nor can we study the life of Jesus without realising what a love He had for the Temple courts. Thither He was brought as an Infant, blessed by Simeon and extolled by Anna. There He was found as a Child, hearing and answering the doctors of the law. Thither He loved to go to teach and to heal, to “look round about on all things,” to receive the welcome of the children. One of His very temptations was on a pinnacle of the Temple. Many of His best sayings and parables appear to have

been spoken within its precincts. True, there was much in it to sadden Him—unsympathetic priests and irreverent traders. Nor was He under any delusion as to its fate. “There shall not be left here,” He said, “one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” But the very idea of it so appealed to Him that in speaking of His own death and resurrection His words were, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Many men blame the Church for its failings, but never seek to help it or make it better. Christ in the Temple is a rebuke to all such people. He did not scruple to criticise those who ministered there, but He did it from within, not from without. He was jealous for the honour of the Temple. “The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up.” And no follower of Christ has a right *merely* to criticise the Church of His founding. It is rather for them to do what He did—to cast out from it what is unworthy, and to purify it, even as He is pure.

“Now, for my friends’ and brethren’s sakes,
Peace be in thee, I’ll say.
And for the house of God our Lord
I’ll seek thy good alway.”

On the mountain-top—among His own people—in His Father’s house—these were the chief resorts where our Saviour loved to walk and to work. We can follow Him to them all. There is something in us that responds to the voice of

Nature, something that warms to our own people, something that seeks communion with our Father. And Jesus loved companionship in His walks. Almost invariably we find Him accompanied by at least three of His disciples, and usually by many more. After His resurrection He drew near and walked with the two who journeyed to Emmaus. His words to men were, "Come unto Me," "Follow Me," "Abide in Me." Though conscious always of His Father's presence, He thought almost with dread of the hour when "ye (the apostles) shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone." Once something He had said made many of His disciples "go back and walk no more with Him." He evidently felt their departure, for He said to the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" The answer of St Peter may serve for us all, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." If we have the same assurance, we too must share His walks. For "he that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."

XII. HIS RESTING-PLACES

“Come . . . and rest a while.”

No one deserves rest who has not earned it, either by work or by suffering. When we are told that God rested the seventh day, the statement would have no meaning had we not also been told that He worked on the other six. When our Lord offered rest it was to those who needed it most—the toilers and the sufferers, “ye that labour and are heavy laden.” And it is just because our Lord was so conspicuously both a Worker and a Sufferer that we are interested in His resting times and places. In one sense, of course, He was always at rest. He “had no time to be in a hurry.” He was never flurried and never in a fret. There was a peace, a restfulness, in all He said and did. In the busiest moments of His life He was in closest touch with His Father, and gained strength for His work in prayer. Yet He, as a man, felt human weakness, and needed rest, as we do, to recruit His strength and make Him fitter for His great work.

One of His resting-places was the “desert place,” to which our Lord invited His disciples to “come apart and rest awhile.” The word “desert” does

not sound very attractive, but it scarcely represents the meaning. It would be more correctly rendered "a remote place," or "an uninhabited spot." To leave town for country, the busy street for the field and wood, is the commonest form of rest prescribed alike for the toiler and the sufferer. Some such rest our Lord and His apostles needed. There had been hard work and hard suffering too in the little circle. "There were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." The apostles had not long returned from the engrossing labour of their first missionary journey. They had but just heard, too, the terrible news of the death of their friend, St John the Baptist. Rest they felt they must have; and probably our Lord was thinking more of them than of Himself. As privately as could be, they went with their Master to the quiet resting-place He had so thoughtfully provided for them.

But not to enjoy their rest for long. The people had followed them, and they were soon in the midst of as great a crowd as before. Our Lord could not long keep from helping others, even in what we may call His holiday hours. He began to teach them, and then to feed them, and only after that did He get away to the mountain to pray. And, like Him, we can always find work, even in our times of relaxation. Very often some little service done at such a time is of more profit to ourselves, and more appreciated by others, than what occurs in the ordinary course of our business life.

Another of our Lord's resting-places is the well on which He sat during His journey through Samaria. A well, in that parched land, was always a welcome place of rest. We read of the Israelites' joy when they encamped at Elim, with its wells and palm trees; of David's longing for water from the well of Bethlehem; of the eager crowd of blind and lame at the pool of Bethesda. The well—the "watering-place"—still does its healing work in the stress of modern life. Men come back strengthened for duty from its invigorating waters. It is at least striking that the only time we are distinctly told of our Lord's being "wearied" was when He sat down on Jacob's well in Samaria. He was tired and hot, for the hour was noon. He was hungry, and the disciples had gone off to buy food. He was thirsty, as we see from His request to the woman, "Give Me to drink." Never was He in more need of rest and refreshment.

But the sequel is instructive. When the disciples come back and bid Him eat, He will not comply. He says He has had meat to eat that they know not of. They ask Him, then, whether any one has brought Him food. We feel inclined to ask the same question. Whence has this revived strength come? What has this Samaritan woman done for Him? What has brought colour to the wan cheeks, light to the half-closed eye, force to the weary limbs? But we find nothing. He has received nothing; He has been giving all the time. He began by sitting on the well and asking

for water: He ends by telling of the living water which springs up within the soul as a well of everlasting life. "My meat," He says to the disciples and to us—that meat which they knew not of, and of which, alas! we all know so little—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." Work again, always work, even in resting-time.

A third resting-place is the boat on the Sea of Galilee. The sea presents, or used to present, an almost perfect form of rest. Its fresh breezes give new life and vigour; and still better is the isolation it gives us from the business worries left behind on shore. The only time we ever hear of our Lord asleep is in this boat. "He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow," in the midst of the storm. A great soldier, the Duke of Wellington, and a great physician, Sir James Simpson, are said each to have had the rare power of going to sleep whenever they wanted, for however short a time. We can easily imagine Jesus to have possessed the same power. His sleep amid the storm was not, like that of Jonah, the uneasy slumber of a man who had fled from work. It was the sleep of perfect trust, of absolute security amid danger.

But here, just as in the other cases, He is not allowed to rest long. His disciples mistake His peace for indifference. They awake Him, and say, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" The weary Christ is again called to work. "He arose,

and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And He said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? " In the boat, as in the desert-place and on the well, He is working even where He might well be resting. He gives to others the calm and peace which were already in Himself.

We follow our Lord to a more solemn resting-place—the grave. Whatever be our temporary resting-places, it is to this final one that the toiler and the sufferer must alike come. " There the wicked cease from troubling: and there the weary are at rest."

" Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas,
Ease after war, death after life, doth greatly please."

" Though I have great retirement here at Dunblane," writes Archbishop Leighton to his sister, " yet I am still panting for a retreat from this place, and all public charge, and next to rest in the grave." The inscription on the tomb of an old Italian warrior reads, " Here resteth one who never rested before." There is a touching epitaph in a German churchyard, " I will arise, O Christ, when Thou callest me: but oh! let me rest a while, for I am very weary." To that rest our Saviour came at last. " He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." His body was laid in the sepulchre in the garden till the resurrection morning. The greatest worker and the greatest sufferer had well earned His rest, and sorely needed it.

Yet even this rest was no dreamless sleep. Even then He seems to have been at work for the redemption of lost mankind. "To-day," He had said to the penitent thief, "thou shalt be with Me in paradise"; and St Peter's words seem to indicate His pursuing a like mission of mercy to others. (He was) "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient." His spirit was not inactive: He was ministering to those who had never seen Him in the flesh. And His ministry is still going on.

"Among the living, among the dead,
Yesterday, to-day, and for ever
He must be doing the Father's will,
Bearing the message of mercy still."

Let us gather up in a few short sentences the thoughts which our Lord's resting-places suggest to us.

Rest is necessary. Our Lord felt weak and weary, and that very fact is a comfort to us who so often feel the same.

Rest is not inactivity. Nature is never entirely at rest. Even sleep is but the bringing into play of new forces. In the life of Christ we find no place for lethargy or suspended energy.

Rest is often best found in helping others. This is conspicuously shown in all the examples cited from our Lord's life. It was not only a practice

but a principle with Him. The Sabbath, or Day of Rest, was that on which He most delighted to perform works of mercy. And part of our day of rest may well be spent in helping others, and in brightening dull and suffering lives.

Rest, finally, is obtainable from within rather than from without. It is a matter of the spirit rather than of circumstance. The real peace "that passeth understanding" is the peace which is of Christ and not of the world. If our Lord's life was all work, it was all rest too. To rest in working and work in resting is the best life of all. Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest.

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