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Entre Nous.

On the 24th of December there appeared in *The Times* an article of nearly two columns in length, being a review of the second volume of the *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church* (T. & T. Clark; 25s. net). As the Dictionary is not reviewed in The Expository Times, that review may be recommended for reading.

One of the literary surprises of the War has been the demand for the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. How is it to be accounted for? The evidence, so far as it is available, points to a wider knowledge of its contents. A Roman Catholic priest, just returned from Rome, informs us through a friend that *no book of any kind is now so frequently consulted in the Vatican*. The tenth volume has been published; the last two are well on the way. The whole will be comfortably contained in twelve volumes.

SOME TOPICS.

With Anger.

Dr. Westcott's lectures are another very vivid memory. I was not reading theology, and therefore had to take them as a luxury, to be indulged in when my own Tripos lectures allowed. The courses I attended were thronged by men who received certificates of attendance, in view of bishops' requirements at ordination. At the back of the big room could generally be seen a few embryo priests of a style which is not unfamiliar at the seminaries of sound learning and religious education. These worthies, being absolutely incapable of following the lecture, would play cards or read novels, and secure some more intelligent friend's notes afterwards to copy. Once Westcott stopped abruptly in his lecture and fixed the back bench with wrath in his eye. Gathering up his gown, he strode down to the door, and presently we saw a big undergraduate towering above the little Professor and looking about as thoroughly withered as a man could do. In a minute or two the door opened, the hopes of a certificate vanished sullenly down the stairs, the Professor came back to his desk, and we resumed our note-taking. The incident will serve as a companion to the solitary instance of Westcott's powers of wrath narrated in the *Life*, which made his son ever after believe in the story that Edward I. once killed a man by looking at him.[1]

Your Favourite Passage.

A man is known by the company he keeps in his reading, by the authors he loves, by his preferences and his aversions. A well-loved writer cites this from Thoreau as 'the noblest and most useful passage I remember to have read in any modern author': 'It takes two to speak truth—one to speak and another to hear.' The same writer tells us that to his thinking 'the noblest passage in one of the noblest books of this century is where the old pope glories in the trial, nay, in the partial fall and but imperfect triumph of the younger hero.'[2]

Of Pure Love for his Country.

Let me tell you—or remind you—of this, for a true history and a parable. In the year 1870, in the little village of Arbois in France and in a cottage close by the bridge that crosses the Cuisance river, there abode a small half-paralysed man, working at his books to a word which he constantly repeated—*Laboremus*. For his school in Paris was closed and he had been sent out of the city as an 'idle mouth' and indeed he was clearly unfit to carry arms. 'But sometimes,' says his biographer, 'when he was sitting quietly with his wife and daughter, the town-crier's trumpet would sound: and forgetting all else, he must run out of doors, mix with the groups standing on the bridge, listen to the latest news of disaster, and creep like a dumb hurt animal back to his room,' where the portrait of his father, an ex-sergeant of Napoleon's 3rd Regiment of the Line,—'the brave amongst the brave,'—hung to reproach him. 'Shall we not cry, "Happy are the dead?"' wrote this paralytic man to one friend; and to another, 'How fortunate you are to be young and strong! Why cannot I begin a new life of study and work! Unhappy France, dear country, if I could only assist in raising thee from thy disasters!'

Now that man swore—in the depth of national defeat, in the anguish of a brain active while the

[1] J. H. Moulton, *The Christian Religion in the Study and the Street*, 99.

[2] Sir Edward Cook, *Literary Recreations*, 180.

body was laid impotent—to raise France again to her rank among the nations and by work of pure beneficence. He would never forgive Germany: but he—a man warned of his end—would live to build this monument, for the glory of France, to shame by its nobility that vulgar excrescence raised by Germany over the Rhine. You may read it all in his *Life*; how the vow was taken, how pursued, how achieved. I, who quote this vow and its accomplishment, saw the wreaths piled five-and-twenty years later by all Europe—prouder trophies for a cathedral than stands of captured colours —on the grave of Pasteur.

'But that which put glory of grace into all that he did,' says Bunyan of Greatheart, 'was that he did it of pure love for his Country.'[1]

Angels.

Mr. Charles A. Hall, who writes confidently about the life to come,—his book is *They do not Die*,—writes as confidently about angels. 'It has been customary to imagine that there is, in the spiritual world, a superior race of beings who know nothing of the grossness of earth, and who constitute a heavenly hierarchy, or a coterie of super-beings quite distinct from ordinary humanity. The belief has been fostered by poets and wrongful interpretation of Holy Writ. As a matter of fact, angels, in our Scriptures, are sometimes referred to as men, and all the parts and virtues therein attributed to them are distinctly human. The seer of Patmos, who was disposed to worship the angel who showed him so many wonders, was restrained from such action: the enlightened one saying to him, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, *and of thy brethren the prophets*, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." How an angel who had not known earth, and the temptations and trials of humanity, could minister sympathetically to man, passes comprehension. "Angel" literally means a messenger, and the term is really applied to "just men made perfect," spirits who once dwelt upon earth in a material body, but have since passed through death and the purifying fires of life. They have reached a degree of spiritual manhood which peculiarly qualifies them for employment as "ministering spirits." We can conceive of no occupants of the spiritual world who are not human, and who have not once been men on earth. And, necessarily, a personal Devil, who, according to a Miltonic conceit, is a fallen angel become the sworn enemy of God and man, is a mere fiction. The Lucifer of Holy Writ (Isaiah 14) was a figurative term applied to a king of Babylon. The writer of the noble hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," gave us a truer and a nobler conception of the angels:

> And with the morn those angel faces smile
> Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.[2]

Could we see the other side of death, we should behold a fair vision of such angels, fine-souled, large-hearted, and tenderly-affected human beings treating the new arrival with the most sympathetic concern:

> Angels to beckon me
> Nearer, my God, to Thee,

is no sickly sentiment, but fact of the most practical kind. The heaven that "lies about us in our infancy" also encircles us on our arrival into the spirit realms, and, doubtless, the patriotic lads who have been given such quick shrift on the field of battle have seen the beckoning fingers and experienced the heavenward enticement.'

[1] Quiller Couch, *Studies in Literature*, 320.

NOTES ON TEXTS.

ROMANS 8[38].—Does Christianity speak the truth? No one can say who has not tested it in action; and those who have tested it cannot prove it to those who have not. They can only affirm their utter certainty, as St. Paul does when he says—I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Only through the music of those words can we understand their meaning, for that alone tells us what they meant to the speaker. He speaks of his utter certainty like a poet who, with his music, convinces us that he tells the truth about himself. He speaks like a poet in love; and we know something more from the words of the poet than that he is in love. He makes us share the passionate certainty of his love.[3]

[2] But that was not Newman's idea.—Ed.

[3] A. Clutton-Brock, *Studies in Christianity*, 64.

MATTHEW 18^3.—To enter any kingdom worth entering, and above all whatever we call a Kingdom of Heaven, it is necessary for us not to be, but to become, little children, not merely to recover child-like graces, which may be but a pretty veil drawn over imbecility, but to temper the vivid and varied colours, the hot and violent passions, the strident notes of mature experience, all to harmony, to a simplicity which holds in firm government a host of tendencies, impulses, and powers, ready without that government to break into discord. This is not the simplicity of childhood, but of seasoned age. Simple children treat the humble and the august with the same sweetness or the same pretty and pardonable impertinence, and make upon both the same demands, while they do not see the difference; but when they come to learn a little of the significance of dignity, whether of office, or of station, or of age, they are often at a loss how to behave. The same behaviour is not appropriate in all circumstances and in all places and towards all persons, when once we have learnt the real distinctions which exist in circumstances, places, and persons. An infant, carried to his christening, may, without reproach to himself, though not without extreme discomfort for his kindred and his sponsors, behave as he would in his nursery; but a man who should comport himself in a cathedral as he would in his club would deserve and receive our censure. He should be natural in both, and to be natural he must neither cause, nor allow, a divorce between one part of himself and another: to be natural he must be his whole self. Our difficulty is not that we have two or more worlds, but that we have two or more selves; if this marks an advance (as in a sense it may) upon the simplicity, the unity of childhood, it indicates also the need for a further advance to a new simplicity, a higher unity. There is no dissonance in unison, for none is possible; harmony is the reconciliation of divers tones. But harmony attempted and not achieved is discord, and hurt by that we resort to a single note, which lacks the clearness, if it is without the shrillness, of childish music.[1]

1 PETER 1^4.—Mr. J. P. Struthers of *The Morning Watch* attended Professor Aitken's lectures at the Hall of the United Original Secession Church. One day a student had read in 1 P 1^4 a description of the heavenly inheritance. The Professor paused, repeated slowly the Greek words which had been read—*εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον*—and then, as if emerging from a fit of wonder, said, 'as if the thought was music to the apostle's soul.'[2]

PSALM 95^4.—Mr. Struthers travelled round the world. In India he was much moved by the grandeur of the Himalayas. One of the heights is Kinchinjinga (or Kinchinjunga, as he spells it), between Sikkim and Nepal, over 28,000 feet. 'At length,' he says, 'the mist cleared away, and there stood before us, white with everlasting snow, the top of Kinchinjunga. I need scarcely tell you that to look at it over the ten ranges of intervening mountains, that ever rose higher and higher the nearer they came to Kinchinjunga, was our chief occupation for three days. When we went to church on Sabbath and heard in the morning service that "the strength of hills is His also," we got a new idea of the words. They were away up in the clouds, those hills, with an awful barrier look about them, and yet they rose so gradually you felt God could have made mountains twice as high. There was no feeling of effort about them at all.'[3]

PSALM 116^11.—And this leads me to remark that all men are liars here—the English, *i.e.* some of them, as at home, if it is to their advantage; the natives, whether or no.[4]

MATTHEW 27^46.—I believe Miss Cobbe is right—in every Calvary there must be 'darkness over the face of all the land' for awhile.

Well, indeed, if we can always keep a firm grip of:

Only this, that He knoweth the way that I
tread,
And His banner of crimson is over my head.

And again:

This only for solace,—God knoweth indeed
Where the poverty galls,—of what things we
have need.[5]

MATTHEW 4^6.—'I took Colani from the shelf,' she says on one occasion, 'and read, "Cast *thyself*

[1] E. T. Campagnac, *Religion and Religious Teaching*, 25.

[2] *Life and Letters of John Paterson Struthers, M.A.*, 21.

[3] *Ibid.*, 63.

[4] *Ibid.*, 67.

[5] *The Life of Sophia Jex-Blake*, 243.

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[3] *Ibid.*, 63. [4] *Ibid.*, 67.
[5] *The Life of Sophia Jex-Blake*, 243.

down,—for the devil can suggest; compel can he never."'[1]

About 1 Timothy 5^{23}, with its suggestion that he should 'no longer be a water-drinker, but take a little wine for his stomach's sake and his frequent infirmities.' It is strange that a verse which palpably gives scriptural authority for total abstinence, except for medical purposes, should be so perversely misquoted to encourage 'moderate drinking'![2]

SOME RECENT POETRY.

Ernest Rhys.

The new volume which Mr. Rhys has issued and to which he has given the title of *The Leaf Burners* (Dent; 4s. 6d. net) will certainly widen the circle of his readers. For it has poems that are simple and true and touching. Read this on

The Home-Returned Soldier.

I saw a young soldier sitting alone,
Home from the wars; wounded, unhappy,
His face pale as paper above his red necktie,
Khaki coat, and blue breeches;—
Yawning and stretching at the gate of the gardens.

Should I halt at his seat, and ask him his news?
Should I sit down beside him upon the wet bench?
The mud made me doubt, and the edge of the wind;
And I nodded my head, with a nod non-committal,
Quickened my paces and hurried away.

Behind me, some footsteps and wheels told of nursemaids—
Three of them, wheeling so primly their nurslings,
Talking so mim, as one might to a mistress;
Maids automatic, each one an appendage
Of her square p'rambulator;
Stiff as pins, you might think—till they saw the young soldier.

Oh Ares! Great Scott! and Pythian Apollo
What a change there was then in the scene, and the soldier!
For the handmaids, all three, had halted their chariots;
And one laughed such a laugh, so joyous and noisy,
So jolly and rowdy and mistress-defying,
So rude and rebellious and baby-alarming,
That the cold dripping laurels thought it must be the herons
Were shrilling and clapping their wings by the pond.

Once again I looked back, at the shout of that laughter—
So unfitting the scene, the dark and sad landscape,
Chill trees and wet wind—and what did I see?
Two nursemaids were sitting, one each side the soldier,
And one stood before him, his cap on her head,
And his face had grown red, and his khaki was shaking
With amorous mirth as he rallied the nursemaids.

I wished, as I went, that their music was sweeter;
But Apollo on high forthright from the cloud
Shot shafts of delight, and shone, and reproach'd me,
'You did nothing for him, your home-returned soldier;
But went slinking off. They have warmed him with laughter,
They like his rum face, red tie and blue breeches,

And out of their heart's love have taken the strings,
And hung it about him—the joyousest garland
Ever made for a man in his sulking and moping;
And the heavens are pleased, for the gift that goes hot
And hot from the heart is good for a soldier;
And when you have had months of Krupp in the trenches,
You do not ask lutes in the hands of the Graces.'

[1] *The Life of Sophia Jex-Blake*, 483.

[2] E. A. Burroughs, *The Faith of Friends*, 63.

Many of the poems are engendered by the War, and enable us to see it in some of its less familiar phases.

Helen Cash.

The author of *The Dreamer and other Poems* (Palmer & Hayward; 3s. 6d. net) is in earnest and has ability enough to carry her earnestness into poetry. She is in earnest to make life better for others, not to find it easier for herself. She grudges the young and strong who have fallen because they might with youth and strength have done so much to make better this sorry scheme of things. She makes no terms with a man or a people that is not striving to make good. Listen to this patriotic outburst:

While there are weary feet and toilworn hands,
And lips too tired for laughter, eyes too sad
For tears, and hearts made wolfish by despair,
And misery that drives men almost mad:

While there are feet that creep before the dawn,
With brains enfeebled, bodies weak and starved,
And souls depraved by vile incestuous loves,
Young faces marred by lines that crime has carved:

While there is bestial bargaining for love,
And loathsome gutters where wan children play,
And rooms in which men breed like human lice,
And men who say the world was made that way—

While there are sunshine, woods, and flowering fields,
Sea shore, and brown wet rocks, and golden sand—
While there is one wan child face lacking these—
England, I scorn Thee, Thee my native land.

E. J. Thompson.

Mesopotamian Verses, by E. J. Thompson, M.C., C.F. (Kelly; 2s.), are hard to read. For every poem is an act of heroism, and the restraint of the poetry, the very fineness of it, makes the act the more heroic. The places that have become familiar to us along the Tigris are sepulchres of our own heroic dead. And nearly every poem is the memory of such a place. Yet there is now and then a sweet picture:

THE OLD EMBRASURE.

Where wind-waves had drifted
The waves of dust,
I found a thorn that lifted
Strong arms of trust
Against a gun-embrasure;
Green of leaf and bud,
With stars of azure
And berries of blood.

But the memory of the fallen is never far away, as in

THE WADI.

Wind that in the Wadi
Sett'st the scrub asighing,
In the Wadi, where the grouse are crying!
Like the souls of men
Homeward fleeting,
Through the wintry heavens the fowl their way are beating.

Stream that in the Wadi
Sett'st the grasses swaying,
In the Wadi, where the waves are playing!
Like the souls of men
Homeward going,
Down the racing stream the silvered waves are flowing.

You that saw men die,
Wind and Stream! Reply!
After all our pain
Does no trace remain,
But flying
Wings, and crying
Fowl, and weeds and water sighing?

Edward Thomas.

The *Last Poems* of Mr. Edward Thomas (Selwyn & Blount; 4s. 6d. net) are almost all poems of nature. Trees, winds, birds—especially birds, are ever returning. And the tone is pessimistic in spite of this intimacy. For the birds and the bushes suggest missed opportunities, lost ideals, unhopeful outlooks, and even a doubtful Providence. Yet it is all deeply interesting, sometimes absorbingly so, and very poetical. This is one of the darkest:

FEBRUARY AFTERNOON.

Men heard this roar of parleying starlings, saw,
A thousand years ago even as now,
Black rooks with white gulls following the plough
So that the first are last until a caw
Commands that last are first again,—a law
Which was of old when one, like me, dreamed how
A thousand years might dust lie on his brow
Yet thus would birds do between hedge and shaw.

Time swims before me, making as a day
A thousand years, while the broad ploughland oak
Roars mill-like and men strike and bear the stroke
Of war as ever, audacious or resigned,
And God still sits aloft in the array
That we have wrought him, stone-deaf and stone-blind.

Twelve Poets.

Messrs. Selwyn & Blount have issued a volume of selections from the most recent poetry of *Twelve Poets* of our day (5s. net). They are poets indeed, now recognized as poets even by the editors of up-to-date periodicals. They are Edward Thomas, W. H. Davies, Walter de la Mare, Vivian Locke Ellis, A. Hugh Fisher, Robin Flower, John Freeman, James Guthrie, Ruth Manning Sanders, J. C. Squire, Rowland Thirlmere, W. J. Turner. Quotation is needless. This by Mr. Robin Flower will serve to show how determined our poets are to 'find a gesture of their own':

THE DEAD.

They had forgotten that for which they died,
Ardours and angers, valiancy and pride,
The blows given for blows, the blood, the stench,
The grenade scattering death in the dripping trench,
The humming death and the droning death in the air
And the sad earth pitted and riven everywhere—
They had forgotten all; and now gathered together
Like flocks of birds fluttering in the serene weather
When the exhausted summer day draws to an end,
Enemy by enemy going as friend by friend,
Rejoicing and rioting there, truants from life,
Forgetting mistress and friend, children and wife,
Released from hate and love, mated or unmated,
Wondering at how they had loved, how they had hated,
Spirits alight and alert, circling and flying
Over death and life, being done with living and dying,
Being free of the flesh, glad runaways from that prison,
Eager for joy, avid of light, from slumber arisen;
So enemy going by enemy as friend by friend
In the level light of the quiet evening end
They flew and mounted and dwindled and so were gone,
And the night drew down and stars came one by one,
A wandering wind began to mutter and sigh,
And the earth lay lonely under a livid sky.

'D.'

All is well with 'D,' who sends out the small book of poetry called *The Celtic Tinker* (Heffer; 1s. 6d. net)—all is well, except the technical skill. And that is probably but a matter of revision. There are lines that could easily be made more poetical and phrases also. This sonnet shows what 'D' can do with care:

O hast thou known it? Known the restless, trite
And aching weariness of life subside
At last, and backward slowly, slowly slide,
Till peace enfold thee as a globe of light?
And now there breaks upon thy weary sight
A long line of white sands, where wavelets glide,
And silver silence in the air doth hide,
And brittle grasses, green as malachite
Without, and satin-ribbed with snow within,
Stand waist-deep in the sand, and little thin
Pink shells are lost in the still, shimmering white
Of earth and sea, all lapped in that pale light?
This is the borderland 'twixt God and thee,
The curving argent of eternity.

J. M. Courtney.

Captain Courtney has considerable skill in rhyme, but sometimes he attempts more than he can carry through. Once he attempts to write a sonnet of which every line shall end with one rhyme. The

rhyme is 'tears,' 'nears,' 'years,' etc., but before the fourteen lines are finished he has to use 'bears,' and prayers.' Nor is the poem on the Symbol of the Wooden Cross quite successful. This is the first stanza:

> There grew a Tree in leafy pride
> Whereon there hung One, crucified,
> There hung an One, Who dying cried
> A meed of Hope to the whole wide
> Of the world—Who crying died.

The best of his poetry is, after all, and with all his skill, in blank verse. Take this:

THE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD.

Humbly I stand before the Beauty of the World,
Bending my trancèd soul in wonder mute,
What time my aching tongue must cease
For very inability to speak
The passion-thoughts that throb and throb,
Making such burning pain in me,
To cry to all the peoples of the winds:
'Behold! The Presence of your God!
Unloose the sandals on your feet;
Fling wide your arms and cry out—"Hail!"'
So would I speak if I had words,
When humbly I stand before the Beauty of the World.
There is more Godhead and more holy Prayer
In the frail crimson of the sunset's veil
Or in the narrow grass-blades green
Than in St. Peter's mighty dome itself.
Wherefore I say—
'If you would see the Image of your God,
Humbly then stand before the Beauty of the World,
Bending your trancèd souls in wonder mute.
Pray that His Love may reach
Into your hearts through this mysterious way.
The Beauty of the World is God!'

The title of the volume is *As the Leaves Fall* (Macdonald; 3s. 6d. net).

Willoughby Weaving.

The poem quoted in the Notes of Recent Exposition, beginning

> I searched awhile the earth and skies,

is taken from Mr. Weaving's new volume entitled *Heard Melodies* (Blackwell; 6s. net). It might very well stand as an example of his poetry. For it has something of most of the merits of this true, graceful, sternly religious poet's work. But we shall quote another, saying as we do that this volume makes sure its author's place among the great poets of our time:

BEYOND RECALL.

One who had walked awhile with Death,
And knew what he accomplisheth,
Having, amid the stress and strife,
Found death as common as the day
And, close as night, had put away
The fallacy of life.

Where men fell thick, like sheaves beside
The shrewd machine that reaped and tied,
And life was left like stubble bare,
He could but see with inner sight
That life was but a thing how slight,
And death a thing how fair.

How empty seemed those husks of men
That ne'er would lift their hands again
Nor fill with thought those faces grim;
But Death was present with them, more
Than life had been, and closer bore
Them now in love to him.

He did not wish that they would rise
And move their silly hands and eyes:
He almost feared their bodies yet,
Lest they should claim their inmates fair,
And draw them struggling from the air,
And force them to forget.

The beauty of their bodies now,
That once he loved, he knew not how
Till Death had left it overthrown;
He envied lest it might entice
Their souls again from Paradise,
And snatch them from his own.

He watched while men with tender skill
Sought signs of life within them still,
Despairing at their hope; and when
They ceased and bound the hands and feet,
A joy and great compassion sweet
Filled up his soul again.

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