
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

In the Study.

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

The Fifth Sunday in Lent.

DETACHMENT AND ATTACHMENT.

'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'—Mt 6^{21}.

OUR treasure is that upon which our heart is set. In the broadest sense it is either the world or Christ. Is the world, or something that belongs to the world, our treasure? or is our treasure Christ, who said emphatically, 'I am not of the world'? If our treasure is Christ there is in our life a steady process of detachment from the world and attachment to Him.

1. DETACHMENT.—It is a serious thing to let any of the outward things of life become so essential to us that we say of them, 'I cannot do without it'; 'I must have it.' It is morally bad to be the slave of anything, even of things not bad in themselves; it is an encroachment on the absolute freedom which ought to belong to the perfect man; and it may pave the way for much more serious deflections. 'I cannot do without it' is what the drunkard says, or the sensualist, or the extravagant. There is a helplessness in the avowal which does not befit the servant of God. God wants hardy detached men for His service; and accordingly we find that He is always seeking to detach us from the world in the different separations which prevent us from clinging to places, occupations, or people, however dear they may have become to us; in failure itself, with its merciful discipline; in the Cross which He lays upon all our life and all our actions.

Let us learn, and learn at once, the lesson of detachment, that power of sitting loosely to the things of the world, refusing to be brought under the power of any of those good things with which God surrounds us. Take, as an example of this detachment, a man like S. Paul, whose life had been so abundantly stored with much that could make it prosperous and happy. He apparently had a home to which he could look back with affectionate regard, where he had been taught the great truth of Monotheism, and of God's fatherly care over Israel; where, like every other Jewish boy, he had learned a trade, and learned it successfully, so that with his own hands he could minister to his own necessities. He could look back to his education with piety untinged with regret; Gamaliel is a figure of reverence to him in his later years. He had much to be grateful for in the people who crossed his path at crises of his career, such as S. Stephen; or Ananias, the minister of his Baptism; or Barnabas, the surety of his sincerity; or the Apostles who had made up to him in some ways for the years in which he had missed a great opportunity. 'S. Paul the traveller' is a phrase which speaks to us of labour and missionary zeal, but it also speaks to us of the fascination of travel, its educating power, its wider outlook, and its richer store. He knew Tarsus and Antioch and Jerusalem; he knew Asia Minor and Greece and Rome. He had hopes of seeing Spain, perhaps of wider travels still. And yet he was ready at the call of God to give up all—to give up his convictions, and own himself in the wrong; to seem to be disloyal to the religion of Jerusalem, to the discipline of Rome, and the intellectual culture of his Greek training. He was ready to part with friends one by one, and linger on in a lonely, forsaken life until the end came. He had not, in the eyes of the world, improved his position by becoming a Christian. He had not added to his resources, nor made himself a comfortable home, or even answered to the expectations formed of him by becoming an Apostle. Christ asked for a higher price, and still a higher price for the position near to Him which the Apostle craved. At last He asked for his life, and that was willingly paid, as if the demand were nothing, so eager was he to win Christ.[1]

2. ATTACHMENT.—'Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?' So says the soul sometimes counting the cost of its detachment, and still smarting with the severance. But this cry is soon lost in the joyful acclamation of complete satisfaction, which comes to it when it has found its attachment in God. 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' So it will be with all loss, with all detachments; they are but the preliminary to a higher gain, to a real and lasting attachment. So it is with loss of friends. So Cardinal Newman speaks of St. John lingering on in his old age, sending on his friends one by one, like a man who sends gradually and piecemeal his furniture before him, until his present house is well-nigh unfurnished; but gradually and thereby finding the attachment to heaven more real and more firm. Where his treasure is, there his heart is also.

To be attached to Christ is not to lose touch with life. It is to find life vastly enriched. It is melancholy to consider how much we lose, even in this world, of pleasure, profit, and joy, which might belong to us. Sometimes the botanist shames our ignorance by treasures unknown to us, which he has found in our hedgerows. The historian has convinced

[1] W. C. E. Newbolt, *Apostles of the Lord*, 198.

us of our dulness by the moving pageant out of the past, which he conjures up in the familiar streets and lanes of our life. The archæologist shows us how poor our daily life is in comparison with the fuller life of those who know the wealth of interest which is stored up around them. The musician, the artist, the man of science, all live in a fuller and richer world than other people, as regards their own particular art and science. In like manner we shall find that we are losers in a rich world, if we fail in searching out and touching the spiritual wealth which is stored up in our daily life.[1]

My scattered life I pour
Towards Thee; but the volume is so slight,
'Twill sink among Time's sands, to rise no more,
Unless Thyself, from fulhead of Thy might,
With depth of marching waters dost fulfil
And my bare shelves and gaping channels swill,
That, though I find Thee not, yet, found of Thee,
My waves may fall to Thine abounding sea.[2]

Sunday before Easter.

ESCAPE FROM TROUBLE.

'Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?'—Jn 12^{27}.

There are three ways of escape open to every man, and these were open to Christ.

1. There is the *backward* escape—the way of retreat. This was at least present to Christ's thought.

It has been supposed by many that these Greeks who desired to see Jesus came to Him, moved by solicitude for His safety, to propose to Him the abandonment of His ministry amongst the stiff-necked and hostile Jews, and His retirement with them to some foreign court, where He would be honourably welcomed, where He would be surrounded by men of more open and reasonable mind, and where He would find a much more favourable field for His propaganda than amongst His prejudiced and narrow-minded countrymen. It is a tradition that goes as far back as the time of Origen, that they came as emissaries from the King of Edessa, to offer Jesus an asylum in his kingdom. They may have come on some such errand, and the painful struggle that arose in the mind of Jesus may be thus accounted for. If He remained in Judæa to carry on His ministry under existing conditions, He must be prepared to brave the worst. If He turned to the Gentiles He might find 'a wide and effectual door' opened to Him. Should He? *Could* He?

[1] W. C. E. Newbolt, *Apostles of the Lord*, 203.
[2] E. J. Thompson, *Waltham Thickets*, 44.

There was the path of what had seemed duty, so steep, so painful, so perilous. Might not the end be reached by some easier, though more circuitous, way? He wanted to save men. He had thought that there was no way of saving them, except the way of the cross, and now these Greeks suggested another possible way. It is the same struggle that He had in the temptation in the Wilderness, again on the Mount of Transfiguration, and finally in the Garden of Gethsemane. He shrank from the toil and the pain. Does not even the bravest nature shrink from the sharp edge of the cold steel? Would not even the stoutest nerves flinch from the hissing contact of the red-hot branding-iron?

Yes—He shrank. But for a moment, however, as under some sudden shock you have seen the compass-needle quiver and diverge from its pole, only an instant afterwards to fall back into the line of its true magnetic direction. In Jesus we see a passing repulsion, a momentary shudder and struggle; but the soul soon recovers its true polarity. His resolve swings round and trembles back to its final equipoise, its line of rest, as leal to duty as is the needle, despite its momentary aberrations, to the trend of the polar current.

The *first* mode of retreat, then, was not for *Him*. It could not be backwards. Whatever else He did, He would not run away.

For years after his wife's death Dr. McLaren had a struggle with himself. Four years after he wrote in his diary: 'I passed Woodlea this morning (the house in which Mrs. McLaren died). Every yard of that road has memories for me—the happy Sunday mornings when we walked home together, times when I met her coming back from a Dorcas as I was going down to service and saw how wearily she was toiling along, and how her face brightened as she saw me though she was a long way down. One such time is often present to me—the happy glad look, the quickened step, the rest in both our hearts—it all stands before me far clearer than what we call the present, and I can see the evening light in the sky, and can hear the thrushes that were singing. And now I was walking down the road alone in a snow-storm and strange faces looking out of Woodlea. It is a bitter cup, and sometimes I cannot say, "Shall I not drink it?" If it could be emptied at a draught, but this slow trickling drop by drop every day and all day is hard to accept.'[3]

2. The second line of retreat is *upward*. 'Father,' He says. His heart obeys its instinct and turns heavenwards. He looks up. The way *out* is the way *up*.

[3] *Dr. McLaren of Manchester*, 124.

Still the struggle is not ended. He is 'distracted between two feelings; the innocent feeling, the natural craving after life; and the higher feeling which desired to embrace the will of God.' He has resolved to turn to the Father. That was His instinctive and inevitable resource. All His struggles articulated themselves into prayers, as does this. *But even recourse to heaven may be only another form of cowardice.* Is it not true that many of our prayers are simply whining appeals to heaven to get us out of our difficulties, and not solicitations that we may be able manfully to confront them?

Some have repudiated the idea that the 'strong Son of God' could have prayed to be saved from His agony. But did He not so pray in the Garden of Gethsemane? Did He not then, 'with strong crying and tears,' plead that, 'were it possible the cup might pass from Him?' Indeed, putting this interpretation upon the words, this scene might be regarded as an anticipatory parallel to Gethsemane. There is the same confession of inward suffering. There is the same prayer for exemption, followed by the same avowal of implicit submission. There is a close parallelism between the 'Now is my soul troubled' of the one occasion, and 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful' of the other; between 'Father, save me from this hour,' and 'Let this cup pass from me'; and also between 'Father, glorify thy name,' and 'Not my will but thine be done.'

Are we to take Christ's prayer as a sign of the deepening of the struggle, or of the emergence of a courageous faith? That depends on how we read the prayer. There are two ways of reading it, and it is a pity we do not know which is the correct one. We may read the phrase, 'Father, save me from this hour,' either as a definite petition, or as a continuation of the question. The Revised Version gives it in the form of a petition in the *text*, and as a continuation of the question in the *margin*. We may read either, 'And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour'; or, 'What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? Nay, for the sake of this very struggle have I been brought to this hour.' In the one case it is the cry wrung from the weakness of human flesh and blood. In the other, it is the note of triumph over all such weakness, and brave acceptance of the conflict and its issue. Unfortunately we cannot tell which is the correct version. There are no notes of interrogation in the Greek, and we are left to conjecture as to whether the words fell from Christ's lips in the interrogative form or not.[1]

3. And so we are led finally to that which is the true retreat for all of us, viz. the *inward* retreat. Not the backward retreat, that is for cowards only; not the upward retreat alone, for that may be cowardly too; but the *inward* retreat *through* the upward, and as the consequence of its helpful baptisms. 'For this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name.' There you have the highest note, the note of victory over self.

When we can lose our wills in the Infinite Will, that way release comes. When we can *accept* our mission along with its crucifixions, because it is ours to help humanity, and for us there is no other way, then do we enter into the very secret of Christ's own victory. When persecution and suffering and death are once seen as *duty*, then the true heart knows that it has no alternative, and at once braces itself for the issue. The angel that 'came from heaven to strengthen' Jesus in the garden was the Angel of Duty. This is the angel that must strengthen us all for our life-ministry, whatever it be. The conviction that we are in our allotted place, fulfilling our appointed mission, the mission that is uniquely our own, is the consideration that must inspire us to bear all pain, and overbear all opposition.

It is singular, perhaps, that we do not find the *word* duty ever falling from Christ's lips. But it was none the less His life-motto, the atmosphere in which He lived. And His sufficient answer to the perplexities of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus was given in the words, '*Ought* not the Christ to have suffered these things?' If we would be true followers of Jesus we must come under the power of this inspiration.[2]

What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel?
—Being—Who?
One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.[3]

Easter Day.

VICTORY.

'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ'—1 Cor 15^{57}.

The victory of Christ is complete, beneficent, and unchanging.

[1] J. Halsey, *The Beauty of the Lord*, 125.

[2] J. Halsey, *The Beauty of the Lord*, 129.

[3] Browning.

1. It is complete. He vanquished in His own person by dying and rising again from the dead, that indestructible energy which was always manifest just when it seemed to be overthrown. At the commencement of Christianity, would not any one have thought that a breath would annihilate it and exterminate the name of its founder for ever? And there they were—Cæsar on the throne, Herod on the bench, Pilate in the judgment hall, Caiaphas in the temple, priests and soldiers, Jews and Romans—all united together to crush the Galilean; and the Galilean overcame. And so it has been in all ages until now. Persecution has lifted up her head against the truth; war-wolves have lapped up the blood of God's saints, and for a time silenced the witness of confessors; and the testimony of the faithful has gone upward amid the crackling of fagots, and the ascending flame has been the chariot of fire in which rising Elijahs have mounted to heaven.

And the completeness of this triumph is manifested not merely in the aggregate, but in the individual. Not only is every man brought into a salvable state, but every part of every man is redeemed. The poor body is not forgotten; it is taught to cast off the grave-clothes and anticipate an everlasting residence in heaven. The mind crouches no longer; it emancipates itself from its vassalage, and stands erect in the liberty wherewith Christ made it free; and the whole man—who was a while ago an alien, degraded and desolate, a fitting companion of the beast in his lair, a worthy follower in the serpent's trail—is now 'clothed and in his right mind,' careering along in the enterprises of godliness, a fellow-citizen with saints, and of the household of God.

The longer I live, the more clearly I see how all souls are in His hand—the mean and the great. Fallen on the earth in their baseness, or fading as the mist of morning in their goodness;—still in the hand of the potter as the clay, and in the temple of their master as the cloud. It was not the mere bodily death that He conquered—that death had no sting. It was this spiritual death which He conquered, so that at last it should be swallowed up—mark the word—not in life; but in victory. As the dead body shall be raised to life, so also the defeated soul to victory, if only it has been fighting on its Master's side, has made no covenant with death; nor itself bowed its forehead for his seal. Blind from the prison-house, maimed from the battle, or mad from the tombs, their souls shall surely yet sit, astonished, at His feet Who giveth peace.[1]

[1] Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. xii.

2. The victory is beneficent. It is not as the great victories that are celebrated in history—Flodden, Agincourt, Waterloo. One verse of the poet aptly describes them all:

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife;
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend,—foe,—in one red burial blent!

But what is to be seen in the time of the Lord's victory? Plains covered with traces of recent carnage, of recent havoc? What is there to be heard in the time of the Lord's victory? Orphans wailing the dead; widows bemoaning those that have departed? No, but a voice breathing down a comfortable word to men—'They shall neither hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.' The procession of this Conqueror consists of saved souls, and eternity shall consecrate the scene.

The burial of Christ was thought by His enemies to be the end; but in truth this was the very way to the glory of Christ. He Himself had said, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' Christ's burial in the grave was but the necessary way to His final and glorious victory.[2]

Death and darkness get you packing,
Nothing now to man is lacking;
All your triumphs now are ended,
And what Adam marr'd is mended;
Graves are beds now for the weary,
Death a nap, to wake more merry;
Youth now, full of pious duty,
Seeks in Thee for perfect beauty;
The weak and aged, tir'd with length
Of days, from Thee look for new strength;
And infants with Thy pangs contest
As pleasant as if with the breast.
Then unto Him, who thus hath thrown
Even to contempt Thy kingdom down,
And by His blood did us advance
Unto His own inheritance;
To Him be glory, power, praise,
From this unto the last of days.[3]

[2] J. R. Miller.
[3] Henry Vaughan, 'Easter Hymn.'

3. And then Christ's victory is for all time. His triumphs brighten with the lapse of time; their lustre time can tarnish not, nor death itself destroy. Think of the multitudes that have been already saved; think of the multitudes who went up in the early ages of the Church, with its enrichments of blessings; think of those, from the time of the Saviour's incarnation until now, who have passed through death triumphant home; think of the multitudes now upon earth, that are working out their salvation with fear and trembling.[1]

O Love! which lightens all distress,
Love, death cannot destroy:
O Grave! whose very emptiness
To Faith is full of joy;
Let but that Love our hearts supply
From Heaven's exhaustless Spring,
Then, Grave, where is thy victory?
And, Death, where is thy sting?[2]

First Sunday after Easter.

My Lord.

'My Lord.'—Jn 20^{28}.

What faculties are needed in an act of faith? What powers must a man use who says with all his heart of an unseen Jesus, 'He is my Lord and Master'? In an act of faith, by which you or I trust ourselves to the keeping and make ourselves the servants of Christ, there must meet three faculties, or else the act cannot be done: the power of dealing with the unseen, the power of personal loyalty and trust, the power of a hopeful sense of need. Those three great powers in their aggregate meet in the man who is Christ's servant.

1. First of all there is the power of dealing with the unseen at all. You know your friend by the seeing of the eye; all the distinct intercourses of the senses introduce your life to his; and then your friend goes away from you, out of your sight, to China or Peru; and as your power of friendship reaches out to follow him, as the thought of him takes the place of the sight of him, as association, and memory, and hope, and imagination come out at your need to bind your life with his—is not your friendship growing greater with the new faculties it requires, has not your love for your unseen friend become a nobler exercise than any delight in his visible presence possibly could be? That is an instance and illustration of the glories of the faculty in man by which he has to do with things which he cannot see. And when the unseen one is Christ, a being whom the man never has seen, whom yet he is compelled to realize, not as an idea, but as a living person capable of being loved, and trusted, and obeyed, there surely is a noble demand there for one of the loftiest of human faculties; and the loftiness of the faculty which must be used in doing it bears testimony to the loftiness of the act which the man does who says of the unseen Jesus Christ, 'He is my Lord.'

2. Another of the faculties which is involved in faith, and whose necessity is a sign that a true act of faith is one of the completest acts which man can do, is the faculty of personal admiration and trust. In its fullest exercise faith is personal. We speak indeed of faith in principles, and that is a noble and ennobling thing; but the fullest trust comes with the perception of trustworthy character, and the entire reliance of one nature on another. The poetry and beauty and richness of a boy's life lie in his power of admiration for, and trust in, something greater than himself. If you fathers make your homes what they ought to be, the boys will find the object of that admiration and trust in you. If you will not let them find it there, they will find it somewhere else. Somewhere they will surely find it. And in their admiration and in their trust, the out-reaching and uplifting of their life will come. What does it mean when men as they grow older become narrow, sordid, and machine-like, when a vulgar self-content comes over them, and all the limitations of a finished life that hopes for and expects no more than what it is makes the sad picture which we see in hosts of men's middle life? Is it not certainly that those men have ceased to admire and ceased to trust? The objects of their childhood's trust and admiration they have outgrown, and like young scholars who imagine that the story-books of infancy are the only books in the world, and so, when those books cease to interest the maturing mind, lay by their power of reading as if there were no further use for it, so these men, when they can no longer admire and trust their fellow-men completely, as they used to do when they were boys, think that the faculty of perfect trust and admiration has no further use. The blight that falls upon their admiring and trusting natures is the token of what a lofty and life-giving faculty it is which they have put out of use. It was this faculty which made them at every moment greater than themselves, which kept them

[1] W. M. Punshon, *Sermons*.
[2] J. S. B. Monsell, 'Easter Day.'

in communion with the riches of a higher life, which preserved all the enthusiasm of active energy, and yet preserved humility which held all the other faculties to their best work. This is the faculty whose disuse makes the mature life of so many men barren and dreary, and whose regeneration, when the man is lifted up into the new admiration and the new trust, the admiration for and trust in God, makes a large part of the glory of the full-grown life of faith.

3. One other quality which must be in the man who sends his faith out into the unseen and fastens it in trust and admiration on a Divine Person is a hopeful sense of need—not only a sense of need, for that, if it be not hopeful, may merely grovel and despair—but a sense of personal deficiency, filled and lighted up all through and through with the conviction that somewhere in the world, in some place not desperately beyond its reach, there lies, waiting for its finding, the strength and the supply that it requires. This is the faculty in which has lain the coiled mainspring of all human progress. Barbarism, filled with the hopeful sense of need, has pressed onward and onward into civilization. Ignorance, hopefully knowing its need, has scaled the heavens and fathomed the seas and cleft the rocks for knowledge. Man, in all ages, has struggled and achieved, has wrestled with his present condition and laid his daring hand on higher things, under the power of this faculty in which were met the power of his clear perception of his deficiencies and his deep conviction that his deficiencies might be supplied. This faculty of hopeful neediness must wake and live, before a man can with true faith call Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, his Lord.[1]

All that awakens a sense of need within us, draws us by so much nearer Christ, no spiritual truth being our own until we have needed it.[2]

Virginibus Puerisque.

I.

APRIL.

Them that are Asleep.

'We would not have you ignorant concerning them that are asleep.'—1 Th 4^{13}.

Spring is a time of joy. You like it, for then the world is full of young things. There are young buds, young blossoms, tadpoles, birds in their nests, and young lambs. It is the time of making things new again. There is joy all round, especially among boys and girls. You cannot help feeling happy on a fine April day. Can you?

A frisky lamb
And a frisky child
Playing their pranks
In a cowslip meadow:
The sky all blue
And the air all mild
And the fields all sun
And the lanes half shadow.

Spring is a time of new beginnings, hopes and promises, for all the world seems to have grown young.

It is at this happy season that Easter comes. The resurrection of Nature and the resurrection of Jesus Christ seem to belong to each other. Occasionally we have Easter Sunday in the end of March. This year it has come in April. From Sunday to Sunday during the year you have heard sermons preached about Jesus Christ dying for you: to-day the preacher's theme is how He conquered death.

Easter Sunday gets its name from the Saxon *Oster*, meaning 'to rise.' But there is a story that the name is taken from an ancient pagan goddess called Eostre. It is interesting to know that the people who worshipped this goddess held their festival in honour of her just about the time of the year when Christ's resurrection is celebrated. They rejoiced in the coming to life again of things that had died down during the winter.

I do not believe there is a boy or girl here who has not been made sad because some one they loved has passed out of sight. But the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives death quite a new meaning. There is a beautiful little play in which a weird old man—a sort of 'Lob-lie-by-the-fire'—invites a party of guests to his house for midsummer night's eve. They are ordinary people, some of them living erring lives, and others who, though quite harmless, do little good to those about them. They are all under the impression that, given certain circumstances, they might have made more of their lives. Lob induces them to go out into an enchanted wood on that lovely summer night. It is the wood of the second chance, and there we see them doing no better, no

[1] Phillips Brooks, *The Mystery of Iniquity*.
[2] D. Greenwell, *The Patience of Hope*, 76.

worse, they are just their old blundering and erring selves.

It would be a poor story if we had nothing better to report about the life that comes after death. We believe that it is a life of higher service. During the early part of the war a very noble subaltern, just before going 'over the top,' knelt down for a few seconds with his men. He told them what was before them: 'If wounded, "Blighty"; if killed, the Resurrection.' When he was last seen alive he was rallying his men. Writing to a friend afterwards, his sister said, 'I like to think of Donald having a word of greeting for me when I go over the top.' She felt sure he was safe. A little girl was walking with her father through a village cemetery when, pointing to the graves, she asked wonderingly, 'What are these for?' The father found it difficult to give an answer, but he said, 'They belong to the people who have gone to heaven.' 'To the angels?' 'Yes.' 'Ah!' said the little girl, 'that is where they have left their clothes.'

So Easter Sunday should be a day of joy. We can thank God for the renewal of the trees, and the flowers, and the song of the birds, and think of it all as an expression of the same love that gave us Jesus Christ.

There is an old community of Monks who live in complete silence. They make one exception, however. When they pass one another, they are allowed to say, *Memento Mori*—Remember Death. The Russians have a better saying. On Easter morning one exclaims, 'The Lord is risen!' Another answers with uncovered head, 'The Lord is risen indeed.' Boys and girls, if you do not greet each other with words like these, you can go home sure of the truth of them. Those who have gone before and have trusted themselves to Jesus Christ are safe, and so may you be.

II.

Robin Redbreast.

'I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.'—Gal 6^{17} (A.V.).

I wonder if you know the story of how our dear old friend Mr. Robin got his red breast? To a great many people a robin suggests the autumn, when he comes to cheer us up with his quaint little piping song. And to a great many other people he suggests the winter-time when he comes to pick the crumbs off our window-sills. But when I see a robin with his bright scarlet breast I think of Eastertide. Shall I tell you why?

It is said that when Jesus was climbing the steep ascent of Calvary with the crown of thorns on His head He fell down under the weight of His cross. A little robin sat warbling on a tree near by, and when it saw the cruel crown piercing the Saviour's brow it flew to His side and tried to pluck even one thorn away. But the sharp spike pierced its dear little breast and stained it crimson, and from that day till this the robin has worn on its breast the marks of the wound that it bore for Jesus' sake.

Of course this is just a legend, but although it is only a story it carries a very beautiful and true meaning. St. Paul once wrote a letter to some friends in a place called Galatia, and he told them that he bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Now I wonder what Paul meant when he said that? Well, I fancy he was thinking of all the sufferings that he had endured for Jesus' sake and that marked him as Jesus' own. Like the robin, he had shared in Christ's sufferings and he bore the marks of them, and these marks were the signs that he belonged to Jesus. They were Christ's special badge. In one of his letters to the Corinthians he gives us a long list of these sufferings. He had been beaten many times; he had been stoned; he had been in perils by land and sea; he had been in danger from his own countrymen, from the heathen, from robbers; often he had been hungry, and cold, and weary, and sick.

Some of you may have seen a flock of sheep with blue or red marks on their backs to show their ownership, and you know that cattle very often have marks burned on their horns for the same purpose. Now in Paul's day the masters used to brand a special mark on runaway slaves, so that they might be known again. And sometimes men burned on their bodies the name or special sign of the heathen god to whom they had devoted themselves.

Paul says that the marks that his sufferings had left on his body were the special signs whereby he might be recognized as a disciple of Christ. They were the marks by which Jesus knew him, and they were the marks by which other people knew he belonged to Jesus.

Now if we are going to be true followers of

Christ, we also shall have to bear marks that hurt. We may not have to suffer the things Paul had to suffer, but if we want to be faithful disciples and of real use to our Master, our discipleship is sure to cost us a great deal of trouble and perhaps some pain. But you know that is true of anything that is worth doing. If you want to be a good scholar you must work very hard and take a great deal of pains to learn. If you want to be a good musician you must go through a lot of disagreeable drudgery. If you want to be a good cricketer you must practise very hard and play many a losing game. And if we want to be good followers of Christ we shall have to take a great deal of trouble and perhaps suffer many rebuffs and discouragements.

What are a few of the marks we must bear for Jesus?

1. Well, first, there is the mark of *self-discipline.* And that is a mark that often hurts very much. Some of us will have to try to get the better of our temper; we shall have to check the angry word that rises, and swallow the bitter retort though it almost chokes us. And some of us will have to conquer selfishness and laziness, and *make* our feet run on other people's errands though they almost refuse to go. And some of us will have to learn to give up to others; and some of us will have to struggle with envy and spite and jealousy.

2. Another mark of Jesus we may have to bear is *reproach.* Sometimes we may have to stand up for the right and take the consequences, no matter how much it hurts or how much other people laugh at us. Now there is no more detestable person than the boy or girl who is always putting other people right, and please don't run away with the idea that I want you all to be prigs; but there comes a time to most of us when we have to play either the man or the coward, and when that time comes I hope you will stand up for your Master and bear His marks however much they hurt.

3. Yet another mark we have to bear for Jesus' sake is the mark of *other people's burdens.* He came down to earth to bear burdens—the burdens of sin and sorrow and death—and when you are helping to bear burdens you are doing the most Christlike work. So every time that you make a sad person glad, or help a weary person to be a little less tired, every time you make the way a little easier for some one in a difficulty, you are bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Now perhaps you will think this is a very sad sermon, but I want you to remember two things. First, the marks of Jesus are soldier's wounds, and they are not things that should make us sad; they are things that should make us proud and glad. Do you think a soldier is sad about the marks of the wounds he gets in battle? I fancy he is generally very proud of them. And I think that when our day of battle is over and our Captain calls us home we shall be very much ashamed to meet Him face to face if we don't bear some of His marks.

And secondly, the marks of Jesus make us beautiful. The robin would scarcely be worth looking at if it were not for his red breast, and we have no real beauty unless we bear Christ's marks. The marks of temper, and selfishness, and pride, and envy, and meanness spoil our faces and put ugly stains on our character, but the marks of Jesus adorn us with a beauty that will never spoil and that will endure for ever.

III.

'A diamond.'—Jer 17^1.

April has as its stone the diamond. Everybody knows a diamond. It is the most brilliant of precious stones. And yet it is only a variety of what is known as carbon. The black stuff (wrongly called lead) which forms the point of your pencil and the shiny lumps of coal which burn in the grate are made of the same substance. They are the diamond's first cousins. More remarkable still, a diamond, by means of great heat or electricity, can be turned into a black mass like coal dust, and coal dust, most wonderful of all, can actually be turned into small diamonds — very small, it is true, but still diamonds. Some day we may learn how to make diamonds as large and as cheap as cocoa-nuts, and then everybody who wishes can have one.

But though men of science have succeeded in making diamonds, they have not discovered how the diamond makes itself. That remains a mystery. The diamond is found in river-beds, sand, and gravel, in India, Brazil, and Borneo; but in the great diamond-mining country—South Africa—it is found in what is known as 'blue ground.' This greenish-blue earth is met with in deep craters known as 'pipes.' But instead of being hollow the pipes are packed with hard blue earth. Some men say that it was volcanic action

that made the diamonds in the blue ground, but nobody is quite sure. All that is certain is that the diamonds are embedded there, each a separate crystal, some large, some medium-sized, many very tiny, but all costly and precious in the sight of man.

How did the diamond get its name? Diamond is really the same word as 'adamant,' and 'adamant' means 'that which cannot be tamed or broken.' It is a good name for a stone which is the hardest thing in the world. The diamond is so hard that it can cut steel, glass, or precious stones. The painter uses it to cut the panes for our windows, and the dentist uses it for one of his delightful drills.

There are many famous diamonds in existence. All the large ones have names, and their history is known like the history of the kings or great men who have owned them. Perhaps the two most famous are the Koh-i-noor and the Cullinan.

The Koh-i-noor, or 'mountain of light,' belonged to the ancient rulers of India, the Moguls. A Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, conquered Hindustan, and took away as part of the spoil this glittering gem. But he did not keep it for very long. He was killed shortly after, and his treasurer, an Afghan, carried it back to Cabul, where he made himself Emperor. It passed from one prince to another, and it almost seemed as if the sovereignty of India went with it. In 1850 it fell into the hands of the East India Company, who presented it to Queen Victoria. It now flashes in the crown of the Queens of England. Long may it rest there!

The other great diamond, three times as large as any other diamond, the Cullinan, was found in the Premier Mine in the Transvaal in 1905. At the suggestion of General Botha the Transvaal presented it to King Edward in gratitude for his having granted self-government to that State. It was cut into nine large stones and many small ones. The two largest are the biggest diamonds known. Of these the smaller is set in front of the British Crown. The Cullinan, you see, has a short history, but a happy one.

Now, what has the diamond to say to us? You will notice it is valued because it cuts, but it is prized most because it shines. It catches the light and breaks it up into all the colours of the rainbow, and flashes it back to us glorified and magnified. So I think the diamond's message is this—'Shine.'

When I say 'shine' I don't mean that I want you to try to be one of the brilliant people in the world—one of those who are always making clever sparkling remarks, or writing wonderful books, or doing great things in business. Brilliant people of that type are few, and not many of us can aspire to shine in that way.

No, there is another, and to my mind a better, way to shine, and we can all try it. It is a very simple way. We have merely to be happy. Perhaps some people will say, 'That may sound simple, but it isn't simple when you come to try it.' Now these people are wrong. It is perfectly simple if you only follow the directions I am going to give you.

There was once an old Spaniard who was very fond of cherries. He was so fond of them that when he sat down to eat them he put on a pair of magnifying spectacles which made them look twice as big. That sounds greedy, but his idea was not at all a bad one, and I think we might imitate it.

Let us keep two sets of imaginary spectacles, one pair to make things twice their size, and the other to make things half their size. Let us put on the first pair to look at all the joys and pleasures in life, and let us keep the second pair to look at all the troubles and the worries.

Or, to put it another way, like the diamond let us catch and reflect all the sunbeams that are going. When you were very tiny I expect you often tried to catch a sunbeam with your fat little hands and failed. But the diamond's way of catching them is the only way.

If we always try to look at the bright side of things and catch all the sunbeams, do you know what will happen? Why, our faces will shine with the happiness we have caught. And a happy shining face is ten times more to be desired than a face with merely beautiful features. The loveliest face is ugly with a frown or a cross expression, and the plainest face is beautiful if love and happiness shine out of its eyes.

Shall I give you a reason why we should shine? We should shine because Christ expects us to do so. It is our duty as His children. He is our great Sun and we are His diamonds. He pours on us the sunshine of His love. He cares for us each one, and we know that He will not let anything harm us. And we love Him in return, and, knowing all is well, flash back His sunshine and take as our motto—'I shine for Christ.'