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Entre Nous.

SOME TOPICS.

A Clean Fighter and a Tiger Beetle.

Two Soldier Brothers is the title given to a short biography of Lieut. Walter Bertram Wood, M.C., and Sec.-Lieut. Edwin Leonard Wood (Jarrolds). The writer of the biography is Mr. John Bygott, M.A., B.Sc. 'Bert' belonged to the Royal Flying Corps and seems to have been eclipsed only by Captain Ball in the marvel of his exploits in the air. It may be questioned if he was eclipsed, for he was barely three months in the fighting line and he was victorious in thirty-six air battles. Certainly even Captain Ball showed no more eagerness in attacking superiority in numbers and no more skill in the management of his machine. He was as clean a fighter as Ball.

'Ted' belonged to the First Royal Scots Fusiliers. No such exploits can be told of him as of his brother. But he was a naturalist, and a good many pages of the book are occupied with his observations. A most interesting story is related by himself of a long-eared owl which he caught young and taught to love him (there is no other word that will fit), though, strange to say, love of him meant hate of all his friends. To show how closely he could observe we may quote this short paragraph on a tiger beetle. 'This morning we watched a tiger beetle on the flower head of a water parsnip: its antics were quaint. Its head was quite lively, constantly being raised and twisted, seemingly "sniffling" around, antennæ waving. A starling which flew directly over us was appreciated — the swiftly passing shadow brought forth a distinct start on the part of the insect, whether seen or "felt" by the antennæ I do not know.'

The Spoiler.

There is an inexplicable charm in all Dr. W. Warde Fowler's work. In his latest volume he gives the story of *The Death of Turnus* from the twelfth book of the Aeneid (Blackwell; 6s. net), and then comments upon it. It is a fine story to read, even when picked out from its context. But Dr. Warde Fowler's own observations are the surprise of the volume. Even when they turn upon a textual emendation or some nicety of translation they hold the interest. But sometimes they deal with great principles of religion and morality. Perhaps the end of the incident, as Virgil tells it, carries the finest lesson. This is Dr. Warde Fowler's comment on it.

'Turnus had seized on the beautiful belt of his young and noble victim [Pallas], and with the rude egoism of a savage warrior was wearing it himself. Such a thing as this Aeneas could not have done, as Virgil conceived him and as we know him; and in this fatal moment his eye catches the ill-omened spoil, his wavering will becomes fixed, and the death of the spoiler is certain. In Aeneas the motive is partly that of revenge for a cruel and ungenerous deed, partly too, perhaps, indignation at the breach of an ancient rule of honourable warfare; but above all it is the memory of the sacred relation in which he himself had stood to Pallas and his father Evander, the beautiful old Italian relation of *hospitium*, and the memory, too, of his love for the lad entrusted to his care, of his bitter grief for his death, and of his own feeling as a son and as a father. Thus all that was best in the pure and wholesome Italian tradition of family life and social relationship is placed at this last moment of the story in contrast with the wantonness of individual triumph. The ethical idea is here, focused in a single object and a single act, and illuminated by a sudden lightning-flash of poetic feeling. To spare Turnus would have been the betrayal of the mission of Aeneas in Italy.'

War and the Struggle for Existence.

With the League of Nations well on the way we are not yet out of the wood. There are men in every country who will oppose its operation with all their might, because the purpose of it is to end all war, and they do not believe that war can ever be ended. One of the arguments which they use is that war is simply a form of the struggle for existence, and the struggle for existence is essential to human nature and human progress. Bernhardi, for instance, in his book on *Germany and the Next War*, says: 'War is a biological necessity of

the first importance. The struggle for existence is, in the life of Nature, the basis of all healthy development. . . . The law of the stronger holds good everywhere. Those forms survive which are able to procure themselves the most favourable conditions of life and to assert themselves in the universal economy of Nature. The weaker succumb.'

Do biologists accept this argument? They do not. The case against it is set forth clearly and unanswerably by Mr. Ernest Ewart Unwin in his book entitled *As a Man Thinketh* (Allen & Unwin; 2s. 6d. net). He refers to Professor Arthur Thomson of Aberdeen, Professor Ray Lankester, and others, and he quotes from Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, Secretary of the Zoological Society, who says: 'If you go up and down the whole animal kingdom it is practically impossible to find any case which bears out or agrees in any way with the theory that war is an example of the struggle for existence. I could quote a thousand instances from the animal kingdom in which the struggle for existence seems to be the advance of the peaceful arts, the advancement of co-operation, and the heightening of the emotion of love and pity.'

A Nicety in New Testament Greek.

A feature of New Testament Greek unaccountably neglected by the grammarians is the use of qualitative nouns. A noun without the article has usually been looked upon as indefinite, and translated accordingly. But it is not always indefinite; it may be qualitative. That is to say, it may be equivalent to an adjective. Thus in Ro 3^5, 'But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God, what shall we say?' Here the Greek words for 'righteousness' and 'God' are both anarthrous. But they are not indefinite. It is clearly not any righteousness and not any God. You cannot use the indefinite article with either word. The unrighteousness of men is set in contrast with the divine righteousness.

The grammarians have not all missed this nicety. Professor Hope Moulton, for example, in his Prolegomena says: 'For exegesis there are few of the finer points of Greek which need more constant attention than this omission of the article when the writer would lay stress on the quality or character of the object. Even the Revised Version misses this badly sometimes, as in John 6^{68}.'

The whole subject has been worked up with admirable thoroughness as far as Paul is concerned by Arthur Wakefield Slaten, Ph.D., and the volume has been published at the University of Chicago Press as one of their Historical and Linguistic Studies in Literature related to the New Testament. The title is *Qualitative Nouns in the Pauline Epistles and their Translation in the Revised Version* (London: Milford). Dr. Slaten gives a complete list of the qualitative nouns in St. Paul and their occurrences, and then he treats some of them separately and in detail. He points out that in Ro 8^{24} 'a concurrence of the generic, the indefinite, and the qualitative uses of "hope" is found: "For we are saved by hope; but hope which is seen is not hope." Here the first "hope" is generic, the second indefinite, and the third qualitative. The writer's thought is that a hope once realized ceases to have the character of hope but takes on that of experience.'

A Market Cross.

What have we to do with Guide Books? We have to do with everything that makes for righteousness. And it is wonderful what even the author of a sixpenny Guide Book can do for righteousness if he has the root of the matter in him. The author of this Guide Book is Mr. G. M. Fraser, Librarian of the Public Library in Aberdeen. He is the author of many books about Aberdeen. The publishers knew what they were doing when they invited him to write *The Stranger's Guide to Aberdeen* (Aberdeen Journal Office; 6d.). Let us quote what he says about the market cross. He mentions that there were two crosses at one time as in other towns. But that may be omitted.

'This beautiful structure, that stands in the eastern part of the Castlegate, is the most interesting historical building that we possess. A market cross has stood in the Castlegate throughout our whole historical period. In 1686, the old cross having become ruinous, the Town Council contracted with John Montgomery, a mason of Old Rayne, to provide, for £100 sterling, a new Market Cross, the same as the Market Cross of Edinburgh—the removal of which Sir Walter Scott so lamented in "Marmion." The present cross was the result. Architecturally it is not pure, being a Jacobean structure, but it is the

finest of the historical market crosses of Scotland, and is hallowed by a continuous series of historical events in the life of the city. In 1821 it was taken down and cleaned, and being then a solidly built structure, it became for a few months the Post Office of Aberdeen. In 1842, by which time it was felt to be rather an obstruction in the west end of the Castlegate to the growing traffic, it was again taken down and removed to its present site. It was raised on a granite platform, and opened up, giving us the beautiful arcade that we see to-day. The ten medallion portraits of Stuart sovereigns, and the two coats of arms—Scotland and Aberdeen—round the front of the balustrade give the cross a unique character. The cross is a sandstone structure, but the unicorn that surmounts the tall Corinthian shaft appears white. It has a curious explanation. In 1821, when the cross was being cleaned, the unicorn, to everybody's surprise, became whiter and whiter, and it was found that John Montgomery, who contracted to make a sandstone cross, had been better than his word, and had made the unicorn of pure statuary marble.'

Here are the materials for an effective address to children—the county mason, ready for his opportunity when it came—the builder of the finest market cross in Scotland—building better than his word—the text is 'Every man's work shall be made manifest' (1 Co 3^{13}).

From the Pew.

Here is another paragraph from Mr. Fraser's Guide. 'Many churches may be found in Aberdeen—about a hundred, one would imagine, of one kind or another. We see them on both sides as we proceed along Union Street. But we never see them crowded quite in the way the "cinemas" are crowded. Yet, visitors go there too, and when they go in the right spirit they find refreshment there as well. English visitors will be struck with the excellence of the preaching, for in Scotland—and in Aberdeen beyond most places—the greatest care is taken in the preparation of sermons, and you find scholarship, and sincerity, and sympathy typical of all preachers. Complaints are sometimes made by correspondents to the newspapers against the Churches, but that is an ancient practice, and if all the congregation of only one church in the city were to write letters—in favour—as they feel in favour, the whole world would not be sufficient to contain the newspapers that could print them.'

A Gross Exaggeration.

How did Mr. Fraser dare to suggest to his readers' minds the words which end St. John's Gospel? Does he not know that they form one of the most popular arguments of the secularist lecturer against the Bible? Has he never heard them spoken of as a gross exaggeration? Mr. Fraser does not seem to be afraid of the secularist lecturer.

But he is not to be altogether neglected. Professor James Hope Moulton, anxious always to give every man credit for sincerity, thought he saw a way of meeting the secularist here.

A volume has been published containing everything that Dr. Moulton wrote which had not been published already (for nothing of his must be lost). Its title is *A Neglected Sacrament* (Sharp; 5s. net). It contains six studies, each study a work of art and Christianity, and ten addresses. The last address is on 'The Things that Jesus Did,' its text Jn 21^{25}.

Dr. Moulton believed that he could meet the secularist here, or at any rate blunt his argument. And so he suggests that the author of this verse, when he speaks of the things which Jesus did, carries his thought not only back into the life on earth which had come to an end, but also forward into the life that Jesus was still living, and the work that He was still doing and would go on doing even unto the end of the world. He notices that the very next words in the New Testament (the beginning of the Acts) speak of 'What Jesus *began* to do and to teach' up to the day of His ascension. Clearly Luke means that in the Acts he will tell of what Jesus went on to do and to teach after His last appearance to human eyes. Moreover, Jesus promised His disciples, 'He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; *and greater works than these shall he do*; because I go unto my Father.' And these greater works have always been of His doing also, as every follower has been glad to acknowledge. Thus Dr. Moulton suggests that when the writer wrote that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written, these books were not a dream of what might have been, but a vision of what would actually be as time went on. 'In

plain scientific fact,' he says, 'and not in mere poetry it is true that a record is made and preserved of all that goes on in this great universe; and it is hardly even a figure of speech which portrays the Recording Angel at his ceaseless work. And he is writing of all that takes place in your life and mine—all the secret thoughts that we ourselves have hardly detected as well as the words and deeds that are open for all our fellows to know. What he has written he has written, and nothing can recall or change one word. As grim old Omar Khayyám says:

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.'

NEW POETRY.

Norman Gale.

A Merry-Go-Round of Song, by Norman Gale, deserves the very first place this month, and shall have it. Let us quote at once the very first poem:

Merrily Spring came over the hill,
With fun in her lovely eyes.
She whispered a word to the leafless hedge,
She kissed her hand to the skies.

Hearing a new-born lambkin call
His mother in Cowslip Vale,
She threw him a leap to suit his legs
And a waggle to fit his tail.

Prettily humming her delicate songs,
She chose one out of the rest
And flung it afar with magical skill
Right into the blackbird's breast.

Seeing a thrush on an aspen branch
In want of a perfect note,
See gave him a thrilling cry to use
And a velvety courting-coat.

Hearing a bachelor beetle move
At the back of a hazel stem,
She cried to a fairy polisher, 'Go
And polish him like a gem!'

Blossom she gave to an almond-tree,
And warbles she gave to a brook;
But Fancy she dropped in a poet's heart
As he sang at his Children's Book.

When have we had anything like that in the way of children's poetry? It is neither childish nor childlike. It is the very child itself. And there are many such poems in the volume. They are not all so wonderful, but they are all delightful. Mr. Gale has published the book himself. A copy may be had (for 6s. net) by sending to his address at Old Bilton, Rugby. But you had better send at once. For he has printed only six hundred copies and they are rapidly disappearing.

Hope Fairfax Taylor.

The *Songs* in the little volume with that title by Hope Fairfax Taylor (Blackwell; 1s. net) are spiritual songs. And Hope Fairfax Taylor is entitled to be called a religious poet, a rare distinction in these days. Let us quote one of the poems:

MY PEACE.

My Peace doth guard an unassailèd country
Where flowers the wealth of all eternity,
Its mighty waters garrison wide pastures
Richly aglow from love's vast treasury.

Thereto may turn the seekers of all ages
To rest them from the hurt and heat of thought,
Upon the fastness of the Truth restore them,
And, in their seeking, know so are they sought.

Therein may come the sad, the sick, the sinning,—
Love doth await them; in her strong control,
Even as they stand, all undisguised, unshriven,
They shall hear pardoning, be made very whole.

My Peace is known in darkness of desertion,
Yea, it doth burn within the heart of strife,
It is the Peace of an abiding Presence,
It is communion with Eternal Life.

Herbert Read.

When the time comes for a review of War Poetry one thing that will emerge with clearness is that quite a considerable number of the poets are intensely realistic. Mr. Herbert Read is of the number. His *Naked Warriors* (Art and Letters; 3s. net) is an effort to describe war as it is, not as it is supposed to be. We may quote

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

His wild heart beats with painful sobs,
His strained hands clench an ice-cold rifle,
His aching jaws grip a hot parched tongue,
And his wide eyes search unconsciously.

He cannot shriek.

Bloody saliva
Dribbles down his shapeless jacket.

I saw him stab
And stab again
A well-killed Boche.

This is the happy warrior,
This is he. . . .

A. H. Lash.

Why is it so difficult to write religious poetry? You cannot answer and say that art is always impossible if it has an interest. There are the Psalms of David, some of them climbing to the very highest attainment both of art and of worship. And the Psalms of David are not alone. There is much else in the Old Testament, there is much in other ancient literature. It is modern religious poetry that seems so difficult to write. The Rev. A. H. Lash, C.M.S., calls his book *Things Unseen, and Other Sacred Poems* (Scott), but he is not a poet. He writes religious verse with evident ease and genuine unction. And after all he is more likely to do good in this world by his religious verse, with its unmistakable edification, than if he were as George Meredith or Thomas Hardy. Here is a fair example of his work:

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Our Saviour is our Shepherd still,
His sheep are all His care;
They browse on the Eternal Hill
And find sweet pasture there.

Nothing the holy Saviour shocks!
The very citadel of sin—
My evil heart! behold He knocks,
And unabashed comes in!

He *knows* my sad reluctant heart,
I need not yield me to despair.
He knows the sin in every part
Before He enters there.

Ah! when He comes, 'tis passing strange,
I feel a new desire,
His very Presence brings a change,
He lights a holy fire.

Maude C. Sidgwick.

With one exception all the poems in Maude C. Sidgwick's volume are *Sonnets*, and that is the title of the book (Heffer; 1s. 6d. net). Their author never writes sonnets like a Milton, but if she does not reach the highest height she never descends to the lowest depth. There is not a single failure in the whole number. We quote one on Food, for the point in it as much as for the poetry:

FOOD.

Food cannot give us Life. Instead
It merely stirs to wakefulness each cell
That erst lay dormant. Just as well
Expect the dead to rise again when fed
As look for life within the meat and bread.
Apart from us it is an empty shell:
Merged must it be with our life, ere its spell
Can work. But lo! the spirit that doth God-
ward tread
Can so inform and use the body's power,
Through thoughts of beauty, deeds of loving
might,
That it becomes a perfect instrument,
Subtle and swift, yet graceful as a flower.
The soul, that feels with joy its upward flight
Helpeth the body's needs through its own
nourishment.

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