

accept the crudest and most physical ideas as to the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. In its earliest form it depends on the belief that the Spirit is a hyper-physical energy which produces miraculous results in the *bodies* of mortal men. Any sacramentarianism which does not claim these effects, and is not eschatologically conditioned, is a departure from the New Testament. That such departure has proved to be inevitable is only an indication of the completeness with which the Church has shed its primitive apocalyptic. The sacramentarianism of the present day is as far removed from the sacramentarianism of the first century as the world-view of the Church is removed from the expectations of the Judæan communities who looked for the *palingenesia*, the 'restoration of all things.' And as it is impossible to reproduce *in their original form* the apocalyptic hopes of the Church of those days, so it is impossible to reproduce its sacramentarianism. It rests on assumptions which were speedily outgrown.

On the other hand, the fact that New Testament baptism is the baptism of believers and not the baptism of infants, not only suggests that a genuine spiritual experience normally accompanied baptism,

but it indicates the real value of this type of baptism. It is no longer a question of magical efficacy, it is a question of spiritual crises. And, like every definitive action, the open confession of baptism must have results in the spiritual life. At the lowest it is to reduce alternatives, to seal an inward decision by an outward deed. This always means an access of power or, at least, a concentration of moral energy. It is not too much to believe that such a decisive act on the part of man is met by a new movement on the part of the Spirit. It is probable that, on inquiry, it will be found that many still will bear this testimony, that their baptism was for them not a form only but a power, that a profound spiritual experience is for ever associated with the hour in which they witnessed the 'good confession.' It is along these lines, and not along the lines of its sacramentarianism, that the deeper thought of the New Testament is to be understood. Its sacramentarianism belongs to the 'husk,' its spiritual experience to the abiding truth. It is in no sectarian spirit that we may claim for 'believer's baptism' that it conserves all that is precious and imperishable in the baptism of the earliest period.

In the Study.

Mr. Boreham's New Book.

MR. F. W. BOREHAM has an enviable fertility as well as an enviable faculty of imaginative sermon-making. We say sermon-making, for we are convinced the sketches in his books have been preached. And if they were preached, they must have astonished the people with their breeziness. Yet with all their fresh unconvention, there is reverence and responsibility in every one of them. This volume is as full of surprise as ever. The best method with such a book is to quote an average example. Let it be, not *Mushrooms on the Moor*, from which the book gets its title (Kelly; 3s. 6d. net), but

THE HANDICAP.

I.

It was a sunny autumn afternoon. The leaves were rustling about my feet, and the first nip of

winter was in the air. It was Saturday, and I was out for a stroll. Suddenly a crowd attracted my attention, and, impelled by that curiosity which such a concourse invariably excites, I drew near to see whether it meant a fire or a fight. It was neither. As I approached I caught sight of young fellows moving in and out among the people, wearing light many-coloured garments, and I guessed that a race was about to be run. Almost as soon as I arrived, the men were called up, arranged in a long line, and preparations made for the start. At a signal two or three of them sprang out from the line and bounded with an easy stride along the road. A few seconds later, three or four more followed; then others; until at last only one was left; and, after a brief period of further waiting, he also left the line and set out in pursuit. It was a handicap, I was told, and this man had started from scratch. It was to be a long race, and it would be some time before any of the runners could be expected back again. The crowd, there-

fore, dispersed for the time being, breaking up into knots and groups, each of which strolled off to while away the waiting time as its own taste suggested. I turned into a lane that led up into the bush on the hillside, and, from that sheltered and sunny eminence, watched for the first sign of the returning runners.

Sitting there with nothing to do, it flashed upon me that the scene I had just witnessed was a reflexion, as in a mirror, of all human experience and endeavour. Most men are heavily handicapped; it is no good blinking the fact. Ask a man to undertake some office or assume some responsibility in connexion with the Church, and he will silence you at once with a narration of the difficulties that stand in his way. Ask a man to act on some board or committee for the management of some charitable or philanthropic enterprise, and he will explain to you that he has not a minute to spare. Ask a man to subscribe to some most necessary or deserving object, and he will tell you of the incessant demands to which he is subjected. Now it is no good putting all this down to cant. We have no right to assume that these are merely the lame excuses of men who, in their secret souls, do not desire to assist us. We must not hastily hurl at them the curse that fell upon Meroz because it came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty. All that they say is perfectly true. The difficulties that debar the first of these men from undertaking the work to which you are calling him are both real and formidable; the second man has every moment of his time fully occupied; the third man, because he is known to be generous, is badgered to death with collecting-lists from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night. We must not judge these men too harshly. In the uncharitableness of our hearts we imagine that they have given us excuses which are not reasons. The fact is that they have done exactly the reverse; they have given us reasons which are not excuses. We are on safer ground when we recognize frankly that it is very difficult for many men to devote much time, much energy, and much money to the Kingdom of God. Many men are heavily handicapped.

II.

'Isn't that one of the runners just coming in sight now?' a friend asked, pointing along the road. I fancied that he was right, so we rose and

strolled down to the spot from which the race had started. We must have been mistaken, for when we emerged from the lane there was no sign of the competitors. I was not sorry, however, that we had returned prematurely; for I noticed the handicapper strolling idly about, and got into conversation with him.

'There seems to me to be very little sense in a race of this kind,' I suggested to him. 'If those men win who started first, the honour is very small in view of the start they received; whilst if the man who started last fails to win, he feels it to be no disgrace, and comforts himself with the reflexion that he was too heavily handicapped. Is that not so?'

'Oh no,' replied the handicapper, politely concealing his pity for my simplicity; 'it works out just the other way. It isn't fair, don't you see, to keep those chaps that got away first always running in a class by themselves. It does not call out the best that is in them. But to-day it does them good to feel that they are being matched against some of the finest runners in the State, and they will strain every effort to try to beat the champions. And it does a man like Brown, who started from scratch, no harm to see those fellows all getting ahead of him at the start. He knows very well that he can beat any man in the country on level terms, and in such races he will only put forth just as much effort as is needed to get ahead of his opponent. But there is nothing to show that he could not do much better still if only his opponent were more formidable. In a race like this, however, he knows that anything may happen. His usual rivals have all got a start of him; if he is to defend his good name, he must beat all his previous records and bring his utmost power into play. And so every man in the race is put on his mettle. We consider the handicap a very useful race indeed!'

'Perhaps so,' I said, feeling that I was beaten, but feebly attempting to cover my retreat; 'but how do you compute the exact starts and handicaps which the different men are to take?'

'Ah,' he said, 'now you've touched the vital question.' I was gratified at his recognition of the good order of my retirement. 'You see,' he went on, 'we have to look up the men's previous performances and work out the differences in their records with mathematical exactness. But there is something more than that. We have to know

the men. You can't adjust the handicaps by rule of three. Anybody who has seen Jones run must have noticed that he's a bit down-hearted. He has been beaten every time, and he goes into a race now expecting to be beaten, and is therefore beaten before he starts. He needs encouragement, and we have to consider that fact in arranging his handicap. Then there's Smith. He's too cocksure. He has never had any difficulty in beating men of his own class. He needs putting on his mettle. So we increase his handicap accordingly. It takes a lot of working out, and a lot of thinking about, I tell you. But here they come!

There was no mistake this time. A batch of runners came into sight all at once, the officials took their places, and the crowd clustered excitedly round. As we waited, the remarks to which I had just listened took powerful hold upon my mind. The handicaps of life may have been more carefully calculated and more beneficently designed than we have sometimes been inclined to suppose.

III.

It was a fine finish. As the first batch of men drew nearer I was pleased to notice that Brown, the fellow in light blue, who had started last, was among them. Gradually he drew out from the rest, and, with a magnificent spurt, asserted his superiority and won the race. A few minutes later I took the tram citywards. Just as it was starting, Brown also entered the car. I could not resist the opportunity of congratulating him.

'It must have taken the heart out of you,' I said, 'to see all the other fellows getting away in front of you, and to find yourself left to the last?'

'Oh no,' he replied, with a laugh, 'it's a bit of an honour, isn't it, to see that they think me so much better than everybody else that they fancy I have a sporting chance under such conditions? And, besides, it spurs a fellow to do his best. When you are accustomed to winning races, it doesn't feel nice to be beaten, even in a handicap, and to avoid being beaten you've got to go for all you're worth.'

I shook hands and left him. But I felt that he had given me something else to think about.

'It's a bit of an honour!' he had said. 'And, besides, it spurs a fellow to do his best!'

The next time a man tells me that he cannot help me, because he is so heavily handicapped, what a tale I shall have to tell him!

IV.

My Saturday afternoon experience has convinced me that, in the Church, we have tragically misinterpreted the significance of handicaps.

'I am very heavily handicapped,' we say in the Church, 'therefore I must not attempt this thing!'

'I am very heavily handicapped,' they say out there at their sports, 'therefore I must put all my strength into it!'

And who can doubt that the philosophy of the Churchmen is false, or that the philosophy of the sportsmen is sound? There is a great saying of Bacon's that every handicapped man should learn by heart. 'Whosoever,' he says, 'hath anything fixed in his person that doth induce contempt hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn.' Is that why so many of the world's greatest benefactors were men who bore in their bodies the marks of physical affliction—blindness, deafness, disease, and the like? They felt that they were heavily handicapped, and that their handicap called them to make a supreme effort 'to rescue and deliver themselves from scorn.'

When speaking of the difficulty which a black boy experiences in America in competing with his white rivals, Booker Washington tells us that his own pathetic and desperate struggle taught him that 'success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.' There is a good deal in that. I was once present at a meeting of a certain Borough Council, at which an engineer had to report on a certain proposal which the municipal authorities were discussing. The engineer contented himself with remarking that there were serious difficulties in the way of the execution of the plan. Whereupon the Mayor turned upon the unfortunate engineer and remarked, 'We pay you your salary, Mr. Engineer, not to tell us that difficulties exist, but to show us how to surmount them!' I thought it rather a severe rebuke at the time, but very often since, when I have been tempted to allow my handicaps to divert me from my duty, I have been glad that I heard the poor engineer censured.

I was once deeply and permanently impressed by a chairman's speech at a meeting in Exeter Hall. That noble old auditorium was crowded from floor to ceiling for the annual missionary

demonstration of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The chair was occupied by Mr. W. E. Knight, of Newark. In the course of a most earnest plea for missionary enthusiasm, Mr. Knight suddenly became personal. 'I was born in a missionary atmosphere,' he said. 'I have lived in it ever since; I hope I shall die in it. Over forty years ago my heart was touched with the story of the world's needs; when I heard such men as Gervase Smith, Dr. Punshon, Richard Roberts, G. T. Perks, and others, I said, "Lord, here am I, send me." I came up to London forty-one years ago as a candidate for the Methodist ministry. I offered myself, but the Church did not see fit to accept my offer. I remember well coming up to the college at Westminster and being told of the decision of the committee by that sainted man, William Jackson. I went to the little room in which I had slept with a broken heart. I despised myself. I was rejected of men, and I felt that I was forsaken of God.' Now here is a man heavily handicapped; but let him finish his story. 'In that moment of darkness,' Mr. Knight continued, 'the deepest darkness of my life, there came to me a voice which has influenced my life from then till now. It said, "If you cannot go yourself, send some one else." I was a poor boy then; I knew that I could not pay for anybody else to go. But time rolled on. I prospered in business. And to-night I shall lay on the altar a sum which I wish the committee to invest, and the interest on that sum will support a missionary in Africa, not during my lifetime only, but as long as capital is capable of earning interest. And, ladies and gentlemen, I assure you that this is a red-letter day in my life!'

Of course it was! It was the day on which he had turned his handicap to that account for which all handicaps were intended.

'My handicap was an honour and a spur!' said the champion in the tramcar.

'My handicap was an honour and a spur!' said the chairman at Exeter Hall.

Both the champion and the chairman did by means of their handicaps what they could never have done without those handicaps. There can be no doubt about it; handicaps were designed, not as the pitiful excuses of the indolent, but as the magnificent inspirations of the brave.

Point and Illustration.

This Short Prayer.

No writer is great who does not take his readers into his confidence. Dr. R. F. Horton does this. He is great as a man and is not afraid to show himself to his valet; he is great as a writer, touching his readers sometimes to tears by his confidence in them, and always obtaining of them the very best they can give and do. When he writes books he is not careful of their titles—that also being a sign of his friendship. The title of *Reconstruction* (Clarke & Co.; 3s. 6d. net) is like the invitation to take a broad stream at a leap. True, there is the sub-title 'A Help to Doubters,' but it is not irresistible. Nevertheless we take the leap, and we are at home at once.

Dr. Horton's object is to give us something to be sure of, from which we may proceed to other things. He calls that one sure thing the Criterium. What is it? It is 'the enthronement of love on the throne of the universe, the incarnation of love in a human Person, and the requirement of love, as a result of this manifestation, to be the spring and guide of all conduct, the essence and the fulfilment of the moral law.' From that all else will follow—the sense of forgiveness, the joy of reconciliation, the power of the Spirit, the apprehension of the Person of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. And it is all so simple. Even the receiving of the Spirit is simple. 'Not more wonderful,' he says, 'than the work of the Spirit, but certainly not less wonderful, is the simplicity with which we receive the Spirit, and come under the transforming and convincing power. That modern saint, John Smith of Harrow, who, as a master in a large public school, was every whit as devoted, and as effective, as the remote saints of the Middle Ages, taught his boys to pray for the Holy Spirit in the most childlike way.

'When I was a Sunday school teacher, now forty-five years ago,' he wrote to some children in Standard III., near the close of his life, 'our minister told us a story one afternoon of a person whose life was entirely changed by this short prayer, repeated continually through the day for many years: "O Lord God, for Jesus Christ's sake, give me Thy Holy Spirit"; and he asked us all to use it for ourselves. This prayer, I have given for years to all my Harrow boys, and now I pass it on to you. Will you use it every day?

God will certainly give you His Spirit, to make you like Himself, truthful, industrious, pure, patient, forbearing, brave, humble, tender-hearted, loving, kind. Could you wish for anything more?’

That prayer, we may assume, produced that saintly life, which so deeply impressed generation after generation of Harrow boys. And it should be considered how readily accessible, and swiftly convincing, the truth of Christianity is, if it is reached by so direct and feasible a way.’

Gravitation.

The Rev. W. Campbell, D.D., F.R.G.S., is the man to tell us all that can be told about Formosa. He went there in 1871. He has been there ever since. And he has used his great opportunity in all the ways that a keen mind, a nice sense of humour, and a devouring love of Christ, have suggested to him. He calls his new book *Sketches from Formosa* (Marshall Brothers).

Dr. Campbell's faith in the Formosan is unquenchable. We shall record an incident to prove it. But we may say at once that it is the direct and immediate consequence of his faith in Christ. Never were these two more clearly manifested in their close relationship. The book is well furnished with incident and observation, and it is appropriately illustrated; but its charm is due to the author's—what shall we call it—his ‘simplicity which is in Christ Jesus.’ This is the story we promised to repeat.

‘Mr. Loa was a native scholar, who was engaged to do copying work, and to drill us into the mysteries of the spoken and written language of China. He wore a long blue robe with wide sleeves; came to our house every day at 9 a.m., and remained till noon, during which time, at intervals, he had to be left by himself whenever we were called away to attend to other duties. He had already been several months in our service when my colleague one day remarked to me that some member of the establishment must have fallen into thievish habits, as candles and other small articles were continually disappearing. He added that he was not at all assured of the reliability even of Mr. Loa; but to this I replied by saying that our Teacher was surely far too serious-minded and gentlemanly a man to be associated with such charges. About a week after this, the two of us were again chatting in our verandah, when Mr. Loa passed us at the close of his labours

for the day; but, before going through the outer gate, my colleague stepped forward to say something to him, saw a long foreign candle inside his sleeve, pulled it out, and simply held it up in front of His Moulviship. I confess I felt exceedingly uncomfortable, and wondered what form the humiliating confession and apology would take. Confession and apology! There was nothing further from Mr. Loa's mind, for he only looked at my colleague, straight in the face, and said, “Now, sir, as you know everything about gravitation and the secret laws of Nature, will you tell me how that candle came to be there?” He also appeared grieved to think we should demean ourselves by harbouring any kind of unworthy thoughts about himself; so that, receiving no answer to his inquiry, he quietly went out and left us to our own reflexions. Of course, we were thrown off our guard a little at the composure, the fertility of resource, and the abysmal impudence which could thus easily raise an act of vulgar theft into the high region of philosophic speculation. And yet, the rich and precious—although still unworked—materials for discipleship were certainly there; the possibilities of the whole incident reminding one of Saul of Tarsus, who began life by being an arch-persecutor of the Church of God, and ended by becoming the very chiefest of the Apostles.’

Weapons for Workers.

Mr. J. Ellis has done the hurried preacher and Bible teacher another good service by the issue of a volume of outline addresses and illustrations which he calls *Weapons for Workers* (Scott). Here is one of the outline addresses and also one of the illustrations.

The Great Physician (Mk 1³⁴).—The world is like a great hospital, full of people smitten by deadly spiritual diseases. But Christ is the Great Physician. I. *He is divinely chosen and qualified* (Is 61¹, 1 P 2⁶, etc.). II. *He thoroughly understands every case* (Mt 9², Jn 4^{17, 18}). III. *He has already healed millions* (Rev 7⁹). IV. *He deeply loves every one of His patients. Has he not proved this by dying for us?* (Gal 1⁴ 2²⁰). V. *He heals completely and finally* (Mt 9²⁷⁻³¹). VI. *He can heal anywhere* (Mt 19²). VII. *He delights to deal with hopeless cases* (Mt 9¹⁸⁻²⁶, Lk 7¹²⁻¹⁵, etc.). VIII. *His cures are immediate and free* (Mk 1³¹⁻⁴², etc.). IX. *He is accessible to all* (Mt 11²⁸).

Nothing the matter with me!—Rev. Mark Guy

Pearse's wonderful gift for 'telling a story' is well known. The other day, he recalled visiting the 'Guild of Brave Poor Things,' where he found a capital meeting proceeding, of sufferers whose crutches, piled against the wall, told their own sad story. *Outside*, however, was a poor little girl, weeping bitterly. 'What's the matter?' asked Mr. Pearse. 'Oh,' sobbed the little one, 'I can't go in, I—I ain't got *nothink the matter with me!*' There is an apt spiritual application to such as think they are 'all right' and are thereby excluded from the gospel feast.

The Message.

The Rev. J. W. W. Moeran, M.A., has been successful in his effort to gather *Illustrations from the Great War* (Scott; 2s. 6d. net). He has not only gathered the stories, he has also fitted them with their appropriate text or topic. To testify to the real riches ready for the preacher in this book almost any illustration could be quoted. This, for example, to encourage us to deliver our message when we have a message to deliver: 'In the 2nd Royal Sussex was a cyclist orderly named Wedge. He was mortally wounded at Bethune (on January 25, 1915) by a shell which pitched in the road near him as he was returning to his regiment with a message from Headquarters. He was there attended to by Major Matthews, R.A.M.C., who afterwards wrote to the Commanding-officer of the Sussex regiment, saying he thought the regiment ought to know about their comrade's devotion to his duty. In the course of this letter, Major Matthews said: "His left leg was shattered, his left great toe and the next were nearly blown off, he had a severe wound of the chest, and his right hand was wounded. In spite of his wounds, all his concern and anxiety were that his message should reach his regiment, and he thought of little else."'

Virginitus Puerisque.

I.

Christmas, 1915.

'They were sore afraid.'—Lk 2⁹.

'Be not afraid.'—Lk 2¹⁰.

Many boys and girls have been saying to themselves lately, 'Christmas will not be happy this year, everybody is so sad. There will be no

Christmas dinner—if there is, it won't be a jolly one—no crackers, no funny games.'

You have been feeling sad yourselves. At times it has been as if you were in a very dark terrifying place. Then you were more than sad; you were afraid. There are boys and girls who dislike darkness very much. They fear to be in it alone. They say they want to be able to see things and touch them too. I have even known men and women—they were amongst the best folk in the world—who felt very solemn in the great darkness of the country. 'What do you generally read to your sick people?' I heard one minister ask another. 'Very often I read the ninety-first Psalm,' was his answer: 'they like it,' he added. Here is a little bit of what he read. Listen:

He shall cover thee with His pinions,
And under His wings shalt thou take refuge:
His truth shall be thy shield and buckler,
Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night.

(I shall repeat that last line)

Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night.

So, you see, if we ask God to take care of us, there is nothing in this world of which we need to be afraid. You dislike the darkness, you say; you want to be able to see things. Let me ask you a question. Did it ever occur to you that the real joy of Christmas comes from things we cannot see? The dinners, the crackers, the presents, are only signs that our friends want us to be happy. There is a much deeper cause for our joy than the Christmas parties and the Christmas presents. The shepherds that kept their flocks by night on the fields of Bethlehem were very good religious men. They must have known our ninety-first Psalm; doubtless it was a favourite. Yet we are told that one dark night they were 'sore afraid.' Picture the shepherds to yourselves. The fires which they kept burning to scare away the wild beasts but made the darkness all the blacker. They drew near together—can't you see them?—a group of men whose one interest was God. They spoke about Him—more softly and solemnly than usual. It was even as if they dreamed when they told one another their thoughts about the Saviour for whom their people had looked so long. 'He will be a great shepherd'; 'But He will have the glory of a King about Him.' 'Ah!' another would break in, 'He will know about sorrow'; and we can imagine how they might repeat—

'sentence about'—the exquisite scripture words about the 'Man of Sorrow.'

Suddenly, it was no longer dark. Heaven seemed to have come down to earth. 'An angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: then they were sore afraid.' It was not the darkness, you see, that made them afraid, it was the 'Glory.'

You all know what the angel said to them. It was, 'Be not afraid.' Then he told them that their long-expected deliverer had come; not as a great King, not even as a great shepherd, but as a little baby. Those good shepherds of Bethlehem had not realized they were so near to Heaven when they were in the darkness.

There has been darkness over our country and over our homes: you hear about it on every side and you will wonder when I say to you that in the midst of the darkness, the Glory of the Lord has been round about us.

It has been the glory of a great love—a love that has made many of those who used to be big boys here, willing to lay down their lives. They followed another leader than the general who led them forward on the battlefield. Their Hero was the Man over whose birth we rejoice on Christmas day. He had put love of the highest into the boys' hearts. That love has in it the honour of the Roman who, when offered his life by a general who had ordered all others to be slain, mixed with the people, saying, 'I will not live while so many of my fellow-citizens die unjustly.'

Their leaving us has made heaven more like a home-country than ever it has been before. The glory of it has been round about us; but we have been 'sore afraid.' Can we believe that the big boys who were with us only a little while ago, and have been called from us so suddenly, are far away? I am sure that not one of you boys or girls can believe it. They are round about us, though we cannot see them. Let me read three verses from a little poem I came across the other day. I liked it, and thought it was a very beautiful idea to have on your minds on Christmas day:

Lest Heaven be thronged with grey-beards hoary,

God, who made boys for His delight,
Stoops in a day of grief and glory,

And calls them in, in from the night.

When they come trooping from the war,
On skies have many a new gold star.

Heaven's thronged with gay and careless faces,
New-waked from dreams of dreadful things,
They walk in green and pleasant places
And by the crystal water-springs,
Who dreamt of dying and the slain,
And the fierce thirst and the strong pain.

Dear boys! They shall be young for ever.

The Son of God was once a boy.

They run and leap by a clear river,

And of their youth they have great joy.

God, who made boys so clean and good,

Smiles with the eyes of fatherhood.¹

I have sometimes thought that those families are happiest out of which a brother or a sister has gone to the Father's home. We have had many hard but very beautiful lessons to learn during the past year; I think, however, that like the shepherds, some have heard the angel of the Lord say, 'Be not afraid.' For hundreds of years children have been told to rejoice because of the Babe in the manger of Bethlehem. They feel happy when Christmas comes round, and the story is told to them once again. To-day we ask you to be happy because of the family home in heaven, where the boys are, and where Jesus is.

II.

Children of the East Wind.

'A strong east wind.'—Ex 14²¹.

To-day it is the turn of the children of the East wind.

Now I wonder if you have noticed that when you mention the East wind, people have very little good to say about it? 'That nasty, biting wind!' they exclaim. 'It chills you through and through; it makes all your bones ache; it brings colds and all sorts of horrid troubles with it!'

Well, there are two sides to every question—a good side, and a bad side—and we are going to look at both sides of the East wind. It has its faults, and we are ready to admit them, but we are going to try and find out its good points also.

The thing that strikes one first about this wind is its blighting power. In Palestine the East wind is dry and scorching: it blows from the desert and it often withers the corn, and destroys the fruit. The Bible often speaks of this blighting

power of the East wind. You remember, for instance, how Pharaoh in his dream saw seven thin ears of corn *blasted by the East wind*.

It seems rather queer to think of an East wind being hot; does it not? We are accustomed to regard it as a bitterly cold wind. But the reason why it is cold here is that it comes to us chiefly in spring, and it comes across the frozen plains of Russia.

But here is a strange thing. Although the East wind in Palestine is burning hot, and the East wind in Britain is bitterly cold, in both places it has very much the same effect—it blights and destroys young plants. Last spring I planted out some sweet-peas. For a week or two they looked strong and sturdy. Then came a few days of wind blowing from the East, and when I went to look at the sweet-peas their poor leaves were all yellow and shrivelled by the cruel blast. You would have thought some creature had got at their roots, and had been gnawing their life away. A few of them recovered, but many withered and died.

I think some people are very like the East wind. They blight and destroy a great deal of happiness in the world by their tempers and their tongues. There are those who say cutting things with intent to wound, there are those who say biting things in order to be clever, and there are those who insist upon telling you unpleasant truths in the most unpleasant way.

Now I want to say this to the East-wind people. I don't think you mean half you say. I think very often you speak in the heat of the moment, and you don't realize the harm you are doing. But remember your unkind words may rankle and wound long after you have forgotten them. The tongue is a terrible weapon. It can inflict mortal injuries. It can separate lifelong friends and cause great dispeace in a family circle. St. James tells us it is 'a restless evil, full of deadly poison.' Some day you may wake to find that by your bitter words you have blighted the happiness of some one you love very dearly.

Now St. James also tells us that 'the tongue can no man tame.' He says that 'every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame.' Well, it is true that no *other* man can tame your tongue for you, but you can tame it for yourself. You will have a hard fight, and sometimes it will seem as if this

wild beast were conquering you, instead of the other way, but if Jesus is on your side you are sure to win in the end, for He has won the victory over all our enemies.

Perhaps you think I have been rather hard on the East wind, so now I am going to say something nice about it. I can never forget that the East wind often brings us bright sunshine. We have got so used to discussing its faults that we forget the good things it does. It comes to us when the ground is sodden with the winter snow and rain, and it dries the soil so that the farmer can get his seed sown. And it helps us to forget its own bitterness by the bright sunshine it brings.

Do you know, East-wind people, you have a great power in you to bring sunshine into the world? Your tongues have been employed in saying cutting, cruel things. Why not use them in being witty in a kind way? Why not employ them to defend the right in the face of evil? Why not train them to say kind things that will warm people's hearts?

Once the famous clergyman, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, came across a little ragged news-boy standing shivering at the edge of the pavement. He went up to him and said, 'Poor little fellow! Aren't you very cold?' And the boy replied, 'I was, sir, before you spoke to me.' The kind words had made him feel almost warm again.

Try to put the sunshine of a smile into all you say and do. It will make things easier, and it will make the world brighter. Sometimes along our East coasts the East wind brings a thick mist. If you go inland a few miles you will find the sun shining brightly, but the people along the coast cannot see the sunshine for the mist. East-wind people often hide their own good qualities behind a cold mist. Get rid of the mist, dear East-wind people: let us see the glorious spring sunshine which you bring, for the world has need of all its sunshine.

III.

Master Cold-Rice.

'He that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.'—Lk 22²⁶.

In a great family it makes a big difference whether you are born first or second or third. The king's eldest son succeeds to the throne.

The eldest son of a nobleman gets his title when the father dies and the largest share of his estates, while the younger sons may have a very much smaller share, and even be rather poor. In families that have not titles and property there is not much difference between older and younger children. Indeed, the younger children often have the best time, because the eldest is expected to help to take care of them and to be responsible for them.

But in some countries it is different. In Japan, where they have rules for everything, they have very decided rules for the position of the different members of the family. The Japanese are a very polite nation, and are very particular about proper behaviour, not only in society, but at home. As soon as a baby can run about he is taught good manners. He learns how to bow properly, and how to behave with respect to his elders. And he has a great many elders, for there the members of the family live together even after they are grown up and married and have children of their own. The wives must obey the husbands, and all the women in the family must obey all the men. The children must not only obey their grandparents and parents, and all the older people of the family, the aunts and uncles, but the younger brother must obey the older brother, and the younger sister the older sister. Even in small things the younger must always give in to the older, and at meals must be helped last. These are some of the laws made for a Japanese village. 'If there be any of our number who are unkind to parents, or neglectful, or disobedient, we will not conceal it or condone it, but will report it.' 'We shall require children to respect their parents, servants to obey their masters, husbands and wives and brothers and sisters to live together in harmony and the younger people to revere and cherish their elders.'

As I told you, at meal-times the elder son is served first, and the second next, and so on. But if there are very little children they are not obliged to wait. So a curious name is given in Japan to the second son. He is called 'Master Cold-Rice.' This is because it is supposed that as he has to wait till all his elders, and also the babies, have been helped, his rice will not be very hot when he gets it.

Now there is a little parable in this name. In every family there are times when some one must give way to others, and be content with the second

best instead of the best place. This is what we may call eating cold rice. We do not insist upon the younger ones always giving way to the elder. Indeed, it is very often quite the opposite way, and the big sister or big brother gives up something to give pleasure to the younger ones. But if you notice you will very often find that in some families, one boy or girl never offers to give up to others, and is never expected to do it. Why? Because everybody knows that he will make himself so disagreeable that they would rather make a sacrifice than bear his crossness and unpleasantness. Perhaps there is a picnic or an excursion. Everybody cannot go. But nobody supposes that he will be the one to stay. Or if he is playing a game, he is never pleased unless he has the leading part. At table he wants the nicest part of everything, and the most comfortable chair in the evening, and the first turn to read the new magazine. It becomes a family habit to let him have what he wants, because it is easier than to make him give up. But that is not a boy anybody loves. He gets more and more selfish, always grasping at what he wants, and never thinking of others. He may succeed in life, but it will be a poor kind of success, not worth having, and he will have few friends.

Now, it is worth while thinking who generally eats cold rice in your house. You will notice that there is one person who is always ready to give up anything to the children's pleasure. If any one has to stay behind, mother does not think she wants to go. If there is anything you like very much, she likes you to have her share too. But is it right that the unselfish people should always have to make the sacrifices? There will always be times when *somebody* must do it, but in future, instead of saying, 'I don't see why I should have to do that,' suppose you say, 'Somebody must do it, why should not I?' Take your turn at being Master Cold-Rice.

IV.

Mr. James Logan, M.A., F.R.G.S., Principal of Rathmines College, Dublin, has published a volume of his *Talks to Boys* (Robert Scott; 2s. net). One of the talks is

On doing Things Well.

We read in the Bible of One 'who doeth all things well,' and this quotation supplies me with

a 'text' for this morning's sermon, viz. 'Doing all things well.'

What a splendid lesson for all of us to learn, to do everything well! Two well-known maxims bring out the same idea. Can you give them? 'Everything worth doing is worth doing well.' The other is: 'Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' In other words, be *thorough*, don't do things by halves, do good work or none. An American firm undertook to build a tunnel for an underground railway in record time. They did so, but scamped the work, and there was a record smash. I have seen some of you do a certain thing thoroughly, you did it well, very well indeed; it was taking your tea at a cycling run. You did that thoroughly, and why not? One boy to the extent of seven cups in fact, and it is always interesting to see boys 'in their cups.' Now learn to do *all* things well. If it be some small thing (I wonder is there really any such thing as a small thing), if it be just carrying a parcel, do it well. The point for you is not to be ashamed of carrying a parcel, nor to think whether the parcel looks well or ill, under your arm, but to carry it properly. Many great men have done far humbler things.

It does not matter whether you are driving a nail, or reading a book, or writing a letter, or playing cricket, or posting a letter, or saying 'Thank you,' or making an apology, or helping some one who has fallen, or showing a person to the door, or playing the piano, or answering a test paper, or washing your face, or sharpening a pencil, *do it well*. He doeth all things well, the successful man. However humble the duty, try to outshine others in the doing of it.

If I were a cobbler, I'd make it my pride
The best of all cobblers to be;
If I were a tinker, no tinker beside
Should mend an old kettle like me.

And when you have learnt to do humbler or smaller things well, the opportunity comes to do

big things. It is only when we fill one sphere well, that another greater opens up to us.

When Jim Garfield had learned to chop wood, he did it well. Then he learned carpentering, and did that well. Then he had to take charge of his mother's farm, and he did that well. (And let me say in passing, that Jim Garfield loved his mother, and he did that well.) By and by he rose to higher posts, and he filled them well, until he reached the highest position the land could give him, President of the Great Republic, and he filled that office well. He did all things well.

When Pope wrote verse, he wrote, re-wrote, corrected, polished, revised and polished again until he felt perfect satisfaction. The poet Gray took eight years to write his *Elegy*, and Johnson seven years to write his dictionary, and surely they did them well. When Lord Kitchener plans a campaign, nothing is left to chance, everything is taken into account, every man's duty is arranged to a pinhead, and victory follows his organization as regularly as clockwork. 'He doeth all things well.' Genius is said to be 'a capacity for taking pains,' and we cannot take pains with things unless we do them well. An engine-driver must run his train with care and caution, a judge must listen for days to counsel and sift evidence and think out facts before deciding a case, an editor must fill his pages cleverly and well or retire from his chair. To get on nowadays, it is an absolute necessity to do things well.

Start now to do things well, if you have not already begun. Take in carefully all I am saying; when we disperse to our duties, take each half-hour and fill it well. Live by half-hours. Do one thing at a time and do it well. Be thorough. Master that problem in algebra, see the why and wherefore of that knotty question in arithmetic, probe to the bottom that rule in geography.

Attempt the end and never stand to doubt,
Nothing's so hard but search will find it out.