

was on fire now, and Moses recognized in the burning bush on the hillside a symbol of the flame in the heart of the people; this was God telling him that the time to move had come, the long-distance task had become an immediate demand. The soul of Israel had been kindled by God. Moses saw the invisible as the befriending, saving God. Is not that the assurance we need when we are faced by some costly task, when we have to make some big choice, the full consequence of which we cannot foresee? We have long dreamed of it, it has been a sacred ideal for many years; yes, but what if we were unable to carry it through, what if it failed, and involved us and all we loved in suffering and destruction? No wonder Moses put that question to himself. But he went on because he saw that whatever the risk and whatever the sacrifice, the step forward must be taken, and the sacred fire at the heart of a mourning people would not prove fatal, because God was in this movement against tyranny.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews paid homage to Moses' endurance—why? Because it was a magnificent attitude of forgiveness for the rejection and insult meted out to his first approaches to a degraded people. It was persistence in self-effacement and self-sacrifice in spite of stinging memories. It was the patience which is 'the

passion' of a great heart, the way of the Cross, and it cannot be explained except as a splendid insight into the forgiving character of God, a vision of His undiscouraged mercy, and a presage of what was revealed in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 'He endured as seeing him who is invisible' and now he came to the rescue of those who had mocked him, for he was not ashamed to call them brethren. Gerald Gould writes:

I loose my hold of silence and of song,
And join the ragged ranks where I belong;
Mix with the crowd of them that shun their
fates,
Poor, pitiful souls, that are my natural mates!
Ah, how regain the morning, how control
The lost, the hunted, and the haunted soul,
Save by the light, the peace that made me see
Even in the slave the spirit of the free!

Jesus Christ lived, died, and rose again to prove the dependable content of the unseen, which will bear our weight and never let us down in the enterprise for a more Christian civilization. When things look ugly for Christian ideals we venture to believe in the unseen God of love as our adequate support, because Jesus Christ has made us sure that such belief is not misplaced.¹

¹ A. A. Cowan, *Captain of the Storm*, 17.

Entre Nous.

Pain.

'I am only trying to show that the old Christian doctrine of being made "*perfect through suffering*" is not incredible. . . . My own experience is something like this. I am progressing along the path of life in my ordinary contentedly fallen and godless condition, absorbed in a merry meeting with my friends for the morrow or a bit of work that tickles my vanity to-day, a holiday or a new book, when suddenly a stab of abdominal pain that threatens serious disease, or a headline in the newspapers that threatens us all with destruction, sends this whole pack of cards tumbling down.

'At first I am overwhelmed, and all my little happinesses look like broken toys. Then, slowly and reluctantly, bit by bit, I try to bring myself into the frame of mind that I should be in at all times. I remind myself that all these toys were never intended to possess my heart, that my true

good is in another world and my only real treasure is Christ. And perhaps, by God's grace, I succeed, and for a day or two become a creature consciously dependent on God and drawing its strength from the right sources.

'But the moment the threat is withdrawn, my whole nature leaps back to the toys: I am even anxious, God forgive me, to banish from my mind the only thing that supported me under the threat because it is now associated with the misery of those few days. Thus the terrible necessity of tribulation is only too clear. God has had me for but forty-eight hours, and then only by dint of taking everything else away from me.

'Let Him but sheathe that sword for a moment and I behave like a puppy when the hated bath is over—I shake myself as dry as I can and race off to reacquire my comfortable dirtiness, if not in the nearest manure heap, at least in the nearest

flower bed. And that is why tribulation cannot cease until God either sees us remade, or sees that our remaking is now hopeless.¹

The Bread I ate with you was more than Bread.

In the form of short letters Rita F. Snowden writes on great things of life and religion—Love, the Incarnation, the Cross, Easter. The title that she gives to her book is *The Winds Blow*, and it is published by the Epworth Press at 3s. 6d. net. There is a fine use of imagination in these letters and a wealth of illustration. But it is easier to show what they are by quotation than by description. And so we quote from the one on first communion.

‘DEAR JILL,—

‘Many thank for your letter. So you are coming to your first communion. I am so glad.

‘Can I tell you what this means to me? I will try. In my mind are some lovely words: “Music I heard *with you* was more than music, *And bread I ate with you* was more than bread.” Of course it was. You can think of some times, I am sure, when that has been true to you; when with your friend you have shared some simple meal, and it has been more than bread. Truly so!

‘Away back in 1909 four men were making their way wearily back from the South Pole. They had been short of food for days, and one of their number was sick. All that they had was a little horse-flesh and a few biscuits. One morning the sick man, Commander Frank Wild, was so ill that he couldn’t bear his horse-flesh. Then Shackleton did a glorious thing: he slipped into his companion’s pocket his own morning’s ration, one biscuit. The weary march went on, the others had no knowledge of what had happened; it was all done so quietly. But in his diary Wild wrote of it: “I do not suppose any one else in the world can thoroughly realize how much generosity and sympathy were shown in this. *But I do, and I shall never forget it.*” Only after the great explorer’s death did he tell that to the world. To him it was a beautiful thing: you see, there are times when “the bread I ate with you was more than bread.” It’s the presence of one’s friend, and the sympathy and the deep, real love of one’s friend that makes it so. So is the bread and wine of this simple feast, to me. *The presence of my Friend makes it a sacrament.* . . . I come to this simple table to share this feast with my Lord, and because He is here, this “bread that I eat is more than bread.” Studdert-Kennedy has

¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*.

the same wonderful thought expressed in a slightly different experience: he says, “If we picked a rosebud from a tree, it would be a rosebud and no more; but if the one we loved best in all the world plucked it and gave it, it would be a rosebud, and a great deal more; something spiritual would be added *because of the love behind the gift*. In this sense,” he says—and adds the thought I have expressed—“the bread and wine we take at the Communion service are different from the food and drink we have in our own homes; *they carry a share of the love of our Lord who receives us at His table*.”

Lebensraum.

‘It is early one morning in February, and a group of pacifist and isolationist students have me “on the mat.” They are emphatic in their denunciation of war and in the determination to keep America out of the present conflict. I suggest that there is a geographical aspect to their pacifism; if Hitler were in New York State, and had seized Massachusetts and Rhode Island, would not their pacifism be qualified? There was no reply. About this time I was told that Dr. James Moffatt dealt with characteristic shrewdness with an isolationist who spoke of the war as between two imperialisms and declared it would be well if it ended in a draw. Dr. Moffatt said, “Well, let us assume that is so, and Britain and France say to Germany, ‘We are impressed by your appeal for *Lebensraum*. We will give you one of the British West Indies and one of the French.’” “But you can’t do that,” said the outraged isolationist, “that would bring them on to our door-step!”’²

Books for the Troops.

‘Please say nothing about my losses or some good Samaritan will forthwith send me odd numbers of the *Evangelical Magazine*—the pictures extracted; *Alleines Alarm* without the title page; an odd volume Charnock’s sermons, etc. etc.’ So Livingstone wrote in 1852 after he had lost his books.

² Dr. Peel in *The Congregational Quarterly*, October, 1940.

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