

needed to be said. Again, 'There is no danger of any one's trying to stop all preaching until the text of the New Testament is finally settled. That would be absurd. For preaching did not begin with the New Testament. Preaching, vivid work in the Church, preceded by years the New Testament' (p. 507). The debatable land of importance for theology, inside textual criticism, is pronounced very narrow. (Perhaps, had Dr. Gregory faced the recent movements¹ initiated, e.g., by Merx on the Syriac versions and by Mr. F. C. Conybeare, he would have modified this reassuring statement.) Yet, none the less, the

¹ Another aspect of the problem is the influence of the Canon upon the form and text of the New Testament Scriptures. How far, if at all, did the motives and aims of 'canonization' operate in the way of altering, say, the titles of some books? One would have welcomed Dr. Gregory's valuable opinion on this crucial point, but he does not seem to have considered it as germane to his subject.

Christian must be prepared to admit and welcome the effects of the textual critic. 'It is singular to see a man anxious to have the latest and best thing in electric lights, but totally indifferent as to having the best text in his New Testament.'

With this ironical sentence the volume closes. The index is not adequate, by any means, nor is there the slightest attempt, as I have hinted, to furnish the student with bibliographical information. As a matter of fact, the appeal of the book is not to the advanced student so much as to the general public, and for the purpose of educating the intelligent Christian it may be commended. It is an unambiguous, fluent, and alluring sketch of the extremely intricate subjects which it professes to discuss. Any one who masters it will be not only enabled but incited to pursue further investigations and research under the guidance of the professional experts in either department.

The Man of Sorrows a Man of Joy.

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'For the joy that was set before him.'—Heb. xii. 2.

WE know our Lord as the Man of Sorrows, and such indeed He was; but here He is set before us as the Man of Joy, and deep as was the sorrow, and personal as it was to Him, this joy was deeper still, and still more personal. It was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the cross, despising the shame. Let us understand the words—'the joy set before him.'

The customary interpretation does not do justice to this noble passage. It takes the joy set before Him to be a prevision of the end of His humiliation and sacrifice in heavenly glory. It sees the joy spring out of His hope of success, His assurance of victory. But this is wooden and commonplace. It does not do justice to the mind that was in Christ Jesus. It does not sympathetically understand the mood out of which, not only this of Christ's, but all noble and heroic actions spring. For what have we to say of all noble and heroic acts but this,—their root and impulse are never calculation, but always inspiration, not the weighing and balancing of consequences and possibilities,

nor even the fruits of success, but always the vision of the beauty of the act itself. It is the love of love, the nobility of self-sacrifice, the thought of the misery of sufferers ended, and their happiness and safety won, that flash on a heroic soul to ravish it by their beauty, and fire it by their moral appeal; that smite 'the chords of self that trembling pass in music out of sight' to issue in some noble hymn of love and sacrifice and service. And in this vision and rapture there lies a joy, stern but sweet ineffably, a veritable music and harmony of the noblest and most godlike in us.

That, we venture to say, was 'the joy set before him.' It was not the issue of the act, but the act itself, that was a joy to Him. The joy lay not in the distant victory, but in the splendour of the present and pressing sacrifice. He rejoiced not in the hope of future good, but in the loveliness of present love. The root of His action was not calculation, but inspiration. So Man of Sorrows as He was, more deeply and more essentially He

was a Man of Joy. Joy was the root of that sorrow, joy explained it, joy laid it on Him, joy gave Him strength to bear it, and in the power of joy at last He overcame it.

What is true of this noblest of all acts and greatest of all sacrifices is true in the measure of their nobility and greatness of all good acts of men. Our text speaks not only of the inner life of Jesus. It lays bare the secret of all noble living. And in the sacrifice of Christ this is shown us so enlarged and perfected that in it we most readily study the movements of that life of God that stirs within ourselves.

We note, first, that every noble act and every holy life have their source and spring in a deep-seated inward joy. All goodness begins with a vision. We see God in the beauty of His holiness, or it may be only the skirts of His wondrous garment. Conscience and reason approve the vision, saying, 'This is truth and life: this is truth for you, the life you are called to live,' for goodness and God are their own and their best argument. But seeing is not enough, nor approving. If there is to be fruit, there must be more. The vision must draw your soul, as the moon draws the waters after her in that great tidal wave in its holy task of cleansing the ocean and the earth. It must strike the chords of the soul till they make a noble music of aspiration and purpose, till they tingle into joy, that holy joy out of whose impulse noble acts are done.

We note, second, that such joy brings sorrow.

Laughter and tears lie close together, and humour and pathos are near of kin. It is emphatically so with this joy set before us. In the very capacity to see the beauty, to love it, and be stirred by it to joy, there lies a flood of tears ocean deep. The joy lies in the perception of the worth of personality, of manhood and of womanhood, of the supreme beauty of purity and love. But that seen and felt sin can be but the more sinful, and the suffering it brings men but the more sorrowful. As you love purity, so must impurity grieve you. The love of love is ever proportioned to the hate of hate. So much in the world denies and flouts this truth and goodness that you, who love and rejoice in them, must be content to have them wear a crown of sorrow.

One thing we note in relief. We are not to think of such joy as a rainbow set in a cloud of sorrow. It is rather the background of light that invests the darkness with a deeper hue. It is not

the sorrow that is first, and the joy that relieves it. It is the joy that is first, and it is its light that makes the blackness. It is not the sorrow but the joy that is the permanent and abiding: and as it is first, so shall it be last. That the root of the sorrow is a joy deeper and more personal than itself is a pledge, that the sorrow must at length be swallowed up in joy.

We note, third, that it is the joy set before us that gives strength to bear burdens and endure sufferings.

It was out of the joy set before Him that Jesus endured the cross. And if we are to endure anything, small or great, it is out of the joy set before us we must draw our strength.

The note of Christian heroism, then, is not callousness, but sensibility. Three recipes in the main have been given men for the learning of endurance. We name them after their chief teachers, the Epicurean, the Stoic, the Buddhist. The Epicurean bids us look away from sorrow, and find relief in distraction. The Stoic bids us suppress feeling, and learn to bear by refusing to feel. The Buddhist bids us pluck the sting out of suffering, with the conviction that the world is illusion and the desire of it the source of this and all evils.

The Christian recipe for strength is different from all three. Unlike the Epicurean, the world's shallow philosophy, it bids you not look away from sorrow to find relief in distraction, but face it, looking for a more real and lasting joy behind and beneath the sorrow. Unlike the Stoic, it bids you not suppress feeling, but develop it. Unlike the Buddhist, it bids you find reality and the good not apart from life, but in it. Against them all, it sets up tenderness and susceptibility as the secret of true strength and endurance. I heard lately a brave man, whose life had been spent with brave men, say, in words that still ring through my soul, 'The men who are stern are men of tenderness. Men of steel are men who feel.' That was Christ's secret. There was the meat He had to eat, the world wist not of. His very capacity to feel the sins and sorrows of mankind was the measure of His strength, for that sorrow was rooted in a deeper joy, and, deep as the sorrow went, the joy went ever deeper, and, heavy as its burden pressed, His strength grew ever more than equal to bear it. For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross.

We note, fourth, that the joy set before us has a transforming power.

For the joy set before Him Jesus not only endured the cross, He despised the shame. The clouds that overwhelm joyless men lay far beneath His feet. His joy lifted Him above them. It disarmed the contumely and scorn of men of their power to sting. He despised the shame, for that joy of His showed Him glory in what men without vision and the joy of it see only shame, exaltation in what they think degradation, and victory where they read defeat. And at whatever interval the world has come to think after Him. The cross, that was for Jews the cursed tree, and for Romans the vilest felons' scaffold, has become the badge of blessing, and glory, and power. This is but the symbol of a vast transformation, and it is the joy of Christ that has brought it about.

It is this power of transformation we need: a joy that transmutes values; that finds foolishness, wisdom, and weakness strength; that judges with God's judgment, and in His light sees light; that does not conform us to the world, but transforms us by the renewing of our minds to know what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God; that sets free from false judgments, false shame,

and false ideals; that lifts us above the world, and sets us at the right hand of God.

What then? Joy is evidently the key to life, and we should seek it. Inspiration, strength, renewal lie in it. The heart of religion is to see God and rejoice in Him. Praise is the greatest of all, greater even than prayer, for prayer, when it becomes perfect, passes into praise.

Lay aside, as the thought of the savage and the schoolboy, that it is weak to feel or show feeling, and the shallow philosophy that the fruit of life's wisdom is to admire nothing, be capable of admiring nothing. Feel—admire—worship. Rejoice in God and in all things godly and goodly; hate hate, scorn scorn, despise shame, and, above all, love love.

There is a joy set before you as before Christ. Without it you shall do nothing good or great. It brings sorrow, but vanquishes it. It adds burdens, but increases strength. It transmutes all values, and lifts you out of worldliness and above the fear of men, because it renews your mind, and makes yours the truth that sets you free. It gives wings, wings that lift high and higher, till with Christ you are set at the right hand of God.

Literature.

THE STOICS AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

THE STOIC CREED. By William L. Davidson, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Aberdeen. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1907. 4s. 6d.)

THE first eleven chapters of this most excellent handbook are devoted to an historical and ethical exposition of Stoicism among the Greeks and Romans. There was room for a fresh, up-to-date survey of this kind, and Professor Davidson has furnished his readers with a thoroughly readable account of what the principal Stoics, those 'budge doctors of the Stoic fur,' believed and taught. To the student of early Christianity, the relation of the Stoic to the Christian faith is of especial interest. Stoicism, as Professor Davidson admits (pp. 180-181), 'is very likely to have affected the early Christian teaching—more especially that of Paul,

who himself belonged to a city that was a chief seat of Stoicism (namely, Tarsus), and who could, on occasion, as in the Areopagus at Athens, turn his Stoical knowledge effectively to account.' This point of connexion has been worked out by several scholars recently, notably by J. Weiss, and, with less caution, by Professor Mahaffy. Strabo mentions five prominent Stoic philosophers of Tarsus, and the Cilician origin of some others is quite certain, so that the local opportunity may be taken for granted. How far the actual influence extended, it is more difficult to determine. The famous kenosis passage in Ph 2⁶⁻¹¹ is held by Dr. E. Pfeleiderer, the editor of Heracleitus, to reproduce a speculative idea of that Ephesian philosopher, whose repute had revived in the later Hellenistic age. In his mystical theosophy, the 'dark' thinker had conjectured that the Absolute Being might divest himself of his high estate,