

Entre Nous.

The Greater Men and Women of the Bible.

THE second of the six volumes which are to complete the series on *The Greater Men and Women of the Bible* has been issued (T. & T. Clark; 10s.). We shall not review it here. But we shall quote three reviews of the first volume, all of which reached us on the same day, and all in Church of England newspapers.

The Guardian.

'This book is intended for preachers, but may certainly be read by others with pleasure and profit. Other volumes will follow; this treats of Genesis. Quotations and illustrations from many sources "touch the imagination," but their easy pleasantness is controlled by a quite severe attention to the historical meaning of the narrative. "Criticism is kept subordinate to construction, as it should always be in the pulpit, but the work of the critic is not forgotten any more than that of the discoverer." Beside the direct instruction given in the text, the literature of interpretation, criticism, and archæology which a preacher ought to know is referred to systematically, and the references are the right ones. The book is workmanlike. In Dr. Hastings's country preaching is taken more seriously than it is in England. But no country endures more sermons than England. Such a book as this encourages us to hope that the rule may grow, "Non multa sed multum." Yet the Englishman should learn from it discerningly; his dislike of didactic preaching is still wholesome.'

The Record.

'Dr. Hastings is as wonderful as ever. Not content with giving us two new volumes of the Great Texts series, he starts a new series on the Greater Men and Women. No doubt the success of the first series has justified the issue of the second, and that success continues to be well deserved. Properly used, these three books will not only be a stimulus to the brain of the tired clergy, but an incentive to the jaded men of the dispirited congregation. Little need be said of these three volumes. They are as good in their

special way as all Dr. Hastings' work, and they will be as useful. The "great texts" of these portions of Scripture are excellently expounded, illustrated, and driven home. The lives of the patriarchs are told in the other volume as they should be told. The men and women are made to live before us, and, although modern criticism is not ignored, it is not allowed to run riot with the history. These volumes are popular, but they are not unscholarly; they are homiletic, but they are not dry-as-dust. They are not to take the place of clerical study and to dispense with sermon preparation. They are to help preparation, and of their kind they are the best helps we know.'

The Church Family Newspaper.

'This is an excellent book of its kind. The illustrations are fresh, being for the most part taken from recent books, and they are well chosen. All Dr. Hastings' work is done to perfection, and we wish him success in this effort to make present-day preaching both attractive and accurate. The critical position taken up is that of the Editor's *Dictionary of the Bible*, moderate and sound. But the homiletic matter supplied is far larger in range than the limits of the dictionary could allow. More than a quarter of this volume is rightly taken up with the life of Abraham. From the critical point of view we note the careful summary of the different estimates of the character of Abraham found in those writers to whom the symbols J, E, and P have been attached.

'But the constructive part of the study of his character is worked out in far more detail, from the story of his call on through all the vicissitudes of his life in Canaan. We turn instinctively to two episodes—the lonely, persevering and humble prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah, and the sacrifice of Isaac. The illustrations in both instances are excellent, and we commend heartily the way in which the difficult problem is faced—how may we justify God's command to slay his son: "Precisely on that ground which lies patent on the face of the narrative—God meant Abraham to make the sacrifice in spirit, not in the outward act." That is the spirit in which parents may be called to-day to give a child to be a missionary, in despite of all their own hopes for his earthly career.

'If the series maintains this high level its value to Bible-class teachers, as well as preachers, will be great, and its success assured.'

Recent Poetry.

William Blane.

There is true poetry enough in *A Ballad of Men*, by William Blane (Constable; 3s. 6d. net), but there is always some thought that brings the eternal note of sadness in. The longest and best poem is that which gives the book its title. Here is a shorter poem, and more characteristic of the whole.

AT MY FATHER'S GRAVE.

Here, bridging with a thought a gulf so vast,
It holds, unheeding, youth and manhood's years,
So dark, it gave for love but toil and tears!
Strangely I link the future with the past.

The past that held the present darkly sealed!
The future, still a vague, illusive dream!
The life that gave me life! The lips whose
theme
Was Love Divine to faith and hope revealed!

Tell me, my father—here beside thy grave,
As when a child, my doubts to thee I bring,
Fain to the shattered hopes of youth to cling—
Is it the perfect-rest which mortals crave!

Dost thou enjoy—faith yielding unto sight—
All that the cherished promises foretold?
Or, is it more than human creeds can hold—
Each but a fragment of the fuller light?

Or, in the Spirit world, as here with men,
Art thou in lowly service humbly great,
And, trusting still where others hesitate,
Thy duty deifying, now as then?

This I believe—here by thy sacred dust
I feel it spirit-borne upon my heart—
The noble soul that chose the nobler part
Shall not be disappointed in its trust.

Oh, for the simple faith for ever fled!
Be thou my witness with what bitter grief
I cling about each fading, fond belief,
And bear it in my aching bosom—dead!

Night falls, and falteringly I leave thy side,
With hesitating heart and step to plod
Along a darker path than once I trod,
Trusting there shall be light at eventide.

J. H. Twells, Jr.

Moods of the Inner Voice is a title which accurately describes the poems in the volume of that name by J. H. Twells, Jr. (Grant Richards; 3s. 6d. net). The author is in one of his softest and best moods when he writes in this way of his mother:—

I often wonder, when the years creep by
Dividing me from your once-guiding hand,
If now as then you are not always nigh,
Dear Mother, tho' I cannot understand
As once I could.

For oft I feel the breath of love dispel
Some darkling cloud that o'er my soul descends,
Or hear a gentle warning to compel
Rejection of some act my will intends
In reckless mood.

Oh, ever do I feel your anxious eyes
Still bent upon the path of those you left
And hear you sigh, when new distresses rise
To try the hearts already so bereft
Of Fortune's good.

Thomas MacDonagh.

We have had the father and the mother; now let us listen to the hopes that gather about the birth of a son. His name is Donagh MacDonagh, and he was born on Saint Cecilia's Day, 1912. The volume in which he is sung is a fine handsome quarto of *Lyrical Poems* written by his father, Thomas MacDonagh (Dublin: The Irish Review; 6s. net).

WISHES FOR MY SON.

Now, my son, is life for you,
And I wish you joy of it,—
Joy of power in all you do,
Deeper passion, better wit
Than I had who had enough,
Quicker life and length thereof,
More of every gift but love.

Love I have beyond all men,
 Love that now you share with me—
 What have I to wish you then
 But that you be good and free,
 And that God to you may give
 Grace in stronger days to live?

For I wish you more than I
 Ever knew of glorious deed,
 Though no rapture passed me by
 That an eager heart could heed,
 Though I followed heights and sought
 Things the sequel never brought:

Wild and perilous holy things
 Flaming with a martyr's blood,
 And the joy that laughs and sings
 Where a foe must be withstood,
 Joy of headlong happy chance
 Leading on the battle dance.

But I found no enemy,
 No man in a world of wrong,
 That Christ's word of charity
 Did not render clean and strong—
 Who was I to judge my kind,
 Blindest proper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight
 And the clear undoubting strength
 Wars to knit for single right,
 Freedom's war to knit at length,
 And to win, through wrath and strife,
 To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,
 Born on Saint Cecilia's Day,
 I in more harmonious song
 Now for nearer joys should pray—
 Simple joys: the natural growth
 Of your childhood and your youth,
 Courage, innocence, and truth:

These for you, so small and young,
 In your hand and heart and tongue.

The Great Text Commentary.

The best illustration this month has been found by the Rev. George Graham, Mechanic Falls, Maine, U.S.A.

Illustrations of the Great Text for May must be received by the 20th of March. The text is Ph 1⁶.

The Great Text for June is Ro 1¹⁸—'For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness.' A copy of any volume of the *Great Texts of the Bible*, or of Winstanley's *Jesus and the Future*, will be given for the best illustration sent.

The Great Text for July is Ac 21¹⁸—'Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' A volume of the *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, or three volumes of the 'Short Course' Series, will be given for the best illustration sent.

The Great Text for August is Ro 15¹³—'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost.' A copy of Durell's *The Self-Revelation of our Lord*, or of Walker's *Christ the Creative Ideal*, or of Briggs' *The Fundamental Christian Faith*, will be given for the best illustration sent.

The Great Text for September is Gn 13¹¹—'So Lot chose him all the Plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abraham dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom.' A copy of any volume of the *Great Texts of the Bible*, or of the *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, or any volume of the 'Short Course' Series, will be given for the best illustration sent.

Those who send illustrations should at the same time name the books they wish sent them if successful. More than one illustration may be sent by one person for the same text. Illustrations to be sent to the Editor, Kings Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.

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