

Gayton Scholarship. He has written a school story. He has been quite as successful, however, in describing school life as he ever was in describing strange adventures in foreign lands. Every boy will find the humour of 'the angel'—who was not an angel—irresistible.

At last we have a story for the girls—*The Little Brown Linnet*. We wonder why the boys should have so much more than their share of the good things. *The Little Brown Linnet*, however, is one of the sweetest stories we have read, and will make up for much. The book is bound in brown, with a picture of the 'linnet' on the cover.

Neither have Messrs. Nelson forgotten the bairns. For them has come *Silver Bubbles* (3s. 6d.). One side of each page is occupied by a large coloured picture, and on the other side are the verses telling about the picture. Those who would like to see Ann who blew a big bubble—red, orange, and green—and little boy Black, who gets a fresh soot each day but never looks clean, must get *Silver Bubbles*.

There are also two smaller books, both crammed full of bright pictures. These are *Our Dogs* and *The Doll's House*.

'It is Finished.'

John xix. 30.

In the Greek it is one word (*τετέλεσται*). Perhaps it is the greatest word that was ever spoken. And it was probably spoken triumphantly. It is the sixth of the seven 'sayings on the Cross.' Of the fifth and seventh it is said that they were spoken 'with a loud voice.' We may think of this also as spoken in a loud triumphant voice.

What does it mean? That something was ended? His life, for example, or His sufferings? No, the word means more than 'ended.' Five times in the course of His ministry the word is used by our Lord of Himself (Lk 12⁵⁰ 13³¹ 22³⁷, Jn 19²⁸). In every other place but this it is translated 'accomplished' in the Authorized Version. It was probably merely for the sake of variety that it was not translated 'accomplished' here. It means more than ended. The year 1903 and the 19th century are ended, but has their promise been fulfilled? Have we accomplished the work that we were given to do?

But what was accomplished?—

1. *His earthly life.* Two things had been especially given Him to do in His earthly life, and He had accomplished both. The one was *never to sin*. He had accomplished that. He had been tempted keenly, but He had never yielded; and at the close of His life He could say that He had never sinned, no, not once. Was He alone sent into the world to commit no sin? We make a mistake if we think so. What do the commandments mean?—*Thou shalt not*. One day we shall have ended our earthly life, shall we also have accomplished it? Shall it be said of us, as it ought to be said, 'He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth'?

He was to love and *never cease from loving*.

He accomplished that. He loved the publicans and sinners; He loved even the Pharisees, His denunciation of their hypocrisy was due to His love of them. He loved Jerusalem when He said, 'How often would I have gathered thy children together!'—and Jerusalem had rejected Him then. Was He alone sent into the world to love? No, but it was easier for Him. Was it easier? He knew what was *in* man, not merely what came out of Him. He marvelled at the hardness of men's hearts; we scarcely see it. They brought before Him the woman taken in adultery—did they feel the enormity of the transgression as He did? Yet He loved and loved until in many cases He was loved back again. And even when He was not, He never ceased loving. He had accomplished His life. He had never sinned, He had never ceased to love.

2. *His suffering.* 'It is finished'—it was a loud cry. Should we be wrong to say it was a cry of relief as well as of triumph? The deepest experience of all His suffering was just past. The cry, 'My God, my God,' had just been uttered. Should we be wrong in saying that it was partly the gladness of relief?

But we should certainly be wrong if we took it to mean that He was glad His suffering was *ended*. Do you think that the only way to look at suffering is to bear it and get rid of it as soon as possible? You do not know what suffering can do for you. You do not know what it can do through you for those around. There is no more gentle angel of mercy than suffering. There is none that descends more immediately from the Father. Jesus had not only ended His suffering, He had accomplished it. It had done its work in Him. He had been made

by it a perfect Captain of our salvation. And it had wrought its work through Him on us. Henceforth men shall always look on Him whom they pierced, and the look will bring both sorrow for sin and endurance under suffering.

3. *His work.* This was what was accomplished chiefly. He had started with a sense of having a work to do. Even in boyhood He had said, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' He had felt the pressure of it all through His life. 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.' He had ended His life in the calm confidence that He had accomplished it. 'I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have accomplished the work which Thou gavest me to do.'

There is no good done without a purpose in life. Of every one of us it stands true: 'There was a man sent from God, whose name was' so and so. Have we seen that life is a few hours sunlight in which to work the works of Him that sent us? When the night cometh shall we be able to say, 'I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do'? We fear, perhaps, that this would make life too serious or too sombre? He enjoyed His work. 'My meat,' He said, 'is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.' The workman may sing at His work all the day long.

But what was His work?

(1) It was glorifying God. He said, 'I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do.' And what is glorifying God? It is letting men see Him just as He is. Jesus had done that. Jesus had never once sinned, and never once ceased to love; and then when they were impressed with that and loved Him, He said, 'I and the Father are one.' He loves as I do, 'God so loved the world.' Men take their idea of God from those who name the name of God. Do we glorify Him? Do we show Him as He is? We speak of Him as a Father, do we trust Him? Do we draw others to Him?

(2) It was also fulfilling Scripture. Again and again, when He did this or that, we are told it was 'that the Scripture might be fulfilled.' The prophets had prophesied certain things of Him. He fulfilled their prophecies. Among the rest they had prophesied, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.' He healed the sick, and cleansed the leper, and preached the gospel to the poor. They had prophesied, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.' And He read it, He read it and said, 'Of whom speaketh the prophet this?' and answered, 'Of Me, of Me.' This was His work—to suffer, the just for the unjust, and bring many sons to glory,—and He knew it.

(3) So His work can be summed up in one great word Redemption. He came to give His life a ransom, and He had done it. This was the work that the Father gave Him to do, and He had accomplished it.

He had accomplished it for all His Church. His cry, 'It is finished,' did not merely look back on the work of the earthly life. He took His stand, as He uttered it, at the end of the world's history. He saw many of all nations gathered in. He saw them around the throne. 'It is finished' He said, with prophetic voice.

And yet more, He looked on every one. It was not merely that He saw congregation after congregation gathered for true worship, then laid beneath the sod, the redeemed being received into glory; He saw one after another, one beside another, He saw them singly; He knew them one by one, He called them all by name.

So even we also, at the end of our life, can say, not only 'It is ended,' but 'It is accomplished.' For we can say, 'I lay my sins on Jesus,' and in Him we have the benefit of His accomplishment. 'I in them and Thou in Me, that they also may be made perfect in us.'