

Worth Repeating.

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES AND THE DEATH OF JESUS.

[The Rev. Phillips Brooks, before the Yale Theological Seminary.]

No one can read the Gospel of St. John, and then turn to what is left us of the life of Socrates, without being struck and almost startled with the suggestive comparison between the account of Christ's last talk with his disciples before his crucifixion, which is given in the thirteenth to the seventeenth chapters of that Gospel, and the beautiful story of what Socrates said to Cebes, Simmias, and his other friends in prison at Athens, just before he drank the hemlock; and nowhere could the essential difference, as well as the likeness, become more apparent; nowhere could the critics, who loosely elasp Jesus and Socrates together, see more clearly where the line is drawn beyond which Socrates cannot go, beyond which the nature of Jesus sweeps out of our sight.

The story of St. John is familiar enough. The points in the story that Plato tells I may venture to recall to you. The upper chamber of Jerusalem, where the Savior sits with his disciples at supper, is set off against the rugged prison opening upon the Agera of Athens, where, in an inner chamber, the friends of Socrates have come to talk with him once more before he dies. The old man sits upon his bed, rubbing the spot on his leg from which the fetter has just been taken off. The relief that he feels in his leg upon the removal of the fetter gives him occasion to commence his talk. By and by he drops his foot upon the floor, and so sits on the bedside, calmly talking. Once he drops his hand affectionately upon the head of Phaedo, who sits beside him. His wife comes in, with their three boys, and he talks with them kindly; but there is no tenderness in his words, and after a while he bids them to be taken away. The humor that played through all his life is with him to the last, as when he bids his disciples: "Bury me whatever way you like; only you must catch hold of me and take care that I do not give you the slip." Once comes a message from the executioner to tell him about the poison he will have to drink; a sharp fundamental note intruding on the music of his thought, that somehow reminds us of the passing of Judas out from the Passover table. There is one beautiful moment when the disciples are half convinced, but still frightened and trembling. Socrates reads it in their faces and charges them with fear, when Simmias bursts out: "Suppose that we are frightened; do you encourage and comfort us. But, rather, suppose that we are not frightened; that there is a child within us who is frightened." And Socrates says: "Ah! yes. We must find some charm that we can sing over this frightened child to quiet him." And so he goes on with his talk again. Phaedo afterward recalls the impression that his master made upon him in words like these: "I had no painful feeling of pity, as might seem natural to a person present at such a scene; nor did I feel pleasure, as when we talked philosophy, though the discourse was of the same kind. It was a peculiar feeling that possessed me, a strange mixture of pleasure and pain, because I knew that he was soon to die." All through the conversation one can hear the sounds of the religious festival in which the Athenians are engaged outside, the passover, as it were, of the Athenian life. At last, without a shock, calm and peaceful to the last, the great man takes the cup, drinks the poison, and all is over. There lies his body, more eloquent in silence than ever in the words that he said.

And now what was it that they were talking about on that last day? The discussion varied a little at first; but soon it became a sustained argu-

ment for immortality. His arguments were really three. The first was the distinctness between the soul and the body, as testified to by what was the favorite doctrine of Socrates,—the soul's preëxistence. If the soul existed before the body, it surely might outlive it. In his second argument he pleads the immortality of the soul from its simplicity. Here Simmias and Cebes interpose two exquisite difficulties: the one arguing that, after all, the soul may be to the body what the music is to the lyre; the other, that the body may outlive the soul, as the cloth outlives the weaver by whose hand it is made. Socrates replies to both of them and satisfies them; and then goes on to his third argument, in which he tries to establish the distinction between the idea and the perishable attributes of human life. His arguments are all surrounded with an atmosphere of feeling, reverence for God, affection for his disciples, and a tender sense of duty. These play around and through the whole discourse, and give each sentence a richness which is not hard and cold, and which does not rely wholly on the worth of the argument for its power. The whole scene remains as one of the sacred pictures of the human soul. That prison-cell is one of the temples of men's faith, one of the vestibules of immortality. Still, the discourse is an argument; it is a struggle of the intellect. It is consoled by the thought of the divinity behind it, which will make allowance for its deficiencies; but it feels no direct and present influence from the presence of that divinity.

Now turn the leaves of four hundred years, and in the chamber of the passover feel the difference. As Jesus speaks, argument disappears and conviction is at once attained. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." That is the argument of Jesus for immortality. It is not right to say that Socrates appeals to the reason and fails, while Jesus speaks to the heart and succeeds. The appeal of Jesus is to the reason too; only it is to that spiritual reason which has no special function of the nature, but is the best action of the whole nature working together,—the affection and the will being the partners of the brain, or, rather, being one manhood with the brain and sharing its intelligence. The difference of result, in one word, is the difference between convincing the intellect and making the man believe.

I do not know that I can make this clearer, and I must not steal the time to quote largely from the words of Jesus in support of what I mean; but let us select sayings of both Jesus and Socrates and compare them together in pairs. The philosopher asks: "Shall a man who really loves knowledge, and is firmly persuaded that he shall never enjoy it except in the other world, be sorry that he has to die?" The Son of God declares: "I go to him that sent me." Socrates says: "Be well assured that I shall be with the gods, who are good governors (of this I am as certain as I can be), and with good men departed (though of this I am not so certain)." Jesus cries: "And now, O Father! glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Socrates draws in confused but in elaborate detail the road to Hades. Jesus says: "In my Father's house are many mansions." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am." Socrates is noble in his frank uncertainty about his life: "Whether I have tried in a right way and with what success I shall know certainly when I arrive there, if it pleases God." Jesus is divine in his certainty: "O righteous Father! the world hath not

known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Socrates tells of a demon or angel who has the care of every man's soul while he is alive, and when he is dead takes him to the place of judgment. Jesus says: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." "He shall testify of me." The sage consoles his disciples by sending them out to find other teachers. "Greece is a wide place, and there are in it many good men; and there are, besides, many races of barbarians,—all of which are to be explored in search of some one who can perform such a charm as we have explained." The Savior says to his disciples: "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." Socrates says: "If you will take good care of yourself, you will always gratify me and mine." Jesus says: "Love one another as I have loved you." And, if we let our eye run out beyond the times when both the tragedy of Athens and the tragedy of Jerusalem were completed, and see what was thought of the two sufferers, we hear Phaedo closing: "This was the end. O Echechates! of our friend; of all men whom we have known the best, the wisest, and the most just." Nay, before the poison was given by the jailer's hand, we hear him say to his great prisoner: "I have found you the noblest, the gentlest, and the best that ever came here." And then our thoughts turn to Jerusalem; and we hear the centurion and the soldiers who crucified Jesus exclaiming: "Truly this was the Son of God." I know not what to say to any man who does not feel the difference.

The Sanctuary of Grief.

[From the French by Mme. de Gasparin.]

Grief is a delicate and fragile flower, fading even more easily than joy, but never wholly dead. Like the rose of Jericho, though seemingly dried and withered past recognition, yet, if but one warm breath pass over it for a moment, it will bloom again with renewed freshness. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and those who seem to forget have often the saddest hearts. In each and all of us life is two-fold; two beings dwell within us, one active, busy, absorbed in the duties and pleasures of this world; while the other is sadly and dreamily living in the past, treading with tears the former paths, stopping to remember a look, to pursue a shadow.

Yes, even the frivolous man of the world has his memories; a gentle voice reaching from the past; one confiding word; one "touch of a vanished hand," something sudden, unexpected, and lo! the flood-gates are opened, and the waves of sorrow are rushing over him; his heart beats quick, he seizes once again with a passionate intensity the image of his beloved one,—it is his, it is not dead, and the joyous loving past lives again for him.

But when we see light returning to the eyes that wept, when life begins to flow again in its wonted channels, then we are apt to say, "that which is finished is finished, and the memory of the dead has perished forever."

Not so. After those first days when the anguish of separation is lacerating the heart, and it cares not to conceal the depth of its wounds, there comes a reaction, an over-powering desire, a craving for isolation; a holy jealousy takes possession of the soul, the gates are barred against intruders, the doors of the chamber of death are sealed, the brow is taught to deny everything, tortures, memories; while within, ah, within! the lamp of sorrow is burning with an ardent glow, and many a passing word will make the heart-strings quiver with a poi-

nant agony, even while the lips are discoursing of common things,—ay, and perchance with smiles.

Then the heart will commune with its beloved dead in a sacred stillness which even the tenderest sympathy may not break. Then are lavished forth those expressions of endearment perhaps in life but charily bestowed; then perhaps is forgiveness craved, confessions are poured forth with burning tears, all the springs of emotion are stirred to their very depths, and harmonies so sweet and solemn are ringing in the temple of the soul, that even a friend's voice mingling therewith would seem to jar and give pain as a discordant note.

Oblivion? Nay, think not so! a sanctuary, a holy of holies, shrouded with a veil forever.

Old Earth in Terrible Throes.

Mount Etna is in full eruption. Thirty craters are vomiting fire, smoke, dust and ashes. They cover several square miles, and all pour forth lava. Much alarm is felt in the vicinity. This is in the island of Sicily. Here were the fabled forges of Cyclops; and it is called by Pindar the pillar of heaven. Eruptions are mentioned as occurring 1693, B. C., and Thucydides speaks of three eruptions taking place in 734, 477, 425, B. C. There were eruptions in 125, 121, and 43, B. C. In 1169, A. D., Catania was overwhelmed and 15,000 inhabitants perished in the burning ruins.

In 1669, tens of thousands of persons perished in the streams of lava which rolled over the whole country for forty days. In May, 1830, showers of lava reached nearly to Rome, several villages were destroyed. In 1832, the town of Bronte was desolated. The volcanoes have been preparing for this grand affair since 1865.

Vesuvius, not willing to be beaten, has kindled her fires afresh and is increasing their intensity. In the year 79, A. D., this giant of volcanoes buried Pompeii and Herculaneum beneath its ashes. 250,000 persons perished as they walked and talked and eat and drank. Among them Pliny, the naturalist, came to his death. In 1623, Terre del Greco was destroyed, and 4,000 perished, and much of the country around the mountain was desolated. The most terrible eruption took place in 1759. One of the most violent bursts took place in 1767, the 34th from the time of Titus. In 1794, the lava flowed over 5,000 acres of rich vineyards and cultivated lands, and the town of Torre del Greco was again burned. The top of the mountain then fell in and enlarged the crater to ten miles in circumference. Eruptions in 1855, 1858, 1859, and 1860, all were destructive. December, 1861, Terre del Greco was again destroyed.

It strikes me that I should rather live farther from spontaneous combustion. The grand old chimney of the earth may give timely notice of its intentions, or it may not. I would like a small sea at least between us.—*Apostolic Times*.

"The women and children in the mills and factories of India are greatly oppressed. "Of all the classes that toil for a livelihood," said the Earl of Shaftesbury in Parliament, "there is none so helpless, so friendless and subdued as these women. They are doubly slave—slave to the mill owner, and slave to their husbands, who, disregarding the sufferings of their wives, revel at ease in their hard-won earnings. They have no public opinion on their behalf, no press, no paid or voluntary agitators. In their distress they lift their eyes to the Imperial Parliament, and shall it be replied, my lords, that 'on the side of their oppressors there is power, but that the oppressed had no comforter? Heaven forbid such an issue! For six years ago I addressed the House of Commons in a kindred appeal, and they heard me; I now turn to your lordships, and I implore you in the same spirit, for God's sake, and in his name, to have mercy on the children."

—If we enjoyed all our religious privileges, as we might, we would have no use for the word duty.

Politeness Exemplified.

While at Providence, Rhode Island, says a writer in the *Springfield Republican*, I met Mrs. Mary A. Livermore at the house of a friend. At table the conversation fell up on the subject of politeness. The hostess told of a friend of hers, a little antique in her manners, for whom a reception was given by one of the Beacon street aristocracy of Boston. At dinner the guest poured out her tea in her saucer to cool it, a method of refrigeration which was quite au fait thirty years ago. The guests looked surprised, and some were inclined to smile at her simplicity and ignorance of high-toned propriety, but the lady of the house poured some tea into her saucer and drank it therefrom. This was considered a hint to all, and the guest was immediately placed at her ease.

Mrs. Livermore said: "I was once the recipient of a very marked politeness of a similar sort. When I was in London my husband and I received a verbal invitation from Lady Vilas, whom I had met once or twice pleasantly, to come to her house next evening and meet a few friends of hers. We accepted and went. But I was deceived by the informality of the invitation, and supposed it was merely to meet half a dozen neighbors or intimate friends. So we went out riding in the afternoon, stopping here and there on our way back to the hotel. Judge of my amazement to find the house illuminated, and a very large and brilliant party assembled in full dress in my honor. There I was in plain carriage dress, bonnet, and black gloves!"

"What in the world did you do?" inquired a young girl.

"Why, I went right into the house and to the ladies' dressing room, whence I sent a note to the hostess saying that I misapprehended her invitation and was not in appropriate costume. She ran up and reassured me by telling me they had come to see me and didn't care for the dress, and carried me right down with her. All in full dress, and the ladies without hats, and hair elaborately dressed; I with brown drees, bare hands, bonnet on. I soon recovered the self-possession which the faux pas somewhat disturbed, and was greeted with splendid cordiality. In a few minutes Mr. Livermore edged around behind me and whispered, 'Didn't you think Mary, that all these ladies had on white kids when you came in?' I looked around, and they were all bare-handed! More-over, I observed that a half dozen had bonnets on. This half a dozen rapidly increased, till we were in a majority; and I soon discovered that no lady who arrived after I did had removed her hat. Now that is what I call politeness."

Another.

"Another little wave
Upon the sea of life,
Another soul to save,
Amid its toil and strife:

Two more little hands
To work for good or ill,
A little thoughtless brain,
A little untaught will.

Two more little feet
To walk the dusty road,
And choose where two paths meet,
The narrow or the broad."

—Life is made up of experiences, and each experience is necessary, else it would not be. We often think we have failed when we are defeated in some purpose we had in view; but could we behold the wisdom displayed in the thwarting of our petted plans, we would be ready to accept the result, let that be what it would. We, like little children, often desire that which is not well for us to have. Our wants are always greater than our necessities; but 'tis well that we aspire. The buds of Springtime aspire to be the fruits of Autumn, and the ripened fruit contains a germ that waits in peace for the good time coming, when it shall burst into life and become a living entity in the world of being.

Of the ninety-nine criminals in the Ohio penitentiary for life, nine-tenths of them owe their present condition to the use of whisky, the curse of this generation.