

there is a partial answer which may be given. Here let us refer to an interesting letter which has come from the far north, in reference to this very subject. Says the Rev. John Love, of Mid Yell, Lerwick : "The circumstances of the workers are not all the same. Some have fewer opportunities than others. Should they suffer loss on that account? 'Yes,' says the world. 'Not so,' says Jesus. And He makes the master give the full hire to the eleventh hour labourers as well as to all the others." Circumstances—the word does not cover it all, but it seems to run in the right direction. Lo, we have left all, said Peter. Yes, but what had Peter to leave? The young man could not leave his all, *for he was very rich*. And some, in like manner, never have had the temptations or the trials; have found the path to Jesus smooth and alluring, for a mother's hand, it may be, smoothed and made it pleasant for them, and they shall have their reward. But the last shall not be forgotten. For there is more joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance.

THE time for toil is past, and night has come,

The last and saddest of the harvest eves ;  
Worn out with labour long and wearisome,  
Drooping and faint, the reapers hasten home,  
Each laden with his sheaves.

Last of the labourers, Thy feet I gain,

Lord of the harvest ! and my spirit grieves  
That I am burdened, not so much with grain,  
As with a heaviness of heart and brain—

Master, behold my sheaves !

Few, light, and worthless, yet their trifling weight

Through all my frame a heavy aching leaves ;  
For long I struggled with my hapless fate,  
And stayed and toiled till it was dark and late—

Yet these are all my sheaves.

Full well I know I have more tares than wheat,

Brambles and flowers, dry stalks and withered leaves ;  
Wherefore I blush and weep, as at Thy feet  
I kneel down reverently, and repeat—

"Master, behold my sheaves !"

I know these blossoms, clustering heavily,

With evening dew upon their folded leaves,  
Can claim no value or utility ;  
Therefore shall fragrance and beauty be

The glory of my sheaves.

So do I gather strength and hope anew ;

Full well I know Thy patient love perceives,  
Not what I did, but what I strove to do—  
And, though the full ripe ears be sadly few,  
Thou wilt accept my sheaves.

## ++ Saint Paul. <sup>1</sup>

BY REV. GEORGE JACKSON, B.A., EDINBURGH.

It is a dainty little volume that lies before me as I write, only fifty pages in all, and costing but half-a-crown ; but it "hath dust of gold." It is by no means a new book. My copy bears the date 1890, but the poem first saw the light as far back as '67. It has been reprinted several times since, and judging from the figures which (in accordance with the very commendable practice recently adopted by the publishers) are furnished by the book itself, with increasing rapidity during recent years. Turning over the title page this inscription meets us—

Dedicated

to

J. E. B.

September 1867.

In the original edition, a copy of which I have not yet been able to see, were added these words (in Greek) : "To whom I owe my own soul also." When the omission was made, I do not know ; why, I can only guess.

"J. E. B." is Mrs. Josephine Butler. Of her it is needless to speak. What she has done will only be fully known when "in that day" thousands hasten to acknowledge that to her—as Philemon to Paul—they owe their own souls. But the faith that through all the long agony of these twenty years has made her gentle spirit strong to do and to endure, is known to all. That same faith breathes in every page of this noble poem. Mr. Myers, it is true, is far away now from his early creed ; yet whoever reads this sweet song of a once confident hope may do so, not only with deepening

<sup>1</sup> *Saint Paul.* By Frederic W. H. Myers. (Macmillan & Co.)

admiration for her, whose life and teaching could inspire such lofty music, but with the knowledge that he is listening to the very language of Paul's heart.

And that phrase, "the language of Paul's heart," may perhaps be taken as describing not inaccurately the nature of this poem. It is not in any sense a *life* of the apostle—not even in the sense in which Sir Edwin Arnold's poem, "The Light of the World," can be called a life of Christ. References to events in the career of the historical Paul of the Acts and the Epistles are comparatively few. Nor is the poem an attempt to trace in verse (as Dr. Matheson has recently attempted in prose) the spiritual development of the apostle. For though it is Paul himself who speaks throughout, this is much too slight a work to claim to be a spiritual autobiography. But fragmentary as it is, it is a fragment of "The Story of my Heart." We get, if not a full view, at least glimpses of Paul's inner life—his strength and weakness, his rapturous joy shadowed by bitter memories of pain; above all, his love for Christ and deep passion for souls. The poem, as Mr. Meredith has said, "is in the form of a monologue of the apostle who does not preach but meditates, as 'in the hollow of his heart,' giving utterance in various moods to the intense aspiration, the fiery belief, which animated him for his work." A bald summary of such a poem would probably be as useless as most outlines of "In Memoriam"; for this, like Tennyson's great work, is not less a cluster of poems than one poem. I shall endeavour rather to indicate by quotations the point of view from which Mr. Myers has approached his subject, and briefly to compare the St. Paul of his pages with the St. Paul of the New Testament.

Our judgment upon any attempt to reconstruct, in however small a degree, the spiritual history of the apostle will, of course, be determined very largely by the conception which we have already formed of him. How very widely opinions may differ, one example will show. Shortly after the publication of this poem, a notice of it (from which I have already quoted) appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* from the pen of Mr. George Meredith. It is a model of favourable and, at the same time, discriminating criticism. A year or two later an anonymous critic in *Blackwood* dismissed Mr. Myers and his poetry with the most scornful contempt; and indeed so carefully chosen did the points of attack appear to be, that it is difficult to

resist the conclusion that Mr. Meredith no less than Mr. Myers was the object of the reviewer's indignation. Mr. Meredith had singled out for special praise the lines on Damaris, as showing the author's mastery of the form of verse which he had chosen, and the fulness of poetic expression he was able to throw into it. "Was Damaris a ballet-dancer? the reader wonders" is the astonishing comment of the *Blackwood* reviewer on these self-same stanzas. The following parallels are interesting as a lesson in literary criticism, but especially as furnishing one (as I think) well-balanced judgment on the poem in question,—

*Blackwood's* Reviewer.

Mr. Meredith in *Fortnightly*.

"It breathes throughout the spirit of St. Paul.

. . . a singular stately melody of verse."

"It seems to us that any garland of rhymes that could be strung together would be as like St. Paul as the curious succession of semi-scriptural rhapsodies which are here called by his name . . . expressed in a rhyme of such bewildering cadence, and embellished with such perpetually recurring parallelisms, that our brain is in a whirl before it has gone over half a dozen pages."

"Until this young man divests himself of his strangely prosaic jingle-jangle, we cannot promise him that anybody above the mental level of a Sunday School teacher will be 'rapt in a worship ravished in a wonder' of his poetic gift," etc. etc.

"I have cited what are to my taste blots in his work; but as one loving poetry wherever I can find it, and of any kind, I have to thank him."

Further comment is needless.

What will seem to some "blots" in the work may be mentioned in two or three words. I am glad to notice, by the way, that the use of the small letters at the beginning of a line (except where a full stop preceded), which disfigured the pages of the first edition, has now been abandoned in favour of the usual practice. But there is still a singular want of uniformity in the printing of capital letters in the case of pronouns which refer to Christ. As to the form of verse chosen by Mr. Myers, Mr. Meredith's description may suffice: "The lines are rhymed fours, alternating eleven and ten syllables; what we call the accent is on the first syllable of each line invariably." The measure is not common, but in Mr. Myers' hands it yields the most pleasing results. Now and again, however, one notes a tendency to what

Mr. Meredith rightly calls "lackadaisical alliteration." When we read of Paul offering to God "a patience and a pain" it is inevitable that the *Blackwood* reviewer should make merry.

These, however, are but minor blemishes. More serious is what I cannot help regarding as a misreading of the mind of Paul. It has been more than once remarked that in all the addresses and writings of the apostle that have come down to us, there is manifested a curious insensibility to the sights and sounds of nature. Probably not a single physical fact with regard to the many countries through which, in his busy life, he passed could be gleaned from his writings. "There are few writers who, to judge solely from their writings, seem to have been less moved by the beauties of the external world. . . . Not by one verse, scarcely even by a single expression in all his letters, does he indicate the faintest gleam of delight or wonder at the glories of nature" (*Farrar's St. Paul*). Explanations, of course, lie ready to hand; but the fact itself seems beyond dispute. Now, such is by no means the impression left upon the mind by the reading of this poem. Take, e.g., the lines describing Damaris, to which reference has already been made; is there not in them a touch of sensuousness impossible to the Apostle Paul? Or, again, can we imagine him writing of the earth's "retrieving" when it

"Pours in the rain and rushes from the sod"

of "the soft air infinite and pearly," of "the purple heather" and "the purple sea,"

"Blending of waters and of winds together,  
Winds that were wild and waters that were free"?

Did Paul know aught of spiritual experiences that could shape themselves in language like this?—

"Often for me between the shade and splendour  
Ceos and Tenedos at dawn were grey;  
Welling of waves, disconsolate and tender,  
Sighed on the shore, and waited for the day."

Then till the bridegroom from the east advancing,  
Smote him a waterway and flushed the lawn,  
God with sweet strength, with terror, and with trancing,  
Spake in the purple mystery of dawn."

Words such as these on the lips of Jesus, whose home for thirty years was amid the quiet beauty of Nazareth, who pointed as He taught to the humble wayside flower, or to the purple flush of western skies, only and to whom earth, sky, and sea were all a parable of God, it might be possible to justify; on

the lips of Paul they contradict every impression which his own life and writings give to us.

One other criticism only will I venture to offer. Do not these lines strike a false note?—

"What was their sweet desire and subtle yearning,  
Lovers and ladies whom their song enrols?  
Faint to the flame which in my breast is burning,  
Less than the love with which I ache for souls."

Or these, again, in which Paul, fainting for the "advent feet" of Christ, compares himself with "some innocent and eager maiden" who

"Leans o'er the wistful limit of the world,  
Dreams of the glow and glory of the distance,  
Wonderful wooing and the grace of tears,  
Dreams with what eyes and what a sweet insistence  
Lovers are waiting in the hidden years"?

As Mr. Meredith very truly says, the dominant impression we have of St. Paul is jealously sensitive of any such contrast, however slight.

But to most readers of *St. Paul* praise will be far easier than criticism, and I gladly pass on to point out a few of the manifold beauties of the poem. In the introduction to a little volume of poems of Scottish Minor Poets, just issued, the editor (Sir George Douglas) says that though Scotland has never lacked natural poetic genius—"the tuneful impulse"—her sons have to a remarkable degree neglected the cultivation of poetry as an art. Opinions may differ as to the degree of Mr. Myers' natural poetic genius; his cultivation of the art of poetry is beyond question. His life-long study of the great writers of antiquity—the fruit of which is gathered in his *Classical Essays*—has taught him that the poet is "made" as well as "born." We expect to see, therefore, in *St. Paul* the hand of the literary artist, and we shall not look in vain.

"God, who in Israel's bondage and bewailing  
Heard them, and granted them their heart's desire,  
Clave them the deep with power and with prevailing,  
*Gloomed in the cloud and glowed into the fire.*"

Could language more happily describe the guiding pillar of the Israelites, and at the same time remind us that that pillar was but the visible sign of the presence of the invisible Jehovah? Is not this, in a single phrase, the Athens upon which, from Mars Hill, Paul looked down—

"A shining city  
Full of all knowledge and a God unknown"?

How fine are the lines in which the apostle, yearning for the return of Christ, likens himself to the "venturer," who, fashioning "his fancies of the realm to be,"

" Wears evermore the seal of his believing  
Deep in the dark of solitary eyes" !

But the noblest imagery of the whole poem is to be found in the reference to the Great Forerunner—

" John, than which man a sadder or a greater<sup>1</sup>  
Not till this day has been of woman born ;  
John, like some lonely peak by the Creator  
Fired with the red glow of the rushing morn.

This when the sun shall rise and overcome it  
Stands in his shining desolate and bare,  
Yet not the less the inexorable summit  
Flamed him his signal to the happier air."

But Mr. Myers is more than a literary artist. He has deep spiritual insight. His canvas is all too narrow for so great a subject;<sup>2</sup> but within the limits which he has assigned to himself, and in spite of the blemishes which have been detected, he has given to us a picture of the mind of the apostle both beautiful and true. It would prove a very profitable exercise for any biblical student to go carefully through this poem and note in the margin parallel passages from Paul's epistles. Here I can only draw attention to some of the most obvious of such parallelisms. The apostle's frequent references to the persecuting zeal of his early life—"the days desolate and the useless years"—are well known. This is how he speaks here—

" Dear men and women, whom I sought and slew !  
Ah, when we mingle in the heavenly places  
How will I weep to Stephen and to you ! "

" Also I ask, but ever from the praying  
Shrinks my soul backward, eager and afraid,  
Point me the sum and shame of my betraying,  
Show me, O Love, Thy wounds which I have made ! "

How truly Pauline is the prayer which in the bitterness of his spirit he offers—

" Make Thou, O Christ, a dying of my living,  
Purge from the sin but never from the pain ! "

<sup>1</sup> "A sadder or a greater"—in the original edition, "a grander and a greater;" on which Mr. Meredith remarks, "The epithet belongs entirely to nineteenth century journals, shouting praise of their favourite public men; but the image is splendidly characteristic and permanent."

<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, I can see neither reasonableness nor justice in the remark of a reviewer in the *Athenaeum*, to the effect that "either more should have been done or nothing."

Or, compare again Paul's wish that he himself were anathema from Christ for his brethren's sake, with lines like these—

" Oft when the Word is on me to deliver,  
Opens the heaven and the Lord is there :  
Desert or throng, the city or the river,  
Melt in a lucid Paradise of air.

Only like souls I see the folk there under,  
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be  
kings,—

Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,  
Sadly contented in a show of things.

*Then with a rush the intolerable craving  
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call,—  
Oh, to save these ! to perish for their saving,  
Die for their life, be offered for them all !*

The Paul of this poem is one with the Paul of the Epistles in his preaching of the Cross—

" Not in soft speech is told the earthly story,  
Love of all Loves ! that showed thee for an hour ;  
Shame was thy kingdom, and reproach thy glory,  
Death thine eternity, the Cross thy power."

One with him, too, in his passionate longing to be with Christ, whether he be brought nigh by death, or by the coming of his Lord Himself. As a ship "strains for the harbour where her sails are furled," as a venturer—

" In palace or in prison  
Fashions his fancies of the realm to be,

So even I, and with a heart more burning,  
So even I, and with a hope more sweet,  
Groan for the hour, O Christ ! of Thy returning,  
Faint for the flaming of Thine advent feet.

Ah, what a hope ! and when afar it glistens,  
Stops the heart beating, and the lips are dumb :  
Only my spirit to His silence listens,  
Faints till she find Him, quivers till He come.

Once for a night and day upon the splendid  
Anger and solitude of seething sea,  
Almost I deemed mine agony was ended,  
Nearly beheld Thy Paradise and Thee :

Saw the deep heaving into ridges narrow,  
Heard the blast bellow on its ocean-way ;  
Felt the soul freed, and like a flaming arrow  
Sped on Euroclydon thro' death to-day.

Ah, but not yet He took me from my prison,  
Left me a little while, nor left for long,—  
Bade as one buried, bade as one arisen,  
Suffer with men and like a man be strong."

One other quotation only I will add. It needs no comment. As a member of a Church that has always laid emphasis on the "argument from

experience," it was with peculiar delight that I read these three stanzas—

"Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest  
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:  
Yea, with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest,  
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."

Rather the earth shall doubt when her retrieving  
Pours in the rain and rushes from the sod,  
Rather than he for whom the great conceiving  
Stirs in his soul to quicken into God.

Ay, tho' then thou shouldst strike him from his glory  
Blind and tormented, maddened and alone;  
Even on the Cross would he maintain his story,  
Yes, and in hell would whisper, I have known."

Dr. Dale has written a book to answer the question, why it is that those who believe in Christ continue to believe in Him, despite all the attacks upon their faith. What nobler answer could be given than this which Mr. Myers has put into the lips of St. Paul?

\* \* \* The article by Mr. George Meredith, to which I have several times referred, is to be found in the *Fortnightly Review*, vol. iii. New Series. I am indebted to a writer in the *British Weekly* for calling my attention to it, as also for one or two facts which are mentioned in the above paper.

## Expressions employed concerning Israel as a Chosen Nation.

BY AD. NEUBAUER, M.A., READER IN RABBINICAL LITERATURE, OXFORD.

I DO not pretend to exhaust the subject, or to draw definite conclusions relating to the time when the texts which I shall adduce for my purpose were composed. I shall only put together what I have observed in the Bible from time to time concerning the matter.

The rarer expressions are:—1. יְדָה, *Yada*, "to know," to be found in Amos iii. 2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth;" and Hos. xiii. 5, "I did know thee in the wilderness;" compare also Gen. xviii. 19, "For I know him." 2. נֶגֶל, *S'gullah*, "a particular object" (the root is not employed in the Bible in any other form), to be found in Exod. xix. 5, "Then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people;" and in Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2, and xxvi. 18, where it is connected with אֹם, *Am*, "a peculiar people." 3. הַלֵּק, *Helek*, "portion," to be found in Deut. xxxii. 9, "For the Lord's portion is His people," and Zech. ii. 16 (12), "And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion." 4. עָבֵד, *Ebed*, "servant," in Lev. xxv. 42, 55; Jer. xxx. 10, and sometimes in the later part of Isaiah. 5. "The branch of my planting, the work of my hands," Isa. lx. 21. 6. "A kingdom of priests," only in Exod. xix. 6. 7. קָדוֹשׁ, *Kadosh*, "holy," in Exod. xix. 6 and Deut. vii. 6, and elsewhere, "a holy nation." Compare also Isa. iv. 3, applied to those who remain in the holy city.

More frequent are the following expressions:—**בָּן**, *Ben*, "son," in Deut. xiv. 1, "Ye are

children of the Lord your God;" Isa. i. 2, "I have nourished and brought up children;" Hos. ii. 1 (A.V. i. 10), "Ye are the sons of the living God;" Isa. xlvi. 3, and Ps. ii. 7, "Thou art my son."

Most frequent are the following expressions:—**נָהָלָה**, *Nahlah*, "inheritance," to be found in Deuteronomy, Isa. xix. 25, Micah, Joel, and the Psalms. 2. "People of the Lord," abounding in the Song of Deborah (Judges v. 11), in Amos vii. 15, and Isaiah. 3. With verbs: **אָרַךְ**, *Barakh*, "to be blessed," in the Pentateuch, except Exodus and Leviticus, in Jer. iv. 2, "And the nations shall bless themselves in Him;" and in the latter part of Isaiah: **אֶחָבָה**, *Ahab*, "to love," in Deuteronomy, Hos. iii. 1, "According to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel," xi. 1, xiv. 5, in Jeremiah and the Book of Kings. The love of God is compared to that of a woman and a bride. Jer. ii. 2, "The love of thine espousals," Isa. liv. 5 and lxii. 4, 5; Hos. ii. "And give her a bill of divorce": **בָּחָר**, *Bahar*, "to choose," which seems to be the latest of all the expressions we find, introduced most likely after the disappearance of the kingdom of Israel. It is to be found in Deuteronomy, the Books of Kings, the latter part of Isaiah, the Psalms, and Nehemiah. The expressions of love and choice mostly occur in post-Exilic writings, if we may judge from the ancient liturgical compositions.