

tute for the imagination. But the modern preacher has found that the men and women of to-day are walking on the earth, and he has resolved to come and join himself to them there. So the *Problems of Life* (Macmillan; 3s. net), discussed by the Rev. C. A. Houghton, M.A., Rector of St. Petrock's, Exeter (a typical modern preacher), are such as 'The Voice of Approval,' 'Prayer,' 'Labour,' 'Joy,' 'Sorrow,' 'Pain,' 'The Journey's End,' and 'What is Truth?'

Messrs Morgan & Scott have issued another impression of Gough's *Orations* (1s. net).

Near as the Psalms are, delightfully near, to the human heart, there are some things in them that are a considerable distance removed from the modern human understanding. And of these things the most remote of all are, strange to say, some of the most vital things, as Life, Death, and Immortality. Perhaps the nearest approach that we can make to an explanation of the difference between the ancient Hebrew and the modern English conception of these things is to say that, to the Hebrew, immortality was of the nation rather than of the individual, while to the modern Englishman it is altogether the other way. In

any case, we need to try to understand these things as the Psalmists understood them, if we are to understand the Psalms. And to that end the Rev. W. O. E. Oesterley, D.D., has published a volume of studies in the Psalms, to which he has given the title of *Life, Death, and Immortality* (Murray; 3s. 6d. net). It is a volume of such studies as only a man who can live in two worlds at once, the ancient and the modern, could write. Dr. Oesterley has worked himself into the Hebrew mind as few men have had the patience to do, and indeed his most passionate desire in life is that Israel may be saved. It is a book which will set many a preacher on the right lines.

Messrs Pickering & Inglis, of Glasgow, have a series which is called 'Every Christian's Library.' They have just added to it *God's Gospel and God's Righteousness*, by Philip Mauro (1s. net).

*Culture of the Christian Heart*, by the Rev. J. A. Clapperton, M.A. (R.T.S.; 1s.). Is it the heart in the modern or in the Biblical sense? In the Biblical sense. It includes the will; it is not merely the emotional part of us. And culture? It is not culture as the offset (and antagonist) to religion; it is growth in grace.

## Christ's Teaching on Divorce.<sup>1</sup>

BY THE VEN. WILLOUGHBY C. ALLEN, M.A., ARCHDEACON OF MANCHESTER.

It is often asserted that in His teaching about divorce the Lord lays down a law prohibiting divorce, which is contradicted by the exception permitted in Mt 5<sup>32</sup> 19<sup>9</sup>, and the conclusion is drawn that these clauses cannot have been spoken by Him.

But quite apart from the question whether the Lord (even supposing His teaching about divorce to have been intended to be of the nature of a law to be enforced by authority) may not have qualified this law by laying down another law dealing with exceptional cases, there is grave reason to doubt whether His words should be understood to be of the nature of law at all in the sense of an enactment to be enforced.

<sup>1</sup> N.B.—This paper does not deal with re-marriage after divorce.

If, e.g., we take the Sermon on the Mount, the whole of the teaching there, with the exception of this so-called 'law' of divorce, is now generally understood to be of the nature not of law, but of illustrated principle.

E.g. 'I say unto you, Swear not at all.' Who is there now who wishes to interpret this as a law prohibiting all swearing?

'I say unto you, That every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to the judgment.'

'I say unto you, That every one who looked on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.'

'I say to you, Resist not the evil one.'

'I say to you, Love your enemies.'

None of these are laws to be enforced by discipline, without exception. They are principles which

are to guide the conduct. On what ground, then, is 'I say unto you, That every one who putteth away his wife, causeth her to commit adultery' to be regarded? not as a general guide to conduct, but as a rigid law to which there can be no exception. In the other cases the Christian Church has long been of the mind that exceptions must be made to (a), whilst in the others there can be no case of making exception, because they are of the nature of principles or ideals to be aimed at, but which few would care to assert that they wholly keep.

So far, then, as the First Gospel goes, the argument that the clause 'except for the sake of fornication' cannot have been spoken by Christ because it contradicts the 'law' of Christ that 'every one who putteth away his wife, causeth her to commit adultery' is invalid. For read in the light of the whole Sermon this command is not a 'law,' but an ideal of conduct, an ideal which every Christian will seek to make the law of his life. But in marriage the maintenance of this ideal depends upon two parties. And what if one live up to, whilst the other fall from it?

Perhaps, however, the objection to the clauses in question may take a different form. It may be said that they are inconsistent with the teaching of the Lord as recorded by three independent witnesses, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Paul.

To this we may reasonably answer that there is no good ground for using the word 'inconsistent.' The clauses in question may be supplementary to teaching elsewhere recorded.

As the subject is dealt with most fully in Mark, it may be convenient to deal with that Gospel first.

And it should be noted in passing that many critical writers believe that of the two passages Mt 19<sup>3-12</sup>, Mk 10<sup>1-12</sup>, the former contains the most original record of the ultimate facts. In that case our primary gospel record of this incident contained the clauses in question. But since, perhaps, a majority of recent writers believe Matthew to be here secondary as compared with Mark, let us assume that that has been proved. Mark, then, records that Pharisees came to Christ and asked him if it was lawful for a man to put away his wife. Now this is a very extraordinary question to have been asked, for no Jew doubted, or could have doubted, the legality of divorce. The Law of Dt 24<sup>1-4</sup>, as interpreted in the time of Christ, settled that question, though it left doubt as to the legal grounds for divorce. It is clear, there-

fore, that these Pharisees were not asking for any other purpose than to get an answer which they could use as an indictment against Christ. They came, as Mark says, 'tempting' Him. They must, in other words, have had reason to know what the answer would be. And they got what they expected and desired. The Law of Moses was set aside. Appeal was made to the purpose of God in creation, and divorce was declared to be inadmissible.

St. Matthew, when repeating this narrative, has confused it by interpolating into it the exceptive clause, and by modifying it in other ways. He has thereby given a handle to those who jump quickly at conclusions.<sup>1</sup> They argue that because interpolated here the clauses do not belong to the authentic sayings of Christ. That is a very rash conclusion. St. Matthew has elsewhere interpolated into St. Mark's narratives other sayings. Are we immediately to conclude that all these do not belong to Christ's authentic sayings? Many of those who so cheerfully abandon Mt 19<sup>9b</sup> would be aghast if they were asked to give up 16<sup>17ff</sup>. and other such interpolations. The question is, where did St. Matthew draw these sayings from? If others come from a source which has preserved authentic sayings of Christ, whether Q, or any other source, why not also 19<sup>9b</sup>?

To this it is replied that this clause is inconsistent with or contradictory to Christ's teaching in St. Mark, St. Paul, and St. Luke.

But why is it inconsistent? Suppose that Christ's teaching in St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Paul is intended to be a law binding on all men and to be enforced by authority. Then what reason is there for saying that the clauses in St. Matthew are not of the nature of a supplementary 'law'?

Or better, allow that the stricter teaching is intended to be an ideal to be aimed at by the disciple of Christ. Then the exceptive clauses will be a supplementary regulation limiting divorce to the one case where it will sometimes be necessary, namely, in cases where the ideal has been shattered. For what is the principle of marriage implied in the Lord's teaching? It is that marriage is the union, spiritual and physical, of two

<sup>1</sup> The conclusions arrived at in *St. Matthew* ('Int. Crit. Com.') on this subject are open to this charge. But they were not determined by such considerations as those described in the next sentence (above).

whole and complete personalities, a union which is indissoluble, or should be indissoluble, until death, which severs the bond. That is the ideal, but like all God's purposes for men it can be thwarted by human sin, and human sin can break this union. What sin? The sin of fornication which is an act of severance, spiritual and physical, of the marriage bond.<sup>1</sup>

Of course the legal tie may remain. But, in fact, the marriage bond has been broken and the exceptive clauses in St. Matthew are a sanction or a recognition of the possible necessity of legal divorce following a divorce which has already taken place in the spiritual and physical sphere. This sanction is, of course, only permissive. There is no command that such divorce (legal) shall take place. But there is the recognition that fornication is an adequate and possibly necessary ground for solving in law a union which has already been dissolved in the sphere of the spirit and of the flesh.

This teaching is clear and consistent. Marriage is a bond which during life should be indissoluble. Two things sever it. Fornication which severs the union of the flesh, that being only the symbol of the severance of the union of the spirit. Death severs it also. The words of Christ deal with principle, not with the application of principle

<sup>1</sup> Chrysostom, *Ep. 1 ad Cor.*, Hom. 19. 3. By fornication 'the marriage is already dissolved.' 'The husband is no longer a husband.'

to legal enactment, except in so far as He implies that legal solution of marriage may in some cases follow its solution in fact.

To this recognition of the fact that Christ's teaching permitted divorce for fornication the early Church held firm. Clement of Alexandria,<sup>2</sup> Tertullian,<sup>3</sup> Cyprian,<sup>4</sup> Basil,<sup>5</sup> Gregory of Nazianzen,<sup>6</sup> Chrysostom,<sup>7</sup> Epiphanius,<sup>8</sup> Jerome,<sup>9</sup> Augustine, Hilary of Poitiers,<sup>10</sup> Ambrosiaster,<sup>11</sup> all affirm it.

But in the later Western Church ascetic tendencies fought hard against this exception. It has, however, been reserved for modern writers to go beyond a tacit neglect of these clauses to a positive rejection of them in the interests of ascetic theory. In many respects this modern theory represents a return to Montanism. It tends to try and represent the teaching of Christ as a hard-and-fast 'law' absolutely prohibiting divorce. It should logically, but in the face of the New Testament, describe marriage as a permanently binding tie lasting beyond death, so that second marriages would be un-Christian. And there are signs of a desire to do so, and to represent this Montanist view as 'Catholic.'

<sup>2</sup> *Strom.*, 2. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *De Monog.*, 9; *Adv. Marc.*, 4. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *De Disciplina*, 6. <sup>5</sup> *Ep.*, 188. 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Orat.*, 37. 8.

<sup>7</sup> In *Ep. 1 ad Cor.*; Hom. 19. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Panarion*, 59. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ep.* 55. 77.

<sup>10</sup> In *Matt.* 4. 22.

<sup>11</sup> In *Ep. 1 ad Cor.*, 7. 10, 11.

## The Palinode of the Pharisee.

A STUDY OF THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER OF 1 CORINTHIANS.

BY THE REV. EDWARD SHILLITO, M.A., LONDON.

IN the passionate opening of this poem we may find memories of the Pharisaism out of which Paul had been delivered. His was an 'experiencing nature,' which had an incomparable experience upon which to work. He is an artist who draws from life, and, whenever he can, from his own life. The words, indeed, look first to the situation of the Corinthians, who had been tempted to dwell too much on their brilliant gifts, and to neglect love; but there is a far-away look in the writer's eye; he is back again in Jerusalem, the zealous Pharisee,

foremost once more in his sect, and yet the chief of sinners; he is turning back to the past, forgiven but not forgotten. He recants once more his former errors; he convicts himself again of his secret fault; he makes his penitent submission to the Lord, who had taught him to love. The Eulogy of Love is the Palinode of the Pharisee. It is never easy to find autobiography in the books of the ancient world; where it is found, it is veiled from profane eyes; the Apostle Paul often uses the discipline of his own spiritual life, but without