
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

CAN we determine and define the Essence of Christianity? This is a question that has been handled by nearly every notable writer who in the last century has discussed the claims of the Christian religion. It is raised by the suggestion that there are elements in the developed Christian faith which are not necessarily part of it, and by the results of comparative religion which compel us to declare in what respect the Christian faith differs from others. Harnack devoted a book to the question. Loisy followed suit. Troeltsch contributes to the discussion. Quite recently Principal Jacks settled the matter confidently in his book on 'Religious Perplexities.' And now Principal GALLOWAY devotes a long essay to it in his new work *Religion and Modern Thought* (T. & T. Clark; 8s. net).

Dr. GALLOWAY is Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, and a recognized authority in philosophic thought. His book contains a series of discussions of problems raised by modern thinking in reference to religion. The unsettlement of the time is in his mind throughout, and perplexed souls will find in him a very competent guide on many difficult questions. He writes with a sure grasp and out of profound knowledge, and his thinking is so clear and so plainly expressed that his book will be read with unalloyed pleasure. One of the most interesting essays is on 'The Essence of Christianity.'

Harnack thought the question was a purely historical one, and went back to the origins. What was the gospel of Jesus Himself? To find this you must eliminate Paul and the Fourth Gospel. The answer lies in the Synoptic Gospels, and the answer is: the Fatherhood of God, with its associated doctrines of the sonship of man, the infinite value of the soul, and the righteousness of the kingdom. This is the living core of Christianity. The key that unlocks the door is Simplification.

Is this answer sound? Loisy answers No. He points out that Harnack leaves out what to the mind of Jesus was essential—the eschatological element. Harnack's Christ is not the Christ of history, but of Liberal Protestantism. Besides, the problem is not merely a historical one. In history there are no bare 'facts.' It is values that move human wills and are the real forces in historic development. Finally, it is not practicable to answer our question by going back to the origins. Christ's consciousness is not quite the same thing as historic Christianity. You have to seek that in the consciousness of His followers, in what Christ was to them. The faith of Christians is not the faith of Christ, but faith *in* Christ, which was embodied in definite conceptions of His person and worth.

Is Loisy's view any truer? For him the religious

beliefs of Christ are not the essential thing, but the living evolution of the Church's faith and doctrine to meet the changing needs of a changing world. Hence the essential is the expansive spiritual life of the Church ever embodying itself in fresh forms.

This, however, is even more open to criticism than Harnack's answer. For it cuts the tree loose from the root, Christian development from the historic life from which it sprang. Christ becomes little more than a symbol in His religion. It is a precarious principle to lay down that what is really valuable in Christianity is essential, for 'it is notorious that different persons make very different valuations of the same object.'

Can we not find an answer, then, to our question: What is Christianity? Well, we cannot, in so many words. Christianity is a great Gift of God to the world. Every age sees in it something of the truth. Christian history is a progressive vision of the supreme good. 'Each age brings something of its own to the interpretation of the Christian Religion, and expresses its faith in terms of the values which are immanent in its own life.' The essence of Christianity can reveal itself only as it is taken up into and vivified by the life of each successive age.

The real problem is not that of essence, but the question of gaining an insight into the broad principles or factors which distinguish the Christian outlook on the world and life. And these are obvious: first, the place of Christ in Christianity; second, the nature of Christianity as a redemptive religion; and, finally, the existence of a transcendent world wherein man's destiny lies.

The written sermons of Dr. ORCHARD are always welcome. We say 'written' advisedly, for these sermons are packed so full of thought that they must be sometimes difficult for the hearer. Dr. ORCHARD himself says that he has selected the sermons found in his new volume, 'some because they were liked by those who heard them, and some because they were not.' This new volume is called *No More War* (Allen & Unwin; 5s. net). The title is taken from the last sermon in the volume.

But let us turn to the second sermon. It is called the 'Consciousness of Christ.' The consciousness of Christ interests Dr. ORCHARD because it is, he says, the ultimate court of appeal concerning Christ's Divinity.

Dr. ORCHARD is well aware that the appeal to Christ's consciousness may lead to an impasse. He does not build his argument for Jesus' Divinity on any passages in the Fourth Gospel, or even in the Synoptics, in which the consciousness of Jesus would appear to be directly revealed. His object is to find some ground which would not be denied even by those critics of the Synoptics whose process of throwing doubt on everything which seems to make too direct a claim of Divinity is carried, according to Dr. ORCHARD, to such an extent that 'no argument is possible because everything is suspected which can be used to support Christ's divinity precisely for that reason.'

What does Dr. ORCHARD make his starting-point, then? He starts from those passages in which the consciousness of Jesus is only indirectly revealed. He even goes further, and builds upon those sayings of Jesus which seem to contradict the received estimates of what His consciousness includes or supports.

Dr. ORCHARD asks in the first place what we can infer about the Divinity of Christ from Jesus' clear consciousness of God. Jesus Christ, he says, speaks with assurance about God, His utterances in this way being markedly different from those of the prophets. 'He does not preface His utterances with, "Thus saith the Lord God": there is no arguing of His authority to speak for God; it is

assumed without claim or argument. And on the other hand we find not the slightest dubiety about the ways of God which even the greatest theologians have always confessed.' These utterances do not point to a knowledge of God acquired through experience or by reflexion. Christ's knowledge about God everywhere bears the mark of immediate intuition. His knowledge of God belongs to Him because of what He is.

There is one saying which expressly distinguishes between Jesus' knowledge and the knowledge which the Father has. '"Of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Although this is one of those negative texts to which we are to be allowed to ascribe the greatest value because they appear to contradict the prevailing opinion, yet the very distinction only serves to enforce the point of Christ's unique knowledge.' The text puts the Son not only above men, but above the angels, and thus indirectly and by the way claims for Him a unique place.

Dr. ORCHARD turns next for a proof of Jesus' Divinity to indirect revelations of His consciousness of Himself. He deals with Jesus' conception of Himself as the Messiah; but leaving this aside, his two examples are Jesus' unconsciousness of sin and the high-handed manner in which He rescinds the Mosaic law. Dr. ORCHARD says there is 'no word to show that Jesus had the slightest consciousness of sin. This marks Him off in a most significant way not only from the rest of mankind, but from the most saintly among men; for the higher man rises in actual goodness the more he is aware of how much he falls short. And there is no word from the lips of Jesus that ever suggests that He came to this condition of mind through a stage of penitence and subsequent assurance of forgiveness.'

On Jesus' attitude to the Mosaic Law, Dr. ORCHARD says that His direct claims to be greater than Solomon or Jonah are 'themselves indirectly surpassed when, without either defence or apology, He rescinds the Mosaic Law with the simple but majestic claim, "but I say unto you."'

Dr. ORCHARD's third argument for Jesus' Divinity is got from His own sense of His relationship to mankind. Jesus' demands, he points out, for man's love and attachment go beyond anything which family or country can claim: men must be prepared to forsake all and to risk their lives in following Him. But in Jesus' interview with the rich young ruler Dr. ORCHARD finds something which goes even beyond that. The rich young ruler 'had asked what he should do to inherit eternal life; there is enumerated in reply the second half of the decalogue; to this there is added the surrender of his riches, and this only as the final condition of following Jesus. That is to say, eternal salvation depends ultimately upon relation to Christ. If one asks why there is no enunciation of the first half of the decalogue, the only possible answer is that Christ has put loyalty to Himself in its place. And this indirect claim is supported by the explicit declaration that men's confession now will determine His owning them before His Father.'

Building up his argument further, Dr. ORCHARD quotes Jesus' invitation to men to come to Him, because He can give them rest, as a promise of something which it is agreed none but God can do —which is only emphasized if Jesus is consciously borrowing from the invitation of Wisdom in the Apocrypha.

Professor J. A. FINDLAY of Manchester has followed up his previous studies with a remarkable book on *The Realism of Jesus* (Hodder & Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net). It professes to be a paraphrase and exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, but it is much more. It is a sincere, suggestive, and original presentation of the mind of Jesus, and of the historical environment that makes it intelligible. The book makes the same impression on the mind as did Glover's 'Jesus of History' and McFadyen's

'Jesus and Life,' an impression of intense reality, as though the writer had got inside the thought and 'worn it next his skin.'

Professor FINDLAY faces the question: How can we observe the injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount? He has been handling the difficult passage about turning the other cheek and going a second mile. So far as the *meaning* of these injunctions goes, the writer thinks it is very much this, that everything in social life depends on restoring the right human relationship, the only terms on which men can live together, and this can best be done in such cases as Jesus mentions by a surrender of personal rights. We can discourage the will to wound the feelings of a brother-man by ignoring an insult: 'for rudeness soon tires if it is not noticed; it lives by seeing itself resented.'

This will sufficiently indicate the line of Professor FINDLAY'S exposition. It does not do much to make the injunctions easier. It does not explain them away. It makes them as hard as ever. But then comes the question: Where is the power that can make possible this single-minded and generous attitude Jesus has been describing? The answer of this book is a striking one. It is very much this, that our inability to carry out the teaching of Jesus is due, not to lack of piety, but to the fact that we are not *human* enough; and what brings the human into exercise and thus binds us all together is love for Jesus.

We are not human enough. We surround ourselves with abstractions like nationality, federations, trade unions, and these hide from us our common humanity. Human trustfulness and reasonable good nature would carry the fabric of society along. But we erect these barriers between classes and individuals and forget what is common to us all. What we need is to be simply human and *naturally* human. The idea of a Christian who is openly insulted remembering in the nick of time the verse about non-resistance, and, with an expression of saintly resignation, turning the other cheek, is not the idea of Jesus.

This sense of our common humanity comes to us when we learn to love Jesus truly. What does 'truly' mean? Well, look at the disciples. Jesus was to them at first a peculiar possession. They saw God in Him, but He was still outside them. They were spectators, and were for ever quarrelling as to which of them could get most out of Him. Then, because they were divided, they failed Him in the hour of His need, and their very failure brought them at last into a fellowship. When their private hopes and prejudices had all been forgotten, He came back to them, but only to tell them that He was theirs for ever on condition that they shared Him with all the nations.

This was the fellowship of His Holy Spirit. The disciples discovered that all kinds of people could share their experience of Jesus, and human nature became a new thing because He revealed Himself in it. That is the bond that unites us to all men, that at any moment we may see Christ in them. To see this is to be human, to live it is to be *naturally* human. And we come to this by the love of Jesus, not as our own possession, but as the possession of all sorts of people. Nothing is too good to hope for in each other, and nothing too hard to do for each other.

And so the Gospel goes further back than 'get right with God,' or even 'get right with your fellow-men.' Its essential message is 'get right with Jesus, and your love for Him will make you brave and simple enough to get right with man.'

Psycho-analysis is for the moment all the rage. Its literature is issuing from the Press in a steady stream. It means something of which account has to be taken. As to how much it means, judgment may well be held in suspense for a time. We can only 'wait and see.'

What interests us here is the statement, repeated by many writers, that psycho-analysis is bound to modify moral and religious doctrine. Is this merely another example of the familiar case of those who are enthusiastic over a new discovery in one department of study imagining that all departments of thought must thereby be profoundly affected? One may complain that so many writers should confidently predict a modification of religious doctrine without indicating fairly definitely what sort of transformation is in their minds. Does it amount to a revolution, or is it merely a change of emphasis? We have a right to be informed.

We apprehend that in all probability what certain writers on psycho-analysis have in their mind when they speak of a modification of religious doctrine is a modification of Christian ethics. We cannot see what else it can be. Admittedly the teaching of the new psychology, that 'repressions' are dangerous to physical or mental health or to both, does seem to bear hardly on what is in many quarters supposed to be the Christian doctrine of renunciation and self-denial. In his recent book, 'A Study in Moral Problems,' Mr. B. M. LAING acknowledges the force of this new argument in favour of self-interest, and to all appearance he finds it unanswerable.

The first remark to be made is this. Psycho-analysts are far from being the first to cast doubt upon the value of renunciation as an ideal. To mention no others, Spencer argued the point very well in his 'Data of Ethics.' We doubt if the new considerations adduced from the analysis of pathological and abnormal cases make the argument very much stronger.

Our second point is this. Renunciation is not at all the Christian ideal, as we find if we go for our conceptions of what Christianity teaches, not to the hermitage, but to the New Testament. What needs to be changed is not the New Testament, but the 'monkish' ethics. The latter is held unfortunately by many to whom the very word 'monk' is anathema. On the other hand, it is fortunately held in very few monasteries. For the Western Church in particular was, on the whole, wise enough to see that the goal to be aimed at was not 'repression' but 'sublimation' of egoistic desires. And that is precisely what psycho-analysts are now proclaiming as though it were a new discovery.

That self-repression is a true end in itself, that in itself and for its own sake it is either good or likely to lead to good, is nowhere taught by Jesus or Paul. So much is the contrary the case that 'superaltruists' have criticised the Christian Ethic as a thinly disguised egoism. They have found fault with the rule 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' They are almost shocked to find the writer of Hebrews saying that Jesus endured the Cross 'for the joy that was set before him' and counselling His followers to be like Him in that. They have some doubt about our Lord's question, 'What shall it profit a man . . . if he lose himself?'

True, there is the saying, 'let him deny himself,' etc., but it must surely be read in the light of other sayings, where the self-denial is conditioned by such words as 'for my sake,' or is inculcated as the necessary step towards a fuller self-realization.

The Christian doctrine of self-denial has no doubt been often expressed in sermons and in hymns in such a way as to make criticism pertinent, just as has been the case with the doctrine of contentment with one's lot. What we complain of, however, is that psycho-analysts and others seem to confuse the real Christian teaching with popular misunderstandings of it.

'You call yourselves sinners. That is blasphemy. You are Gods! . . . When I see a young mother bending over her child I bow before the image of

God our mother. When I see a harlot leaning down from her balcony I bow before her also. I say, "Behold the mother at her sport among the children of men." ' These words, spoken by a chief prophet of Hinduism at the Chicago Congress of Religions, are quoted by the Rev. E. J. BICKNELL, M.A., in *The Christian Idea of Sin and Original Sin* (Longmans ; 6s. net).

He does well to quote them, for they show in one fearful flash the hell towards which modern thought is moving when it turns its back on the Christian doctrine of sin. And no doctrine in our time has been more rudely assaulted or more insidiously undermined. Evolution is held to have shown that sin is but the relic of the ape and tiger, from which humanity is steadily purging itself. More recently, the new psychology claims to have disproved the Christian idea of sin. It takes a biological view of all mental life, and traces the building of all human conduct out of a small number of primitive instincts. No room is left for free will, and conscience is only an emotion. Moral distinctions merely exist in the mind of the individual or the community, and God is but a projection of the human mind.

Is it possible to turn the battle in the gate? Mr. BICKNELL'S book is at least a very able attempt. He calls science itself to witness that many species have made false steps, and strayed from the upward path. ' We may apply this to the spiritual evolution of the human race. It is perfectly conceivable that the race as a whole has failed to live up to God's purpose. . . . That this is the truer statement we most firmly believe, and in support of it we appeal to the facts both of the individual life and the world at large.' So much for the doctrine of the Fall.

On the subject of original sin it is argued that some such conception is an intellectual necessity. It stands for the whole movement of the race away from God's purpose. It may be described as ' the devil's counterpart of grace. Grace is God's personal influence. And grace is always mediated directly or indirectly through the divine society, the people of God. . . . All the means of grace are social. Original sin is the antithesis of this. It acts through all the social influences that drag us down, that implant in our imaginations false ideas of God, that encourage unlawful and anti-social desires, that divert our impulses into wrong channels.'

And all leads at last to God's remedy for sin. ' In its essential nature the problem of sin remains unaffected by modern knowledge. Sin is still sin against God. It still needs redemption and forgiveness, and we believe that in Christ alone we have the remedy for the situation. We can still repeat the old text, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." '

The City and the Sanctuary.

BY PROFESSOR THE REVEREND W. F. LOFTHOUSE, D.D.

IN the *Princeton Theological Review* of July 1922, Mr. C. M. Mackay has published a long and careful discussion of the measurements for the city and the Temple which Ezekiel has left us in his last chapter. Most readers of the prophet, who have toiled through the sections dealing with the ground plan and elevation of the visionary shrine, the materials for the sacrifices and the incomes of the hierarchy, find their interest somewhat exhausted when they reach the redistribution of the land as a whole, and the actual measurements of the spacious domains of the priesthood and the prince. But it is dangerous to regard anything in Ezekiel as uninteresting ; and Mr. Mackay's arithmetical calculations, if accepted, will lead to conclusions of great importance, both for Ezekiel and for the Judaism