
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.

THE University of Edinburgh paid a very high compliment to one of its former professors when it asked Dr. PRINGLE-PATTISON to deliver the Gifford Lectures under its auspices. Professor PRINGLE-PATTISON had already been Gifford lecturer at Aberdeen, and his lectures there, published under the title 'The Idea of God,' have obtained wide recognition and appreciation. For his course at Edinburgh he chose the more restricted subject of the 'Future Life,' and the first series has just appeared—*The Idea of Immortality* (Clarendon Press; 12s. 6d. net).

It is a fascinating book, written with distinction and with a clearness of style and thought that makes the reading a continual pleasure. It is not a difficult book to read, and yet it never fails to make demand on the reader for attention and judgment. It is obvious not only that the writer has thought deeply on his theme (that we should expect), but that he has explored widely and thoroughly the literature of the subject. As a proof of this it may be said that his pages on the Hebrew belief are correct and even illuminating.

What are his own conclusions on this great question? He reviews three arguments for a future life, which may be called the metaphysical, the moral, and the theological. The first of these, the metaphysical, is based on the nature of the soul. From the earliest times and by some of the greatest minds it has been held that the soul is a substantial entity within the body, eternal in its nature, divinely created, and inhabiting the body for only a period.

Professor PRINGLE-PATTISON rejects this view of the soul, almost with scorn. 'People talk as if the being of a soul were something which almost defied annihilation. . . . But surely it is quite the other way.' The soul is just the true self that comes into being as the result of continuous effort. It is the coherent mind and character which is the result of the discipline of time, not some substantial unit or identical subject present in the body all along. It 'achieves a unity and identity,' however, as a self, and 'attains individuality and independence in an ultimate sense.' This does not seem very different from the idea of the soul as a substantial unit; but let that pass.

The writer's own conclusion at this point is the important thing. 'Is it, then, unreasonable to conclude that an individuality so real, and the goal apparently of an age-long process, must be capable of surviving the dissolution of the material frame through which it was brought into being? The body, ceasing to be a living body, may relapse into its elements when it has "fulfilled" itself, while the true individual, in which that fulfilment con-

sisted, pursues his destiny under new conditions.' It may be added that this conception of the 'soul' implies the doctrine of 'conditional immortality,' a position which the writer expressly adopts at a later stage.

The moral argument for a future life is also rejected. The idea is the necessity of a future life to redress the balance of this life, either in the form of retribution or in the more refined form of compensation. The belief in a future existence would be thus a moral necessity. 'But,' asks the Professor, 'have we any right to stake the whole character of the universe as rational and righteous on the question of our own personal survival or non-survival?' 'The very idea of "justice" as the satisfaction of an individual "right" seems to disappear in the atmosphere of religion.'

Professor PRINGLE-PATTISON finds the most satisfying ground of faith in the theological, or perhaps better the religious, argument. It is the nature of God, and consequently the reality of 'eternal life.' The nature of God is love, and, if so, the value of the finite world to the Spirit of the universe must lie, above all else, in the spirits to whom He has given the capacity 'to make themselves in his own image.' These spirits themselves are values to God. We may conclude, then, that they are not made to be broken up and cast aside and to be replaced by relays of others in a continual succession.

'At such a standpoint, the belief in immortality is not based by the religious man on any personal claim for himself or even for others; it seems rather, as our argument has suggested, to be an inference from the character of God.'

To affirm that the ideals and hopes which have been the nursing-mothers of mankind are 'too good *not* to be true,' is to teach the same conclusion from another starting-point. In other words, 'the idea of immortality has no religious significance, and it loses all credibility, if we separate it from the idea of eternal life as a realized possession.' The immortality of man lies for him in his union with the eternal object on which his affections are set, and he seeks no other assurance.

A Professor of Theology remarked to the writer the other day that no book is so much needed at present in the theological field as a new work on sin, a really big treatment of the subject.

Well, it is certainly a big subject, and bristling with difficulty. It is more difficult now than it used to be. For what the present age needs to be convinced of afresh is the fact of sin, or at least its seriousness. That a sense of the reality of sin is very weak among masses of men, even among professed Christians, admits of no question. They are prepared to consider moral disorder and crime, faults of character and frailties of temperament, but sin?—they can attach little meaning to the term.

One problem that the big man who writes this new book will have to face is the Fall. Was there ever a Fall? If so, what were its nature and significance? It is easy to criticize the views expressed by Canon Barnes and others on the subject of an alleged Fall. But beyond all cavil, modern science, with its key-word evolution, has made the notion of a Fall very difficult to many minds, and not all seem to see just how very difficult it is. To speak as some do, of 'a Fall upwards' is to miss the whole point. If it was upwards, it was not a Fall.

The theologian who is to render modern theology the great service indicated will do well to read a very unpretentious little work which was noticed in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES last month—'The Christian Idea of Sin and Original Sin,' by Mr. E. J. BICKNELL. Therein we find, among other excellent chapters, a specially good one on this difficult subject of the Fall and Original Sin. Let us set down the main point in his own words.

'Without in any way denying the progress of mankind, we hold that the highest kind of progress has been prevented by a falling away from the true line of advance. Sin is that which not only ought not to be, but ought never to have been. . . . We are told that as we follow the upward development of life in this world many species have, as it were, made false steps. They have chosen the easier road and been content to adapt themselves so thoroughly to their present environment that they have reached a state of equilibrium. Advance is no longer possible. They remain stationary. And the inevitable result of this refusal to co-operate with the upward movement is, in the long run, death.'

'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. It has developed along wrong lines. Its evolution has been misdirected. . . . If this is so, if the race is evolving along wrong lines due to misdirection in the past, the individual, even though he is in no sense personally responsible, is barred out from God. Each member bears the burden of the misdirection of the race. He is not personally guilty, but he suffers from that moral and spiritual disability which we call original sin.'

'Now, if this view represents the truth, original sin is indeed the grave matter that Christian theology has always supposed. It is no passing weakness that mankind will outgrow. No regression is possible. In nature, steps made in the wrong direction cannot be retraced. Humanity can never save itself. It can never get back on to the right lines.'

A cordial welcome will be given to the first number of a new religious magazine which has just appeared. The name is *The Congregational Quarterly: A Review of Religious Life and Thought*, and it is issued by the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The Editor is Dr. Albert Peel, and on the Editorial Board the name of Dr. W. B. Selbie is included. The interest of the opening issue is of a general nature. Only two of the articles are what may be called theological, but one of these attracts attention at once by its title, and more than maintains the attraction by its merits. It is on 'The Meaning of the Death of Jesus.' The writer is the Rev. A. D. BELDEN.

Mr. BELDEN refers at the outset to the difficulties the modern mind feels about the older mechanical theories of the Atonement. Such ideas as the innocent suffering instead of the guilty, of a substitute being punished in the sinner's place, and of a redemption entirely independent of the soul's co-operation, arouse an intense feeling of revolt. The answer of Christian theology to these difficulties has been anything but plain, and the preaching of the Cross has consequently become vague and ineffective in the modern pulpit. The result of this is loss of power.

It is loss of power because the Cross is the supreme symbol of our faith. The New Testament gives a predominant place to the death of Jesus. The greatest fact about Him, according to the Apostles, is that He died. The love of Christ constraineth us because . . . one died for all. Jesus invested the crime of His murder with a redeeming efficacy, and 'all through history the Cross has carried His meaning,' not that of His murderers. It was because the Apostles saw 'His meaning' that He became to them more than a Divine Teacher and awakened their passionate devotion.

It is perfectly clear that Jesus *intended* His sacrifice to be to every sinning soul the proof of a deathless redeeming love. He embraced it wholeheartedly. It was not forced on Him, and we must reject the 'mischievous travesty' of the truth which represents God and Christ as opposed, as punisher and punished. Jesus believed, in His love for men, that His Cross would, at some point and in some way, intervene between them and their sins. 'He died hemmed in by sin on every hand, betrayed by

His followers, forsaken by all . . . yet dying of set intent *for their sins and mine* in a passion of purest love.'

But there must be more than that. Why? What more do we want? There is the key to the whole matter. *We all do want something more.* We want atonement. And that word stands in the human soul, by a deep, undeniable instinct, for compensation—compensation before reconciliation. This is more a demand made by man than by God. A wrong must be righted somehow, and man cannot rest in God's mercy till he knows this will happen. The necessity for atonement is 'a great hungry cry from humanity,' and it is there because it is in God.

Those who deny the necessity of an atonement because God is love forget love's Perfect Equality which we call justice. They forget also that the sinner is part of a society, every member of which is also and equally the object of Divine love. If sin were only a personal insult to God, it might be forgiven easily. But it is more. It is a corporate thing. It is a blow against His other children. We need a new sense of the terrible complications that sin causes. And in every heart there lies a fierce demand that somehow the gaping rents that sin makes in the very fabric of the universe—for the moral law is the world's true structure—shall be mended, wrong righted, and atonement made.

When, therefore, One appears in history bearing the credentials of a moral victory, exquisitely right in all spiritual matters, offering Himself in His travail to redeem us all, saying in effect 'I am the Atonement,' even as He said, 'I am the Truth'—is it too much to say: 'He meets this fundamental hunger of our souls for atonement too perfectly for us to believe Him mistaken? We will believe Him right!'

'If at present we cannot go beyond this, if we cannot yet trace with perfect psychology the entire mystery of how the sacrifice of Christ in death reaches out to defeat sin in the universe that lies beyond our earthly life, and whither, alas! our own personal sin has travelled in its far-reaching consequences, need we refuse on that account this meaning of His death for ourselves here and now?'

The *Hibbert Journal* for January contains an article by Professor B. W. BACON of Yale University on 'Two Parables of Lost Opportunity,' the purpose of which is to 'restore to more authentic form two much-disputed parables of Jesus.' The primitive tradition, in the period of oral transmission, was marked by a homiletic 'adaptation to the occasion.' But Professor BACON thinks the period of editing witnessed an even more drastic handling.

The current theory is that 'Matthew' and 'Luke' (Dr. BACON uses inverted commas in both cases) were indebted for their material to Mark and Q mainly. Q, as it was used by them, was in Greek, but this was a translation of an Aramaic original (S). This was 'perhaps known to Mark, but left by him in comparative neglect.' The material thus derived from Q has been 'adapted' by both the first and third evangelists.

'Matthew' is the bolder and more thorough-going adapter. He turned Mark's parable of the Patient Husbandman, *e.g.*, into the Tares in the Wheat. The section he appended to the parable of the Slighted Invitation ($22^{1\text{-}14}$) is his own 'expansion.' The householder of 'Luke' is transformed by 'Matthew' into the Messianic King. And in other drastic changes he is governed by his desire to show the necessity of good works, and to condemn the teachers of 'lawlessness.'

'Luke' has no such doctrinal idiosyncrasy. He is an historian. He writes to tell things 'in order.' It is true, he has his weaknesses also. The 'Great Interpolation,' *e.g.*, he organizes as a travel document, but the local touches are so transparently artificial that these 'travel-rubrics' are recognized easily as a device of the evangelist and not really

a reflexion of fact. He has his humanitarian tendency also, but this only accounts for his choice of material. And, finally, he is a strict moralist, and tries to safeguard the teaching of Jesus from misuse. He does this frequently. Indeed he is very careful about it, for he not only appends the parable of the Dishonest Steward to safeguard that of the Prodigal Son against misuse, but he appends to the Dishonest Steward two sayings on the use of wealth to safeguard this also from misapplication.

But, with these (and perhaps other) exceptions, he is blameless as compared with 'Matthew'; and the two parables of the Half-shut Door (Lk 13^{22-30}, Mt 7^{13-23}) and the Slighted Invitation (Lk 14^{15-24}, Mt 22^{1-14}) are proof of this. A careful scrutiny of the material shows that Luke's version of the former has unity, authenticity, and consistency, while Matthew has only scattered fragments of it greatly modified in form.

But in both evangelists the motive of the two parables is the same—to guard against antinomianism. In the source the parables of the Kingdom were in a group ending with the Sower. Upon this followed, 'perhaps not immediately, the pair of parables of Lost Opportunity, introduced by a bystander's question. For in the arrangement of the Source it would seem to have been the parable of the Sower which evoked the question: "Lord, are they few that be saved?" to which Jesus replies with the parable of the Half-shut Door.' This parable answers the question with the lesson, 'Now is the day of salvation.' It emphasizes the urgency of immediate repentance. The two later evangelists not unnaturally brought the second of the pair of parables, the Slighted Invitation, into connexion with the fate which Jerusalem had drawn upon itself by its murder of God's messengers.

The whole article is an instructive example of what we venture to call subjective criticism. Criticism has its rights and duties, and it must be left free to pursue these without let or hindrance. But it may not be altogether out of place to plead for a little more reality in criticism. The way in which imagination is allowed confidently to dominate the arrangement of the original sources and their modifications in the process of using them does not appeal to a sense of reality.

At a Y.M.C.A. hut in France, discussion turned on the nature of the Christian life, and a demand was voiced for explicit instruction as to what for each man discipleship would mean. The hut leader pointed out that it was not in accord with the spirit of Christianity to frame a code of rules. John the Baptist gave explicit guidance to various classes in answer to the question, What shall we do? But Jesus, in answer to the same question, replied, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.' Get the Spirit of Christ, said the hut leader, and follow that. But this did not seem to satisfy. 'I want to know,' said one soldier, 'just exactly what I, John Smith, have to do.' This represents a spirit widely prevalent to-day, a spirit which is less concerned with first principles than with their practical application in everyday life. And no doubt it is one of the main duties of the Christian teacher to interpret the faith in terms of men's daily life, and show its relevance to the problems of the hour.

A very interesting book has been issued by the Student Christian Movement, which seeks to bridge the gulf between the cloister and the market-place. It is entitled *Everyday Religion*, by Edward S. Woods, M.A. (5s. net). The various chapters discuss Christianity and Work, Money, Thought, Beauty, Recreation, Sex, and Health. The book is ably written, and its criticisms are vigorous, if at times one-sided. To speak evil of dignities has no terrors to the modern mind, and Mr. Woods is, above all, modern. The Church, as usual, is the principal whipping boy, and a good second is, of course, the Victorian Age.

It illustrates the bias of Mr. Woods' thinking that, while he finds the present industrial order

thoroughly unchristian, his only reference to the great drink evil is a passing remark that 'the ploughboy and the publican, the merchant and the mechanic, need not go outside the shop, the farm, or the factory to express and exhibit the Spirit of Christ.' And again, while he condemns the Church, he quotes with approval a statement that 'most of the younger generation are outside the Churches not because they don't care, but because the Christian organizations are not Christian enough to meet their need.' It is difficult to see what good can come of such a travesty of the actual facts.

Coming to constructive work, Mr. WOODS acknowledges that 'idealists are trying people because they are frequently so vague. Those of us who believe that our present industrial and social arrangements are a remarkably poor attempt to solve the old problem of human living together are often asked what exactly we should propose to put in the place of the present system. That question I will try to answer.' What is the answer? What is the substitute for the present industrial system? It is to be a system marked by three characteristics—service, co-operation, and humanity. All that Mr. Woods has to say on these topics is admirable, but how far does this take us? The Christian individualist would give as hearty assent to this teaching as would the socialist. Why then speak as if it implied the overthrow of the present industrial order? Why speak as if the Kingdom of God were bound up with a certain economic theory? The best thing about Mr. WOODS' book is that in the end he preaches the old remedy for 'the old woe o' the world,' and if his manner of preaching it proves effective in this new age, Christians of every school of economics will heartily rejoice.

The Development of Thought within the Fourth Gospel.

BY THE REVEREND R. H. STRACHAN, D.D., EDINBURGH.

II.

ALL that has been said in the previous article constitutes an attempt to describe the kind of thought and attitude towards the historical facts of the Christian faith which we find in the Fourth Gospel. The ultimate intention has been to lead up to another question, Is it possible to trace in the Gospel any plan of internal development which determines the course of thought of the Evangelist? His thought is a kind of thought that is emancipated from any mere bondage to actual historical fact. He is a preacher expounding a theme; a haggadist bringing out hidden meanings in the traditional material and suggesting a providential order in the history; a profound Christian, whose inward loyalty of love to Christ has quickened his spiritual vision to behold the life of Jesus and His disciples as an unchanging drama, a conflict between Light and Darkness, Love and Hate, Truth and Unreality.

It does seem possible to trace a plan which has determined the Evangelist's course of thought right through the Gospel. In a general way, he himself tells us the plan. In $20^{30.31}$ he says, 'Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written (you have the book in its present form), that ye may believe (go on believing) that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name.' He asserts: (1) That he has made a selection out of the available historical material. (2) That he intends to use the material before him in such a fashion as to strengthen and deepen the faith of his readers. Apparently he has chiefly in view those who are already Christian.

We shall, therefore, be prepared to find that 'faith' or 'belief' is a dominant idea in the Fourth Gospel. In a sense, we are stating the truth in-