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1937

804TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, JANUARY 25TH, 1937,
AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. CHARLES W. COOPER, F.G.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read, confirmed and signed and the HON. SECRETARY announced the election of J. W. Wenham, Esq., B.A., as an Associate.

The CHAIRMAN then called on H. R. Kindersley, Esq., B.A., to read his paper entitled "The Person of Christ. Doctrine of the two Natures."

THE PERSON OF CHRIST. DOCTRINE OF THE TWO NATURES.

By HENRY R. KINDERSLEY, Esq., B.A., Barrister-at-Law.

PERHAPS there is no item in the Creeds of Christendom which has occasioned so much questioning, and been responsible for so many defections from the orthodox Faith, as the doctrine of the *two natures in the one Person of Jesus Christ*—"Perfect God and Perfect Man." It is asked how it is possible that the Perfect Godhead, with all its inherent powers, could exist in full function in the nature of One who was Perfect Man, with all the limitations which humanity entails. How can anyone *know* all things, and at the same time *not know them*? So stated this amounts to a contradiction in terms.

Many of those who were troubled by these difficulties hailed "evolution" as a possible avenue of escape (even if only "by way of avoidance" and not explanation), always in the belief that the persistent search of the Scientists might be trusted eventually to discover the missing evidence which up to date has restricted "evolution" to the category of pure speculation.

The logic of "evolution" demands that in the interests of "uniformity" belief in the Godhead of Jesus Christ—the keystone of the Christian religion—must be abandoned.

The next step was inevitable, and the Modernists, denying His Godhead, and ignoring the power of God, have lowered the Jesus Christ of the Gospels to the level of the fallen offspring of Adam; and consequently His recorded utterances are declared to be frequently in error, though His general teaching is said to be true! (see "Statement of Belief" of C.M.S., November, 1922; also the proceedings of the Modern Churchman's Conference, 1934). This is the Modernist's reading of the doctrine known as *Kenosis* based on the words of St. Paul in Philip. ii, 7. The modernist view is that "the Christ Spirit" descended upon Jesus, the "natural" son of Joseph and Mary. This novel doctrine of course plays havoc with the Gospel narratives.

The Creationists, who stand for the Orthodox Faith, as enunciated in the Creeds, could not remain unaffected by the difficulty presented by the doctrine of the "two natures" in the single Person of Jesus Christ; so, in order to admit His Humanity, they had to concede the "veiling" of His Godhead. If disposed to advance cautiously in this direction, nevertheless they felt themselves supported by the words of Scripture—"the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. x, 20).

* * * * *

Now if, *on New Testament authority*, it can be shown that in Jesus Christ the inherent powers of Godhead, in everything affecting His incarnate state, were *wholly veiled*, it is not difficult to believe that a great body of Christian opinion might be won back from the materialism which the logic of "evolution," accepted on trust as something more than a theory, would seem to induce; always provided that such *veiling* does not in the smallest degree invalidate the simple meaning of His words and actions, even as it surrenders nothing of unquestioned faith in His identity as "the Only Begotten Son of God."

The "*veiling*" which is now in mind, *would seem to have been complete, amounting at His Incarnation to a temporary abeyance of His powers, wherever the retention of His own divine powers would militate against the full realisation of His adopted Humanity*. At the same time, the retention by Jesus Christ of His Divine powers in the spiritual world (the power to forgive sin, etc.) would obviously not derogate in any measure from His voluntary abnegation. It is in this sense only that the

expression "wholly veiled" is intended to be used in this connection.

In a whole-hearted belief that the Bible not merely "contains" but is "*the word of God*," this line of thought is offered in humble reverence, which—new, perhaps, to some if not to all Bible Students—has helped to clear away doctrinal difficulties presented by the necessity of interpreting the Creeds which throughout the centuries have buttressed the Church of Christ. If it sacrifices one single fundamental point of the Orthodox Faith, as enunciated by the Apostle's and Nicene Creeds, then this thesis must be treated as illusory.

Our Lord's repeated reference to Himself (eighty times in the Gospels) as "*The Son of Man*," justifies us in seeking the whole import of this title. What deep satisfaction it brings, and what glorious light it sheds on the great purpose of God, to realise that His Incarnation provides the manifest example of *The Man* who fulfils and restores in Himself the lost opportunities of the original innocent Adam, and of a sinless and triumphant *Humanity*!

Assuming that the Great Plan of Renunciation was "fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World," and assuming that we agree that some of the absolute attributes of the Godhead in Christ were "*veiled*" in His Incarnation (e.g., His subjectiveness to physical hunger, thirst, etc.), then *the degree of "veiling" is the point at issue*. Have we not strenuously held to the view of a very *partial "veiling"* only because, to concede the *total "veiling"* as previously defined (the "emptied Himself"—*ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*—of Phil. ii, 7) seemed to surrender the only ground on which His supernatural life could rest? How else were His miracles worked, and how else was His infallibility secured? To answer these questions is the purpose of this paper.

* * * * *

Certain statements of Jesus Christ have always puzzled the Church, and not least among them His declaration—"If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamore tree, be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you" (Luke xvii, 6). And again, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove" (Matt. xvii, 20). In other words, Jesus Christ

assured His Disciples that the most prodigious powers were available to *humanity* through the agency of faith. The Creationists are bound to give full value to these words or else to abandon their position to those who regard them as expressions of mental rhapsody.

Here again, as elsewhere, it is wonderful how the Bible can be relied upon to explain itself. On close study, we are impressed by the fact that for the second time in the Gospels (Matt. xvii, 20 ; Luke xvii, 6) the *mustard seed* should be chosen to illustrate Christ's meaning. Certainly most people have thought the meaning of His words to be—"If men had faith as *little* as a grain of mustard seed, they could move trees and mountains." This interpretation, however, seems to contradict the experience of Christians, past and present, even as it misses the point of the words, "O ye of *little* faith." But another meaning may be found capable of explaining passages that are otherwise difficult. Both the Gospels named had previously recorded the parable of the Kingdom of Heaven, which in its wonderful growth was likened to the growth of the mustard seed, which, from a tiny seed, if sown in good ground, could become "a great tree" (see Matt. xiii, 31 ; Luke xiii, 19).

Was not the meaning of Our Lord, when revealing to His disciples the powers of faith which were to be open to them and to His Church, just this? If they had faith like the mustard seed (of whose wonderful power of growth He had previously spoken), *then when faith has reached a growth corresponding to the "great tree"*—the perfected growth of the mustard-seed—they would be enabled to work miracles.* It is worth noting that Jesus did not say "faith as *little* as a grain of mustard seed." In both illustrations the point was the *marvellous growth* of which the grain was capable.

St. Paul, too, seems to take this view of Christ's words—"Though I have *all faith*, so that I could remove mountains" (I Cor. xiii, 2). Among these wonderful powers were the following: Superhuman power over the forces of nature; power to predict future events; power to read men's minds; power to receive and reveal the great truths of time and eternity. Both before and after His Resurrection, Jesus declared that

* "Supernatural effects" defying explanation by laws of common experience.

His faithful disciples should be the possessors of these powers ; but their employment was to be preceded by prayer and fasting. Nowhere in the Gospels does Our Lord suggest that these supernatural signs were other than the fruits in humanity of *the well-grown tree of faith*. "Why could not we cast him out?" Jesus said unto them, "Because of your *unbelief*" (Matt. xvii, 19, 20).

In the Old Testament, where some of these powers were exhibited, we can mark the long preparation of Moses, Elijah, and others before they were called upon and enabled to use them.

This brings us to the central point of our suggestion—*With the "omniscient" and "omnipotent" powers inherent in His Perfect Godhead "veiled" in His Perfect Humanity—all the powers specified were derived by Jesus Christ immediately from The Father, as One in closest communion with The Source of all power*. Christ's repeated assertion of this fundamental truth is unmistakably clear: "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (John xiv, 10). "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself" (John viii, 28). "The Son can do nothing of Himself" (John v, 19). "I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge" (John v, 30). "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me" (John xi, 41). "Many good works I have showed you from My Father" (John x, 32).

Very striking too are the following: "All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (John xv, 15). He certainly had not revealed all knowledge to His disciples; no human brain could sustain the knowledge of all the physical contents of the universe. "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels" (Matt. xxvi, 53). "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Matt. xxvi, 39).

Prayer, silent or uttered, is sometimes recorded as preceding Christ's working of miracles, *e.g.*, the miracle of the loaves and fishes (Matt. xiv, 19), and that of the raising of Lazarus (John xi, 41).

Compare these inducted powers with the power of the risen Christ released from His human limitations. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii, 18).

After His Resurrection there is no record of His praying to His Father for guidance and relief (Matt. xxvi, 39) or "giving thanks" (Luke xxii, 17). There was no need, since all power was given unto Him.

In "the Son of Man" faith unimpaired by sin had no room to grow. Graduated to suit His physical abilities, at each stage of His human existence faith in Him transcended the "great tree"; for example, it amounted in manhood to certainty of knowledge of His Father: "I know that Thou hearest Me always." Perfect Faith reciprocates perfect communion, and through perfect communion with His Father, He was supplied where necessary with the supernatural powers which were "veiled" at His Incarnation, enabling Him as "*Man*" to say to the dead, "Come forth," and to the sick of the palsy, "Take up thy bed and walk." This view can account for the "infallibility" claimed for Jesus Christ equally with the miracles which He wrought, while hampered by the conditions of His adopted humanity. Nowhere do the Gospels say that Jesus Christ during His existence on earth before His Resurrection was either "omniscient" or "omnipotent." It is not less than horrifying to imagine that Jesus Christ could have *acted* the part of a helpless babe in His Mother's arms, or *pretended* to grow in knowledge.

Corresponding powers, He promised, should be possessed by the disciples when their faith had grown to something approaching the dimensions of "the great tree" of the mustard seed. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also" (John xiv, 12)—increase of faith spells a closer communion with God. All of these powers were to be at the disposal of the Church, provided the necessary conditions were present:—

(a) The seed of Faith grown to a "great tree" in close communion with Jesus Christ "the Only Begotten Son of God," approaching His own perfect communion with the Father.

(b) The thing desired must be in accordance with the *will* of God: the life of Christ was one persistent desire to do the *will* of His Father.

(c) Necessity for the miracle must exist; Jesus Christ never worked miracles to satisfy curiosity. On his own showing, His miracles were wrought to reveal Himself to those who

might be looking for Him. Drawn direct from God Almighty, such miraculous powers would seemingly be commensurate with the magnitude and urgency of the crisis or necessity which called for them.* Physical trees and mountains† can never be moved capriciously merely to demonstrate the possession of such power by men. Yet in a portentous crisis "Nature" responded to man's appeal when the sea divided to save Israel from the host of Pharaoh, and when the earth opened to swallow up Korah and his rebel company; and again when fire descended upon "the altar to The Lord" built by Elijah on Mount Carmel. The water, too, became wine, and the five barley loaves and few small fishes increased to an adequate supply to feed the hungry thousands—physical proofs to His disciples, like those who were sent to John the Baptist, that there stood One among them, whom as yet they knew not, who was indeed "He that should come."

* * * * *

St. Paul throws a flood of light on the problem of the *perfect humanity* of Jesus Christ by speaking of Him as "*The Last Adam*" and "*the Second Man*" (I Cor. xv, 45, 47). *The First Adam* was moulded from the dust of the ground, and into the lifeless shape God breathed the breath of life; and "Man" was made "in the image" of God. The material and human part of the "*Last Adam*" was graciously housed in the Virgin Mother, and this *lifeless form* received the Life of the "Only-Begotten Son of God." Jesus Christ was thus truly the "second man" Adam, with functions like Adam's—wholly human; a perfect Man, endowed with free will; sinless like Adam at his creation, and tempted like *unfallen* Adam, from His birth to His grave. ("In all points tempted like as we are yet without sin.") His agony in the garden, and His cry on the Cross testify to His life-long endurance of temptation: *but Jesus Christ "The Son of Man" triumphed—where the Man Adam fell.*

* That "economy of miracle" has marked God's revelation of His power to men, is fully recognised by all devout Students of the Bible.

† To limit Christ's words, as is suggested, to symbolical "Mountains of difficulties," *i.e.*, to accept a subjective and reject the objective meaning, besides stumbling over "the Sycamore tree," marks a definite disbelief in God Almighty's power over the Universe of His Own creating, and makes of Our Lord's Prayer—"Give us this day our daily bread"—an empty form of words, stripped of its heartening reality.

His *death* on the Cross was to avail for the washing away of sins, and His *life* was to be the great example of the perfect "Man" *born in innocency*, with *free will* to obey or disobey* ; fulfilling in every particular to its climax the *will* of The Father : *while in Himself—His Person, His Individuality, His Identity—* He was able to show men "The Father," since in His Incarnate Godhead He was as ever "One with the Father"—*GOD ALMIGHTY.*

* * * * *

Thus, without having recourse to metaphysics (*e.g.*, distinctions sought to be drawn between His conscious and subconscious mind), we can say with clear understanding that Jesus Christ was "*truly Man,*" as well as "*truly God,*" with the super-human powers of His Godhead over the natural universe "*veiled,*" while His *natural powers* (as distinct from those unlimited miraculous powers drawn from the Father) were the normal, limited and hitherto unrealised powers of the *unfallen* Humanity.

The "veiling" was the first act in the great scheme of Christ's renunciation : yet "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii, 9).† Yes, "*bodily*" (Incarnate) ; for by His Incarnation "the Son of Man" yielded nothing of His claim in the fullest sense to be "the Only-Begotten Son of God" (John iii, 16, 18). His Identity with the "I AM" of eternity would not be lost or even affected by the "veiling" of His Divine powers in His Incarnation.

That this *Identity* with the Second Person of the "Deity" was not impaired by His Incarnation is well attested in the Gospel narratives : from this we may believe that at an early age He realised, though, perhaps only dimly, *who He was* : "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business ?" Would not His mother have prepared Him in some degree for this awe-inspiring knowledge ? The full realisation at any rate

* "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels. But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled . . . ?" (Matt. xxvi, 53.)

† Mark the present tense "dwelleth," perhaps referable to His then and now exalted state, and in the light of the previous verses 2 and 3, this reading seems very probable.

"Fullness" in "The Word . . . made flesh" is explained to indicate "grace and truth" (John i, 14), and not "omniscience" or "omnipotence."

must have come at His baptism, when the Voice proclaimed to *Himself*, "Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Luke iii, 22; Mark i, 2; cf. Matt. iii, 17).

At His Transfiguration the manifestation of His Godhead was made also to *His three disciples*. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him" (Matt. xvii, 5; also Luke ix, 35). These words in singular and unique recognition of His Deity issued from God The Father. Then, in further proof, the following quotations confirm His own personal claim, "I give unto them eternal life" (John x, 28); "I and My Father are one" (John x, 30); "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv, 9); "Before Abraham was I AM" (John viii, 58)*; ". . . and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds" (Mark xiv, 62); "I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi, 44); "The only-begotten Son" (John iii, 16, 18); "Who can forgive sins but God only? . . . but that ye may know that *the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins . . .*" (Mark ii, 7, 10).

These last words are of special value in this connection, indicating that Our Lord regarded the power to forgive sins as a Divine prerogative, and as exceptional to one living on the earth. It was a spiritual power, apparently retained from the "veiling," and exercisable in virtue of His Godhead. From His own words and actions we gather that it was a power distinguishable from the "signs [which] shall follow them that believe" (Mark xvi, 17). The retention of this spiritual power by the "Son of Man" was obviously not in frustration of the fulfilment of His perfect Humanity. Later on, after His resurrection, and after *all power* had been given to Him, in heaven and on earth, when He had breathed on His disciples, He *bestowed this wonderful gift on them* as delegates through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

Lastly, and carrying the most convincing proof that "*Deity*" was claimed by the Lord Himself, is the evidence that He accepted worship without questioning its propriety: "There came a leper and worshipped Him" (Matt. viii, 2); "there came a certain ruler and worshipped Him" (Matt. ix, 18);

* The Jews so interpreted the meaning of His Words and called for His execution for blasphemy under the Levitical law.

“then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him, saying of a truth Thou art the Son of God” (Matt. xiv, 33); “Behold Jesus met them saying, All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him” (Matt. xxviii, 9; also Matt. xv, 25; xxviii, 17; Mark v, 6). This attitude is in marked contrast to that of His Apostles, who, while exercising supernatural powers over the material world, together with that special power to forgive sins, bestowed on them as delegates by the risen Saviour, yet emphatically repudiated the worship of their fellow-creatures, which would imply their inherent possession of Divine status (St. Peter, Acts xiv, 15).

* * * * *

To accept the view outlined in this essay, claiming for its sole authority the words of Holy Scripture, seems to find at once a comprehensive and illuminating explanation of the *infallibility*, and the *supernatural power* of the “Son of Man” in His complete Humanity (making a reality of His Temptation in the wilderness; the congruous climax in reversal of the human tragedy in Eden and after),* without sacrificing in any measure His Identity as the Second Person in the Trinity of the One Almighty God “revealed” to the World in the “blessed” answer to the question—“Whose Son is He?”

It seems to give a fuller value to Canon Liddon’s declaration, in his Bampton Lecture on “The Divinity of Our Lord,” Lect. 8, pp. 453–472: “A sincere and intelligent belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ obliges us to believe that Jesus Christ as a teacher is infallible . . . when we say that a teacher is infallible we do not mean that his knowledge is encyclopædic, but merely that when he does teach he is incapable of propounding as truth that which in point of fact is not true.”

Also Bishop Handley Moule in his *Phillipian Studies*—“The Absolute Bondservant must exercise a perfect Bond-service; and this will mean . . . a perfect conveyance of the Supreme Master’s mind in the delivery of His message.” The *Kenosis* itself is nothing less than a guarantee of the infallibility. It says neither yes nor no to the question, “Was our

* His Temptation was a monumental event where “Man” is seen in action in the faithful exercise of His divine faculty of *free will*, a faculty which is always open in fallen “Man” to influences of fear and love, but is never subjected in its final decision to compulsion, which is the very antithesis of *free will*, and productive only of automatons.

Redeemer, as Man, in the days of His flesh, omniscient?" It says a profound and decisive "yes" to the question? Is our Redeemer, as Man, in the days of His flesh to be absolutely trusted in every syllable of assertion which He was actually pleased to make? "*He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God.*" (The comments in this Paper are made deferentially to such higher Authorities.)

Christ's *infallibility*, like His *supernatural power* as "The Son of Man," flowed, spontaneously to His requirements, from His unbroken communion with God The Father—a communion to which fallen "Man," through his developed seed of *faith in Jesus Christ* "The Only-Begotten of The Father," might aspire to approach.

* * * * *

It should be clearly understood that this belief is far removed from the views of "modernism" and its interpretation of the doctrine of *Kenosis*. The doctrine so interpreted, while it denies the claim of Jesus Christ to be "the Only-Begotten Son of God," presents Him as the "natural" Son of Joseph and Mary—a richly gifted Man, "evolved" like the rest of mankind, from the atom through the beast, and from His lack of knowledge often in serious error in His teaching. Denying, too, the Christian belief in His Virgin Birth, "modernism" refuses to credit His exhibition of supernatural powers, and the Modernist is only logical when he also rejects the Gospel accounts of His Resurrection. Prof. T. H. Huxley was right when he said: "Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to accept the Bible"—and the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, is centred in Jesus Christ. The views of the extreme Modernists are the only logical outcome of belief in the theory of "evolution," which Dr. Inge in his "valedictory" address 1934 said, "now dominates all our thought. Theology, like everything else, must grow and change" (*Church of England Newspaper*, September 21, 1934). That this view is shared in general by the Leaders of "modernism" is confirmed by Bishop Barnes in his sermon at Westminster Abbey in May, 1927, and by Prof. Bethune Baker in the November number of the *Outline*, 1929. *Evolution is indeed the "dynamic" of the whole Modernist outlook*, in which the Christ of the Gospels is a fabulous figure, and His Cross a needless tragedy. "In the light of modern

knowledge," which is an expression constantly in use by Modernists, may generally be taken to mean, "from the standpoint of 'organic evolution.'" For the Modernist, "sin," in its Biblical sense attributable to Adam's fatal fall, does not exist; it is in all its aspects merely evidence of a lack of knowledge due to Man's present imperfect stage in his imaginary progressive rise from the beast to the throne of the Universe.

Judged by the Creeds, the grievous error in the Modernist's view of "*Kenosis*" does not seem to lie in the assertion that Jesus of *His own initiative* "*did not know*" and "*could not act*" outside the inherent capabilities of His adopted Manhood, but, *basing its logic on "evolution,"* a theory which *denies to God the power to intervene in the affairs of men and nature,* "*Kenosis*" inevitably led to the modern apostasy, that the recorded utterances of Jesus Christ are unreliable. "Gloze the facts as you will, Jesus remains deluded" (*Modern Churchman*, October, 1928).

* * * * *

Criticisms of the view here propounded, which are based on the wording of the Athanasian Creed, fail to realise that those portions of the Creeds which deal with the mystery of the dual natures in Jesus Christ, were addressed entirely to answer the question—"What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?" In short, the Creeds are concerned with Jesus Christ's *Identity*, and do not touch the central theme of this essay, viz., the degree of "veiling" of His Divine powers which His Incarnation—a true Humanity—demanded. The theory here presented, on Scriptural authority, removes any ground for an interpretation of Phil. ii, 7, which could justify the Modernist's theory of *Kenosis* and its destructive inference that "Jesus Christ remains deluded," and renders the text clear and intelligible in the face of the Creeds of Christianity.

If Jesus Christ was not the "Only-Begotten of the Father"—the "I AM" of Eternity, as He claimed to be, then by Jewish law He was justly condemned for blasphemy (Lev. xxiv, 16), and His Cross, the central point of the Christian religion, carries no more merit than the crosses of the two thieves; and Christianity, robbed of its power, ceases to live.

In the fashionable corner of the field of philosophy, comprehended in the expression "the dominance of mind over

matter," or "the subordination of the material to the spiritual," we may discern the feeble and fruitless efforts, from the purely rationalistic human standpoint, to penetrate the "terrain" of those supernatural "powers" which by His perfect communion with the Father were available *in an unlimited degree* to "the Son of Man," and given the fully developed Faith (a seemingly impossible achievement to a "Christian" world, living so short of "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ") might be powers at the disposal of His Church to-day.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN (Rev. CHARLES W. COOPER) said: I wish to express the grateful thanks of the members and associates of the Institute to Mr. Henry R. Kindersley for his most valuable and helpful paper, given this afternoon. We regard it as a much-needed and very useful contribution to the cause of Evangelical truth.

It is impossible for me, in the space of time permitted, to argue in a few words the right and wrong of any opinions concerning the doctrine of *the Kenosis*, of which this paper treats. I should, however, like to express my opinion that the essence of the discussion under consideration is not a question of the true or false interpretation of the expression used by the apostle in Phil. ii, 7, "He emptied Himself."

The real question at issue is whether Bible statements in general, concerning the divine nature of our Lord's Person, are statements of absolute truth, or merely statements made by men with human limitations, unaided by divine guidance.

We regard it as a basic truth, and beyond all legitimate controversy, that the New Testament is full of statements representing Jesus Christ as truly divine, and yet perfectly human. The writer of this paper, for convenience, divides inquirers into this subject into two classes, viz., "modernists" and "creationists." Many modernists, however, declare that they cannot accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus. That this is true is proved by the book which I hold in my hand—*The Heart of Modernism*, by L. J. Dunne—which contains verbatim quotations of such and similar statements gathered from over 500 sources of publications by modernists. It is manifestly useless to argue with such men about the truth of

Bible statements, where there is no common foundation on which to build.

Our conviction is that passages of scripture which appear to contradict one another are not really contradictory but parallel truths, complementary to one another, and that those who would set one Bible statement against another thereby prove their inability rightly to interpret that which is written, for we believe that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim., III, 16) and therefore cannot err. The words under discussion, "He, (Christ) emptied Himself" are a case in point.

As Dr. Hastings's Bible Dictionary rightly states, the question is "as to the extent to which the Son of God stripped Himself of His divine prerogatives." No amount of casuistry can get rid of the fact that the New Testament declares Christ to have been born of a virgin, or that He Himself claimed to have existed before Abraham, and that He raised the dead to life. It is therefore manifest that Jesus was *not* entirely stripped of divine power during His earthly ministry. To deny these facts, and the plain implications of these statements, is pure assumption, without the slightest authority.

Mr. PERCY O. RUOFF said: All attempts to compass the Person of the Son of God, by defining the limits either of His manhood or His Deity, are doomed to failure, and are open to grave objection. It would appear from the words of Christ Himself that it is impossible for any man to fathom the mystery of His Being. He said, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father."

It is difficult to understand what Mr. Kindersley means on page 42 when, referring to the "veiling," he speaks of the abeyance of His powers, whenever the retention of them would militate against the full realisation of His adopted humanity. If, for example, it is accepted that Christ walked on the water, or raised the dead, the argument of the lecturer fails, because such acts exhibit divine power. Mr. Kindersley forces an argument from the words of Christ, "faith as a grain of mustard seed," and seeks to show that it means "faith (which) has reached a growth corresponding to the great tree." The words of Christ cannot be said to carry such a meaning. There is all the difference in the world between "faith as a grain of

mustard seed" (small but living) and "faith which has reached a growth corresponding to the great tree." Mr. Kindersley cites the words "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also," and affirms that such powers belong to those whose faith has approached "the great tree." May not an illustration of these words be seen, for example, in the case of a preacher who declares the Gospel and the omnipresent Spirit of God uses the words spoken to turn men to God?

The description of the birth of Christ on page 47 is open to strong objection, as no human being can go beyond what is revealed about His mysterious Incarnation.

The lecturer speaks of Christ having free will to obey or disobey, and in a footnote cites the passage about prayer for the aid of angels. This does not prove the point. Such prayer, if offered, could not be construed into *disobedience*.

Mr. GEORGE BREWER said: It is not possible for finite minds to comprehend or reconcile all that is implied by the Incarnation of God the Eternal Son, omniscient and omnipotent, emptying Himself in order to become man. While His glory was definitely relinquished until He should receive it again from His Father, there is nothing in Scripture to show that His knowledge was not retained. He saw Nathaniel when under the fig tree, and knew the state of his mind (John i, 48-51) and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man (John ii, 25). He knew the personal history of the Samaritan woman (John iv, 17-18) and from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him (John vi, 64).

In the four gospels there are at least 100 passages to prove that our Lord's knowledge exceeded what was humanly possible.

It is significant that in our Lord's prayer recorded in 17th chapter of John, He does not pray for a return of His knowledge or power, but for His pre-incarnate glory only, which He had laid aside in order to undertake the work of redemption.

At the same time Luke ii, 52 tells us that the child Jesus increased in wisdom and stature; and of Him who said "Lo, I come to do Thy will O God," and whose human life was one of perfect submission and obedience, Hebrews v, 8 states, "Though He were a Son, yet

learned He obedience by the things which He suffered : and being *made perfect*, He became the author of eternal salvation to them that obey Him." These passages indicate that our Lord's retention of His knowledge as God was not allowed to abrogate the necessity of acquiring knowledge and experience as man.

The omniscience of God being inherent differs not only in degree but in essence and character from human knowledge, which is acquired and retained by the intellect ; and the perfect combination of the Divine and Human in the person of our Lord, which our finite minds are unable to grasp, must be accepted with reverence. Mr. Kindersley's explanation of the " veiling " on page 42, as being " a temporary abeyance of our Lord's own divine powers, whenever the retention of them would militate against the full realisation of His adopted humanity " seems to be as far as we can safely go.

As the Author and Finisher of faith, our Lord's life on earth was perfect in communion with, and dependence upon, His Father for all His words and actions ; and even if all the implications claimed for the *Kenosis* theory be admitted, the absolute accuracy of all our Lord's utterances by reason of this perfect dependence is secured. His own testimony as recorded in John xii, 49-50 leaves no room for doubt : " For I have not spoken of Myself ; but My Father, Who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." This covers every utterance, whether public or private, and the attempt to discredit any word of our Lord which does not fit in with modernistic theories is utterly futile. Such criticism affects not our Lord alone but God the Father, Who gave the commandment, and the Holy Spirit, Who inspired the record. Thus the Triune Godhead is attacked, our Lord's parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal fulfilled, making the evolution of evil complete.

These adverse critics seem to overlook the exhortation in Phil. ii to emulate the humble mind of the Lord Jesus. In their case the emptying process does not appear to operate. If it did, their self-assertive wisdom might give place to that which cometh from above.

I hope that I have misunderstood on page 49, paragraph 2, of this generally excellent paper, what appears to be a defence of the Roman doctrine of priestly absolution. After stating that our Lord regarded

the power to forgive sins as a divine prerogative, only exercisable by virtue of His Godhead, it goes on to say that "after His resurrection He bestowed this wonderful gift on His disciples, as delegates through the agency of the Holy Spirit."

I do not find any such bestowal recorded, or even referred to in the New Testament; but if the apostles understood such to have been made, it is singular that there is no record of their *having used* this power, although ample evidence is afforded of their obedience to instructions which have been recorded.

The doctrine that power to forgive *sin against God* has been delegated to sinful men, has been used to establish a man-made priesthood, is subversive of the High Priesthood of our Lord, and has no warrant in the pages of the New Testament.

Mr. R. DUNCAN said: The Scriptures afford us a reasonable degree of light on the great mystery of God manifest in the flesh. The statement by St. Paul to the effect that our Lord, in becoming man, had emptied himself of His glory is not one to be stumbled at but rather to be accepted in its complete significance. There *was* this emptying, but was there not also, in due time, a refilling? The "emptied" period lasted throughout infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood until our Lord came forward to begin His public ministry. How He had borne Himself in the Father's sight during these thirty years in obscurity was testified at His baptism by the voice from heaven which said "This is My beloved son in Whom I am well pleased." Thereupon the Spirit descended on Him in bodily shape, like a dove. From that hallowed experience, as Luke tells us, Jesus went forth "full of the Holy Ghost." This, then, was the refilling. Concerning its scope Isaiah had said, centuries previously, "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." With the exception of the Transfiguration, a further manifestation by the Father, was not this enduement, while entirely concordant with His humanity, adequate in all respects to everything the gospels tell us as to His words, acts and ways up to the great consummation in His sacrifice on the Cross?

We know something of what the Spirit could accomplish even

through imperfect instruments. Amongst the Corinthian converts, as we gather from St. Paul's First Epistle to them, to one was "given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit dividing to every man severally as he will. If the Spirit could work thus in the case of vessels of inferior capacity, what could he not achieve in and through one so fully receptive and so completely dedicated as Jesus the well beloved Son!

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Major R. B. WITHERS, D.S.O., wrote: Christians have always been of two types; those who, in practice, accept the Sacred Scriptures as the sole, complete and final revelation of God; and those who, though they may not realise it, do not thus accept them.

This paper brings the issue into sharp focus.

Quite evidently the author desires to be wholly scriptural, and he largely succeeds. Why, therefore, does he start off with something altogether outside the Word of God? Where does Scripture speak of "the two natures in the one Person of Jesus Christ"? Where does Scripture speak of the Lord Jesus as "Perfect God"? These things are found instead in creeds and other merely human writings. How can we receive them if we accept Scripture as our *sole* spiritual authority? The author's problem would not arise if unscriptural expressions were avoided.

If we have "a whole-hearted belief that the Bible not merely *contains* but IS 'the Word of God'" (p. 43), why waste time and energy interpreting the creeds? Whatever is true in them would be better stated in God's own words; and whatever is untrue in them is but fuel for fire, and helps only the enemies of our Faith.

I believe from my heart *all* that God has been pleased to reveal about His Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sacred Scriptures. What is more, I understand what He has said in them! I cannot understand the Athanasian Creed, and I doubt if anybody

really does. It is a monument of scholastic speculation, the very antithesis of a scientific compilation from the Scriptures.

The use of such man-made formulæ as the Athanasian Creed implies that God's Word is not complete and sufficient in itself; a proposition which I, at any rate, refuse to entertain for a moment.

This question of ultimate authority is vital. The choice is between the Word of God and the words of man; and if we are undecided in such a matter, how can we hope to present a united front to our assailants? I most earnestly appeal to all to face this issue.

Let us then abandon all indefensible outposts, and believe simply what God has said, neither more nor less. If we could but state our faith in God's own words, our divisions would largely disappear for sheer lack of occasion for disagreement.

Where the author of this paper forgets the creeds and confines himself to Scripture, I have little criticism to offer.

The Venerable Archdeacon W. S. MOULE, M.A., wrote: If we regard the Tabernacle as a picture of the way in which God would deign to dwell among men, we are at once struck by the figure of one Tabernacle with two parts, kept separate from one another by a veil. The one part is eloquent of Deity, the other of humanity. In the Holiest Place are figures of the divine attributes of law-giving, forgiveness, and rule over created things. In the Holy Place are exhibited a perfectly pure Body, Mind, and Spirit of Man. These two natures are seen united in one structure, but not confused. The picture is certainly in favour of the suggestion in this paper that the proper Deity of our Lord was not the support of His life in the flesh. This, though present, was not used for this end.

But it is to be remarked in the Divine Plan for the Tabernacle, that when oracles of God were sought in the Tent of Meeting, they came not from the Holy, but from the Holiest Place (Numbers vii, 89). This appears to teach us that the teachings of our Christ come out of His own divine consciousness, and not from His humanity, however perfect. Prophets say, "Thus saith the Lord"; He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you."

The Glory in the Tabernacle was also veiled, by its covering curtains, of the same material as the Veil, from those amongst whom it dwelt. But sometimes the Glory shone forth to the people.

Is this an indication that when God would dwell among men, the present Deity, ordinarily hidden, would at times shine forth? If so, then His first sign before men, and those that followed, would be works of *His own, His present Deity* manifesting itself.

But what then of all the places where the Lord Jesus says that His works and His words are not His own, but the Father's? To this it may be answered:—

1. These did not spring from *what appeared to sight, the Man men knew*, but from what was present within, His own essential Deity; and this Deity *always is*, not of Himself, but of the Father. He is God, but always as Son of God (John v, 19).

2. Furthermore, these manifestations of Deity, which He showed in the flesh, were confined to the words and works His Father gave Him to speak and to do in the world, and so may be said to be not of Himself but of the Father.

He did not speak all He knew (John iii, 12, 13; xvi, 12), nor do all He could. But the words of teaching, and works of power which he showed were, when they occurred, manifestations of *His own proper Deity*.

It is possible that the words of the Lord Jesus that “neither the Son, but the Father only” knows the day and hour of His Coming, may be explained as its being no part of His commission to declare it. But this is not wholly satisfactory. It is the only place where our Lord confesses ignorance on any point. I prefer to leave it. It should not be used to negative what the Lord says elsewhere about the trustworthiness of all He did speak. In fact, it confirms it.

The only *Kenosis* affirmed in the Bible is that He Who before lived as God came to live as man. *How* the One Person could live in the two Natures it is not necessary for us to understand, the fact is the important thing.

May we not say that as regards His personal life as Son of Man, Jesus Christ lived on earth independently of His own divine powers, and in entire dependence on the Father; while as regards His commission to the world, whether in manifesting Himself as the Object of faith, or in His teaching, He spoke and acted with full use of those divine powers?

In this view the miraculous powers were not exerted by the Lord as part of His normal human life, and in consequence of the perfect

harmony of His human spirit with God, but by His own volition, to show Who He really was. If it were by consequence of His unbroken fellowship as perfect Man with the Father that His works of power were done, would they not have appeared before He was 30 years old ?

At the grave of Lazarus He might show that His working was always with and from the Father, for the sake of those who stood by, that they might believe that God sent Him, yet it was His own will and divine power that called Lazarus from the tomb.

Our Lord's asking for information on several occasions may indicate that in His own human life and actions His Divine knowledge was not used. But similar questions were put by Him after His resurrection, and in the O.T. are found in the mouth of God. And sometimes, as in the direction to the Samaritan woman, and the question to Philip, there was no ignorance. The definitions of Dean Liddon and Dr. Moule on this point, quoted in this paper, seem true and satisfying. It is all we need to know, though we may reverently ponder the mystery of God manifest in the flesh. It is significant that there is no recorded word of authoritative teaching until the Lord had begun to manifest His glory.

The relation of human faith to the operations of divine power is a very important question.

If the view taken in these comments of our Lord's working is correct, He did His works, not because of His perfect faith, but in the line of His commission, and as evidence of powers resident in His own Person. There is nothing corresponding to this in us.

When He says, "these signs shall follow those who believe," He is declaring His intention, among the gifts to His Church, to give these gifts to whom He will. Do all work miracles ?

When He says, "the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works . . ." He means, I think, on a greater scale, over a wider range than it was His mission to do. "Faith like a grain of mustard seed" may perhaps mean, as is suggested, *growing* faith. Jesus Christ does honour faith, and faith does grow by use ; Paul's word is also to be remarked. Yet, on the whole, according to the Scriptures, faith, however great, works miracles, not necessarily, but of *God's will*. The highest faith will always acknowledge this. There is an essential difference between our mission in life and that of the

Lord Jesus. (1) He knew all the Father sent Him to do, and we do not, so that for God's work in our hands we must still say, *if God will*. (2) His mission to do and teach was fulfilled by His own divine knowledge and power, in the unity of the Divine Being.

A second picture of the Person of the One Mediator is given by the garment of the High Priest, and the two pictures agree. He has the blue inner robe, indicative of Deity, and upon it the Ephod (of the same construction as the Veil and Curtain of the Tabernacle) of His Flesh. *Attached* to the robe is the memorial of His Flesh (the fringe of Tabernacle materials and colours); and *hidden in* the Ephod is the memorial of His Deity (the Urim and Thummim, the Lights and Perfections).

The Lights and Perfections are brought out when the High Priest speaks, and such are all the teachings of Jesus.

LECTURER'S REPLY.

Verbal Discussion.

Rev. Charles W. Cooper. His quotation from Dr. Hasting's Bible Dictionary seems to endorse the underlined hypothesis set in the early part of the read paper, which limits the "veiling" to a temporary abeyance of Christ's powers, wherever the retention of His own divine powers would militate against the full realisation of His adopted Humanity—the power to forgive sins supplies an obvious exception.

Mr. Percy Ruoff. If all attempts to "compass" to some extent the Person of the Son of God "are doomed to failure," what meaning can be assigned to considerable portions of the Bible, Old and New Testaments alike, which deal with His Identity and His powers, to some of which the principle paper has ventured to point? These were "written for our learning."

Christ's prayer for help from legions of angels to save Him from the Cross (had it ever been made), says Mr. Ruoff, could not be construed into *disobedience*. No, but it shows that His will was free to make such prayer which He said if made would be answered, though obviously avoiding the known purpose of God. It would have been a failure of the gravest magnitude. The miracles which he cites find their counterpart in those performed by Moses, Elijah, Elisha

and others, even to raising the dead. These differ perhaps only in degree and not in kind. But these men never ventured to forgive sins of their own initiative!

Mr. George Brewer. The same reply applies to his comments as to those of Mr. Ruoff. All the instances which he cites of Christ's supernatural knowledge are capable of falling within the category of inducted knowledge and power. "He saw Nathaniel under the fig tree"—Elisha saw that Naaman "turned again from his chariot" to meet Gehazi. Mr. Brewer need have no fear that any words of the paper countenance the false doctrines of Rome: he breathed on all of them.

Mr. Duncan. While allowing that the "veiling" was in force in His childhood, suggests that after His Baptism there was a "refilling"; does he mean a complete "refilling"? Is this idea consonant with His prayers, His agony, His want of knowledge why His Father should have forsaken Him?

Written Discussion.

Major R. B. Withers. Thinks that all Creeds are erroneous and a mistake. Many share his doubts about the Creed of St. Athanasius. But just to test the truth of his general view of Creeds, will Major Withers take one by one the affirmations of the simple Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and apply to each a direct negative? From the earliest records of "Man" in Genesis a simple Creed or expressed Faith was found necessary (Faith in God—what are His attributes, and how does He stand in relation to "Man"). The Old Testament writings teem with such. They become more necessary, if somewhat more complex, for the early Fathers after our Lord's Resurrection. It is to meet the modernist denials of such expressions of Faith that this paper was written.

Ven. Archdeacon W. S. Moule. The Archdeacon bases much of his comments on lessons to be drawn from the wonderful Tabernacle ordinances, in so much of their detail prefiguring the Personality of our Lord. There the Deity at times shone forth. From this the Archdeacon argues that our Lord's essential attributes of Deity, for the most part veiled, were occasionally manifested in His life on earth. This exhibition of His own glory, is not precluded by

the wording of the paper, which expressly suggests that the "veiling" was limited to His purposive experience of a human life. His sinlessness and His Personality speaking with authority, always shone forth, as also from time to time did His mercy in openly pronouncing forgiveness of sin. His terrible judgments also on the Pharisees and Jerusalem were no less an exhibition of power inherent in His Godhead. These do not militate against His experience of a human life. The Archdeacon considers that our Lord received before Incarnation a detailed commission what he was to say and do. There are words in the Gospels which do not seem to bear this out, *e.g.*, "As I hear [present tense] I judge"—"I thank thee Father that thou has heard Me"—"For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth Him [present tense] all things that Himself doeth [present tense]; and He *will show* Him greater works." It would make our Lord's prayer for escape ("if it be possible") from the terror of the Cross, an unreality.

The suggestion that Christ's own "essential" powers were always available in Him, but were not used, leaves unanswered the question of this paper, *viz.*, "how can anyone know all things, and at the same time not know them?" Again, is the statement quite correct that our Lord's denial that The Son knew the day and hour of His second coming, was the *only recorded instance* of His suggested want of knowledge? On the cross He did not know why His Father had forsaken Him! The Archdeacon also leaves untouched the profound question of how, if knowledge was not "veiled" in him, His baby life can be explained otherwise than as a deception! Likewise, how are we to explain His growing in wisdom and stature. His earthly education would be a pretence! These comments are made with all due deference to the Archdeacon's great authority.

* * * *

Now what is the real difference between those who disagree in their understanding of this sacred and very important subject? Some are apprehensive lest the stressing of His true Humanity should compromise His Deity. Others adopting the view taken in this paper feel relieved of any such fears. Of what does the, we won't say *Kenosis* which implicates a modern heresy,

but of what does the "heauton ekenose" of Phillipians (translated "Emptied Himself") deprive Our Lord? Not His Identity, and therefore not His place in the Deity.

Both sides agree that he was possessed of infallibility. Both agree that he had *available* unlimited *knowledge and power*. The only difference is that we disagree as to whether these attributes "in the days of His flesh" were *inherent faculties* or *inducted facilities*. Some may think that this is hair-splitting, but indeed it is vital. If these Powers were "inherent" "in His Incarnate State," they seem to make His human life an unreality: just as much as if, being God, He had not submitted for the period of His Incarnation, to hunger, thirst, pain, weariness and tears, none of which can be contemplated as pertaining to His Godhead. But if these powers were to an unlimited extent "inducted" as required for the accomplishing of His Mission (as they were to the Prophets of old) then truly, though God, He lived a *perfect Man* and One who "was in all points tempted like as we are," yet untroubled by a tainted heredity, and "without sin."

His works were proof, as the People said, that He came from God, and was always living in close communion with Him—that is why they said that He was one of the Prophets. But the revelation of Himself through the Father could not stand there. The supreme vitalizing fact for Himself and humanity lay in the answer to His insistent question made to the Pharisees as well as to His Disciples—"Whose Son is He?"—"Who do ye say that I am?" In the true answer to this question rests enshrined the *whole Christian Faith*, as enunciated in the Apostles' Creed, and in its acknowledgment stands alone the title of anyone to call himself a Christian.

Modernists to-day say that the "basic question" for the world is "What think ye of Christ?" They stop there, though purporting to quote Him. (This is not said at random.) That was not His question, but only the introduction to it. Christ seemingly was not so anxious to elicit from His audiences what estimate men held of His character (the majority of men, then as now, think well of Him as a Prophet and Teacher, and as the ideal "Man"), but correlating Genesis with the *facts* of the Gospels, Jesus Christ made *His Identity the supreme concern of Faith*—"For when the fullness of

time was come God sent forth HIS SON, *made of a woman* " Gal. iv, 4.

Finally, all men must acknowledge that He submitted Himself to hunger, thirst, weariness, tears *and even death*. No one will say that such experiences are inherent in the Deity : or that the reverse of each of these is not "*essential*" to God Almighty. Therefore in His Incarnation Christ's "*essential*" freedom from these traits of imperfection was most obviously put in abeyance.

Is the right to life less "*essential*" to the Godhead than the attributes of "*omniscience*" and "*omnipotence*" ? On the contrary, they are clearly dependent on God's Eternal Life.