

scheme which incorporates the idea and appeals to the imagination of men, welcome every step that encourages the new and better mind; but also he will know that the new and better mind is near to the mind of his Lord, and conversely that as men come to have the mind of Christ they will arrive inevitably at the will and mind for peace.

The logic of the situation, as we read it, leads to nothing less than vigorous evangelization on the part of the Christian Church. The peace propaganda demands exactly that which the Church can supply, and in the last analysis it is seen that the truest antidote to militarism and all its brood is the missionary activity of the servants of Jesus Christ.

The Revivalism of the New Testament.

IN these days, when revivalism is in the air, it will not be out of place to direct attention to the revivalism of the New Testament. The exponents of the Psychological Study of Religion have as yet paid very little attention to the relevant data contained in the New Testament writings. Doubtless, this is because these data are often disappointingly meagre. But such as are available have received less than justice. There are many notices in the Book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles the exact significance of which can be appreciated only by those who have had some experience of a religious revival. Such an experience is every bit as illuminating to the student as the travels of Ramsay and Deissmann in Asia Minor. There is in the Christianity of the New Testament a power of contagion, which is a marked feature of religious revivals. To the disciples at Pentecost there comes a deep religious experience, which fills them with a new and strange enthusiasm. The fire spreads. Many others catch the new enthusiasm and are converted on the Day of Pentecost. Philip takes it down to Samaria. A little later the revival breaks out in Caesarea, and the centurion, Cornelius, and his household break out into the glossolalia. The arch-persecutor, Saul of Tarsus, catches the divine fire and carries it through Asia Minor and into Greece, establishing in the great centres of trade and commerce little communities of men and women in whose hearts there glowed the same fire. He finds twelve lifeless Christians in Ephesus, and before long they are filled with the same holy enthusiasm that fills him. This feature of early Christianity is apt to receive less than justice at times from the

average Anglo-Saxon. The present writer had no adequate notion of what the meetings of the Corinthian Church must have been like, until he had seen the Christians of Bengal assembled for a *nagarkirtan*, which is a singing procession round the town. In such processions there are always manifestations of *bhakti* (loving devotion to the Deity), and these manifestations would sometimes be more frequent than they are, if the moderating influence of the European missionary were removed. As the procession moves along singing, e.g., "Let all men shout, 'Victory to Jesus!' as long as life remains in the body," the fervour rises and, each time the procession rests, some will dance and wave their arms above their heads, while the others keep time by singing enthusiastically in chorus. Even the phlegmatic man of the West is apt at such times to feel a curious lump in his throat, though it would never enter his head to dance with his Indian Christian brothers.

We are fortunate in possessing pretty full information of a revival movement which bears many marked resemblances to the Christianity of the Apostolic Age. The parallel between the conditions prevailing in the Graeco-Roman world, into which the first Christian missionaries carried their message, and the conditions in England during the Commonwealth, when George Fox set in motion the Quaker revival, is extraordinarily close. In both cases the times were times of religious ferment. Men and women, in large numbers, had broken free from their religious moorings and were sailing troubled seas with little to guide them to the haven of religious peace. They were dissatisfied with their ancestral religions and from them they had gone out; and some had gone out not knowing whither they went, but they all were mindful of a better country. In both cases there is the same medley of sects and cults. In almost all the fields of his missionary labour Paul would meet with "God-fearers" and initiates into the different Mystery-Religions. In England in Commonwealth times there were the Independents, the Baptists, both Particular and General, the Presbyterians, the Fifth Monarchy men, with their millenarian ideas, the Muggletonians, with their extreme apocalyptic notions, the Ranters, the Familists, and the Seekers or Waiters. Modern research helps us to see in most of them, in spite of certain extravagances, men and women of honest heart and fearless purpose, filled with unsatisfied longings for a vital religious experience.

It cannot be doubted that Paul and George Fox would find in these different groups many whom long seeking had left in an expectant and suggestible state of mind. The conditions were, therefore, ripe for the outbreak and rapid spread of a revival. The preaching of Paul and the message of

Fox came to men and women prepared for it, and in both cases the first converts come from companies of men and women in whose hearts religious feeling was already aglow. Paul won many of his Gentile converts from the "God-fearers," whose religious cravings had formed them into a fringe around the Jewish synagogues. George Fox won his first great successes among the Seekers, who had banded themselves together in a fellowship of prayer to wait for a new outpouring of the Spirit. In both cases it was the existence of these prepared souls that made the outbreak of the revival, humanly speaking, possible, and caused the preacher's message to fall like a spark on gunpowder.

In both cases there is also a creative moment, when the revival breaks out, followed by a period of rapid expansion. The creative moment in the history of Quakerism falls in June 1652, when at Preston Patrick whole congregations of Seekers went over to Fox *en masse*, and, to use Cromwell's phrase, became "happy finders." Three and a half years later Quakerism had spread through all the counties of England and was being carried into Scotland and Ireland. The cause of this rapid spread was, without doubt, the wide diffusion of companies of Seekers throughout the land. It is sufficient to cite a typical case. When, in the autumn of 1654, the Quaker preachers, Camm and Audland, came to Bristol, they found there a company of Seekers, who had spent one day a week in fasting and prayer and who were "sometimes greatly bowed and broken down before the Lord in humility and tenderness." Under such circumstances it is not surprising to find the missionaries writing thus, two days after their arrival:—

Here is a pretty many convinced of the truth . . . they are much come down into themselves since we were here. . . . The work of the Lord is great hereaway; the people hungers after life; they groan to be delivered; they meet us every day; if we go into the fields, they follow us; from us they cannot be separated; if we sit silent a long time, they all wait in silence; the Lord will do a great work amongst them, and raise up a pure people to place his name in.

In the history of Primitive Christianity, Pentecost seems to have been the creative moment when the revival first broke out with power. Luke's account of Pentecost presents many difficulties, but it is clear that he intended his readers to feel that the movement, whose history he is recording, entered upon a new phase that day. The narrative seems to point back to some memorable occasion when the little company, met for prayer in Jerusalem, first became conscious of the strange phenomena of the glossolalia. For them

that the priest fell a trembling himself, that one said to him, "Look how the priest trembles and quakes. He is turned a Quaker also."

From Wesley's *Journal* we quote the entries for April 30 and May 1, 1739.

We understood that many were offended at the cries of those on whom the power of God came, among whom was a physician, who was much afraid there might be fraud or imposture in the case. To-day one whom he had known many years was the first (while I was preaching in Newgate) who broke out into "strong cries and tears." He could hardly believe his own eyes and ears. He went and stood close to her and observed every symptom, till great drops of blood ran down her face and all her bones shook. He then knew not what to think. . . . But when both her body and her soul were healed in a moment, he acknowledged the finger of God.

(The next day). Many were offended again, and, indeed, much more than before. . . . A Quaker who stood by was not a little displeased at the dissimulation of these creatures, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when he dropped down as thunder-struck. The agony he was in was even terrible to behold. We besought the Lord not to lay folly to his charge. And he soon lifted up his head and cried aloud, "Now I know thou art a prophet of the Lord."

In all these cases we have a company of human beings who are simultaneously excited. In any crowd even a slight rise in the level of general feeling will involve its members in some loss of their ordinary powers of inhibition. Moreover, in every crowd there are a few susceptible ones, who have little control over themselves, and impulsive social action begins with these. As soon as a few persons have been affected in a particular manner, the power of suggestion overcomes others and a common affection, whether physical or psychic, or both, is the result. Wesley, in the above entry in his *Journal* says enough about the Quaker to make it clear that the good man struggled against his suggestibility but all to no purpose.

The revivalistic nature of the Christianity of the Apostolic Age also manifests itself in the sudden and explosive character of many of the conversions. This suddenness was remarked upon by Jowett, as long ago as 1855, in his essay *On Conversion and Changes of Character*. "There was no interval," he remarks, "which separated the preaching of Peter on the Day of Pentecost, from the baptism of the three thousand. The eunuch of Candace paused for a brief space on a jour-

ney, and was then baptised into the name of Christ, which a few hours previously he had not so much as heard. There was no period of probation like that which, a century or two later, was appropriated to the instruction of the catechumens." Jowett thought that this suddenness was to be explained by the fact that the first Christians were poor and uneducated, and by the fact that they had no Christian training in their childhood and youth. As soon as they heard the Gospel, "they were pricked with a sense of sin; they were melted with the love of Christ; their spiritual nature 'came again like the flesh of a little child.'" It seems a fair criticism of Jowett to say that, if his explanation be correct, it is reasonable to expect a similar ready response from heathen peoples, wherever Christian missionaries appear on virgin soil. But, as a matter of fact, such is not the case. The suddenness of the New Testament conversions is to be explained by the fact that they took place in a time of religious revival. Jowett himself came very near to this view, when in his essay he noticed the contagious nature of mass movements.

It is also worth noticing that the New Testament preachers appealed for instant decisions quite in the manner of the revivalist preacher. "Has not all mission preaching," asks Weinel, 'indeed all revival preaching to this day, followed in the same steps?' and he adds, "Certainly this sort of preaching has up to now met with immense success, it is the manner of preaching of Methodism in the broadest sense." Dr. Nairne, who belongs to quite a different theological school, expresses the same opinion. "'Saved' in the New Testament," he says, "means what the mission preacher means by that word rather than what the Catechism suggests by 'being brought to this state of salvation.'"

But the revivalistic and enthusiastic nature of early Christianity has often been exaggerated. Wernle, for example, does not weigh his words, when he writes, "St. Paul's universal experience in founding his congregations was that they became the scenes of a wild enthusiasm, which was certainly connected with the faith in Jesus, but had in reality nothing whatever to do with Jesus himself."

In dealing with the enthusiastic nature of early Christianity it is important to remember that Paul always subordinated ecstasy to ethics. The apostle knew the value of emotional methods and could himself speak with tongues. He knew that under the influence of a crowd men could do things which they could not do alone, and of which they might become ashamed when alone again. But he also knew that under the same influence some would go far beyond their past attainments and attain to heights which

in solitude they had vainly struggled to win. Yet he was never content to begin and end in a tempest of emotion, nor did he believe that high-strung emotion is the peculiar channel by which the Holy Spirit finds access to the soul. In the self-portraiture of a passage like 2 Cor. x. 3-5 we get a picture of Paul the preacher, quite as anxious to convince the intellects of his hearers as to stir their emotions.

But, above all, it was by his doctrine of the Spirit that Paul was able to lead "Christianity past the critical years of its enthusiastic childhood and into the path of an orderly church life." After Gunkel's thorough investigation, it cannot be doubted that in the Primitive Church manifestations of the Spirit were recognised as such by their wonderful and exceptional character, rather than by strict reference to the moral and spiritual ends they were supposed to serve. Any remarkable manifestation in the convert's life was deemed a gift of the Spirit, and the glossolalia was specially valued as evidence of the Spirit's possession. At Corinth, and, possibly, elsewhere, there was a tendency to pay more heed to this "showy" gift of the Spirit than to the more humdrum virtues of the Christian life. But the ethical insight of the apostle enabled him to effect important modifications in this Primitive Christian doctrine. He adopted the same general standpoint as his fellow disciples and recognised ecstatic manifestations as gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. xiv. 18), but he differed from them in his criterion of values. For them the most valuable gift of the Spirit was that which seemed most wonderful. They gave little thought to its ultimate purpose. For the apostle, however, the purpose of the divine gift was the edification of the whole church, and by this test he estimates the value of the different gifts. Hence, he sought to bring not merely the ecstatic but also the normal life of the believer under the influence of the Spirit. He ethicised the popular Christian supernaturalism by applying to it the test of moral productivity, and he extended the domain of the Spirit's influence by placing not the ecstatic only, but the entire religious life under His sway. He concedes that speaking with tongues is a gift of the Spirit, but he does not include it among the fruits of the Spirit in Gal. v. 22. Thus in the teaching of Paul the Spirit becomes the creator and sustainer of the new life of peace with God, and all the graces of the Christian life are his gifts. Gal v. 22. may seem a truism to us to-day, but in Paul's day it was a revolutionary statement.

Paul, evidently, was aware that the ecstatic nature of some of the New Testament conversions would expose the converts to the danger of their religious development outstripping their moral growth. This danger would be greater

in the case of the converts from heathenism, with its lower moral standards, as the experiences of present-day missionaries among the heathen show. In his most illuminating analysis of the impact of Christianity upon the animistic Battaks of Sumatra, Johannes Warneck has shown that the moral renewal of the converts does not always keep pace with their religious progress.

Finally, it may be pointed out that it is possible to trace in the period covered by the New Testament writings that periodicity and rhythm, which so often mark the religious life of the individual and the community. The Christian movement began with the preaching of John the Baptist. It is to be regretted that no full account of his ministry has come down to us, but we have enough to show that the Baptist was an independent teacher with a message and influence all his own. His preaching was designed to produce conversions. The words put into the mouth of the angel who appeared to ~~Zaccheus~~, "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God," certainly embody an historical reminiscence. The Baptist's stern, and even terrible, words at a time of eschatological expectation, when men's minds were full of thoughts of the cataclysmic end of all things, would strike terror into the hearts of some, as is seen by the number of those who sought his baptism. To resort to modern parallels, John seems to have been a field preacher of the type of Wesley and Whitefield, with a message as urgent and an eloquence as terrifying as theirs ever were. His ministry has many of the features of a revival movement, and the conversions, which took place in the crowds which gathered to hear him, would, doubtless, be of the sudden and explosive type.

The Baptist's ministry was followed by that of Our Lord, who in the early part of His ministry had the crowds frequently with him. But it seems as if the revival movement received a check, owing to the fact that His personality and His method of preaching and teaching were different from the Baptist's. Though the impact of His personality upon others was often shattering, there was, as far as we know, no outbreak of visions, hysteria and glossolalia as a result of his preaching. He was the Great Healer of mental disorders and did not leave a trail of them behind him, as many revivals do. "No religious leader appealed less to religious excitement than the founder of Christianity."

But, as we have seen, with the experience of the Day of Pentecost another change came over the Christian movement. A new revival is set on foot and, in Acts and the epistles of Paul, we can trace not a few of the concomitants of religious revivals. But by the time the Johannine literature

and the Pastoral Epistles were produced the revival seems to have spent itself, and the enthusiastic Christianity of the primitive community has been replaced by more orderly and more settled methods of church life. Strange psychical phenomena no longer manifest themselves, and the Fourth Evangelist, in unfolding his doctrine of the Spirit, does not, like Paul, bring it into connection with those ecstatic phenomena, which many in the early community regarded as the surest sign of the Spirit's presence.

A. C. UNDERWOOD.

Baptist Church Discipline 1689—1699.

IN 1689 Robert Steed became co-pastor of the Hanserd Knollys Church (then meeting in Thames Street). Hanserd Knollys lived until 1691, when he commended Steed to the Church as his successor. During the eleven years of Steed's pastorate he kept a Discipline Book, which records about a score of cases for that period. This is high testimony to the general morality of a Church of more than a hundred members when we consider the severity of their scrutiny of each other's conduct. The record is made in almost microscopic hand-writing, often needing a magnifying-glass to decipher it. The manuscript is in the Angus Library, Regent's Park College, and is now for the first time published. The interest of the record is in the vivid light it throws on Baptist life in the closing decade of the seventeenth century. We get interesting glimpses of the relations of master and apprentice, not always simplified when both were "brethren" of the Church, of the brother who found it more congenial to preach than to pay his debts, of simple-minded trustfulness and cunning greed, of trade disputes, and the difficulty in making Christian theory into Christian practice, of gossip and slander, of heresies and hymn-singing, then (to Steed at least) a horrid innovation of Keach's, of the difficulties which may still arise between a minister and his assistant. It would be of interest to reconstruct the life of this little community from the data afforded by Steed's private Book of Discipline. But it is probably better to use the space at command in order to give these data in full, so that readers may use their own imagination in looking back to the rock whence they were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence they were digged.

H. WHEELER ROBINSON.

The names of the Brn. and Sisters of the Church of Christ assembling in George Yard in Thames Street.