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1923.

656TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, ON MONDAY, MAY 28TH, 1923,
AT 4.30 P.M.

LIEUT.-COLONEL F. A. MOLONY, O.B.E., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read; confirmed and signed, and the Hon. Secretary announced the Election as Member of W. Roger Rowlatt-Jones, Esq.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced the Rev. Canon A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., to read his paper on "Religious Controversy between Christians and Jews of To-day."

*RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY BETWEEN CHRISTIANS
AND JEWS OF TO-DAY.* By the Rev. Canon A. LUKYN
WILLIAMS, D.D.

THANK God that there is controversy! For there is a spirit abroad which thinks that since Jews are such sober good people, so trustworthy in business, so kind in family life, we Christians ought not to do or say anything to lead them to reconsider the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ, with the then resultant effect of producing a complete change in the attitude of Jews towards God, and in their whole outlook upon life.

This feeling exists to-day even among benefited Clergy of the Church of England, but it is an attitude which, I venture to assert, is not consistent with Church teaching, with the mind of St. Paul and the other Apostles, or with the mind of Christ. Christians, thank God! always have had controversy with Jews—for not a century, hardly even a single decade, has passed in which there has been none—and they always will have, until the last Jew has been led by them to submit himself to the doctrine of the Cross.

Controversy there must be. But there is controversy and controversy. Let me quote a few documents.

“ So because the Lord charges us in the Gospel, saying, ‘ Verily I say unto you, If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything whatever they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father who is in Heaven,’ therefore do I address this venerable assembly of holy Fathers with tears streaming down my cheeks, that by your zealous rule the land may be purged from the pollution of vice. Arise! Arise! I beg you. Loose the knots of the guilty, correct the shameful habits of the wicked, apply the scourge of zeal against the disaffected, stamp out the backbiting of the proud, lighten the burdens of the oppressed, and, more than all else, pull up from the very roots that plague-spot which is ever bursting forth into new forms of virulence—the Jews. Examine, therefore, with the utmost thoroughness the laws which have been recently issued by Our Majesty against the treachery of certain Jews; make the purport of those laws inviolable; sum up the decrees concerning the outrageous actions of those treacherous persons, and issue them as one.” So spake King Erwig to the large assembly of Bishops at the twelfth Council of Toledo in A.D. 681, as he asked them to confirm the twenty-eight laws he had compiled, twenty-seven of which were against “ the Jews.” Some of these, no doubt, refer directly to converts from Judaism rather than to the Jews as such, but they begin as follows :

“ Since the Truth itself teaches us to ask, seek, and knock, admonishing us that ‘ the violent take the kingdom of heaven by force,’ there is no doubt that that man abhors the grace of God, which is so freely bestowed, who with eager mind does not hasten to come to it. Therefore if any Jew, namely one of those who have not yet been baptized, either postpones his baptism, or in no wise sends his children or his servants to the priest for baptism, or even withdraws himself and his from baptism, and any of them allows even a whole year to pass after the publication of this law without the grace of baptism—he who commits any of these transgressions, whoever he may be found to be, shall have his head shaved, and shall receive a hundred strokes, and shall also pay the due punishment of being banished from our land.”*

* This appears to be a re-affirmation of laws made by Sisibut in A.D. 612, and by the sixth Council of Toledo in A.D. 636 under Chintila. See R. Altamira in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, ii, pp. 174-176. The original of the two quotations may be found most conveniently in the *Monumenta Germanica, Leges Visigothorum*, i, pp. 475 seq., and 4:12.

In the First Crusade (A.D. 1096) a monk is said to have shown a writing found in our Lord's grave which affirmed that it was the first duty of all believers to compel the Jews to become Christians. So the Crusaders went to Rouen, drove the Jews into the churches, and pointing their swords at their breasts shouted out to them, "Death or Baptism!" At Treves the whole community fled to the Bishop for protection, who answered, "Now have your sins come upon you, poor wretches, for rejecting the Son of God and slandering His Mother. Be converted, and I will grant you peace and the quiet enjoyment of your property. But continue in your stubbornness, and perish, soul and body!"*

Seventy-one Archbishops, 412 Bishops, 800 Abbots, and even Patriarchs from the East, took part in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, and in four of the seventy canons that they passed dealt with the Jews. These were forbidden to take interest for loans, or to hold any office, and were compelled to pay tithe to the clergy, and, worse than all, had to wear a special badge on their clothes which should proclaim to everyone that they were Jews. This was the beginning of their being treated as pariahs, and of their consequent deterioration in independence of character.†

"Joseph son of Yechiel the priest, and his spouse Hendlin, and his daughter; Yechiel the priest, and his wife Yuta, and his three sons; Isaac, son of Baruch the priest, and his wife Jeannette, and his grown-up son Baruch, and his aged mother-in-law Hannah, and his daughter Minna, and her son Koplín, a lad, and his three sons"—and so we might go on for 153 families, 560 souls, who suffered martyrdom at Nuremburg in 1349, out of a community numbering only some 1,200 members.‡

"Isaac, son of Don Judah Arbarbanel, of the root of Jesse the Bethlehemite, of the seed of David, saith (I give but a summary): I was at my ease in Portugal, and was driven forth, barely escaping with my life, and I fled to Castile, in the 244th year of the sixth thousand since the Creation (A.D. 1484). There I wrote commentaries on Joshua, Judges and Samuel, and I purposed beginning to write on the Book of Kings. But I was taken into the King's service, and found favour in the eyes of

* Grätz, *Geschichte der Juden*, 2nd edn., 1871, vi, 92 seq.

† *Ibid.*, 1873, vii, 16-19.

‡ See the original in W. H. Lowe, *The Memorbook of Nürnberg . . . from the unique MS. preserved in the University Library, Cambridge*, 1881, p. 16.

him and the Queen and the nobles, and I became wealthy, and neglected my writing. In the ninth year (A.D. 1492) the King took Granada, and as a thank-offering determined to bring all the sons of Israel to worship his God, or else within three months to leave his dominions, Spain, Sicily, Majorca and Sardinia. I and my people offered to the King and Queen large sums of money, but in vain. There was lamentation and terror among all the sons of Israel, such as had not been since the exile from the Holy Land. And they said each to the other, Be strong, and let us play the man for our religion, and for the Law of our God, because of the reviler and blasphemer, the enemy and the avenger. If they save us alive, we shall live; and if they slay us, we shall but die. We will not profane our covenant; our heart shall not turn back; but we will go in the name of the Lord our God. And in one day they went out, helpless, 300,000 on foot, myself among them, old and young, women and children. From all the provinces of the King of Spain, whithersoever the Spirit would, did they go, with their King before them, even the Lord at their head. Some went to Portugal and to Navarre, because they were near, but lo! trouble and anguish and woe. And some to the sea, with their paths in the mighty waters, but of these many were drowned or were enslaved. But I and my family, blessed be the name of the Lord, came safely to Naples, whose kings are kind.”*

“In each town they must stay in their Ghettos, and have no more than one synagogue. They may keep no Christian servants, nor have intercourse with Christians, nor eat nor play with them. All Jewish men must wear green caps, all Jewesses green shawls; they may hold no landed property, and Jewish physicians may not attend a Christian patient.” So said the Pope’s Bull for Italy in 1555.†

And to-day? I assure you that a few months never pass without a paragraph appearing in the *Jewish Chronicle* saying that somewhere or other in Eastern Europe the cry has been raised that a Jew has murdered a Christian child for the sake of drinking its blood—that most shameful of all accusations,

* From the preface to Abarbanel’s Commentary on the Book of Kings, 1686 Edition.

† Grätz, *Geschichte*, u.s.w., 1877, ix, 348. Again only a summary.

manufactured first in our own England, and, as it appears, in Cambridge itself.*

Alas, alas! For, as Dr. Kohler says, "The cross, originally a sign of life, became . . . a sign of death, casting a shadow of sin upon the Christian world and a shadow of terror upon the Jew."†

Do I seem to you to have wandered away from the proper subject of this paper? Believe me, I have not. What I have said belongs to the very heart and substance of it. For underlying all "Religious controversy between Christians and Jews of to-day," there is, on the Jews' side, the sense of the shocking treatment that they have ever received from Christians. Their race-consciousness of moral superiority has had to yield to the *force majeure* of semi-pagan Christians of all centuries, our own included. Do you not marvel that any Jew since quite early days, say the fourth century, has ever become a believer in Jesus? O Sirs, I plead earnestly that we henceforth behave as Christians towards Jews, as men who believe in Jesus, and endeavour to represent Him to them. Our past actions ought surely to be borne by us in mind, that so in all controversy we may both make allowance for the present attitude of Jews, and ourselves feel repentant for our past treatment of them. Humility, like pity, is closely akin to love, and love alone will prevail.

Love, with Truth. I say this because we have not always been thoroughly conscientious about Truth. We have been too apt to seize in controversy some present advantage, without considering the claims of final truth. When shall we learn that falsehood, even in holy things, furthers the work of the devil, and that only Truth furthers the work of God? Our matter, as well as our methods, must be really Christian.

For our subject to-day is, I apprehend, not so much methods as matter, the arguments that present-day Jews adduce against Christian doctrines, and our answers to those arguments. At first I thought that I would make a sharp division between these two parts of our subject, but I have found it impossible to do so. I shall, therefore, try to set before you the chief arguments of the Jews, and do little more than hint at the way we ought to deal with them.

* H. P. Stokes, *Studies in Anglo-Jewish History*, 1913, pp. 125 seq., 204.

† *Jewish Theology*, 1918, p. 438.

When, however, we speak of "Jews," we must define whom we mean. For many Jews, and no doubt the great majority of Jews, are still "Orthodox," and think as their fathers thought before them. It will hardly be profitable to speak at length about the Orthodox, for their opinions may be found in all the Mission tracts of the last hundred years. Yet this must be borne in mind, that there is, properly speaking, no standard authority in Judaism, nothing like the Westminster Confession for Presbyterians, or even the Thirty-nine Articles for Anglicans. At most there is the vague and shadowy appeal to the traditions of the Talmud; which somewhat resembles the vague and shadowy appeal of some Churchmen to the traditions of the Evangelical Fathers.

There is in Judaism no final authority in doctrine, to which appeal can be made. Maimonides' Thirteen Articles have never been accepted by the Jews as a whole. On the contrary, to use the words of a recent writer in the *Jewish Chronicle*, "Every man is encouraged to form his own opinion."* And, certainly, directly you begin to talk with any Jew whatever, you will find that he has already formed that opinion, and he gives you to understand that his own Judaism is the one and only Judaism which has any pretensions to being right.

Neither is it possible within the limits of this paper to consider the various shades of Orthodoxy which gradually merge into "Liberal." I shall content myself with recent Jewish authors who claim to represent the Judaism of the more active type. In particular I shall make use of Dr. Joseph Klausner's *Life of Jesus*, published in Jerusalem last year. It is a book of 468 pages, and, though it contains repetitions, is full of matter for our purpose.†

What then is the nature of Religious Controversy which Jews of to-day have with us?

Now frankly, in the first place, Jews have very little opinion of our fitness for controversy with them. They are fully convinced that no Gentile Christian, like you and myself, ever understands Judaism, partly by reason of our unfortunate lack

* *The Jewish Chronicle* for March 19th, 1922.

† It is written in what is presumably "Hebrew as she is spoke" in Palestine. One may be permitted to express the wish that in literature the style of I. H. Weiss in his *Dor Dor we-Dorshaw*, 1871-1891, were accepted as the standard of modern Hebrew.

of Jewish ancestry, and partly because we do not take the trouble of trying to learn what Judaism is. Jews complain that we misrepresent the Jewish religion and its books, especially the Talmud, and that we forget the stand that Judaism has ever made for the pure doctrine of God. Judaism, so Jews affirm, stands for spiritual religion against the shallow talk of Christianity, and the material aims of so-called Christians.

Is then this accusation of our ignorance wholly false? I wish it were! It is alas, true that we Christians have unduly minimised the higher side of Judaism, have not studied Jewish literature, and have done more than injustice to the noble faith and the high ethics of countless numbers of Jews. If we are honest, we must blame our conceit, and our laziness, for not knowing the facts about the religion of Judaism.

Secondly, the Jews find fault with our conceptions of the Sources of our religion. They do not see, for example, that Organized Christianity is justified in the claims it makes to represent Christ, and still less, to exercise such authority that Jews are bound to accept its dicta. You and I at least can hardly blame the Jews in this. The authority of the Church seems to us to be grossly exaggerated, and those texts of Scripture which speak of it to have received an emphasis which does not belong to them. Besides, Jews generally take the Roman as the type of the true Christian Church, whereas we know it to be very much the reverse.

Again, Jews object to the trustworthiness of the great source of our religion, the New Testament itself. I do not mean that learned Jews think it was written in the fourth century, as some ignorant Jews believe,* but they lend a ready credence to the notion that the Gospels were composed as late as the second century, after, that is to say, Christians had had time to tamper with the earliest forms of Christian teaching. Hence, whenever there is anything in the New Testament which they do not like, they brush it aside with the remark that that saying cannot be original. They do not believe that the New Testament is trustworthy in details. For example, Jesus cannot, they say, have referred to His Cross, cannot have said that He would rise again, cannot have made His reply to Peter about Judas. These and

* See Lukyn Williams, *A Short Introduction to the New Testament for Jewish Readers*, 1920, p. 5.

many more sayings attributed to Jesus in the Gospels have been concocted by Christians.*

How will you meet these objections? It is not easy to say. But of this I am very sure, that it is useless to tell Jews that this New Testament is an inspired book, and therefore cannot have errors or interpolations. One cannot expect Jews to accept one's *ipse dixit* about that. I should suppose that we must be content with showing that these objections are *præ-judicia*, prejudices in the strictest sense, and, while examining each passage candidly, point out that the sayings are so interwoven with the Gospel History that it is unscholarly in the extreme to reject them, while accepting the Gospels as a whole. We must, surely, be prepared to meet such objectors on their own ground, and deal very patiently with them.

Thirdly, what do the Jews of to-day say about Jesus Himself?

They regard Him as a Jew, and nothing but a Jew. It is indeed true, they say, that He opposed the Pharisees,† or rather some Pharisees, and that unwittingly He said and did things which were in their tendency opposed to Judaism‡—for otherwise how could Paul of Tarsus, the real deviser of the Christian scheme, have gone so fearfully wrong, and yet all the time have thought that he was carrying out the intention of his Master?—but Jesus Himself, to use Wellhausen's words, "was not a Christian, but a Jew."§ His ideal of the future, for example, was Jewish||; His words about the Great Commandment were Jewish¶; His Sermon on the Mount was Jewish through and through.** In fact, the aim of Jesus was to prepare Jews for the coming of the Messiah.†† Here, however, Klausner is inconsistent. For he is very emphatic in his belief that Jesus did believe in His own Messiahship. Otherwise He was an ordinary

* See Klausner, *op. cit.*, pp. 322, 321, 339, 352 *seq.*, 357, 373, 376, 378, 383, 401 *seq.*

† Klausner, pp. 305, 311.

‡ Klausner, pp. 402 *seq.*, 425.

§ Klausner, pp. 396, 447. The reference is to Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, 2nd edn., 1911, pp. 102 *seq.* Yet Wellhausen points out plainly that He was opposed to Judaism as we know it. "One must consider the non-Jewish, the purely human, more characteristic in Him than the Jewish."

|| Klausner, p. 325.

¶ Klausner, p. 343.

** Klausner, pp. 399 *seq.*

†† Klausner, p. 401.

deceiver, and such men do not make history.* But He never desired to be thought to be Divine, or other than a Messiah of apparently a higher character than was usually expected. He was a Jew, and had no intention of promulgating a new religion.

The Teaching of Jesus, however admirable, struck too high a note for human nature. It is above man's execution. Judaism, on the contrary, is well aware of the weakness of human nature, and never asks too much of it.† “Tolstoi tells us in his *Confessions* that he was reading the fifth chapter of St. Matthew with a Hebrew rabbi. At nearly every verse the rabbi said, ‘That is in the Bible,’ or ‘That is in the Talmud,’ quoting sentences very like the declarations of the Sermon on the Mount. But when they reached the verse about non-resistance to evil, the rabbi did not say, ‘This also is in the Talmud,’ but he asked the Count, ‘Do the Christians obey this command? Do *they* turn the other cheek?’ And Tolstoi adds to the recital of this anecdote: ‘I had nothing to say in reply, especially as at that particular time Christians were not only not turning the other cheek, but were smiting the Jews on both cheeks.’” The Jew, Dr. Joseph Blau, who quotes this from Tolstoi, appends a bitter remark, not, alas, wholly undeserved, “People that believe in non-resistance (*i.e.* Christians), but practise it not, hate a people that believes not in non-resistance, but practises it” (*i.e.* the Jews).‡

The precepts, the Jews say, are impracticable between man and man, and also, if performed, would soon bring the State to ruin.§ Forgive one's enemies, never going to law! Yielding to the importunity of every beggar, and bestowing on him alms, whether he will make a good use of them or not! Take no oath, even in the law-court! Treat every one, bad and good, alike! Where is the justice of the State in this! Yes, and where is the Justice of God?||

We cannot wonder that thinking Jews are disposed to accept Schweitzer's interpretation of our Lord's teaching, and say that He intended it as “Interim Ethics,” fit for accomplishment only until the time supposed to be near at hand, when He should return in glory.¶

* Klausner, p. 371, cf. pp. 412, 432, 437.

† Klausner, pp. 427, 429, 431.

‡ *Jewish Chronicle*, February 10th, 1922. Cf., Klausner, p. 398 *seq.*, 411.

§ Klausner, pp. 407, 425 *seq.*, 428.

|| Klausner, p. 413.

¶ Klausner, p. 439.

What shall we say to these difficulties ? What arguments can we bring forward, likely to appeal to thinking men ?

I know no other than this (though we must confess that we ourselves find the argument hard in the case of our Lord's remarks about Divorce), that He never intended to give a New Law in His Sermon on the Mount, or indeed elsewhere. I am aware that this is contrary to the opinion of many Christians, early and late, but it seems to me irrefutable. Our Lord's precepts, that is to say, were not, in any case, statute laws, but principles and ideals, the carrying out of which in their letter depends upon circumstances and conditions. In other words, the Gospel is not a Second Law, very much harder as it would then be than the First, but a message of new Life in Christ, lived by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who leads us and other believers more and more into truth, and into the performance of the will of God, as we are able to learn it. Of course, it is difficult to persuade either Jews or so-called Christians that this is the right way of looking at our Lord's precepts, but we must endeavour to do so, and in proportion as they accept the free grace of Christ for salvation, so will they be the more ready to acknowledge its legitimate sequence, a life lived, not by laws and rules, but in free communion with God, carrying out His will as made known to us day by day.

With regard to our Lord's Miracles, the Jews are prepared now, I believe, to accept them more than formerly. For they believe that many can be accounted for by psychological causes. They think that many others must be relegated to what they call *Haggadoth*, namely, the tales whereby the Talmudic teachers are wont to illustrate their doctrine, the literal truth of which depends upon the nature of the tale. Many of our Lord's miracles, the Jews say, are only illustrations of that kind. Our own Modernist writers make the same assertion. The argument, we must confess, is attractive ; it solves so many difficulties. But personally I believe it to be untrue. I would far rather say that we know not as yet the power over the realm of nature exercised by a Personality wholly in communion with God, and affirm that while we think we can see scientific explanations of some of our Lord's miracles, the others which we cannot as yet explain may also be facts. These, it may be, we shall learn one day to understand. In any case, we dare not make the acceptance by a Jew of every word and incident recorded in the New Testament a condition of receiving him into the Christian community.

What then do Jews of to-day say to the crowning miracle, the Resurrection of our Lord? They have outgrown the stupid stories that His body was carried away, and that His disciples were mere liars when they asserted that they saw Him alive again. Klausner rightly says that as with Jesus Himself, so with His disciples, such men do not make history.* Our own Modernist writers say that the Disciples saw Him only by some spiritual perception, becoming thus aware that He really continued to exist after death. I do not know why Jews should not be ready to say as much as that, for they firmly believe in the continued existence of the personality of the dead. But, as it seems, Jews go in fact only so far as to say that the Disciples had visions, and became convinced that these visions of the living Jesus were true.† We must, I think, reply that a Faith which has revolutionized the world can hardly have been founded upon hallucinations. Jews now make the further concession that the Resurrection of Jesus was unexpected by the Disciples, but turn that concession to their own use by adding that this proves that Jesus never foretold it.‡ But, surely, if He did foretell it, they would not have been likely to grasp the significance of His words (see expressly Mark ix, 32), so that the failure to expect Him to rise does not militate against the fact of those predictions having been made.

If then Jews deny so much of the miraculous in our Lord's life, how do they explain the effect of it? For they do not attempt to deny the fact that His teaching has spread over the whole world. They say that the combination of gentleness and asceticism is almost irresistible.§ They express the highest admiration for Him.|| He was very nearly the greatest and noblest Jew there has ever been. But He was not perfect; far from it. For the last thirty years have seen attacks on His own ethics, ethics as carried out by Himself, which perhaps were unknown to earlier generations. "In almost all of his public utterances," writes Mr. Joseph Jacobs, "he was harsh, severe, and distinctly unjust

* See Note * on p. 215 *supra*.

† Klausner, pp. 389-391.

‡ Klausner, p. 389.

§ Klausner, p. 444.

|| Many interesting quotations from writings by Jews may be found in Mr. E. S. Greenbaum's brochure, *What Modern Jews think of Christ*, published by the London Jews' Society.

in his attitude towards the ruling and well-to-do classes.”* This is echoed, and more than echoed, by Klausner, who says, for example, that when Jesus saw no result for His labours at Chorazin, He was angry, and cursed it.† Jesus was not, we are told, the tender Jesus of the Christians.‡ He never even prayed for the Pharisees, but pronounced woes upon them. In fact He was really inferior to Hillel. For Hillel’s patience was inexhaustible ; that of Jesus was not. Hillel was a man of peace ; Jesus a man of war. Besides, Hillel added this to his genial character, that he was a learned man, able to explain legal difficulties.§

The comparison with Hillel is interesting, but I do not think there is much in it. What do we know of Hillel in comparison with the information we possess about our Lord ? Not only are the stories about Hillel very late in their documentary form (though I am far from denying the general trustworthiness of the sayings attributed to early Teachers), but there are so few of them that I suppose they could almost all be put into two or three of the sheets of paper upon which I am now writing. Hillel is hardly known by name to the world in general or even to the great majority of the Jews themselves. It is really rather farcical to put him up as a serious rival to Jesus.

Fourthly, there is another point of controversy between Jews and Christians of grave importance in the eyes of us Evangelicals. It is the question of Merit, which is closely akin to the relation that there is between Faith and Works. Part of this controversy indeed is due to a complete misunderstanding, fostered by popular Christian belief both Protestant and Roman. Jews are always twitting us with supposing that intellectual assent is sufficient for salvation. The poor ignorant Sicilian peasant who thinks that he may commit any crime if only he repeats his *Credo* or his *Paternoster* is partly to blame for this supposition of the Jews. A writer in the *Jewish Chronicle* for May 19th of last year says that Faith is to Christians “ a sort of religious dope.” And I am not sure but that there is some truth underlying his words, even in the case of many Protestants. But, in reality, as we here to-day know, nothing can be further from the doctrine of Justification

* *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1904, vii, p. 164.

† Klausner, p. 313.

‡ Klausner, p. 311.

§ Klausner, pp. 423 *seq.*, 430.

by Faith than Justification by intellectual assent. For the Faith that justifies is a faith not merely intellectual, but active and living. True faith must, by its very nature, show itself in good works.

So far the Jews only misunderstand us, and it ought to be sufficient to tell them so.

But there is more in the Jewish contention against us than that. They minimize the effect of Sin upon human nature, and they believe that we can deserve to receive pardon from God, and entrance into everlasting life. The Jews, it must be remembered, know nothing of original sin. On the contrary, they pride themselves on possessing Original Virtue. They, therefore, think it easy to do more than can actually be required of them for their own salvation, and to contribute something additional to that store of merit laid up by the great ancestors of the nation. The Merit of the Fathers is as much a reality to the Jews as the *Thesaurus meritorum*, wrought out by believers and by Christ, is for those who accept the Roman doctrines of Purgatory and Indulgences.* I suppose that to meet this contention we can but tell the Jews of the Gospel as it is in the New Testament, which, facing steadfastly the fact of our weakness and sinfulness, yet assures us that Christ has met all demands, and offers us free pardon in Him, and in Him only. But it is not argument alone that can convince a Jew, or indeed any one else, of the truth of the Gospel message. Only the grace of God, borne in upon the soul by the Holy Spirit Himself, can effect this.

Fifthly, I need hardly say much about the statement which Jews are always making, that they have a Mission to fulfil in the world, and that this cannot be carried out if they become Christians. When they say this, we express to them our astonishment that if they indeed have a Mission they take so very little active part in accomplishing it. They reply that their work is to bear a silent testimony to the truth of the Divine Unity, and by their suffering commend it to all men. I would not go so far as to deny that there is something in this. When one thinks of the many centuries in which the Christian Church in practice, I do not say in theory, deified the Blessed Virgin, without protest being raised from Christendom; when one bears in mind also the present adoration of images, which approaches so closely to the worship of idols by the Hindus that it is difficult, if not impossible, to

* See Harnack, *History of Dogma*, English Trans., vi, pp. 263-266.

distinguish the *raison d'être* in one form of religion from that in the other; when one remembers that this image-worship, I myself would call it idolatry, on the part of the Roman Catholic peasantry (to attribute it to no higher class) makes in actual devotion no difference between the saints and God; one dare not say that Judaism has nothing still to teach many Christians.

But we believe that the Mission of the Jews would be immensely developed and strengthened if they came to accept the full teaching of the New Testament, and then allied themselves as Christians with some Protestant body. Their testimony to the Truth would be perfected; they would preach the Unity indeed, but the Trinity in Unity, and they would be free from serious doctrinal and practical error.

Sixthly, I have left another point to the last because of the extreme difficulty of dealing with it. I refer to the attitude which the Jew holds towards the Old Testament, and to the complaint he makes of the way we use it in argument with him. For not only do the Jews believe that we are entirely mistaken when we assert that the Old Testament upholds Christianity, but they also object very strongly to the method we employ in our use of many of the passages we adduce against them.

Now here again is something in what they say. You will observe that I am not speaking of Orthodox Jews, who believe every letter of the Old Testament to be so inspired that any meaning attributable to those letters as such may fairly be included in the Divine meaning. I am dealing with Modern Jews. These (I speak of their right, not of their left, wing) grant indeed that the Old Testament is inspired, but not in its letters, and not even in its actual words. We must, they say, consider sayings in their original context, and with reference to the circumstances in which they were first spoken. For example, a Messianic Time of perfect happiness and world-wide service of God is indeed foretold in the Old Testament, and probably a Messiah also. But the Jews deny that the Old Testament says that He is to be Divine, and to suffer, and to rise again. They argue that we cannot prove the contrary by grammatical exegesis, scientifically carried out. We believe that we can, and that the Old Testament does state these facts about the Messiah. But we must allow that the Jews of to-day are so far right that the proof-texts are very, very much fewer than our forefathers supposed. Most of the passages quoted in our older missionary tracts can be adduced by us to-day only by way of application,

not by strict exegesis. Talmudic writers, no doubt, do adduce texts to prove this or that point with strange disregard for their primary signification. They do so, either because they accept the inspiration of the very letters of each word, as I said just now, or else because they know that their readers will understand that they are only using them by way of application, not in serious exposition. We also are quite entitled to use texts in this way, but we must guard ourselves from our methods being misunderstood, by plainly confessing what we are doing.

For Truth is too great to require any adventitious, much less any doubtful, aids. We dare not argue falsely, or even doubtfully, in the cause of God. We have a splendid message to give ; a wonderful Gospel. Let us proclaim it with all the energy and all the intellectual ability that God has bestowed upon us, consecrating every power of mind and body to His use.

Our Gospel is glorious, something far beyond verbal controversy, the polemics of the Schools. It is nothing less than the announcement of a Person, Who, the more He is studied with fairness and truth-loving enquiry, the more He will commend Himself. People in general, and Jews in particular, do not judge Jesus as He ought to be judged, with the strictest regard for historical accuracy, and the warmest desire to understand the depth of His character. How can they, when they see so much obliquity of vision, and even of speech, in His true servants, and so many and grievous inconsistencies in their walk ? We ought, surely, to be continually on our knees, speaking metaphorically, as we dare to address others who as yet know Him not, in order that we may present Him far more fully in His perfection than we yet have done.

And more than this. It will be well, I feel sure, to make Jesus both the beginning and the end of our argument. This is no truism. On the contrary, it is a complete innovation. It is a reversal of Christian methods that have lasted from the days of Justin Martyr to Dr. McCaul and our own time. Nay, it is even possible (if the modern discovery be really true, but it has hardly yet been examined critically) that, preceding even the Gospels, a little book existed containing proof texts from the Old Testament to convince the Jews, showing the true doctrine of the Messiah and its fulfilment in Jesus. Scholars have given it the name of the Book of Testimonies. If that book existed, as many believe, it is instructive to notice that the Evangelists, while using it, departed from its method. Their aim was not

primarily to prove this or that from the Old Testament, but to exhibit Jesus as He was and is. And the Evangelists' way ought to be our way. Tell Jews of Jesus, adding, if you like, and as they will expect, definite proofs, and, what is of more real importance, spiritual illustrations, from the Old Testament. But tell them of Him. You will then appeal not to their intellect only, but to their whole personality. For there is nothing so great as the Personality of Jesus, and personality attracts personality. But such a display of Jesus includes, as I have already said, more than words on our part. It involves our whole life.

DISCUSSION.

The Rev. L. ZECKHAUSEN said :—On the main points of Canon Lukyn Williams's paper, I find myself in full agreement with him, and I think that the learned lecturer was right in dwelling at such length on the sad subject of the persecution of the Jews in Christian lands, for it is easily the greatest of all obstacles a missionary has to encounter in approaching the Jew. For my own part, I, as a Jew, am glad that it has not fallen to my lot to expatiate here on this blot on the fair escutcheon of Christendom, for it is not easy for a Jew to speak dispassionately of these matters, and he might conceivably be carried away by a feeling of scorn and indignation.

The Jew has a long memory, and the recollection of his long drawn-out martyrdom in Christian countries has become burnt into his soul, so that it requires a considerable effort on his part to think of Christianity apart from persecution and intolerance. It is, indeed, an additional cross a Christian Jew, who is anxious to win his brethren for Christ, has to bear. How often have I not been reminded, in this connection, of that famous line of Shakespeare's, "The evil that men do lives after them." But all the more is the wonder that, in spite of it all, there never was a time when some Jews did not join the Church of Christ, and often at great cost to themselves. I agree with the lecturer that it is nothing short of a miracle.

The only way we can hope to make the Jews forget the wrong they have received is, surely, by exhibiting the true Christian spirit of kindness, sympathy, and love towards them, for "charity never faileth."

Another of the main difficulties properly emphasised by the Canon is the Jew's pride of race, pride of intellect, and his supposed superiority over the Gentile. This is such an old and well-known obstacle as to look at first sight almost insuperable. And yet, most missionaries know that it is not really so formidable as it looks. In their heart of hearts, Jews of Western countries know that they have nothing, or very little, to tell the Gentiles about the Bible and the God of the Bible; and in Eastern Europe, the younger generation of Jews is becoming painfully aware how far they lag behind the times, behind the Gentiles, in manners, learning, and true knowledge.

It has been my privilege to administer baptism to a Jewish lady of seventy-nine, belonging to the upper classes, two years ago. I found that all her six daughters, and at least one of her sons, have also embraced Christianity at different times. One of these daughters repeatedly told me in conversation that from her early youth, and in spite of the fact that her parents were strictly orthodox Jews, she greatly disliked Judaism, and found its endless observances a meaningless burden, and that her and her sisters' life was absolutely changed, since they found Christ, and with Him happiness and joy. The old lady herself was not a little influenced in her decision by the manifest happiness of her daughters.

While a Jew will frequently admit to a fellow-Jew that there is truth in that cruel gibe of Heine that "Judaism is not so much a religion as a misfortune," he will yet shrink from becoming a Christian for fear of the relentless hatred and opprobrium that step will bring him.

There is one other point in the lecture I should like to refer to. It is the Jewish claim of having a mission of its own to the world. In itself, this is only right and natural. A religion without a mission is almost a self-contradiction. But how does Judaism accomplish its mission? By standing in the world, we are told, as a protest against the errors of the other creeds, especially against those of Trinitarian Christianity. But mere passivity can never be construed to be synonymous with mission work, which, above all, presupposes zeal and activity born from sympathy, propelled by love, and sustained by loyalty to God's command.

The simple truth is that Judaism has long since ceased to be a missionary religion. It has lost whatever sympathy it may have

had for the Gentile world, and has become entirely self-centred, supremely self-satisfied, and absolutely indifferent to the eternal welfare of non-Jews. It has ceased to be even a civilising force, for the Jew invariably reflects merely the civilisation of the Gentiles in whose midst he lives. If the Jew in the West is progressive and humane, it is because he lives in humane and progressive surroundings. In Turkey you will find him almost as lethargic as the Turk, and in Poland he is as devoid of culture as the average Pole generally is. People on the Continent have long since realised this, and there is a German saying, "Wie es christlt sich so jüdl't's sich," as the Christian so the Jew. All the vital force that Judaism possesses seems to be only just enough to hold on, to keep alive.

The usual answer of the Jew to the charge of doing nothing to live up to his pretence of a mission is that he is not suffered to propagate his faith, that he is being constantly persecuted. For my part, I generally refute this apology by telling the Jew that nobody persecutes him in England or America, and that the early Christians, for three hundred years, carried on their mission in spite of cruel suffering and persecution, in the course of which countless numbers of them laid down their very life rather than desist from proclaiming the Gospel of their risen Saviour. And not only the Christians of those early ages, but to this very day there is no lack of Christian men and women who gladly sacrifice their substance, their health and strength, and, if need be, their life also, in order to tell people in distant lands of Israel's God and Israel's Messiah.

The very fact that Jews pride themselves on not being "proselytizers" merely shows that they have nothing more to give the world, which the Church of Christ (not the Jews!) has familiarised with the Jewish Bible and the Jewish Messiah.

Mr. THEODORE ROBERTS desired to express his hearty agreement with what the lecturer had said on page 216 with regard to the Sermon on the Mount and other Christian precepts. The exhortations in the epistles were not intended to be taken as a law of a higher standard than the Mosaic, but were based upon the doctrines in the earlier part of each epistle. For example, if a Christian found himself in an unforgiving spirit, instead of trying to observe the precept to forgive, he needed to recognise that the cause of his lapse was that he must have lost his own sense of the divine for-

giveness ; for we are told to forgive one another even as God in Christ forgave us (Eph. 4, 32).

He thought that the principles declared in the prophecy of our Lord's sessional judgment, at the end of His great apocalyptic discourse recorded in Matthew's gospel, could be seen in operation at the present time, namely, that in God's government of the world, the nations were treated according to the way in which they had treated the Jews, and he instanced the present condition of Russia as a proof of this. That nation's terrible persecution of the Jews had provoked from the anti-christian Swinburne his most powerful sonnet, beginning :

“ O Son of man, by lying tongues adored,

 Face loved of little children long ago,
 Head hated of the priests and rulers then,
 If Thou see this, or hear these hounds of Thine
 Run ravening as the Gadarean swine,
 Say, was not this Thy passion to foreknow
 In death's worst hour the works of Christian men ? ”

Mr. W. E. LESLIE said :—On page 215 the author refers to the use made by the Jews of Schweitzer's works on the Apocalyptic element in the Gospels. If it could be shown that the Apocalyptic material of the Old Testament articulated with similar elements in the New Testament to form a coherent system, would not this furnish an argument for Christianity that would appeal with peculiar force to the Jew ? The theories associated with the names of J. N. Darby and Bullinger, though uncritical, tend in this direction.

I would like to express my admiration of the balanced and temperate tone of this excellent paper.

The Rev. PAUL LEVERTOFF, M.Litt., said :—I agree with the lecturer that if we want to win the Jews for Christ we must win them with love and truth.

The tracts which are published with the aim in view of converting the Jews to Christianity are for the most part as unsuitable as methods of force.

To judge from the title which the lecturer has taken for his paper, it appears that he assumes that modern Judaism brings forth new

and original arguments which we, on the Christian side, have to refute. As a matter of fact, the so-called modern Jews are so little interested in their own religious problems that they do not trouble their heads over the Christian message. Those who do, as for instance Claude Montefiore, Klausner (mentioned by the lecturer) and a few others, are simply influenced by the extreme school of "Christian" New Testament criticism, and even they cannot, and do not, study the origins of Christianity *sine ira et studio*, for nothing in religious matters which is not Jewish can be true.

In fact, it is one of the proofs of the genuineness of the Gospel of St. John to find that the same arguments which were brought forth by the contemporaries of Our Lord against His claims, are really brought forth by orthodox and reformed Jews to-day, only in a different dress.

The *unum necessarium* at the present time, in my opinion, is for Christian Jews to unite themselves into a Christ centre and make Christ visible there. Our Lord is unseen in the Jewish world notwithstanding all the Mission Societies and Christian Churches, and it is the duty of those Jews who believe in Him to make Him visible. We are to Him what He was to His Father in the days of His flesh:—*Dei inaspecti aspectabilis imago*.

If we could only institute Hebrew Christian services of worship which would present our faith in the crucified and risen Messiah in the terms of the rich background of devotional and mystical Jewish religious tradition, we would, I believe, do more to convince the Jews that Christianity (although I do not like the word, for there is not "it," only "He" in our Faith) is not a new un-Jewish religion, but Judaism with its hopes fulfilled.

For, notwithstanding the unbiblical and abstract Jewish conception of Divine Unity, the dogma of the finality of the Law, and their erroneous ideas about the meaning of their own history, and their present unwillingness to accept the Gospels as records of real historical facts, if we could only put our ear to the ground we should hear voices calling out from the depth of the Jewish religious consciousness as deep calls unto deep. Especially is this true of Hasidic Judaism.

That a study of this mystic Jewish piety would supply us with a theological terminology in which to express to the Jews the essentials of the Christian Faith in a genuinely Jewish form, I have tried to

show in my work on "Hasidism" (Univ. of Leipzig publication, 1918).

Mr. HOSTE questioned whether it would not be better to describe Jews who had accepted the Lord Jesus as Saviour and Messiah, as "Christian Hebrews," rather than "Hebrew Christians," which savoured of creating a separate species of Christian, rather than a distinct genus Jew. So, too, we should talk of Christian Englishmen, "Christian Chinese," "Christian Negroes," rather than in the reverse order.

When Paul wrote the words "There is one body" (Eph. 4, 4) he was not combating the deplorable divisions of Christendom into, we know not how many, "bodies"; but the idea of dividing the Body of Christ into two: Jewish and Gentile. Anything that perpetuated the separatist idea must prove a hindrance to Jew and Gentile. As men in the world we do preserve our national distinctions, but in our Church relations "there is neither Jew nor Greek."

No doubt a converted Jew has a great advantage over his fellow-Christian from among the Gentiles, in understanding his compatriots' point of view, and in that sense he is a special gift to the Church for evangelising Israel, but he does not perform this service properly as a "Hebrew Christian," but as a "Christian."