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# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

OUR debt to Greece is incalculable. Apart from the spheres of law and religion, most of the thinking and many of the activities of modern men are inspired by thoughts that had their origin in her. It was she who gave the ultimate impulse to our philosophic, and in one sense even to our scientific, thought. Physics, mathematics, politics, history, linguistics, literature with its multifarious kinds of prose and poetry—ancient Greece has largely conditioned the forms which these intellectual activities have assumed in the modern world, and has largely determined the vocabulary in which these activities are expressed.

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Any good book on Greece will therefore always be welcome to all who are interested in how the modern world came to be. And such a book is that by Principal Maurice HUTTON of University College, Toronto, on *The Greek Point of View* (Hodder & Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net). Principal HUTTON has for many years been Professor of Greek, and every page of his book attests his familiarity with his subject. Yet, though he loves Greece, it is not with that passion which is blind to the defects of the beloved. He has caught the Greek spirit of criticism. Indeed he is very critical of Greece, and over and over again he puts his finger upon what he regards as her supreme defect, viz. her exaggerated emphasis on the things of the intellect; and a chapter which he adds on Rome almost per-

suades us that at the bottom of his heart he has a warmer regard for Rome than for Greece.

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One criticism we would make to begin with. The discussion hardly satisfies all the hopes raised by the title. It is very largely confined to an appreciation and criticism of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Now it is true that in these great men the spirit of Greece can be more than obscurely discerned. They came at the end of a period of extraordinary vitality, in which the nation had created immortal history and immortal literature, and these philosophers were more than usually well qualified to gather up its meaning. But, great as they are, they do not exhaust Greece. Homer and Hesiod, the lyric poets, the dramatic poets, the historians, the Anthology, all in their own several ways illustrate the Greek point of view; and of these we do not hear much, though we do hear a little, in this volume. But after all we have no right to quarrel with an author for selecting from so vast a field the particular area he desires to traverse; and the area Principal HUTTON has chosen is one which enables him to do justice to his own very real powers of ethical analysis.

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May we make one more criticism, suggested by the rather touching preface? In it, quoting a colleague, the Principal says: 'The painful student who has laboured at the art of expression for a

lifetime has nothing to express ; the man who has a life and a story to tell has never acquired the art of expression.' We should have thought that a writer like Conrad, with his full and stern experience of life on the inhospitable sea and master surely of the art of style, is a sufficient refutation of this dictum. But is it not refuted by Greek literature itself? Mr. Livingstone, in his charming book on 'The Greek Genius,' has pointed out that part of the greatness of Greek literature lies in this that it springs so immediately out of life: Thucydides the historian, for example, was an admiral. That literature was not the product of the study, it was the outflow of life, written by men who for the most part were immersed in the actualities of life; and their power of expression no one who knows that literature will question.

The subjects dealt with in successive chapters are these—The Greek City-State, Virtue is Knowledge, Virtue and Art, Hellenism in Character, Hellenism in Language, Naturalism, Socrates and Plato as Theists, Greek Religion, Stoicism, and Rome. Subtle and illuminating things abound in every chapter; illuminating—for the Principal has the philosopher's interest in the meaning of life, and the preacher's interest in the secret of the good life, and he makes his knowledge of Greek literature contributory to the satisfaction of those interests. 'Life,' he remarks, leaning on the *Phædo* and the *Apology*, 'is essentially for the good man a venture of faith, a speculation of hope, a gamble of love.'

There are gentle ironies, too, interspersed throughout the discussion. Alluding to a remark in the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle, he slyly adds, 'this Divine life is thinking upon Thought, *whatever that may be*' (italics ours). And of eloquence this is what he says: 'No man who knows is ever eloquent and no man who is eloquent ever knows his subject; a man is eloquent out of half-knowledge, out of the little knowledge that is dangerous; the great orator is eloquent because he has a mystic vision and one idea; if he saw further and knew more

his eloquence would fail him; and he would become as ineffective on a platform as an historian or a philosopher are ineffective.' Incidentally this sentence illustrates a curious habit of Principal HUTTON'S—curious in an accomplished Greek scholar—of building long compound sentences out of simpler sentences separated by semicolons. There are many such sentences a page in length.

The Principal knows very well, of course, that the sentence last quoted is a paradox, but it is a paradox with its measure of truth; and he is led into writing it in the course of, and indeed as part of, his criticism of the Socratic paradox, equally if not more inadequate as an expression of ultimate truth, that virtue is knowledge and an art. This is the point at which he challenges most drastically the Greek contribution to the science of the good life. Repeatedly he insists, as he well puts it on p. 56, that 'virtue depends not upon knowledge, but upon the disciplining of the will to follow such instincts as are dimly felt to be best, until, in the fullness of time they come to prove themselves best, and he that has willed has learned of the doctrine (to adopt the familiar words of the New Testament), and the scales of lower passions have at last fallen from the eyes.'

The defect of the Greek was that, in exalting the understanding, he ignored the will. Socrates ignored it, because with him the will unhesitatingly obeyed the understanding; the average Greek ignored it, because he was constitutionally deficient in will-power. Strictly speaking, the Greek is not interested in virtue, as we understand it: the word which is commonly rendered 'virtue' means with him 'excellence'—excellence as much in non-ethical as in ethical spheres. Athens is a University rather than a State, and the typical Greek is the clever man, a man, for example, like Themistocles, to whose career the Principal devotes three interesting pages—a man very adroit and entirely unhampered by scruple.

Cognate to this defect was the Greek distrust of

those instincts and impulses which lie embedded deep among the ultimate things in our human equipment, and it was the very lucidity of the Greek intellect that created or, at least encouraged, this distrust. The Greeks were intolerant of vagueness, everything had to be sharply defined, with the result that, as many things, including some of the deepest, in our experience are incapable of exact definition, Greek explanations are not seldom superficial, inadequate, and unsatisfactory.

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But in the two chapters on 'Socrates and Plato as Theists' and 'Greek Religion' Principal HUTTON supplements and qualifies his indictment against the Greek view of life by reminding us that, in spite of its prevailing intellectualism, there flashes out at times a 'certain passionate Theism.' Socrates and Plato were religious men, their spirit is occasionally, though no more than occasionally, even Christian; and in them there are anticipations, both in phrase and in spirit, of the New Testament. We do not quite agree, however, with the Principal when he suggests that '*only* in the philosophers, in Socrates and Plato, does religion seem to be part of their serious view of life'—what of the tragedians?—any more than we agree with him when he says that 'the Greeks shone *only* in prosperity.'

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The book makes us feel afresh how much the modern world may still learn from Greece, in spite of and because of her shortcomings. We learn from the turmoil of her history that a patriotism which is nothing more than an enlightened self-interest will not carry us very far, and that the individualism, which showed itself politically as state self-determination, leads in our own days, when pushed as it has been to mad extremes, to 'a wild and chaotic nationalism of petty states.' All this, and much more, will be found in this suggestive book—interesting comparisons, for example, between the logical and nimble-witted French and Greeks, and between the honest, if somewhat stodgy, Romans and British.

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There is much, too, in the book to arrest the

preacher—among other things, a fine parallel between Socrates who cared for the intellect, and Jesus for the character, of his disciples. 'Socrates, like the Master, spoke in parables; in parables homely to grotesqueness but in parables; Socrates, like the Master, spoke of a second birth of a kind, an intellectual re-birth or "conversion" necessary for his disciples and over which he presided; Socrates, like the Master, was at home in humble houses and spent much of his time, like St. Peter, "in the house of one Simon a tanner" (or a shoemaker),' etc.

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Excellent, too, is this, from the passage in which the Principal is contrasting the Pauline with the Greek conception of humility: 'St. Paul tells us at first whilst he is still a novice in the faith of Christ, that he is the least of all the Apostles and not worthy of being called an Apostle; at a later date when his knowledge of Christ has progressed, that he is the least of all "saints" or Church members; and last of all, when he is finishing his good fight and keeping the faith, that he is the chief of sinners; as he grew in grace his sense of his imperfections found ever stronger expression; clearly it was his moral aspiration and his purified will that prompted this rising scale of self-abasement, and not a nice perception of his own claims as measured by the claims of his neighbours.'

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We are all of us grateful to Dr. L. P. JACKS for the service he has done to religious thought by his writings. But there is sometimes a strain of perverseness in what he writes. And this is apparent in an article he contributes to the current number of the *Hibbert Journal* on 'A Creed in Harmony with Modern Thought.' He quotes the phrase as one that has been much in evidence of late as indicating one of the aims of liberal theology, and especially of the Modernist party in the Church of England. Is the achievement hinted at in the phrase possible? That is the question Dr. JACKS discusses.

He begins with a kind of amiable snarl at creeds in general. Harmonizing is a two-sided process, he says. And modern thought may not be willing to be harmonized with 'the creeds,' the characteristic of modern thought being, precisely, its aversion to all creeds whatsoever. But does the phrase quoted above really refer to 'creeds' in this sense at all? When any one uses it what he means surely is simply a religious belief. If he aims at 'a creed in harmony with modern thought,' what he wants is a religious belief that is in harmony with all we have really discovered about the world and God. The Modernist in the Church of England, for example, is the very last person who wishes to construct a creed of the kind to which Dr. JACKS refers.

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But it is equally necessary to look at the other term of the phrase, namely, 'modern thought.' What does this mean? Dr. JACKS apparently thinks it means the opinions of everybody who can be considered a modern thinker. 'A creed in harmony with modern thought would be a creed that satisfied not only Sir Joseph Thompson, Dr. J. S. Haldane, and Mr. Julian Huxley, but also Sir James Frazer, Professor Gilbert Murray, Mr. Bertrand Russell, Dr. Graham Wallas, Dr. William McDougall, Dr. Samuel Alexander, and last, but not least, M. Alfred Loisy.' This sentence is very daunting to the inquirer who wishes to find a faith that is reasonable. It suggests a picture of a bewildered person going the round of these eminent men, and many others (for the list 'might be extended indefinitely'), to discover if they are all satisfied with his faith before he can commit himself to it. He would have a job in hand!

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One difficulty would prove insoluble. He would go to M. Loisy and then to Professor Harnack, and he would find them quite irreconcilable on the most important points, and he would thus be 'as far as ever from a creed in harmony with modern thought.' No doubt. And he would be in the same geographical position if he tried to satisfy all the distinguished persons whose names have been given

above. But do we really need to wait until they can all be satisfied before we believe anything about God and His truth? There would never have been any belief at all in the world if men had waited, hat in hand, till every distinguished person had no more objections to offer.

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There have always been thinkers in the world who have differed widely from orthodoxy and even from truth as it came to be ascertained later. But no sensible person has ever imagined that faith is impossible till all kinds of thinkers have come to an agreement. The plain thinking man tries to find out what God has revealed about Himself in any and every sphere to which he has access. And he lives this out from day to day. His 'creed' consists in the truth he has verified for himself with what is to him sufficient certainty. And so 'a creed in harmony with modern thought' is *not* a creed that satisfies a long list of eminent men, but one that is in harmony with the ascertained results of honest investigation, that is uncontradicted by any sure facts within the plain man's knowledge.

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Dr. JACKS thinks, however, that there is one person whose conclusions may, if they are verified, overthrow everything that can be called Christian belief, and his article has been written really to introduce us to M. Alfred Loisy's contentions about primitive Christianity. Briefly, his position is that Jesus Christ is 'a mere point or nucleus round which the illuminism of the first century consolidated itself into the faith of the Church.' Between this and the contention of Drews that Jesus never existed there is little perceptible difference. M. Loisy also contends that what we have in Luke's Gospel and Acts is not the original Gospel or Acts at all, but a superstructure erected by the Church to take the place of the original, and erected by one who was a forger (*un faussaire*) and whose work is a species of jugglery (*escamotage*).

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These conclusions, as Dr. JACKS points out, are in conflict with Harnack's results. And Dr. JACKS' comment is: 'All the same it cannot be denied

that the fortunes of Christianity are in a very precarious condition so long as they are made to depend on the victory of one school of critics over another.' This is true. But one may ask, Who, with any common sense, would make the fortunes of Christianity depend on the results of a dispute between two antagonists, even so distinguished? There have been such antagonisms all through the ages. There are many to-day. But the fortunes of Christianity do not depend on, do not wait for, the victory in any such contest. The truth will certainly appear sometime. Meantime the Christian faith rests on stronger foundations than 'modern thought.' It rests on history, and on experience, and on the person of Christ Himself, and that is a threefold cord not easily broken.

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Recent events in America have made it evident that the Fundamentalist controversy is likely to disturb the peace of the Church for years to come. To many Christian minds—they may be unenlightened—Science and Genesis are still unreconciled and the principles of the Higher Criticism are anathema. It is too hastily assumed in some quarters that these questions were settled in Britain for good a generation ago, and that the religious storm across the Atlantic need not trouble us. This is undoubtedly a mistake. Apart from anything else, it is a serious matter that a very large section of religious opinion in America regards the Protestant Churches of Britain as having betrayed the faith. That belief constitutes a formidable bar to brotherly relations, as was evidenced at the recent Pan-Presbyterian Council.

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Moreover, is it so certain that Christian opinion on this side of the Atlantic is as unanimous as appears to be assumed? On the contrary, the truth is that the rank and file of the Churches are still largely in the position of having their minds uninformed and their opinions undecided. Preachers generally, even those who have accepted the principles of the Higher Criticism, have not felt it their duty to deal in the pulpit with questions of

literary and historical criticism. The suggestion that this is due to moral cowardice is grotesque. The simple reason is that preachers, finding that the Bible, after passing through the fires of criticism, remains the Word of God no less than before, are more concerned to break the bread of life to their people than to trouble them with matters that seem remote from the problems of daily life. This may or may not be wise, but it means that the average Church member knows little about Higher Criticism and cares less.

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It must be added that there is latent in many Christian minds a vague suspicion and dislike of the spirit and methods of modern criticism, a dislike which has some justification in the attitude and utterances of many critics. Too often the assumption seems to be made that reason and science are all on the one side, and only ignorance and prejudice on the other. This may be clever and effective as a weapon of controversy, but it is never a wise and becoming assumption, and in discussions among Christian brethren it is deplorable. It provokes antipathy where conciliation is most needed, and leads to the formation of hostile camps. This has already happened in America, where the Fundamentalists have declared that 'it is going to mean war to the knife, knife to the hilt,' and it is a danger from which the Protestant Churches of Britain are by no means free, for if a popular appeal were made with passionate conviction no one could predict how large a proportion of the rank and file might be swayed towards the Fundamentalist position.

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These reflections have been suggested by the reading of *A Scientist's Belief in the Bible* (Marshall Brothers; 3s. 6d. net). The author is Professor Howard A. KELLY, M.D., LL.D., a surgeon of great distinction and the writer of standard medical works. As the production of a man of science the book is amazing, so completely does it ignore, while professing strictly to follow, scientific method. It is useful as a reminder that distinction in one branch of science does not make a man an authority on other

subjects. A distinguished physicist is not necessarily an authority on spiritualism, nor a popular novelist on religion. In this case Dr. KELLY is clearly off his beat. He does not even know what Higher Criticism is. To him it is simply 'a destructive analysis of the Holy Scriptures,' the effect of which is to 'tear the Bible to pieces,' discredit miracles, and deny the Deity of our Lord, His atoning death and resurrection. This, of course, is to confuse methods of historical study with results, and summarily to excommunicate all Higher Critics.

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Dr. KELLY confesses himself to be a thorough-going pragmatist. Finding, as he believes, that the Bible, 'manifestly everywhere claimed in all its parts to be the very literal Word of God to men,' he so accepted and applied it. 'Tested in this way, the Bible worked, and from that day on I became as a Christian philosopher, a member of the great school of pragmatists, for pragmatism defines practicability as the supreme test of any doctrine: it only asks, Does it work well?' The substance of his book is devoted to showing that the Bible works, or, in other words, is adequate to the spiritual needs of men.

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But all this is beside the point. It has never been denied by believing critics. On the contrary, they have confessed it *ex animo*, and no one with more passionate conviction and impressiveness than Robertson Smith, the great protagonist of modern

criticism. 'Of this I am sure at the outset,' he wrote, 'that the Bible does speak to the heart of man in words that can only come from God—that no historical research can deprive me of this conviction, or make less precious the divine utterances that speak straight to the heart.' In these circumstances it must be accounted deplorable that Christian men, who equally find in the Bible the living Word of God to their souls, should fall asunder in mutual suspicion and enmity, with charges of heresy on the one hand, and of bigotry on the other. May there not be something to confess on both sides?

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The Fundamentalist has been accused of 'compromising Christianity before the intelligence of the world,' of 'scattering thorns in the path of the young Greeks of our day who would see Jesus.' Must it not also be said that some Higher Critics, in clearing the path of the young Greeks, have appeared to throw formidable obstacles in the way of simple believers, have worked too much in the cold light of science, have in effect taken that very sacred and living thing, the gospel, and exhibited it, all duly dissected and labelled, but dead? There is need of much forbearance and conciliation, above all of clear instruction, given with all patience and sympathy and warm Christian feeling, so that, while doubts are cleared away, the timid may be reassured and the wayfaring man may be taught to turn with fresh interest to his Bible, and find it more human, more vital, more precious than before.

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## A Factor of Old Testament Influence in the New Testament.

BY J. RENDEL HARRIS, LITT.D., LL.D., D.D., MANCHESTER.

THE general problem of the influence of the Old Testament on the New has been the subject of a multitude of investigations, undertaken from different points of view, and dating from the earliest days of the Christian Church. Such

studies were both natural and necessary, if the dictum of the Church that the Holy Ghost spake by the Prophets was to acquire credal value. Our concern here, however, is with but one aspect of the subject, namely, some quotations from the