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## 'Doubt' in the New Testament.

Most readers of the English Bible have probably been in the habit of regarding 'doubt' as virtually synonymous with 'unbelief.' This notion, it is possible, has had little practical effect, but it seems desirable for two reasons to record the result of a recent study of the original texts. For one thing such study shows that intellectual doubt or hesitation is clearly distinguished in the New Testament from the moral unfaithfulness which is the spring of 'unbelief.' The other reason is that in one passage it would appear that the author's meaning has been misconceived, and this misconception has been made the ground for some criticism of the strength of the evidence for the Resurrection.

Five Greek words are represented by *doubt* in the A.V. These are as follows :

1. διακρίνεσθαι = (a) 'to dispute with oneself,' 'to hesitate': Mt 21<sup>21</sup>, Mk 11<sup>23</sup>, Ac 10<sup>20</sup> 11<sup>12</sup>, Ja 1<sup>6</sup>.  
(b) 'To doubt': Ro 4<sup>20</sup> 14<sup>23</sup>.
2. A. ἀπορείσθαι } = 'to be at a loss,' or  
B. διαπορεῖν } = 'uncertain.'
- A. Jn 13<sup>22</sup>, Ac 5<sup>20</sup>, 2 Co 4<sup>8</sup>, Gal 4<sup>20</sup>. B. Lk 9<sup>7</sup> 24<sup>4</sup>, Ac 2<sup>12</sup> 5<sup>24</sup> 10<sup>17</sup>.
3. μετεωρίζεσθαι = 'to be buoyed up, elevated, all agog with (false) hopes': Lk 12<sup>29</sup>; with which may be compared Jn 10<sup>24</sup>—τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν αἶρει.
4. διαλογισμός: 1 Ti 2<sup>9</sup>.
5. διστάζειν: Mt 14<sup>31</sup> 28<sup>17</sup>. This verb is found in Plato and later writers, to express intellectual uncertainty and hesitation. A typical passage is Plato, *Legg.* x. 897B :

τιθῶμεν ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχειν ἢ ἐτι διστάζομεν εἰ ἐτέρως πῶς ἔχει. Two other passages deserve to be quoted: Plato, *Theæt.* 190A: ὅταν δὲ ὀρίσασα, εἴτε βραδύτερον εἴτε καὶ ὀξύτερον ἐπάξασα, τὸ αὐτὸ ἦδη φῆ καὶ μὴ διστάζει, δόξαν ταύτην τίθεμεν αὐτῆς; and Plato, *Epist.* vii. 328B: ὅθεν μοι σκοπομένῳ καὶ διστάζοντι πότερον εἴη πορευτέον καὶ ὑπακουστέον ἢ πῶς, ὁμῶς ἔρρεψε δεῖν εἰ ποτέ τις τὰ διανοηθέντα περὶ νόμων τε καὶ πολιτείας ἀποτελεῖν ἐγχειρήσοι καὶ νῦν πειρατέον εἶναι.

These passages suggest, and, it may not be too much to say, demand that we should understand St. Matthew's words as meaning (1) 'Why didst thou hesitate?'—i.e. to go forward over the water. (2) 'Some hesitated'—i.e. to bow themselves in worship, their Jewish upbringing making them not yet ready to see in Him whom they had known after the flesh One who was to be worshipped. The bulk did as St. Thomas did, as we may infer from the words he is said to have uttered in Jn 20<sup>28</sup>, and as Lk 24<sup>52</sup>, according to some MSS, represents the Eleven at least as doing. This interpretation will not be affected whether we suppose a dative or an accusative to be the object-case intended by St. Luke. The correctness of this view is substantiated by the words which St. Matthew records our Lord to have uttered—presumably in part because of this hesitation on the part of some. 'All authority,' He said, 'has been given me in heaven and on earth,' and this, of course, warranted the rendering to Him of the worship reserved for God (4<sup>9</sup>. 10).

T. NICKLIN.

Hulme Hall, Manchester.

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## Entre Nous.

### Indexes.

Of the making of books there is truly a superfluity, but of the making of indexes there is surely a great paucity. How many valuable books lose half their value because their authors have not realized this. In his *Recollections*, Sir William Forwood tells how the late Lord Curzon, having finished his famous book on Persia, was so anxious to make an index for it on his own lines that he shut himself up for a month in rooms at Croydon, and worked hard till it was finished.

And yet, as many a man has proved, a bad index is almost worse than none. Take the minister who is labouring on Saturday night or early on Sunday morning. He has rummaged his tired brains in

vain for an illustration on, say, resistance to temptation, and in despair he seizes a book which purports to come to the rescue in such a difficulty. But the very brevity of the index is its drawback. Of references to temptation there are seventeen, which means that he must hunt through them all before he gets his point, for, ten chances to one, 'resistance to temptation' is the seventeenth.

The ideal index is, of course, the index that enables one to lay one's hand in a moment on any desired information. We have seen the Index to the nine volumes of *The Speaker's Bible*, which is incorporated with the volume on *The Epistle of James* just published, and after looking through it we congratulate the man who owns it. It is so

detailed and so exhaustive that he need lose no time hunting up useless references. It should prove a priceless boon to many a harassed preacher. (The Speaker's Bible Office, Aberdeen, will send a prospectus of the work to any one who applies.)

Talking of indexes reminds us that the long-looked-for *Index to the Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* is now nearing completion. It has been a colossal task, but it can safely be said that its value is commensurate with the labour it has entailed.

#### Summer School of Theology.

Dr. Estlin Carpenter asks us to draw attention to the Summer School of Theology for men and women which is to be held at Oxford from August 16th to August 26th. There are to be about forty lectures under the general heading of 'Aspects of Contemporary Theology.' Among the large number of representative lecturers are the Right Rev. the Bishop of Oxford, the Right Rev. Bishop Amundsen, Professors J. Chevalier (Grenoble), Hugo Gressman (Berlin), R. H. Thouless, C. C. J. Webb, and Dr. Estlin Carpenter himself.

#### The Story of Eden.

A short but welcome sketch of John M. E. Ross has been prepared by Dr. Moffatt, and prefaced to *The Tree of Healing*, a volume of short studies on the Message of the Cross (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s. net). They are fascinating studies, polished, suggestive, and marked by all Mr. Ross's old width of outlook. Only a certain number of the studies which Mr. Ross left have been included in the volume. For he was scrupulously careful of the form in which his thought was expressed, and he left instructions that nothing was to be published which he had not himself revised. One of the studies, in a shortened form, will be found in 'The Christian Year.' The first study is on the Story of Eden—as a point of preparation for the Cross. Mr. Ross finds three Gospels in it—first the Gospel of Hate, and second the Gospel of Pain and Struggle, but finally a Gospel of Love and Hope. In the forefront is the Gospel of Hate, but the hate is not the ugly unbrotherly enmity between man and man, but the enmity between man and evil. 'Enmity in this sense is the condition of all lofty living,' and, as Mr. Ross says, 'experience justifies in a thousand ways this Gospel of Hate.' It is the way in which a mother deals with her child when she tries to put enmity between his heart and some of the things he will be all too ready to love. It is what humanity needs—this secret of a noble hatred and, once implanted, it never entirely dies away. 'In the worst and weakest sinner who ever

tried to sate himself with forbidden fruit, there is deep down a weariness of his sin, and a more or less conscious wish that he could have been the conqueror of the serpent rather than its victim.'

And then the message of hate shades into a message of Struggle and Pain. 'Thou shalt bruise his heel.' 'There is good in humanity, and the good, if we take history as a whole, is moving on to victory. But where shall we find a good unwounded and unweakened, or a better and a best which has not the trail of the worst over it somewhere?' If the champions of God do overcome, they overcome with a struggle. If they attain, they attain by the Royal Way of the Cross.

But lastly this *protevangeliu*m is a Gospel of Love and Hope. 'He shall bruise thy head.' 'A wound in the heel may be painful and disabling, but it is local, temporary, curable; but the crushing of the head is death. And it is the spirit of man, and not the earth-spirit, that is finally to be left in possession of the field. So, even into the world's dim morning, before men knew all that the struggle was to mean, or how long it was to last, there broke, like a shaft of sunlight, this forecast of deliverance.'

#### Grace.

'Words often have more than one meaning. And this word—Grace—means something quite different when you ask someone to say grace before dinner, or when you say, "She dances with much grace," or "He has a very gracious manner," or "The Three Graces." The word is a very interesting one; in Latin [*gratia*], from which we get it, it means favour or friendship, and also charm or beauty, and also gratitude, which shows how men connected all these things in their minds. You get this still more clearly in Greek, when the word *charis* meant at first just beauty and *charm*; then it meant a *favour*, a charming thing done, and so it came to mean the *kindness* in the person who did it, and then the *gratitude* in the person who received it, and the general delight which it caused. So in the New Testament all these lovely ideas of the Greek word *charis* were used to describe the help that God gives.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P. Dearmer, *The Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments*, 3.