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obedience to the Word, (*c*) the idea of attainment through the witness of the Spirit.' These three modes are exemplified in (*a*) Monasticism and the Catholic Mystics, (*b*) Wesley and the Methodists, (*c*) The Quaker Movement.

The historical survey having revealed 'the wide extent of the quest for Perfection and the inalienable place of the quest in the Christian Gospel,' the writer proceeds to a modern formulation of the doctrine. He finds it to be 'a present experience through faith and hope, to be consummated in eternity.' Dr. Forsyth is quoted with approval as saying that there are three ways by which men have sought to arrive at the goal, of which two are wrong and the third is right; but that all three are right compared with the notion that we are to wait for Perfection 'till some indefinite time in the indefinite future.' The objections raised against the term and its misuse are clearly recognized. 'Yet, when we consider the abundant use of the word in the New Testament, and the fact that the idea runs through the whole of it, we are not prepared to acquiesce in the suppression of the term. . . . And, after all, what better translation than "perfect" can be found? "Entirely sanctified" has been put forward as a synonym. It appears, however, quite as objectionable, so far as any claim to holiness is concerned, and it does not bring out the idea of *teleios*. . . . What the mature Christian is seeking for is some term which shall bear witness to the fact that he is assured that he has passed out of his nonage, and that he has arrived at a stage of firm confidence that the divine purposes of love will be fulfilled in him, and through him to the blessing of many others.'

An interesting section deals with the preaching of the doctrine, and the general conclusion is reached that 'the doctrine of Perfection ought to take its place among those which in their union constitute the full Evangel. Its neglect has been one of the main causes of weakness and failure. This was clearly foreseen by the apostles, and stated by them with uncompromising plainness. Failure to reach maturity in the spiritual life has often been due to the absence of instruction and culture; and this failure has been the disastrous result of bringing in the idea of a double morality, which is a foreign intrusion, into the gospel message. The true doctrine speaks of a natural and normal development which all Christians ought to expect and pray for. Where this is not taught by those who are leaders in the Church, the soul experiences a sense of disappointment, which may induce it to turn to those who will lead it astray. Foolish and hurtful notions of Perfection spring up in the soil where the wholesome teaching of the full Gospel has been omitted. The Church ought earnestly to strive to formulate a message in which the state of Perfection shall be set forth as the definite aim of all who have entered on the Christian way.'

The Parables of the Treasure and the Pearl.

By Professor W. P. Paterson, D.D., Edinburgh.

II.

The Challenge of the Parables.

The business of the preacher is to persuade, and our Parables had the force of an argument by which Jesus sought to procure or to confirm a momentous decision. He called men to enter upon and to persevere in a life of privation and danger, and the argument which He was accustomed to employ was that which best commends a painful and hazardous enterprise—namely, that the sacrifices were justified by the greatness of the expectations. It was used for the persuasion of the rich young ruler who, when he was bidden to sell what he had and give to the poor, was promised that he would thus have treasure in heaven (Mt 19^{21}). It also served for the confirmation of the disciples

who had already obeyed the call, as when He said that 'every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life' (Mt 19[29]). And what was thus taught in the plain way was repeated in the picturesque way by giving instances of two men who found a rich prize within their grasp, and who secured it by way of a profitable exchange. The themes of the Parables are thus the supreme value of the Kingdom and the great renunciation which it requires, and these, as has been said, are a challenge to modern Christendom, since it is a question whether it really believes the first and really practises the second.

1. *The Kingdom as the Highest Good.*—The truth which is the foundation of the appeal for sacrifice is the supreme value of the Kingdom. The finders of the treasure and the pearl came into possession of a fortune, and it was thus made to appear that the disciple of the Kingdom was one who rose from poverty to wealth, and that a wealth beyond compare. It was the same doctrine which was implied in the royal imperative—'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness' (Mt 6[33]), and again in the admonition which has haunted the Christian conscience as the most solemn of all warnings: 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' (Mk 8[36. 37]). From other passages Biblical Theology compiles a list of the blessings which make up this incomparable wealth. The boon which is most prominent is everlasting life or the heavenly inheritance. But much was also said of privileges of the Kingdom which are experienced in the present world. The chief of these—if they may be described by the modern categories—are the religious values of the forgiveness of sins and filial communion with the heavenly Father; the moral values of the change of heart, the practice of the true righteousness, and the call to the service of God and man; the intellectual values of the knowledge of the Father and of the mysteries of the Kingdom; the social values of the fellowship of the Christian society; and the affective values of the peace and the joy which the world can neither give nor take away. The Kingdom might even be said to include economic values, since the disciples were assured of a providential care by which the hairs of their head were all numbered, and were promised that if they made it their concern to seek the Kingdom of God the Father in heaven would make it His concern to provide for their earthly necessities (Mt 6[33]).

The Church has been accustomed to proclaim these blessings as a great salvation, and has so valued them even when it has only seen them in part. In the Middle Ages salvation was often narrowed down to the eternal salvation; but it was then practically the universal theory—however inconsistent might be the practice—that the goods of this world are not worthy to be compared with the treasures of heaven. The evangelical schools fastened attention on the truth that even for this life the one thing needful is to repent and believe the gospel, and thereby to obtain deliverance from the guilt and the power of sin, with the accompaniments of peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost. Within wide Protestant circles it has even been the popular opinion that the only true blessedness is to be in the state of salvation. As to the latter-day Protestant Church it cannot be said that the Christian salvation is usually rated as the most precious possession within the knowledge and the reach of man. There are not a few to whom judgment and eternity are solemnizing certainties, to whom conversion and sanctification are great realities, and who can sincerely profess that to them to live is Christ; but even these find it difficult to think of their religion as other than one pearl among many. The average view, no doubt, is that it is of some value. Most people think it worth their while to be members of a branch of the Christian Church, to join in its worship, and to do or give something in support of its spiritual and philanthropic enterprises; while the doctrines of Christianity have some influence upon their thinking, and its ethical principles are at least a factor in the determination of the details of their conduct. But it does not appear that their religion is more than a minor interest in comparison with their daily work, their home-life, and their recreations, and it would be absurd to affirm that they regard it as the most important of all their concerns. In so far as it is generally valued it is mainly for lesser reasons than are given in Theology—as that worship brings a sense of tranquillity by offering a temporary escape from worldly strife and anxieties, that ecclesiastical life provides rational and helpful forms of social intercourse, and not least that the influence of the Church is a useful supplement to that of the school and the home in the difficult work of building up the moral character of the young, and equipping them to withstand the assaults of the Devil and the flesh. And clearly this half-hearted belief in the value of Christianity is a very perilous declension. For faith in a chief good is one that human nature cannot do without; and if we do not find one in

our religion, we are likely to adopt that which is recommended by the inclinations of the natural man, and so to miss our way both to nobility of character and to habitual peace of mind.

It would therefore appear that nothing is more needed in our generation than a revival of faith in the Christian religion as supreme among values. Various attempts are as a fact being made to promote such a revival. The Roman Catholic Church has its propaganda in which the Church is magnified not merely as the protector against the menaces of eternity, but also as the refuge from the storm and the covert from the tempest that are so sorely needed in our chaotic and bewildered age. There have also been evangelical missions which have prepared for and supplicated the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which is at once man's greatest need and God's greatest gift. An earnest group has fastened on the promise of the Second Coming as the one sufficient hope for a world whose spiritual bankruptcy has become naked and open, and which is deemed to be ripe for judgment and on the brink of destruction. But perhaps the greatest service that has been done to revive a sense of the paramount value of Christianity has been rendered by Jesus Himself acting through the Biblical record of His preaching of the word in the days of His flesh. There are many to whom it has come as a new revelation when they have sat at the feet of Jesus Himself, pondered the message as He delivered it, and learned to understand and appreciate the work of the Saviour as the founding and the advancement of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is in truth a sublime idea which may well lay a spell on mind and conscience. Nothing higher can be proposed to the individual than that he should become righteous in heart and life after the pattern of the righteousness of the Kingdom, and that he should become the possessor of the privileges which are promised to the children of the Kingdom in time and eternity. The best that could be asked for the world is that it should become subject to the sovereignty of God, that its life should be purified and governed in every sphere by the principles of the Kingdom—which are purity and peace, justice and brotherly love, with filial piety—and that men everywhere should know the Father, and should work as well as pray that His Kingdom may come and His will be done in earth as it is in heaven. It may indeed be that this school exemplifies the law of history that the measures of man's mind are always narrower than the thoughts of God; and that, in the enthusiasm which they feel for the Kingdom as the splendid task to which they are called, less than justice is done by many of the disciples to the idea of the Kingdom as an unmerited salvation which is of the Lord. There is need in some quarters of the reminder that man does not live by ideals alone, but by the promises that proceed out of the mouth of God, and by the fulfilment of His promises. For without doubt it is an axiom of the Christian gospel that the condition of the coming of the Kingdom, whether in the life of the race or in individual experience, is that God Himself must take the initiative and bear the chief part of the burden —even as in our parables everything hinged on the providential strokes of good fortune that are a symbol of the God-given salvation and of the gifts of God by grace.

2. *The Demand for Sacrifice.*—The message of the sister Parables is that earthly goods ought to be willingly sacrificed for the sovereign good of the blessings of the Kingdom. The finders of the treasure and the pearl parted with all else that they might secure these; and Jesus applied the lesson to the young ruler when He bade him sell his possessions, and to others when He called upon them to leave their homes, and even to hate father and mother for His sake. The rule was even stated in unqualified terms—'whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple' (Lk 14^{33}). And sometimes it has been even as He said. The Twelve, as Peter said, forsook all that they might follow Him, and later on some of them, along with the confessors and martyrs of later days, were to follow Him to prison and to death. The demand was also literally fulfilled by such as Bernard of Clairvaux and Francis of Assisi, who renounced every good that the world prizes, and welcomed every evil that it fears, to the end that they might win Christ, and be found in Him, and do His works of teaching and of mercy. The life of the modern Protestant Church has moved on a different plane. The general experience of its members has rather supported the observation that godliness is profitable for this life. It has not even been made very hard for those who have succeeded the Twelve and the Seventy in the office of the Christian ministry. They could not, indeed, amass riches, but on the whole they have had the solid comforts of the middle station of life, together with Nature's chiefest blessing of home and wife and child. They have also enjoyed in an unusual degree the privilege of being allowed so to manage their lives as to leave a large place for self-development and culture, and when they have been found faithful in their vocation they have gained a larger

measure of popular esteem, and wielded a wider influence, than are readily obtained by equal talents and labours in any secular calling. And the question is, What is to be thought of this prosperous and comfortable Christianity in the light of the teaching of Jesus as to the imperious demand of the Kingdom for sacrifice?

The case for the defence may be briefly outlined. The first branch is the thesis that worldliness consists, not in possessing the goods of this world, but in valuing them as ends in themselves, or in using them for selfish or sordid ends; and that the renunciation of the world essentially consists in a detachment of spirit, and a devotion to higher ends, which is quite compatible with a life that is crowded with mundane interests and activities. It is from this point of view that Calvin, in the chapter of the *Institutes* on self-abnegation, pictures the Christian man as outwardly resembling the children of this world in the pursuit of this world's goods, while he differs from them in that his diligence in business is a matter of duty, his success is thankfully ascribed to the Divine blessing, and wealth and honours are held and used with a single eye to the glory of God and the service of man. Similarly it was the theory that when the minister is permitted a share of the natural blessings of life, it is that he may be the better equipped for the work of God and of His Church than would be the case if he were devoted to the loneliness of the celibate and burdened with the anxieties and the humiliations of the mendicant. The second branch of the apologia may be summed up under the heads that under modern conditions there is no longer occasion for the sacrifices of the heroic order, that credit has to be given for potential sacrifice, and that as a fact the Church evokes a very large measure of self-sacrificing service. In the first place, when the world ceased to despise or hate Christianity, and proceeded to take it under its patronage, the extreme forms of sacrifice naturally became an anachronism. Secondly, it is deemed just to take account of the large and important, if necessarily impalpable, volume of sacrifice which would be forthcoming if called for. It was one of the revelations of the Great War that a generation which seemed to have been brought up in the faith that pleasure is the chief good, and in the practice of self-indulgence, was nevertheless able and willing to respond to the call to risk and surrender everything that flesh holds dear; and it may be taken for granted that there is in the Church an immense reserve of the same spirit which is known to the Searcher of hearts, and which is appreciated by Him as the good will which has the worth of many good deeds. And finally, there is the impressive body of concrete sacrifices which are actually made by ministers and missionaries who give their lives to ill-supported and ill-recognized service in the waste and dismal places of their homeland and of distant parts of the earth, by faithful members who devote much unpaid time and labour to works of teaching and mercy, and by the general Christian body which makes contributions of money running to many millions in support of schemes such as Foreign Missions which men of the world think to be useless when they are not mischievous, but which the faithful support because they are dictated by the command, and are in accordance with the example, of Christ.

This apologia is certainly effective up to a certain point. And yet—the teaching of Jesus seems to demand more sacrifices of the literal kind than have been elicited in Protestantism by the theory of a worldly unworldliness, and also more than are represented by the offerings and the labours of the modern Church. It may be expected that in another age overt acts of renunciation will again be given a more prominent place in the life of the ministry, of the representative laity, and of the general membership of the Church. It may be that self-abnegation will be enforced from outside—that as the result of political and intellectual revolutions the world will develop a new hostility to Christianity, and will require many who profess the Christian faith to choose between apostasy and a persecution operating either by violence or by ridicule. In one way or another there is likely to be a more urgent call to transform the potential sacrificial energy of the body of Christ into concrete forms of life and deed. The task of the minister of the future is likely to become harder, and the work that is now done by two or more may have to be undertaken by one. It may also be expected—though this should not, perhaps, be said by one who has had the fullest benefit of the ideal of a comfortable ministry—that the ministerial vocation will take on a sterner character. Probably self-denial will be practised as a thing of course in the matter of the pleasures of wine and tobacco which have hitherto been thought lawful, there will be a greater detachment from worldly amusements which are merely an indulgence and a waste of time, and doubtless also there will be a more severe self-limitation in the devotion of time and opportunity to the ideals of intellectual and æsthetic culture. It may also happen that a special class of disciples will emerge who will revive a rigorist

standard of literal self-abnegation. From time to time the Church rediscovers that human nature as such, and still more regenerate human nature, can find a rare pleasure in the crucifixion of the lower self when an appeal is made by a great cause to the imagination, the heart, and the conscience; and there is no reason to be found among Protestant principles why it should not supplement the labours of the regular ministry by various orders of teachers and workers who would humble and impoverish themselves in the literal way that Jesus did, because sacrifice is the mother-tongue of love, as well as because the Cross is the surest way to the hearts of those that the disciple of Christ desires to serve. More also may be expected of the Church as a whole in the matter of practical and adequate self-denial. It may be that the great Protestant Churches will come to be sifted after the manner of Gideon's army, and will be greatly reduced in numbers, but if so this would doubtless be compensated for by a deepened sense of responsibility, and by a corresponding effort to make the offerings commensurate with their profession. The gifts of money and of service which are made by the membership of these Churches—large as they now are in the aggregate—bear but a small proportion to the expenditure made by the same persons on mere luxuries, and to the toils which they undertake in pursuit of pleasure; and it is certain that there would be a vast increase in the proportion of Christian giving if the Church were to realize afresh, with the coming of another spiritual spring, that it is indeed in possession of the great treasure and the unique and incomparable pearl.

Literature.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Professor W. Morgan, D.D., of the Chair of Systematic Theology and Apologetics in Queen's Theological College, Kingston, Canada, has just written and published through Messrs. T. & T. Clark an exceedingly able book, *The Nature and Right of Religion* (10s.). Professor Morgan's career as a writer began, if we remember aright, in this magazine a number of years ago with two articles on the religious philosophy of Ritschl. The articles created a good deal of interest, because they were the most penetrating and knowledgeable interpretation of Ritschl that had appeared in English. Since those days Dr. Morgan has produced at least one considerable work on 'The Religion and Theology of Paul,' a book of immense ability which tended rather strongly to the radical wing of New Testament scholarship. Still, it was a good book and in many ways illuminating and helpful. The present volume is of a more general kind and might have been written for a Gifford lectureship. It shows one thing clearly, that Dr. Morgan has not departed very far from his ancient loyalty to Ritschl. The central position of this book is the supremacy of values. Dr. Morgan rather scorns the logical line of proof for religious truth, though he does not wholly deny its worth. He can proceed quite easily from value to existence, and the place of religion in the hierarchy of faith is determined by the nature of the values it represents. Our belief in God is rooted in our feeling for values, more particularly in our feeling for the ideal values. 'It is under the form of value that the Divine is apprehended; the Divine is that which approves itself to us as supreme in value.' Religious faith is trust in the rational, the beautiful, and, above all, the good, as the ultimate reality in the universe.

Similarly, in dealing with what Christianity (the highest religion) really is, Dr. Morgan says: 'In determining the essence of any religion we are therefore thrown back on the character of the values it affirms. . . . Christian faith or piety receives its character from the Christian values; and our task therefore resolves itself into one of describing what these values are.' Christianity is a much simpler thing than the Church has been willing to believe. 'It is nothing else than trust in the great values for which Jesus stands as that which gives to our human life its meaning and glory, and as the ultimate reality in the universe.' As to the position of Jesus in religion that is secured (as Herrmann said) by this, that, if He is not the only fact in the world that can beget within us the certainty of God, He is the supreme fact. Dr. Morgan agrees with this, though he develops the position in his own way.

One of the great questions which a writer on this