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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

Is there to be a serious reaction from Modernism? Or are we arriving at that middle position which so often occurs between two extremes? If one reads the history of human thought one finds a constant swing of the pendulum. One age seizes a half-truth, the succeeding age seizes the other half, and then there is a reconciliation in a third age. And the process goes on *ad infinitum*. We passed out of the age of orthodoxy a generation or more ago, and for the past thirty or forty years we have been living under the guidance of 'modern thought.' Are we due for a great reconciliation? In any case, it is worth while setting down in plain terms the case which traditional opinion makes against Modernism. It is neither so feeble nor so negligible as many take for granted.

To take the most important and most deadly criticism first, it is said that Liberalism in theology is singularly barren. It is no 'gospel.' It is suitable only for the minority of intellectuals. What has it to say to the prodigal, the down-and-out, the submerged tenth, the people to whom the Salvation Army appeals and whom the Army succeeds in saving? All the great revivals, it is said, have happened on the basis of 'the old gospel.' All the conversions we hear about to-day are in circles where the old gospel is preached. What kind of message has Modernism to present to those without much intellect (the great majority), and to those whose mind and soul are overlaid with the flesh and the devil?

The Modernist cannot very easily turn the point of all this, even if he is sceptical of the worth of many 'conversions.' One of the most brilliant of America's advanced and critical scholars confessed lately that this criticism has, as a matter of fact, been justified by the barrenness of liberal theology. He does not admit that the modern critical believer has no message for the 'lost,' but he says that as a matter of actual fact the liberal theologian has given the impression that he has no positive message by his emphasis on the negative side of his attitude. And he pleads for a more direct and simple affirmation by Modernism of its positive beliefs.

We may admit, then, that Modernism will need more and more to put forward its positive message for mankind. In an article in the new *Modern Churchman*, the Rev. Herbert EDMONDS, Rector of St. John's, Manchester, endeavours to do this. He is aware of the reproach levelled against Modernism, and he states its positive message in plain terms. This includes the Fatherhood of God, the clear recognition of sin and of the necessity of the grace of God, the fact of Christ as the Mediator and Interpreter of both God and man, and the certainty of immortality.

It is just in regard to the most important of them all, the nature and mission of Christ, that the second criticism is levelled against the Modernist teacher. The Fundamentalist asks (and he is not alone in this), 'Was Jesus Christ the Eternal Son

of God? Did His death effect anything at all *erga Deum*? Is the Holy Spirit a Person? And is Christianity a miraculous, supernatural event? These are the matters about which the ordinary Christian cares. He wants to know whether the ministry of Jesus was the ministry of God in the flesh, and whether he can thus believe that God has actually broken in on our world-system in a miraculous way. If the answer is negative or vague or hedged about with explanations to the effect that Modernism does not say miracles cannot happen, it only says they have not happened, he feels that the main barrier between faith and negation has disappeared.

In all these matters Modernism has its answer. And perhaps as good an answer as could be wished will be found in Bishop BARNES'S new book, reviewed in another column. We are not taking the side of the Fundamentalist in this note. But the other side is so often stated, and the plain man who clings to tradition is so inarticulate that it is of some moment to put into words what he says to himself and what he feels about things. And the moral is plain. It is of the utmost urgency that the relation of the Christian Church to the great facts of faith should be defined, and the real effect of modern discovery and modern critical thought on Christian belief should be stated, so that the plain man may know where he is and on what he is standing. In other words, the Church must *teach*, and must *affirm*, what it believes to be true. Only thus will it secure confidence and power for its great mission among men.

It is good to remind ourselves from time to time of our no less than infinite debt to the past. It is a truism more widely acknowledged than acted upon that the present cannot even be understood without some acquaintance with the past. We are where and what we are because of the thoughts that were cherished, and the work that was done, and the institutions that were slowly wrought out in ages long gone by, and by our unremembered or too little remembered ancestors.

As a contribution to the recognition of our indefeasible debt to the past, the Clarendon Press of Oxford, which has long been famous for the ripe scholarship and the practical value of the books which it has issued, recently published two volumes of unusual interest on 'The Legacy of Greece' and 'The Legacy of Rome' respectively, and they have wisely followed this up by an equally valuable volume on *The Legacy of Israel* (10s. net). This continues in a sense the volume published two or three years ago, and noticed at length in these columns, on 'The People and the Book,' which dealt more specifically with the history and religion of the Old Testament period and with the problems raised by that great literature, whereas this volume deals with the history, the literature, and the influence of the Jews from the close of that period to our own day.

The book was planned by that erudite and lovable scholar Dr. I. ABRAHAMS, who did not live to see its completion, and it has been edited by Dr. E. R. BEVAN and Dr. Charles SINGER, who also make substantial and notable contributions to its pages. It is a sign of the magnanimous and unsectarian spirit in which the project was conceived and carried out that Christian as well as Jewish voices are heard throughout the volume. This is as it should be; for the legacy of Judaism, as this volume abundantly proves, is a legacy to the whole world, and very particularly to the Christian world. And, as one of the writers points out, the Jewish legacy is not one which was bequeathed once and for all, to be appropriated and assimilated by us moderns as a gift from the olden time, but it is a legacy which all down the ages, and to-day no less than ever, is still being imparted by Jews to those who have ears to hear. It is indeed as much leaven as legacy.

The Christian world has by no means always been as grateful as it should have been for that legacy. For centuries it repaid its benefactors with the blackest ingratitude and with persecution as cruel as it was disgraceful. It is too much to expect that a people of so intensely ethical a passion as the Jews should have been led to embrace a religion

which was commended to them by methods so atrocious. Of the book entitled 'The Valley of Weeping,' the Rev. R. T. HERFORD in one of the Essays remarks that 'the story of horror is told with a dull monotony in which all separate incidents are merged in one long agony of grief.' In other books incidents are recorded without remark which are beyond belief and intolerable to quote. 'That the Jews could endure under centuries of such treatment is proof of the influence of their religion upon them, when they could have saved themselves at once by giving up the struggle and being baptized.'

The rich variety of the book, which is introduced in a 'Prologue' by the Master of Balliol, will be sufficiently obvious from the Table of Contents. It is opened by a characteristically eloquent chapter on 'The Hebrew Genius as exhibited in the Old Testament,' by Sir George Adam SMITH, marked by all the insight and imagination which we are accustomed to expect from his expositions of the letter or the spirit of the Old Testament. Dr. E. R. BEVAN offers a survey of Hellenistic Judaism, which contains a particularly able and discriminating study of Philo. Professor BURKITT follows with 'The Debt of Christianity to Judaism'—the debt to early Judaism being Jesus and the Old Testament, while to Rabbinical Judaism the debt lies in the gradual recovery of a better text and the more scientific interpretation of the Old Testament.

In 'The Influence of Judaism upon Jews in the Period from Hillel to Mendelssohn,' Mr. HERFORD tells a moving tale of their sorrows and sufferings, of the yellow badge and the ghetto, and of their unconquerable optimism through eighteen centuries. Full of suggestion and interest is Professor GUILLAUME's chapter on 'The Influence of Judaism on Islam,' in which he emphasizes the striking similarity between the Talmud and the Hadith, and shows how, in prayer, cult, and much else, Muhammadan practice was profoundly influenced by the Jews.

Dr. and Mrs. SINGER discuss at great length and with much learning 'The Jewish Factor in Mediæval Thought.' Dr. SINGER deals also with 'Hebrew

Scholarship in the Middle Ages among Latin Christians,' while Canon BOX follows these essays up with an equally learned and interesting chapter on 'Hebrew Studies in the Reformation Period and After.' These three chapters, through which pass many famous figures, for example, Averroes, Maimonides, Abraham ben Ezra, Roger Bacon, Raymond Lull, Nicholas of Lyra, Pico della Mirandola, Reuchlin, Luther, Melancthon, the Buxtorfs, etc., reveal the almost incredible industry and erudition of the Jewish and Christian scholars of the Middle Ages and the Reformation Period.

Professor ISAACS of Harvard throws much curious light on 'The Influence of Judaism on Western Law,' while Principal SELBIE illustrates 'The Influence of the Old Testament on Puritanism' in its attitude to liberty, vengeance, witchcraft, war, persecution, the Sunday, etc. A chapter of quite unusual interest and importance is by Dr. LEON ROTH on 'Jewish Thought in the Modern World.' In this he shows how deep is our debt to the fundamental ideas of the Old Testament within the region not only of ethics but of scientific thought as well.

A short but suggestive paper by Professor MEILLET of Paris on 'The Influence of the Hebrew Bible on European Languages' is followed by a fresh study of 'The Legacy in Modern Literature' from the pen of Mr. LAURIE MAGNUS, who shows how greatly the language and thought—and not least the political thought—of modern literature are saturated with the language and thought of the Old Testament. The volume is fittingly closed by an epilogue in which Mr. MONTEFIORE forcibly pleads, as he has done before, that the work of Judaism is not yet done, but that it may still exercise a more direct influence upon the world's religious future than it has done in the last sixteen hundred years.

It is obviously impossible to review, in the ordinary sense of the word, a book whose contents are so rich and varied. All that we can hope to do is to record a few impressions and offer a few quotations which will indicate the flavour of this important volume, whose value as an interpreta-

tion of Judaism is enormously enhanced by eighty-three remarkable illustrations.

The first point to which we would call attention is Dr. BEVAN's fine characterization of the essential elements of the Hebraic view of the world. They are three: (1) An apprehension of God as righteous Will; (2) a conception of the world-process as a process in Time, which embodies a Divine plan beginning in God's mighty act of creation and leading up to a great consummation in the future; and (3) an association of the Divine plan with a Divine community, a 'people of God' chosen to be the vehicle of God's purpose, so that the ultimate consummation is a communal bliss, the community redeemed, blessed, and glorious.

The mysterious Cabala which seems so remote and impalpable to those who have not seriously studied it, is attractively presented by Canon Box as revealing the mystical side of Judaism and as marking the reaction against a dry and arid scholasticism. He reminds us that some of the most exquisite prayers and liturgical poems of the synagogue liturgy are the productions of the Cabalists, and he quotes the contention of J. Abelson that 'if it is true to say that Judaism here and there suffers from too large an element of formalism and legalism and externalism, it is equally true to say that many of these drawbacks are corrected, toned down, by the contributions of mysticism.'

In the chapter on 'The Legacy in Modern Literature,' Mr. MAGNUS makes some suggestive remarks about the curious power of the Bible to associate moral ideas with the names of things. In its summons not to live by bread alone nor to eat the bread of idleness, it 'standardized the loaf's spiritual value. . . . Bread, wine, and the rest were not merely what the dictionary called them; they were sublimated, or consecrated, into a call to virtuous living.'

In another chapter Dr. BEVAN reminds us that the problem with which the Jews of the Dispersion were brought face to face through their contact with Hellenism was just 'the first brunt in a conflict

in which we too are engaged. For their problem is still in a way our problem. In the civilization of the European peoples the Hebrew and Greek traditions have entered into combination, but their mutual adjustment still raises questions on which men are not agreed.'

In some ways the most striking claim for Judaism made in the volume is that by Dr. ROTŪ when he contends for its influence upon scientific thought. This honour is usually claimed for Hellenism, but Dr. ROTŪ argues that 'the very background of modern scientific ideology is Hebraic. As a matter of history this derives not from the scientific monism of Greece but from the transcendental monotheism of Israel. The ideal of absolute cosmic regularity, so far as it has reached general thought, is of theological origin.' And again, 'Whatever idea of the spiritual has reached the masses of the European peoples is due to the Jewish view of the character of supreme reality. In the light of this achievement all else pales.'

Throughout all the chequered history of the Hebrews one spirit has run. As the Master of Balliol well puts it in his 'Prologue': 'There is a world of difference between the dramatic passion and the poetic imagery of the Book of Job and the austere and ordered reasonings of Spinoza's Ethic; but in that rare combination of unflinching truthfulness and religious reverence the two books are alike, and in the strength of that combination they breathe an assurance of trust and confidence which is the more precious because it has been so hardly won.'

In view of the stupendous influence that Israel has exercised upon the thought and life of the world—an influence abundantly illustrated by this volume—Canon Box's eloquent plea for 'the rehabilitation of Hebrew studies as occupying an essential place in sound learning, and above all in studies which have the Bible as their foundation,' is very much to the point. He shows what an essential element the study of Hebrew was in the Humanistic Movement which found expression in the Renaissance and the Reformation. That study,

like the study of Greek and Latin, brought men who were weary of the arid logomachies and futilities of scholasticism face to face with reality ; and the spiritual heirs of the Reformers will never, let us hope, abandon the study of a language which enshrines a literature that has left so powerful a mark upon the mind and spirit of man.

Dr. Rendel HARRIS has published in pamphlet form a little book on *Eucharistic Origins* (Heffer ; 3s. net), in which he traverses Bousset's opinion that in the present state of our knowledge we are obliged to give up all hope of ascertaining the original meaning of the Last Supper. It is an opinion shared by other liberal and radical critics of the New Testament documents ; and it must be reckoned with by those, in particular, who would maintain the 'Dominical' institution of the Eucharist as a Sacrament, in the Catholic sense of a 'generally necessary' means of objective grace.

But Dr. HARRIS's views as to the original meaning of the Last Supper will not be welcome to conservative critics, and will be obnoxious to those who believe in our Lord's institution of the Eucharist as a means of grace. For a critical examination of the Eucharistic texts in the Gospels and 1 Corinthians leads him to the conclusion that what Jesus did and said was simply this : 'He took a cup and said, "This is my Soma."' And by this Jesus meant nothing suggestive of the Catholic idea of Sacrament, but only that the end was come and immortality was at hand.

We cannot take space to show how Dr. HARRIS

reaches his critical reduction of the Eucharistic texts, but we may indicate how he reaches his novel interpretation of what he regards as the primitive text. It is by writing $\sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ (*sōma*) with a capital letter and understanding it as the 'great Aryan Sacrament,' and as signifying immortality.

'We have drunk Soma, we have become immortal, We have pressed through to the light, we have found the gods (*Rig-Veda*).'

That is to say, Jesus was speaking of the Indian, Avestan, Indo-Germanic *Soma*, and not of His *body*.

Thus, according to Dr. HARRIS's restoration of the original form of the Eucharist, our Lord used a mystical expression, an occult saying, a figure of speech expressing the situation in which He found Himself : 'He appears to have invited the disciples to drink Soma with Him, *i.e.* to die with Him, and with Him to enter upon an immortal life. They did drink, but, as in so many other cases, they only understood in part. From that partial misunderstanding sprang, in a little while, the "Hoc est corpus meum," and the Mass.'

Dr. HARRIS is quite sensible that his suggestions 'for the simplification of the history of the Eucharist and for making it at once intelligible and reasonable' are open to a very damaging fire of objections. Did the term *Soma*, in the sense of the 'elixir of immortality' of the Pagan mysteries such as the Bacchic, exist either in Greek or in Syriac ? Could it have formed part of our Lord's religious vocabulary ? Are we justified in drawing analogies between Greek and Indian cults, or, more specifically, in assuming a dependence of Greek Bacchic rites upon Aryan origins ?

