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ness of the Pharisees,' and in its strength possesses the Kingdom of Heaven.

Religion has no more deadly enemy than formalism; and formalism is 'good form' standardized and sterilized. Some one has said that the difference between a groove and a grave is mainly a matter of depth. The prophets were for ever contending against good customs that had corrupted the world. Standards change, both for better and for worse. The righteousness of one generation is either above or below the mark set by the next. God does not change, but men's thought of Him is ever in a state of flux. Progress in religion is mainly the clearing of the Divine character of the imputations cast upon it by the dark minds of men. Moral progress is the outcome of the education of the conscience. Things once accepted as either good or inevitable come to be reprobated and resisted. The consciousness of evil is as necessary for our advancement as the perception of good. Resistance is as truly a part of the devout life as acquiescence. Striving is as needful as submission.

It is not the province of religion to defend to the last errors or evils which have become intolerable to the intellect or conscience of mankind. Unless the standard of righteousness be moved forward from age to age, we may not trust in Divine providence. Challenge is inseparable from the Cross. The Cross is itself a challenge. The Sermon on the Mount is the only bit of acknowledged Christian interpretation which has survived without being encrusted by ideas and beliefs outgrown. It remains as dynamic as ever, and more and more men see in it the essence of the Faith. On a quiet hillside by Galilee Christ threw into the cauldron of the world the most inexhaustible utterance that ever found expression, and its mandate is in our day more compelling than ever before. It does not consist of excessive amiability, but of the most unflinching demand for human righteousness conceived of as service offered unto God.

A German Estimate of Contemporary British Theology.

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British theologians may well feel flattered at the warm appreciation of their work expressed by Professor Vollrath of Erlangen in an estimate [1] as generous as it is comprehensive. Very friendly indeed are the eyes through which he looks at them and their labours, and in his careful and trustworthy account of them there is not a breath of superiority or patronage. It is the estimate of a man who knows that, without sympathy, just and useful criticism is impossible, and who is well aware that, if Germany is endowed for the business of theology in one way, Britain is in another. Indeed, not the least fascinating part of his discussion is the contrast he occasionally draws between the two types. The German, he tells us, is an individualist—that is why he is so thoroughly at home in lyric poetry; the Britisher, on the other hand, never forgets that he is a member of a complex society—his tendency is therefore to seek a *modus vivendi*, he has a genius for compromise, and his capacity for team-work, which is illustrated so admirably in the realm of sport, is exemplified in another way in the co-operation which has gone to the making of his great Biblical Encyclopædias, or, for example, the 'Cambridge Ancient History.' The German is interested in theory and enamoured of hypotheses, the Britisher is interested in practice; he does not produce the systematic and monumental Practical Theologies of the German, because, as Vollrath acutely says, all his theology is practical theology. And this explains the wholesome and all but universal practice in Britain of appointing to theological chairs men who have been in the pastorate and who therefore know intimately and at first hand the duties and difficulties that will afterwards have to be faced by the men whom they are preparing for their life-work. The real test of the value of a theology is whether it can be preached, and, says Vollrath, a very good test it is, 'an infallible standard for every kind of theological thought and instruction.'

This practical quality, he points out, invests with peculiar value practically every British contribution to theology, alike in the field of exegetics and of theology proper; there is heard through most of it the religious note, there runs through most of it the spirit of devotion; and the German

[1] *Theologie der Gegenwart in Grossbritannien*, von Dr. Wilhelm Vollrath (Bertelsmann, Gütersloh; Mk.14).

theologians in whom this blend of theology and religion is most conspicuous are the theologians whom Britain is most disposed to take to its bosom. Adolf Deissmann, for example, is welcomed because of his 'attractive combination of scholarship and spiritual feeling,' Nestle because he used to preach on Sunday to German congregations in London, Kittel because he was 'a devout churchman and former pastor.' Robertson Smith, he remarks, knew his British public, when in introducing Wellhausen's work he emphasized not only its scientific quality but its essentially, if not obtrusively, religious tone. True, he does not fail to notice that there were sections of the British public who did not take kindly to Wellhausen, but some at least of these had taken little trouble to understand him; and he quotes a characteristic sentence of Gladstone, who speaks of him as one 'whose works, on a rather slight acquaintance, I have all along mistrusted.' But he also emphasizes the splendid service rendered by Herrmann in Marburg and Harnack in Berlin in creating a genuine theological *rapprochement* between Great Britain and Germany, a verdict which many generations of British students who have studied under those great and inspiring teachers will most cordially and gratefully endorse.

No one will dispute the fact, which Vollrath does not unduly stress, that there are departments of theology in which Germany has an indubitable pre-eminence—notably Old Testament and Systematic Theology. In the former field, Britain has more or less followed in the wake of Germany, though here, too, original work has been done—Professor Welch's book on 'The Code of Deuteronomy' (James Clarke) being singled out for special mention and its argument succinctly sketched. It is further significant of our national bent of mind that, stimulated largely by Duhm's 'Theologie der Propheten,' British attention has been to a great extent concentrated on the personalities of the Hebrew prophets. In Systematic Theology again, as in Music, Vollrath tells us, we are imitative rather than creative; we are theological and we are musical, but in both departments, reproductive rather than productive. It is rather curious, too, he remarks, and not perhaps without significance, that England has no magazine exclusively devoted to Church History; but certain areas of it have been brilliantly treated by British scholars—the Reformation, for example, by the late Principal Lindsay, and Luther by Professor Mackinnon, whose second volume has just appeared.

We are not, as a people, intellectually curious. Vollrath quotes as 'very interesting' the rather caustic sentence in which Mozley offers a partial explanation of the comparatively little account taken in England of Ritschl and his doctrines: 'As a people we have many faults, but scarcely that of the ancient Athenians, anxiety either to hear or to tell some new thing.' Some of Vollrath's *obiter dicta* are very suggestive, and express thoughts which would not so readily occur to ourselves. He points out, for example, the deep significance of the familiar phrases, 'I see,' 'Look here.' The Britisher learns through his eyes, his passion is to see things; he does not, like the German, move in a world of ideas; he wants to see his ideas embodied; he believes in the visible Church, and in the League of Nations. The German scholar tends to be a man of the study, worshipping the idol of objectivity, a stranger to life and the world. Another point that strikes Vollrath as significant is the frequency of the word 'meeting.' Individuals are always 'meeting'—this illustrates the essentially social quality of the British temperament; and the individuals who meet, on platforms, for example, are often representatives of different religious denominations—this illustrates our genius for compromise and co-operation.

What strikes us most about this admirable book, full of acute observations on British ways of life and thought, is the extraordinarily high praise bestowed on book after book and scholar after scholar. Over and over again occur words like 'ausgezeichnet' (of the highest distinction), 'mustergültig' (of model excellence), 'allerersten Ranges' (in the very front rank), etc. These or similar words are applied to Professor Souter's 'Pelagius' Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul,' Professor Milligan's 'New Testament Documents' (which, he says, ought to be translated into German), Dr. Leckie's 'The World to Come and Final Destiny,' M'Leod Campbell's 'Atonement,' Lindsay's 'History of the Reformation,' Denney's 'Jesus and the Gospel,' Professor Mackintosh's 'Doctrine of the Person of Christ,' Professor Anderson Scott's 'Christianity according to St. Paul,' Campbell Moody's 'Mind of the Early Converts,' Hastings on 'The Christian Doctrine of Prayer,' Principal Garvie's 'Ritschlian Theology,' A. E. J. Rawlinson on 'Authority and Freedom,' Professor Moffatt's Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Charles's Commentary on Revelation, and Canon Streeter on The Four Gospels. A Scot may be pardoned for noting the prominence with which Scottish contributions to almost every department of theological science appear in this impartial estimate of contemporary British theology.

Vollrath speaks, for example, in the highest possible terms of R. S. Sleigh's book on 'The Sufficiency of Christianity' (James Clarke), a criticism of Troeltsch, the like of which, he says, Germany does not yet possess. He remarks that it represents 'the first penetrating and comprehensive study of Troeltsch not only in English but in any language'—betraying not only a sensitive approach to Troeltsch's ideas but a sturdy independence of thought.

Especially British, Vollrath remarks, is the emphasis upon the rational aspect of religion. The Britisher has little use for and little appreciation of the irrational. *Credo quia absurdum* is an idea for which 'the English Christian and theologian has no understanding.' Vollrath quotes as typical of British mentality the words of Hastings Rashdall, 'If I could not believe that Christianity is essentially rational, I could not be a Christian'; and of Dr. Leckie that it is the business of the theologian 'to show that the Gospel is a reasonable thing.' This explains the disinclination to accept Barth; the Englishman is most at home among facts and comprehensible ideas.

High praise is given to the work of British scholars in archæology, in the New Testament, where their work is more original and independent than in the Old Testament, to linguistic work, especially in the Septuagint, the investigation of the papyri, Syriac and Coptic, to the practical home mission work of the churches of all denominations, and, above all, to their splendid work on the foreign field. In this last connexion he pays a glowing tribute to the independence of the missionaries who, filled with a sense of their responsibility to preach the gospel, are not only not under the influence of political or financial motives, but are not afraid to criticise imperialistic measures of their own government or to attack the unscrupulousness of those who would exploit the natives. 'The missionaries are their friends and they know where the shoe pinches'; their knowledge of native conditions is so intimate that they are often consulted by the Government, and their achievements in the department of education, especially in India, have been of the highest value.

The three hundred and thirty-four pages of this book are not a mere catalogue of names. Not only does every page of it display an intimate acquaintance with British theological literature, but of book after book in different departments there is an adequate and often a fairly lengthy sketch. The vast material is most lucidly arranged and discussed under the following headings: (1) Science and Life, (2) Introduction to Theology, (3) Old Testament, (4) New Testament, (5) Historical Theology, (6) Leading Theologians of Germany and their Reception in England, (7) The General Contemporary Philosophical Position in Great Britain, (8) Systematic Theology, (9) Practical Theology. We have never seen a foreign book so singularly free of errors in English spelling; once or twice Kennett and Moffatt are spelt with one *t*, but our own countrymen, with less excuse, can err similarly. To the list of twenty-two errata should be added, p. 110, 'tramaic' (for 'Aramaic'), and p. 276, 'rigtheous' (for 'righteous').

It is pleasant to see the incomparable services to theological learning rendered by the late Dr. Hastings, the founder of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, through his great Dictionaries and Encyclopædia, so adequately recognized as they are in this volume. The very title of the Encyclopædia, as Vollrath justly remarks, is significant of the characteristically British interest in the ethical and practical aspect of religion. This is a book which perhaps could hardly have been written before the War. It is one of many welcome signs that Britain and Germany are really beginning not only to understand but to appreciate one another. Each has something, indeed much, to learn from the other; and while the debt of British theology to Germany is profound, it is heartening to have from a German scholar so frank and cordial a recognition of the fact that the British contribution to theological science has been anything but negligible.