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Nearest of all is perhaps one of those Lives of Saints, such, for example, as Eddi's "Life of St. Wilfred," in which the pious writer's aim is only secondarily to tell the literal truth, and primarily to exalt the merits of his hero and further the great cause of the Church, with which he believes the good of his country to be inextricably bound up.'

Mr. KELLETT's critical position is well illustrated in the foregoing words, and two further quotations will serve still further to illustrate it. The first may be taken as a reminder that when criticism—even advanced criticism—has done its work, a substantial core of historical truth may remain in the Biblical narrative: 'Moses was rightly regarded by Israel as its true founder; and few more influential men have ever been born into the world than this half-legendary leader of a small wandering clan. So great was his name among his own people that they ascribed to him a long and most complicated set of laws, and the composition of five volumes to which they paid a reverence even more profound than that yielded by Islam to the Koran. This reverence, despising the dust of death and the darkness of centuries, is sufficient to prove the greatness of the man.'

The second quotation may be taken as a reminder that even advanced criticism does not necessarily stand for radical conclusions, and incidentally as illustrative once more of the wide sweep of Mr. KELLETT's net in its search for literary and historical parallels. Of David the outlaw and warrior he writes: 'That such a man should also have been a poet—that in the midst of these scapes and perils he should have composed any of these Psalms which have been ascribed to him, might seem utterly impossible. To Westerners, indeed, it is so. We can hardly picture William Wallace, during his flight from Falkirk, as making an elegy on his misfortunes, or the Black Prince, during the pursuit after Poitiers, as chanting a pæan of triumph. But the Eastern mind is different.'

Then comes the reference to which we have been leading up: 'We think of Babar, in one of his many flights from murderous foes, escaping into a cave, watching the enemy ride harmless by, and then sitting down to compose a lyric in the language and manner of Hafiz. There is much in the great Mogul Conqueror that reminds us of David; and we can only wish that the resemblance had been yet closer, and that the Hebrew, like the Mohammedan, had left us his own authentic memoirs.'

Nathan Söderblom.

By Professor M. Tor Andrae, D.D., University of Stockholm.

If it is fortunate for a country that its reputation abroad depends upon the most typical and genuine representatives of the race, then Sweden and its churches may consider themselves fortunate indeed that the Archbishop of Upsala is one of the small number of Swedes of to-day who have a place amongst international personalities. For he is a genuine Swede to the depths of his being.

Hätsingland, a very old district of Sweden, the land of the white high-towering birches, and of the dark blue lofty mountains, is his native land. 'Hätsingland,' thus he writes himself, 'has two landscapes in the grand style. One is the valley of the river Ljusnan. In its ceaseless movement the river is symbolical of the activity and energy which characterize the inhabitants of this well-to-do district. For timber, which is here one of the principal sources of revenue, the river is an indispensable roadway. The second great landscape is the basin of the Dellenseen, a world in itself, which maintained an isolated existence longer than the rest of the district round about Ljusnan, a world whose dreamy stillness lends its impress to the people.'

The family to which Söderblom belongs springs from peasant stock in the valley of Ljusnan. His remarkable activity, zeal, and energy might thus be regarded as an inheritance from the land of the

swift-flowing streams. He passed his childhood in his father's manse. Here he learned two lessons which were of real value for his future life-work. Like many Swedish clergymen of peasant extraction, Jonas Söderblom cultivated his glebe-land himself. The eldest son had early to help with the work in field and meadow, as far as his school work permitted. During his student years the greater part of the summer vacation was spent in hard farm-work. Such an upbringing naturally led to a thorough understanding of the everyday realities of life, bringing with it a healthy contact with mother earth, and forming an inestimable counterpoise to restless intellectual activity. Archbishop Söderblom has worked all his life, by preference after that American method which knows how to utilize every moment and every ounce of strength. His early training was to be of great use. Only one who has had experience of hard manual labour himself can understand the disposition and thoughts of the working classes. Söderblom's public appearances have always been characterized by his manner, which is genuinely that of the people. One has only to see him visiting in a distant parish. Who could have expected that this learned theologian, this distinguished and cultured personality, would know how to grasp, inspire, and edify his country congregation in such a simple fashion?

The other experience lay in the fact that his father was moved to the depths of his being by the great religious revival which then spread widely over the land. Deep and genuine piety characterized the life in the manse, and the future teacher of religion did not require to learn from books what is meant by a living religion.

In 1883 Söderblom went to the University of Upsala to study theology. The Faculty of Theology was not at this time in the happiest condition. The training was one in a somewhat narrow Lutheran orthodoxy, for the most part under the influence of the Erlangen School, while alongside of this the Biblicism of J. F. Beckle represented the more modern tendency. Of greater import for the growing minds of the new generation than the University Professors was a theologian not of the University, the young Pastor Primarius of Stockholm, Fredrik Fehr, who in Sweden represented the theological ideals and aims of the young Ritschlian School. He was an intimate friend of Stade. But in reality the young pupils had to find their way for themselves. This is the generation to which Nathan Söderblom belonged, which amongst us brought a really freer scientific spirit to bear on theology, and thus not only opened the way to a new synthesis between religion and culture, but also furthered a deeper understanding of religion itself. On the heels of this theological movement there followed, during the first ten years of this century, a new awakening in the churches, which started amongst the students in Upsala. It should not be concealed that Söderblom played a very important part in this new movement, the influence of which our Church still feels every day. After severe inner struggles, the new historical conception of Biblical religion, so brilliantly presented by Wellhausen, convinced Söderblom's scientific conscience. Soon he came to see that what had at first appeared to be a danger to faith, really pointed the way to a new kingdom. God's revelation is not a book, it is not a collection of dogmas or a set of rules, but history, dealing with living people and their deeds, worked in God and through God. This discovery, indeed, did not come to him without some influence from Albrecht Ritschl. The perception that historical criticism was also of practical value for faith was one of the most important achievements of the Ritschlian theology. But Söderblom never became a mere follower of Ritschl. His intellectual activity and originality did not dispose him to become the *famulus* of a German Professor, or to enrol himself as belonging to any school. In addition to the idea of revelation as history, the emphasis laid upon the independence of religion had especially attracted Söderblom. The independence of religion is to be seen in creative religious personalities. Here Ritschl directed him to the pre-eminent religious genius of the Protestant world—to Martin Luther. The study of Luther, pursued for decades, became of the utmost importance for Söderblom's understanding of theology as a whole. ***Luther's Religion*** is the subject of one of his first literary efforts; twenty-five years later the religious personality of Luther is portrayed by him, with the touch of a master, in his psychological and exceedingly liberal-minded study, ***Humour and Melancholy***.

Söderblom, unlike the majority of his countrymen, seemed to be born to be a cosmopolitan. It is significant that his first great interest outside his studies was the International Christian Student Mission Movement. It was thus no mere chance that he was appointed in 1894 preacher and pastor to the Swedish community in Paris, where he spent seven years of great activity. As clergyman, adviser, and helper of his countrymen in this world centre, he gained the affection of all. In the capital of the arts he cultivated the deep æsthetic interests, which also have their place in the many-

sided composition of his being. But especially was a new goal opened up for his scientific activities. Already in his closing student years his attention had been drawn to the study of Comparative Religion. His interest in the Mission played its part here just as surely as did his view of religion as the history of revelation. He had early recognized that this history must be taken as a history of the world. Moreover, Paris in the 'nineties was the centre for the study of the history of religions, with pioneers like Réville, Merillier, Maspéro, and Darmesteter. Söderblom became their disciple. For his special subject of study he chose the Iranian religion, and in 1898 he gained the title of 'Élève diplômé de l'École des hautes Études' for a thesis on *The Fravashis*. Three years later appeared his great work, long since recognized as a classic, *La Vie future d'après le Mazdéisme*, in which, indeed, starting from the beliefs of Mazdeism concerning life beyond the grave, he really gives a complete sketch of Comparative Eschatology.

The important works of Söderblom on Comparative Religion won for him in 1901 a Professorship in the Theological Faculty at the University of Upsala. As a teacher he had no equal. The enthusiasm of the young professor for his branch of study, his firm belief in the mission and future of theological investigation, his broad-minded and intrepid recognition of every honest opinion, even though 'dangerous and proscribed'—all this came like sunshine and spring showers to a soil which had need of them. These were unforgettable years. He widened and deepened the outlook of the history of religion in the direction of psychology; he gave us a psychology of religion from the standpoint of Oriental history, which is something quite different from the products, in their own way worthy of all respect, which emanate from American laboratories. It is an individual psychology on broad historical grounds, an exceedingly sharp and fine conception of different types of Christian piety, their general characteristics and their peculiarities, of Christianity in relation to other religions, and of religion itself in its opposition to other forms of man's spiritual life. Religion interests him in the first place not as representation, mere idea, or as custom or rite, but as a form of life, as a frame of mind and a state of being, as motive power and as activity.

A notable Swedish theologian, Bishop Bodke of Lund, sees the characteristics of his investigations 'in the far-seeing survey of all sides, and in the deep respect for the actual, which forbid any premature generalizations.' These are qualities which one in truth does not usually find together, in any case not in the History of Religion, where a reputation for constructive surveys is only too often gained through a certain carelessness in dealing with stubborn realities. But the judgment passed on Söderblom is quite correct. It is because of his grasp of history that he is able to unite the two apparently opposite qualities.

Söderblom has a keen interest in, and an extraordinary insight into, personal character. His house was a meeting-place for all earnest inquirers, not only for those recognized as promising disciples, but for the dull, the strays and free lances, whom no other understood or wished to understand. If there were genuine material, he knew how to make it ring true. Söderblom prefers to think in terms of human beings rather than of abstract ideas. Read his great work on the World Conference at Stockholm. A whole host of characters from different lands, peoples, and churches, who will achieve the task of remembering merely the names? He, however, knows not only the names, but the persons. Specially appropriate epithets are attached to the person concerned through the whole book, like the principal theme in a piece of music by Wagner.

This highly developed sense for individual peculiarities is in Söderblom, as an historian of religion, the creative thought which turns the chaos of history into a 'kosmos.' His synthesis is not the product of a dry system, it arises from his lively appreciation and keen intelligence. Thus he does not require to change reality that it may agree with his own favourite ideas. The most mature work of this characteristic synthesis of his is *Das Werden des Gottesglaubens* (1914), of which two German editions have appeared. Tylor and his successors had pronounced Animism to be the only true, original form of religion, a younger school regarded pre-Animism as having these virtues, while, for Andrew Lang and Wilhelm Schmidt, Monotheism was the original form. Söderblom shows in an essay, full of clever observations and covering nearly the whole development of religion, that each of these three hypotheses has selected an important element of primitive religion. Everywhere in the philosophy of our earliest forefathers we are confronted with the soul, mana, and the Creator in many different combinations. Each gathers round it its peculiar world of ideas, notions, and values, and it is possible to trace the passing of these primitive ideas even into the highest religions.

When comparative religious history, as is the case in Upsala, is one of the many subjects of the

Faculty of Divinity, its most important question is, What is the place of Christianity amongst religions? Naturally, the question is not answered for Söderblom by a dogmatic reference to revelation. 'The Biblical revelation must rather prove by science the validity of its special position within the genus of religions.' The worth of Christianity as the climax of religion is an historical fact, which may be grasped and proved like all other historical matters. Söderblom, however, unlike Hegel in his magnificent synthesis, does not regard Christianity simply as the climax of the whole movement, into which all religions of mankind are introduced almost anywhere as necessary stages in the dialectic of the idea of religion. From the common primitive source there proceed rather two lines of religious development. On one side the prophetic religion, which has an undeveloped embryo in the religion of Zarathustra, a side-shoot in Islam, but its chief branch in the prophets of Israel, which blossoms into Christianity. On the other side the great culture religions of India and the Western lands. Both these main developments exhibit at the same time two special types of piety, whose nature and differences are portrayed by Söderblom with genial clearness—the earnestly striving trust in God of ethical monotheism and the 'Gottesgenuss' of mystical pantheism. Söderblom appropriately calls them 'Persönlichkeitsmystik' and 'Unendlichkeitsmystik.'

The question, then, of what religion really is, Söderblom does not answer by a definition. He points to the word which gives more clearly than any other the peculiar sentiment at the basis of religion, the word 'holiness.' 'Holiness is the great word in religion; it is even more essential than the notion of God. Real religion may exist without a definite conception of Divinity, but there is no real religion without a distinction between holy and profane.' The feeling for that which is holy is the connecting link which joins into one whole the different phases of religious development, from the primitive fear of tabu to the Trisagion of the cherubim before the throne of Jahweh, from the dreadful, fear-inspiring gods to our idea of the supramundane and supranatural One. Söderblom here first gave utterance to those thoughts which later Rudolf Otto developed from his own point of view in his well-known work *Das Heilige*.

An investigation into religion which is bound by verbal revelation or church confession, which finds in Christianity at once its starting-point and its goal, is not Söderblom's ideal. But the scientific method in the study of religion, as elsewhere, does not imply the absence of personal conviction, and, least of all, the absence of a religious viewpoint. The scientific method must be tested by its results; it depends upon scientific endowment and the love of truth. The demand that the theologian must have a sense for religion or definite theological convictions, so far as this demand is justified, comes simply to this, that he must have an acquaintance with the subject of his investigations. These conditions are pre-eminently satisfied in the case of Söderblom.

It is not necessary to say, when dealing with such a universal genius, that this form of theological outlook does not renounce acquaintance with the most important data of the spiritual life of to-day. But Söderblom's theology is fundamentally Lutheran and Swedish. It springs from a tradition which characterizes the deepest Swedish thought, the 'Persönlichkeitsphilosophie' of Geiger and Boström. The Ritschlian theology looks upon history as the work of God, as God's deeds. For Söderblom this work of God appears pre-eminently as a self-manifestation by means of great, especially chosen and equipped persons. 'God's manifestation within Humanity takes place partly through graciously favoured ones, whom our criterion, which becomes severer as time goes on, looks upon as geniuses; partly in a form of existence which in principle is accessible to every human being, that of moral freedom.' This is illustrated most clearly and powerfully in the case of the few who inside the realm of moral freedom itself have come forward as innovators. One might name Moses, Socrates, Laotse, the Prophets, Paul, Plotinus, Luther, and Kant. But undeniably there is no rival to Jesus, even if one leaves out of sight, for the moment, His incomparable significance for the history of the world. He has no possible rival from the point of view of creative power and ethical independence.

Is Jesus, then, to be regarded simply as one of the great creative geniuses of Humanity? It would be to grossly misunderstand the whole manner and tendency of Söderblom's thinking, to find in the above utterances a mere echo of the liberal theology. He has never been able to accept the picture of Jesus drawn by the liberal school of religious history. He knows of no difference between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. The mission as Messiah, the Last Supper, the Resurrection, cannot for him be separated from the rest of the history, through which God speaks to us; these are rather the essential parts of the whole. It is significant, to call attention to a single detail, that, while

liberal theology accepts it as a matter of course that every truthful description of Jesus must be confined to the Synoptic Gospels, Söderblom has never been able to give up the picture of Jesus in the Gospel of St. John. In a recent publication he has expressed the opinion that at least in the main that picture is by an eye-witness.

This Revelation theology is very different from an æsthetic or evolutionary religion of Humanity. It is not by their richly endowed nature, or by their brilliant superiority over other men, but rather by faithfulness to their calling and earnest activity that geniuses become revealers of God. This 'personal revelation' attains perfection in the moral emancipation of a man through forgiveness of sins and trust in God. That is the characteristic of Lutheranism. Freedom is the central idea of this theology: 'The truth shall make you free'—its oft-repeated watchword. Trust brings freedom, freedom of thought and of speech, but also freedom to live from the spiritual riches which the order and confession of the Church supply. It is not the freedom of self-will, but the freedom of being able to follow 'the alone liberating and saving compulsion of duty.'

In 1912 Söderblom accepted a call to Leipzig to occupy the newly founded Chair of the History of Religion. He had scarcely been at work there two years when, after election, he was appointed Archbishop of Upsala. The connexion which Schleiermacher had called for between theology and Church government characterized in the highest degree the theology of the Swedish universities. The professors were at that time holders of Church livings, and are still members of the ecclesiastical courts. But, above all, they had exercised since olden times a decided influence over the spiritual guidance of the Church. A natural consequence is that the Bishops are mostly chosen from amongst them.

The churches of Sweden had certainly passed through a period of depression during the last ten years of the preceding century. The great religious movements amongst the people in the 'sixties and 'seventies had led to the institution of numerous Free Churches, which indeed, for the most part, belonged formally to the Church, but as a matter of fact occupied a position of distinct opposition to it. Even in Church circles many silently cherished grave doubts about the future of the Church. The very servants of the Church did not hesitate to proclaim their free 'evangelical' opinion by passing a depreciating judgment upon it. Söderblom early showed himself an earnest champion of the Church of the people. Its worth for him, however, did not depend upon its being the Church of authority, stable order, and rigid creed, but upon its being the Church of true evangelical freedom. 'Two fundamental principles, never quite reconcilable, inspire advanced religion in general, and Christianity in particular. One is the personal resolve of the individual. A choice is dictated between God and the world. This personal decision is the root of the Free Church conception. Congregations of that kind have their function, live their life, and take refuge sooner or later in the fold, which from a deeper point of view they never forsook. . . . The other fundamental principle is the work of God, His grace past finding out. If any form of the Church can symbolize this side of Christianity, it is the State Church. She defines no limits for her faith in Almighty God, and for her duty of caring for souls; she is only bounded by the State and its language. She desires naught else than to win her way to souls with the message of the forgiveness of sins.'

The Church of Sweden has preserved the ancient Catholic tradition in her order and her ritual to a far greater degree than most other Protestant State Churches. This fidelity in the administration of the common Christian heritage has as its natural expression the fact that with us the Apostolic Succession has *demonstrably* persisted unbroken. Söderblom has always very highly prized the connexion with Christendom in general, past and present, to which this tradition bears testimony. He has always felt strongly the spiritual affinity between our Church and the Church of England on this point, and has made great efforts to bring about a spiritual and personal exchange between the two Churches. But attachment to this Church tradition does in no wise appear to him to be an indispensable condition of a true Christian life.

Nathan Söderblom is still in the midst of his Church activities. The judgment of what his Episcopate has meant for our Church is a question for future investigation. But even now it may be stated without fear of contradiction that during his time the position of the Church in Sweden has been strengthened to a remarkable degree. That his large-hearted, enthusiastic, and energetic directing of the Church has had a large share in this result will scarcely be disputed. He, the restless worker, understands, as no one else, how to infuse new zeal into the daily work of Christian service. At a Church diet a priest complained bitterly about the crushing burden of work in large congregations: 'We are working ourselves to death.' The Arch-

bishop instantly replied: 'But that is the very thing we should do. A priest *should* work himself to death. But—slowly and in an intelligent fashion.' 'Be concerned about the souls, be not concerned about yourself! Spare the souls, spare not yourself!'—these are words of admonition which he addresses to young ordinands from before the altar. The influence and the recognition which the superior spiritual personality of the Archbishop has won even from the most unwilling redounds to the benefit of the Church. It cannot be concealed that his person has gained a certain importance in the Christian world. His word is listened to with respect in wide circles. In difficult questions of Church politics his intervention is asked for in distant lands, people seek to make use of his influence in matters of every description. The Evangelical Churches of the New Baltic states invite him to the consecration of their bishops. His tour in America amongst the two million Swedes who live scattered there was a real triumphal march, and tightened still more closely the bonds with the homeland in innumerable hearts. Much may still be hoped for from the Church which is under the guidance of this man.

It was a number of men inspired by Christian sentiments who at Constance in the end of July 1914 originated 'the World Alliance for International Agreement by Means of the Church.' Never could the work of Christian unification have begun under more mournful auspices. The Archbishop of Upsala was not at that time amongst them. But he has devoted his whole soul to the idea of restoring Christian fellowship which was destroyed by the War. Already in the autumn of 1914 he had drawn up an appeal 'for peace and Christian fellowship,' which was signed by representatives of the Churches of neutral countries. Since then he has been unceasingly busied with those efforts which finally led to the Christian World Conference at Stockholm in 1925. If ever a man was endowed and prepared by Providence to play a leading part in this 'œcumenical' work, that man was Nathan Söderblom. He had studied science in France, had worked as a Professor in Germany, and was attached to the English Church by bonds of warmest concord. A very uncommon faculty of being able to feel with others had enabled him to make friends amongst the leading representatives of the Church and of Religion. He knew, as few of his contemporaries did, and from his own personal experience, the spiritual position of Evangelical Christianity in different countries. And yet it can scarcely be said that it was the desire of such a cosmopolitan to see international relations again established, that urged him on in his work for unification. Already early in life as a young student he had listened with an awakened conscience to the bitter complaint of the masses, who accused the Church of viewing with indifference the pressing social needs of mankind. Now he heard again the same complaint coupled with the more terrible accusation that the War had spelt bankruptcy to Christianity. The Church had not been able to prevent the selfishness, the discord and the frenzied hatred, because it had not honestly wished to do so. Christian love had become an empty word. The accusation weighed heavily upon his Christian conscience. It left him no peace.

From his theology as from his whole nature it is self-evident that he would not desire a union of the Churches which meant the renouncing of confessional differences. As a matter of fact, the spiritual individuality of different Churches is for him the gift of God granted to each; it indicates the vocation of each Church, and marks out the special direction in which it is to exploit the riches of Christian life. This does not mean, however, that for real unity he does not clearly recognize the necessity of a common Christian faith. But a real unity of faith can never be attained through decrees of Councils, but only through free spiritual intercourse, which will best be promoted by a common endeavour after a practical Christianity.

Söderblom might well regard the movement for Christian unity as the principal task of his life. He has devoted all the resources in his power to this task. In the difficult years during which preparations for the Conference were being made, when difficulties arose in almost incredible fashion, when time after time the whole structure threatened to collapse, his courage never wavered, his faith never despaired. He was like one assured that he was charged with a mission from God.

How far the influence of the Stockholm Conference will extend in the future, no one knows. Still an effort has been made, and that is itself a great thing. Amongst those concerned with this bold endeavour Nathan Söderblom has inscribed his name for the future in the history of the Christian Church.