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that in Him they find God, and One who is Redeemer and Saviour.

Short of such an experience, so warm, so vital, so deep in its richness, it is not altogether wonderful that men are discovered who can, and do, pour ridicule upon the whole subject, and in self-satisfied pride prefer to regard (with Bernard Shaw) forgiveness as a beggar's refuge, and wish if they can

to pay their debts. But the biggest proof of the present creative activity of the Creator to-day is the transformation He still works in human life, re-creating sinners into saints, lifting up the fallen and degraded, bringing the lost back and making us 'new creatures' in Christ Jesus.¹

¹ H. M. Relton, *The Catholic Conception of the Incarnation*, 48.

Recent Foreign Theology.

THIS is really a long review, containing forty-eight open letters written by O. Ritschl to his friend Rade about Rade's recently published *Dogmatic*.¹ The frankness of the conversation is delightful. Not only so, but the book has great independent value, for Ritschl is as learned and informing a writer on all that concerns Dogmatic as Germany can put forward. Even more suggestive than his comments upon Rade are his *obiter dicta*—sometimes worked out at considerable length—on other theologians of the day. Thus we are told that Herrmann was a preacher more than a dogmatician, which has a measure of truth and yet leaves us pleased that Herrmann was as he was. It is justifiably urged that Herrmann was wrong in rejecting the idea of *system* in theology; for, as Ritschl pointedly remarks, we need a synoptic view of Christianity, and in being systematic we need not in the least be purely deductive in method. Mysticism is religion, but not Christian religion. As against Otto, the point is made (as previously by Professor Kenneth Edward) that 'the feeling of creatureliness' is not a simple but a complex feeling. One of the least convincing pages in the book is that in which the writer reiterates A. Ritschl's mistaken objections to the idea of the Divine anger. Anger, he contends, is a momentary loss of self-control, which we cannot predicate of God. Was it so when Jesus looked round upon the Pharisees with indignation? Granting for the moment that we cannot imagine even a very good man being angry without being also slightly fanatical, we must not make the limits of our imagination binding for our thought of God.

Ritschl with justice repels Holl's view—held long ago by Newman—that God justifies because

¹ *Theologische Briefe an Martin Rade*, by Otto Ritschl (Leopold Klotz Verlag, Gotha, 1928, pp. 132; M. 3.60).

He intends to sanctify; if taken seriously it is indisputably a view that generates self-righteousness.

Some unusually interesting comments are made on the theology of Karl Barth. The Swiss school have hastily developed a one-sided reading of Luther's paradoxes, and their feverish thought is the result of being mere onlookers during the War—for spectators often are more profoundly upset by suffering than the sufferers themselves. Barth's point of departure is the mind of the anxious inquirer rather than fully Christian faith. This is worth thinking over, but does it carry us very far to call Barth one-sided? Of course he is, but then so were Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Albrecht Ritschl himself. Every new movement zigzags at a tangent, and if we are to get the good of Barth we shall have to listen to his powerful voice, allowing for his over-emphasis.

These essays² on Calvin's work, from the pen of the late Professor Paul Lobstein of Strassbourg, have been gathered together and edited by the filial care of his son, M. Edouard Lobstein. They include some which appeared originally in German, and have now been rendered into French. In a day when many are turning afresh to Calvin for inspiring guidance, these scholarly papers, informed by a sympathy which is never excessive, will be received with pleasure. They treat of Calvin as preacher, as theologian and religious philosopher, and as commentator on Scripture; shorter notes also are given on particular episodes in the Reformer's life.

We are shown how Calvin as really as Luther is a preacher to the people, simple and elevated by

² *Études sur la Pensée et l'Oeuvre de Calvin*, by Paul Lobstein (éditions de 'La Cause'; Neully, 1927, pp. 185; 9 fr.).

turns, familiar and pathetic, ironical and solemn. Never was there a more Biblical preacher. Lobstein dwells especially on Calvin's method of preaching from the Old Testament and of setting forth dogma. He speaks plainly of the preacher's power of vituperation and of the abuses by which it was, if not excused, at least not unnaturally provoked. In the admirable studies devoted to Calvin's dogmatic work, particularly his *Institutio*, it is pointed out how his chief aims were three in number. First, he sought, as a systematic theologian, to be strictly Biblical; and here he fostered among Protestants the doctrine of verbal inspiration. It is scarcely accurate, however, to call him, as Lobstein does, 'the creator of this dogma,' for Luther had taught it undisguisedly before him. In any case, much of its evil was neutralized by its never-failing concomitant, namely, the doctrine

of the inward witness of the Spirit. Secondly, his theology is in principle theocentric, above all in his doctrine, at once triumphant and tragic, of predestination. Finally, Calvin aimed at a system of practical efficacy. 'He is the irreconcilable foe of scholasticism; he has no desire for a theology essentially verbal and formalist, but demands a truth which legitimates itself by its blessed and salutary effects, a doctrine which impels men to action, which finds expression in the fruits of holiness and righteousness, and passes finally into a life dedicated to the service of the Lord.' Attention must also be called to a penetrating paper on Calvin's view of religious knowledge—a view which to some degree explains the profound admiration cherished for Calvin's work by Ritschl.

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Contributions and Comments.

Paul and Peter at Rome.

THAT St. Paul was at Rome for at least two years, if not more, and died there, no one has ever doubted. Whether St. Peter was ever there, or had any special relation to the Roman Church, is one of the endlessly debated points of controversy in New Testament history. It crops up again in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for August, and is not likely to be ever settled beyond dispute. I have no intention of adding to the mass of matter written about such familiar questions as the meaning of Clement of Rome in his allusion to the end of the two great apostles, or of 'Babylon' in 1 Peter. But I think that the Epistle to the Romans gives an impression about St. Paul and the Roman Church which is not without some bearing on St. Peter's relation to it.

One sees at once that St. Paul has to be tactful, one might almost say diplomatic, in venturing to write at all to the saints at Rome. He disclaims any attempt to assert authority over them, such as he asserts in letters to his own churches. There could never have been any question of his coming to Rome, as he actually threatened to come to Corinth 'with a rod.' He longed to see them, and in the meantime he writes, simply in order to 'impart some spiritual gift,' that he and they may

be comforted, 'each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.' He had oftentimes proposed to come, but had been hindered. Were those repeated hindrances all due to difficulties of travel—he constantly overcame much greater difficulties of that sort—or to pressure of other work? This latter reason no doubt operated, and in Ro 15²³ he implies that it was because it had become less insistent, that he at length saw his way to pay the Roman Christians a visit. But he was evidently well aware of the necessity of having a strong centre of the gospel at the centre of the Empire, and believed that it was essential that he, the Apostle of the Nations, should have some share in the moulding of Church life there. One would have thought that with such a purpose he would have managed to make time somehow to carry it out, and not allowed it to be put off over and over again. And why, when he at last announces his intention of coming, does he twice say (Ro 15^{24, 28}) that he is on his way to Spain? The Church of Rome was far more important, and almost certainly far larger, than any of the churches in Spain were then likely to be. There may be such a thing, I take it, as Christian diplomacy, though not, of course, duplicity, and it looks as if the Apostle welcomed the call to Spain, whatever it was—and no doubt he felt it to be a real one—as giving him