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effort to construct a new social machinery, realizing that the order under which they lived might prove workable and safe if men would accept the spiritual principles they laid down. It was a new motive power that was required, not a new engine by which that power might work.

But of this they had but little hope, and through warning and denunciation there ran a note of comparative helplessness which reaches its clearest point in the last utterance attributed to Jeremiah. And it is perhaps here that we see at its highest the fundamental optimism of the prophets. For though Israel might suffer and even perish, the will of Yahweh must endure. If a city were necessary to Him as an earthly home, then Jerusalem could not fall. If a nation were indispensable as a means of His self-expression to the world, then, whatever calamity befell Israel, there must always be a remnant. This is the only true optimism, the refusal to believe in the ultimate defeat of the good, in the ultimate victory of the evil.

Only once or twice in history have men found themselves in a position when the prophetic message had so clear a meaning as it has for us to-day. We, too, have embarked on a great experiment in social order, an experiment whose issue is yet doubtful. As Amos and his successors seem to have realized, we cannot turn back. When once the path has been entered, a society must follow it to ruin or to success. In so far as we are suffering to-day in ways which are strange to us, our troubles are due to the fact that this new order has not yet been so worked out as to give us security and peace. On all hands we have remedies of one kind and another offered to us, new schemes of society, new gospels. Yet we must go back to the prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries to learn the root of our danger. In the industrial order, with its mass production and its power of supporting a very much larger population than the old agricultural society, we risk losing that which alone can keep a society alive—a due stress on the value of personality. Men are worth more than things, and our supreme danger is that we should treat men as things, and as things of comparatively little value at that. Much of what Amos said to Samaria, and Micah said to Judah, would be repeated if those prophets were in our midst to-day. The passion for publicity which forms one of our major evils was, it is true, almost unknown to them, but the lust for power, especially in the form of money, and for luxury, is still with us. Our industrial order is built up on these things, and even those who feel the need of other elements in life are uncertain and timid in their efforts to secure their aims. Never in history was there a greater need than to-day for a bold repetition of the call to justice, to love, and to holiness.

It may be that there are those among us who feel that the outlook is hopeless, and that our whole social order is doomed to perish as surely as the kingdoms of Israel fell. Yet even so the prophets have a word for us in their intense conviction that their God could not fail. His purposes might be thwarted for a time, and His chosen people pass into captivity, but always there would be a remnant, and upon the ruins of the old temple a new one should be erected. While God lives there is always hope for humanity, though there may be little for us, and even if our great experiment fails, that is not the end.

As far as we can judge, human civilization, as we understand the term, goes back only some ten thousand years. Long as the period may seem to us, it is but a fraction of the ages through which man, as a physical species, may yet be expected to dwell upon the earth. We stand at the beginning of man's history, not at its end, and though our puny efforts and foolish schemes may lead to immediate disaster, we cannot doubt in the final triumph of our God. At long last the lesson must be learnt, and there shall be fulfilled the final utterance of that greatest of the prophets, through whom God said, 'They shall know whose word shall stand, mine or theirs.' [1]

[1] Jer 44^{28}.

The Tongues of Pentecost.

By the Very Reverend R. O. P. Taylor, M.A., late Provost of Cumbrae.

To attempt to re-open the question of what actually took place when the Apostles spoke from the roof at Pentecost may seem rash and even unnecessary. My defence is that the prevailing opinion leaves the first teaching of the Apostles entirely unrelated to the main stream of subsequent Christian experience. To speak quite plainly, as it is viewed at present the preaching of Pentecost is entirely

out of keeping with the character of preaching as a Christian institution in earlier or in later days.

We may take A. Robertson's statement in Hastings' Dictionary as an authoritative and careful version of the accepted position. Somewhat abbreviated, the central portion of the article runs: 'The view has been held that while the Disciples spoke in some one language, each group of hearers understood the words as spoken in his own; just as St. Vincent Ferrer, preaching in Spanish, was said to have been understood by English, French, and Italian hearers. But this is not what the narrative describes; we have a miracle of speech, not of hearing only, they began (before the hearers had come) to speak *heterais glossais*. But the more difficult question is in what precisely the miracle consists.'

'The narrative does not appear to carry us beyond the area of Greek and Aramaic-speaking Judaism. That the Jews of the different countries enumerated spoke these languages with dialectical differences is, of course, more than probable. It might therefore suggest itself that the obstacle overcome by the inspiration of Pentecost was diversity not of language but of dialect only.'

I attach great importance to the last suggestion, but some of the other statements seem to me to be very questionable, or at least doubtful. First of all, there is the phrase, 'while the Apostles spoke in one "language."' If this is a summary way of saying, 'while the Apostles spoke "in turn each using some one language,"' it may well stand. But it ought to be guarded against a meaning which has been read into St. Luke's words, viz. that the Apostles spoke simultaneously. We should never dream of reading such a meaning into the newspaper reporter's phrase, 'Several people addressed the meeting.' Even this error, however, does not seem so wanton as the assumption that the Apostles spoke simultaneously in different languages. The Spirit is the author of unity, not confusion. Such a view only makes the miracle more miraculous in the sense—the entirely illegitimate sense—of queer. Robertson seems to ignore this view as not worth consideration, but I fear that it is sometimes held through sheer want of thought. The part of the article to which I take most serious exception is, 'This is not what the narrative describes; we have a miracle of speech, not of hearing only, they began (before the hearers had come) "to speak *heterais glossais*."' Now there is obviously a gap of time in the narrative, as indeed Robertson notices, between the speaking with tongues, or, at all events, the beginning to speak with tongues, and the hearing by the crowd. In view of this gap it seems doubtful whether it is necessary, or even legitimate, to prolong the speaking with tongues into the second portion of the narrative. And we have to remember that in all other cases where the phrase 'speaking with tongues' occurs, it appears to mean uttering inarticulate cries under the stress of great emotion. The speaker, through the very intensity of his feelings, was unable to put them into articulate words, and this had to be done by some other person who was capable of discerning the cause of his emotion.

I must notice at this point a view which has attracted many minds, and is put forward by Canon Raven in his *Creator Spirit* (p. 240) in the following words: 'The Apostles spoke in glossolalia a wordless cry of praise. Those who were affected with their spiritual emotion became sensitive to their meaning by a process of thought-transference and would interpret it into their own native languages. Others remained spiritually unmoved and to them the utterance was a mere babble.' And again, 'The cries of rapture are not . . . meaningless to those whose personalities are perfectly at one under the influence of a common ecstasy.' I should like to know where Canon Raven gets the information on which this last remark is based. But, surely, the amazement of the crowd did not arise from their finding that the cries of the Apostles were not meaningless, but from their finding the Apostles quite intelligible—a very different matter. We know, of course, so little about the transference of thought, that it is impossible for us to say that it could not extend so far. But I should like much more definite information before I depend on such an explanation. I can imagine—I do imagine that something of the sort was at work. But from my very slight knowledge of the phenomenon, I should imagine that some assistance was necessary to secure such definite results.

But as I have said, I am doubtful of the propriety of carrying the contents of the first part of the narrative into the second. And while I see clearly enough that the word 'tongue' is used in the second part in the sense of 'language,' I cannot bring myself to see that the phrase, 'other tongues,' in the first part must mean foreign languages, and thus regard it as different from the speaking of tongues with which St. Paul had to deal, and for which he uses this very phrase. Indeed, if the phrase means the same thing, I am rather puzzled at St. Paul's making no reference to Pentecost in

speaking, or rather writing of the matter; a lack of reference which would seem even more strange if Canon Raven's explanation were the correct one.

A combination of the two meanings might be based on the supposition that the Apostles spoke so strangely in their excitement that they would scarcely have been understood, had circumstances been otherwise normal. But this idea seems to be too far-fetched to be satisfactory.

Despite what Robertson says, it seems to me that St. Luke in the second portion is talking about a miracle of hearing and not of speech. Attention is directed entirely to what takes place among the hearers—first, 'How hear we every man in his own tongue?' and then, 'We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.' What is reported is the account given by the crowd, *i.e.* the affair as it appeared to them, and cannot be pressed to signify more than their impression. The silence of St. Luke about the Apostles' view of the occurrence seems to me important. It almost looks as though they were unaware of what was taking place at the time.

Robertson is of opinion that the difference between the languages was largely, if not entirely, dialectical. If this were so, the problem would be greatly reduced, especially if we could hold the view that they and the Apostles used the vernacular Greek which was the *lingua franca* of the Mediterranean. This idea appears to be out of fashion at present, though I cannot help thinking that its fitting into the phenomenon of Pentecost would be a strong argument in its favour. It may be remarked that, even with a *lingua franca*, local variations in the pronunciation both of vowels and consonants would raise a serious difficulty. We know how hard it is for natives of different parts of our own country to understand one another, though they are using a natural and not an acquired tongue.

But I think that the difficulty may be reduced to a far greater extent by another consideration. Judging from St. Paul's speech, and from the general manner of preaching to the Jews, the proclamation of the Apostles on this occasion must have consisted largely of quotations from the Scriptures. This is borne out, not only by the nature of the occasion and the subject, but also by the familiar fact that preachers tend to slip into such quotations in moments of exaltation. Moreover, the texts likely to be used would be the passages rendered familiar by their constant use in discussions about the Messiah. Now, in the case of well-known texts, dialectical difficulties would be greatly lessened under two common rules of hearing, viz. that we can carry on if we get a start, and that we hear what we expect to hear, often failing to notice variations. The brain slips easily into a familiar groove and is apt to stay there.

The texts used would probably be the most familiar, even of the Messianic texts, and would probably be very easily recognized. This may be illustrated from his own experience by any one who has looked at a copy of the Bible in an unfamiliar Romance language. The crowd would be more prone to catch such texts because they would, in all probability, know that the Apostles were speaking of the Messiah. Furthermore—though this may be more doubtful—it seems possible that the man in the street would have some vague knowledge of a teaching which embodied a national desire and professed to satisfy national aspirations.

In any case, it must be remembered that a crowd so eager and excited, listening to what they had always hoped to hear, would be swift to catch every bit of mental foothold. Their brains were working under a very strong stimulus.

Having all this in view, I venture to think that we can bring the incident into line with the subsequent experience of the Church—even though it cannot be reduced to the same scale. Every Christian teacher, who really watches the effect of his efforts, knows how difficult it is to communicate to others his own personal experience and conviction. Besides, any one who has to deal with mixed audiences and differing classes of people must realize that religious terminology means one thing to him and perhaps a dozen different things to a dozen different auditors. He is confronted with the same complication of obstacles which the Apostles had to face at Pentecost—often with a greater complication, because he is speaking to people who think they know all about it and whose brains, therefore, are not stimulated by curiosity. Yet, in spite of all, the message is once and again transmitted and received, and one feels that its reception is largely due to a gift of comprehension conferred on the hearers. The more one is able to study his hearers individually, the more one realizes that the situation is desperate until the hearer is illuminated from within. It is also noteworthy that when the proper result comes, it is usually found to take shape in the vivification of some familiar phrase rather than in the adoption of a new idea. These, our experiences on a small scale, help us to understand what then took place on a large scale, while on the other hand the striking and decisive results of the Pentecost preaching,

being thus related to our own, will help us to that understanding of the whole conditions under which we work, which is necessary for effectiveness.

Again, the effective sermon or speech still raises in the breast of the auditor the question, How is it that these words, spoken by another dealing with the circumstances of his own life, speak to me in terms of my own life? God is still the great Translator, and presses His own meaning home. How often has one stood astonished at discovering the message received through some sentence which he has used in a far smaller sense than that in which it was grasped by the hearer. For my own part, I have come to feel that any sermon which gets across is a repetition and a continuation of Pentecost. When one considers what he has said, realizing that, at best, he has only spoken a fragment of his mind, and remembering the variety of mental vernaculars, he perceives how the Spirit gives understanding to the hearer as well as lucidity to the speaker.

I have sought to bring Pentecost into close connexion with our common experience, as a matter of principle. I am persuaded that we can only understand the New Testament records as we detect their verification in our own experience. But what I have said may incidentally serve another purpose if it induces any one to consider the obstacles which lie between him and his hearers. Though we know that we can rely on the help of God, that help is chiefly given to those who try to understand those whom God has put before them. What we ought to deliver is not a statement which satisfies our own taste in oratory, still less a tirade which satisfies our own feelings, but a message as nearly in their own tongues as may be. Only by getting on to the track of their minds can we make a way straight for God.

Literature.

SCHLEIERMACHER.

We have been looking forward for some years to the accomplishment of a great project to which Professor H. R. Mackintosh set his editorial hand, namely, the translation into English of Friedrich Schleiermacher's chief dogmatic work, *Der christliche Glaube*. And now the project is accomplished, and we are deeply grateful to him, to his joint-editor, and to the band of competent translators whom he gathered round him, for the goodly volume, *The Christian Faith* (T. & T. Clark; 21s. net), which has recently appeared. The joint-editor is the Rev. J. S. Stewart, M.A., B.D., of Beechgrove United Free Church, Aberdeen. The translation is from the second, which was the last, German edition.

Why have we had to wait so long for an English rendering of a work which, as the editors justly say, is, with the exception of Calvin's 'Institutes,' the most important work covering the whole field of Christian doctrine to which Protestant theology can point? Many good reasons might doubtless be given, but the perusal of the first pages of the work suggests one which, if not altogether good, is at least valid. It is that a subjective theology of feeling does not readily find a home among the inheritors of the Calvinistic tradition. It is true that Schleiermacher composed his theology from within the bosom of the Reformed Church, but it is also true that he sought to bridge the divisions between the Reformed and the Lutheran Church, and that the 'piety' on which he lays so much stress is more characteristic of the followers of Luther than of those of Zwingli and Calvin. It is significant in this connexion that Schleiermacher has impressed his influence more deeply upon the neo-Lutheran or Ritschlian school than upon any other school of theology. It is also significant that within the German Reformed Church there has arisen in recent years a strong neo-Calvinistic movement which repudiates Schleiermacher's subjective position and would reaffirm the essential objective principle of the Reformed theology. Is it then altogether to be wondered at that a work so influential as Schleiermacher's has had to wait for a whole century before being published in Great Britain? Theology clings to the past, and is not readily hospitable of innovations of thought. In this it is unlike philosophy. But then its appeal, unlike that of philosophy, is to the many rather than the few.

It is not that in Great Britain, or America, Schleiermacher's influence has not told. Its mark is on all our vital theological teaching, whether from rostrum or pulpit. But it has been an indirect rather than a direct influence, and it has