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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

In Professor Baillie's book, *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*, there is an interesting piece of expository work in the early chapter in which the writer lays the foundation of his argument. The foundations of Christology, he says, lie deep in the essential experience of the Christian fellowship. It is to an account of this fellowship Dr. Baillie gives himself to begin with. He quotes the description of the early Christians in Acts, 'they devoted themselves to the instruction given by the Apostles and to *koinonia*, breaking bread and praying together.'

In this word *koinonia* lies the key to early New Testament Christianity. It had a double meaning. It was a fellowship of believers *inter se*, and a fellowship of the believers individually with the Spirit, but a complex experience which included both. When we ask what this new relationship was we come upon another great word, *agape*. In these two words we can sum up New Testament Christianity. The word *agape* is nearly unknown to us outside the Christian use of it. It is translated 'love,' but the trouble is that 'love' covers also the Greek word *eros*, which the New Testament scrupulously avoids.

Dr. Baillie suggests that when it applies to God *agape* should be translated 'fatherliness,' and when it applies to man 'brotherliness.' But the real difficulty is that it often applies to both. It is often regarded as a triangular relationship in which the Christian's attitude to God is closely related to his attitude to his brethren, and in which this attitude to his brethren is modelled upon God's attitude to him.

The secret of the little band's influence, then, lay in the fact that in its meetings it was enjoying this *koinonia* of *agape*. How, then, did this work out in the actual detail of life? Through the family idea. God deals with us, and we ought to deal with our fellows, in the spirit of family affection. But if we are to understand this fellowship of love we must look at it on its two sides separately. *Agape* obtains first between man and man, and in this aspect the word used generally is 'brotherhood.' This, says Harnack, is the 'fixed and frequent title' that answered to the Christian's life and conduct. It means that we are to do for all those with whom we have dealings what the meanest of us does for his own flesh and blood.

Now this implies that *agape* is, first of all, a *redemptive* love. As von Hügel says, it is 'a love that loves, not in acknowledgment of an already present lovableness, but in order to render lovable in the future what at present repels love.' But that is not all. We do not penetrate to the heart of the matter until we realize that *agape* is in addition *suffering* love, a love that involves pain and sacrifice if it is to be redemptive. The world being what it is there can be no effective helping of our fellows except through self-sacrifice. But

suffering is not the last word. *Agape* is also a *joyous* love. Triumphant hope is the keyword of early Christianity, the faith that love is stronger than death. No gospel of mere renunciation, however nobly represented, could have had in it the tremendous power of spiritual appeal which the faith of that little Christian band has ever since proved itself to possess.

What is distinctive about the Christian fellowship is its perception that in this *agape* is to be found the secret of the further spiritual development of the race. It is the great spiritual discovery for which Christianity stands, and it is certain that it was in the nature of a discovery even to men who had been reared in the faith of Israel. Comparing Jewish benevolent righteousness (*chesed*) with Christian *agape*, that learned Jew of our time, Dr. Claude Montefiore, allows that the latter stands for 'something more venturous, more self-sacrificing, more eager, more giving, than can honestly be said to be connoted by righteousness or goodness. It is a virtue which does in its height "cause a man to lay down his life for his friend." It is a virtue which drives a man forth to save, to redeem, and to forgive.'

But *agape* is also the attitude of God to man. Here we have to do not with a different kind of love from that which we have been considering, but with the same kind. Just as the New Testament *ethic* is summed up in the words, 'Be under no obligation to any one except the obligation to love one another,' so the New Testament *religion* is summed up in the words, 'God is love.' It is in God 'fatherliness.' It is in us 'sonship.' And about this relation Paul emphasizes two things. The first is its informality, the readiness of access we have to the Divine presence. In the Christian fellowship, he says, 'we have the right of free speech and access in confidence.' The second thing is its graciousness in respect of our sins and failures.

The central affirmation of the New Testament, then, is that the eager, patient, forgiving love which is our pattern is enthroned in the highest heaven as the Spirit manifested by the Most High God in His dealings with us. It is in God also a redemptive love. And in Him also, in order to be redemptive, it is a suffering love. If our little human enterprises of redemption are costly to us, how much more costly the redemption of the world to God! And yet, as the last word about human love is not the tragedy of suffering but the triumphant peace and joy of eternal life, so the last word about God's love is the unchanging serenity of eternal perfection. There is an everlasting Divine joy, a peace of God which passeth understanding, before which the last remaining shadow of sorrow and suffering must flee away.

In the recent volume of Essays on *The Atonement in History and in Life*, there is an essay by the Most Rev. C. F. D'Arcy, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh, whose expositions of theistic thought on Bergsonian lines have been interesting and suggestive contributions to philosophical theology. The essay in question is on 'Atonement and the Problem of Evil,' but its emphasis is on the problem of evil rather than atonement; and it is just because a fresh approach to this perennial problem is always of interest that we would call attention to the essay.

Dr. D'Arcy remarks first on the universal tendency in human thought to link up the two forms of evil, physical evil or pain and moral evil or sin, and to regard them as somehow interdependent. 'The history of punishment, and the various doctrines connected therewith; the impulse to regard suffering as penalty inflicted by superior powers, witness the Book of Job; the idea of *Nemesis* in Greek thought; the Eastern conception of suffering and degradation as the result of sin in a former incarnation: all these reveal a conviction in the mind of man that sin and suffering cannot be separated.'

But the fact of animal suffering tends to qualify this ancient conviction. The lower animals are certainly subject to pain, and yet in no sense are they guilty of sin. Yet until the theory of evolu-

tion there was no rational explanation of the suffering of animals. In the light of evolution we may now look upon pain, not as punitive, but as a specific and positive element in the development of animal life, or, as Dr. Wildon Carr expresses it, as 'a biological factor with a distinct psychical function.' Pain thus possesses a utilitarian value.

Even so the real problem of physical evil still awaits solution. Sensitivity to pain is no doubt a useful element in animal life, but there appears to be an excess of pain in the world, and this constitutes the difficulty. And the higher we ascend in the scale of being, the more keenly is the difficulty felt. And further, the worst sufferings of men are not physical at all: they are hurts of the soul, disappointments, fears, social injuries. These can hardly be represented as of biological value. And yet further, when all is said from the evolutionary standpoint in mitigation of the problem of physical evil, the problem of moral evil remains.

One way of solving the problem of evil, of eliminating the irrational element from the universe, is by denying the reality of evil. According to Christian Science both sin and pain are illusions of the human mind. 'If by a great act of insight we can rise to the conviction that God is all and that God is good, these unrealities, sin and suffering, will vanish into nothingness, the afflicted soul and the afflicted body will both pass into a condition of health and happiness.' Although this doctrine was extravagant in its expression, it appears to bear an essential resemblance to those negative or privative theories of moral evil for which great names have stood as sponsors, such as those of Augustine, John Scotus, and Thomas Aquinas. From this negative point of view moral evil is related to good as shadow to light, or as silence to sound.

But it is an abstract point of view, designed to save in the face of evil the goodness of God, and is not based on the facts of experience. A similar criticism applies to the solution offered by evolutionary science, according to which moral evil is a survival of qualities and modes of action which belonged to more primitive stages in development, being the unnatural and blameworthy persistence of brutal instincts in the life of man. Which brings us back, by another path, to the idea that sin, if not an unreality, is entirely relative to thought and habit. In confutation of all these views, of the Christian scientist, the philosophic theologian, and the modern evolutionist, we need only appeal to the actual facts. These would seem to show us that an evil deed or an evil character is just as positive an existence as we can imagine.

Moral evil being then no unreality, no mere defect or negation, but a real and positive thing, let us consider whether we may find any true light upon the problem it sets. If the source or seat of it is in the will, we may say that the moral situation is created by the will's exercise of its inherent power or freedom, the choice of the good implying the possibility of evil. Are, then, the whole course of history and the realization of the Divine purpose at the mercy of man's will? It is a question which presses more insistently under the scientific story of Creation, with its long record of pain and struggle, than in the old story of our childhood. 'The Creator, if there be a Creator, seems far more directly responsible for the sufferings and sins of His creatures than He appears to be in the Biblical account. For, in the scientific account, the fierce competition which brings pain and sin is part of the order of things from the beginning.'

Yet the narrative of the Fall as we read it in the Book of Genesis expresses the fundamental principle of all life. Spontaneity of action can be traced from its lowly beginnings in the *amœbæ* through the long history of developing life until we reach its highest point in man. Out of the acquisition of sensitivity, some degree of awareness, some inward urge of feeling, sprang what we call mind and will. Thus pain and sin, the two forms of evil, come from the same root, and, linked thus in their origin, interact in their history; and through their interaction the moral life of humanity is created. 'It is in choosing the good and rejecting the evil that the will finds its highest exercise; and the conditions which enable this choice to be made

involve as their very essentials the sentient life of pleasure and pain, and the moral elements of good and evil. The actuality of pain and the possibility of evil form the school of discipline in which man is made.'

'From this natural history of suffering and sin, we gather that moral evil is not an essential element in the total scheme of things, nor, on the other hand, is it an unreality. It is a state of human life arising, though not necessarily, from the contingency which must belong to any order of things in which moral and spiritual attainment is possible.'

Does the contingency which is an essential condition of moral life account for the enormous development of evil in human life and history? Or, is this only to be explained by some doctrine of original sin, some inbred evil tendency in human nature? Dr. N. P. Williams thinks that evil must be traced to a premundane Fall of the Life-Force —so reviving an old theory. Dr. Tennant's is a more reasonable theory, regarding the sinful tendency as the survival or persistence of the crude animal tendencies which, at first natural, became with the emergence of man's moral nature the source of evil. But in any case we may conclude that the creation of beings capable of moral faculty and moral conduct involved the possibility of evil.

This is a position which is generally affirmed by theistic thinkers, but Dr. D'Arcy imparts a Bergsonian flavour to his affirmation of it. He represents God as the Supreme Adventurer, of whose venture we cannot be certain that it will be justified; and he maintains that the conception of an Adventurer God is infinitely more worthy of our acceptance than is the idea of a Supreme Being who makes us to be all that we are, whether good or bad, in order to promote His own glory. For the first, as we may observe in Bergsonian phrase, the gates of the future are open, for the other they are closed.

And yet, although our reason finds itself limited and confounded when it passes from the lower levels of reality to the consideration of spiritual beings possessed of mind and will, for God the supreme Reality there must be a final Unification. It may surpass our thought, but we must believe in its existence. 'We may, indeed, venture to think that what we call the Love of God, embracing all His creatures, is the best and fullest expression of the ultimate truth.' 'Here, it would seem, is the essence of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, which means just this—that in God there is a principle of Unification higher in kind than any known in experience.'

We shall not follow Dr. D'Arcy into his discussion, brief as it is, of the relation of his conclusions to the idea of the Atonement; we are content to quote the closing words of his main discussion: 'If this way of regarding the problem as a whole be sound, we find that we have a real explanation of the reason why the problem of evil has shown itself to be, for every philosophy, an insoluble problem. Evil cannot be rationalised, because it has to do with just that point where the categories of rational thought have reached their limit.'

A third edition of *Essays Catholic and Critical* has been published (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d. net). No one who has read its able and scholarly pages can wonder at its popularity. But in the third edition the editor, Dr. Selwyn, takes the opportunity to reply, in a long preface, to some of the criticisms (including our own) passed on the book when it first appeared. He deals chiefly with two points, the claim to authority and the relation of Anglo-Catholicism to the results of Biblical criticism.

As regards the first point Dr. Selwyn quotes from The Expository Times the following sentence, 'If authority rests on Christian experience, surely those great Churches (Free, Lutheran, etc.) have some authority to plead. But if the Christian experience of these bodies is to count in assessing the authority of any truth, what becomes of the Anglo-Catholic contention?' The editor's reply

is that this is a misunderstanding of the Anglo-Catholic claim. That claim is not that Anglo-Catholicism gives a final and exclusive expression of the truth, but that it represents the best expression at present available, in thought, worship, and life, of the principles necessary to an ultimate synthesis. It is interesting to have this definition of the limits which should be put to the claim to authority. It is a much more modest claim than is usually associated with Anglo-Catholicism.

But Dr. SELWYN returns to the subject of authority later, and is quite explicit. Authority may be objective or subjective. The latter is generally known as the Inner Light, or sometimes as 'private judgment.' The weaknesses of the subjective claim are obvious. It will never satisfy those who long for some one, or something, that will say to them, and have the right to say to them, 'this is *true*!' But if the authority is objective, where does it lie? In the Creeds? In the Church? In the Bible? As to the first of these Dr. SELWYN says some fine and true things. The Creeds are expressions and safeguards of the worship of Christ. And they are the expression and embodiment of the *common* experience of the grace of Christ.

And then Dr. SELWYN, with felicity and courage, proceeds to define the source, the seat and the organ of authority in the Church of Christ. Its *source* is the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, in the unity and development of Christian doctrine, and in the conversion of souls. Its *seat* is the common mind of the Church. This is not found in any one mode, but it is accessible and real. Creeds and liturgies embody this, and whatever expresses the experience of God's grace. We suppose that Dr. SELWYN would include the Free Churches at this point. It is the weakness of Modernism, he says, as of Liberal Protestantism, that they have failed to allow for the authority of this Christian experience.

The question of the *organ* of Catholic authority presents a more difficult problem, and one on which Dr. SELWYN finds it hard to be definite. The difficulty arises from the divided state of the Church. For Romanism there is no problem at all, because the Pope is the infallible spokesman of God. For others there can be no single 'organ.' There must necessarily be 'organs.' This is so, says Dr. SELWYN, 'so long as the collective episcopate cannot meet.' In this phrase he seems to exclude all non-episcopal Churches. What this imperfect state of things means, he says, is that the pronouncements of the divided Churches are incomplete, since they rest upon, and apply to, only a part of the whole field of Christian experience. The position is not a final one, but it is, we are assured, strong enough to rest in, until such fresh illumination is given as can alone make the solution of the difficulties possible.

The weakness of this position from the Anglo-Catholic standpoint is terribly obvious. There seems to be no half-way house between the Roman claim and the position that authority in religion rests with the achievement of the Spirit of God manifest in the witness of Christian experience which we can read in the Creeds and in the worship of *all* the Christian Churches. Even the meeting of 'the collective episcopate' would not be enough. The Free Churches, the Lutheran Churches, the great Churches of America have also their part in forming the authority which comes from the Spirit. It is, however, a gain to have this clear and candid discussion of a great problem set before us in such a fine spirit.

With regard to the other topic dealt with in this interesting preface, the relations of Anglo-Catholicism with the critical movement, our sympathies are rather with Dr. SELWYN than with his critics. Dr. Selbie urged, when this book first appeared, that it attempted the impossible in trying to bring into synthesis the Catholic and critical movements. That is rather a dangerous thing to say of any strong Christian position. Frederick Robertson of Brighton taught some of us long ago that truth is never found between extremes, but always in bringing together the half-truth in each extreme. And this would seem to describe the Anglo-Catholic attitude. There is a

truth in the critical attitude, and so far as it is true the Anglo-Catholic writers here accept it. Why not? For they also accept the other truth of Christian experience, which is as much a truth (or half-truth) as the truth of 'science.' Dr. SELWYN'S remarks on this topic are very illuminating and will seem convincing to most minds. There does not seem, in the nature of things, any reason why an Anglo-Catholic should not also be a higher critic.

National Contributions to Biblical Science.

II. The Contribution of Great Britain to Old Testament Study.

By the Reverend Principal H. Wheeler Robinson, M.A., D.D., Regent's Park College, London and Oxford.

1. The scientific study of the Old Testament means the examination of its elements by the full employment of all the general methods of literary and historical study—linguistic, archæological, geographical, anthropological, comparative, even theological and philosophical, always provided that the literature shall be allowed to speak for itself without conscious correction by any of the vested interests of Church or Creed. The aim of this article is to review the chief contributions made to this study by British scholars, exclusive of those who are still living, and to steer, if possible, between the Scylla of subjectivity and the Charybdis of a mere bibliography. Fuller details, including those relating to other countries, will be conveniently found in *Founders of Old Testament Criticism*, by T. K. Cheyne (1893), the Introduction to *The Hexateuch*, by J. E. Carpenter and G. Harford-Battersby (1900), the article on 'Criticism (Old Testament),' by J. Strachan in vol. iv. of the Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics (1911), 'The Legacy of Israel' (*Hebrew Studies in the Reformation Period and After*, pp. 353–373, by Canon Box, 1927), *Theologie der Gegenwart in Grossbritannien*, by W. Vollrath, pp. 48–81 (1928).

2. If we leave out of account the great series of translations of the Old Testament into English, our scientific contribution may be said to begin with the London *Polyglot* (1654–57), of which we may justly be proud.[1] An added interest is given to these six great folios when we remember that its editor, Brian Walton, turned to this task after being ejected from his livings in 1641. The four Old Testament volumes open to show the Hebrew text with half a dozen versions, each with its Latin rendering. To this monumental work, for which the editor justly claimed the *aere perennius*, there was added in 1669 Edmund Castell's sevenfold Lexicon in two companion folios. Naturally the foremost Orientalists of the time were associated with Walton, such as Edward Pococke (1604–91), remembered also for his commentaries on Minor Prophets, and John Lightfoot, best known by his *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae* (1658–78). To the same period belong two scholars whose interest lay rather in the Biblical manners and customs than in linguistic study, namely, John Selden, known by his *De dis Syris* (1617), who died in the year of publication of the *Polyglot*, which he had helped to finance, and John Spencer, whose pioneer work in the comparative study of Hebrew institutions was published in 1685 (*De Legibus Hebraeorum Ritualibus*). To the next generation belongs the textual work of Humphrey Hody (1704), and to a still later period that of Benjamin Kennicott (1776–80), and (on the LXX) of Holmes and Parsons (1798–1827). The outstanding name of the eighteenth century in regard to subject-matter is that of Robert Lowth, whose *Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (1753) gives the pioneer and classical treatment of Hebrew poetic parallelism. He also illustrated his insight into the poetic form of Hebrew prophecy by his annotated translation of Isaiah (1778).

3. The literary or 'higher' criticism of the Old Testament began in Great Britain with Alexander Geddes (1737–1802), who followed up the pioneer work of Astruc (1753) and Eichhorn (1780) on

[1] Its international significance may be illustrated by the fact that my own copy of it was catalogued in the library of the Bare-footed Carmelites at Riom in 1711.