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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

PROFESSOR JAMES MOFFATT, whose departure to 'the other side' has been one of our greatest losses in recent times, has hit upon an ingenious, interesting, and not unedifying idea for his latest book, *The Day before Yesterday* (Williams & Norgate; 5s. net). By the day before yesterday he means the period from the eighteen sixties onwards, for about thirty-five years, and his aim is to consider certain aspects of the strain between faith and philosophy or science during that generation, noting how some lost their faith in God altogether, how others devised substitutes for Christianity, and how others again looked for light to fall from the clouds, if not on themselves, at least on the next generation. It is not so much the theology or philosophy of that period he discusses as the literature, and how that literature reflects the currents of thought of its day.

The advantages of such a review are not small. We are always apt to look on the past with a feeling of superiority, and this confident—and superficial—temper often fails to realize the importance of being able to distinguish between things that happen and things that matter, largely because we have not disciplined ourselves to verify a principle of judgment by studying the history of the day before yesterday. We dismiss the events of these years as of little more than antiquarian interest, and yet sometimes forces started in that period are telling with unconscious power upon the life of the present. Also we are apt to forget that, though the battles of the day before yesterday were not waged with the same weapons as ours, the leaders of that day were meeting foes who face ourselves in different guise, and we learn that the Christian religion has been under fire before now, that it has given way to panic as well as to over-confidence, that it has handicapped itself by adhering to outworn tactics and weapons, and that it has displayed recuperative powers which have been a surprise to its followers, as well as to its opponents.

Just recall what the day before yesterday was like. It witnessed the appearance of Darwin's 'Origin of Species,' the great economic and industrial development of Britain, the Civil War in America, the aggrandisement of Prussia, and the publication of Herbert Spencer's 'First Principles.' It was the age of Renan and Taine, of Mommsen and Ranke, of Tolstoi and Dostoievsky, of T. H. Green and Martineau, of Dickens and Thackeray, of Bagehot and Lang. It was a time of upheaval no less in thought than in politics, and particularly in religious belief. The new ideas of creation and the struggle for life, of continuity and progress, of historical proof and literary research into the origins of humanity and tradition, were stirring the pool with fresh impacts, whose ripples are still being felt. Dr. MOFFATT, with his almost unrivalled equipment of literary culture and theological knowledge, disentangles for us the significant facts amid this welter of currents and movements.

These significant points he calls respectively 'A Third Religion,' 'The Loss of God,' 'Nature for God,' and 'Instinctive Faith.' By a third religion he means briefly that the Christianity of the day before yesterday was felt widely to be so poor a thing that many efforts were made to replace it by something better. The Christianity that Mazzini saw in Italy, that Butler encountered in the Anglican Communion, that Amiel met in Switzerland, was not a 'great work of God.' It failed to appeal to the intelligence, the imagination, or the conscience. It lacked vitality and nerve, it was conventional and timid. It had in particular three faults which alienated many minds. It shut its eyes to the newer conceptions of creation and causation; it ignored the religious significance of Nature and the order and beauty of Nature; and it tabooed many of the simple joys of life by its false puritanism.

The result was seen in the 'mongrel religions' invented to take the place of Christianity, such as those in Tancred and 'Robert Elsmere.' It was seen also in the strenuous efforts of Ibsen to find something better than the Christianity with which he was familiar, which seemed to him an evasive, conventional hypocrisy. Ibsen thought that paganism, which was (for him) the empire of matter, had been succeeded by Christianity, the empire of the spirit, and that the third, and final, empire was to be one in which spirit leavened matter, and matter spirit. This somewhat vague conception came to him from the joint influence of science and philosophy, and his significance for us lies largely in the fact that a poor kind of Christianity invariably creates reactions of one kind or another in minds for which religion is a necessity, but for which also there can be no terms made with a religion that is merely the art of hedging and dodging realities.

In his chapter on 'The Loss of God,' Dr. MOFFATT describes the influence of Darwin's researches. There was, of course, the spread everywhere and to every sphere of life and thought, of the idea of 'evolution.' It dazzled and dismayed Christians, since it appeared to explain away creation, reduced the Bible to the level of a natural phenomenon, evaporated anything like revelation and left no place for freewill. These are familiar features of the period. But the indirect result of the scientific movement was even more remarkable, as seen in a writer like Hardy, for example. Hardy's view of life was just the struggle for existence on its lower side vivified by imagination. This underside preoccupied him with its ugliness and fatuity. The world in Hardy is rather a horrible place. Men's passions, virtues, visions, crimes, obey resistlessly a Thing that 'heaves through space.' His real and fatal weakness was that the good was always second in his scale of values. What determines a man is what he puts first, and where there is no supreme value attached to goodness or God there can be no religion.

Dr. MOFFATT deals at length with Meredith and his cult of Nature, which he idealized as a kindly mother, and with Matthew Arnold and his passionate vindication of a religion of some kind, a religion freed from the trammels of tradition and loyal to what he considered the secret of Jesus. These pages on the two great literary figures are full of fascination and instruction. But enough has been written to show the trend of Dr. MOFFATT'S analysis. Instead of pursuing this, it may be useful to extract two of the general summaries in which the book abounds. In one of these Dr. MOFFATT contrasts the chief interests to be found in the literature of the day before yesterday and in our literature to-day. To-day, in verse and prose, these are the erotic and the economic. Novels and plays preach as much as before, but it is not religion that is their text. It is love and hunger. Whereas the religious interest is more prominent in the books of the day before yesterday, there are to-day far more novelists than between 1860 and 1890, 'who resemble lively and dirty cockroaches in the basement of the House of Life.'

On the other hand, it is noted that philosophy has become less agnostic and materialistic than it was fifty years ago, and this revival of idealism has told in favour of an attitude to the universe that is more patient of a religious interpretation. This has been more responsible than anything else

for the bankruptcy of the older naturalism. Christianity is still exposed to gusts of error, but religion is less embarrassed to-day by movements of real philosophy. Dr. MOFFATT insists that his review of the day before yesterday shows that religious people were more right than either they or their opponents knew in maintaining the spiritual intuition against materialism.

The real issue in the day before yesterday was this: Is the highest to be interpreted in terms of the lowest? Do the claims of science involve that the human soul or mind is no more than a pattern woven on the stuff of matter, no more than an illusion of the grey matter in the brain? These issues absorbed the thoughtful over half a century ago. We have only to look around us to see how the situation has altered. The materialistic scheme has been repudiated and discredited. Determinism has been largely abandoned. Reality has been seen to be too great to be grasped by our physical categories. Religion itself has been largely renovated by a frank admission of the claims of Nature. The efforts to invent new religions, the arrogant claims of science, the insistence on outworn religious traditions, all these have passed in large measure away. And if there is still a fight to be fought, at least it is to-day easier for earnest minds to say, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.' And this we owe, partly at least, to the struggles of the day before yesterday.

Each generation has its own problems for the preacher, and to-day he is faced by the apparent indifference of the many. Whatever he may have to say, there is no great multitude, if we may judge by the empty seats in churches, who are anxious to hear it. To a perplexed world he has words of eternal life to offer, but there are few who are willing to lend an attentive ear. Why is this? Is it that the people are really indifferent to a message which they need so sorely, or is it that the preacher is perplexed no less than the people, or is it that he cannot transmit his message to them because he cannot speak their language?

There is perhaps an element of truth in all three contentions. Dr. J. Fort NEWTON, in an interesting book on *The New Preaching* (S.C.M.; 5s. net) tells of a gifted and high-minded young man who bluntly asserts that 'no preacher over forty can speak our language, and the young fellows shy at the pulpit.' If this is true, it is sad indeed, for it would mean that there is a great and impassable gulf between the preacher and the men whose allegiance to the gospel he is most anxious to win, for on the moral and religious quality of the youth of to-day will depend the spiritual tone, and to that extent the essential welfare, of the world of to-morrow. Happily, it is very far from being universally true; for there is many a preacher far over forty who has the heart of a boy, and who can speak the language of the young as well as they can themselves.

Nevertheless the experience of the War did reveal to many a chaplain that the conventional language of religion was hopelessly unintelligible to many of the soldiers to whom it was addressed. Words like 'grace,' 'faith,' 'salvation,' meant no more to them than their Greek equivalents would have done; and one can sympathize with the Australian who insisted that it would be a good thing to drop the word 'salvation' for a few years from the vocabulary of religion, so unreal had become the ideas associated with it. And this consideration leads Dr. NEWTON to one of the features which must characterize the new preaching; it must learn to translate the truths of faith into the idiom of to-day. This effort of translation will be a valuable discipline, alike intellectual and spiritual, for the preacher himself, for it will compel him once more to confront Reality, and not only to re-express but to re-think the meaning of terms whose pristine vividness and power readily become dulled by conventional and professional handling.

For the preacher himself is implicated in the spiritual temper and outlook of the age. Even though he rises above it—as he must, if he is to be effective—he also stands within it, and that is at once his opportunity and his peril, a peril to which it is fatally easy to succumb. 'No wonder,' says Dr. NEWTON, 'the people are bewildered and

turn away from the Church; the pulpit itself is perplexed and confused, unable to find its way.' 'A multitude of people are hungry of heart, confused, astray, adrift, and the Church does not meet their need.' There is a widespread feeling that 'modern preaching is chaotic, anæmic, and lacking in power.' 'The failure of the pulpit to reform the wicked, to hold the attention of the young, to win the respect of the lover of science, to attract the man in the street, is clearly manifest.' These are grave words, but they are spoken not in cynicism, but in love; and the book is written to point the way to a clearer understanding of the new congregation which the preacher of our generation has to address, and to the new strategy by which it may be won.

But it will not be easy to win. For one thing, the new congregation knows next to nothing about the Bible, so that expository preaching of the type practised so successfully by Parker, Maclaren, Dale, George Adam Smith, Denney, Dods, is 'well-nigh impossible, at least in America, where life moves to the rhythm of motors, movies, and jazz.' In Great Britain the situation is perhaps not yet quite so desperate; but it would be affectation to deny that even here the Bible is nothing like so familiar as it was two or three generations ago.

This ignorance of, and indifference to, the Bible is symptomatic of a widely diffused temper, which it is the preacher's business to challenge, but to challenge which successfully is one of the hardest things in the world. 'A spirit,' says Dr. NEWTON, 'has been released among us, wild, restless, ruthless, realistic, rebellious, disillusioned, sad, making mock of chastity, reverence, restraint, and even truth itself.' 'Even our boys and girls are cynics, *blasé* and bored,' and 'no one can deny that our age is strangely astray in its own life, baffled and confused.' Another writer, B. I. Bell, in a book entitled 'Beyond Agnosticism' noticed elsewhere in this number, similarly remarks that contemporary thought concerns itself with all the things which count for least and ignores most of the things which matter most—'it is always talking of origins and rarely speaks of destinies.'

All this is true, but, happily, it is not the whole truth. In every congregation there are faithful souls 'who keep the faith amid all change and chaos, without whom the heart of the preacher would turn to dust.' And not only is there a faithful nucleus in every congregation, but the age itself is not so deeply immersed in material interests as a superficial diagnosis might suppose. Dr. NEWTON is too good an observer of the times not to know that in our generation there is 'an eager wistful longing for a more vivid experience of spirituality.' The preacher is never really alone. He finds his support not only in the few who demonstrably care for the Church and the gospel, but in the very restlessness of the age, which is nothing but a pathetic and unconscious reflection of the yearning for something more deeply satisfying than anything it now possesses or knows. The preacher has more allies than in his depressed moods he is aware of.

Our own age, though distinctive enough, has much in common with every other age. Even in the so-called Ages of Faith, there were, as there are to-day, forces of evil which had to be combated, and the preacher is wantonly diminishing his vitality and crippling his influence who allows himself to cherish the conviction that his generation is more insensitive and impervious to a spiritual appeal than the ages which preceded his own. But if he is to drive home his appeal effectively, he must, besides fully understanding the gospel he proclaims, and being able to express it in the idiom of to-day, have the wit to recognize, according to Dr. NEWTON, that 'the future will be ruled by the Spirit of Science and by the Democratic Principle.' Even if, in the light of recent and existing dictatorships, the latter principle may seem to some not quite so secure as it once was, there can be no doubt about the former. The Spirit of Science has assuredly come to stay. Its conclusions may, and some of them will, be challenged; but its method and its temper are abiding things, and the preacher must make up his mind to reckon with them; and if that method and temper are entirely alien to him, he is little likely to help men who are convinced that science too has her own wonderful revelation of God.

But it is the supreme function of the preacher to testify to his experience of Reality, as Reality has been revealed in Jesus. And his testimony must be a real testimony, he must be expressing not his opinions but his convictions. He must be able to say not only 'I believe,' but 'I am persuaded'; and Dr. NEWTON inclines to the opinion that his utterance will be all the more persuasive if it take the form not of a read sermon but of vivid, glowing, extempore speech. It will be news to many people that 'in 1720 the Church of Scotland, in its Assembly, declared the reading of sermons to be displeasing to the people of God and an obstruction to the gospel.' That this statement is too drastic is proved by the moving eloquence of Thomas Chalmers, John Hunter, and many another, whose read sermons have stirred the souls of their hearers to the depths. But, broadly speaking, the spontaneous utterance of the well-prepared mind is not only more attractive, but more effective, and every preacher should covet earnestly this most excellent gift.

Dr. NEWTON has proved his power as a preacher on both sides of the Atlantic. Every page of his book stamps him as a keen and experienced observer and a master of his craft, and by its skilful diagnosis of the contemporary situation and its sympathetic appreciation of the preacher's task, it is well fitted to fascinate preachers and laymen alike.

Whatever Professor W. R. MATTHEWS writes is sure of wide and appreciative attention, for he is one of the half-dozen theologians of our time who are original thinkers. And when he chooses so timely and urgent a subject as 'The Destiny of the Soul,' he at once captures our expectant curiosity. The subject is urgent in itself for all believers, and it is timely because, owing to the researches of science and psychology, it has become one of the most debated topics of our day. The article with the title mentioned is printed in *The Hibbert Journal*, and our readers will be glad to read a summary of its conclusions.

The older conception of the 'soul' was that it is a something unsubstantial inhabiting the body and quite separable from its corporeal dwelling-place. But psychology has poured scorn on that idea, and no one now holds it in its former simplicity. Dr. MATTHEWS refuses to enter into a discussion of the nature of the soul. He prefers to state the question thus: Has the personal experience which we now enjoy a future? Is it capable of persisting after death? And, if so, in what conditions may it be supposed to exist? These questions are debated with eager interest, and the fact that there has been such a lack of conclusiveness is due to the different presuppositions from which the disputants start. They assume different conceptions of the nature of reality.

On the presupposition of materialism or naturalism there is very little evidence or reasoning that can be considered as of real value. That is obvious. It might be urged, however, that, when we are dealing with empirical evidence, philosophical thought would be prepared to weigh this without bias. But even here the influence of presuppositions is overwhelming. The majority of such thinkers dismiss the vast mass of material which exists in support of man's persistent belief that death does not end all as if it were unworthy of their attention.

Clearly, however, one presupposition is necessary if we are to believe in survival as probable, or even possible, and that is one that holds the priority of mind over the material order, or at least its relative independence of the material order as we know it. We should add one further requisite—the belief in the significance of values. Only a type of thought which attaches ontological importance to judgments of value is likely to have the basis for a serious argument in favour of the immortal hope. For any profound reason for a future or supernatural life must bring in the thought that the values which we find imperfectly manifested in this present order have some inherent right to persist, and that the conception of their evanescence is intolerable. Perhaps the point would be put more definitely if we said that the

problem of the soul's destiny only becomes real and urgent for a philosophy which regards the universe as rational in the sense of having some reason for existing.

Taking, then, the postulate of the truth of Christianity, in its broad sense, let us ask what view a modern Christian may take of the future life? The Christian theist approaches the problem with two beliefs. In the first place he finds God in Christ. And, therefore, for him God is more than the Ground of the Universe, more even than creative will. He is Holy Love, and He manifests His holiness and His love in redemption. The second belief of the Christian theist is the Resurrection of Christ. That is to say, apart from any particular view of the Resurrection, that Christ was not defeated by death, but is alive for evermore. These are the central affirmations of the Christian faith. These, then, are the determining factors in any Christian view of the soul's destiny.

The question at once arises: Is the immortality of the soul a Christian doctrine? By immortality is meant that the soul is inherently and in its own right immortal. This doctrine was maintained by Plato, and through Platonism found an entrance into Christian theology. But it is time that we should rid ourselves of this Platonic bequest. The New Testament knows nothing of the eternity or the indestructibility of the soul. If we are to ask what doctrine is most in harmony with the postulates of Christian theism, it is clear that derived immortality is the one we should choose. Indeed, the view that individual selves are inherently indestructible is hardly compatible with theism, for it would seriously compromise the supremacy of God. The Christian theist is committed to the belief that all things take their origin from, and depend upon, the creative will of God.

Not only is conferred or conditional immortality the view most in harmony with the fundamental assumption of theism, but we must clearly realize that the resurrection of the body is the characteristic Christian doctrine on this subject. We need not accept the traditional imagery in which apocalyptic has clothed this doctrine. But when the clothing which has come from a vanished age is stripped away, the essential thought in this doctrine remains the most reasonable conception of the future life. It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain that the personal life and experience are something transacted, as it were, in association with the bodily frame, but having no necessary connexion with it.

The old problem of the relation of mind and body has not been solved, but it becomes clear that the sharp antithesis between them is not tolerable. This means that the distinction between mind and body is one which is made within the unity of the personal life, and therefore includes what we mean by body as well as what we mean by mind. And, therefore, it is difficult to maintain any belief in survival of a personal identity which does not include a body. Hence our emphasis on the essential truth of the resurrection of the body. The fact that the doctrine has been presented in crude or even ridiculous forms need not deter us from affirming it in a rational form. And St. Paul has given us a hint of a form in which it can be held, without any reproach of materialism, in his great conception of a spiritual body. This conception is really in harmony with the conclusions of science, which has so dissolved the materiality of matter that there can be no difficulty in believing that the soul's activity builds up a body which is a suitable vehicle of its life.

What conclusions are we to draw from this discussion? It is impossible to harmonize a belief in eternal punishment with Christian theism. We cannot believe that God would hold, in unending existence, human spirits in order to inflict pain upon them. But this does not lead to universalism. What has been said leads rather to the idea of survival as an achievement. The choice of evil, if persisted in, is in conflict with the nature of reality and can only lead to the destruction of the self. This is what is meant by a doctrine of derived or conferred or conditional immortality. And this belief, we have seen, is founded, not on doubtful

texts of dubious authority, but on the fundamental conception of God, on which we are agreed. And this is a message which is peculiarly fitted for the present age, which is tired of the conflicting and material utopias presented to it. The Christian religion is incurably other-worldly, and its message for our age is that the destiny of the soul lies in the unseen.

The Words from the Cross.

VI. 'It is finished' (John xix. 30).

By the Very Reverend J. G. Simpson, D.D., Dean of Peterborough.

It is surely unfortunate that *to give up the ghost* should have become an expression bearing no further significance than the simple verb *to die*. Its use in the A.V. sufficiently accounts for this. There is only one instance, Jn 19[28], in which it actually represents the phrase which it professes to translate. For, though the language of Mt 27[50] bears some resemblance, we should there rather read *let go* than *yielded up the ghost*, which is the actual translation of the A.V. The idea in this case is little more than that of losing hold of life, which is practically a variant for dying. The usage in the translation of the O.T. is borrowed from that of the N.T. In this case, there is not a single instance where, as in Jn 19[30], the English words are an exact equivalent of the original.

That this assimilation should have taken place in the four narratives of the death of Jesus obscures the force of the phrase, when it occurs in the Fourth Gospel. If in Mark and Luke the word 'expired' had been used, while the words of Matthew had been more accurately translated 'let go his spirit,' the expression used by St. John, which is properly represented by 'gave up the ghost,' would have been invested with its full significance. It means 'he handed over (or consigned) his spirit,' as by a final act of voluntary demission into the hands of God. It is precisely the same word which the Evangelist has already employed to express the official consignment of the body of his prisoner by the procurator to those who were to carry out the capital sentence. '*He delivered him unto them to be crucified*' (Jn 19[16]).

St. John does not attribute to Jesus the words *In manus tuas*. But in view of the adaptation of Ps 31[5], which Lk 23[46] places in His mouth, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose that John is not merely interpreting the death of Jesus, as he witnessed it, but is actually telling us what Luke conveys by recording the utterance, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*. If that be indeed the case, then we have here one of those instances characteristic of the Fourth Gospel when the Synoptic narrative is implied. So far from sinking into death, the Evangelist means to say, Jesus consciously and in terms delivered over His spirit to the Father, just as He had consigned His mother to the care of the disciple whom He loved. Thus the phrase 'gave up the ghost,' far from being a customary expression to indicate the simple fact of death, differentiates, and is deliberately intended to differentiate, the last act in the career of the Son from all ordinary forms of dying. There is no swoon, no lapse into coma. In the fullness of a life, which no suffering can diminish, Jesus passes into death. The impression thus created is renewed by what follows. When the soldiers, according to custom, came to hasten what in normal cases, like that of the two malefactors, would have been a long and lingering process, by breaking the legs, they found that in that of their principal victim there was no need. 'They saw that he was dead already.' And, when one of them, as though to leave no room for doubt, thrust his spear into the side, the stream of blood and water issuing from the wound was a result so unexpected, that 'he that saw it,' while attesting in consequence the reality of the Lord's death, drew therefrom the inference that this death had quickening power, and was able to invest the circumstance with mystical significance (1 Jn 3[6. 8]). Thus, the actual phenomena of the passing of Jesus completely vindicated in the eyes of the disciple the utterance which he attributes to his Master: 'No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself' (Jn 10[18]).

All the Synoptists agree that just before Jesus died He cried with a loud voice. This belongs to