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sap flowing from the wounds caused by insects. That suggestion is now abandoned. Manna is a plant. It is one of the Lichens. Its scientific name is *Lecanora esculenta*, or the edible Lichen. It is greyish-yellow in colour and grows on grey limestone rocks, in the form of a wrinkled crust so like the rock itself that it is easily overlooked. Neither of these could be the manna of Exodus, which was a miraculous substance.

In order to solve this problem, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem organized in 1927 a small expedition to the Sinai Peninsula, and the leaders of that expedition, Dr. F. S. Bodenheimer and Dr. O. Theodor, have just published a very interesting account of their investigations, under the title *Ergebnisse der Sinai-Expedition, 1927, der Hebraischen Universität, Jerusalem.* Pp. 143+24 tafeln. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1929.)

The expedition visited some classical localities where manna was recorded. In the course of investigations, it was established beyond doubt that the appearance of manna is a phenomenon well known in other countries under the name of 'honey-dew,' which is a sweet excretion of plant-lice (*Aphidæ*) and scale-insects (*Coccidæ*). Two scale insects mainly responsible for the production of manna were found, namely, *Trabuteria mannipara*, Ehrenb., occurring in the lowlands, and *Najacoccus serpenterius* var. *minor*, Green, which replaces the former in the mountains. Two other Hemipterous insects, *Euscelis decoratus*, Haupt, and *Opsicus jucundus*, Leth., also produce manna, but to a lesser extent. All these insects live on *Tamarix nilotica* var. *mannifera*, Ehrenb.; no manna was observed on other species of *Tamarix*, a fact probably due to some physiological peculiarities of the former. The authors observed the actual excretion by the insects of drops of clear sweet fluid, and proved by experiments that the fluid is ingested by the insects from the vessels of the phloem. When in an experiment a twig bearing the insects was placed in water, the bark was cut below the insects, the production of manna continued in a normal manner, but it stopped as soon as the flow of carbohydrate solution from the leaves was interrupted by cutting off the bark above the insects. The dry desert climate of Sinai causes the syrup-like fluid excretion to crystallize, and the whitish grains thus produced, which cover the branches or fall to the ground underneath them, constitute the true manna of the Bible.

A chemical analysis of the manna demonstrated the presence of cane sugar, glucose, fruchose, and saccharose; pectines were also found, but there was no trace of proteins.

Detailed descriptions of the manna insects are given in the report, which includes very good photographs of various stages of the production of the manna. Notes on the course of the expedition and on the fauna of the Peninsula of Sinai in general provide very interesting reading on that still practically unexplored country.

Accepting the findings of these savants does not affect the miraculous character of the manna of the Israelites. As Dr. M'Laren maintained, 'It was miraculous in its origin—"rained from heaven,"—in its quantity, in its observance of times and seasons, in its putrefaction and preservation, as rotting when kept for greed, and remaining sweet when preserved for the Sabbath. It came straight from the creative will of God, and whether its name means "What is it?" or "It is a gift," the designation is equally true and appropriate, pointing, in the one case, to the mystery of its nature; in the other, to the love of the Giver, and in both referring it directly to the hand of God.' ARTHUR S. LANGLEY.

Wednesbury.

Entre Nous.

Adventurous Faith.

Dr. Hugh Black, formerly of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, and now for many years Professor of Practical Theology in Union Theological Seminary, New York, has contributed the last volume to Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton's 'People's Library' (2s. 6d. net). It is necessarily a small book but it is richly suggestive. Dr. Black reminds us that he is not a young man—his memory goes back earlier than most of the scientific discoveries of our age, to the time when Dr. Bell could not find any one courageous enough to advance him the necessary money to finance his early experiments in the use of the telephone—but his attitude is essentially modern. The title of his book is *The Adventure of being Man*, and the purpose of it is to suggest a way of looking at the mysterious universe and man's mysterious life from the point of view of adventure. He

divides his subject into three—The Adventure, The Adventurer, and The Last Adventure.

What is the adventure? It is a certain attitude of the soul in which it makes a venture on the world and life, throwing itself on an unseen spiritual order. 'We believe that there is an end in purpose with which we can co-operate. We believe that what we experience of beauty and goodness and love are not illusions, and that human life is not the sport of chance. We embark on the great moral and spiritual adventure.

'When we do, we find everywhere the supporting facts. We find this faith the light of everything that lives in man, and that in the strength of it we can build up a human world. We look back into history and see that the spiritual forces have ever said the last word. We see ideas and ideals creating new and vital institutions, and heroic faiths saving the world. We find as a matter of experience that life does not play man false in his noblest hopes, that life hides no treachery against the soul. "This is the true joy in life," says Bernard Shaw in one of his most self-revealing moods, "the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap-heap; the being a force of nature, instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."'

It is forgotten sometimes that the other view of life implies faith also. Dr. Black says: 'The greatest men of faith I meet on this green earth are some who call themselves unbelievers. They have to accept such tremendous miracles, and assert such unproven assumptions'—'the universe is a series of accidents, and flukes, and peradventures, and haphazards, and coincidences. . . . One day there broke off from a flaming sun what ultimately by an amazing series of flukes became this earth. By another astounding series of accidents there gathered somehow on its surface some organic scum.'

And it is forgotten sometimes that the scientist is compelled to make assumptions and to take unproved things for granted before he begins his work. He must assume that the universe is rational; that it is causal not casual. But the fact that knowledge of any kind depends on faith goes deeper even than that. We must believe that the picture of reality that we get from our mental acts is a true one. The world we know is built up as a picture by percepts through the avenues of sense, and by concepts. It is a question here of *credo ut intelligam*. We must make a venture of faith.

Again, Dr. Black says everything human stands on this footing. 'The solid world of business, on which we all depend, looks the most material structure erected by man. When we ask our bankers and leaders of industry on what it rests, they reply that it is a system of credit—and credit, like creed, is *credo*, I believe. They will add that business needs public confidence—that is *fides*, faith. The most important development of modern business is the creation and management of what it calls "trusts." The demand which business men are always making on each other as colleagues is for loyalty and fidelity. Trust means confident reliance on integrity, or veracity, or some such quality. Every important business word has in it the word "faith" in Latin or English. So that this immense solid structure of business is so built that if a tenuous thing like credit be impaired, or an equally tenuous thing like public confidence be lost, the whole system would crash.'

The second part of the book deals with the adventurer—what man means. Surely those who cannot make up their minds about God can make them up about man. They cannot decide about another life, they may about this life. But here again it is a venture. Just as in the case of the venture of faith on the world, arguments can be brought on both sides. If it were not so, it would not be a venture. For on one side there are the facts that seem to show nothing in the world but the blind drive of non-moral force, and on the other side are the facts that prove that the world hides no treachery for the man who trusts it. So it is in the choice that we have to make as to what man is. We can point to the facts that link him to everything below him. For there are signs in plenty of his animal ancestry. On the other hand is the long story of the ascent of man. 'We are unworthy of our past heritage and our present privilege if we forget the great society of the noble living and the noble dead. This also is a fact, that every high thought and every splendid passion exemplified in others find instant response in our heart. We can say that this is man at his best, this is the true man, this is what he may be and should be, what he in nature is.'

There is a drastic sanity in true realism. But in the realm of art to-day a facsimile of morbid and unsavoury things often passes for it. Lately, Dr. Black says, a realist of that type wrote in commendation of the book of another, 'If there is a writer in America to-day who can lay hold of mean

people and mean lives and tear their mean hearts out with more appalling realism, his work is unknown to me.' And, he adds, this was supposed to be such high praise that the publisher used it to advertise his wares. Conrad, who was certainly not a romanticist in dealing with life, says: 'What one feels so hopelessly barren in declared pessimism is just its arrogance. It seems as if the discovery made by many men at various times that there is so much evil in the world were a source of proud and unholy joy to some of the modern writers. . . . To be hopeful in an artistic sense it is not necessary to think that the world is good. It is enough to believe that there is no impossibility of its being made so.'

The one leader who deliberately staked everything on His faith in man was the Lord Jesus. And He fearlessly put His theory into practice. The heart of the objection to Him was that He acted His theory out and in that endangered the prestige of the whole social and religious system—'this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.'

The third part of the book deals with the last adventure—'If a man die, shall he live again?'—and in it Dr. Black suggests the method of approach as part of the whole adventure of being man. But the reader must turn to the book itself for the development of this. All the ventures hang together.

The Noble Risk.

'Religion is not a formula of escape nor a way of safety. It is an adventure of the spirit. Clement of Alexandria, of the second century, who was of a cultivated pagan family, described his step from paganism into the Christian Church as taking "the noble risk of a desertion unto God." It needs only a little imagination to understand some of the pathos and heroism in the experience so modestly expressed. To break away from the safety and security of old ways, snapping tender ties of kinship and friendship, was "desertion" that meant pain and loss. Only the courage of a great faith, venturing from the known and the usual, could have induced him to take the noble risk.'[1]

Religious Thought of India.

The Student Christian Movement Press has just published a volume of selections from the religious literature of India with the title *Temple Bells*, edited by Mr. A. J. Appasamy, M.A., D.Phil. (5s. net). We are interested more than ever to-day in the mind of India. And the reading of this book certainly affords one avenue of approach. The publishers and the editor together have done all that they could to make it an attractive one to us. There are excellent introductory sketches of the authors of the poems, and delightful sepia illustrations from Indian pictures and sculpture. We give two selections. The first is by Rāmakṛishṇa Paramahaṁsa. Born of Brahman parents, he strove to conquer his pride of ancestry by doing the work of the street cleaner and scavenger. Anxious to know and understand other religions, he became later the disciple of a Muhammadan saint. His followers have quickened the religious impulses of the people of India, and they have done much social work.

The second quotation is from Rabindranath Tagore's volume of Bengali Poems—'Fruit Gathering.'

MOMENTS OF DEEP SILENCE.

Behold the bee buzzing and circling round and round near the blown lotus, how it buzzeth and circleth again and again:

But anon it goeth inside the flower, and then it settleth down and drinketh of the honey in silence:

Even so, disciple, man talketh and argueth before he hath found his joy in the Lord, before he hath tasted of faith:

But when he findeth the nectar at last in the opened lotus of his heart, at once he settleth down to drink it, and babbleth and talketh no more.[2]

THE BARE INFINITY OF GOD'S UNCROWDED PRESENCE.

Time after time I came to Your gate with raised hands, asking for more and yet more.

You gave and gave, now in slow measure, now in sudden excess.

I took some, and some things I let drop: some lay heavy on my hands: some I made into playthings and broke them when tired; till the wrecks and the hoard of Your gifts grew immense, hiding You, and the ceaseless expectation wore my heart out.

Take, oh take—has now become my cry.

Shatter all from this beggar's bowl: put out this lamp of the importunate watcher: hold my hands, raise me from the still-gathering heap of Your gifts into the bare infinity of Your uncrowded presence.[3]

[1] H. Black, *The Adventure of being Man*, 59.

[2] P. 69. [3] P. 103.

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