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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

PERHAPS there is no body of men that stands more in need of expert and sympathetic guidance than candidates for the ministry. In the exercise of their calling after they leave college it is their solemn privilege to deal with the deep things of the soul; and every gift of mind and heart will have more than ample scope in a ministry which at every turn calls for tact, wisdom, sympathy, and knowledge alike of the ways of men and of God. Every one therefore on the threshold of such a profession, if he considers it with the reverent seriousness which is its due, will give earnest heed to whatever a master has to say.

Such a master is Principal W. M. MACGREGOR, D.D., of Trinity College, Glasgow. It is now many years since the discerning recognized in him one of the most impressive preachers in this country, and we congratulate the leaders of the Student Christian Movement on their wisdom in persuading him to write the book, entitled *For Christ and the Kingdom* (S.C.M.; 2s. net), which embodies his mature convictions, rising out of wide experience and long meditation, as to the things which it is most necessary for aspirants to the ministry to do and to know, if they are to become good ministers of Jesus Christ and His Church.

What he has to say is so suggestive and so searching that men who have had experience of the ministry would instinctively recognize its value

for themselves also, and would wish perhaps that they had had the good fortune to light upon counsel so sane and helpful at an earlier stage in their career. But it is addressed primarily to younger men who are about to embark on their glorious but perilous opportunity; and it is not without significance that he speaks of them more than once as 'lads.' In this word we detect a note of tenderness, which reminds us of the prayer of the Breton mariner, 'Lord, Thy sea is so great and my barque is so small.' He knows, as they cannot yet know, how much they will need compass and chart for so hazardous a voyage.

Apart from the solid substance of the book, one is immediately struck by its literary quality. It is not only that a vast range of literature is laid under contribution in a most apt and unobtrusive way, but that the writer has obvious command of the inevitable word. The book is studded with memorable phrases—of a preacher he says that 'through him his people touched the skies'—and every text he handles he sets in a fresh and arresting light, for example, 'He sent His word and healed them.' Also there are occasional translations and paraphrases as illuminating as they are unconventional: the teaching of Jesus was *κατ' ἐξουσίαν*, teaching *with power at the back of it*—that could hardly be bettered. And the high argument is occasionally relieved by touches of humour, as when he suggests that the so-called 'study' of some ministers can only be explained

on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, 'because no study is ever done there.'

But to come to more vital matters. The man who entered the ministry from any motive less than the highest would have a rather uncomfortable time in reading this searching book. The ministry is indeed, as Dr. MACGREGOR persuasively shows, attractive beyond any other profession to the man who is drawn to it by the opportunity it affords to serve his fellows in the things that are highest, and to inspire them with a sense of the majesty of God, the love of Christ, and the reality of things unseen; but for the man who enters it merely to prosecute a professional routine which will leave him, as he fancies, with abundant leisure and secure for him social prestige, while he remains 'a creature with heart unopened, a mere outsider in the things of God'—for such a man he has nothing but scorn.

Dr. MACGREGOR is a just, but severe, critic of many things—of some modern liturgies, for example, for being inexcusably eloquent and rhetorical; of some modern sermons, which are 'a very deluge of words; but what is said which can be got hold of?' and of lectures on homiletics, the library of which is 'nearly as unprofitable as it is immense.' This is a hard saying, but a true one. Men learn more about Pastoral Theology, Principal Denney once said, from *obiter dicta* than from lectures, and the same thing is true of Homiletics; they learn little about preaching from formal lectures, rather they learn by watching other men preach, assimilating (not imitating) what is good in the good preachers, and avoiding what is bad in the bad—for we can learn from them all—and by arranging to have their own sermons delivered under the conditions of public worship, submitted to friendly but candid criticism.

About preaching, the Principal has many arresting things to say which deserve to be inwardly digested—and not by the tyro alone. The goal of preaching, as of worship, of which it is a part, he defines as 'to make God visible'; and this, he reminds us, is not effected either by pedantry or

by polysyllables. These are infallible signs, if not that a man has mistaken his profession, at any rate that he has yet to learn the alphabet of it. It is not by any display of self that the preaching whose aim is to 'transform situations' will be accomplished. Again, preaching which is felt to be clever is only one degree less obnoxious than prayer which makes the same impression. Really great things—the Bible, for example—are too great to be clever. Simplicity and depth are quite compatible. The message of Jesus is simple, yet it is deep beyond plummet's sounding.

A by no means unnecessary note of warning is sounded in the chapter on Training. It is easily possible, Dr. MACGREGOR reminds us, for theological teachers to be ultra-academic—to forget that, while their methods and approach must be as scientific as those of other University teachers, their ultimate aim is not to turn their students into experts in theological science, but to equip them for the 'cure of souls,' to make them efficient as ministers of the Word and pastors of the people. This is not to lower the academic flag, it is but to do justice to all the high interests at stake; and when this is overlooked or forgotten or deliberately ignored, a grave injustice is done alike to the Bible, to theology, and to the student who is preparing for his life-work. It is not enough to be conversant with the history of opinion; the student must be taught to reflect on why these opinions were held, and what relation they bear to the life which men have to lead and to the burdens and the sorrows they have to bear. Where this spirit is absent, lectures, however informing, may be little more than irrelevant trifling.

There is much else in this fine book, notably the chapter on 'Profession or Vocation?' which merits notice, were there space for it. It is enough to say that it is controlled throughout by an exalted conception of the ministry, which is well fitted to inspire as well as to challenge the conscience not only of those who look forward to it, but of those who are engaged in it already.

The most significant fact in the life of our time is that the whole world is in a state of ferment, and that all forms of organized religion are suffering a grave and unaccustomed measure of contradiction. We in the West are more immediately aware of the attack made on the Christian faith, but all other religions are being similarly challenged in the name of modern science, and in the supposed interest of a new social order from which the name of God and the practice of every form of religion will be banished.

In these circumstances mere traditional beliefs are of little value, and the position of unthinking conformity is totally insecure. Every Christian man must be able to give a reason for the hope that is in him. Towards this end the Church must labour incessantly by voice and pen, 'warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom,' so that Christian people may become a fully instructed and disciplined force, and that the world in general may know what the Christian faith stands for.

The S.P.C.K. has published the first of two volumes on *The Christian Life*, edited by the Rev. Oscar HARDMAN, D.D. (12s. 6d. net). The first volume deals with Christian Standards, the second will deal with Discipline. It is an endeavour to meet the present challenge 'positively rather than negatively, persuasively rather than magisterially, by the direct presentation of Christian standards rather than by a sustained critical analysis of the views of those who oppose them, and by a detailed treatment of the Church's methods of training, which are commonly judged without knowledge.' The first volume, though lacking somewhat of the coherence which is best secured by unity of authorship, is a powerful presentation of the Christian moral ideal and of its application to various problems of individual and social life.

The challenge to the faith comes from two different quarters, from important schools of thought which deliberately assail the truths of religion, and from the thoughtless action of millions who have changed their way of life, finding themselves in a

new and bewildering world in which the old landmarks are lost to sight.

'As a general rule it may be said that the greatest minds among the scientists take no part in making this challenge. . . . Whereas at the top of the intellectual ladder there is usually either a simple faith or an open mind on the larger issues of life, at the bottom there is a widespread notion that all modern science tends to make religion impossible; and quotations are usually offered from writers not of the first rank to show that this is the case. . . . Astronomy gives us a vast picture of a bewildering universe, with no word of a Creator; geology and biology give us a vivid story of a long and unbroken procession of life, with no place for an Incarnation; and psychology is made at last to provide us with an all too plain and sobering description of man, robbed of his fancied power and destiny, robbed almost of a bare pre-eminence among the beasts that perish. What constraint can there be, then, in the appeal of the Church and the claim of the Christian religion?'

These considerations have, perhaps, little direct influence upon the multitude who have simply yielded without reflection to the changed conditions of the time. Modern inventions have broken down barriers to such an extent as to make seclusion and quiet almost an impossibility. Restlessness and discontent have been aroused, with yearnings for the excitement of ever new experiences. Novelty follows novelty, and no one is required to think or to contrive. So there comes about 'on a large scale the uncritical adoption of ready-made opinions, foolish slogans and debased forms of hero-worship, at the heavy cost of the destruction of independent, if rudimentary, thought, honest conviction, and simple dignity of life.' The War also wrought moral havoc which will leave its mark on society for many a day. It cheapened human life, it gave to lust a new freedom, and it created a strong dislike to discipline of every sort. In all this there is very little of reasoned opposition to the Church. 'Christian standards are deliberately set aside, it is true; and it is believed that there are those who are capable of making out a good case against them.'

But it is sufficient, after all, that they stand inconveniently in the way of the most obvious reaction to modern conditions ; and the line of least resistance is followed without argument. Any doubts suggested by the consciences of those who have been accustomed to pay some heed to the Church are easily silenced, as a rule, by the reflection that the great majority of people are agreed in ignoring an institution which has had its day.'

Over against all this the Christian faith stands, claiming to be the absolute religion, and offering the true way of life to men. This way of life may be summarily described as having four distinctive characteristics.

First, 'the Christian standards are the standards of a redeemed people. They rest upon Christian doctrine as their foundation, but upon that doctrine, not only as believed, but as verified in Christian experience.' It has been common to speak of Christianity as a life rather than a doctrine, and so far this is true ; but it is far from being true if it is meant to imply that the life can be lived apart from the doctrine. 'It is the gospel that comes first, not the moral demand ; for it is idle to ask men to act as Christians, unless they first believe as Christians, and have "tasted of the heavenly gift" to which their faith is meant to lead.'

Second, the Christian way of life is 'an unworldly, because a heavenly or other-worldly life. The Lord "gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us out of this present evil world." Though Christians are still in the world, they are not of it, nor must they allow themselves to be moulded by it.' It is doubtless not easy to hold the balance true. The world is ever the object of God's redeeming love, yet in the world's interest as well as in its own, the Church must ever guard against accepting the world's standards. This is the peculiar peril of our time.

The third characteristic of the Christian way of life is that 'it is a life made possible, and directed from first to last by the indwelling Spirit of God.'

The Spirit both reveals the way by convincing us of the truth on which it rests and enables us to walk in it by strengthening us with moral power. 'To pray for the Spirit, it has been truly said, is to "ask for trouble." Were the Spirit of God to come with power upon the Church to-day, so far from His proving a "Comforter" in the ordinary sense of the word, the result would be most disturbing. The Church would indeed possess a new illumination, love, and power. But the illumination would turn the present mind of the Church upside down ; the love would be an agony in view of the world as we see it ; and the power would seem so dangerous that the world would be as united in resistance to it, as it was against the Lord Himself.'

The fourth characteristic of the Christian way of life is that 'it is a life of progress and of adventure, whose end we cannot see.' We do not know what will be asked of us ere the goal is reached, but with sacrifice and suffering will come a sufficiency of grace. 'The fatal blunder is to attempt to resist evil while we shrink from full surrender to good. Christian life, like the life of our Lord Himself, is ever positive rather than negative ; it is concerned much more with what at the call of the Spirit has to be done than with what has to be avoided ; and, if all that ought to be done is done, there is no time for anything else. . . . The Christian life looks impossible till it is lived, and its sacrifices unbearable. But when it is lived, however imperfectly, Christ's yoke is found easy, and His burden light. It is not death which characterizes it, but new life through death.'

In *Studies in the Birth of the Lord* (Scribner's ; 10s. 6d. net), Dr. ELWOOD WORCESTER, Boston, offers a contribution to the vexed question of the Virgin Birth of Christ. His work is a learned, but popularly written, essay in historical criticism ; and he reviews not only the birth stories of St. Matthew and St. Luke but much other analogous material, even Zoroastrian and Buddhistic as well as Jewish and Early Christian.

We would here draw attention to the standpoint he adopts, and to the solution he offers of the historical problem created by the existence of the evangelistic narratives. These narratives, in his opinion, can hardly be regarded as historical documents, even by the firmest believers in the Virgin Birth. 'Recitals which turn on dreams sent from Heaven, on the visible appearances of angels to waking persons, and on conversations between angels and men, do not belong to that domain of literature which we are accustomed to call history.' But if not history, they inculcate doctrinal belief—'the cosmical importance of the birth of Jesus in which we fully concur'—in the form of narrative.

From this standpoint Dr. WORCESTER is entitled to suggest that the explanation of the greatness of Jesus put forward by the Evangelists took an unfortunate form, if it is true—as he is inclined to think it is—that the price we have paid for the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is the separation between the Church and the Synagogue. 'As soon as the doctrine of the Virgin Birth was publicly preached, no more Jews were converted. The movement which began so auspiciously through the preaching of the Apostles abruptly came to an end.' (But is there not exaggeration here, true as it is that the doctrine under consideration called forth the bitterest attacks from the Jews?)

As for the historical problem presented by the birth stories, which Johannes Weiss said would never be solved, Dr. WORCESTER has an interesting suggestion to offer. Of all pre-Christian parallels or possible sources of the idea of a Virgin Birth, he thinks the closest and most probable analogy is to be found in Philo's interpretation of the birth of 'children of promise.' According to Philo, Isaac was the product of a supernatural birth, although he had a human father; and other similar instances are expounded.

Following Dr. G. A. Barton, our author suggests that Apollos was the channel whereby Philo's views on Isaac, Moses, Judah, and others found their way into the circles of devout believers, whether Jewish or Christian, in Palestine during the latter part of

the first century. Was there any other man among the earliest Christians known to us who would combine in himself knowledge of Philo's writings, a perfect acquaintance with Jewish custom and with the Old Testament, a peculiar interest in and veneration of John the Baptist, and faith in Jesus as the Son of God? ———

Viewed more closely, the suggestion is that Apollos' story of John the Baptist was written while he was still a disciple of John. After he became a Christian Apollos could not regard the birth of the Lord as merely on a parity with that of the Baptist. Accordingly, a closer and more intimate association of God with Mary is spoken of than in the case of Elisabeth. Further, St. Luke, who is regarded as the earlier evangelist, would receive these birth stories from Apollos, whether in the original Greek or in a Greek translation, and rewrite them in his own style. As himself a Gentile Christian he would lack the Jewish background and the profound knowledge of the Old Testament which is revealed in the birth stories.

A supposition such as this, contends Dr. WORCESTER, avoids appeal to the gross myths of the pagan world, shows how through Philo the Jewish aversion to the notion of birth from a virgin was for a moment relaxed, accounts for the strong Hebraic colouring of the Lucan narratives, and, above all, makes it plain how the passage both tells and does not tell the story of birth from a virgin, how though Jesus was truly conceived and brought into being by the Spirit of God, yet His father's name was Joseph.

It is in these birth stories, adds Dr. WORCESTER, that the highest claims of our religion are put forward. Their truth depends not on biological facts but on a just perception of Jesus' place in the moral universe. Spiritually and religiously they are profoundly true. It is only materialism which judges the physical to be either more true or more important than the spiritual.

Liturgy and Worship, edited by the Rev. W. K. Lowther CLARKE, D.D., assisted by the Rev. Charles HARRIS, D.D. (S.P.C.K.; 15s. net), is a formidable production, extending to eight hundred and sixty-eight closely printed pages. The Literature Committee of the English Church Union had planned a Commentary on the New Prayer Book in the expectation that this would soon be the recognized Prayer Book of the Church of England, or at least a legalized alternative to the official Prayer Book. Parliament willed otherwise, and the scope of the projected work had to be revised.

The volume which has been produced is not a Commentary on the Prayer Book, but a Companion to it, and it is based mainly not on the 1928 Prayer Book but on that of 1662. Much space has been given to the Eucharist in accordance with the views of the party represented in the volume, and an attempt has been made to study Anglican problems against a background of wider knowledge. The thirty-two essays which comprise the book have been prepared under the supervision of an Editorial Board, all the writers but two being English priests.

In view of the conversations taking place between representatives of the Church of England on the one side and representatives of English Nonconformity and the Church of Scotland on the other, the publication of the volume is timely, since it gives a more or less authoritative account of the things most surely believed on questions of Liturgy and Worship in an important section of the Church of England.

If one approaches this book with the desire to find evidence for the immense difficulties to be surmounted in these conversations, one will find it in abundance. Mr. K. D. MACKENZIE, for example, writes on 'Anglican Adaptations of Some Latin Rites and Ceremonies.' Among much information of a similar kind he tells us that a few Anglican bishops have now revived the blessing of the Holy Oils in the Maundy Thursday Liturgy, but that there are two special difficulties in adapting this ceremony to the Anglican rite. One is that

the little ceremony of the bells and the organ loses all point if the 'Gloria' is sung at the end of the service: it has, therefore, to be omitted. The other difficulty is that probably all priests who wear vestments use white ones on this day; but white vestments accord very ill with the story of the Passion which is assigned as the Gospel of the day. It might be possible to have the story of the Passion sung by three deacons with violet stoles and maniples as on the earlier days of Holy Week, the rite being supplemented by a Gospel borrowed from the Missal; but for this evasion of the difficulty there is no authority.

Utterances of this kind not only emphasize, but are presumably meant to emphasize, the gulf that separates a prominent section of the Church of England not only from Nonconformity and the Presbyterians, but from a large section of the Church of England. But if we approach the volume with the much more laudable purpose of seeking common ground between different branches of the non-Roman Churches in this country, again we can find it; perhaps nowhere more so than in the Essay on 'Extempore Prayer,' by the Assistant Editor.

Dr. HARRIS points out that in the 1928 Prayer Book, at the end of the Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings, there occurs the following Rubric: 'Note, that subject to any direction which the Bishop may give, the Minister may, at his discretion, after the conclusion of Morning or Evening Prayer, or of any Service contained in this Book, offer prayer in his own words.' In the 1928 Book Morning and Evening Prayer close at the third Collect. The Bishop's 'directions' may regulate the extempore devotions of the ministers, but can hardly prohibit them. According to Dr. HARRIS, extempore prayer on a large scale is thus authorized, since any prayers offered after the third Collect depend entirely on the discretion of the minister.

As a matter of fact, the Rubric to which attention is called makes no reference to extempore prayer: what it authorizes is prayer 'in his (the minister's) own words.' Dr. HARRIS seems to

have fallen into the common error of representing the opposed alternatives as being a Liturgy and extempore prayer. But there are many Nonconformists and Presbyterians who dislike a Liturgy, but who have an aversion at least equally strong to extempore prayer. It should be an axiom that no clergyman is entitled to lead his people in their devotions without careful preparation.

The true contrast is between the exclusive use of a Liturgy compulsorily imposed by ecclesiastical authority and the at least optional use of prayers composed or selected by the clergyman himself. The edge is taken from the controversy by the consideration that it is not the minister alone but the worshippers who pray, and that in neither case are the worshippers responsible for the contents of the prayers or the language in which they are expressed.

The advantages claimed for a Liturgy are solid and substantial. Where a Liturgy is used, there is some guarantee that the great subjects which must ever be the burden of the prayers of the Church are kept in mind. Moreover, in the prayers of a Liturgy, and not least in their language, we feel we have a bond between the Church of our day and the saints of the past.

The prayers in a Liturgy are usually couched in choice diction (though the Editor refers to the complaint that the new prayers 'do not read well'), and for many there is a peculiar attraction in the thought that all over the world the same prayers are ascending to God from devout worshippers. Under a Liturgy, also, the worshipper is protected from 'shocks' due to the idiosyncrasies of clergymen, their intellectual incapacity or spiritual immaturity. Probably no Nonconformist Church would like to be held responsible for all the prayers offered by its clergy during the War.

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 From the purely professional point of view there is the consideration that dependence on a Liturgy immensely simplifies the work of the clergy, who, if they so choose, need not give a moment's preparation to the work of leading the worshippers in

their prayers. One would hesitate, however, to claim that this is necessarily an advantage from the point of view either of the minister or of the laity. Indeed, one criticism urged against a Liturgy is that it implies a distrust of the clergy, which is resented in those churches that insist on a high standard of education and a long period of preparation for their ministers.

There is another difficulty about the use of a Liturgy. The non-liturgical churches are less anxious that the prayers of their people should be beautiful, dignified, and historical than that they should be *prayers*. But the repetition of familiar prayer formulæ, such as the Lord's Prayer, taken at the speed at which they are usually taken, and without pauses as is the custom, is no more prayer than is the product of a Buddhist prayer-wheel. To turn such recitations into prayers would, in the circumstances, be all but a psychological impossibility.

Another serious objection to a Liturgy is the difficulty of adapting fixed forms of prayer to the needs of a changing world. It was in 1907 that Convocation began to consider revision of the Prayer Book; but it was not till the Great War that it became manifest to all that the 1662 Book was out of date. The Burial Office, for example, needed for tens of thousands, could not be used as it stood. Of the forty-five Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings in the 1928 Revision, the late Dr. Brightman claims that only five can be called really new. These are the Prayers for the British Empire, for the Church Assembly, for the League of Nations, for Sunday Schools, and for Industrial Peace. Mr. Milner-White, who has constantly used the new Occasional Prayers in church, finds them lacking in provision for modern need and in distinction of form and expression. It is a very grave charge against any system of Church prayer that it can respond to new needs, however great, only by the aid of cumbrous machinery which, when it moves at all, moves with infinite leisure and sometimes with unsatisfactory results.

While there are fundamental human needs that

are common and abide, there are others, equally demanding prayer, that vary not only from age to age but almost from parish to parish. Moreover, those with an acute sense of religious appropriateness would urge that the form to be taken by group prayer depends to some extent on the environment, social and architectural. A form of words that would be entirely congruous to the large body of worshippers in a Cathedral may border on the absurd as expressing the aspirations of a small group of all but illiterate villagers.



George Borrow tells in 'Wild Wales' a curious adventure which happened to him near Chester. He fell in with some wandering tinkers who insisted on taking him for a minister and talking to him about their souls. At the end of the conversation they said: 'O Sir, give us comfort in some shape or other. Give us God!' Borrow could do nothing but fling some money to them and say: 'Lord have mercy on you,' and depart. 'We do not want your money, Sir,' a woman screamed after him. 'We have plenty of money. Give us God!' This story is told by Canon Guy ROGERS in the first chapter of *Christ in the Changing World*, a chapter that strikes a new note.



This is the cry of the world to-day, Canon ROGERS says. It is a *demand*. We have heard much of the 'wistful' search for truth, the 'wistful' turning to God, but there is nothing wistful about the ordinary man to-day. God is for him the alternative to chaos. The gap in his thinking, in his standard of conduct, in his relationship with others, needs to be filled by God. 'The man I am thinking of does not want to be handled with kid gloves, nor does he want to be prepared for the shock of receiving God. The Church's tentative and diplomatic approaches to him on the possibility of accepting God surprise him. He is all for God if he can find Him. Give us God if you can and be quick about it.'



Our attitude is altogether too timid and apologetic. The great need of to-day is not interpreta-

tion of God but proclamation of Him. We think the modern man is not worrying about his sins, and we hasten to explain that God is not worrying either, only to find that the burden of the world's sin is pressing more heavily than ever upon the conscience of mankind. We fancy that miracles are out of date, and prepare people for living in a 'closed' universe, only to discover from science that it is more open than ever before. Imagining that the life of triumphant faith in Christ lived by a Hudson Taylor is no longer possible under modern conditions, we set ourselves to study the limits under which faith may safely be applied, and then we are startled out of our complacency by the life-story of Kagawa of Japan.



Let us postpone our policy of adjustment and proclaim a living faith in a living God. Changes of interpretation are as variable as fashion in women's clothes. We are at present wearing a costume made by Karl Barth, which is uncommonly like one of the early Victorian modes. There is abundant drapery, and the form is well concealed! Within the Church the pendulum swings backwards and forwards, and the presentation of the Faith varies according to the mode of scientific thought. *But this is a declaratory moment in the world's history.* Every one who has something to give must give it. Adjustment and reconstruction will come (*must* come) later. But the note of to-day is urgency. The old war weariness is gone. Humanity is on the march again. And whenever man turns there is a gap to be filled.



This is one of the supreme arguments for the Christian Faith—that it fills the gap. If you read Walter Lippman's 'Preface to *Morals*' you may well feel a chill creeping round your heart until you come to his constructive part, and find what is to take the place of the God whom you have learned to know in Christ. The substitutes for God are so utterly inadequate to the strain that life puts on them. The gap between man's moral capacity and his idealism can never be filled in that way. The substitutes for God do not work in the moral sphere. There can be no such thing as ethics without a foundation in faith. There is

no reason for goodness but that it has behind it the moral imperative.

There never was a time when faith had more reason to be sure and aggressive than it has to-day. It is pathetic to see people waiting for a scientist's nod before daring to achieve a confident faith in the unseen. The swing back from distrust and neglect of science to abject dependence on it for prescribing the limits of faith has gone too far. Such an attitude is not welcomed by the scientist. He works steadily in his own sphere, but he has no desire to set any limits to the spiritual sphere. The new note in science is that of genuine spiritual humility. Within the region of the moral and spiritual life a certainty can be reached which science is prepared neither to reject nor to affirm, but with which, if the phrase be possible, it finds itself increasingly in sympathy.

What the world wants is testimony. It is waiting for those who have found God real to themselves, who come not to argue but to witness. It is remarkable how successful are the religious books which make simple testimony their main theme. Here is a list of 'best sellers': *What I Owe to Christ*, by C. F. ANDREWS; *What Christ Means to*

Me, by Sir Wilfred GRENFELL; *Christ at the Round Table*, by Stanley JONES; and *God in the Slums*, by Hugh REDWOOD. The popularity of books like these means that people want to find the secret of how to reach God for themselves. Gone is misgiving. Gone is the old inferiority complex. Gone is the old emphasis on restatement and adjustment. Christianity has found itself. It is rejoicing in the exuberance of its own life.

Can we break through the spiritual lethargy which has crept over us partly as the result of a long accepted minimizing view of Christianity, and partly through the policy of always waiting for fuller justification for putting our faith to the venture? We not only need to capture the old spirit of confidence, we have abundant reason for possessing it. And we cannot deprive the world of what it may receive through us. The cry 'Give us God' is in our ears. We hear it in the markets. We hear it behind international conferences which deal with the remaking of the world. Beneath the conversation of ordinary men there flows an undercurrent of serious thought, sometimes of apocalyptic hope. And what we have got we must give; we who have found God in Christ must offer God to the people.

Is God at Work?

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND A. A. DAVID, D.D., BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL.

IN the *Listener* of October 29th, 1930, Professor Malinowski, speaking 'not as a specialist, but simply as a thinking and feeling man,' has said:

'Personally I am an agnostic. I am not able, that is, to deny the existence of God: nor would I be inclined to do so, still less to maintain that such a belief is not necessary. I also fervently hope that there is a survival after death, and I deeply desire to obtain some certainty on this matter. But with all that I am unable to accept any positive religion—Christian or otherwise. I cannot positively

believe in Providence in any sense of the word, and I have no conviction of personal immortality.

'Thus, as you see, I profoundly differ from the confident rationalist or disbeliever of the past generation or two. We all know the story of La Place and the discussion which he had with Napoleon the First about his system of Celestial Mechanics. The Emperor asked him, "What place have you given to God in your system?" "Sire," was the answer, "this is an hypothesis of which I have never felt the need." It is the proud answer of a