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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

It might be difficult to offer a definition of Christianity which would satisfy everybody, but it is, or it should be, easy enough, as a rule, to recognize a real Christian when we see him. Again, it might be difficult enough to say what is meant by a great Christian: this sonorous phrase might mean a Christian conspicuous for the service he has rendered to the Church or to society, or one who, though little in the public eye, is conspicuous for the qualities essential to Christian character. However we define the term, there can be no doubt that the forty men and women whose careers and characters are so vividly sketched by sympathetic draughtsmen in the book of six hundred and thirty-two pages entitled *Great Christians*, and recently published by Ivor Nicholson & Watson at the astonishingly low price of 8s. 6d. net, are altogether worthy of the name. The chief exception, to which the editor himself, Mr. R. S. Forman, calls attention, is Hale White, better known as Mark Rutherford; but as he hints, that brooding, wistful spirit, with his passionate love of truth and goodness, is perhaps no real exception after all.

In such a collection there inevitably are, as the editor admits, many notable absentees. One might have desiderated, for example, a sketch of General Gordon; and the proportion allotted to Scotland is curiously small. A Scot would have welcomed a sympathetic interpretation, let us say, of Alexander Whyte or Henry Drummond. But the fare set before us here in this attractive volume is so ample and diversified that only a churl could complain. Here, side by side, is a goodly company representing many professions and denominations—Episcopalians, High Church and Low Church, Roman Catholics, Nonconformists, preachers, missionaries, lawyers, social workers, college dons, etc., and women are represented by Catherine Booth, Josephine Butler, Lily Dougall, Margaret Macdonald, and Christina Rossetti. From such a galaxy of noble Christian men and women one gets a fresh impression of the meaning and the vitality of the 'Holy Catholic Church.' And all the more that there is frequent reference to friendly intercourse between members of different communions; indeed, they sometimes come closer to one another than members of the same communion. Bishop Westcott, we are told, for example, did not understand Father Dolling; but over against that we can set the friendship of R. W. Dale for Canon O'Sullivan, the Roman Catholic Vicar-General of the Diocese of Birmingham, or that of Baron von Hügel for Protestants like Eucken and Troeltsch.

It is a distinct advantage that the sketches are not arranged according to denominational affinities. The order is alphabetical—which yields the interesting and significant result that personalities so disparate as R. W. Dale, Father Dolling, and Lily Dougall appear side by side; but different as they are, they are one in devotion to their common Lord. Besides, there are affinities in unsuspected

places. Nobody, for example, could accuse Hugh Price Hughes of being a ritualist; yet we are told that, though an ardent Free Churchman, he did not sympathize with the negative attitude of many of his co-religionists towards the Sacraments and all that is best in Catholicism. And the mention of the Sacraments recalls a fine thought of Forbes Robinson, who once wrote to a friend: 'Oh, if bread and wine and water are capable of being transformed into the highest means of grace and hopes of glory, may not living, human, breathing persons—may not those I love—be sacraments as well?'

The various sketches are, for the most part, a skilful blend of biographical interest and delineation of character. It is amusing to learn that Joseph Parker kept the household accounts, and it is interesting to know that Sir Edward Clarke wrote his own obituary notice for 'The Times,' probably the only man who ever did so. One is intrigued by the contrast between Hugh Price Hughes, who assumed that his friends regularly read the 'Methodist Times,' and Baron von Hügel's acceptance of Abbé Huvelin's counsel 'never to read religious periodicals; they will throw you into all kinds of temptations, they will do you untold harm.' Sometimes, too, the biographical touches let us into the great secret, as when in one sublime moment the conviction dawned upon Dale that Christ was alive.

The sketches are executed with ability, sympathy, and candour. The editor has succeeded in securing writers with an inner understanding of the character they delineate. Where all is so good, it is invidious to select; but we cannot refrain from calling special attention to Edward SHILLITO's account of Christina Rossetti, H. D. A. MAJOR's of Father Tyrrell, and Ernest H. JEFFS' of Hale White. Thoroughly in love as the writers are with their subject, they are not uncritical. Angus WATSON, while noting Parker's deep humility, does not disguise his 'profound egoism,' and J. H. B. MASTERMAN admits that Bishop Gore 'sometimes seemed a little too unwilling to reconsider a judgment once formed.'

This fine candour helps us to feel that, great as they were, those Christians were subject to moods of depression and discouragement which lesser men know only too well. Miss Rossetti, for example, with her imminent sense of unworthiness and apprehension, sometimes seemed to her friends 'unreasonably anxious.' The last three years of Parker's ministry were 'a weary stretch on the long journey.' While of Spurgeon we are told that 'towards the end of his life the tone grows more sombre,' and the belief that the Churches were on the 'down grade' 'helped to shorten his life.' Even the great Christians, it appears, find it difficult to keep their footing on the heights all the time.

Peculiarly interesting is the attitude of the various persons here described to modern thought: it ranges all the way from fear to bold and glad acceptance. According to Donald HANKEY, there are theologians who do little to encourage thought. Some of his teachers, he tells us, read, not to find out the truth, but to substantiate their preconceived ideas, and, as most of the hearers imbibed with docility whatever they were told, the result was deplorable. This, of course, is far from being universally true. Bishop Gore, for example, claims that he could never be otherwise than a free-thinker, though he 'disapproved altogether of the Modernism that claimed to interpret the creeds in what seemed to him an unnatural sense.'

Of the famous 'Cambridge Three'—Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort—it is well said that 'they held that the door of enquiry should not be closed by the hand of authority.' To a Protestant this is just what the Roman Catholic Church seems to do, as one may reasonably infer from the masterly account of the career of Father Tyrrell. Lord Acton, whose 'conscientious maintenance of the rightful and necessary liberty of thought' is worthy of all admiration, nevertheless confesses that 'it had never occurred to him to doubt any single dogma of his Church'; and von Hügel, who claims that 'the old Church possesses in full the knowledge and the aids to *spirituality*,' yet frankly admits that 'it is much less strong as regards the needs, rights, and duties of the mental life.' But

hostility to Modernism is not confined to the Roman Catholic Church. Spurgeon, we are told, was impatient with what he called 'Modern Thought,' which he regarded as a betrayal of the gospel.

Considered as a whole, the book is a spiritual tonic. Again and again emerges a wholesome emphasis on the indefeasible importance of prayer. Of one college don we read that for many an hour of his life he strove with God throughout the night for those he loved. Paton, of Nottingham, set apart the first day of each month for self-examination, prayer, and devotional reading, and coldness in prayer was the chief accusation which the sensitive conscience of F. J. Chavasse, while still a young man, brought against himself. It is refreshing to note how those lives, rooted in prayer, affected the public life of the country: the social history of England could not be adequately written without some reference to Josephine Butler, Father Dolling, and many another Christian of the like stamp.

We have touched only the fringe of this stimulating book, whose biographical sketches are practically all as informing and vital as those we have referred to. We shall conclude with an extract from a speech of Sir Edward CLARKE, which gathers up the spirit of the book. 'We have heard a great deal—I think too much—of the Catholic revival. Is it not time that there was something said of a Christian revival, a revival that would awaken us to a sense of our duty, our influence, and our capacity, and help us to make the Church of England to which we belong'—and we may add, all the Churches of the land—'a more potent factor in all the moral and social movements that affect our country?'

In his recent work on *The New Psychology and Religious Experience*, Principal T. H. HUGHES considers the relation of the New Psychologists to Christianity. He finds that here the disciples have gone further than the masters. For example, Professor Berguer of Geneva has sought to apply the principles of the New Psychology to the Life of Christ. He regards that life as affirming and demonstrating the sublimation of the human instincts towards the Divine. Nor is there reference to any force or power outside the personality of Christ.

Freud has little to say on religion and Christianity. In his work, 'Totem and Taboo,' he betrays an imperfect and distorted apprehension of what is meant by the Christian redemption and the Christian Eucharist. In them, by a strange mental process, he finds confirmation of his theory that the totem feasts are really efforts to atone for the murder of the father by the sons, as the result of an Oedipus Complex situation.

Throughout Freud's teaching, however, there is a pessimistic strain altogether alien to Christianity. His is a dark view of human nature, in its constitution and tendencies, with the 'Unconscious' as a kind of devil's cauldron, exhaling evil vapours. Dark also is his view of human destiny. Over all is the iron necessity of the instinctive urges, which make towards death, and the grave is the welcome end of human effort and striving.

When we turn to Yung we find ourselves in a different atmosphere. There are genuinely optimistic elements in his teaching as well as a keen sense of the meaning of some of the primary Christian facts. We can here take note of only one or two of the points in Dr. HUGHES's exposition. Incidentally we remark that his exposition in this and other places of his book might be clearer and more logical; it suffers also from the unconscionable length of some of the paragraphs.

Yung bears witness to the power and purity of Christian morality, and declares that if we discard Christianity and therewith Christian morality we shall be faced with the ancient problem of licentiousness. And Christianity is not only a negative and restraining power, it has come with an emancipating word to the lower classes of society and so made a collective culture possible. It was through the Christian principle of brotherly love that this collective culture came about; and this principle

is supremely exemplified in the sacrifice of the Son of God. We must not assume, however, that Yung's interpretation of the meaning of sacrifice is adequate from the full Christian point of view. It is enough to notice that he regards Jesus as a mythical figure.

On some points Yung is definitely critical of Christianity. Indeed, the logic of the position taken by Yung and the New Psychologists in general is subversive of the Christian gospel, and the tendency of this whole movement of thought is opposed to the basal truths and principles of the Christian faith. There is to these thinkers no God to initiate the movement of deliverance; no sin—except physical and psychic maladaptation—from which redemption is necessary; no place for, or need of, the Spirit of God as man's indweller and helper. The forces needed for redemption and for the ennobling of life are to be found within man, and the dynamic for moral and spiritual progress lies in the instinctive impulses and the unconscious elements of human nature. This is in reality the negation of the essentially Christian position, and although the New Psychology has much to teach us, it constitutes a real menace to Christianity.

There are few laymen more highly esteemed to-day in religious circles than the Master of Balliol, Dr. A. D. LINDSAY. His great ability, his wide influence, and his known sympathy with the Christian Tradition would give him a hearing at any time. And when he writes on such a live and timely subject as *Christianity and Economics*, the title of his new book (Macmillan; 5s. net), it is certain that he will have something of value for the Churches to ponder. These lectures, which were delivered at Oxford and in America, are frankly based on the religion of the Incarnation, though that is not discussed at any length. Dr. LINDSAY makes it quite clear, however, that he has in mind all through the truths about the essential nature of God, and of man, which are embodied in the doctrine of the Incarnation.

One of the outstanding facts in connexion with this subject is the secularization of political and economic thought in modern times. This has come about as a reaction against the 'mediæval synthesis' in which political thought and action were totally subordinated to the religious or ecclesiastical power. This revolt found extreme expression in Machiavelli. But, curiously enough, it has also had embodiment in 'other-worldly' theories and systems like German quietism and some forms of evangelistic fervour. It is enshrined in many of our hymns (where the world is a 'desert drear'), and it is found at the present day in connexion with the teaching of Karl Barth. If rumour is correct as to the contents of his new pamphlet, which has not yet reached us, his position is very much this: 'Hitler can do what he likes in politics. I have nothing to do with politics. But when he touches the ark of God, I say "No."'

This, however, is not really expressive of the modern religious attitude. Speaking generally, there has been a real rapprochement between politics and religion, and what is needed is a similar co-operation between religion and economics. Economics is just a system of exchanges, and the error into which we have fallen is to have produced an economic system without moral elements. We must consider the moral quality of the services we are asked to render in these exchanges; for example, the sale of cocaine or sweated goods. We have forgotten this task. Our system exhibits the tragic combination of scientific production and moral failure. And also the fact that we must live, and depend on the economic system for our livelihood, tends to make this system an end instead of a means, and to loosen the sense of personal responsibility for what is happening in 'business.'

And at this point a consideration of great importance emerges. In exchange we treat each other as means. And we are means, but not only means. We are ends also. And this is what the modern economic organization has obscured. The real objection to the industrial system is that men are treated as cogs in the machine. In a remarkable German book on the mind of the Marxian worker

the authoress details a conversation with a lithographic printer. The man described his certain future. After a life of industry, he would be beyond skilled work and would sink down into the ranks of unskilled labour. 'But what is the use of telling these things to you?' he said. 'People like you cannot understand.' When she explained that her family had cast her off and that she also was one of the disinherited, his eyes flashed and he gripped her hand, saying, 'Then we speak a common language—Dann verstehen Sie uns.'

This is the real charge against the economic system. Our failure to understand it is due to the gulf between the two sections, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This is the real sore, and we must try to realize it. We are all familiar with the employer's position. But what the workers feel is this: 'We are only pawns. We have no security. When *your* risks fail, *we* suffer. The real cost of the game falls on us. And in the game we are only things with which you plan, parts of the machinery. You talk to us of the glories of individual enterprise, but that is the last thing your machine wants of us. And finally, your system is one of organisation and discipline in which you are free while we are slaves who have to submit to be ordered about. And so we have given up the idea of joining in your game. We have devoted ourselves to collective bargaining, by means of which we can stand together and have some say as to the conditions under which we shall be used. Only this solidarity has given us any sort of status in the community.'

It is not merely a question of wages with the working class. Wages have increased. It is the loss of status, of personal dignity. In commerce there is no government. But in industry there is, and there are therefore command and obedience. Money relations are impersonal relations. But, where personal relations enter, there must be sympathy and co-operation. In so far as capitalism has tried to find a basis for the government of men in economic relations alone, making men submit to discipline and order from fear of dismissal, it has based government on a principle which has never been successful and has always provoked bitterness. The criticisms which are often levelled against the present system have little substance. Competition, for example, is perfectly sound if properly regulated. And profit-making has as little to be said against it. The real criticism that is well-founded is that our economic system tends to make it easy to treat men as means. This creates bitter feeling and splits society into two camps.

We must therefore resist the idea of economic determinism, that the present economic situation is necessary, and that nothing can be done about it. Christianity is a religion of redemption, and therefore of hope that man's situation can be bettered. The essential point to hold by is that the economic framework is necessary to the good life but is not the good life itself. We ought always to be better than the system (whatever the system be), and we ought to be always bettering the system itself. The Wesleyan revival is a good example of how religion can change the system, and this points the way for the Church to-day. She ought to set her mind on quality in life, and especially the care of human personality. The Church cannot furnish specific economic solution, but she can awaken men's conscience of right and duty to others. And this is perhaps the greatest service that can be offered to-day for the bringing about of a better state of things.

Astronomy and the New Physics seem to be taking the place in popular thought which the theory of Evolution held in the nineteenth century. We hear more to-day of the birth of stars than of the origin of species, and instead of the results of natural selection we are bidden ponder the second law of thermodynamics.

In these circumstances Dean INGE'S new book on *God and the Astronomers* (Longmans; 12s. 6d. net) is assured of a wide circulation. It has a taking title and an attractive, star-spangled cover, but it should be understood that there is less in it about the astronomers than one might naturally expect. It is in the main an exposition of Christian philo-

sophy, in the interpretation of which Dean INGE is a devoted follower of Plotinus. At the same time he does bring this to bear very incisively upon certain theories of the cosmos which have recently been made popular through the writings of such astronomers as Jeans and Eddington.

It is a curious thing to note how the mind of each generation tends to swing irresistibly in a certain direction, to fall under the power of a single dominant idea, and yield to its sway regardless of other ideas which qualify or even contradict it. The popular mind seems constitutionally incapable of maintaining itself in due equilibrium in the world of thought, but must needs plunge heavily to the one side or the other. An instance of this in theology is to be found in the doctrine of the Godhead, where first the sovereignty and now the love of God have been taught in a one-sided way, often in complete forgetfulness of the other half of the full-orbed truth.

Dean INGE calls attention to an astonishing example of this in the scientific thought of the nineteenth century. It lies in the fact that, while the blessed word 'evolution' was giving rise to a glowing optimisn and the most boundless hopes for the human race, the second law of thermodynamics was perfectly well known but was completely ignored in its philosophic implications, and is only now being taken full account of in our more pessimistic and disillusioned age.

What is the second law of thermodynamics? Following upon the first law, which declares that heat and energy are one, it affirms that all the energy in the universe is becoming less and less available, is being dissipated by a process which cannot be reversed, so that the doom of the whole physical universe is sealed. In the end all must inevitably be reduced to one dead level without life or motion. All civilizations, all human achievements, will perish in one common grave. The human race may climb high, but, to use Sir James Jeans's simile, its effort will be as unavailing as that of a sailor who climbs to the masthead in a sinking ship.

When one thinks of it, 'it is strange that this depressing law was known at the time when Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, and a host of others were indulging in exultant pæans about the ineluctable law of progress, which was destined beyond a peradventure, to lead the human race onward to a condition of absolute perfection.' The only explanation is that it did not fit in with the optimistic mood of that time, whereas to-day, in a world whose mood has profoundly changed and is more inclined to pessimism, this 'depressing law' finds a ready acceptance. It is a reminder to us of how deeply our thoughts are ever coloured by our feelings, and a warning not to overlook or reject those elements of truth which are not in harmony with the mood of the hour.

Dean INGE sets down in his own incisive way the objections which are now being widely felt in regard to the optimistic evolutionism of the nineteenth century. The term was left undefined, and came to be used in all sorts of illegitimate ways. It became a mere catchword, 'brought in to adorn pretentious and thoughtless writing on every subject.' All change is not progress; there may be movement with no improvement, but, on the contrary, with degeneration. Evolution contains no guarantee of progress as that is humanly understood. In any case the movement which we call biological evolution can only be local and temporary. It is embraced within the wider, downward sweep of the physical universe which is turning suns and stars to cinders, and carrying all created things to a common grave. The human race may have yet a long tenure of this little planet, but what does that avail when sooner or later the whole will come to ruin?

In the heavy disillusioned mood of our time these thoughts are taking a firm grip and tending to deepen the prevailing pessimism and moral indifference. 'Relativity' is beginning to assume the place in popular speech once occupied by 'evolution,' and the human mind is in danger of being hag-ridden by the second law of thermodynamics. But to this, again, there are powerful objections from the purely physical point of view.

If the world is running down, it must somehow at the beginning have been wound up. It must have begun in a state of higher potency than it ever afterwards possessed, 'started off with a bang,' as Eddington phrases it. Now this is from the physical point of view infinitely improbable. Some have imagined that the astronomers to-day are preaching the theistic doctrine of creation, but that is not so. Eddington says, 'Scientists and theologians must regard as somewhat crude the naïve theological doctrine which (suitably disguised) is found in every text-book of thermodynamics, namely, that some billions of years ago God wound up the material universe and has left it to chance ever since. This should be regarded as a working hypothesis rather than a declaration of faith. It is one of those conclusions from which we can see no logical escape—only it suffers from the drawback that it is incredible.'

To all this Dean INGE opposes what he calls 'the Great Tradition in Christian Philosophy.' This philosophy may be said, in a word, to rest upon the eternal values. 'The appreciation of value is as integral a part of our experience as the judgments which are based on sense-perception, and in consequence it must be accepted among the data upon which our view of reality must be founded.' Indeed, value and reality are ultimately identical; existence apart from value is an abstraction. This means that Goodness, Truth, and Beauty are ultimately real. They have a universal quality; they are ends in themselves; 'they satisfy, delight, and elevate us, so that when we have been in contact with them we feel that we have found our highest or deepest selves.' These are facts which philosophy, even a philosophy of science, must take account of.

And these values imply an eternal world, a world which transcends, while it may embrace, this world of time and space. Christian philosophy has refused to entangle God and man in the physical and temporal world-process. The 'Yonder' has always been firmly held in contrast to the 'Here and Now.' In so far as we are in touch with the ultimate values we are what St. Paul calls spiritual persons, citizens of the heavenly city, 'whose builder and maker is God.' And, thus, we are no mere items in the space-time continuum. 'Our citizenship is in heaven, in a spaceless and timeless world in which all the intrinsic or ultimate values are both actual and active. In this higher world we find God and our own eternity.'

This is the only perfectly real world. No Christian thinker has ever dreamed of this world as lasting for ever, or of man's tenure of the earth as permanent. On the contrary, the passing away of the heavens and the earth which now are is an accepted doctrine of the faith. Yet this present scheme of things is more than a shadow of the real, as Plato thought. It is rather to be conceived as a sacrament. 'A sacrament is something which, in being what it is, means something more, something universal, permanent, and spiritual. . . . In this sense earth is a shadow of heaven, but the shadow is a true shadow, as the substance is a true substance.'

The Message of the Epistles.

Colossians.

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I. PROFESSOR ADOLF DEISSMANN in his volume, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History*, remarks: 'The results of Paul's contemplation flow in the clearest stream in the letter to the Colossians and the nearly akin letter to the Laodiceans (Ephesians so-called). There were no special problems of church life which had to be discussed in these two letters; and so Paul could here express