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Contributions and Comments.

Acts xi. 20.

THIS is an almost unique instance of the restoration of the *Textus Receptus* by Westcott and Hort, after it had been rejected by practically all modern editors and scholars. Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, Wordsworth, Alford, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Scrivener, and the English Revisers; and commentators beyond number—an imposing array of critics and scholars of all schools to cite in support of any reading! The fact remains, however, that there is a heavy preponderance of manuscript authority in favour of the *Textus Receptus*.

I suggest that the MSS are right, and that modern editors (except Westcott and Hort) are wrong. The previous verse had described how the disciples who were scattered abroad by the persecution that arose on the death of St. Stephen 'spoke the word to none, save only to Jews.' Then v.²⁰ adds, 'Some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, when they came to Antioch, ἐλάλουν [καὶ] πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς, εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν.'

Ἑλληνιστάς is the reading of nearly all known MSS—BEHLP, and apparently all the cursives but one. But the Hellenists or Grecians were Jews. They differed from other Jews, not in race or descent, but simply in language, speaking Greek instead of Hebrew or Aramaic. Such Greek-speaking Jews had been recognized from the very first (Ac 2⁵ 6¹). It seems pointless to mention their special evangelization several years later. Hence editors and commentators prefer to read Ἑλληνας

on the very precarious authority of AD and one cursive. [*Codex Sinaiticus* strangely reads εὐαγγελιστάς—which though clearly impossible itself, must be regarded as confirming the sister manuscript *Vaticanus* and the *Textus Receptus*.] But it is not on the frail basis of such slight evidence that editors rely. In their view the internal evidence of the sense of the passage must be the deciding factor. Are they right; or are they all mistaken?

My suggestion is that the editors have put a wrong interpretation on the passage, and the direct evidence of the MSS (here as elsewhere) should prevail. The reference is not at the moment to an extension of missionary enterprise, but to the adoption of a new form of evangelization. Surely the very word εὐαγγελιζόμενοι—'gospelizing'—supplies the key to the passage. These men were not only preachers, but catechists and teachers. The most important part of a catechist's work was to teach gospel lessons learnt by heart. The earliest of such lessons were probably St. Matthew's collection of 'Logia' in Hebrew or Aramaic. But now at Antioch, for the first time apparently, the gospel lessons were given and learnt in Greek. This verse, I suggest, is an account of the very beginning of the Synoptic Gospels as we know them now. No matter whether we speak of the Triple Tradition, or Q, or *Ur-Marcus*, or anything else, this is St. Luke's account of the rise of the original Greek Gospel. The date is about A.D. 40.

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Entre Nous.

A Modern Mystic.

Rufus M. Jones has just completed forty years as Lecturer and Professor in the Faculty of Philosophy at Haverford College, Pennsylvania. Recently he published an admirable history of the college, to celebrate its centenary. Now in a volume entitled *The Trail of Life in the Middle Years* (Macmillan; 8s. 6d. net), he gives some account of his own work during the pre-war period, and re-examines and restates the fundamental convictions which have inspired his work. As philosopher and psychologist,

editor and author, teacher and preacher, he has exercised a unique ministry as an apostle of light and love. Few modern writers on the essentials of religion can compare with him for clearness of expression, for steady persistent witness to truth, for charity in judgment, and for persuasive power. His influence has grown with the years and is the reward of his loyal adhesion to lines of service adopted in 1893.

Outwardly the life of a university teacher is apt to be sheltered and uneventful. Yet it presents its

own difficulties and opportunities. Professor Sorley suggests somewhere that the virtue of temperance may be more concerned with the use of one's tongue and pen, as we establish and can take for granted control of our natural appetites. When James Nayler spoke of a spirit which 'takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind,' he was thinking first and foremost of patience under physical suffering and of refraining from physical violence. The modern man must discover the meaning of 'not with contention' in the realm of intellectual discussion. Rufus Jones thus reinterprets or reapplies James Nayler's words. 'One difficulty about controversies is that the one-sided contentions in the controversy are likely to make each party more deeply entrenched than before in its own position. Every argument proposed on one side suggests a counter-argument on the other side. The mind is all the time occupied, not with the discovery of truth but with a way to answer and combat the argument of the opponent. There are many kinds of violence besides the violence of cannon, shot and shell, and one age-old form of violence is that of trying to force religious ideas upon unwilling minds and to compel a mind to arrive at a conclusion without having had the educational steps that make the conclusion *real*. I was resolved to carry the ideals of *non-violence* into all my methods of presenting religion, and that meant that every step of advance must be one of understanding.' In the same way, as editor of a Friends' weekly, he rediscovered the meaning of loving one's enemies. 'Through the attacks of my critics I discovered a new meaning in the words of Jesus, "Love your enemies." These attackers of mine rendered me an invaluable service. They kept me humble. They compelled me to think more clearly and to look more deeply into every side and aspect of the problems with which I was dealing, and they taught me how multiform human minds are, how varied are human needs, and how important it is to respect the heart-beat of the man who does not belong to one's own school of thought. I should have come through these years a much narrower man if I had not learned through difficult experiences to love my enemies—who dared to tell me that there were other sides to the truths I was trying to interpret.' This teachableness and this resolute endeavour to get alongside other people undermine the party-spirit, which is so harmful in Church and State. Rufus Jones has promoted harmony and understanding, and yet he has done this without fostering ambiguity or compromise.

The work he has accomplished during the past forty years has often been carried through amid physical handicaps. One striking passage relates, not a cure for sleeplessness, but the possibility of refreshment through faith which may prevent insomnia producing the nervous breakdown so often associated with it. 'I fortunately discovered somewhere along my track the important secret that if one lies with muscles completely relaxed, with mind calm and serene, with spirit free from worry or fidgets, and with life quietly committed to the Eternal Love that is underneath, the effect is just as restorative as sleep is. That shepherd Psalmist was speaking wisdom when he said, "Thou restorest my soul."

'The usual trouble with us is that we set up a great worry when we begin to realize that sleep is not coming to us. We say to ourselves: "What shall I do, with all the work and strain of to-morrow coming on, and no sleep to prepare me for it! Oh, I shall be a wreck! Dear me, dear me, here it is two o'clock and not a wink yet!" Psychologically that state of mind, like an inferiority complex, defeats the very end in view. The strain, the tension, the anxiety keep the angel of sleep from perching on the eyelids. One prays frantically, "Dear God, give me sleep," and then, at least by the worried state of mind, says, "but I know it will not come!" And it doesn't. It may not come even with peace and expectation, but something just as good as sleep will come with that serene state of mind, for, as I have said, composure and relaxation bring restoration and preparation for tasks, even if physiological sleep is absent. How far this serenity and this calm are to be thought of as a religious feature and how far they are merely psychological, I leave for the experts to say. I only know that my faith in infinite Love and my conviction that I live in an environment of Spiritual Reality immensely helps me to attain the serenity and gives me an expectation of restoration.'

The mystical religion which Rufus Jones expounds and exemplifies relies very little on ecstasy and vision. A life of trust, with an ever-expanding interest in one's fellows and an ever-deepening joy in God, is the mark of a mystic. Visions and abnormal experiences are not the mystic's essentials. Spontaneity and vividness are not in themselves proofs that suggestions with these characteristics come from God. Rufus Jones relates one such abnormal experience of his own, an experience of audition, in which as he laid down on his desk the manuscript of an address he had just completed, he heard as it were an outward voice say to him,

'But thou wilt never give it.' He was actually laid low with an acute attack of ptomaine poisoning at his host's in Boston where he was announced to speak, but he resolved to carry out his engagement. With medical assistance he was just able to do it. 'The "audition" was due, I think, not to a special divine initiation, but to a subconscious morbid impulse of a tired man.' That may not be a final judgment, but it illustrates the wise caution of the mature Christian. Throughout the book Rufus Jones stresses constant features of human nature and experience, and if some may feel that his teaching takes too little account of the sinful and the irrational elements in men and perhaps in the world, yet all must respond to the enlightening, health-giving inspiration of his message. The good in one is constantly raised up.

Building One's Faith.

'I aimed in my work to make my readers and my hearers understand that the theological systems to which they so tenaciously clung had not dropped ready-made from a divine hand, but were the work of many generations and the outcome of many controversies. It was the best and truest form that the foremost interpreters of Christian thought could arrive at, as they lived and laboured to find what St. Paul called the "mind of Christ" for their generation. It is not truly "evangelical," it does not completely express the mind of Christ, unless it is adapted to our spiritual stature to-day, unless it corresponds with truth and life as we know them now, unless it can pass through the alembic of our noblest thought and come forth without dross.

But how firm and solid these forms seemed! What a comfort and a support they were for unadventurous souls! And what a labour it is to build up slowly and painfully the structure of one's own faith! Dean Inge has suggested a new line to a famous hymn:

*They climbed the steep ascent of heaven,
Through peril, toil, and pain;
O God, to us may grace be given
To follow by the train.'*¹

¹ Rufus M. Jones, *The Trail of Life in the Middle Years*, 152.

Real Religion.

'Next day the life of the school village [Livingstone Memorial Girls' Boarding School, Mberesbi, Kawambwa, N. Rhodesia] was in full swing. In the afternoon a group of small girls were sitting under a tree sorting out raffia for their basket work. A new one was amongst them. I overheard part of their conversation. "Do we pray every day like we did this morning?"

"Yes, always, and in the evenings."

"Mwa!"

"You see we are the people of a Chief. In the morning we go to the palace to greet Him, to receive His blessing and to hear His word for the day, then all day we work and play in the 'chinso' of the Chief. At evening we come back to His courtyard, sit around His fire, tell Him of the day's doings. If you've done wrong you tell Him and say you are sorry. Then He blesses us and we go to sleep." The child had got at the secret. Religion is not a theory, not creeds and dogmas to which we give mental assent, but a life to be lived "all day within the Chief's presence."²

A Christian!

'A week later Luse's parents [Bantus] came from their home a hundred miles away. They were mad with rage, and wanted to kill the youth who had met their daughter behind the school and then spoken evil of her. They would not listen to reason. The missionary reminded them that they were Christians.

"I am a Christian to God, not to my fellow-men," the father retorted.³

² Mabel Shaw, *God's Candlelights*, 128.

³ *Ibid.* 153.

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