
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

prayer. The reflex influence of Missions has been truly great. The promise of Scripture has been richly verified in the experience of the churches of to-day: 'The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself' (Pr 11[25]).

Further, Missions have influenced the Home Churches by stimulating the hope and strengthening the movement for the re-union of Christendom. The persistent urge of the Christian churches towards union is one of the most impressive signs of the times, and it cannot be doubted that it is due to the constant pressure of the Divine Spirit on the heart and conscience. The prayer of our Saviour *ut omnes unum sint* seems nearer fulfilment to-day than at any time within the last four hundred years. There is a strong and growing desire to lower, if not wholly to demolish, the doctrinal and governmental barriers which divide church from church, and if this can be achieved without sacrificing the convictions or impairing the spiritual strength of a communion, such rapprochements are to be sincerely welcomed.

Missions have played their not unimportant rôle in promoting the cause of union. The most ecumenical gathering of Christian ecclesiastical leaders and missionary statesmen held in our time was 'Edinburgh 1910.' The active co-operation of churches and societies in the mission field, where it is a matter of urgency to show an unbroken front, has proved that *unity* is already a *fait accompli*, and that *union*, of the federal or the organic type, is no longer a utopian dream but falls within the scope of practical missionary politics. Union on the mission field between the various bodies belonging to the Protestant Church is a perfectly feasible proposition. The difficulty arises when co-operation or union is sought with churches holding strong sacramentarian views, like the Anglo-Catholics. The movement for a federal union of missionary churches in East Africa, which announced its programme at Kikuyu in 1913, was held up chiefly through the opposition of the late Bishop Weston of Zanzibar, an extreme sacramentarian. Anglican bishops of evangelical persuasion, though restrained by archepiscopal inhibition, have no fundamental objection to co-operation with other Protestants. In South India the federation movement has made greater progress than elsewhere, and a union is confidently anticipated of Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist bodies.

'There is a missionary rhetoric that overestimates the results which Missions have thus far secured, and there is a missionary hypercriticism that underestimates them' (Warneck). Both extremes must be avoided. The results are rich enough to gladden and encourage us, but also meagre enough to spur us to more earnest endeavours. 'There remaineth yet much land to be possessed.' More than half the inhabitants of our globe must yet be efficiently evangelized. Many countries, many nations, many tribes are still practically untouched. And even where the process of Christianization has commenced, generations may pass before it is completed. There is hardly a community so completely Christianized that Missions can withdraw and leave it to its own resources and the grace of God. Watchful superintendence and wise guidance are still everywhere necessary. But the results already achieved—which but for our lack of faith and consecration had been immensely greater—are the earnest of far more glorious victories still in store for the Church of the Living God.

Vexilla Regis prodeunt,
Fulget mysterium Crucis.

The Heretics of the Church and Recurring Heresies.

Monarchianism and Sabellius.

By the Reverend J. G. Riddell, M.A., Glasgow.

It may be well, at the outset, to notice that Sabellianism is one of the heresies which have played a considerable part in the history of theology and have been persistent in their influence on the Church's faith. Only a few weeks ago, indeed, the pages of *Punch* contained a picture which suggested that it might be considered a living issue in a sermon of to-day (27th June 1934—'Visiting Clergyman.' 'Aha! I know what you will say to me. You will say to me—"Sabellianism"'),

and it has been the subject of direct reference in more than one recent contribution to theological thought. Two writers, for example, after criticising, each from his own point of view, John Caird's famous *dictum* that 'the Trinity is the distinctively Christian idea of God' (*The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, i. 58), have directed attention to the Sabellian heresy. Thus Professor John Baillie, discussing God's presence in Christ, writes, 'such questionings would have been characterized by our forefathers as "Modalistic" or "Sabellian" in tendency, but it is obvious that they do not involve us in the difficulties in which such third-century teachers as Noetus, Praxeas, and Sabellius found themselves involved' (*The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*, 194 n.). Professor D. Miall Edwards also raises the question, pointing out that 'the inherent difficulty of the orthodox dogma of the Trinity lies in this, that it is ever in a state of unstable equilibrium between two opposite "heresies"—Modalism (Sabellianism) on the one hand, and Tritheism on the other' (*Christianity and Philosophy*, 345).

These quotations may serve to show that some, at least, of the problems raised in the controversy between Hippolytus, Tertullian, and other defenders of orthodoxy, and the advocates of views which came to be described as Sabellian, are still worthy of attention, and to indicate the line of approach which we may follow in our consideration of them.

Caird himself, immediately after the passage cited above, goes on to discuss 'the obscurity or mysteriousness, which at first sight is involved in the notion of a Being who combines in His nature absolute unity with equally essential differences or distinctions' (*op. cit.* 58). His words indicate just where the difficulty has been found to lie. We may, by our assertion of the threefold nature of God, find ourselves led towards the idea of three distinct individualities or separate objects of faith, with possible differences of character and will in the 'Council-chamber of the Trinity' (cf. W. N. Clarke, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, 234)—a conclusion which faith has consistently rejected as Tritheism. On the other hand, the assertion of divine unity may be made so uncompromising as to end by substituting for the Persons of the Trinity mere aspects or 'modes' of being. It was the latter tendency, first in regard to the relation of the Father and the Son, and later to that of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that found its expression in the heresy linked in the history of dogma with the name of Sabellius. 'One cannot, they say, believe in one only God in any other way than by saying that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the very self-same Person' (Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* ii.). The third-century Church was warned against both extremes. 'It would be just to dispute against those who, by dividing and rending the monarchy . . . into three deities, destroy it . . . such are diametrically opposed to the opinion of Sabellius. For he blasphemes in saying that the Son Himself is the Father, and *vice versa*' (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, iii. 385).

As in other controversies which preceded the Council of Nicæa, we may distinguish, on both sides, an apologetic and a dogmatic point of view. Both 'heretics' and 'orthodox' felt the need of defending Christian truth and of seeking a definite formulation of it. It was necessary, for example, to maintain belief in one God, against the charge of polytheism, and so to hold fast to the monotheism which had been a heritage from Israel (cf. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, iii. 55, 62 f.). It was necessary also to protest against a wrong way of stating the Christian faith which was being widely accepted—namely, the subordinationist view of Christ, which, emerging from the Logos doctrine, seemed to refuse to Him a final place for faith. The often quoted saying of Noetus, the forerunner of Sabellius, τί οὖν κακὸν ποιῶ, δοξάζων τὸν χριστόν (Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*, i.), is evidence of this endeavour on the part of the 'heretics,' as also is their appeal to Old Testament texts conspicuously monotheistic, and to words from the New Testament which seemed to imply the fullest unity of Father and Son. (Hippolytus, *op. cit.* ii.; Tertullian, *op. cit.* ii.). Thus new stress was laid upon the conception of divine μοναρχία—a word unfortunately variable in meaning, but always carrying with it, according to Harnack (*op. cit.* 62), 'the conception of the Person of Christ founded on the history of salvation, as against one based on the history of his nature.' Monarchianism declared that redemption must be recognized as the act of God and would admit no suggestion that the Redeemer is in any sense separable from Him. It was sensitive to the desire of faith to know that the Father meets with men in Jesus Christ. As a modern statement puts it, 'To transfer the mighty work of salvation to any Saviour divided, however faintly, from the only God, is to invalidate it and leave faith no security' (T. B. Kilpatrick, in Hastings' *E.R.E.*, xi. 703). Only thus, it was maintained, was it possible at once to defend the unity of divine being, and to set forth the truth of Christian faith. Tertullian's criticism illustrates the point: 'They assume,' he

writes of the Sabellians, 'that the number and order of the Trinity imply a division of the Unity, whereas unity which evolves a trinity from itself is not impaired thereby. . . . So they talk loudly of our preaching two or three Gods, and assume that they themselves are worshippers of the One God . . . "we," they say, "hold the Monarchy"' (Tertullian, *op. cit.* iii.; cf. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, 95).

This way of thought has become known as Modalist Monarchianism, as distinguished from the Adoptionist Monarchianism of Theodotus the leather merchant, his namesake the banker and Paul of Samosata. Against it arguments serving both apologetic and dogmatic interests were put forward—our knowledge of the Monarchian position, indeed, is to a considerable extent derived from the criticisms of its opponents. Before passing to consider these, however, let us look more closely at one or two features of the heresy itself.

Beginning in Asia Minor, whence came Noetus and Praxeas, the opponents of Hippolytus and Tertullian, it passed to Rome, where Callistus sought a compromise between the two parties, and to Egypt, where it had many adherents, and again to the East where it received and retained the name of Sabellianism. In the West it became frequently known as Patripassianism, from one implication of its teaching. While Sabellius was its best known exponent, it is doubtful whether he did more than make explicit what had been implied by earlier Monarchians. 'In reality,' it has been said, 'Sabellius was only unusually frank' (H. R. Mackintosh, *The Person of Jesus Christ*, 151). His teaching not only consolidated the earlier position, but revealed more clearly dangers involved in it. God is described as without distinction (*ἓν ὑποκείμενον*), and the word *υἱοπάτωρ* was used to emphasize the unity of Father and Son. To the assertion of this twofold *monarchia* there was added the thought of the Holy Spirit as a third mode of divine being. The idea of three *πρόσωπα*, that of the Father as Creator, of the Son as Redeemer, and of the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life—each an 'energy' or 'form' of the Godhead—was put forward. The three phases of revelation corresponding to these aspects were described as successive, each being temporary only—a conception which, even if we hold with Harnack that Sabellius himself sought to modify it (*op. cit.* 85), remained both the most dangerous and the most vulnerable feature of the heresy. From the defence of monotheism and the protest against Subordinationism, there had developed a thoroughgoing modalism which has been described by one writer as 'virtually unitarian' (K. E. Kirk, in *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation*, ed. A. E. J. Rawlinson, 211), and criticised by another for leaving room for 'no living God, but only for an expanding and contracting Monas. . . . The Son has no life of His own, and, when His temporary manifestation is over, He is retracted into the Monas and lost to faith' (T. B. Kilpatrick, *loc. cit.*).

Both in the East and in the West, Sabellianism lingered on after it had been officially condemned, and was the object of canons and decrees by Council and Pope. Its influence persisted, partly through the teaching of individuals, notably Marcellus, Bishop of Ancyra, 314–336, much of whose work, it is often suggested, has been credited to Sabellius himself, and partly through the tendency of Monarchianism to pass over into other heresies. The work of Praxeas and Sabellius, for example, was by no means free from traces of Docetism, and Priscillianist views were not unjustly described by Hippolytus as Sabellian ('Ante-Nicene Fathers,' Hippolytus, i. 325). Even as late as 1441 we find Eugenius IV. reiterating the Church's condemnation of Sabellius 'for confusing the Persons and for thus altogether doing away with the real distinction between them' (art. 'Monarchianism,' in Hastings' *E.R.E.*, viii. 780). Not infrequently the charge of Sabellianism, in some modified form, has been brought against theologians until our own time. Thus it has been detected in Schleiermacher (F. W. Green, *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation*, 246; W. R. Matthews, *God in Christian Thought and Experience*, 189, etc.) and in Biedermann (W. P. Paterson, *The Rule of Faith*, 336), both of whom seem open to the charge of Modalism in holding a conception of an external being above all triune distinction, or of different 'moments' in the manifestation of the Divine nature. Its very persistence may be a testimony to the service Monarchianism rendered to faith, by maintaining what the orthodoxy of its day had come largely to ignore—the assurance that in Christ we find ourselves in direct touch with God. It is not surprising that, with its assertion of the unity of the Godhead and its protest against the subordination of the Son, Monarchianism should have won many followers in the days of controversy, or that its principles should be found to have a certain kinship with the idealist philosophy of a much later day.

The opponents of Sabellius and his school were able to formulate convincing answers to Monarchianism, although they did not always find it easy

to avoid the opposite danger of Tritheism (*e.g.* Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, whose attack on Sabellianism brought about his own condemnation by the Roman See on the charge of Tritheism; cf. Hastings' *E.R.E.*, i. 318). Naturally, they addressed themselves to the weakest points in their adversaries' position—appealing to a multitude of Scripture passages which seemed to make clear the distinction between the Father and the Son (Tertullian, *op. cit.* xi.–xxiv.; Hippolytus, *op. cit.* 2–8). From the point of view of apologetic, they maintained that no theory could be admitted which was open to the charge of crucifying the Father, or which implied that God had left His place of authority over the universe to become flesh. The Sabellians, they maintained, had fallen into the very error against which their protest was directed, and their conception of a Protean God was no real answer to the non-Christian arguments of the day. No variety of modes or diversity of aspect, it was maintained, could satisfy the Church or meet the world's need of the gospel. It would be impossible to defend the teaching of Modalism, ingenious as its intellectual basis might be, when, in answer to the question, 'In what kind of God do you believe?' no real conception either of Fatherhood or Sonship could be put forward (Tertullian, *op. cit.* x.).

The interest of dogmatic, also, led to at least one fundamental criticism. Noetus sought to glorify Christ by asserting the unity of Father and Son. But this came to involve the denial on the one hand of Christ's pre-existence, and on the other of His living presence (Tertullian, *op. cit.* vii.). A transient Christ, the Christ depicted in Sabellius' teaching of successive phases, robbed the gospel of its glory and faith of its hope. The denial of the Holy Spirit's subsistence must leave the Church bereft of that sense of indwelling presence which meant so much for devotion and for service alike. Athanasius, in his later criticism of Marcellus, touched the vital weakness of Monarchianism. The Church could not 'negative Christ's existence before ages, and His Godhead and unending Kingdom, upon pretence of supporting the divine monarchy' (Hastings' *E.R.E.*, art. 'Monarchianism,' viii. 780).

While victory in the Monarchian controversy thus rested with the opponents of Sabellius, there arise from the Modalist arguments issues of abiding interest at some of which we may briefly glance.

In the first article of this series it was pointed out that Marcion, in his dealing with the Old Testament, 'was handling a problem which still—perhaps now more than ever—exercises Christian minds' (E. C. Blackman, in *The Expository Times*, July 1934, p. 458). Indirectly Monarchianism raised the same problem, and the opposite charge to that made against Marcion might be brought in the case of Sabellius—that he did not realize how far the Old Testament teaching had been transcended in the New. There was a constant danger that his followers might only too easily come to hold a doctrine of God akin to that of Judaism (cf. Basil's charge of a mere abstract monotheism against Sabellius). Realizing the significance of theophanies and of prophetic teaching, Sabellius had not, it might be argued, realized also the need for transforming and re-interpreting Old Testament doctrine in the light of the new revelation on which Christianity was based. 'What need would there be of the gospel laying down (as it does) that the Law and the Prophets lasted until John,' asks Tertullian (*op. cit.* xxxi.), 'if henceforward the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are not both believed in as Three, and as making One Only God?'

The same suggestion has been made by more than one modern writer. 'The Christian conception of God was of course the legitimate and lineal descendant of the Hebrew. . . . But the belief in the Incarnation while it intensified and emphasized the notion of divine personality, necessitated a further intellectual analysis of what that notion meant, and issued in the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity' (Illingworth, *Personality Human and Divine*, 66; cf. T. Miall Edwards, *op. cit.* 338; W. R. Matthews, *op. cit.* 86). It would take us too far from our subject to inquire how far the Trinitarian mould, into which the Christian idea of God, at least from the third century, has fitted itself, is 'a thing which it found ready to its hand in Hellenistic philosophy,' rather than something 'newly spun by Christianity out of its own peculiar substance' (cf. John Baillie, *op. cit.* 186); but two points, which link themselves with the Monarchian view of the Old Testament, may be noted.

There is, firstly, the endeavour to connect the third Person in the Trinity—the Paraclete whom Praxeas was said to have put to flight—with the Hebrew thought of the Spirit of God. Even in the Old Testament, while the Spirit is always the Spirit of Yahweh, there may be discerned, it has been maintained, developments of thought which 'tended in the direction of the recognition of distinctions within the being of God' (W. R. Matthews, *op. cit.* 181), for which the theory of the monarchy

made no room. Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson suggests a change of terminology. 'The one God is Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier—all within the spirithood of divine personality, and all within the personality of Divine Spirit. If we have to read "*pneuma*" for the ancient *ousia*, then perhaps for the ancient *hypostasis*, the least inadequate word will be *parousia*, so long as we remember that the divine presence means God as He is, and is eternally, and not a transient "mode" of Him' (*The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, 281). The new terms seem more akin to Hebrew usage than to Greek—but even if we leave aside the use of Hellenistic concepts, the immediate suspicion of which, according to Harnack, showed the character of the opposition to Modalism (*op. cit.* 55: 'they at once scented the God of Heraclitus and Zeno'), Monarchian teaching may be in less complete agreement with the implications of Hebrew religion than either its supporters or its opponents believed.

In the second place, Patripassianism, which was so favourite a ground for criticism, might, paradoxically, well have been a corrective to the danger of the idea of divine impassivity into which Old Testament Monotheism so often tended to pass. Heretical as it may have been for Praxeas to 'crucify the Father,' there was current also the opposite conception of God, not seldom held within the Church, which removed Him far from human life—the spectator only of earth's suffering and sorrow. With such a view there has often gone a separation in thought between the Father and the Son against which Monarchianism would have protested. Divine love has been linked with the person of Jesus Christ, while the Father has been thought of in terms of power or wrath or perhaps pity—but too often in contrast to the Son. 'The God of popular Christian theology is still the far-off, self-involved, abstractly perfect and eternally blessed God of pure Monotheism. . . . Few things are more disheartening to the philosophical student of religion than the way in which the implications of the doctrine of the Incarnation are evaded in popular theology by dividing the functions of Deity between the Father and the Son. . . . Grosser still, however, is the materialism which has succeeded in transforming the profound doctrine of the Spirit . . . into the notion of another distinct Being' (A. S. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, 409). In such a protest as this the truth of the oneness of the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit, which lay at the heart of Monarchianism at its best, is again set forth as that in which our minds must ultimately rest.

The Sabellian controversy has its own bearing on another problem—that of the Personality of God. One of the distinctions between Unitarianism, to which Sabellianism, as noted above, has been closely compared, and orthodox Christianity lies in the difference between the assertion of the personality of God and that of personality in God (cf. C. C. J. Webb, *God and Personality*, 84 f.: 'For Unitarian Christianity personal relations with God are not, as for Catholic Christianity, rooted in a like relation within the Godhead itself'). Monarchianism, in denying personal subsistence to the Son and to the Spirit, not only tended towards 'a sort of Christian pantheism' (H. Wheeler Robinson, *op. cit.* 249), but meant an impoverishment of the thought of the divine personality as something richer, more complex and wonderful than human personality can ever be. It is worth recalling that it was to distinguish one member within the Unity of the Godhead that the word Person was first used in the theology of the Church—and that with a meaning very different from what our modern psychological use of the term suggests (cf. F. W. Green, *op. cit.* 262). Paul of Samosata, the representative of Adoptionist Monarchianism, and Sabellius himself were alike charged with substituting the idea of God as one person behind or beyond the modes of his self-manifestation, for the mystery of triune Godhead (cf. C. C. J. Webb, *op. cit.* 68 n.; Illingworth, *op. cit.* 69). Similar criticism was incurred by the 'psychological' view of the Trinity in which Augustine, who 'did not escape the accusation of Sabellianism' (F. W. Green, *op. cit.* 296), spoke of the three functions of human personality which 'constitute one life, not three, one substance, not three,' and thus yield a 'Trinity in man which is an image of the divine Three in One' (*De Trinitate*, x. 18, xiv. 15). Modern theories, Hegelian and other, which similarly seek to interpret divine personality on the analogy of threefold human activity, may be free from the idea of successiveness, but remain more or less Modalist in their essential character. They may do justice to the unity, but fail to allow for the distinction of personality within it, just as alternative 'social' theories, like that held in the third century by Novation, the critic of Monarchianism, and frequently reaffirmed from different points of view, tend to destroy the oneness of Divine being. Neither of these analogies, in fact, even though it could be shown, as Dr. Matthews suggests, that 'they are not ultimately divergent, but really converge' (*op. cit.* 193), appears to give an adequate explanation of the

problem or to provide a *via media* between Tritheism and Modalism, such as theology, even in the third century, had begun to seek.

Behind considerations such as these there lies, however, another fundamental question which emerged soon after the Sabellian controversy. Are we to say, it came to be asked, that, while an 'economic' Trinity, based upon the threefold self-disclosure of God, is to be accepted, there is no ground for the theological assertion of a Trinity of divine nature? If we speak of an ontological Trinity, are we not simply taking refuge in a mystery which wholly transcends our powers of understanding? Should theology not rest content without speculations which seem to carry us so far beyond our depth?

Now Monarchianism, which from one standpoint might be interpreted as a protest against a binatarian conception of God (Harnack, *op. cit.* 62, 'Monarchians of all shades had a common interest in opposition to the Logos Christology'; cf. Swete, *op. cit.* 99), tended towards an extreme statement of the economic doctrine. It called forth from Hippolytus and Tertullian an assertion of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and it was in speaking of the divine οἰκονομία that Tertullian, though with no suggestion of an ontological theory, first used the word 'person,' which was later to be of such great significance in the assertion of a 'theological' Trinity superimposed, as it were, on the Trinity of experience. Trinity and Triunity —economic and ontological doctrine—came to appear as two conceptions, regarded by some as alternatives, one of which might be accepted while the other was set aside, and by others as both essential to the Church's faith—a difference in outlook with which we are still familiar.

The economic theory, which Sabellianism, however inadequately, asserted but beyond which Modalism can never go, is of undoubted practical value as a statement of the threefold process of divine self-revelation, and as a working theory makes its appeal to many for whom the ontological doctrine has little attraction. 'It may not come naturally to the Christian piety of to-day,' writes Professor Baillie (*op. cit.* 194), 'to express itself by means of the old triadic mould.' The doctrines of the third and fourth centuries no longer speak to us as they did to our forefathers. By itself, however, the economic theory is open to this criticism —that it may be nothing more than a description of the subjective processes of our understanding. There may, that is to say, be a distinction between the way in which God has revealed Himself and the way in which men have apprehended Him. The main weakness of Sabellianism—the suggestion of succession and transience in time—is an example, as also the interpretation of the Trinity given by Schleiermacher which, it has been said, 'has value simply as a concise statement of moments in the Christian experience of God' (W. R. Matthews, *op. cit.* 189). Once the economic theory takes this form it loses much of its value—and the only safeguard would appear to be the assertion of a triune nature in the Deity, if such can be made, as the counterpart in reality of the Trinity of experience. However fully we agree that 'it really is impossible to read the Gospels freshly and gain the impression that when Jesus spoke of God or presented God through action, the thought in the foreground of His mind . . . was the thought of God in three persons,' we may yet hold that 'a genuinely Trinitarian view of God can hardly be evaded by those who try to think out and think through the ultimate problems of the Christian faith' (H. R. Mackintosh, *The Christian Apprehension of God*, 108). If we can agree that there is that 'in the Christian experience of God which makes it necessary for us to think of Him as existing in three Persons' (K. E. Kirk, *op. cit.* 226), as well as manifesting Himself in threefold fashion, we shall not only have surer ground for our use of the Trinitarian formulæ, but shall be able to use the economic form of the doctrine with a new confidence.

We return finally to the question with which we began, and which the Sabellian controversy brought so acutely before the Church—the centrality of the Trinitarian doctrine for faith. In its ontological form it may have appealed to Caird (*loc cit.*) and others by its seeming suitability to the Hegelian dialectic. The economic theory has had its attractiveness for empiric theology, and the issues raised in the third century have recurred constantly in the history of the Church. But one thing stands out clearly—that the doctrine of the Trinity is not meant to rival the assertion of the love of God as supreme for Christian faith, but rather to be a measure of the greatness of that holy love which, in self-sacrifice, seeks men to redeem and save them. A truth beyond that of Sabellius' concept of the υἱοπάτωρ lies at the heart of it. Not only the Son but the Spirit are one with the Father, and divine love is seen in all the threefold unity. The meaning of the Trinitarian creed, writes Brunner (*The Word in the World*, 59), 'is not to indicate three objects of faith. . . . The meaning is that one can know and have the Father only through the Son and the Holy Spirit; that one can have the

Son, too, only through the Holy Spirit, and *vice versa*, the Holy Spirit only through the Son.' Monarchianism, however inadequate its expression or unsatisfactory its ultimate conclusions, had this merit at least, that it was an attempt to state the abiding truth that the God who creates and sustains all things is the God who makes Himself known to men in Jesus Christ and whom we experience in the Holy Spirit, and that, in the unity of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are ever doing for men what they so deeply need but what, for themselves, they cannot do.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

A Nazi Parade.

By the Reverend P. N. Bushill, B.A., Orpington.

'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'—1 Jn 1[9].

There are some strange things happening in Germany to-day. I read this the other day in *The Times*:

> Killer of Young Birds Paraded.
> Berlin, May 18.
>
> A thirteen-year-old schoolboy at Wettin, near Halle, who is stated to have taken young birds out of nesting-boxes and killed them, was taken through the streets accompanied by a drummer, with a nesting-box on his back and a placard on his chest bearing the words, 'I killed young birds.'

What a cruel punishment for that poor boy! When I read that I had a dreadful vision. I had a vision that we all had to parade in like manner through the streets of the town, each boy and each girl, yes, and each grown-up too. Before us went a drummer calling the attention of all onlookers: on our back was some symbol of our wrong-doing, and on our chest was a big placard telling forth what evil we had done. There was a girl with a big pencil on her back, and the placard in front saying, 'I took my brother's pencil.' Next was a boy with a huge stone on his back, and the placard, 'I threw a stone at a boy.' Then another boy, with a motor-horn strapped on, with this news for all to read, 'I blew the horn on a motor-car as I passed by.' Then a girl with a copy-book on her back, and the placard telling the unpleasant news, 'I looked over another girl's sums at school to-day.' Yes, and far worse things than these, things that we should not like others to know about at all. What a dreadful vision this was; and every one of us had to be there, none of us could escape, for 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' And I thought: all these things are known to God, known as clearly as if we were being paraded down the main street.

Think again of that boy at Wettin in Germany. There would be many onlookers, and possibly some in the crowd would not be feeling very comfortable. Perhaps this boy was not the only one who had killed young birds: one can imagine another boy among the crowd who had done the very same thing, only with this difference, that he had not been found out. He would not feel very happy, would he? Probably he would not want to look at all, but would run in and shut the door. Some very cruel men once brought a woman to Jesus who had done wrong, and they said to Jesus, 'Ought not we to stone this woman to death? Did not Moses command that such should be stoned?' And what did Jesus reply? For some time He was silent, and then He said, 'Yes, you are right: it has been commanded that such should be stoned—and now he that hath not sinned himself, let him cast the first stone.' And you know what happened. They were dumb and ashamed, and they silently and shamefacedly crept out of the room. Oh, it does not do for us to criticise others, and think of the sins of others and all the wrong things other boys and girls have done.

What ought we rather to do? Why, think of our own sins and faults, and then take them to Jesus and say to Him, 'Yes, I ought to have this placard and that placard on me, for I have certainly done many wrong things: please forgive me, and help me to do better in future.' If we do that, what happens? We are told in our text: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' He not only wipes off the writing from the placard, but He takes away the burden from our