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pre-suppositions, it did real service to a better study of Scripture. It warned all churches against finding proofs of a doctrine in texts that, looked at candidly, have really no bearing on the subject.

Second, there is something admirable in its ultra-Protestant claim for the rights of the individual thinker—a claim which the authoritarian Lutheran or Calvinistic churches virtually denied. It threw off the burden of the past to the extent of pouring out the baby with the bath-water; but nearly all modern evangelical churches have more or less emancipated themselves from arid dogmatic rigidity. That Confessions of Faith while venerable are not sacrosanct, is the all but universal present-day opinion.

Third, in setting religion against a moral rather than a metaphysical background, Socinians pointed the way to modern preaching.

Fourth, there is an element of real value in its conviction that the gospel is some simple thing which can and ought to be expressed, not with unintelligible paradox, but with clarity. There is paradox in Christianity, and there are deep mysteries; and it is a weakness of Socinianism—still more of Unitarianism—that little mystery is left. Yet surely the prime object of a preacher is to *persuade*, and for that it is clarity and reasonableness that are effective.

Such praiseworthy features, however, go no great distance towards balancing the demerit. With the dogmas the Christian *religion* all but went too. 'Guilt and repentance, faith and Grace were retained in attenuated form, only by a happy lack of logical thoroughness, because they were in the New Testament.'¹

¹ Harnack, *op. cit.* vii. 167.

Entre Nous.

The Church Controversy in Germany.

Professor Anders Nygren has given a clear account of the position of the Evangelical Church in the Third Empire, and this has been translated by the Rev. G. C. Richards, D.D. (S.C.M.; 2s. 6d. net). It possesses increased interest and value because it is written by a Swedish theologian, the distinguished author of a noted book, 'Agape and Eros.' The authorship shows that the surprise, anxiety, and indignation felt in the English-speaking world regarding the ecclesiastical situation in Germany is shared in the Scandinavian countries, and that the apologists for the 'German Christian' régime are not entitled to appeal as they do to themselves as faithful exponents of the teaching of Luther. The author feels strongly and writes severely, but the facts he adduces fully justify his judgment.

In ch. i. he describes the *fourteen years of shame and dishonour* through which Germany was made to pass after defeat as an explanation of the present mentality of the nation which so eagerly welcomed, and so quietly endures the Nazi Revolution as a resurrection to new life and fresh hope. He refers especially, and with justified anger, to the confession of war-guilt extorted from the vanquished by the victors, and the effect it has had on the temper of the nation. One fact he omits. If there was no political repudiation of that act, the Christian churches were not quiescent. The Continuation Committee of the Stockholm Conference in 1928 took up the question. I was chairman of the Com-

mittee which with great toil and trouble prepared a declaration on the question, which the German delegates accepted with relief and gratitude as making possible their continuance in fellowship and work with the representatives of the victor nations. It is well, however, to be reminded that the Allies by their treatment of Germany have been largely responsible for this outbreak of fanatical nationalism; our country in less degree than France, but in the degree in which we did not use our influence sufficiently to restrain French policy.

The second chapter gives the characteristics of *the new Germany*; the principle of *Gleichschaltung* (conformity), the military discipline, the racial prejudice, the intolerance of differences, the propaganda for national socialism. 'Under such circumstances it is clear that the new Total State has an interest in interfering with and regulating the internal affairs of the Church, an interest which is different from that of any earlier State with more limited aims.' It is on this political background that the controversy in the Church must be regarded.

In the third chapter the *first phase of the Church's controversy* is sketched. About the unification of the twenty-eight territorial churches in one 'Reich' church under one 'Reich'-Bishop there was no difficulty. The complications began, not with 'a tug-of-war between State and Church,' 'for religious freedom had been promised, but with the determination of a specially active group inside the Church . . . with the help of the State to conquer the Church, that is to take the lead in it.' The

'German Christians' claimed that the Reich-Bishop should belong to their party; they refused to acknowledge the leader—Friedrich von Bodelschwingh—who was first nominated, and had found general acceptance, and they insisted on the appointment of Army-Chaplain L. Müller, the Chancellor's confidential man. The intervention of the State came when Rust, the Prussian Minister of Education appointed a State commissary Jaeger, to bring order into the Church. This compelled von Bodelschwingh to resign. It is impossible to follow in detail the course of fraud, falsehood, and farce by which this German Christian party secured Müller's appointment, which was confirmed by the State, and through him began to subjugate the Church to this policy.

Chapter iv. paints a vivid picture of *German Christians of the Faith Movement*. A definition of the title by one of the party is quoted. 'We believe in the future of Germany; it is not a thing which can exactly be proved, it is something irrational, it is a matter of faith; that is why it is called the "Faith Movement"; but there is the additional point that we are Christians, and our Christian faith is in no way touched by the other.' The policy of the party shows, however, that the adjective determines the content of the noun more than the noun the character of the adjective. It is not the universal Christianity, but a German type which is advocated, a 'heroic piety.' Four categories are distinguished in this group. (1) The care of the movement, its whole-hearted supporters; (2) those who joined it to influence it from within; (3) 'those who joined it for fear of losing their offices'; (4) 'such as regarded themselves as compelled to join the Faith Movement in order to continue performing their functions.' The better side of the Movement is thus expressed: 'The positive object, which is ever present to the minds of German Christians, is that the wave of national rapture which is overflowing Germany may also be guided into the Church and bring about the religious reformation.' But this good intention has often the bad result that 'the swastika displaces the Cross as the sign to lead to victory.' This is shown in the support given to the Aryan paragraph, the exclusion of even Hebrew Christians from the Church.

From this party the author in ch. v. passes to give a sympathetic account of the *Opposition in the Church*. Not opposed to the Hitler rule politically, this party is resenting and resisting the attempt of the German Christians forcibly to get control of the Church, and to subordinate it to political ends. They recognize that the gospel and the

Reformation confessions are in peril. Probably a majority of the believing people are with them. *The Third Confession*, described in ch. vi., is a neo-paganism, opposed to and seeking in its more aggressive forms to supplant Christianity. This German Faith Movement is a religion of the blood or race. Its leaders are Hauer, Bergmann, Wirth, and Count Revenlaw. Patriotism or Racialism is the religion. In ch. vii. it is shown that the German churches are at the *Parting of the Ways*—their Christian confession and their National Social Policy for the Church; and the Reich-Bishop's wavering course—sometimes concessions and sometimes repressions—shows the impossibility of this attempt to serve God and Cæsar. He appears as a weak man trying to play the part of a strong man.

The Fatal Hour for the Opposition, recorded in ch. viii., was the interview with Hitler of the Reich-Bishop and seven representatives of each party, when an incautious utterance of Niemöller, overheard on the telephone, excited the Fürst's wrath, so that he dismissed the churchmen with the command to make peace or to forfeit any recognition from the State. At a subsequent meeting by what must be described as a trick, Müller succeeded in making it appear that the bishops had bowed to his authority as absolute, he used the position so won to try to suppress the opposition entirely. But as ch. ix. shows, *Confessional Synods* met in different parts of the country, and despite interference by the secret State police, gave voice to their objections to his rule and so became a rallying-point for the opposition. The appointment of Jaeger, a civil servant, to be the law member of the ruling ministry in the Church led to still more violent methods of repression. The bishops of Württemberg and Bavaria were deposed, but were assured of the support of the believing people. The Synod of Barmen (May 24th to 31st) defined the aims of the opposition: (1) the combination of all the scattered confessional groups; (2) a uniform spiritual leadership; (3) the formation of theological and practical lines for the continued activity of the 'confessing Church.'

The last chapter seeks to answer the question, *What is the Controversy about?* First of all, the author states what in his judgment it is not. (1) It is not a personal question. (2) Nor is it a question of law and justice in the first instance. (3) Nor does the struggle concern questions of organization. (4) Nor is it fighting for fighting's sake. (5) Nor is it a disguised reaction against the National-Socialist State. (6) Nor is it a fight for the liberal ideal of freedom.' Some of these statements need

some qualification as some of the questions come in as minor issues. The answer the author gives is: 'It is about Christianity itself, its being or not-being,' since the tendency in the German Christian position is to the absorption of their Christian profession in their political activities, and the intention of some of their allies in the struggle is definitely the abandonment of Christianity. The author ends on this hopeful note: 'Just when Christian faith is robbed of every support and protection, one receives more than at any other time a lively impression that it is a supernatural power which gives a supernatural joy and tranquillity—"In earthly distress a heavenly courage."' The Postscript as well as the Introduction deals with more recent events. The author's judgment, which is that of the churches outside of Germany, is that 'the present government of the Christian Church has betrayed Christianity to "the powers of this world."' As this is being written 'the powers of this world' seem to be withholding the reward of the betrayal.

This brief summary may serve as an indication of the contents and spirit of the book. We know no other book which contains in so small a space a clearer or fuller account of a situation which must be of interest to all Christians and even lovers of liberty. The same conflict may emerge wherever the idea of the 'totalitarian' State asserts itself consistently; and it is a good omen that, when all other opposition was suppressed, the Christian Church has by fidelity to conscience forced so seemingly omnipotent a State as that of Germany to abandon the struggle. It is not improbable that the expressed sympathy of the Christian churches of other lands has influenced the policy of the leader of Nazi Germany.

A. E. GARVIE.

London.

Dr. Schweitzer on War and Peace.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer delivered the Hibbert Lectures this autumn. He had large audiences both in London and Oxford. He spoke in German, and was interpreted by Mrs. C. E. B. Russell. In the course of the lectures he dealt with war and peace.

"Is religion a force in the spiritual life of our age?" I answer, in your name and mine, "No!"

There is still religion in the world; there is much religion in our Church; there are many pious people among us. Christianity can still point to works of love and social works of which it can be proud. There is a longing for religion among many who no longer belong to the Churches. I rejoice to concede this to myself and you. And yet we must

hold fast to the fact that religion is not a force. The proof? The War.

Religion was powerless to resist the spirit through which we entered the War. It was overcome by this spirit. It could bring no force against the ideals of inhumanity and unreasonableness which originated the War, and when war had broken out, religion capitulated. It became mobilized. It had to join in helping to keep up the courage of the peoples. To give each people courage to go on fighting, one had to explain that they were fighting for their existence and for the spiritual treasures of humanity. Religion helped to give this conviction. It was a necessity. It is easy to understand. It remains true, however, that in the War religion lost its purity, and lost its authority. It joined forces with the spirit of the world. The one victim of defeat was religion. And that religion was defeated is apparent in our time. For it lifts up its voice, but only to protest. It cannot command. The spirit of the age does not listen. It goes its own way.

How did it come about that ethical ideals could not oppose the inhuman ideals of the War? It was due to the spirit of practical realism. I place at opposite extremes the spirit of idealism and the spirit of realism. The spirit of idealism means that men and women of the period arrive at ethical ideals through thinking, and that these ideals are so powerful that men say: We will use them to control reality. We will transform reality in accordance with these ideals. The spirit of idealism desires to have power over the spirit of realism. The spirit of practical realism, however, holds it false to apply ideals to what is happening. The spirit of realism has not power over reality. If a generation lives with these ideas, it is subject to reality. This is the tragedy which is being enacted in our age. For what is characteristic of our age is that we no longer really believe in social or spiritual progress, but face reality powerless.

The religion of our age gives the same impression as an African river in the dry season—a great river bed, sand-banks, and between, a small stream which seeks its way. One tries to imagine that a river once filled that bed—that there were no sand-banks but that the river flowed majestically on its way; and that it will some day be like that again. Yes, you say, is it possible that once a river filled its bed? Was there a time when ethical religion was a force in the spiritual life of the time? Yes, in the eighteenth century. Then ethical religion and thinking formed one unity. Thinking was religious, and religion was a thinking religion.

Because it was conditioned by ethical religious ideas, the thinking of that period undertook to represent reality to itself as it should be. It possessed ethical ideals in accordance with which it transformed reality.

And as a matter of fact, because it was filled with ideals of this kind, it had power over reality. It undertook a great work of reform. It waged war against superstition and ignorance. It obtained recognition for humanity in the eyes of the law. Torture was abolished, first in Prussia in the year 1740 through a Cabinet Order of Frederick the Great. It was demanded of the individual that he should place himself at the service of the community. English emigrants formulated in America for the first time the Rights of Man. The idea of humanity began to gain in significance. People dared to grasp the thought that lasting peace must reign on earth. Kant wrote a book on *Everlasting Peace* (1795), and in it represented the thought that even Politics must submit to the principles of Ethics. Finally, an achievement which the spirit of the eighteenth century brought about in the nineteenth century was the abolition of slavery.

The religious-ethical spirit of the eighteenth century desired then to make the Kingdom of God a reality on earth.

Then in the nineteenth century the spirit of realism rose against this spirit of idealism. The first personality in which it was realized was Napoleon I. The first thinker in whom it announced itself was the German philosopher Hegel. Men have not, Hegel maintained, to transform reality in order to bring it into accord with ideals devised by thinking. Progress takes place automatically in the natural course of events. The passions of ruling personalities and of peoples in some way or other are in the service of progress—even war is. The view that ethical idealism is a form of sentimentality with which nothing can be done in the world of reality, began with Hegel. He was first to formulate the theory of rationalism. He wrote: "What is reasonable is real, and what is real is reasonable." On the night of June 25, 1820, when that sentence was written, our age began, the age which moved on to the World War and which perhaps some day will end civilization!

Hegel dares to say that everything serves progress. The passions of rulers and of peoples—all are the servants of progress. One can only say that Hegel did not know the passions of people as we know them, or he would not have dared to write that!

One truth stands firm. All that happens in world history rests on something spiritual. If the spiritual

is strong, it creates world history. If it is weak, it suffers world history. The question is, shall we make world history or only suffer it passively? Will our thinking again become ethical-religious? Shall we again win ideals that will have power over reality? . . .

There is a development in which the circle of ethics always grows wider, and ethics becomes more profound; and this development goes on from primitive times until to-day. It often stops—hindered by the absence of thought among men—I dare to say through that absence of thought which characterizes thought! But yet the development goes on to its end. The circle described by ethics is always widening. Primitive man has only duties towards his nearest relations. All other living beings are to him only things: he ill-treats them and kills them, without compunction. Then the circle widens to the tribe, to the people, and grows ever wider until at last man realizes his ethical association with the whole of humanity. This represents an enormous act of thinking.

Take Plato and Aristotle. Their ethic is narrow-hearted. They were only occupied with their fellow-citizens. Slaves and foreigners did not concern them. Then with Stoicism the circle begins to widen. That was the greatest manifestation of Greek thought (forgive me this heresy!). Then in Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, the idea suddenly crops up that ethics is concerned with all humanity. Thought arrives at that intuitive knowledge which you find already in the Prophets of Israel and which is explained by Jesus.

Now ethics thinks the circle is wide enough. But no! The force that causes the circle to enlarge enlarges it further. Slowly in our European thought comes the notion that ethics has not only to do with mankind but with the animal creation as well. This begins with St. Francis of Assisi.

The explanation which only applies to man must be given up. Then we shall arrive at saying that ethics is reverence for *all* life.

A definition of ethics: That it is good to maintain life and further life. That it is bad to damage and destroy life. However much it struggles against it, ethics arrives at the religion of Jesus. It must recognize that it can discover no other relationship, no other beings as full of sense, as the relationship of love.

Ethics is the maintaining of life at the highest point of development—of my own life and of other life, in devoting myself to it in help and love, and both these things are connected.

And this ethic—profound, universal, has the significance of a religion. It *is* religion.

To-day there is an absence of thinking which is characterized by a contempt for life. We waged war for questions which, through reason, might have been solved. No one won. The War killed millions of men, brought suffering to millions of men, and brought suffering and death to millions of innocent animals. Why? Because we did not possess the highest reasonableness of reverence for life. And, because we do not yet possess this, every people is afraid of every other, and each causes fear to the others. We are mentally afflicted one for another because we are lacking in reasonableness. There is no other remedy than reverence for life, and at that we must arrive.

Thinking has not given us that, but thinking is preparing it—in Natural Science, which allows us to know the inner nature of being; and in ethics, which is developing in a direction by which it reaches its conclusion in reverence for life.

Reverence for life dwells within our thought. We only have to go deep enough through that absence of thought until we come to this profound ethic which is already a religion.

We wander in darkness now, but one with another we all have the conviction that we are advancing to the light; that again a time will come when religion and ethical thinking will unite. This we will believe with hope, and work for, maintaining the belief that if we make active in our own lives ethical ideals, then the time will come when peoples will do the same. Let us look out towards the light and comfort ourselves in reflecting what thinking is preparing for us.

'In the Steps of the Master.'

'Describe a journey to the Holy Land and an impression of Jerusalem. I visit the Holy Sepulchre, the Mount of Olives, and the Garden of Gethsemane.' Who, reading this opening to *In the Steps of the Master* (Rich & Cowan; 7s. 6d. net), could refrain from travelling in the good company of Mr. H. V. Morton as he journeys through Palestine and Trans-Jordania. Mr. Morton's reputation for vivid description and power of conveying atmosphere will be enhanced by this volume. Listen to his description of the road to Bethlehem.

'The sun was a hot lid over it. The snapping of grasshoppers in the olive groves was a steady rhythm in the heat. The road was white with the dust of powdered limestone, a floury dust which the heels of the donkeys kicked up in clouds; but the soft feet of the camels hardly moved it, as they passed silent as shadows. White stone walls lay on either side, and behind them the stony terraces,

planted with olive trees, lifted themselves in sharp white ridges against the darkness of the sky. . . . The heat was a nervous tension enclosing the world. All sounds were an invasion, except that of the grasshoppers, which was the palpitating voice of the heat. . . . and the white road led on under the sun.'

Is much of the local colour familiar? Yes. But none the less Biblical students will enjoy Mr. Morton. Let us quote him on 'Wateredst it with thy foot':

'While I was climbing the steep hill to the Russian church (at Ain tarem), I stopped to watch a gardener at work. His land was watered by a series of little channels cut in the soil and dammed by a stopping of earth at various strategical points. Whenever he wanted to irrigate a new portion of garden, he simply lifted his bare foot and kicked away the earth at some point, so that the water rushed forward into new places. In this act I recognized the description in Deuteronomy of Egypt as a land "where thou sowedst thy seed, and *wateredst it with thy foot*, as a garden of herbs."

'And when they were come into the house they saw the young Child.'

'There are a number of old houses in Bethlehem built over caves in the limestone rock. These caves are exactly the same as the sacred grotto under the high altar of the Church of the Nativity, and they are probably as ancient. No one who has seen these houses can doubt that Jesus was born in one of them, and not in the stable of European tradition.

'I suppose the idea that Christ was born in a stable was suggested by St. Luke's use of the word "manger." To the Western mind this word presupposes a stable or a barn, or some outbuilding separate from the house and used as a shelter for animals. But there is nothing in St. Luke to justify this.

'These primitive houses in Bethlehem gave me an entirely new idea of the scene of the Nativity. They are one-room houses built over caves. Whether these caves are natural or artificial I do not know: they are level with the road, but the room above them is reached by a flight of stone steps, perhaps fifteen or twenty. The caves are used to this day as stables for the animals, which enter from the road level. There are, in most of them, a stone trough, or manger, cut from the rock, and iron rings to which the animals are tied during the night. The family occupy the upper chamber, separated only by the thickness of the rock floor from the cave in which the animals sleep.

'Now, if Joseph and Mary had visited the "inn" at Bethlehem and found it full, there would have been no stable for them to go to, because the "inns," or *khans*, in the time of Christ were merely open spaces surrounded by a high wall and a colonnade under whose arches were rooms for the travellers. The animals were not stabled in the European sense, but were gathered together in the centre of the enclosure. The Greek word *katalyma* used by St. Luke, and translated as "inn," would be more exactly rendered as "guest-chamber." Therefore, I believe we must imagine the Nativity to have taken place in one of these old cave-houses of Bethlehem. The guest-chamber, or upper room, which it was the Jewish custom to offer to travelling Jews, was evidently already occupied, and therefore the host did his best by offering to the Holy Family shelter of the downstairs room, or cave. It is interesting in this connexion to remember that the earliest tradition in the Church was that Jesus was born not in a stable or in an inn, but in a cave. Justin Martyr, who was born about 100 A.D., repeats a tradition current in his time that, as Joseph had no place in which to lodge in Bethlehem, he discovered a cave near by. But even before Justin's time it seems that the cave below the Church of the Nativity was venerated as the scene of Christ's birth. It is not unreasonable to assume that the caverns below this church were once above ground, and formed the bottom storeys, or basements, of inhabited houses. One of the houses which I visited might have remained unchanged since the time of Christ. The man was attending to the animals, two donkeys and a foal, which were tied up to the rock in the cave. In the room above the woman was sifting some small grain, like millet, through a sieve. From time to time she talked to her husband as he busied himself in the room beneath.'¹

Christmas.

Messrs. Longmans have published a charming little book with the title *The Spirit of Christmas* (3s. 6d. net). The author is the Rev. J. Alick Bouquet, and he writes of 'Christmas Communion,' 'The Story of the Christmas Crib,' 'The Crib and the Cross,' the Salutations and other Christmas subjects. He ends with the story of the Christmas Crib as a French writer has pictured it.

'In his delicate and fanciful mood he shows us all the animals, birds, and creeping things from all parts of the world coming to adore the Holy Child.

'One after another, they enter the stable and

¹ H. V. Morton, *In the Steps of the Master*, 124 f.

pass before the Crib. The tiny beetles, the worms, the spiders, the wild beasts, one and all pay their homage. The lion, who is nervously self-conscious because of his fiery reputation, is reassured by a smile from Our Lady. The elephant waves his trunk like a censer. Many miracles happen. The hare goes slowly, the tortoise puts on his pace, the hippopotamus is able to make a graceful genuflection, the parrots hold their tongues. The giraffe, alas, cannot get through the door, but he spreads his long legs as best he can outside the entry. He did what he could: and all the creatures accept the will for the deed. Several very small insects, who lived the other side of the world, had started on their way, but their tiny legs took an hour or so to go a few yards. They, poor little fellows, had attempted the impossible. Nevertheless, they had started: nay, more, they had attempted the impossible. What more can any man do?

'These are some of the things which the writer of the story saw as he contemplated the Christmas Crib. You will understand the meaning. It is to teach us that the Stable of Bethlehem has an ever wide-open Door. Even the snakes crept in with the rest. Jesus came to save us all, rich and poor, wise and simple, small and great, wild and tame, saints and poor sinners.

'The Holy Child asks you to join the throng. He is ready to welcome and embrace you, the Blessed Mother will smile upon you. Perhaps you feel like the giraffe—too big, or is it too important?—to enter. Perhaps, like the tiny insects, you feel feeble and insignificant. You imagine that you are not wanted, that you will not be missed, that you could never get to the end of the journey.

'The story is meant to encourage you to cheer up and try. In the New Year you will find Happiness if you persevere and try to find the Holy Child in the poor, the outcast, the lonely, the sorrowful, the weak, in little children, and in all those "in whom He continues His life of lowliness upon earth."

'My song is done, I must be gone,
I can stay no longer here;
God bless you all, both great and small,
And send you a Joyful New Year.'

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