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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

We have read with extraordinary pleasure and profit a little work by the Archbishop of York which embodies three lectures he gave under the Moody Foundation in the University of Chicago last winter. The book—or booklet, for it contains only ninety-four pages—is entitled *Christianity in Thought and Practice*, and is published by the S.C.M. at the low price of half a crown. For any minister and for many more than ministers it will be a half-crown well spent. For Dr. Temple in the few pages at his disposal deals in his own lucid and suggestive way with some problems that are of pressing interest in our time.

The first two lectures are respectively headed the 'Relations between Philosophy and Religion' and 'Personality in Theology and Ethics.' Here, of course, we have an able discussion of topics which the learned writer has handled at length elsewhere and which have often enough been treated by a host of other writers. But Dr. Temple in both deals not only with the large and general questions naturally involved, but with one that is certainly of common special interest and perhaps urgency in our time.

It is the problem of the individual in the State. In this political question theology is involved, and Dr. Temple urges with earnestness that the political future of the peoples in our own and the next generation will depend on what answer is given to the questions, Is man an immortal spirit? What kind of God, if any, may man seek fellowship with? If man is not immortal, then it follows that the Communist or Fascist view—for here they coincide—must be held proved; the individual has value only as a servant of the State, whose authority over him is unquestionable and indefeasible. If on the other hand man be immortal, destined for fellowship with God who is holy, righteous Love, then it is his relationship to the Will of God that is fundamental, then he has a claim against the State that it shall recognize this prior allegiance of his, then he may under certain circumstances rightfully disobey the State. The State is 'entitled to give directions to its citizens' and 'to implement these with appropriate sanctions'; but 'it is not at liberty in its pressure upon his mind and especially through the education which it provides, to suggest that he has no moral duty except to serve the State.'

It is the third lecture, however, on 'Christian Ethics in Application to Individuals and to Groups' that is most striking and, shall we say, most needed. Certainly it is most likely to provoke discussion. As to Christian Ethics in general, Dr. Temple has something to say that some of our readers probably will not like. He maintains that it has almost become a tradition to say that the great contribution of Jesus to Ethics was the centrality of a principle of non-resistance. That belief, he holds, is a delusion, and 'if it is common it is common delusion.' True, in the Sermon on

the Mount non-resistance of a kind is inculcated, but what kind? The injuries or grievances specified concern only one person. But it is illegitimate to argue that Jesus meant non-interference when one sees a third party being injured. Aquinas held, and Dr. TEMPLE quotes him with approval, 'patiently to endure injuries done to oneself pertains to perfection; but patiently to endure injuries done to another pertains to imperfection and even to vice.' Jesus is not legislating but indicating a spirit by which we should live. 'Resentment is absolutely condemned, but not in all possible circumstances resistance.'

But of more pressing interest perhaps is the Archbishop's all too brief but pregnant treatment of a felt difficulty about Ethics. Many factors have conspired to make the question a living one in our time—Are the moral principles which ought to guide individuals those which ought to govern the relations of groups of men such as States? It is a question which has been little regarded in moral philosophy. In contrast to the Ethics applicable to the individual, which has been worked out in great detail and in which Christians are in a large measure of agreement, this group-morality has been oddly neglected. Some German writers have handled it, and in America Niebuhr has broken ground; but the philosophical treatment of this very real problem is only in its infancy.

On the one hand, we remember the Prussian publicists who before 1914 preached that the Sermon on the Mount has nothing to do with nations. On the other, since 1918 we have had many proclaiming, some of them quite violently, that the Sermon is as binding on groups as on individuals. And many are bewildered. Well, in his few pages Dr. TEMPLE cannot be expected to solve the problem. But he does contrive to say some things which need attention.

'What is morally wrong cannot be politically right' is regarded by many as an axiom. It is, Dr. TEMPLE holds, 'a deceptive saying true only in a sense which makes it irrelevant, and relevant only in a sense which is untrue.' If it means that political actions should be directed to the highest conceivable good whether it be attainable or not, then it is a false principle as the outcome will be harmful not beneficial. It is foolish to impose on the mass of mankind a policy which has no root in their own wills. To say that the moral requirements for groups are the same as those for individuals is to ignore the extent to which a man's group-relations modify his individual situation and therefore his duty. A single man may feel called to personal sacrifices of a kind that a married man should not consider, and, if he be a father, would be wrong to contemplate. What right has he through his own splendid self-sacrifice to make life extremely hard for the innocent, passive infant?

Can one nation rightly be admonished to prefer the interests of other nations to its own as an individual may be taught to give place to others? As Dr. TEMPLE points out, there is no true analogy between the two cases. As individuals we may give way to one another, and surrender much to others, and all to the good; but is it quite the same situation as between nations? As members of a nation we are in the position of trustees; the national heritage of culture and all else is a solemn legacy from the achievement of the past. Not only so, but we have to consider those coming after us. And in our determining any policy we have to be loyal to those who went before and to those who come after. These are only two of the points dealt with in this suggestive, in part provocative, chapter. We may agree or disagree with Dr. TEMPLE, but he has at least shown that the problem of group-ethics is far more complex than has been commonly recognized.

So much has been written by and about Karl BARTH that all who are interested in theology must by this time be aware of the unique place he holds in the theological world of to-day. The sound of the alarm bell which, as he says, he accidentally rang has resounded throughout Christendom, and his writings have been as a sword dividing men and bringing sharply to decision. Many have

enthusiastically accepted his teaching; many have found it unintelligible or unpalatable.

It is not, however, too much to say that his latest book, *Credo* (Hodder & Stoughton; 8s. 6d. net), will lead to a better understanding and a new appreciation of him, at least in English-speaking circles. It is an exposition of the clauses of the Apostles' Creed as delivered in a course of lectures at the University of Utrecht, and it has been admirably translated.

Two qualities stand out conspicuously. The first is simplicity. BARTH'S style has lost much of its abruptness, and it does not abound to the same extent as formerly in paradox. The second quality is what can only be called his deadly earnestness. The sufferings through which the Evangelical Church in Germany has passed, and is still passing, have left their deep impress upon him. He is not to-day a dialectician, calmly discussing theological problems, he is a champion desperately fighting for the faith.

He finds that this desperate earnestness is not wholly welcome to his audience of Dutch students who share with all of us the tendency to play with theological questions rather than to be brought to the sharp edge of decision. 'All your questions betray to some extent that you are still able to pursue theology in *comfort*, with a certain calmness and detachment in regard to its problems, such as we once knew in Germany, but to-day know no longer. Here the delectable possibility is still yours of actually standing *over against* theological matters, of observing them, of having them approach in themselves. And now this Professor has blown in from Germany and with regard to many matters has said something very definite in a somewhat *binding* fashion, and you from your situation—that became very clear in your letters—are making a more or less cautious *defensive* movement. You would prefer that all questions, or as many as possible, should be left open. Though known as "head of the Dialectic Theology," I am not dialectic enough for you! . . . All this that has happened in Germany has been a challenge to the Church and to theology, has been and is a challenge to each individual theologian to make a stand, to decide, to confess.'

It would be quite impossible here to attempt a summary of these lectures which are so compact in thought, so profound and heart-searching. Some notes, however, may be given on the first article of the Creed, the Christian doctrine of God. Many who have looked into the first volume of Karl BARTH'S Dogmatics—a truly monumental work if it be completed—have been surprised to find that after treating of the Word of God as the criterion of Dogmatics he plunges straight into the doctrine of the Trinity. He completely reverses what many would regard as the natural order, beginning abruptly at a point which theologians usually reach as the culmination of a long argument, and which some never reach at all.

Why is this? A study of the doctrine of God in BARTH'S *Credo* will make the reason plain. BARTH is insistent that the Creed, from its first article to its last, is written from a Christian standpoint, and that it is wholly based on the Christian facts. God is savingly known in Christ. There is a real and unique revelation in the Word, adequate for human need, and not to be modified or supplemented from other sources.

'God,' as spoken of in the opening words of the Creed, is not a being of whom the unbeliever has a certain knowledge which is enriched when he becomes a believer. To the unbeliever God is an 'unknown God' in the sense in which St. Paul used that expression at Athens, that is, in the sense that the truth about God is among men, made ineffective and unfruitful. 'The word "God" in the symbol, therefore, must not mislead us into first giving consideration to the nature and the attributes of a being which, on the basis of our most comprehensive experiences and deepest reflexion, we think we have discovered as that which this name may and must fit, in order thereupon, under the guidance of the historical statements of the symbol, to ascribe to the subject so conceived this and that definite predicate, behaviour and act.

On the contrary, we have to begin with the admission that of ourselves we do *not* know what we say when we say "God," *i.e.* that all that we think we know when we say "God" does not reach and comprehend Him who is called "God" in the symbol, but always one of our self-conceived and self-made idols, whether it is "spirit" or "nature," "fate," or "idea" that we really have in view. . . . Only God's revelation, not our reason despairing of itself, can carry us over from God's incomprehensibility. In telling us that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the symbol, which speaks of God on the basis and in the sense of the prophetic-apostolic witness, expresses absolutely for the first and only time *Who* God is and *What* God is.'

The designations of God as 'the Father Almighty' and 'the Creator of heaven and earth' are to be interpreted in the same way. Here is no 'playground for Natural Theology.' We do not take our imperfect conceptions of fatherhood and make a transference of them to God, but on the contrary God is revealed as essentially and eternally Father, and is the ground and incomparable prototype of all human creaturely fatherhood. In like manner His omnipotence is not to be understood from any philosophical idea of infinite potentiality. 'But the omnipotence of the Father, revealed in the revelation of His Son through the Holy Spirit, is (in the obedience and faith given to the revelation) a reality which can be recognized as the totality of all known and conceivable and unknown possibilities. For the Lord over life and death with Whom we have here to do is as such the Lord of our existence, *i.e.* He to Whom our life and with it our death has become bound, He Who at the utmost limit of all our possibilities commands us: Halt! and at the very same place and instant: Forward! to Whom therefore we effectively *belong*, *i.e.* in extremest fear and in greatest hope. That is "omnipotence" in a serious sense of the word.'

The doctrine of Creation has nothing to do with a 'world-view,' nor is it part of a general science that has got to be crowned and completed by Christian knowledge. 'If man looks at the world generally and from out of himself, and thinks he knows something of its origin, and if he perhaps decides to name this origin "God," he must yet turn round again and become as a child in order to hear and comprehend what the symbol in common with Holy Scripture says: Creator of heaven and earth.' The doctrine says not only that we absolutely belong to God, but that without Him we should not be and that we exist only through Him. Because God is the Creator of the world it stands under His sovereignty, while it presents a certain mode of the existence of God to His creature. 'Therefore in the proposition, "God is the Creator," we recognize not only God's transcendence, but also the immanence of that God so completely transcendent to the world. Remembering the Creator's transcendence, we shall be safeguarded against ascribing to the world as such any divinity whether imparted to it by God or belonging to itself independently. This very same recollection of the Creator's transcendence will, however, also warn us against denying God's co-existence with the world and therefore His immanence, *i.e.* His free omnipotent presence and lordship in the world that He created.'

The doctrine of Creation, however, has its definite limits. There is the problem of evil. It is impossible to ascribe its existence to the Creator, equally impossible to deny His omnipotence by assuming an anti-God. 'In order to keep true to the facts, Dogmatics has here, as in other places, to be logically inconsequent. Therefore in spite of the omnipotence of God—or rather on the score of the rightly understood omnipotence of God, Dogmatics must not at this place carry the Creation-thought right to the end of the line.' Our logic is brought to a halt before the *mysterium iniquitatis*.

Similarly, the immanence of God would seem to exclude a special presence of God such as we associate with miracle, prayer, and the Church. But our logic must give way to the gospel facts. For 'if we did not know about the immanence, once and for all and in an altogether special sense, of the Word of God in the flesh, how would and could we dare, in despite of sin, evil, death, and devil, to

believe in a general immanence of God in the world, and to live?'

The new issue of *The Modern Churchman* contains the addresses given at the Twenty-third Annual Conference held at Oxford in August. The President was Dr. W. R. Matthews, who spoke on 'The Rights of Reason in Religion,' and Dr. Inge read a paper on 'Prayer.' The general theme was 'What to Believe,' which brought the members of the Conference right up against the Christian facts. As a consequence, the papers on this occasion seem more positive than usual. There even appears a tendency in the contributions to move slightly to the right. Perhaps the most interesting and valuable paper read was on 'The Significance of Jesus for Faith,' by the Rev. R. D. RICHARDSON, M.A., B.Litt. As this takes us to the heart of things, we give a brief summary of it.

The writer raises, and answers, certain crucial questions. First: Can the records that we have of Jesus compel faith for those who have no faith? The answer is No. Where faith is not intuitive; or where the lives and teaching of those we know have not awakened it; or where joy or sorrow have not re-made us within, the records we have of Jesus cannot *create* faith. But, secondly, can they create faith in us if our scale of values is already right? The answer is Yes. Because there is a background in our lives, a great and ever-growing volume of experience which is all of a piece with the records.

Thirdly, should faith in Jesus comprehend the whole of the Christian's faith? No. He was not such for the faith of the first disciples, whose faith was fixed on *God*, a spiritual being without visible representation. And our Christianity has always been a faith in God. We believe that God is revealed in Jesus, but orthodox Christianity has never believed that Jesus exhausts God. He is the mighty river, but God is the wide, wide ocean.

Fourthly, do we know enough about Jesus for Him to be truly significant for our faith here and now in this twentieth century? 'To this question the answer is emphatically Yes.' It is true that the Gospels contain elements of interpretation. Everywhere in the New Testament historical elements are held in solution by active elements of faith, though not of faith as opposed to fact. In this matter 'Form-Criticism' has been a helpful discipline. For it has shown, for example, how in Mark, both in its main lines and in its colouring, history is not hidden from us; and that, quite certainly, in the most primitive short paragraphs we get very near to the living, speaking voice of Jesus.

Moreover, the New Testament portrait of Jesus is multiple, and each aspect of it complementary to the others. Truth is a jewel of many facets, and it is our joy to see several facets of this shining together, to the increased splendour of each. The significance of the portrait, then, is to be found in its wholeness, in the perfect round, in the balance that it presents, even of contrasting elements. We must not analyse the Gospels to find the irreducible minimum of bare history. The real truth lies in the Figure that emerges when we combine the features into a unity.

We come, then, to the essence of the question: What is the significance of Jesus for faith? It is twofold. First, there is the religious consciousness of Jesus Himself. Secondly, there are the interpretations which His Christians have given of Him. First, then, 'the mind of Christ,' the study of which is best described as the study of an overwhelming religious experience. We shall be most illuminated if we look not so much for things either new or old in what He says and does, but for things which bear the stamp of an unrivalled, immediate knowledge of God. His faith is a completely unreserved trust, dazzling, daring, deliberate, which knows no defeat. And yet it is based on fact. He knows, through prayer, the God of whom He speaks.

'He appears to have neglected all cult and ceremony; set forth no forms of faith; made no religious profession. A Sovereign Freedom reigns

over all His words and actions; a Sovereign Truth; a Sovereign Love.' There is nothing shifting, or fitful or merely changeful about Him, but everywhere, says Von Hügel, there are 'energy and expansion, thought and emotion, effort and experience; joy and sorrow, loneliness and conflict, interior trial and triumph, exterior defeat and supplantation: particular affections, particular humiliations: homely labour, a homely heroism, greatness throughout in littleness. And in Him, for the first and last time, we find an insight so unique, a Personality so strong and supreme, as to teach us, once for all, the true attitude to suffering.'

But in addition to the religious consciousness of Jesus Himself, there are the interpretations of Him given by His disciples. To begin with, St. Paul in First Corinthians gives us a statement of beliefs which were the substance of the Apostolic preaching not more than seven years after the Crucifixion. It contains the following points: The prophecies fulfilled and the New Age come through Jesus: born of the seed of David: died according to the Scriptures: buried: rose on the third day: seen of Cephas: exalted at the right hand of God: He will come to be our Judge.

This Apostolic theme is filled out by the New Testament as a whole. The Gospels do this by dwelling on the earthly life of Jesus. But in their final form the Gospels have become a creed, an interpretation, and they represent Jesus as a Divine Being, moving across the stage of history and performing suitable miracles, while all that He says and does is completely known to, and planned by, God; whence follows the simplicity and majesty of the narrative, free from a single adjective, I believe, in the heart-rending story of the Passion ('Jesus wiped away the adjectives from men's lips,' says Glover). One gets a sense of 'God over all.' And this has its own value for us in estimating the significance of Jesus for faith. The writers felt that, in Jesus, 'God had visited and redeemed His people.'

Then St. Paul's interpretation. The new age which has dawned is the age of the long-promised gift of the Spirit; and it has proved to be the Spirit of Jesus, which since His resurrection has entered mightily into this world of 'Law' and sin and created a new Fellowship, righteous, holy, glorious, immortal. The Apostolic band has become a Spirit-bearing Church. Thus there are two foci in the New Testament, the personality of Jesus and the activity of the Holy Spirit; but yet again these two are one.

The writer sums up briefly the 'interpretations' in Hebrews and John. And then he comes to the question: What is the significance of Jesus for faith *to-day*? His answer is 'essentially I think it is the same as in the past.' He would say that God entered history at last decisively in Jesus Christ except that he does not like the word 'entered.' It savours too much of a view of a world into which God comes only from without. We now think of the universe as being the result of a continuous process in which God emerges continuously. Yet the fact remains that there are at times fuller emergences into history of the Divine Spirit, and that Jesus is a decisive revelation of the character and will of God.

Human thought may circle round Him, as the Bishop of Birmingham says, but it does not go past Him. 'It is unfortunate that the word Incarnation is historically associated with the idea of a miraculous conception; but, despoiled of that element, it alone conveys the essential thought of the uniqueness of Jesus. Again, we modern Christians see the same significance in Jesus as led our forefathers to speak of Him as the God-man and to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity. Let it suffice then for me to say that here was One who was truly man; who was able so to live and talk, and be "to the Eternal Goodness what his right hand is to a man," . . . as that His life presents a series of Epiphanies—glorious unveilings of God.'

Thus is established in Jesus the kinship of God and man. But this does not mean that the world has no need of redemption. Jesus is the Brother

of all men, but He is also their Lord. His nature and ours are of the same stuff, but He is the diamond, we are the charcoal. The holiest of His disciples are those most conscious of their need of forgiveness. And it is to Him that we go that we may be kindled and purified, and may feel the power of God's forgiveness. 'Thus, the significance of Jesus for faith is such that our attitude to Him determines whether we enter the Kingdom of God and inherit its blessings or not.'

The Present Situation of Theology in Germany.[1]

I.

By Professor Karl Heim, D.D., Ph.D., Tübingen University.

If I am going to speak about the present situation in German theology, I am afraid I cannot report new masterpieces of creative thought or the emergence of world-stirring ideas. The waves of the political movement are still too high for that. The monastic quietness of the secluded study, in which the great theologians thought out their systems, is missing. I can only speak of foundations that have been shaken, and of one or two attempts to begin building again.

My remarks may be brought under three heads: 1. The decline of Liberalism in all its forms. 2. The crisis of the Theology of Crisis. 3. The call to return to the sources, that is, to the Bible and to Christ Himself.

Until the end of the nineteenth century, indeed up to the end of the Great War, German theology followed three lines of development. It had three starting-points. The first was the philosophy of Kant, which asserted that man was free and morally autonomous. This philosophy was carried over into a theological system by Albrecht Ritschl and his famous disciples. The central idea of the Ritschlian theology was the idea of the Kingdom of God, which Jesus founded, as a Kingdom of autonomous individuals who know that God is not a Judge, but the Father of all mankind. In my student days, forty years ago, we used to divide up our divinity students into two classes, those who could understand Ritschl, and those who could not, and probably never would understand him. This theology exercised a great influence in the past; and even to-day there are not a few important Ritschlian theologians in Germany. But this theology is now a thing of the past. What is the reason for this? Paul Tillich remarks in one of his books. 'The modern man is an autonomous man, but an autonomous man whose belief in his own autonomy is shaken.' No theology adequate to the present generation can be erected upon the autonomy of the individual. The age of individualism is past.

The second starting-point of pre-war German theology was the speculative theology of Hegel and David Friedrich Strauss, both of whom were students in the Tübingen Theological Seminary. The basis of this theology was the abstract idea of the identity of the infinite with the finite. A timeless idea, a Christ-principle, was put in the place of the historical person of Jesus. Strauss, under Hegel's influence, could affirm that 'the idea cannot bear to see its riches lavished upon the individual.' The idea of salvation, by means of which the whole of humanity accomplishes its own deliverance, is then substituted for the Saviour who appeared at a specific, never-to-be-repeated point in history. This theology had an amazing influence during the second half of the nineteenth century. This influence was strengthened and enlarged by the alliance between speculative theology and the Higher Criticism, which had destroyed the traditional picture of our Lord and left in its stead a mere myth. This speculative idealism, like the Ritschlian theology, belongs to the past. The generation which fought in the War could not and cannot live by abstract ideas. It has learnt to look the facts squarely in the face, however cruel or disturbing they may seem to be. I have still very vivid memories of the students who came back to my lecture-room, straight from the trenches. For them the light of all ideas and

[1] A lecture given in Edinburgh, July 2nd, 1936.