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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE tremendous problem of Church and State has in these days been forced to the front and has again become acute. It has, indeed, never been in abeyance for long, since our Lord uttered the enigmatic sentence, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.'

The crux of the problem lies precisely in the interpretation of that sentence. What things are Cæsar's, and what things are God's? The answer is not simple, for the reason that things divine and human are so closely interlinked. Both sides have stretched their claims beyond due limits, and Church and State have contended for supremacy down through the centuries.

The papal claim that the Church is supreme, and that the authority of the State is subordinate, was strenuously resisted by the imperial powers throughout the Middle Ages, and was, of course, repudiated at the Reformation. In Protestant countries generally the State claimed supreme authority, and strove to make the Church a branch of the civil service. In Scotland there was a prolonged fight for 'the crown rights of the Redeemer,' and it was believed for a time that a happy solution of the relation of Church and State had been found, which was expressed in the Mesopotamian phrase 'co-ordinate jurisdiction with mutual subordination.' The end of that, however, came in a disruption, not a disruption of the Church as is commonly supposed, but, as the authors of it strongly contended, a disruption between Church and State.

This gave a big impetus to the modern Nonconformist doctrine of 'a free Church in a free State' which for a time seemed to promise a fair solution. But, by and by, it became increasingly clear that the matter could not rest there permanently. The modern State was extending its activities on every hand. It was taking over works of charity and services, such as education, which had previously been held to be within the province of the Church. By its activities, particularly in education, it was directly affecting the moral and spiritual life of the citizens. So the situation became more and more involved.

The revolutions which have followed the War are, however, the main cause why the relation of Church and State has again become so acute. Russia presents us with the spectacle of the State persecuting the Church with a view to its complete elimination. In Germany and Italy claims are put forward on behalf of the State which are manifestly incompatible with the Church's loyalty to God. Elsewhere, as in Spain and in Spanish America, there is evidence of fanatical antagonism to religion.

All these are portents which cannot be ignored. Accordingly the Universal Council for Life and Work, which is the continuation of the Stockholm

Conference, has been led to decide that the special subject for consideration at the next Conference shall be 'Church, Community, and State.' This Conference will be held in Oxford in the summer of 1937. Already preparatory Conferences and group and individual studies are being pursued in different countries. The aim of this preparatory work is to focus upon the Conference a great body of co-operative thinking and discussion in which Christians of all the different churches and countries may engage. To assist in this a small but very educative book has been published in America, the title of which is *Christ's Way and the World's in Church, State, and Society*, by Mr. Henry Smith LEIPER (Abingdon Press; 90 c.). The writer is the Secretary of the Universal Christian Council, and his book is introduced in a foreword by Dr. W. Adams Brown, the Chairman of the Council.

The aspect of the world as it confronts the Church to-day is very ominous. 'The skies in some parts of the world are reddened by the burning of churches. Christians in nations long devoted, at least nominally, to the idea of religious liberty are faced with imprisonment or worse if they dare to exercise that liberty. The very roots of the Church have been ripped from the soil of some lands. In many others they have been exposed, and are in imminent danger of being cut. Facts such as these have caused many wise men to warn that the Church must become the conscience of civilization, or become its slave. Others go further and say that the Church must likewise unite or perish.' Both Communism and Fascism have undoubtedly supplied many with what is for them a new religion. Their unrest and uncertainty have been changed into a positive, forward-looking creative passion full of buoyancy and irresistible attraction to unthinking multitudes. 'It is in this aspect of Communism and Fascism that one finds the greatest challenge to Christianity. Each contains elements of good, each is fired by a kind of passion for social justice, each utilizes the instinctive idealism of men and women and capitalizes on their readiness to give themselves whole-heartedly to some great movement directed to the bringing in of a better social order.'

In face of this, what does Christianity offer to the world? It offers the power of God for the total redemption of man and society. It offers Christ, the Christian way of life, and the Church as the universal fellowship for the nurture of that life under God. Every one is conscious of how far short the Church has come in fulfilling its function in the world. Yet it would be unjust not to acknowledge how much the Church has done and is still doing to change human life and human society for the better. 'The Church is the only institution in the world which stands for the revelation of God in Christ and mediates that truth and its implications to the individual at every stage in his life day after day and year after year, at times of crisis and in life's routine.'

The world and the Church, the State and society, interpenetrate and overlap. They are made up more or less of the same persons. The conflict, where it arises, is not, therefore, between the State and the Church as entirely separate entities, but rather it is between 'the Christian ideal as represented by those who are trying to realize it in State and Church alike, and the worldly ideal which has its advocates in both.'

What, then, may the State reasonably expect from the Church? It must not ask for definite solutions for vexed economic and political problems, and the Church is not authorized or qualified as such to offer them. But the State may expect from the Church a clear witness to the Christian social ideal even when Christians do not know exactly how it is to be realized. It may expect criticism of all in public life which falls below the Christian ideal. It may reasonably look to the Church to incarnate in individual citizens such a spirit of brotherhood as will make conflict less bitter and co-operation more easy. It may expect from the Church a courageous defence of the liberty of conscience and the right of free speech. It may expect an analysis of current problems in the light of the fundamental, moral, and spiritual principles involved.

If the Church fulfils such functions in the State with fidelity, conflict is sure to arise from time to

time. But such conflict should not be regarded as either normal or permanent. To assume this would really be to despair of the fulfilment of the Church's task, which is to infuse the Christian spirit into the activities of the State. As Dr. Garvie has well said: 'To assume because of the present tension, and even conflict, due to abnormal conditions, that there must be a permanent 'incompatibility of temper' between Cæsar and Christ is to ignore the real gains of the past in humanizing and even Christianizing government, and to distrust the sufficiency of divine grace for human need, the cleansing, renewing, and hallowing influence of the Spirit of God.'

At the same time the Church has ample reason for self-criticism, for it cannot be denied that where the State has shown definite hostility against the Church, part of the explanation lies in the weaknesses and inadequacies of the Church itself. It may be taken as a hopeful sign that there is a growing spirit of self-criticism in the Church, which manifests itself in deep longings for a new vitality, a more effective organization, a more complete organic unity. The Church has often in time past risen to great occasions, and it is not too much to hope that she will be able to find new modes of thought and action through which she will reorientate herself to the tone and temper and tribulation of modern life.

In her brilliantly written book, *Worship* (Nisbet; 10s. 6d. net), Evelyn UNDERHILL has an interesting chapter on Jewish worship and its influence on Christian worship. She begins with the familiar fact that, seen from the historical standpoint, Christianity in its origin was a Jewish sect. It still bears many marks of this ancestry; and nowhere more prominently than in its liturgical life. For Jesus the Temple was His Father's house. The petitions of the prayer which He taught His followers are with one exception drawn from Jewish sources. His answer to the question about inheriting eternal life was in the words of the Torah. He was familiar with the Prophets and the Psalter. His most sacred ordinance was instituted at a Jewish ritual meal. He died with the daily evening prayer of every Jewish home upon His lips.

The early Christians continued, like their Founder, to take part in the national worship; and since the devotional routine of the Temple and synagogue was the only kind of public worship known to and used by them, it inevitably provided the matrix within which Christian institutional worship afterwards developed. The Jewish ritual use of water, oil, bread, and wine, familiar to the Apostolic Church, exerted a direct influence on the form which was taken by the Christian Sacraments. The Jewish Psalter became the first hymn-book of the Church, and still remains the backbone of its ordered daily worship. The reading and expounding of the Old Testament was from the beginning a vital part of the ministry of the Word. Thus Christian worship accepts and completes the devotion of the synagogue, and shows forth in its fulness the spiritual mystery towards which the sacrifices of the Temple looked.

So some knowledge and sympathetic understanding of Jewish worship is essential to any real understanding of Christian worship. The Jewish soul was peculiarly sensitive towards God. It is this, indeed, and this only, which distinguishes Israel from other Semitic tribes. In spite of all her lapses, and in spite of the primitive and coarse elements in her religious life, the history of this people is that of one dominated by that thirst for God and that sense of obligation to God which forms the raw material of all worship. And in the records we find God recognized and adored under two complementary aspects: the Numen, the Eternal, the utterly Transcendent, and also as the Wholly Good, setting a standard of holiness and convicting man of sin. In both, in different ways, He requires the unlimited self-offering and dedication of His people.

With this double vision of God there goes a double tradition of worship: sacrifice and ethic, institutional religion and prophetic religion. Israel's response to God was purest and deepest when these two aspects of man's single self-offering to the Eternal were harmonized: the prophet's deep sense of God's moral demand reanimating, correcting, and spiritualizing the temple worship.

It is true that these two aspects of worship were often set in opposition. In periods of corruption the prophets often spoke like 'pessimistic protestants,' so sick were they of the many perversions of the cultus and its divorce from reality. But it must be remembered that these denunciations were uttered by men whose own deep religious experience was closely bound up with temple worship. They are like the violent condemnations of the shortcomings of the Papacy and Catholic worship uttered later by St. Catherine of Siena.

So many of the greatest pages in the prophetic writings are concerned with the condemnation of formalism and correction of abuse, that we are apt to forget the true splendour of the institution so jealously watched and so constantly recalled to its ideals. The true line of growth is not to be found in the prophet's unbridled denunciations of ritual, but in the lofty and balanced theism of Deuteronomy or those post-exilic psalms which reproduce the liturgic spirit of the second temple. It is this that stretches all the way from primitive religion to Christian worship, and has made the religious history of Israel crucial for the spiritual history of man.

From the point of view of its influence on Christian worship, it is not the primitive origin of the temple and synagogue cultus which chiefly matters to us: but its development in the period immediately before the birth of Christ and the religious temper it nourished and expressed. What, in fact, was the institutional worship of those Jews who began Christian institutional worship? And what was the devotional value of their liturgical life? It was dominated by Jerusalem and the temple worship, and was nourished by a deep and instructed reverence for the Scriptures, and by the devotional routine of the local synagogue. All these elements have to be recognized, and, though the dangers of formalism and materialism constantly assailed them, yet they gave the people's life at every level a Godward inclination, and so were made to serve the deepest religious instincts of men.

The local religious service of the synagogue, which gave the Jewish Church something equivalent to a parochial system and linked the religious life of every village with the central sanctuary, was the chief liturgical invention of later Judaism. In it, for the first time, ordered corporate worship was dissociated from sacrifice, and centred upon the reading and meditation of Scripture. The influence of the synagogue on the development of Christian worship has probably been greater than that of any other single factor, for it is the ancestor first of the primitive normal Sunday service of the infant Church, next of the Divine Office, and last of the countless forms of free evangelic worship based on Scripture reading, preaching, praise, and extempore prayer.

It is tempting to look on the worship of the synagogue as representing the prophetic over against the priestly element in Judaism, and therefore as a contrast or even a corrective to the sacrificial cultus of the temple; and even to see in this contrast a foreshadowing of that which is supposed to exist between the Christian ministry of the Word and Sacraments, or more generally between Evangelical and Catholic ideals of worship. But this temptation should be resisted. In the full religious practice of the devout Jew of New Testament times, both temple and synagogue were accepted as the two aspects of one total response to God. They were parts of a single worshipping life, and there was from the beginning a close organic connexion between them. The prayer and adoration of the humblest local assembly were given fresh dignity by the fact that they were deliberately synchronized, and linked in intention, with the great national acts of worship on Mount Zion.

But beyond all this, our greatest and deepest debt to Judaism is the quality of that realistic conception of God and realistic attitude to God which it bequeathed to the Church, a conception and an attitude which are mainly transmitted to us in the Psalms. The hundred and fifty poems of the Psalter, which still remain the classics of theocentric worship, have probably exerted an influence upon Christian devotional tradition greater than that of any single factor. They still form the sub-

stance of the Divine Office of the Roman, Orthodox, and Anglican communions.

The peculiar function of poetry as the carrying medium of a spiritual intuition, otherwise unexpressed, is fully seen when we consider the Psalter in relation to our whole religious history. Without it we could hardly realize the depth and breadth and height of the devotional landscape within which the historic incarnation took place, for it is the gate which admits us to the inner world of Israel's spiritual experience. If, therefore, our worship is true to the totality of the Judeo-Christian inheritance, it will not be all bright and clear, thin in colour, humanistic, and this-world in feeling. It will retain the ancient sense of cloud and darkness, other-worldly fire and light, which still lives in the Psalter; the awe before a sacred mystery which is with us yet never of us, the deep sense of imperfection, and, above all, the unconquerable trust and the adoring love for a God who has set His glory above the heavens, and yet is mindful of the children of men.

In *The One Way of Hope* (Hodder & Stoughton; 2s. 6d. net), the Rev. A. Herbert GRAY, D.D., speaks to Youth. As one 'in the later sixties,' he addresses 'men and women in the early twenties.' He speaks in language that Youth will understand. He knows what will appeal to Youth. He knows its difficulties about Christianity, and makes an impressive attempt to remove them.

He is no pessimist. He has great confidence in Youth; he has great confidence in the success of the enterprise to which he summons Youth, and in the cure for the world's ills which he commends. The world is in evil case, but it is not past hope. On the rising generation rests the responsibility of saving it. He would despair of the world if he did not believe that Youth may do better than its predecessors. They failed because they did not act on certain convictions which life has forced upon him. They have shown 'how not to do it.' The convictions to which Dr. GRAY has come, he is persuaded, are nothing but the truths that Jesus taught; and his appeal to Youth is to carry them out.

There are, he points out, two rival movements at present contending for mastery in the world, each of which in the end means ruin. They are Fascism and Communism. The one means international hate, the other class-hatred, and both mean war. Both do injury to personality. Communism, he explains, is to be here understood as the declared policy of the Communist Party. There is much in 'Communism' as a social or industrial theory with which a Christian may agree; but the Communism which is challenging the world is more than that.

Over against both, however, may be displayed the banner of 'applied Christianity' which calls us to act in all human relationships in the spirit of Jesus, and in harmony with His teaching. That is the one way of hope for the world. What is wrong with our world when tested by the teaching, example, and spirit of Jesus? Much; but two things most glaringly so; all that makes for war, and our industrial system with all its stupidities, tyrannies, and waste. As to the latter point, Dr. GRAY freely admits that the path to better things may be long. It is easy to condemn in general terms; it is difficult to bring forward on demand concrete proposals. To find such, or go some way towards finding such, is just part of the task which Youth must tackle.

Dr. GRAY's conviction is that by whatever means may prove practicable, competition must give way to co-operation in industry. 'The present system can be shown to be wasteful. It involves absurdities. It shows signs of breaking down. But beyond all else, it is wrong. It embodies vast injustices to a majority of mankind. It does not bring freedom and opportunity to the average man. It does not distribute its products equitably. In the name of God it must go'

If applied Christianity is to be the salvation of the world, then, clearly, Foreign Missions are, in view of the present world-situation, 'the most pressing need' of the age. 'There cannot be a

Christian Europe over against a pagan Asia and Africa. Races and nations that have not learned through Christ to love peace, will remain able to destroy the world's peace.' Further, 'The cruelties that remain in non-Christian lands are such as to wring the heart of anybody who has got a heart.' The position of women; the appalling poverty and ignorance; the disease; the superstitious terrors—such things point us our duty. 'The sole hope for the nations of the world, politically and socially, lies in such a spread of Christianity as will make possible the application of the Christian solutions for all our problems.'

Very impressive, even in a book which all through keeps on the same high level, is the final chapter on God. All our woes, Dr. GRAY holds, have ultimately one profound cause—'we have lost belief in God.' 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Our life lacks dignity, power, and significance, because beneath it is no reverence and no trust. He who does not know God cannot understand the world he lives in, and so cannot live truly. Men ignorant or neglectful of God cannot be true leaders, nor understand their fellows, nor have inward peace.

But can we be sure of God? 'There is only one voice that is worth listening to on the subject of God, and that is the voice of Jesus Christ. And He is worth listening to, because all the truth He uttered was also embodied in a real life.' 'Apart from His life we might have feared that His words were only the beautiful imaginations of an ardent spirit. Wedded to His life they constitute the surest, clearest declaration about God the world has ever known.'

Unfortunately this truth about God has often been 'mishandled.' It has become involved with, and all but obscured by, doctrinal tenets, ecclesiasticism, and ritual. If it be set free from all such embarrassments, the acknowledgment of God in Christ could save the world. The triumph of the Early Church would be repeated. To know God would deliver men from their fears, and the world to-day is fear-ridden: men would know their fellow-men as brothers; 'no dictator can flourish among men who know God'; and force would be kept in its proper place. 'From whatever quarter we approach the real issues of to-day, we arrive at the same result. The world's supreme need is the need of such a knowledge of God as will produce trust, and a quiet mind, and a new courage.'

The Rev. Frederick CAWLEY, B.A., B.D., Ph.D., has written a book which should be of interest to theologians and preachers. It is a study of the 'unique features' of the Person of Christ, with special reference to the Fourth Gospel, and it seeks to make clear the conviction that the Church is right in holding to the 'final supremacy' of Jesus Christ. The title is *The Transcendence of Jesus Christ* (T. & T. Clark; 9s. net).

In a Foreword the late Professor H. R. Mackintosh says that we should be grateful for any book which leads us a few steps into the treasures of light and truth gathered in the Gospel of St. John, and commends the book before us for the insight, reverence, and tireless love of spiritual truth which its pages display, not to speak of its acquaintance with the best that is being thought and said at this hour on the problems of Christology.

An impression of the scope of the work will readily be gained from a tabulation of its chapter headings, which are as follows: The Paradox of Jesus Christ, The Uniqueness of His Person, The Solitariness of His Cross, The Finality of Jesus Christ, The Validity of the Fourth Gospel. We shall give an account of the last-named chapter, as representing the author's primary interest as a student of the New Testament.

In treating of the Validity of the Fourth Gospel, the author asks us to consider four points, namely, (1) its outer validity, or the question of its precise authorship; (2) its inner validity, or the question of the authority of its main presentation; (3) its perennial validity, or its attestation of spiritual reality through the intervening centuries; (4) its

essential validity, or its presentation of Christ as the feasible solution of 'The Riddle of the New Testament.'

(1) On the first point, outer validity, no definite position is taken. Most scholars of non-extreme schools are agreed that underlying all else are the memoranda of the Apostle John. Mr. CAWLEY says that unless we can stand here, then the personal touches, the precise geographical data, the evidence of the 'Beloved Disciple,' cannot be explained at all satisfactorily. Beyond this, in his opinion, nothing is really clear; and in all probability the problem of authorship will never be solved: Irenæus and Papias will each draw to the last their own adherents.

(2) On the second point, inner validity, the position is taken that in its spirituality the Fourth Gospel shows an understanding of the inner significance of Jesus beyond that shown by the other Gospels. Further, though the writer of it stands on the shoulders of Paul, as one grateful to him, he gives in full what Paul only gives here and there in asides, fragments, suggestions, namely, a profound life of Christ. Yet, further, however much he may have stamped his own genius upon his material, yet as its prophetic interpreter he has been true to the tradition which held such sway over his heart. As E. F. Scott holds, he seems to have access to a better tradition than the Synoptists.

(3) On the third point, perennial validity, the position is taken that the Fourth Gospel is linked in spiritual history with this present hour; is always and everywhere spiritually impressive, no matter age or race or culture; finds us at our deepest levels; and therefore expresses a timeless appeal, the compulsion of truth through radiant personality.

(4) On the fourth point, essential validity, the position is taken that the insistence of the Fourth Gospel throughout on the transcendent Christ most distinctly marks its creative quality for Christian faith and experience; and that only a transcendent Christ can adequately explain the Church's history. The Fourth Gospel is thus an inspired polemic against an attenuated conception of Christ. As such, it is, in Hoskyn's words, 'the supreme background of all the New Testament sets out to declare.' It is to be observed, however, that it finally attests its validity only to the committed heart.

These four aspects of validity are not clear-cut in their relation to each other, and Mr. CAWLEY has not been able to treat of them as logically separable. Indeed, logical presentation is not his strong point. His strength lies in his sincerity and reverence as a Christian believer, to which may be added his knowledge of recent writings on his subject in the English language.