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The Churchman

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Editorial

MANY of the books which are reviewed in this issue owe their origin to the general upheaval created by the War. There is on all sides a desire for Reality and it is good to know that so many Christian leaders are facing up to the Challenge of the times.

These are days in which we need in full measure "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." If the Christian Church is to be the effective force which it ought to be and which we hope it may become, there will be need for courageous decisions. The essential content of the Gospel must be retained. There can be no compromise or readjustment there, but incidentals of Church Government, sectarian prejudices, anomalies of one kind and another must be examined and adjustment made where prejudice and not principle is at stake. Only thus will the Church deserve, and, it is hoped, secure, the goodwill of the people.

The question of Reunion cannot be shelved indefinitely, while the vast majority of people both inside and outside organized Christianity regard it as vital. The Vicar of St. John's, Boscombe, has an interesting and challenging article in this issue showing the way to Unity.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to welcome another article in *THE CHURCHMAN* from the pen of Principal Curr of the All Nations Bible College, London, and in these days when statesmen figure more prominently than ever in the public eye, it is helpful and refreshing to look back to a mighty statesman of former days to whom we owe the phrase "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture."

From the statesman-theologian we pass to the theologian-statesman, and many will read with pleasure unfeigned the article by Dr. Lavelle on "The Importance of Calvin for

Contemporary Evangelical Theology," but whether all will agree with the writer that "it is a revival of interest in Calvin's theology that is the clamant need of modern theology," is questionable.

Articles on Baptism are ever welcome, and the Rev. G. W. Bromiley's paper on the views of Baptism held by Cranmer and Rogers will no doubt be helpful to many.

Mr. Arthur Prior (now back in New Zealand) contributes an article on *The Rule of Faith* which has its message for to-day, and a further devotional study on *The Gospel of Truth* by the Rev. E. Hirst, together with many interesting reviews of recent publications complete what we trust will be an interesting, thought-provoking and spiritually helpful issue.

The Road to Unity

THE REV. A. W. PARSONS, L.T.H.

(Vicar of St. John's, Boscombe.)

THE late Professor Briggs, of New York, proposed that there should be recognized as a necessary branch of theological knowledge what he called *eirenics*, the study of the efforts at reconciling differences and removing divisions in the Christian Church. It is undeniable that many of these differences have arisen from causes within corrupt human nature which are analogous to those which have caused the present war. As Dr. G. T. Slosser wrote in the Preface to *Christian Unity*:¹ "Too many Christian leaders and too many Church historians would re-write Paul's concluding words to his classic on Love by insisting that 'The greatest of these is' faith, or probably polity. The highest points in the history of the Church have been when love was made to be uppermost, that love not being compromising weakness, but holy love which puts error and evil to rout by the power of the Spirit of God manifested in a crucified resurrected Christian life. . . . Sometimes genuine love leads to division. But the time has probably arrived when the setting up of any more standards in rival camps merely increases the already disgraceful scandal of division."

Those are wise and weighty words.

We must, however, know what the Churches stand for and this is the first step towards reunion. Unity will be dearly bought if it is the result of compromise and not of true comprehension. We must know what is really vital to our own position, and also we must have accurate knowledge of what other Christians believe.

I believe with Hugh Martin in *Towards Reunion*² that we should find on closer study that most of our present differences are complementary rather than antagonistic; differences of emphasis and proportion rather than of fundamental

¹ Kegan Paul Trench, 1929.

² S.C.M., 2nd Edition, 1937.

conviction. He goes on to say: "But it is vital that we should ask ourselves, if we are to discuss unity seriously, whether we are prepared to share in Christian fellowship with those who maintain beliefs with which we disagree—beliefs about Church order, or Sacraments, or Biblical inspiration, or the Atonement. Do we expect, do we even want, a Church in which everybody agrees with us? If we do, is there any denomination to-day in which we could find such unanimity?"

This is true not only of the denominations but even of various parties in schools within the Churches. What a wide difference there is between, say, the most extreme member of the F.E.C. and the most extreme member of the A.E.G.M.!

In 1933 Williams and Norgate published *The Necessity for Catholic Reunion* which dealt *inter alia* with the tragedy of the divisions of Catholics and advocated Reunion with Rome. On p. 157 we find some suggestions! Number 7 is: "That the Reunion of Anglican Catholics with the Holy See gives the best hope for the religion and morals of England." Proposition 8 lays down: "That the Church of England is growing more and more unsafe for Christ's little ones, and that Reunion (with Rome) is the only remedy"; while the next one declares: "The Anglican Catholic party is becoming more and more divided in faith and morals, and has before it the choice of Reunion or disintegration."

The authors of this book advocate (p. 161) that "when possible, new churches, schools, and presbyteries be vested in trustees who could transfer them to the Church in communion with the Holy See when Reunion is brought about."

One of the most astounding assumptions made by the author of this book, the Rev. T. Whitton, is based on statements made by the Rev. Spencer Jones who contributes a Foreword. Mr. Whitton quotes Mr. Spencer Jones (p. 128), as writing: "It is plain that the power to formally change her position which is denied to the Church of Rome, is a conspicuous characteristic with the Church of England"; and, "When we come to ask how this change (i.e. reunion) is to be effected, we are confronted by facts which deserve to be recognized: the fact, namely, that Rome cannot formally change, and the further fact that during the last

three hundred years change has been one of the characteristics of Anglicanism."

One knows, of course, that the Church of Rome's boast is that she is *Semper Eadem*. Superficially this claim to be always the same is one of the Roman Church's most impressive features. Dr. F. J. Paul in *Romanism and Evangelical Christianity* (1940) writes (p. 71): "In all lands Rome employs the same ritual in her sacred ministrations. She waits on the new-born child to baptize it as soon as possible after it is born, for if it dies unbaptized it goes to hell for ever;¹ she waits upon the dying, to strengthen him by her rites against the 'last great enemy.' Both these rites, at the beginning and end of life, as well as all, or almost all, between, are carried out all over the world (with a few exceptions) in — the same dead language, equally intelligible and equally unintelligible, to the ordinary worshippers everywhere." He adds justly: "The Church in which all the most important rites are performed, throughout the world in a 'dead language,' may impress the unthinking, but valuable elements are absent from her services which are present in an American negro-meeting round a camp fire."

Historically, however, the facts are absolutely against those Anglican Catholics who have allowed their dislike of change in their own Church and their admiration of the unchanging character of the Roman Church to dominate all their thought and dictate their future policy. There is no such unity in Rome to-day, and historically her teaching has altered at least five times.

About 1150 the Church of Rome was dominated by the Lombardic Theology which, on the important matter of human salvation, taught that Justification arose from grace accompanied by Good Works. About 1250 the Scholastic Theology succeeded which taught that salvation was secured by human works done by God's command. But this teaching was variously interpreted by the three Scholastic divisions, the Thomists, the Scotists and the Occamists. A little later, what may be called want of a better name, the Monastic Theology arose. This taught that human salvation was attained by Papal Indulgences, Works of

¹ Trid.-Cat., pl. ii, Chapter ii, Q. 30.

Supererogation and Will Worship. It was this which brought about the crisis of the Reformation and for a short time deeply affected the teaching of the Roman Church, bringing into being the Intermediate Theology which held that salvation was obtained by faith in Christ springing from love, but that good works were necessary. Lastly we have the Jesuitical Theology, which taught that salvation is secured by Good Works which "compel" God to deal favourably with the sinner.

Anglican Catholics who hold the view that Rome is the centre of unity also forget the Great Schism (1378-1415) when, for a period of more than thirty years, there were two and sometimes three popes, each excommunicating the other and the other's followers. Where was the unity of the Church during that period?

Now it is remarkable that we are witnessing to-day a movement in the Totalitarian States which is comparable to that movement which we see in the Totalitarian Church. In the Middle Ages the assumption by the One Church of full authority over the bodies and souls of men led to a scandalous misuse of power from which mankind was partially delivered by the Reformation. To-day it is the State in various countries which advances this claim. A Totalitarian Government is one which claims to dominate, control and direct the whole life of the community and of its individual members. It lays claim to man in the totality of his being, declaring its own authority to be the source of all authority and, consequently, refusing to recognize the independence in their own sphere of religion, culture, education and the family. It aims through education to create a type of man which shall serve the ends of the State.

In the Soviet Union this claim is pushed to the extreme limit. Every subject of the State must accept the principles of Karl Marx. "Religion must be rejected for good, without reservation or camouflage," is the statement made in a series of resolutions adopted by the Communist Party. In the Italian Fascist State, Mussolini has respected religion, and he entered into an agreement with the Roman Church in 1929. But the watchword of the Fascists is: "Nothing against the State; nothing outside the State; everything for the State." The result is seen in the really pitiable position of the Pope. It will be recalled, for example,

that during the Christmas season when the Pope spoke decidedly about the opposition of the Nazis to the Catholic Church, Mussolini presented Hitler with a villa in San Remo!

In Germany under Hitler all the resources of the State have been and are being used to create a new type of German manhood. There can be no escape from the question how far this new type of man is to be a Christian type of man, and the readers of *THE CHURCHMAN* know what the answer is. The National Socialism of Germany has already come up against the German Evangelical and the Roman Catholic Churches. What is noteworthy, I think, is that all these States hold that social unity can be achieved only by compelling everybody to believe the same thing.

In our country Mr. H. G. Wells opposes Communism, Fascism and National Socialism. But he believes in the World State. Under his scheme the new World Government which he hopes to see established will be relentless in suppressing contrary opinion. It will not brook the competition of rival religious systems. It will ultimately have no place for Christianity. As he says: "There will be one faith only for the world, the moral expression of the one world community."

At this period in the history of the world when all the Churches are engaged in a fight for the existence of the Church, it is a grave danger that we should be so hopelessly divided. Behind the struggles of the State in various countries to gain unity, uniformity of control, and final authority, there lies one of the deepest needs of man—

THE NEED FOR COMRADESHIP.

Men have found comradeship in many different ways; in the family; in the tribe; in the State; in their business or profession; in their social class, club or lodge, and in their race.

The simplest meaning of our Lord's prayer: "That they all may be one," seems to be that the Church of Christ should be a world-wide Christian Comradeship. The Christian Church has its members in all nations and among all races. Through union with Christ, the Head of the Church,

we become part of a great company which no man can number, whose members, differing though they may in race, language and customs, yet know that they are sons of one Father and have one leader, Jesus Christ. The Church is not the only international society. There are industrial, political and educational international unions—but political unions, however successful, must always be incomplete since international politics rests upon interests which are largely external and often temporary. Industrial interests only appeal to certain sections of the population and even education is less comprehensive than humanity. Religion alone touches, or should touch, the whole man in the totality of his being, body, soul and spirit. Only a religious society can be, in the fullest sense, international. Moreover, this Great Society is not confined to the living. It includes also the departed. Christian faith does not admit that death is the end of life. In the Church we have fellowship with all who have preceded us—not in memory only, but as comrades in the same task. Dr. Timothy T. Lew, a Chinese professor, wrote: "Before we can win the peoples of the world by teaching them the love of Christ we must set an example to them how we love one another within the Christian fold. To me the significance of the brief sojourn of the Master on this earth was to teach us, among other things, the supreme value and necessity of fellowship. Christ's prayer for His disciples was not for their individual success but for unity and love of the group. Love and unity were indeed the two corner stones of the Christian Church. The Church grew out of fellowship. It was carried on by love." I have read the history of the Reunion movement and am familiar with the various findings of Lambeth, Lausanne, Mansfield and other conferences. I claim to have read widely on these matters in the best books that are available but I do not think the Christian Churches will march along the road to Unity until we really face up to the issue involved in the words: "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." I do not despair of Conferences and Schemes of Union but I am sure that we need a new spirit of comradeship in Christ before these can make much progress.

THE CALL TO UNITY IS A CALL TO THE REVIVAL OF
TRUE RELIGION.

Only as we rally around the Living Christ shall we banish our prejudices, enlighten our understandings, and correct our mistakes. In 2 Chron. xxx. 12 we read: "The hand of God was to give them one heart." The circumstances of King Hezekiah's time remarkably resemble our own, and he saw that only a religious revival could turn back the evils which were coming on his people. So he sent them a message: "Turn again unto the Lord your God . . . yield yourselves . . . and serve the Lord." In our day Mr. John Oxenham has stated it as follows:

"Only one way there is by which this load
Of coming ill may yet be turned to good,
ONE ONLY WAY
Come back to God."

THE CALL TO CHRISTIAN UNITY IS ALSO
A CALL TO OBEDIENCE.

In Exodus xxiv. 3, we read: "All the people answered with one voice." Moses came back from the Holy Mount where he had been in communion with God and when he declared God's will they said: "All the words which the Lord hath said we are willing to do." In this day of broken brotherhood and yet of world-wide opportunity and responsibility can any one of us claim that we are "willing" in the day of God's power?

THE CALL TO UNITY IS ALSO A CALL TO ACTION.

Judges xx. 8, says: "All the people arose as one man." That was a sorry time in Israel. Corruption had polluted the land and public opinion was at a low ebb. But the people of God made up their minds to put away the evil from among them and prepare the way of the Lord. When we think of the need of the world for Christ, and of the multitudes outside the Christian Churches to-day, must we not give fresh heed to the Master's words: "That they all may be one, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me?" Nothing has been so distressing to some of us as the cleavage

within the ranks of evangelicals. Is it not our obvious Christian duty to join hands with those who are nearest to us in our own Church, whose road to union is at no point very far away from ours? Joining them we shall be nearing others all the time until we appear every one of us in Zion. We have grown apart in days of peace. We must draw closer to one another in days of war. By reading each other's writings, by personal friendship, by restraint of judgment, by kindlier thought and by public and private prayer we must first reduce the distance between us and those who are our nearest of kin. Above all, by concentration upon the mind and will of the Lord Jesus Christ, by surrender to His Spirit, and by loyalty to the fundamental obligations of our membership in the world-wide family of God the Father, we must move forward, assured as travellers to a common end, that our ways will meet in Christ and in the attainment of Christian brotherhood.

“ Lord, haste the day Thou hast foretold
When all Thy flock within one fold
Shall live in peace, by love controlled,
Obedient to Thy Will.

Constrain Thy children everywhere
To live for Thee, Thy cross to share;
Resolved, in faith, by work and prayer
To win the world for Christ.

Let love, and joy, and peace abound
Where'er Thy hallowed name is found,
Till Christ, in earth and heaven be crowned
Triumphant LORD OF ALL.

The Importance of Calvin for Contemporary Evangelical Theology

THE REV. A. B. LAVELLE, M.A., B.D., PH.D.

(Rector of Darlaston.)

JACQUES MARITAIN, the brilliant and influential scholastic thinker, has described his vocation in life with the words *Vae mihi si non thomistizavero*. And such a cry—for more reasons than one—might well suggest that the time is similarly ripe for a reevaluation of that summa of Reformation theology, John Calvin's *Christianæ Religionis Institutio*. Outside the Anglican Church there are many signs that such a reinterpretation of Calvin is already in process of being made. This fine volume from the pen of the President of Bristol Baptist College is a case in point.¹ The study of Calvinism at the present time is of the utmost importance to all who profess and call themselves Evangelical. Not only does Calvinism contain the logical answer to ancient and modern Thomism but it is historically the ark which has enabled Evangelical theology to survive in the engulfing seas of this modern world.

It is a great pity that to many Anglicans Calvinism is such a *damnosa hereditas* that its name has become but a synonym for the Genevan discipline of Church government or simply another way of writing the ninth Lambeth Article of Religion—*Non est positum in arbitrio aut potestate uniusque hominis servari*. (It is not in the will or power of every man to be saved.) So far have we moved from the days ironically described by Hooker in the Preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity when “the perfectest divines were judged they which were skilfullest in Calvin's writings.” Yet

¹ *Calvinism*, by A. Dakin, B.D., D.Theol. (Duckworth's Theology Series. 5/-).

Calvin is not the Westminster Confession of Faith and, as we shall see, his logical revival of the Augustinian doctrine of predestination is primarily an implication of his theology and not a major premise.¹ Apart from the fact noted in the preface to his book by Dr. Dakin that "No one indeed can cast even a cursory glance over the material (of Calvinism) without realizing that the problems raised are living issues in the world of to-day," intellectual integrity demands that we regard Calvin not only as one whose opinions count as an exegete but as one of the great creative theological minds of the centuries.

The still prevalent caricature of everything Calvin—and about this words cannot be too strong when almost everything we know of him is construed *per contra*—would not matter too greatly in the realm of biographical fact if it did not at the same time have the ultimate effect of eclipsing the truly amazing debt this modern world owes to the great Reformer. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the pervasive influence of Calvinism to this present hour. It has interpenetrated everywhere. Even such an unlikely person as Lord Byron remains a hopeless enigma unless we remember that the titanism of his poetry is but the vehement, if ineffectual, attempt to give a humanistic answer to that sense of sin he inherited from his early Calvinistic upbringing. (Is this the secret of Byron's popularity on the Continent?) We often speak these days of the morale and moral fibre of the English-speaking peoples but do we remember that their ultimate sanction is to be traced in no small part to that ontological interpretation of Christian morality the great dogmatic system did so much to popularize? The growth of the whole democratic way of life owes a debt to Calvin that has yet to be ungrudgingly recognized and adequately acknowledged. "A strong sense of religion seems to enable the Dutch to endure uncertainty," wrote *The Times* correspondent at Amsterdam some twelve months ago when describing the berserk onrush of the Nazi hordes. It would be difficult to find a

¹The whole question of Calvin's *decretum horribile* (awful decree) and the historic reactions against it open up an interesting subject which would require a separate discussion. For a stimulating and authoritative introduction to it, read a companion volume in the Duckworth's Theology Series, *Arminianism* by Dr. A. W. Harrison. (1937).

more striking testimony to the survival value of Calvinism than this verdict from the thrice-heated furnace of modern war.

Dr. Dakin rightly devotes the second half of his book to "Calvinism as an Ecclesiastical System" and to "Some Aspects of Calvinism," where something is done to trace this labyrinthine influence of Calvin's impact upon the modern world. For this reason alone this book will well repay perusal. Through Milton and, above all, through Bunyan, we are shown, "Calvinism succeeded in giving a fairly uniform theological background to the common mind" and that "even in Calvin's own lifetime, the movement began which was destined to make his life's work one of the shaping influences of the Anglo-Saxon world. His theology counted for much, his ethics for more, and perhaps the spirit and temper of his system for most of all."

Yet it is a revival of interest in Calvin's theology that is the clamant need of modern theology. It is an astonishing thing that there has been no English edition of Calvin's Institutes in recent years in spite of the fact that such a publication venture would be an undoubted success. The important First Edition of the Institutes (1536) has yet to be translated into English. Those who have not found it easy to get a copy of the Institutes must thank Dr. Dakin that in the first Part of this book he gives such an admirable and detailed account of the theology of this great classic. It should prove an admirable introduction to those who have yet "to be brought in contact with his earnest spirit and feel the mighty sweep of his thought" through a study of this monumental work itself. With Dr. Dakin we hope that it will lead others to savour the spirit and teaching of Calvin at first hand.

At the present hour of disillusionment and crisis we may perhaps be excused for thinking that a theology which has visibly altered the destiny of men and of nations has some special claims upon our intellectual regard. There have always been those who would minimize the influence of Calvinism in the Church of England. It is a commonplace to say that there would have been no Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion were it not for Calvin. And as Tulloch dryly remarks, "The Thirty-Nine Articles cannot be taken as a

characteristic specimen of Anglo-Catholic theology.”¹ We cannot be content to say of Calvinism what Dr. Bicknell said in 1925: “Traces of its influence still haunt popular theology.”² The present-day vogue of our Barths, Brunners, Kraemers, Visser T. Hoofts and many others represent a neo-Calvinistic irruption which is among the most striking phenomena of current theology. Is there not here eloquent testimony to the inherent strength and vitality of the teaching of Calvin? And when we think of the travail pangs of this new age and of the unknown future to which we are hurrying we may be tempted to wonder whether the present revival of Calvinism has not come for such a time as this. A modern historian has said that Calvin’s chief title to a place in the history of religion and civilization was his answer to “his master problem by what means could we best secure the expression of a changed faith in a changed life? Or, in other words, how could the Church be made not simply an institution for the worship of God, but an agency for the making of men fit to worship Him.”³ It is the master problem of the Church to-day.

If the greatest weakness of contemporary Evangelicalism in the Church of England is its neglect of theology, then the case for a revaluation of Calvinism is overwhelmingly urgent. No one would wish to argue or even seem to give the appearance of arguing for a mere return to Calvinism *pur sang*, but we do not hesitate to say that Calvin and his message have never been more relevant than to-day. A fresh study of the man of whom we can say “his mind was the mind of Erasmus, though his faith and conscience were those of Luther” might well be that propædeutic we need for a re-statement in terms of the problems of our day of an Evangelical theology not unduly timorous of its differentia and at the same time not merely reactionary in a Barthian sense. When we consider that the ultimate principle—and a study of Calvinism drives one continually back to the theologically ultimate—of Evangelicalism is a theological principle we can readily understand why the neglect of theological learning has meant too often a feebly held Evangelicalism and

¹ *Rational Theology and Christian Philosophy in England in the 17th Century*. Vol. i., p. 65. J. Tulloch.

² *A Theological Introduction to the XXXIX Articles*, p. 249. E. J. Bicknell. 1925.

³ *Cambridge Modern History*. Vol. ii., p. 364. A. M. Fairbairn.

why here as elsewhere a tide of enervating sentimentalism has swept over the Church.

Theology is a word we come inevitably to associate with the great Reformer and it is theology, too, in the great tradition. No one has applied himself so wholly to the vindication of the *gloria Dei* as no one has so drawn his cares and studies this one way. For the Institutes are a manifesto of that theocentric view of the universe where everything in this finite world of change and decay is grounded in the eternal nature of God. Behind the complexity of the world there is the simplicity of a Sovereign Will. Whereas Lutheranism might acquiesce in the joy and peace of justifying faith, the probing and reverent mind of Calvin ascribed all to the *solī Deo gratia*. The undoubted offence which Calvin's "*decretum horribile*" gives to the modern humanistic mind might be mitigated were it realized that for Calvin it was only the logical application of the principle of predestination so universally accepted by the theologians of the Reformation, not to speak of St. Paul and Augustine, and as Haering¹ reminds us it is the "absoluteness" of Divine grace and not its "particularity" that the Reformers had in mind. The sublimity of Calvin's attempt to carry the problem of evil to the mystery of the Divine initiative may overstep the boundaries of a truly Biblical theology—and his Christology illustrates the same tendency—yet its supernaturalism is a refreshing protest against that phenomenology of the Christian consciousness which to-day so commonly passes muster for Christian theology.

Though Calvin leads us back to the Sovereignty of God and so to a teleological conception of the universe where God is *prima causa omnium*, he never loses sight of the great Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God as revealed in Christian experience and in the Word of God. But it is in his doctrine of salvation from sin that Calvin shows himself to be the Evangelical theologian. Calvin's theory of the Atonement has often degenerated in the hands of his followers till it has seemed to argue for a tritheism or at least a merely forensic interpretation of the Atonement. Calvin, however, was too good a Biblical theologian not to recognize that "a subjectivity lies behind the alleged objec-

¹ *The Christian Faith*. Vol. ii, p. 794. (E.T.) T. Haering. 1913.

tivity" (Stevens) and with Augustine he insists that this is to be found in the initiative of the Divine love. Though Calvin, of course, rightly insists upon the objectivity of the Atonement he was more concerned to see in it as well an expression of that Divine Sovereignty and so of that free grace of God from which alone cometh our salvation. His theory of the Atonement is much deeper than his followers always realized and he was too good an Augustinian to be satisfied with any interpretation of it not fully Biblical. In a recent article, Dr. Headlam has stated:¹ "The strength of Evangelical Christianity has always been its firm grasp of the reality of the Atonement. When it has insisted on its particular theory, it has begun to fail. Its religious experience has been true, its theology has been bad." Whatever we may think of this opinion, there can be no doubt that Calvinism has given Evangelicalism a firm grasp on the objective reality of the Atonement which it can only relax at the peril of its own frustration.

It is when we come to Calvin's teaching on the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* and his *autopistic* interpretation of the Scriptures as the Word of God that we reach his most vital contribution to that evangelical tradition which he has done so much to enable to survive. Along with the tragic need of the world for Redemption, it is here that Calvin can perhaps help us most. When we think of John Wesley and Aldergate Street, May 24th, 1738, and of the Evangelical Revival we have commentary enough on the spiritual dynamic behind the apparent aridity of Calvin's doctrine. Surely the task of present-day Evangelicalism is to recover and revalue in the current but not debased coinage of a vital and relevant modern theology Calvin's teaching on the prevalent working of the Spirit of God in the soul of man both for his salvation and to attest the truth of Revelation. If the present tendency to regard the Bible as a mere depository of truth from which we can select that which pleases us most—and how expressive of this tendency is the phrase "Bible Readings"—is still dominant, then Calvin has something to say in recalling us to that Biblical realism so eternally relevant to the passing needs of the generations of men. The new humility we are being taught in these

¹ *The Church Quarterly Review*, January-March 1941. *The Atonement in History. Reformation Theories*, p. 170.

days will do much to chasten the Church to accept anew the yoke of Revelation it has too readily put off.

There are many signs to-day of a re-emergence of a Biblical theology and that not merely by way of reaction. We dare not narrow the issues to Luther *versus* Erasmus. A new intolerance must not replace the moribund liberalism and its "empirical Christianity." Our whole approach to the problems of life must be altered at the centre. Modern Evangelicalism must recall the Church from that fatal preoccupation with the blue prints of man's vision of a new world order to the eternal hills of God from whom alone cometh our aid. It is for this reason that we hope Dr. Dakin's book will not be overlooked for more up to date but less relevant theological literature. It is unfortunately without a bibliography where a bibliography is badly needed, but as a short synopsis of Calvinism its merits are undoubted. Its chief merit—and Dr. Dakin would wish nothing better—is that it will send the reader to Calvin himself. For it is not too much to say that if Evangelicalism in the Church of England is to recover both its theological depth and the power of its Gospel—and need we add without any loosening of the ties of Church Order—a fresh study of Calvin would do more to set this afoot than almost anything else. The sad ruins of many of our Parish Churches to-day speak also of that Resurgam that must come to our theology to-morrow if we are to speak the Word of God to the age that is to be and if a new generation is to enter into that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

“ What though I am not wealthy in the dower
Of spanning wisdom ; though I do not know
The shiftings of the mighty winds that blow
Hither and thither all the changing thoughts
Of man ; though no great ministering reason sorts
Out the dark mysteries of human souls
To clear conceiving ; yet there ever rolls
A vast idea before me, and I glean
Therefrom my liberty.”

Gladstone and the Bible

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WHEN Gladstone was a Student of Christ Church, Oxford, at the beginning of last century, Bishop Charles Wordsworth, a kinsman of the poet, said of him that no man of his standing in the University habitually read his Bible more or knew it better. A similar claim can be made for the great statesman at every stage of his long life. He was ever a lover of God's Word. He drank deeply of its perennial wells of consolation and inspiration, and he endeavoured to regulate his public and private life by reference to its commandments and statutes and laws. In the full tide of his career he could write in this strain: "On most occasions of very sharp pressure or trial, some word of Scripture has come home to me as if borne on angels' wings. Many could I recollect. The Psalms are the great storehouse."¹ In old age he prepared an edition of the Psalter, containing the Prayer Book Version and supplementary matter including an elaborate concordance that must have involved a considerable expenditure of time and trouble, although it was doubtless a labour of love and faith. From such facts as these it may be inferred that Gladstone's devotion to the Bible never varied during his unique career. It was ever the man of his counsel.

In these circumstances a great deal of interest, and a certain amount of importance, attach to his views on such questions as the Biblical Revelation, the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, and the conclusions of the modern critical movement in the realm of Biblical scholarship. Gladstone's reactions to these subjects are all the more significant because of the intellectual revolution which took place during his lifetime with regard to the attitude of theologians to the nature and authority of Holy Writ. When he commenced his political career as Member of Parliament

¹ Morley, I, p. 201.

for Newark on December 13th, 1832, it can safely be said that the historic doctrines regarding the supernatural origin of the Bible were being widely held. When he resigned the premiership on May 3rd, 1894, it can be said with equal truth that a very different conception of the Scriptures had gained possession of the field. Gladstone lived to see the triumph of the school whose most illustrious name is Wellhausen. It is true that the New Testament had not been handled yet in such radical fashion, but that was yet to come. At the close of Gladstone's career the doctrine of Holy Scripture whose keystone was belief in its plenary inspiration had been largely abandoned in scholarly circles. Of this change *The Times* observed in a leading article, dealing with the Victorian age, that it shook British Christianity to its foundations, as well it might. Gladstone was thoroughly cognisant of these changes, and the effect which they had upon him is very striking.

In the main it may be said that no impression was made on his convictions regarding the supremacy and sufficiency of the Bible in all matters of faith and practice with all that such a claim implies regarding the share which the Holy Spirit must have had in its production. That was in keeping with his general conservatism on all theological questions, all the more remarkable because the Bible was not the only department of historic Christianity which was made the subject of critical investigation during the nineteenth century. Thus Christology was reviewed and re-stated in a form which tended to differ radically from the form in which it had so long commanded the spiritual and intellectual allegiance of the church. But Gladstone seems to have cared for none of these things. Morley writes of him that his theological opinions had no history. He never departed from the beliefs which he cherished at Oxford as a fervent Evangelical. That is scarcely in accordance with fact. There can be no doubt that his theological tenets underwent a certain amount of modification. Thus he began by denouncing that of Butler's view of human nature as not evil in the sense required by the Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity. Subsequently we find him defending Butler's position, and quoting Augustine in support of it. As this paper will show, the diffusion of the critical interpretation of the Bible did not leave him unmoved. It can,

however, be said with truth that any such changes were of a slight type, especially when compared with his alignments in other walks of life. The most famous of these occurs in his political allegiance. Every schoolboy knows Macaulay's characterization of him on the publication of his first book as "the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories." That referred to his reputation at the beginning of his career. Is it an exaggeration to say that, when he retired finally from public life, he was the idol of the proletariat? His churchmanship also exhibits changes equally remarkable. He was the son of an evangelical home; and for some years he remained loyal to his early training. But his views underwent an immense change so that he became an enthusiastic supporter of the Oxford Movement whose presiding genius was John Henry Newman. In contrast to these changes, any revision of his views on the Bible must seem to be very slight indeed. That is all to his honour and praise, for it can be safely said that, in the ecclesiastical and political realms, his change of opinions might be compared to swimming with the tide, while his comparative immobility in theology can be truly characterized as swimming against the tide.¹

Gladstone's convictions regarding the Bible may be classified under these three headings, the Biblical Revelation, Inspiration, and the Higher Criticism. With regard to the Biblical Revelation he has some arresting things to say. Thus he refers to a saying of John Bright on the subject in this fine passage: "John Bright has told me that he would be content to stake upon the Book of Psalms, as it stands, the great question whether there is or is not a divine revelation. It was not to him conceivable how a work so widely severed from all the known productions of antiquity, and standing upon a level so much higher, could be accounted for except by a special and extraordinary aid calculated to produce special and extraordinary results; for it is reasonable, nay needful, to presume a due correspondence between the cause and the effect. Nor does this opinion appear to be otherwise than just. If Bright did not possess the special qualifications of the scholar or the critic, he was, I conceive, a very capable judge of the moral and religious elements in any case that had been brought before him by his personal

¹Morley, I, p. 207.

experience."¹ In the same strain reference may be made to one or two observations in the Preface to his edition of the Psalter. Here is a specimen: "Nay, there are many of its single verses on which, taken severally, we might be content, so lofty is their nature, to stake the whole argument for a Divine Revelation."² There can be no question at all that Gladstone never wavered in his belief that the Bible is the repository of an unspeakable disclosure of God's grace and truth.

That disclosure not only takes the form of abstract teaching regarding God's character. It also comprises records of the Divine dealings in history with the children of men, notably with the seed of Israel. These sources of information are equally valid and valuable as means whereby the world might come to such a knowledge of God as may be necessary for the right conduct of life in this world and the next. The Divine ways were made known unto Moses, and His acts unto the children of Israel. Actions always speak louder than words, and that is as true of heaven as of earth. In view of these facts, Gladstone constitutes himself as an impassioned defender of the historicity of the Bible, commencing with such a perplexing phase as the cosmogony of Genesis. He crossed swords with Huxley on the subject, defending the trustworthiness of the narratives at the beginning of Genesis with an appeal to the findings of science. He is equally prepared to do battle against any attempt to impugn the integrity of the revelation contained in the Bible. Thus controversy with Huxley on the morality of our Lord's action in sanctioning the destruction of the vast herds of swine belonging to the Gadarenes aroused a great deal of interest and attention towards the end of last century. Huxley maintained that our Lord's behaviour was open to criticism on the grounds that it represented the wanton destruction of other people's property. Gladstone's reply seems to be rather feeble. He tries to prove that the men of Gadara were subject to the Mosaic Law which treats the pig as an unclean animal. In consequence their possession of herds of swine was religiously illegal, and our Lord merely enforced the provisions of the ancient national code when He acted as He

¹ *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, p. 131.

² *The Psalter*, p. 111.

did. Gladstone's occasional resort to arguments of that type brought him into some measure of contempt. That is to be regretted, especially in view of the fact that he could repel an objection in such masterly fashion as this. Dealing with the moral problems of the Old Testament, he writes in this strain. The entire paragraph is so fine that I shall transcribe it. The sentences furnish a rare cordial for peace of mind and heart. "The sacred book states in bare outline, and at various epochs approves, certain acts in whole or in part irreconcilable, so far as we can see, with the law of Christian love. It only indicates, and does not give us the advantage of knowing the contemporary argument in defence. These acts are, in perhaps the most difficult cases, analogous to acts which are now produced in times of violence, and which do not draw down the censure of mankind. Admit that they leave a moral difficulty unexplained. It is in a volume which, taken as a whole, bears a testimony, comprehensive, wonderful, and without rival, to truth and righteousness. How are we to treat the case? I answer by an illustration. Suppose I am reading a work full of algebraic equations, which I find to be a sound and masterly book. But at length I arrive at one which I cannot wholly solve, cannot wholly comprehend. Should I on this account renounce and condemn the book? No; I should reserve it in hope of a complete solution in the future. This seems to be the mode which is dictated alike by reverence and good sense, not only in the case of the Holy Bible, but in regard to the mysterious problems which encounter us when our eyes traverse the field of human destinies at large. We know the abundant richness of the gift we hold and enjoy; as to the small portion of light at present withheld, we contentedly abide our time."¹ It is along such lines that the reply to Huxley's reasoning must be sought. There are spots on the sun, but that does not justify men in refusing that glorious creature and its indispensable ministry. In the same way, the evidence in favour of our Lord's claim to be all that He said that He was far outweighs any factors which seem to point in a contrary direction. The Biblical Revelation of which Gladstone was such a vigorous defender rests on proofs strong enough to admit some problematic aspects without serious loss or detriment.

¹ *Later Gleanings*, p. 395.

Turning to Inspiration it has been stated, even by such an authority as Goldwin Smith, that Gladstone accepted the doctrine best described as the plenary inspiration of the Bible. That is a mistake as one of the essays in his volume, *Studies Subsidiary to Butler's Works*, abundantly shows. The very fact that he should refer to this theory as stereotyped is evidence that he has no sympathy with it. He bases his rejection of that view on the superficial grounds that it is incompatible with the state of the text which varies through a thousand degrees of uncertainty. He seems to have been impressed with the argument so often repeated that, if the Bible had been fully inspired, the text would have been preserved immaculate by a continuous miracle. "Has the Almighty given us, or has He not, a volume verbally inspired? And that question is sufficiently answered by two brief observations: first, there is no absolute security for identity with the original record; and, secondly, there is no verbal inspiration of translators."¹ These observations take no account of the real and basic reason why the doctrine of plenary inspiration is accepted. That consists in the fact that the authors of the Bible make such a claim on its behalf. They never hesitate to assert that they are God's spokesmen, putting on record His message for men, and they also declare that they do so in words which God Himself teaches. These propositions are widely disputed, but their truth or error is not the point at issue. That is concerned with the foundation on which belief in the full inspiration of the Bible rests. That does not consist in the evidence which can be culled from its pages, nor in the circumstances which attended its composition and transmission but in the account which it gives of itself. It has been well and truly said that, if we cannot credit what it has got to tell us with regard to its inspiration, it is hard to know where we can trust the information regarding religious truth in which it abounds. Gladstone never mentions that aspect of the subject. He is governed by the idea that the theory of verbal inspiration is a case of prejudice and preconception which will vanish away as soon as the actual facts of the case are carefully investigated.

That line of reasoning demolishes his contentions based on the trustworthiness of translations, although it may be

¹ *Subsidiary Studies*, p. 17.

remarked that the argument is singularly infelicitous. The Bible has exerted a much greater influence by its translations than in the original tongues, the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society being the best commentary on that statement. That is surely a powerful factor in constraining men to believe in its unique and supernatural origin. A similar claim can be made for no other book. As to the translators, it is arguable that those who were responsible for such masterpieces as the Vulgate or the Authorized Version were inspired in some similar way as the authors of the autographs, although in much lesser degree. To turn Gladstone's guns upon himself we have already found him urging that every effect requires a sufficient cause. There is always fire where there is smoke, and where there is much fire, we may expect much smoke. When an endeavour is made to find an adequate explanation for these literary miracles of translation just mentioned, one is compelled to acknowledge that more than human wisdom and knowledge are required for such a result.

The question naturally arises as to the basis on which Gladstone was prepared to rest the authority of the Bible as the rule of faith and practice in Christianity. That he finds in the Church. Its imprimatur guarantees the claims made on behalf of the Bible. Writing of evangelicals and their distinctive tenets, he observes: "Most of all, it has suffered very seriously from the recent assaults on the *corpus* of Scripture, which it has received simply as a self-attested volume; and on its verbal inspiration; a question which has never offered so serious a dilemma to such as are content to take their stand on the ancient constitution of the Church, and to allow its witnessing and teaching office."¹ In short, the Church certifies the genuineness of the Bible's claims. The only comment which need be made on that statement is that the major part of the Bible in the shape of the Old Testament had attained to an unchallenged position before the Church of Christ had any being except in the mind of God. The Old Testament was the Bible of our Lord and His Apostles. It is true that our Lord set His seal upon it, and for that reason, if for no other, it is received by the Church which He founded as the everlasting way of truth and life—"the Word of God in the words of God."

¹ *Gleanings*, III, p. 116.

It is when we turn to discuss Gladstone's attitude to the assured results of modern criticism that we are most puzzled. On the one hand, he refuses to abandon his belief in the peerless glory of the Bible as it disclosed itself to the old-fashioned evangelicals whose ranks he once adorned. On the other hand, he makes statements with reference to modern Biblical criticism and its characteristic methods which are hard to reconcile with his views as to its Divine majesty. If an attempt were to be made to summarize his position in a sentence, it would be by saying that it was his firm conviction that the truth of the Biblical narratives, not to speak of the trustworthiness of its teaching, was in no way affected by the theories which may be advanced regarding the date of the documents, or the means whereby they assumed their present form. To take a concrete case, it is a matter of indifference as far as the reliability of the Pentateuch is concerned, whether it be Mosaic or a mosaic. "It is now pressed upon us that, according to the prevailing judgment of the learned, the form in which the older books of the Old Testament have come down to us does not correspond as a rule with their titles, and is due to later though still, as is largely held, to remote periods, and that the law presented to us in the Pentateuch is not an enactment of a single date, but has been enlarged by a process of growth, and by gradual accretions. To us who are without original means of judgment these are, at first hearing, without doubt, disturbing announcements. Yet common sense requires us to say, Let them be fought out by the competent, but let not us who are incompetent interfere. I utterly, then, eschew for myself the responsibility of conflict with these properly critical conclusions."¹ In another place he says: "And yet upon the very threshold, I embrace, in what I think a substantial sense, one of the great canons of modern criticism, which teaches us that the Scriptures are to be treated like any other book in the trial of their title."²

In fairness to Gladstone let it be said that he tries to reconcile acceptance of modern critical teaching as the origin and growth of the Bible with his firm and unsearching belief in what he well describes as "the ineffable and unapproachable position held by the sacred volume,"³ by

¹ *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, p. 12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

arguing like so many others who, like himself, find themselves in a strait betwixt two, unwilling, on the one hand, to surrender their convictions regarding the uniqueness of the Bible, and, on the other hand, reluctant to repudiate the findings of more recent Biblical scholarship, that God is glorified in an even greater degree if the Bible be a kind of patchwork in place of a garment woven without seam. "Indeed it may be that this destructive criticism, if entirely made good, would, in the view of an inquiry really searching, comprehensive, and philosophical, leave as its result not less but greater reason for admiring the hidden modes by which the great Artificer works out His designs. For, in proportion as the means are feeble, perplexed, and to all appearance confused, is the marvel of the results that are made to stand before our eyes. And the upshot may come to be that, on this very ground, we may have to cry out with the Psalmist absorbed in worshipping admiration, "Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness, and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men!" (Ps. cvii. 8). For "how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33).¹ That is a noble passage phrased in noble English. It applies to the Bible the words of Paul with regard to the contrast between the Gospel and the gospeller where he says that we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us (2 Cor. iv. 7).

Such reasoning seems to be very feasible until it is thoroughly tested, and it will be found to be less convincing than one might suppose at the first glance. On the one hand, it is quite consistent and compatible with the traditional theories regarding the origin and authorship of the Biblical books. Whether there be one Isaiah, or three, or even more, there is a savour of heavenly things in the Scriptures which makes them to be a sign and a wonder in the earth. But again it must be acknowledged that the adoption of such views on the composite nature of the Scriptures has not resulted in deeper reverence or a keener sense of God's workings. On the contrary, there has been made possible an increase of rationalism and humanism which do not consort very well with the genius of the Gospel. Gladstone's little book which

¹*Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, p. 4.

he so felicitously calls *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture* was first published in 1890, more than fifty years ago. One wonders if he would still have written in the same strain in view of all that has happened since that date. In any case, he seems to have had serious misgivings about the critical approach to the Bible. In particular, he was most unwilling to accept any theory regarding the origin of the Pentateuch which tended to diminish, or even to eliminate, the Mosaic element. "But we are now apparently asked to sever the work from the worker, and to refer it to some doubtful and nameless person; whereas it is surely obvious or probable that the author of a work so wonderful, and so far beyond example, so elaborate in its essential structure, and so designed for public use, could hardly fail to associate his name with it as if written upon a rock, and with a pen of iron. For, be it recollected, that name was the seal and stamp of the work itself. According to its own testimony he was the apostolos (Ex. xix. 16-23 and *passim*), the messenger, who brought it from God, and gave it to the people. If the use of his name was a fiction, it was one of those fictions which cannot escape the brand of falsehood, for it altered essentially the character of the writings to which it was attached."¹

There is nothing new or original about such words, nor, indeed, about all that has been said in this article with regard to Gladstone's attitude to the Bible. The value lies in the light which is thus thrown on Gladstone himself. He is a figure of endless interest, and a living epistle known and read of all who love righteousness in high places, and not least, in his beliefs about the Bible since religion was the keynote of his life. Huxley said of him that he had the finest intellect in Europe, and there were giants in the land in those days. In view of that, it is moving to recall that for him the Bible was ever and always what the lines of the hymn declare it to be:

"It gives a light to every age;
It gives, but borrows none."

¹ *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, p. 193.

Two Reformers and Baptism

THE REV. G. W. BROMLEY, M.A.

AT its simplest the problem of Baptism in the Church of England resolves itself into two questions: What was the mind of the Reformers in the matter? How far do their conclusions tally with those of Scripture? It has long been demonstrated what is the true Scriptural position upon the matter,¹ but these two questions have both been shirked and the attempt has been made to show, either that the Reformers spoke with uncertain and confused voice upon the question, or that they still clung to a view contrary to that of the New Testament. It is in the hope of demonstrating that in the work of two Reformers at any rate, the constructive genius Cranmer and the Expositor Rogers, a clear and not unscriptural position is revealed, that this present article is written.

Now only too often it is glibly assumed that in the Infant Baptism Service we have a complete and decisive answer to the two questions. This is true not only of those who champion the views supposedly expressed in that service, but also of those who oppose them (inferring thereby that the Reformers themselves were in error upon this point). There are even those who would use the Article,² interpreted after their own fashion, as a buttress for the view that the Reformers continued to share with Rome a belief in Baptismal Regeneration. One thing is certain enough. The Reformers did uphold and continue the practice of Infant Baptism within the Christian community; almost every shade of Reformed opinion lending its consent to a practice which was believed consistent with Scripture teaching and precedent. But there are others who would have it that the Reformers, or at any rate the English Reformers, went further than this. Building upon various statements in the Baptismal Service, which clearly enough are taken from the corresponding Roman office, they would have us acknowledge at once that the Reformers subscribed the Roman

¹ Cf Mozley, *The Baptismal Controversy*.

² Article XXVII, *Of Baptism*.

view, not only that infants should be baptized, but that every infant thus baptized was *ipso facto* the recipient of some measure of Divine grace.

Now it is useless to deny that the language of the Prayer Book does convey the suggestion that the Reformers shared the Roman view: "Seeing now . . . that this child is regenerate. . . . We yield Thee hearty thanks . . . that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this Infant with Thy Holy Spirit. . . ." ¹ Moreover, it is evident that these words are modelled upon those in the similar Roman Service. But again and again it has been pointed out that liturgical statements must not be treated as doctrinal formulæ, unless there is ample evidence of a more solid character to confirm the view indicated by them. Liturgical phrases by their very nature have to be in the most general terms and must perforce be used in the most widely varying circumstances. Again, this service, as was the case with all the services of the Prayer Book, was an amended version of the Roman, and it may well be that, not being regarded as of equal importance as others, it did not receive the same scrupulous attention in revision as, for example, the Communion Service, to the exclusion of every ambiguous phrase. At any rate, if the Reformers did believe in Baptismal Regeneration, then there is need of ample evidence of a purely doctrinal character before the view suggested by the Prayer Book can be expected to gain a hearing.

It is precisely this evidence which is lacking. Doctrinal statements which seem to support Baptismal Regeneration are indeed few and far between, and such as there are data mainly from the early days of the Reformers, when upon this as upon other matters the darkness of superstition and tradition still prevailed. The Article itself seems not to have been interpreted by the first Reformed generation in the sense in which it is now construed to support the implied teaching of the liturgical statement, as we shall have occasion to see more fully later, and in other passages there seems to be confirmation of the fact that a quite other view was customary amongst the leading Reformers. Amongst statements which might be cited as bearing on the Roman

¹ *The Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants.*

view, the most noteworthy and typical is perhaps that of Cranmer :

“ That by Baptism (Infants) shall have remission of all their sins the grace and favour of God and everlasting life ” ;¹

although even here there is a qualifying clause which greatly amends the bald statement, and which shows that Cranmer was already groping after something other than this mechanical view of the Sacraments, namely :

If they die in that grace which by the Sacrament is conferred.² This pronouncement is not indeed in any way decisive, since it dates from 1538, when it is well known that Cranmer still accepted in substance the Roman view of the Lord's Supper.³ It cannot, therefore, be held as in any way conclusive to the present debate, and merely serves to show that Cranmer, in common with the other Reformed divines, was nursed in Roman teaching, a fact which may go far to explain the retention of odd phrases in the Prayer Book not altogether indicative of the true trends of Reformed thought.

Cranmer himself quickly moved from this early position, and there is ample evidence to show that his own final views were quite different. Cranmer, it is true, never dealt with the matter fully, and it may be questioned whether he ever thought the issue out in detail, but such incidental references as there are, chiefly in his great work : the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Lord's Supper, give us clearly to understand that Baptism had for him no more superstitious power than the Holy Communion, and that his views upon the one corresponded closely to his views upon the other. Indeed Cranmer is at pains to illustrate his particular view of the Communion by long and closely applied comparisons with the complementary Sacrament of Baptism.

Now with regard to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper there can be no doubt whatever as to Cranmer's position at this time. The Romish superstitions, Transubstantiation and Sacrifice, had been put off, and Cranmer, as is now

¹ *Remains and Letters of Cranmer*, p. 95, amending the Institutions of Henry VIII.

² *Ut Supra*.

³ See Smyth : *Cranmer and the Reformation under Edward VI*, p. 59 f for a discussion of Cranmer's views of the Lord's Supper.

generally admitted,¹ held the middle position advocated by Bucer and Martyr, and approximating closely to that of Calvin. He retained for the Lord's Supper a significance rather greater than that of a memorial feast only, but he did not believe in the corporal presence of Christ in the elements, holding rather that where the Sacrament was truly received there was a double feeding, the outward consuming of the bread and wine being accompanied by, and picturing, a hidden partaking of Christ spiritually and by faith in the heart.

It is this latter view in particular which is of such importance in the matter of baptism, since it is precisely this view which Cranmer supports at such length by the example of baptism. He does not deny baptism to children, even though he admits that children have no knowledge of faith and conversion, of which baptism is the sacrament.² He asserts rather the true importance of Infant Baptism, which is, that by it we assume responsibility for the future faith and conversion of the children baptized. As an authority for Infant Baptism he cites Augustine, tacit reminder of the fact that the Reformers' views upon Infant Baptism were not unrelated to their very decided belief in the Divine Election, a matter of some importance with which we shall have to deal at a later stage.

This first statement, introductory to the main comparison, is, as it were, a defence of Infant Baptism against the charge of uselessness and irrelevance which Cranmer's doctrine, as unfolded later, would seem to invite. It certainly makes clear from the outset two important facts, first, that Cranmer had by this time fully rejected the view that in baptism a beginning of faith and conversion to God is automatically made and, secondly, that he would retain the Baptism of Infants within a Christian community, since by this practice the promises of God are visibly held out before the children, and provision is made for their godly instruction as they advance to years of discretion.

With this introduction Cranmer now proceeds to examine more closely the relationship of baptism to the Holy Communion. In the one as in the other he traces both an outward act and a spiritual meaning behind that act; the

¹ See Smyth: *Cranmer and the Reformation under Edward VI*, p. 59 f for a discussion of Cranmer's views of the Lord's Supper.

² *True and Catholic Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, p. 157.

eating of bread and wine corresponding with the washing with water as the outward act, the feeding upon Christ to the inward washing with the Holy Ghost as the spiritual meaning. Yet, continues Cranmer—and this is the truly important matter—yet “As in Baptism the Holy Ghost is not in the water, but in him that is unfeignedly baptized,”¹ so also it is with the Lord’s Supper. This is the crux of the whole problem. It is not that in the water of baptism there is a magical property, conveying the grace of regeneration willy-nilly to the persons baptized. The outward washing with water is only the token or pledge of an inner work of the Holy Spirit which is done only in the believing heart, that is, where there is an “unfeigned baptism.”

This clear statement is reinforced by an even more decisive comparison. It is well known from the Article² that the Reformers believed it possible for a man to partake of the bread and wine in the Communion without actually partaking of Christ, for the man, that is to say, who eats carnally and without faith. Cranmer himself is of this opinion. Sacramental grace is by no means automatic. It depends upon the inward disposition of the recipient, not upon the outward apparatus of the sacrament. The mere fact that a man partakes of the bread and wine or is washed with the water of the sacrament does not mean that he is necessarily baptized with the Holy Spirit or refreshed with the body and blood of Christ. Therefore, says Cranmer “As in baptism those that come feignedly and those that come unfeignedly both be washed with sacramental water, but both be not washed with the Holy Ghost,”³ so, too, it is with the Lord’s Supper.

The importance of these passages cannot be exaggerated for the light which they shed upon the disputed passage in the Prayer Book, and the supposed hesitancy or conservatism of the Reformers in the matter of baptism. The teaching upon the Lord’s Supper is too clear to admit of dispute. But here not only are the two assumed to be identical, but Cranmer actually uses the doctrine of baptism in support of his view of the Lord’s Supper. It is self-understood almost

¹ *True and Catholic Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper*, p. 196.

² Article XXIX. *Of the Wicked which eat not the Body of Christ in the use of the Lord’s Supper.*

³ *True and Catholic Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper*, p. 221.

that not everyone who has been baptized has been the recipient of baptismal grace, but only those in whose hearts there has been the response of faith and conversion to God, either through the pious ministry of praying and believing god-parents in the case of the child, or by other means in that of adults. Cranmer's view of baptism, representative of the general view of the Reformers, is that Infant Baptism must be retained as a pledge of the loving purpose of God to all men, and a guarantee of Christian upbringing; but that the rite itself, without the true prayer of the god-parents and their labour to awaken faith, is of no avail for spiritual washing. It is just possible that the Reformers regarded baptism as a further pledge that no infants would be condemned for original sin, not in itself an unscriptural view, but whether this is so or not admits of no proof apart from the assurance they are at heart to give in the Prayer Book that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.¹ For the rest, baptism is an enaction in type of the work which the Holy Spirit in His own time will accomplish when the elect turn to God in repentance and faith, remaining in the case of the non-elect no more than a type, expressive of the good-will of God and His desire to save.

This then was the real position of Cranmer himself, a position quite other than that which some, hastily building upon the phrase of the Prayer Book, would have us imagine. It now remains to be seen whether this was merely an advanced and individual view of Cranmer himself, or whether it was the interpretation of the Prayer Book and Articles common to the Church of England in Reformation days. As the principal witness in this further examination we cannot do better than to cite the earliest expositor of the XXXIX Articles, Rogers, who, writing in 1586 gives us clear indication of the general position of the Church of England in these earliest years of Reform. The objection that Rogers was a Calvinist, and thus held minority views, is trivial, since it is unlikely that an exposition of this nature would issue from so authoritative a source, did it not represent views generally accepted at the time. Indeed it is clear that all the Reformers were to a great extent Calvinists, that the

¹ *The Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants.*

Articles were framed and interpreted "calvinistically" from the very first, and that even the Baptismal Service itself was cast up against a background of Calvinism, as witness the phrase: "That he may continue amongst thy faithful and elect children."¹ If Rogers wrote as a Calvinist, then his work is truly a faithful witness to the general Reformed interpretation of the Articles, both upon the subject of baptism and upon other matters.

In the case of baptism, Rogers not only expresses clearly and concisely views similar to those already propounded by Cranmer; he bluntly and unmistakably condemns the opposite view that grace is granted to all who are washed by the baptismal water, treating this view as a Roman error. "The Papists," he says, "do erroneously hold that the Sacraments of the new law do confer grace *ex opere operato*."²

This Roman error, however, is not the view of the Reformers. The practical and spiritual elements in baptism, as in the Lord's Supper, are not bound together, nor are they in any way of necessity conjoined or contemporaneous. "Howbeit this faith (i.e. the faith which we have in baptism) is not necessarily tied unto visible signs."³

Indeed Rogers, with great common sense and a true Scriptural understanding, goes further, and points out that in probably the majority of cases sacramental grace and the physical receiving of the sacrament are not contemporaneous, even where the Sacrament is unfeignedly, with true repentance and faith, received. "Some," he says, "have faith afore they receive any of the sacraments," and he quotes the examples of the Ethiopian eunuch, and Cornelius, to whom baptism, far from being a means of regeneration, or an agent of believing faith, was a visible pledge of the work of God already accomplished in the heart, and a testimony of repentance and faith. In some cases again there is no spiritual work at all. The sacraments are administered outwardly, but no grace is conferred or received. "Some have faith neither afore nor at the instant nor yet afterward, though daily they receive the sacrament without faith."⁴

¹ *The Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants.*

² *Exposition of the XXXIX Articles*, p. 257.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

The sacrament is an outward symbol of spiritual grace. It may be an effective means of grace. Or the grace may be separated from the sacrament. There is no strict binding of the one to the other. A man may find in the Holy Communion his closest intercourse with the Saviour. On the other hand it may be that he feeds daily upon the Lord, the Holy Communion being but an outward momentary picture of the daily continuous act. Or again it may be that he never truly feeds upon the Lord at all spiritually and with the heart, although he makes the sacramental act. So too, it is with baptism. The work of regeneration may be before baptism, it may be after baptism, or there may never be any such work of regeneration at all. There is no exact binding of symbol to reality: only, God has appointed that the Sacraments should be effectual means of grace to those who use them aright. The believer who brings his child to baptism, the saint who comes to the Lord's table, may rest assured that the Holy Spirit is indeed at work either in the child or in himself, as with a quiet and faithful heart he fulfils the Divine ordinance, and he may look forward with confidence to the time when that work of grace will be completed in the conversion of the little one, or manifest in the strengthening of his own spiritual life. Sacrament and grace are indeed connected, but not in the soulless, automatic way of those who insist that all infants baptized are thereby born again into the family of God.

The full ramifications of this doctrine, and its definiteness and clearness, are apparent when Rogers, in accordance with his usual and interesting custom, proceeds to the condemnation of those who oppugn this truth, and here he condemns as error every deviation from the position which he regards as the true position of the Reformed Anglican Church. In the first place he maintains that it is an error to suppose that children dying unbaptized are thereby excluded from the love and mercy of God and finally damned. Baptism is a "seal of the covenant." It is a pledge of the forgiveness of God. It is enjoined by the Saviour. But in itself it is not absolutely necessary to salvation. Although it is our duty to administer baptism where possible, the love of God is operative apart from as well as in baptism. Consequently: "They do err who, supposing that sacrament and grace are inseparably conjoined, teach that they

never go to Heaven without the seals of the covenant."¹

In the same way a mechanical linking of baptism with salvation is condemned, Rogers pointing out that "It is an error to teach that the Sacrament of Baptism is the cause of salvation."²

This is a plain refutation of the view which the majority of churchmen seek to wrest from the words of the Prayer Book, that because the child is baptized, and for that reason only, therefore a work of the Holy Ghost has begun, which will, if accompanied by a real effort on the part of the child, result in eternal salvation. Nothing could be further from the thoughts both of the original framers of the service and of its first users. The language is a little unfortunate perhaps, but the intention is sufficiently clear. In baptism a pledge of the love and interest of God is given, which, upon the prayers of God's people and a corresponding faith in the child, will lead to a work of regenerating grace, but which otherwise is of no avail.

Rogers further develops this theme with a strong assertion that original sin is pardoned in all infants, whether baptized or not, the work of Christ in this respect availing freely for all. This, he maintains, has always been the opinion of the true Church, being disputed only by the Pelagians, "Because (as they believe) they have no such sin in them at all."³

This statement is particularly interesting as proceeding from so staunch a Calvinist as Rogers, since Calvin himself is often unjustly and erroneously accused of condemning to eternal reprobation all infants unfortunate enough to die unbaptized. In this connection it must be remembered that at that time the fate of those who died in infancy was no mere academic problem. When not far short of half the total population, and probably more, must have been lost in childhood, the problem was bound to be felt in a way in which it cannot be felt to-day, now that the infant mortality rate, in Western Europe and America at any rate, has been so enormously reduced. To us the matter may seem trivial, and relatively unimportant, but to the men of the Reformation age it was an urgent and a vital matter.

¹ *Exposition of the XXXIX Articles*, p. 249.

² *Ibid.*, p. 249.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

Two further opinions are condemned by Rogers: first, that of the Russes and, secondly a further error of the Papists. The opinion of the Russes was that there is such necessity of baptism as that all that "die without it are damned,"¹ but this, as we have already seen, was plainly contrary to the non-mechanical views of Rogers. Rogers rightly and properly saw that in certain cases saving faith may well be manifested where opportunities of baptism are absent, the dying thief upon the cross being a cogent example. It is thus impossible to lay upon the sacrament so tremendous a stress, although certainly Rogers would not deny that Baptism ought to be administered where possible. The further Papist error is that baptism avails for the: "Putting away of original sin only and bringeth grace, even *ex opere operato*."²

At root this is still the opinion of those who hold high views of the sacrament, whether within the Church of Rome or any other Church, but to-day it is not usually expressed with this brutal clarity. Baptism is held in itself to suffice for the remission of original sin, a preliminary work of regeneration done by the Holy Ghost in all that are baptized. But then the child is cast back upon its own devices, to live its life in accordance with the principles of the Lord Jesus, to deal with actual sin as best it can, making use of such aids as prayer and Church worship, and always to be faced with the final prospect of at best purgatory, or even eternal perdition. All place for repentance and conversion to God, all opportunity of an act of saving faith, to avail for the full and free salvation which God Himself gives, is thus excluded. A modern statement of this view in theological terms would, of course, be sufficiently guarded, and leave loopholes enough to evade this stark issue, but in practice this is the reality of the situation. Salvation is reduced to an uneasy compromise, a mechanical act of God to deal with original sin, human works and effort to deal with actual. But this, as Rogers clearly sees, is not the teaching of Scripture, nor is it the teaching of the true Church. The ceremony of baptism does not in itself confer grace, nor is baptism, as a pledge, a pledge of the remission of original sin only. Baptism is the outward token of the whole

¹ *Exposition of the XXXIX Articles*, p. 278.

² *Ibid*, p. 278.

regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, the seal of salvation to the repentant believer.

Finally, Rogers is at pains to justify the continued practice of the baptism of infants, and in view of the constant doubts expressed upon this point it might be as well to present the reasons which he advances in favour of continuing the practice. The question may indeed be asked by those with high views of the Sacraments: If baptism does not avail for salvation, if no grace is conferred by the outward act, why then persist in the baptism of infants, who manifestly do not and cannot repent or believe in baptism? Or to put the question in a different form: If baptism has no more than a symbolic value, why then continue to exercise it, with all its forms, upon those who by nature cannot be fit subjects for baptism? If Rogers's exposition be indeed a true statement of the Anglican Reformed position, in contradistinction to the widespread errors which are current in our age, then it is right to call for an explanation upon this matter.

The position of Rogers is simple. He does not advocate the baptism of infants in order to attain any spiritual advantages for children by magic, as it were. He supports it on far more solid ground. Baptism is the token and pledge of the grace of God which is offered freely to all. It is the symbol of the work of regeneration which the Holy Spirit is willing to accomplish in the heart of any. This grace of God, this regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is not restricted to adults. "The grace of God is universal; therefore the sign and seal of grace is universal and belongeth unto all, so well young as old."¹ Particularly does it belong to the children of believers, for whom, in baptism, prayer is offered, and provision made for their upbringing in grace. Thus it is right for the children of Christians to be baptized. Indeed, as Rogers points out: "Christ hath shed His blood as well for the washing away the sins of children as of the elder sort; therefore it is very necessary that they should be made partakers of the sacrament thereof."² The token and pledge of the grace of God belongs to them, and prayer is made that one day in true

¹ *Exposition of the XXXIX Articles*, p. 279

² *Ibid.*, p. 279.

repentance and faith they may enter into possession of that grace by the inworking of the Holy Ghost.

All who oppugn this truth are condemned by Rogers, both those who deny that the Protestants hold it (as the runagate Hill¹), those who deny baptism altogether (Pelagians, Heracleans, Henricians, Anabaptists, whereof said some how baptism is the invention of Pope Nicholas and therefore naught, others that baptism is of the Devil); those who hold that none should be baptized until he be thirty years old (as the Servetians and Family of Love); those who refuse to baptize some infants (as the Barrowists, who denied it unto the seed of whores and witches); those who are of the opinion that none are to be baptized that believe not first: Hence the Anabaptists: Infants believe not, therefore not to be baptized: Hence the Lutherans: Infants do believe, therefore to be baptized.²

This then is the clear teaching of the Reformers, not that all infants should be baptized as an automatic means of grace, not that the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost is tied to the washing of sacramental water, but that baptism is a pledge of God's love and grace, and a witness of faith and repentance, a pledge not to be withheld from children when proper provision is made to instruct them in the things of God and to bring them to repentance and faith.

This truth may be unpalatable to those who would substitute for the doctrine of God the traditions of men, but here surely we have a sane and balanced and a truly Scriptural view, which is also the teaching of the Anglican Church. No room is left for a pious agreement to differ. In this question the whole truth for which the Reformers contended is at stake, that the Christian faith is evangelical and not sacramental. Uneasy compromise upon a vital issue of this type is futile. The need of our age is that once again the Scriptural and reformed doctrine should be championed and made known both amongst the deluding clergy and the deluded masses. Where truth is at issue to temporize for the sake of unity and for the fear of giving offence is the way of cowardly evasion. Lovingly, and yet firmly and boldly, the Scriptural reformed truth about baptism must be propounded, and if the way is hard the reward is also certain.

For we can do nothing against the truth, only for the truth.

¹ *Exposition of the XXXIX. Articles*, p. 279.

² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

The Rule of Faith

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AMONG the questions on which deep differences are to be found in the ranks of those who are nevertheless prepared to share the name of "Evangelicals," is the doctrine of Holy Scripture. One way to set about clearing up these differences is to find the one basic fact about Holy Scripture on which all "Evangelicals" are agreed, and then to work together at elucidating in detail what this fact means, until our natural progress in the working out of this leads us to those "details" which at present divide and puzzle us. Whether there is such a single fact—and important fact—about Holy Scripture on which all Evangelicals are agreed to-day, I do not know; but there is certainly such a fact on which they were agreed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before such questions as the legitimacy of certain kinds of Biblical criticism had yet arisen. I propose here simply to state this fact, and to illustrate its key importance for the early Reformers and Puritans, and for at least one modern theologian, leaving it to others to work out its meaning fully enough to discover its bearings on current controversies.

The fact in question is the fact that *it is through the Bible—the witness of the prophets and apostles—that Christ rules His Church in the time between His Ascension and His Second Coming.*

THE RULE OF THE BIBLE.

The three main Confessions of Faith of English-speaking Protestantism give every evidence that the first truth about Holy Scripture which their compilers were concerned to assert was its rule over the Church.

In the case of the Thirty-nine Articles, this is not quite as clear as in that of the Scots Confession of 1560, and the Westminster Confession, but it is clear enough. The Sixth Article affirms the "sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for salvation," and says of the Apocrypha that while "the

Church doth read (them) for example of life and instruction of manners," "yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine"—the plain inference being that the distinctive fact about the Bible is that it is the book we must appeal to for the establishment of any doctrine. The Twentieth Article, on the authority of the Church, and the Twenty-first, on that of General Councils, make a point of strictly subordinating both to the authority of Scripture.

In the Scots Confession there can be no doubt at all where the emphasis lies. In the Preface the rule of the Bible is affirmed in a manner which an admirer of Kierkegaard would no doubt describe as "existential." That is, the compilers do not merely assert the authority of the Bible in the abstract, from the point of view of detached spectators, but themselves personally and as spokesmen of the Church confess their own submission to it, "Protestant that gif onie man will note in this our confessioun onie Artickle or sentence repugnand to Gods halie word, that it would pleis him of his gentleness and for christian charities sake to admonish us of the same in writing; and we upon our honoures and fidelitie, be Gods grace do promise unto him satisfioun fra the mouth of God, that is, his haly scriptures, or else reformation of that quhilk he sal prove to be amisse." The necessity not only for themselves but for all to practise such submission is affirmed in their articles on the "notes" of the true Church and on General Councils; and their brief article on the Scriptures, the nineteenth, reads, "As we believe and confesse the Scriptures of God sufficient to instruct and make the man of God perfite, so do we affirme and avow the authoritie of the same to be of God, and nether to depend on men nor angelis. We affirme, therefore, that sik as allege the Scripture to have na uther authoritie bot that quhilk it has received from the Kirk, to be blasphemous against God, and injurious to the trew Kirk, quhilk alwaies heares and obeyis the voice of her awin Spouse and Pastor; bot takis not upon her to be maistres over the samin." The Scriptures are for the Church the "voice of her own Spouse and Pastor," Whom she must obey but cannot command.

This emphasis is equally evident in the general development of thought which led up to the framing of this Confession. For example, in a dispute in 1547 between John Knox

and one Friar Arbuckle, the latter "ever fled to the authority of the Kyrk. Whairto the said Johnne answered offer then ones, 'That the spous of Christ had nether power nor authority against the word of God.' These said the Freir, 'Yf so be, ye will leave us na Kirk.' 'Indeed' (said the other), in David I read that there is a church of the malignantis, for he sayis, *Odi ecclesiam malignantium*. That church ye may have, without the word, and doing many thingis directly feghtting against the word of God. Of that church yf ye wilbe, I can not impead yow. Bott as for me, I wilbe of none other church, except of that which hath Christ Jesus to be pastor, and which hearis his voce, and will nott hear a strangeir."¹ In this constant citation of the tenth chapter of John, Knox no doubt took his cue from Zwingli, whose Theses of Bern of 1528, one of the first documents of the Swiss Reformation, begins with the statement that "The holy Christian Church, of which Christ is the only Head, is born of the Word of God, abides therein, and knows not the voice of a stranger." The same "shepherd's voice" passage from John was used by the German Confessional Church, in the declaration of their Synod at Baemen in 1934, as a proof-text for their doctrine that "Jesus Christ, as He is revealed to us in the Holy Gospel, is the only word of God which we have to trust and to obey, in life and in death."

The Westminster Confession—which, when it was originally framed, was not a purely Presbyterian document, but the work of an Assembly, summoned by Parliament, of the Church of England—opens with the description of Holy Scripture as a "way of God's revealing his will unto his people" and as "given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life, and this conception of Scripture as a "rule" dominates the whole of the opening chapter. In view of current controversies, it is interesting to note that the fourth section of this chapter says that the Holy Scripture should be received as authoritative, not on the testimony of men, but "because it *is* the word of God," while the tenth section, on the other hand, says that "The supreme Judge, by which all controversies are to be determined" is "the Holy Spirit speaking *in* the scripture." Similarly the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism affirms that "The holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament *are* the word of God,"

¹ *The Works of John Knox*. Laing's Edition, Vol. I, p. 200.

while the Shorter Catechism speaks of the word of God as being "contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." Both affirm the rule of the Scriptures over God's people, the Larger Catechism describing them as "the only rule of faith and obedience," and the Shorter saying that the Word of God "contained" in them is "the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him."

The most exhaustive discussion of the doctrine of Holy Scripture that has appeared in our own time, and so far as I know in any time, the 1,500 packed pages of Karl Barth's Prolegomena to his Church Dogmatics, similarly emphasize the rule of the Bible over the Church. The task of theology, Barth maintains, is the criticism of the preaching of the Church by the standard of Holy Scripture, and his Prolegomena are simply a detailed analysis of the meaning of this description of the theology's task. His whole way of going about things thus implies the treatment of the Bible as in the first place a "rule." In his first brief outline of his beliefs about "The Written Word of God," the same fact is stressed. The Church, says Barth, has not been left alone by Christ to follow her own devices, but is still under His living rule. And the concrete instrument of His rule is the Bible.¹ When the missionary obligations of the Church were questioned, the Duke of Wellington is said to have pointed to a well-known missionary text and said, "There are your marching orders!" For Barth also the Bible is the Church's "marching orders."² He attaches special importance to the fact that the term "canon" generally means a rule or regulation. It means that also when we talk about the "canon" of Holy Scripture. He might also have cited the early Celtic Church's use of the term "Pandects," commonly applied to the laws of Justinian, to refer to the Bible.³

Like the framers of the Scots Confession, Barth regards it as important to confess the authority of the Bible not only in the abstract but also in an "existential" way—that is, he does not merely talk about the necessity of submitting

¹ *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 113.

² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

³ See Rev. Duncan MacGregor, in an article on "The Celtic Inheritance of the Scottish Church," in *The Divine Life in the Church* (Scottish Church Society), Vol. II, p. 29.

to it, but himself submits to it in the working out of his doctrine. It is perhaps necessary to explain here that Barth believes that the longest way round is often the shortest way home (a belief which is, of course, a presupposition of the present article). The Scottish Covenanting divine John Brown of Wamphray, in writing a book about the obligation to keep the law of the Sabbath, spread himself over several hundred pages in a preliminary discussion of such matters as the nature of law in general and of divine law in particular, the kinds of divine law, the character of God's covenant with Israel, and the nature and kinds of divine worship. Similarly, Barth, in discussing the criticism of the Church's preaching by the Bible, does not hesitate to devote a vast amount of space to such questions as the nature of that "Word" or "revelation" of God which the Bible is said alternatively to "be" or "contain" (the word Barth himself prefers is "become," though in a carefully defined sense he admits the legitimacy of "be" also.) "When, however, "to make it clear how Church proclamation is to be measured by Holy Scripture, we first of all inquire into the prior concept of *revelation*, in this very inquiry we are bound to stand by Holy Scripture as the witness to revelation. *Perhaps more important than anything that dogmatics can say about the distinctive place of the Bible in the Church and over against the Church is the example it itself has to give in laying its foundations.*"¹ That sentence is in the true line of the Scottish Reformers.

THE TIME OF THE BIBLE.

The rule of the Bible cannot be rightly understood unless we also understand the "time," the "act" in the drama of redemption, in which it plays this dominating part. It is through the Bible that Christ exercises His rule over the Church *in the time between His Ascension and His Second Coming*. Though they have one now, God's people have not always had a Bible, nor will they always have one. The rule of the Bible is a "sign of the times," a distinguishing feature of the "last days" in which we now live.

This part of the description of the rule of the Bible over the Church was not so fully developed, in England and

¹ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

Scotland at all events, by the first Reformers as it was by the later "Protestant schoolmen." John Knox, for example, spoke in exactly the same way about the "Word of God," which came to Noah and Abraham before any Scripture existed, as he did about the written Word of God to which he recalled the Scottish Church of God in his own day—and, for that matter, about the "Word of God" which was then declared from Scottish pulpits by himself and his fellow Reformers. A particularly striking instance of this occurs in his last-published work, a defence of the Scottish Reformation against a Jesuit named Tyrie. To Tyrie's charge that the Reformed Church was a "new-found" (i.e. newly-founded) Church he replies that the only proper test of a Church's "antiquity" lies in the antiquity of the Word which it believes. In support of this, he cites the "Church" established in the family of Abraham, which, despite all appearances to the contrary, was not a "new-found Kirk," because the Word which Abraham believed, different as it was from anything that reached him by tradition, was nevertheless the same Word of promise which God had earlier spoken to Adam and Noah.¹ For Knox, "the Word of God" means indifferently God's directly spoken Word to such men as the patriarchs, and Holy Writ. He was little interested in such questions as inspiration, connected with the way in which the Word of God came to take this written form (what Professor Haitjema of Groningen has in our day termed the "inscripturation" of the Word), his main concern being to assert that the Bible, however it came to be so, is here and now God's living Word to those to whom He gives grace to hear it.

In this general attitude there is much that we still cannot afford to lose. We must still believe of the kind of Word which God directly spoke to Noah and Abraham that it is precisely this Word of God which the Scriptures by the power of the Spirit "become" to His people. That, surely, is the essential truth that people are trying to express when they say that the Bible "is" the Word of God or "contains" it. But this very fact cannot be expressed without formally distinguishing between the "Scriptures" which "become" this Word and the original revelation which they "become." The later attempts of Protestant scholasticism to make this

¹ *Knox's Works*. Vol., VI, pp. 491-2.

distinction more sharp and explicit were therefore not unnecessary. There is a kind of theo-Protestantism—which, we may add, sometimes calls itself “Barthian”—which is fond of praising the Reformers at the expense of the great Puritan divines who succeeded them; but this is short-sighted—we must learn from both periods. Barth himself, whatever attitude his admirers take, uses and quotes the *Protestant Schoolmen* lavishly, and by no means always to criticize them. In fact, he ought really to be thought of as one of them himself.

A practical consequence of this “division of labour” among the different periods is that we do not find this “time-factor” elaborated in the earlier standards of the English and Scottish Churches, but only in the Westminster Confession. Here, however, it is given sufficient importance to appear in the final section of the first chapter, where we read that “it pleased the Lord, at sundry times and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare . . . his will unto his Church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagation of the truth and for the establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing, which maketh the holy scriptures to be most necessary; these former ways of God’s revealing his will being now ceased.”

This passage was doubtless in the mind of that eccentric but instructive nineteenth-century preacher, Edward Irving, when he thus opened the first of his series of sermons on the Word of God: “There was a time when each revelation of the word of God had an introduction into this earth which neither permitted men to doubt whence it came, nor wherefore it was sent. If, at the giving of each several truth, a star was not lighted up in heaven, as at the birth of the Prince of truth, there was done upon the earth a wonder, to make her children listen to the message of their Maker. The Almighty made bare His arm; and, through mighty acts shown by His holy servants, gave demonstration of His truth, and found for it a sure place among the other matters of human knowledge and belief. But now the miracles of God have ceased, and nature, secure and unmolested, is no longer called on for testimony to her Creator’s voice. No burning bush draws the footsteps to His presence-chamber;

no invisible voice holds the ear awake ; no hand cometh forth from the obscure to write His purposes in letters of flame. The vision is shut up, the testimony is sealed, and the word of the Lord is ended, and this solitary volume, with its chapters and verses, is the sum total of all for which the chariot of heaven made so many visits to the earth, and the Son of God himself tabernacled and dwelt among us."

The Puritan divines of the early seventeenth century, and later too, were very fond of dwelling upon and describing these "ways of God's revealing himself," which are "now ceased," and the gradual precipitation of these revelations into their present written form. Detailed discussions of these points are to be found, for example, in the *Christian Synagogue* (1632) and other writings of John Wemyss of Lathockes in Scotland, a quaint scholar who delved into all sorts of Rabbinic and Talmudic lore in order to increase his understanding of the Scriptures.

Among the subjects discussed by Wemyss is *why* "God thought it necessary, after he had taught his Church by Word, next to teach her by write." He says very truly, "That we may the better understand the necessity of the writing of the word, wee must distinguish here the states of the Church"—her first "family or oeconomicke" state, her second "nationall, dispersed through the countrey of the Jewes," and her third "Ecomenicall or Catholicke, dispersed through the whole world." When, however, he attempts an explanation of why God's word was merely spoken to the patriarchs, in the process of being written among the Jews, and merely written to the present and Universal Church, Wemyss's explanation, though ingenious, is rather trivial, and, so to speak, "humanistic" in character. It also attributes to oral tradition an importance in patriarchal times which was plainly not accorded to it by Knox when he based the "antiquity" of the Church in Abraham's household solely on the real antiquity of the Word which came quite anew to Abraham. "So long," says Wemyss, "as shee was in a family, and the Patriarches lived long, to record to the posterity the word and the workes of God, then God taught his Church by the word unwritten. But when his Church began to be enlarged, first through *Judea*, and then through the whole world, then he would have his word set down in write ; because then the Fathers were not

of so long a life to record to the posterity the word and the workes of God."¹

Whether or not this may be criticized for what it says, it must certainly be criticized for what it omits. The closing of the canon surely has a deeper connection with the main events in the work of our redemption than is expressed in this explanation. Karl Barth, in handling the same question, characteristically links it up in the closest possible way with the rule of Christ. The "states of the Church, referred to by Wemyss are differentiated by Barth, not in the first place according to the Church's extent, but according to the methods of Christ's rule. During His life on earth before and after His Resurrection, Christ ruled His flock in person; and in the period of preparation for His Coming direct revelations were also used, though mediated, among the Jews, by the prophets. It is since His Ascension that His rule has been exercised by means of the Scriptures—that is, by a permanent mediation of the prophets and apostles. In his *Credo*, Barth cites the text, "He that heareth you, heareth Me," as a proof of this permanent authority of the apostles in the Church in the period of Christ's "absence."

It should be noted that it is the apostles themselves to whom (with the prophets) he attributes this permanent authority; not their "successors." This is his main quarrel with so-called Catholic doctrines of apostolic succession. He does not deny that bishops, and for that matter all faithful Christian preachers, are in a sense the successors of the apostles, proclaiming, like them, a word which may by God's power and grace become His own Word to their hearers. But their "succession" is of such a kind that the original apostles, whose testimony is deposited in the New Testament, retain for all time a certain independence and authority over them. The authority of the original apostle remains alive in itself and is not completely taken up into the authority of those who, in each generation, "succeed" them. The Word of God which now rules the Church is a written Word simply because in this form it preserves the original prophetic and apostolic testimony and saves it from merging into the "tradition" of the Church. The Protestant answer to the "Catholic" doctrine of apostolic

¹ J. Wemyss: *Exercitations Divine: Containing Diverse Questions and Solutions for the right understanding of the Scriptures*, pp. 61-2.

succession is that the apostles were not merely the first bishops, now succeeded by other bishops; through the New Testament, they are our "chief pastors" *still*.¹ Here Barth has revived the doctrine of the early Celtic Church that the true "Vicar of Christ" is the Bible.²

The "permanence" of this rule of the prophets and apostles is, however, only relative. The time of their rule—that is, of the rule of the Bible—has not only a beginning but an end. The Bible not only points the Church back to a past revelation, but also points her forward to a revelation that is to come. This "future revelation," to which Barth is constantly referring, is, of course, Christ's Second Coming. This end of the Bible's rule is not referred to as such an end in the Westminster Confession; but the eighteenth-century Scottish Seceder, Adam Gib, drawing on common earlier teaching, mentions the fact that "There will be no use or occasion in heaven for that blessed book called the *Bible*," and in their choice of a text for a "head-piece" the compilers of the Scots Confession suggest that all their main affirmations about the state of the Church, naturally including those about the Church's government, refer to the period between the Ascension and the Second Coming. The text is Matthew xxiv. 14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come."

All this discussion of the "time" of the Bible's rule in the Church is another instance of concrete, "existential" obedience to the Bible's authority. That is to say, these doctrines of the divine "times" can themselves only be worked out by actually using the Bible, and using it as authoritative. It is only from the Bible that we learn of these times when God spoke to men and ruled them in other ways, and of the time when He shall again do so. This is among those truths about the Bible which can only be inferred *from* the Bible; and from such truths we must begin if we believe with our fathers that the Bible is its own best interpreter.

¹ *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, p. 115 ff.

² D. MacGregor, *op. cit.*

The Epistle of Truth

THE REV. EDWIN HIRST, M.A., A.R.C.M.

(This is the fourth instalment of the Rev. Edwin Hirst's Studies in the Second Epistle of St. John. These valuable articles on "The Epistle of Truth" will be concluded in our next issue.)

TRUTH AND UNTRUTH

(2 St. John, verses 7-9)

TWO notes are sounded clearly in this letter. First, there is that of commendation. "I rejoice greatly that I have found certain of thy children walking in truth, even as we received commandment from the Father."¹ Next there is the note of warning. "For," says the Apostle, "many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh."² Grave danger was threatening these people. It was all the more serious because it paraded under another guise, so the Apostle plainly places truth over against untruth, warning the people of their threatened peril. The term he uses for these disseminators of dangerous doctrines is a strong one. He calls them "Deceivers." The word is rather rare in the New Testament, but its cognate verb is in fairly general use, particularly in the Johannine writings.

It might be well to turn aside to examine this verb before drawing attention in some detail to the actual danger. "Making to wander" or "leading astray" is the meaning. If the reference is to ships, it means "to drive from their course." The general thought is that of misleading another person, or of actually leading him into error. The Papyri are again helpful. A recovered letter of the second century says "we have collapsed and fallen from hope, being deceived by the gods and trusting in dreams."³ This is strongly

¹ Verse 4.

² Verse 7.

³ Milligan, *Greek Papyri*, p. 23.

reminiscent of Christ's own words : " Take heed that no man lead you astray." ¹ But it is equally true that we may lead ourselves astray. " If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." ² By such a procedure we do in our own selves the work of the great deceiver, Satan.

These " deceivers " were already at their labours in the Church, leading men astray. Their teaching was the equivalent of a denial of Christ's incarnation. They went even further and denied the possibility of such an act on God's part. It seems strange that such beliefs should have been existing at so early a stage of Christian history, especially within the circle of the Church itself. They had resemblances to two doctrines which ultimately were condemned as false and heretical. Evidently they were incipient forms of Docetism and Gnosticism. Both of these systems were more fully developed in the second century. Yet, even at so early a stage, the Apostle saw what would be the ultimate result if they were either harboured or indulged ; hence his unceasing efforts to emphasize the fact of the Incarnation, which both of these systems denied.

It seems that both Docetism and Gnosticism developed from an original desire to preserve the unity of the Godhead. God was the spiritual principle of the universe, and as such was transcendently holy. When emphasized apart from immanence, transcendence always tends to remove God away from the world, practically banishing Him from His creation, and making approach to Him impossible except through many intermediaries. Because Christ was divine, the Docetists held that His earthly body was not a truly natural body like that of the rest of humanity, but a body which seemed (from " dochein," to seem, to appear) to be real. Some maintained that from His infancy to His ascension, Christ's body was but a phantom, yet having the appearance of reality. Others allowed that the body was a true body, but at the same time did not believe that Christ was born at Bethlehem. They held that Christ descended upon the man Jesus at the Baptism, and departed from him before the Passion. In either case, Christ was not real, but

¹ St. Matthew xxiv. 4 : " Take heed that no man deceive you," A.V.
" Take care that no one misleads you," Weymouth and Moffatt.

² 1 John i. 8.

merely that which seemed or appeared to be so. Such doctrine involved a denial of the Incarnation and the Atonement alike, for if Christ was too sacred to share our lot, He neither lived nor died nor rose again for us men and for our salvation. There is no wonder then, that when he encountered this idea even in an incipient form, the Apostle attacked it as destructive to the basic truth of the Gospel.

Knowledge of these two systems comes to us mostly from the writings of Christian thinkers who opposed them, for little of the original writings of these "Deceivers" have survived. However, sufficient evidence is preserved to enable us to reconstruct the basis of their doctrines.

It should be remembered that it was a restless world into which Christ was born. St. Luke gives pictures of it both in his Gospel and in the Acts. Of the Jewish world, he said: "the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ."¹ Writing of Athens, which was representative of the Greek intellectual world, he said: "All the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing."²

Religion was not dead, but the pagan cults and philosophies, for all their fine thoughts, were found deficient in moral force. God was not known as Love, so there was little love in that age. Yet the very restlessness shown in efforts to attain new knowledge in the realm of morals, philosophy and religion, revealed a need which craved for satisfaction.

The Pax Romana had made communication easy within the Empire. Further, a period of reaction had set in after the wars of expansion, and, as usual, reaction was accompanied by scepticism. In such an atmosphere, magic and the occult arts flourished, superstition being rife almost everywhere. Yet there was that eager reaching out for something higher, better and nobler, which has already been mentioned. Sober Roman piety, Greek philosophy, and Oriental mysticism had met together. Out of this mingling of cults emerged the Mystery Religions in which it was claimed that higher knowledge was revealed to those who had been solemnly initiated into the circle of the faithful.

¹ St. Luke iii. 15.

² Acts xxvii. 21.

Such circumstances of intellectual unrest provided a favourable background for Gnostic teachers and systems to flourish.

Gnosticism is a generic term for that variety of systems which laid primary emphasis on knowledge. It has been called a philosophy of religion, but in reality it is more a philosophy of existence than of religion. Its fantastic speculations, however, do not merit the name of philosophy—a term which connotes a careful investigation of facts. Of this aspect Professor Jevons says: "Philosophy consists in reflecting upon experience for the purpose of discovering whether experience, as a whole, has any meaning; and, if so, what meaning."¹ Dr. Plummer summarized the matter as follows: "Gnosticism, though eminently philosophic in its aims and professions, was yet in its method more closely akin to poetry and fiction than to philosophy. If on the one hand it was intended as a contrast to the *pistis* (faith) of the Christian, on the other it was meant to supersede the *philosophia* (philosophy) of the heathen. While it professed to appeal to the intellect, and in modern language would have called itself rationalistic, yet it perpetually set intelligence at defiance, both in its premises and in its conclusions."²

Gnosticism might aptly be described as a series of speculative hypotheses regarding the origin of the universe and its relation to the supreme Being. Its leaders struggled with two problems. First, they sought to know who was the Supreme Principle of the universe and what part He played in creation. Secondly, they wrestled with the age-long problem of the origin of evil and its entry into the world. Like the Docetists, they believed that matter was evil, and for this reason they maintained that God must inevitably be far removed from creation. If contact with God was sought, they believed that it was possible only through intermediaries who were called "Æons" or "Angels." This belief in emanations and angels opened the door to all kinds of fantastic theories and speculations which were most repulsive to Christian principles. No wonder St. Paul directed Timothy, amongst other things, not to "give heed to fables and endless genealogies, the which minister questionings,

¹ *Philosophy, What is it?* p. 23.

² *Epistles of St. John*, p. 21.

rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith."¹ In time, these aeons came to be regarded almost as lesser deities, and, with the same insight, the Apostle warns the Colossians to "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ,"² Or again: "Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, dwelling on the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God."³

Many have been the attempts to account for the origin of evil and its continued presence in the world. In considering this matter, the Gnostics took refuge in a dualistic conception of the universe. God was the Spiritual Principle, but being absent from the world, they held that its creation was due to the activity of aeons, or to some lesser deity whom they named "Demiurge" and identified with Jehovah of the Old Testament. Matter being thus regarded as evil, finite, and limited in every way, it was held that it could have no direct connection with the spiritual and unseen. As a consequence, Christ was revered as an aeon, perhaps the highest and loftiest of the emanations from God; but it was held that He could not have had direct contact with a human body, for being matter, the body must of necessity be evil. Thus it was argued that Christ was not truly human, but merely a phantom.

The Christian could not view either Christ or the world in this light. If, as they believed, in Christ "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,"⁴ being "the Word made flesh," He was no aeon, not even the loftiest of aeons. Further, the world remained an unsolved riddle under dualistic principles. The Christian rejected that theory also, believing that what was indistinct to the finite mind of man was clear to the infinite mind of God. It was God's "good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the

¹ 1 Timothy, i. 4.

² Colossians ii. 8.

³ Colossians ii. 18, 19.

⁴ Colossians ii. 9.

things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth."¹

The Gnostic principles, the supremacy of knowledge, the evil of matter, and dualism, produced directly opposing results in moral teaching and conduct. On the one side, it was argued that if matter was evil and knowledge the only essential, the body must be crushed and beaten so that the spiritual being might attain even higher and still higher knowledge. This developed on one side into extreme asceticism. On the other, it was argued that the body might be allowed to experience every passion, no matter how vile and impure; and that, in contrast, the soul should increase in knowledge. This developed into a life of licence, profligacy, and immorality. No wonder, then, that St. Paul had asked: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"² St. John saw what would be the trend of events if these "deceivers," bearing their false doctrine with them, went about unhindered among the people. He warned them of their danger and exhorted them: "Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward."³

The Apostle went further, saying: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God."⁴ The Revised Version rendering here quoted rests on superior manuscript authority than that followed in the Authorized Version. The expression has a sarcastic ring, and evidently refers to those "advanced" thinkers who claimed that they had gone beyond the Gospel revelation, having reached something higher and more enlightened. Dr. Moffatt translates the passage thus: "Anyone who is 'advanced' and will not remain by the doctrine of Christ, does not possess God." Christ's teaching must proceed in front as the Christian journeys to the Celestial City. Even as an officer leads his men in battle, so must the Lord's teaching lead and guide Christians. He who advances must advance in that teaching. It is impossible to go beyond it, as the "deceivers" claim to have done. The Apostle does

¹ Ephesians i. 10.

² Romans vi. 1, 2.

³ 2 John 8.

⁴ 2 John 9.

not criticize progress in Christ's teaching, for we must all grow in grace. It is that teaching which has left Christ behind that he roundly condemns, for in reality it is a repudiation of His teaching. Here is a warning for these days. Together with a commensurate standard of scholarship, active witness to the truth of the Evangel must find a prominent place in the heart of every Christian teacher.

A desire to possess the truth is manifest in humanity, and Christ came to reveal that truth in His teaching. The double emphasis on the teaching of Christ as expressed in verse nine of this Epistle makes that clear. This does not mean teaching about Christ, nor yet teaching which is Christian, but it means direct teaching by Christ Himself. The first two modes of teaching are common enough at the present time, but it is the last which matters, and its content is in the Gospel. Christ claimed Divine authority for that teaching: "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself."¹ Because of that teaching, He was condemned by the Sanhedrin. "Then the high priest rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? behold now ye have heard the blasphemy: What think ye? They answered and said, He is worthy of death."² Our Lord's teaching was never merely theoretical. It went beyond the theoretical God of the philosopher, known as "The Absolute" or "The Infinite," to a Holy, Spiritual Person who is Life and Love. After all, personality is alike the dominant thought in religion and a primary fact of life. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."³ "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."⁴

It is manifest that God wills that His creatures should know the truth. The appetite of the mind is curiosity, and its true food is truth, which is to be found in Christ. St. John was anxious that his people should know this blessed truth and the starting point, indicated by the entire New

¹ St. John vii. 16, 17.

² St. Matthew xxvi. 65, 66.

³ St. John i. 4.

⁴ St. John iii. 16.

Testament in the search for it, was, and still is, the truth of the Incarnation. Christ became man that He might redeem humanity. Archbishop Temple makes this point emphatically clear. "The men who wrote the books of the New Testament believed that, in Jesus Christ, God Himself lived and walked about among them. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. They start from there." It is important to bear in mind the distinction between the abstract idea of God, which is ultimately hypothetical, and the living, active Person of God, who is Love. The first does not affect life in its most sacred aspects. The second maintains a definite relationship between the Creator and the creature. The creature can live in the power of the Creator, sharing in His truth as revealed in Christ. Happy, then, is he who abideth in the teaching, for he "hath both the Father and the Son."¹

TRUE HOSPITALITY

(II St. John, verses 10-11)

Human nature is such that few people who hold strong views on a controversial subject find it easy to tolerate the opposite point of view. History furnishes many instances which can be cited in support of this statement. In the past, for instance, many men have suffered imprisonment, torture, and even death itself, for holding just and true opinions, which happened to be unacceptable to authority. In our own day, the state ruler with plenary powers is intolerant of nonconformity with his views, and resorts to various coercive measures such as fines, imprisonment, or expulsion, in order to give full expression to those views.

Again, the popular statesman of to-day may, owing to a public expression of views on some question which runs counter to generally accepted opinion, become the unpopular and unwanted statesman of to-morrow.

However, unfortunate though it be, intolerance is a phase of human nature which is not always content to be passive. It tends to become offensively active, and when such intolerance touches religion and professed forms of faith, it sometimes breaks out in bitter persecution. The persecution of the English Protestants under the Marian restoration of

¹ 2 John 9.

Romanism serves as a good example, for : " In the three years of the persecution three hundred victims had perished at the stake."¹

Often we are surprised and pained to perceive that it took centuries even for Christians to learn the principle of religious tolerance. The lesson has not yet been fully learned. It must be also admitted that some have accepted it because circumstances have compelled them so to do. In days of success they have refused to do this, but in days of adversity and humiliation which have succeeded those of success, they turned an ear to its monitions. Religious strife has been bitter in the past, and it is not cleansed of all bitterness even in these enlightened days. So much has this been in evidence that people sometimes speak almost proverbially of the " odium theologicum "—" the hatred of theologians." This is hurled at Christians in particular, because of Christ's lofty standard of life for His people. Yet when men venture to sit in judgment, religious controversies should be judged in the light of contemporary circumstances, if full justice is to be accorded in any given case. During its career, Christianity has suffered violently at the hands of the intolerant. Yet that fact constitutes no excuse for the exercise of intolerance against others.

In this connection, the Apostle John has been harshly judged for some of his words in this Epistle. They fall heavily upon our ears and understanding in these days of wide toleration. Because of this fact alone they demand due consideration ; yet that consideration will reveal features of far wider significance. " Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God ; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting : for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."² This injunction is indeed severe, and has an added strangeness in that it comes from him whom we fondly name the Apostle of Love. Its severity is almost without parallel in the New Testament. St. John was experiencing what St. Paul had previously known : " Beside those things that are without, there is that which presseth

¹ Green, *A Short Story of the English People*, p. 361.

² John ix. 11.

upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches."¹ Spiritual oversight was no easy matter. The infant Churches faced dangers both without and within. On the one hand, there was the ever-present possibility and probability of persecution; on the other hand, that of false doctrine and lapses from grace. The Apostle had no illusions about either danger; the former had to be endured if it came; with regard to the latter, he was particularly zealous to preserve doctrinal purity among his people. Opposing doctrines could be dealt with, for they came into the open. Polluted teaching which sought to pass itself off as the pure doctrine of Christ was another matter, and not always easy either to trace or combat. St. John had one acid test, however, and that was the Godhead of Christ. The danger lay in those teachers who, to quote St. John's words, "confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh."² Thus the Apostle set a standard by which such false teachers were to be judged.

This warning was not issued simply because of a possibility which might arise. It was no hypothetical matter, for such instances of ill-advised hospitality had actually been known. The apostles themselves exercised an itinerant ministry. Later there were others who, like them, went about on evangelistic and teaching missions. Christians were accustomed to receive such travelling teachers and to give them hospitality. The *Didache* throws a measure of light upon this custom: "Let every one that cometh in the name of the Lord be received, and then, when ye have proved him, ye shall know, for ye shall have understanding between the right hand and the left. If he that cometh is a passer-by, succour him as far as ye can; but he shall not abide with you longer than two or three days unless there be necessity."³ Again, "Every true prophet, who is minded to settle among you, is worthy of his maintenance. In like manner a true teacher also is worthy, like every workman, of his maintenance."⁴ Further, these itinerant teachers were accorded special privileges. One is specifically mentioned in the matter of the liturgy. A form of Eucharistic thanksgiving is prescribed in Chapter Ten. Yet exception regarding its use is

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 28.

² 2 John 7.

³ Chapter xii. 1, 2.

⁴ Chapter xiii. 1, 2.

permitted to the prophets, for the Chapter ends with this admonition: "Suffer the prophets to give thanks as much as they will." St. John has in mind no passing Christian travellers who might be in need of Christian hospitality, but he was thinking of those who went out on teaching missions posing as Christian teachers, and whose avowed aim was to gain adherents to their teaching. In writing the words: "If anyone cometh unto you," the Apostle writes in the same strain as did St. Paul to the Corinthians when referring to a proposed apostolic visit: "Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will; and I will know, not the word of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of meekness?"¹ It was as fellow Christians with their hosts that these travelling teachers accepted Christian hospitality. Actually, however, they were impostors, for in preaching a Christ who was not God incarnate they had no right to be heard in the Christian Church. By forsaking the true foundation fact of the Christian Faith, they had ceased to be Christians. Such seems to have been the Apostle's opinion. St. Paul had faced the self-same difficulty, and we find him expressing almost equally strong sentiments on the subject: "If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema."²

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 18-21.

² Galatians i. 9.

THE ROOT OF OUR TROUBLES.

By J. H. Oldham, D.D. 6d. S.C.M.

Two Broadcast Talks in which the theme is developed that the root of our troubles is the mistaken conception of man upon which all social systems are built, viz., the conception that Man is an independent being. He is not. He is dependent upon God, whether he acknowledges it or not. Capitalism, Communism, National Socialism all fail here. God must have His rightful place.

The egocentric outlook is equally mistaken when men seek to achieve their purposes by co-operation.

The "common good" may be nothing more than the good of an enlarged "I."

Man is essentially dependent on nature, on his fellow beings and on God. H. D.

Book Reviews

PUTTING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER.

A sequel to "Men, Money and the Ministry."

London. (Longmans.) 3s. 6d.

"Time," says Bacon in one of his Essays, "is the great innovator; and if time alter things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end?" This pregnant aphorism might well have been put on the title page of this challenging little book, the purport of which is to demonstrate that it is high time for the Church—if she is to hold her own amid the shifting currents of the world—to rouse herself from any sort of easy acquiescence in the *status quo*, and to set her economic house in order. If that Church refuses to get rid of the anomalies of the present, her wastefulness in administration, her calm disinclination to "cut out the dead wood" in the tree of knowledge, it is inevitable that her power and influence (already on the wane) will decline steadily and even rapidly. The present book is a courageous attempt to indicate what ought to be done. It is sponsored by a great number of men eminent in the ecclesiastical world, including the Archbishop of York, the Principal of Westcott House, the Dean of St. Paul's, the General Secretary of the C.M.S., and eminent laymen like Lord Birdwood, Cyril Bailey, A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, T. S. Eliot, and many others whose names are given in the Foreword. The problems before the would-be reformers are many, and some of them supremely difficult of solution, e.g. clerical salaries, pensions, the redistribution of endowments, the extension of clergy-houses for the adequate employment of trained men to serve in over-populated centres, and dozens of other matters demanding the best thought of the wisest advisers.

The present reviewer has but one suggestion to offer: a determined effort should be made to relieve all beneficed clergy from the necessity of keeping their parsonages in proper repair, and from being obliged to pay—generally out of inadequate stipends—the heavy, and the increasing, cost of the local rates. Both these things should be undertaken by the diocese. Such a reform is long overdue. We do not desire to see a *rich* clergy, but no man called to the ministry should, in addition to his many pastoral cares, be harassed by money anxieties; specially is this the case when the income tax has reached its present fantastic figure. We are heavily in accord with the remark on p. 65: "The Church's organization to-day is not sufficiently geared into the social and economic life of the country." The Church will have to adapt itself more realistically to "the changing pattern of contemporary life, before it can hope to transform that life." But we shall do well also to remember, when advocating reforms and drastic changes whether in Church or State, how easy it is to secure a proxi-

mate result with no due thought for the ultimate one. "Original causes," said Herbert Spencer in his valuable work on the Study of Sociology, "are often numerous and widely different from the apparent cause; beyond each immediate result there will be multitudinous remote results, most of them quite incalculable." It would be easy to raise objections to some of the suggestions made in *Putting Our House in Order*, but this would not interfere with the general soundness (as we understand it) of the book as a whole, which should be widely read, carefully studied, and duly acted upon. There is certainly no time to waste on endless and often fruitless discussions.

E. H. BLAKENEY.

THE CHURCH AND THE NEW ORDER.

By William Paton, D.D. (S.C.M.) 6s.

Dr. Paton had no illusions in regard to the difficulties of the problem which faced him when he began to write this book. He knows quite well that Victory, final and complete, must be obtained before we can establish a "New Order" amongst the nations of the earth. Nevertheless he is convinced that it is not too early to examine the facts which are now beginning to emerge from the world conflict and relate them to the Christian view of human life. He therefore considers in close detail the following propositions: The chaos behind the war, the guiding Christian principles of the New Order, the ideal set before us and the next steps, and the future relationship between Britain and America, which may entail a complete identity of Purpose and policy.

Each of these propositions receives wise and careful attention and their united value may be estimated by quotations from one of them. The "Guiding Principles," are based on the well-known letter which appeared in *The Times* on December 21st, 1940, signed by The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Cardinal Hinsley and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council. "The importance of this letter lies not only in the intrinsic merits of what is said but in the highly significant fact that it is said in common by representatives of the three great divisions of English Christianity. It is to be doubted whether any such common action has been taken since the Reformation." Equally significant statements were issued from Geneva before the war by the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches and in December 1940, by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

"These different statements are not likely to be dismissed by thoughtful people as mere generalities. . . . They are genuine efforts to discern in the Christian doctrine of God and His creative and loving will, certain consequences for the life of man. This is found in the following important matters:

- (a) There are basic human rights and these lie deeper than political systems. . . .
- (b) The solidarity of mankind and the need that political institutions should be framed reflect the fact of this solidarity.
- (c) The emptiness of mere political formulations which overlook the facts of social and economic life. . . ."

The Christian Church has a profound interest in this re-building of the New World and its eternal principles should be enshrined in the foundation. We cannot, however, forget, as Sir Alfred Zimmern has pointed out, that President Wilson's attempt to secure the insertion in the Covenant of the League of Nations of a clause guaranteeing religious freedom, failed. The reasons for this failure must be faced in a realistic way. There were and there always will be difficulties in connection with other religions and there is the constant problem of religious freedom in Roman Catholic countries. In regard to this latter issue, Dr. Paton is thoroughly keen for a close and friendly relationship between Christians of every denomination, and he pleads with the authorities of the Roman Church to re-consider and modify their exclusive claims.

"The facts are clear and important. Roman Catholic missions, carried on as they are with great devotion in countries governed by Protestant powers, receive at their hands precisely the same privileges, grants-in-aid, recognition of schools, etc., as the missions of Protestant Churches. It would seem wrong to Protestants if this were not so. But in States controlled by Governments which are subservient to the Roman Church—the colonies of Belgium, Portugal and Italy and some of the Latin-American republics—while every kind of assistance and status is given to the missions of the Roman Church, none is given to those of the Protestants. It is even difficult for them to secure for their own converts, who pay taxes like others, the right to attend their own schools, or to be trained as teachers without professing or assenting to the Roman position. The matter was once put humorously by a Roman Catholic: "Precisely, when we are in power we behave on our principles, when you are in power we expect you to behave on yours. . . ." I would, however, urge upon any Roman Catholics who may read these words that the policy they pursue does, in fact, outrage the conscience of Protestants and is a fertile source of distrust and enmity. The matter may come to a head in unfortunate ways. The many Protestant missions in Portuguese and Belgian territory—British, American, Swiss, Scandinavian—are well aware that there will be no colonies for these little powers unless the British Commonwealth wins the war, and they begin already to ask if prohibitions and discriminations which are morally distasteful to the conscience of the mass of thoughtful people in Britain and America are again to be imposed by these powers. . . ."

This important and valuable book deserves a wide circulation amongst Christian leaders in our own country and the U.S.A. It will undoubtedly help to build up that well-informed and definite Christian public opinion without which we shall not "win the peace." In it we are clearly taught to regard the work of the Church not so much from the point of view of its power and usefulness, but as work offered in faith to God in token of its surrender and its love.

J. W. AUGUR.

THE CROSS SEEN FROM FIVE STANDPOINTS.

By J. Scott Lidgett, C.H., M.A., D.D. (*The Epworth Press.*)
2s. 6d.

THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION.

A Study of the Atonement.
By C. Ryder Smith, B.A., D.D. (*The Epworth Press.*) 7s. 6d.

These two books illustrate in different ways the abiding loyalty of the people called Methodists to the Gospel of the Cross. Incidentally as a result of this they have rendered up to the present hour no small service to Evangelical theology. While both these books have the Cross as their focal point, one has the relative simplicity of a short series of expanded sermons, the other is a resolute essay in Biblical theology of primary interest to students of theology.

In his well-known book, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement* (1897), Dr. Scott Lidgett made a first-rate contribution to the theology of the Atonement along his own lines and it is a remarkable tribute to his virility that, more than forty years afterwards, he is able to give us within the space of some sixty pages these five fresh and stimulating studies of "The Cross." Though slight in bulk there is a spiritual masculinity about these discussions on "The Initiative of Love," "The Cost of Righteousness," "The Glory of Self-Sacrifice," "The Heroism of Saviourship," "The Cross and the Sacrament," which will commend them to the discerning. "Half and half Christianity occasions impracticable difficulties both to thought and life" expresses the spirit of this little book. Many will find in it marrow for their devotional life as well as no little light on theological perplexity.

The contemporary trend towards Biblical theology finds a happy illustration in *The Bible Doctrine of Salvation*, by Dr. C. Ryder Smith. Speaking more particularly of the Atonement, he rightly states: "On this subject, after two millenniums of Christian thought, any violent originality is almost sure to be spurious," and as "the exponents of all historical theories in all periods have all claimed to find their theories in the Bible, and, in spite of the many modern discussions of every kind of Biblical subject, the appeal to the Bible is still the final appeal."

Dr. Smith's contention is that inasmuch as all theories of the Atonement involve the question of a relationship between two persons, God and man, psychological categories are not only inevitable but doctrinally final. They have the additional advantage of leading us to a more direct return to "the New Testament way of approach to the doctrine of salvation." Thus his method is both Biblical and psychological. His psychological principle for the interpretation of both Old and New Testaments is what he calls the societary idea, namely that the root idea of the Bible doctrine of salvation is that God has made man to live in fellowship with Himself. He maintains that here we reach something more ultimate than such distinctions as subjective and objective theories of the Atonement and "What Christ does for us," and "What Christ does in us." "The 'societary theory' here advocated, if that name may be used, clearly claims that

Christ, by His Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection, does everything for us in the realm of Salvation, and, through His indwelling Spirit, does everything good in us."

It is surprising to find a writer whose general view of the relation of the Old and New Testaments may be summed up in the sentence: "The New Testament explanations begin where the Old Testament left off—with the great Servant Song," minimizing the relevance and importance of the element of "sacrifice" in the Biblical doctrine of salvation. However intractable this element may be to our modern humanistic outlook, we are convinced that a Biblical theology demands a more adequate and deeper valuation of its significance.

We are grateful for this scholarly attempt to elucidate that more Biblical approach to salvation for which the times so loudly call. Its thoughtful perusal will well repay those who are anxious to relate Evangelical theology to the wider relevance of a havoiced modern world.

A. B. L.

THE MIRACLE-STORIES OF THE GOSPELS.

By Alan Richardson, B.D. pp. viii + 149. (S.C.M.). 6s. net.

This volume on our Lord's miracles has been written by a scholar who has already done good service in attempting to make available for students and others the results of much recent theological research. This is a task of real importance at the present time. Christianity, as the world shows, is "up against it," and the Faith of the future, if it is to prevail, must be based on sound knowledge. And this knowledge, if it is to be truly Christian, must in turn be based upon the Bible. Furthermore, it must be the full Faith of the New Testament and not a "reduced Christianity." Hence we are glad to notice that the author makes no attempt either to eliminate or to explain away the supernatural. "Miracles," he declares, "are decisive; without them the whole course of events is inexplicable. It was because Jesus by His signs had demonstrated that He was the resurrection and the life, the fulfilment of Judaism and the hope of the world, that He was put to death. . . . Apart from the miracles of Jesus, the story of the crucifixion as a historical narration is unintelligible." So much then for the standpoint of the book.

Of the actual contents of the volume much could be written if only because from several points of view the author has performed a much-needed task. As an example, he has demonstrated the underlying purpose and theological significance of our Lord's miracles. Their purpose was not in any sense to startle, to arrest attention, or to impress the bystanders. And the author corrects a common misunderstanding of the words that "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (St. Matt. xiii. 58). The view that this represents a subjective limitation of our Lord's powers due to the scepticism of the spectators is wholly to misunderstand the position. "Jesus refuses to show the signs of the Kingdom to those who will not understand them. . . ." "The working of miracles is

part of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, and not an end in itself."

In dealing with the theological setting and background of our Lord's miracles the author takes for examination the accounts given by the Gospel of St. Mark as being on the surface the least theological of the four Gospels. Yet he is able amply to demonstrate that to St. Mark as much as to St. John the theological significance of the miracles is decisive for these interpretations. To him, as to believers endowed with insight under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the miracles were "signs," events charged with a deeper and wider significance than is apparent to the superficial reader. Quite rightly the author explains the Old Testament background as providing the proper "setting" in which our Lord's miracles must always be studied. This can be seen most clearly in the Biblical conception of God as *Power*, which the New Testament emphasizes by constant ascription to Him of *dynamis*.

One part of the book which will doubtless be read with interest is the section which deals with the results of Form Criticism so far as it affects the miracle-stories of the Gospel, as well as with the views of those who attempt "to find the significance of the miracle-stories in the element of compassion." These sections the reader must study for himself.

We hope that enough has been said to show the value of the work for the preacher and the teacher, especially with regard to Sections IV, "The Teaching of the Miracle-Stories" and V, "Miracle-Stories and the Interpretation of the Scriptures." But the whole work will well repay the most careful study, and it comes at an opportune moment when more than ever we should all be making every effort to equip ourselves for the tasks which will lie ahead of us all, both now and in the future, in which the education of the laity will be essential.

C. J. OFFER.

NO FRIEND OF DEMOCRACY.

By Edith Moore. (International Publishing Co.) 1s.

This is a well-documented study of Roman Catholic politics offered by the author to all people, Christians and non-Christians alike who are opposing Nazism. Joseph McCabe writes a short preface. He is listed in Albert Close's book amongst the 854 Roman priests who have left the Church of Rome and he is now a Rationalist. This book is divided into four sections. In the first the authoress writes of the way in which the Roman Church helped the Fascists to Power in Italy and Germany. The Lateran Treaty between Mussolini and the Pope transferred about sixteen million pounds from the State to the Pope. More than half of this sum was Italian Government stock so that the Pope became interested in the financial well-being of the new Italian State. Cardinal Hinsley (*Catholic Times*, October 18th, 1935) said at this time: "If Fascism—which in principle I do not approve—goes under, nothing can save the country from chaos. *God's cause goes under with it.*" Miss Moore has no difficulty in proving that Hitler came into power with the active assistance of the Catholic

Centre Party and of the ecclesiastical forces of the Roman Catholic Church. Her second indictment is under the heading: "The Church marches with the War-mongers." She quotes amongst others William Teeling, a devoted Roman Catholic who says of the Abyssinian War: "Practically without exception the whole world condemned Mussolini, all except the Pope." This fact is proved up to the hilt. The same thing is seen in Nazi Imperialism and in Franco's Holy War. In the third section she gives a catena of Roman Catholic opinion on the present War. She has much of interest to quote and comment upon in connection with the present War and the Roman Catholic Church in Germany; the "Catholicism" of the Vichy Government, the entry of Italy into the war and Catholic Isolationism in America. "Catholic opinion in the States is virtually all in the Isolationist Camp." This is quoted from the *Catholic Herald* which on March 14th of the present year, spoke of the "maintenance of a Catholic opinion" against the Lease and Lend Bill.

Finally, Miss Moore indicts the Pope as the greatest of all non-Interventionists. That she is not writing as a mere partisan is evident in such a statement as this: "The British Government will be wise not to refuse the co-operation of Roman Catholics in this country in relation to the present struggle against Nazism. But Parliament and the people at large must realize on what unreliable foundations such co-operation rests." Leaders of Protestant opinion in this country should read this interesting and timely examination of the Totalitarian Church.

A. W. PARSONS.

LET'S TRY REALITY.

By the Rev. W. Rowland Jones. (George Allen and Unwin.) 3s. 6d.

The author is Vicar of St. Hilda's, Denton, Manchester, and a member of the Royal Society of Teachers. He was writing articles for the *Daily Herald* but they were silenced by the Editor!

Mr. Jones is tired of shams, indeed, he is sick of them. He sees in our Lord's life and teaching a great experiment in Reality. In the early days of Christianity he sees the Quislings at work and he believes that from the time of Constantine the basic nature of the Christian Church changed. It became the religion of sanctified patriotism. Some of his statements surprise us. "During my ten years as a Vicar of the Church of England I have never had an invitation to associate in worship with churches of a different school of thought, although there are two not a mile away. We might as well belong to different denominations." Again: "Many a time I have heard Anglo Catholic priests say to their congregations: 'If you don't like what we do here, you can get out!' I have not had quite such close association with Evangelical partisans. I have, however, been told by Evangelical Bishops that my place is not in the Church of England at all."

On the Prayer Book he says: "The language is out-of-date and unintelligible to the average man." Again: "The clergy are a most unpopular body. Apart from Income Tax Officials, they are probably the most unpopular class of beings in this country. Nearly everybody

dislikes them." The man who can write that is not living in a real world himself. This book will provoke criticism. It will not produce reality.

A. W. PARSONS.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

By Harold Anson. (Student Christian Movement Press.) 94 pp. 2s.

The title of this book should be read in close connection with the name of its author : it is the truth about spiritualism as it appears to Canon Anson. Though the alleged phenomena are dispassionately examined, and the dangers of the cult are candidly stated, it cannot be said that the clear implications of the teaching of the Word of God on the subject are taken into account. So we are bound to conclude that we have before us, not the truth about spiritualism as it really is—viz. as it is revealed in Scripture—but only as it appears to the Master of the Temple.

The book does refer to supernatural occurrences and supernatural gifts as recorded in Holy Scripture ; and there is welcome emphasis on the central importance to Christianity of our Lord's Resurrection (though the evidences for it are inadequately stated). But no weight is given to the most solemn warnings of Scripture against the practices and associations of spiritism in any form. In fact, the warnings of Leviticus and Deuteronomy are only mentioned to be immediately described as providing ground for objection to an alleged small minority of people, rapidly diminishing. Perhaps it is not so small as the author supposes. No consciousness, moreover, seems to be indicated that a number of passages in the New Testament entirely confirm these warnings.

The fact is, that this is a subject which Christian people—for whom this book appears to have been written—cannot approach with scientific detachment. And even from the merely mundane standpoint, distinctions must be drawn between remarkable experiences which have come unsought, and the deliberate attempt to seek after the secrets of the unseen through mediums. This, by the way, is a point upon which spiritists continually show confusion of thought, when they claim the Bible (or such parts of it as they approve !) as on their side. There is similar confusion between the possession of unusual psychic faculties and the perverted use of such faculties. It cannot be said that this book makes these distinctions clear.

Again, in the alternative explanations which it offers as to the apparently unquestionable manifestation of occult influences in certain cases, while these are stated with perfect scientific candour, no place whatever appears to be given to the one explanation which alone harmonizes with the severity of the teaching of Holy Scripture on the subject. There is no assignable limit to the power of the principalities of evil to support such manifestations, however apparently marvellous. Messages may certainly come "from an extra-mundane source" (p. 33), from "some active intelligence at work behind, and apart from, the automatist" (quoted on p. 34), and the manifestations may

certainly be proofs of "supra-normal knowledge" (p. 36), without leading to the conclusion that even "a small residuum of psychical facts . . . can only be explained" as genuine communications from departed friends (pp. 37-8). And the implication that mediumship itself may be a gift "brought under the yoke of Christ" and "so consecrated" (even though it is plainly stated that it may otherwise "lead men on the sure road to spiritual destruction") is appalling (pp. 58-9).

There is a very welcome reminder (p. 81) that neither the New Testament, nor early Christianity, has any suggestion of anything like a modern *séance*, "in which the spirits of James or Stephen, much less the spirit of our Lord Himself, were invited or questioned." The author, in one place (p. 59), expresses a somewhat lenient estimate of the effect produced by this cult on the faith of its adherents, though he acknowledges that it may in many cases be injurious. Experience surely shows that the general tendency among them is to abandon certain central articles of the Christian Faith, on the ground that what are called "the guides" do not teach these vital truths. Indeed, another passage in the book (p. 67) virtually confirms this conclusion.

W. S. HOOTON.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By *John Drewett*. (*National Society and S.P.C.K.*) 1s. 6d.

This is a book for the times, because the writer has ably diagnosed one radical cause of our present troubles. He says, "The plight of our times is due to the breaking of the Commandments." "The supreme irony of our civilisation is that it is based on the universality of natural law, but has as thoroughly rejected moral law as any of the former great civilisations." The writer briefly discerns the reasons for the prevalent neglect of the Ten Commandments; and indicates why in the circumstances of our day they have gained a fresh relevance and ought once again to be reintroduced. He then seeks in detail to examine their meaning and implications both in the light of the New Testament and in relation to existing conditions of society. This treatment is practical and challenging, and elementary enough for the general reader to follow. Each chapter is followed by three or four "Questions for Discussion." The book would make a good study book for a group of young people.

Mr. Drewett gets to grips with current questions of community life such as capitalism and communal ownership, pacifism and divorce. He rightly recognizes that the Ten Commandments embody and express principles and duties in the application and practice of which alone can the world find the solution to some of its pressing problems. He makes plain that if we are to solve pressing economic problems, and to secure a just distribution of material wealth, we need a new conception of the sin of theft. The Old Testament prophets violently opposed excessive riches because of their outraged sense of justice.

Christianity does not encourage the abandonment of Law. Rather it inspires a spirit of willing obedience to the Law. For the principles

of the Law are eternal. Divine Love itself can do no better than fulfil it. Further, because "Christianity is the religion of a minority . . . most men are still under Law and not under Grace." Without respect for the moral law, there is nothing to prevent men from slipping back into savagery. We cannot move from international lawlessness to any positive practice of Christian standards except through the preparatory or foundation stage of accepting such a law as the Law of Moses. "The commandments are rules of life ; . . . if we don't keep the rules we shall not be able to play the game at all. Love goes beyond justice, but it can never tolerate injustice, and often Christian love, because it thinks justice is a hard thing, degenerates into a shallow sentimentality." Such reassertion of the abiding importance of Law is something much needed in this twentieth century. The Ten Commandments are, as Mr. Drewett asserts, relevant to our situation.

To Scriptural Evangelicals this book will be disappointing in two ways. First, the writer seems to make more of the Church and of the Sacraments than of faith in the living Christ and the written Word, viz. : "Membership of the Church and partaking of the means of grace alone enable us to lead a Christian life." Second, he does not (in harmony with Article VI) recognize the fulness and finality of Holy Scripture. While he presses for a fresh recognition of the absolute moral law as expressed in the Ten Commandments, he does not equally recognize and appeal to the similar supernatural authority of the whole written Word of revelation. He does not fully and clearly make the written Word and the witness of the Spirit the final and decisive authority in things Christian. He appeals to a very important section of the text-book but he does not appeal in the same way to the whole text-book. The plight of our times is also due to a neglect of the authority of Scripture, particularly of the Old Testament, within the Church. Mr. Drewett does not go all the way to wards its fresh recognition, but the appearance of his book is a further welcome indication of a widespread return in that direction. "To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20).

PAT McCORMICK

By R. J. Northcott. (Longmans.) 3/6.

An attraction of the seaside town which has not been so much in evidence of late years is the Camera Obscura—a contrivance by which images of external objects are shown upon a surface in the focus of the lens. This book reminds one of the view seen in the Camera Obscura ; so much is seen in so short a time with so little trouble. The author shows the reader the different phases of Pat McCormick's busy life ; from childhood, school, university, through his experiences as a padre in S. Africa, as an army chaplain in two campaigns, to Croydon Parish Church and to what has been called the "Parish Church of the Empire." The book has an added charm, for the author, when writing upon various episodes of his hero's life, takes the opportunity to offer some shrewd reflections upon contemporary life. On

pp. 36-7 there is a fine tribute to the traditions of the Brigade of Guards with which Pat McCormick served during the Great War. There is a quiet reminder on p. 102 that the success which we wish to make of life can be achieved only when Church, State, Science, and Administration are willing to acknowledge the part given to each and co-operate with each other. Page 52 and those immediately following have some penetrating reflections on the Life and Liberty Movement which was designed to bring these two elements into the loved Church of England. One wonders whether or no the pioneers of the movement are proud of their work. The Church had both life and liberty, had the people known how to use them; instead, we are now overwhelmed by organisation.

It is never easy to write a short "life" of one whose name has become a household term; but the author has succeeded in giving us a picture of a beloved personality and an outstanding figure who truly lived "a man's life."

E. H.

THE RICHES OF OUR PRAYER BOOK.

By the Rev. J. P. Hodges, Vicar of St. Andrew's, Bournemouth.
pp. 109. (London: S.P.C.K.) 1941. 1s. 6d.

This little manual is introduced in a Foreword by the Bishop of Truro. He suggests that it is likely to be found useful in connection with Confirmation Classes and study circles. We heartily agree. Each separate section, though full of thought, is a simple exposition of the value of the Book of Common Prayer in public worship. It was said by someone that "all that the Church of England needs is the spirit of her own services." This book is likely to help many to catch that spirit. The plan of the book is to enlarge upon the meaning of the words of the exhortation in Morning and Evening Prayer. "We assemble and meet together:

to render thanks;
to set forth His most worthy praise;
to hear His most Holy Word;
to ask those things which are necessary."

In successive chapters, quite simply, yet in such a manner as to lead to fuller thought, the writer shows how the Book of Common Prayer in its services provides us with the means and inspiration which will enable us to make our worship real and edifying. We must always remember that if we are not edified God is not glorified. We strongly recommend this excellent manual as a trustworthy guide to spiritual worship.

D. T. W.