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*FIDES DIVINA ET FIDES HUMANA ;*

*OR, FAITH ACCORDING TO CHRIST.*

WORDS are at best symbols, the paper currency of human thought. It is surely well, then, to pause from time to time and set about realizing our actual moral and spiritual wealth, by "converting" current terms into valid ideas. The task is never an easy, and seldom a pleasant one. Yet it is the very condition of true progress towards the truth, which not only sets free, but also must one day unite in conscious harmony brethren as yet estranged in mind. For as we are often reminded, half the controversies in our midst would cease with the definition of the terms employed. Accordingly the present study will seek to attain in a form suited to the spiritual sphere, which evades all strict definition, what will serve the practical ends of definition, as regards a term of decisive moment for religious thought. The term is "faith," with "truth" as its correlate.

But how avoid the vagueness and inconclusiveness of abstract discussion which oftenest leaves the disputants as far apart as ever? Definition ultimately rests upon an intuition or immediate experience, which determines thought and language, and yet can hardly be communicated to another in the ordinary course of argument. Each must hark back, then, to the real source of the other's thought, the intuition to which any idea must be capable of being reduced, on pain of forfeiting the right to pass current under a given term. In the present instance such a course

seems as easy as it is appropriate. For if there be one legitimate and essential meaning attaching to the term "faith," Christians at least, of every sort and condition, will on reflexion be ready to agree, that this must be the one which dwelt in the mind of Christ and underlay His ministry and its attitude to the soul of man. The question therefore is capable of a treatment primarily historical and exegetical. But it has seldom been so treated. At any rate, in this form, it may well be discussed afresh in THE EXPOSITOR.

### I.

I do not here purpose giving a catalogue of all the passages in which the word *faith* and its congeners occur in the Gospels, examining the etymological meaning of the Hebrew and Greek forms, together with their mutual relations in Old Testament usage, as shown by the Septuagint and other versions, and so striving to fix the sense in which the Lord *must* have used the term. This has been done in lexicons already, to the satisfaction of the lexicographers at least; and undoubtedly it has its value in its own place. But it is at best an *à priori* method, and cannot do more than add a certain probability to results reached contextually. It has too its disadvantages. It tends to obscure or prejudice the "newness" of the gospel. And it is apt to become scholastic, making theologians cease to reflect just at the point where they ought rather to begin.

In contrast then to all that tends to engross attention upon the mere letter, to the neglect of the psychological aspect of the narrative—appreciation of which is dependent on a vivid and overmastering sense of the context—it seems best to focus our study upon one representative passage, regarded both in its narrower and wider context. By this I mean that we must realize, not only the immediate

historical situation, but also the general historical setting of Christ's ministry and its environment.

The passage referred to is John v. 30-47.<sup>1</sup> Here in strictness ver. 30 goes rather with what precedes (vers. 19-29), re-enforcing the thought underlying ver. 19, *viz.* that the secret of the Son's authority, whether in deed or word, is His perfect receptiveness towards the Father, to whom His inner eye is ever turned, His inward ear ever open. But the words, "Because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me," supply a lesson as to the moral conditions of spiritual receptivity, which will prove of great moment when the question emerges, as to what determines predisposition to faith or the reverse.

In the earlier part of the chapter we are told how the Jews saw in Christ's analogy between His Father's continuous activity in the world, untrammelled by institutional restrictions, and His own freedom in beneficent and prophetic action, spite of Sabbath-day usages, a blasphemously individual claim to the relation of sonship (*πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεόν*), whereby He "made Himself equal with God" (*ἴσων ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ Θεῷ*). Their charge Jesus met by correcting their crude notion that rivalry was inherent in the sonship which His words implied, in signalling perfection of *dependent receptiveness* as the unique quality which made His action the analogue of the Father's. This done, He is free to pass on to justify His personal "witness" by witness other than that of His own subjective consciousness; for, on this occasion, nothing but independent evidence will suffice to convince them that

<sup>1</sup> Without going into the Johannine question as a whole (on which, see Professor Sanday's articles now appearing in *THE EXPOSITOR*), it is enough here to remark that, taking the passage on its own merits, it commends itself as authentic, at least in such a sense as to justify the use here made of it. On this point one is glad to be able to refer to Dr. Wendt's judgment as to its organic unity with Synoptic passages of the first weight (*Der Inhalt der Lehre Jesu*, pp. 451 ff).

one who had just openly ignored their Sabbath could be sent of God. Accordingly, Christ is confined to witness which is *ad hominem*, while still valid. Yet in this too there are degrees of value. For here emerges that remarkable reserve, in acknowledging rather than appealing to human attestation, which explains the wording of our title, and merits closer attention.

The thought underlying the abrupt turns and transitions which abound in our evangelist, plainly seems to be as follows. Self-witness apart, there is One to whose witness confident appeal is made by Jesus Himself. Lest then the Jews should imagine that the Forerunner was thereby intended, he adds: "Ye yourselves (*ὑμεῖς*) have sent embassy to John, and he has given his witness to the truth. But as for Me (*ἐγώ*), the witness that I accept is not from man (*οὐ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου τὴν μαρτυρίαν λαμβάνω*); howbeit I refer to this (John's witness in answer to your inquiries), that ye may receive salvation (*σωθῆτε*, *i.e.* even on basis of trust in John's testimony rather than Mine or the Father's). He was indeed the lamp that burneth (*καίόμενος*) and shineth; and as for you, ye were glad to (*ἐθελήσατε*) exult, but with no seriousness, for a brief hour in his light.<sup>1</sup> But as for Me, the attestation which I have is greater than that supplied in John (*μείζω τοῦ Ἰωάννου*). For the works which the Father hath given Me to accomplish, those very works which I do testify concerning Me that it was the Father who sent Me. Ay, and the Father who sent Me, the same hath testified concerning Me (*i.e.* in the Scriptures,<sup>2</sup> mentioned in the next verse but one). Neither

<sup>1</sup> Wendt compares the changeful mood of the children in the market-place, ready to respond superficially to the influence of the hour. But Meyer remarks that "the main feature of the perverted desire does not lie in *πρὸς ὦραν*, . . . but in *ἀγαλλιασθῆναι* itself, instead of which *μετάνοια* should have been the object of their pursuit." "*Johanne utendum erat, non fruedum*" (Bengel).

<sup>2</sup> So Meyer and Wendt (*l.c.*, p. 362, note), comparing also viii. 16-19.

voice of His have ye ever heard, nor form<sup>1</sup> of Him have ye seen; and so (καὶ . . . οὐ, instead of οὐτε), His word ye have not abiding in you, for He whom He commissioned (ἀπέστειλεν), Him ye do not believe. Ye search the Scriptures, because ye yourselves suppose that in them ye have life eternal; and these are they which testify concerning Me, and (yet) ye are not willing to come to Me, that ye may have life. Think not that this is the language of wounded self-love. Glory from men I accept not. But I know you, that the love of God—the very essence of your law (Mark xii. 28 ff.)—ye have not in your hearts. As for Me, I have come in My Father's name (representing Him and His glory), and ye accept Me not. If another shall come in his own name (with no such zeal for the Father), him ye will accept. How *can* men such as you (ὁμοίως) believe, seeing that ye accept glory one of another, and as for the glory that cometh from the only God, ye seek it not? Suppose not that it is I, who will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, upon whom yourselves have set your hope. For, if ye actually believed Moses,<sup>2</sup> ye would believe Me; for *he* (ἐκεῖνος) wrote concerning Me. If, however, ye believe not *his* writings, how shall ye believe My words?"

Here surely we have, so to speak, the *locus classicus* at once as to Christian evidences, and as to authority, so far as it can claim Christ's sanction, as being "witness" worthy of Christian "faith." It is threefold. First, the *ipse dixit* of a great man, regarded as sent of God, for the bare fact that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, to whom

<sup>1</sup> Figurative language: compare our own "voice of God in conscience" and "vision" or "conception of God." The issue in either case is God's "word" in the heart, a relatively non-figurative expression.

<sup>2</sup> It is clear that the reference here cannot be to the mere promise of a Messiah in the Prophet of Deuteronomy xviii. 15. For it was not the *fact* of a Messiah being promised, as to which they were blind, but His *nature* and *characteristics*. And on this point it was the general drift of the Mosaic ideal to be realized in Messiah that they had missed (cf. Luke xvi. 29 ff.).

the prior revelation of God pointed: "He has come." Secondly, the witness supplied by the works of this Jesus, that He is indeed the Sent of God. Finally and most impressively, the witness of God, the Sender, represented as Himself testifying directly in the hearts of men, yet by means of the older Scriptures, that this is indeed His Son following on the "servants" already sent (Luke xx. 9 ff.): that this is Messiah, who unites fully and personally the attributes contained in the heart of those Scriptures. With the second aspect of the witness we are not now concerned. Suffice it to note its place in the organism of witness. There, and not otherwise, it has an important function to perform, though one necessarily varying in cogency with the opportunities enjoyed by an age or individual for assuring itself as to what is, in form, matter of history.<sup>1</sup> It is to the first and third, therefore, in their mutual relations, and to the "faith" answering to each, that we must address our inquiry.

If the view underlying our paraphrase be accepted, then we have two kinds of true witness contrasted: that wherein the source emphasised is man; and that in which it is God. The latter is superior, decisive, and is appealed to. The former is inferior, provisional, and is waived, though its useful function in the case of spiritual minors is incidentally recognised. The contrasted sources of witness are John and the Scriptures, *i.e.* a man and a "book." Why then is the one correlated with God, while the other, at least formally, is not so related? It is not enough to say that to the Jews the Scriptures were the word of God; while John, though equally from God, was to them at best an

<sup>1</sup> See Latham's *Pastor Pastorum; or, The Schooling of the Apostles by our Lord*, in which the "works" of Christ are put in their correct setting. I may add that the "works," particularly when taken in the large sense in which Christ here uses the term, are sensitive, as to their verisimilitude, to every fresh and deepened insight into the character of the Worker Himself. And this latter depends on the Father's witness.

object of doubt. This does not go to the root of the matter. The real difference is, that in reference to the book their religious *conscience* was essentially involved; while as to John, this was so only in a secondary sense. True, their conscience could not but recognise in John tokens of the prophet. Still not only did such derive what cogency they had from John's own conformity to scriptural ideals; but further, and more emphatically, even acceptance of Jesus as sent of God, on the strength of John's assertion, and apart from a sense of Christ's *quality* as thus sent, was at best a second-hand, mechanical sort of credence, and had the fatal defect of making the higher depend upon the lower, belief in the Lord upon belief of the servant.

How was it then as regards the attestation in the Scriptures? They, as we have seen, were ultimate norm for recognition of the Divine, as present in John. They would be so, therefore, in a higher degree, touching the One as to whom he had been wont to cite their witness. But in what sense? Not as mere written record; not even as record of the fact that Messiah should come. No, it is not upon the "is coming," but upon the "He," that the stress falls, in the scriptural undertone "He is coming." Now to enter into the character of the person, *spiritual insight* is requisite; and such, says Jesus, can come from God alone. This is God's witness, whereby His "voice" is heard echoing through the Scriptures, and His "form" is seen adumbrated under the various conceptions of the Divine character. This is His "word," the essence of His thought for man, in virtue of which alone any "Scripture-searching," however painstaking, can conduct to "eternal life" or have in fact any religious value. Moreover the apprehension of this "word" is vitally connected with the "love of God" in the heart, each being the condition for progress in the other.

Dropping now direct reference to the historical situation,



we may say in general that it was this self-witness in the heart God creates and in a certain sense indwells as supreme authority, that the prophets of the Reformation, ere it passed into its scholastic stage, indicated by the *testimonium Spiritus sancti internum*; though the human vehicle conditioning His witness was now not so much the Old Testament as the New. The priesthood—that strangely changed “John” of the Middle Ages—had been testifying clearly enough that Christ, the Saviour of men, was come. But their testimony was one which made little or no appeal to actual Divine witness, and indeed supplied but little witness that befitted such august co-operation. But now with the New Testament, the Christ had been re-discovered, and the conditions for truly Divine attestation were at hand.

## II.

But a vital question remains over for solution. Why do some recognise the witness of God in their heart to the Christ of the Bible, while others do not? In other words, what is the condition of the effectiveness of the Divine testimony, which, with Him “who is no respecter of persons,” must be the birthright of all alike? The answer is found in words of Christ, such as “he that hath ears to hear, let him hear”; “he that hath, to him shall be given” of aptitude to hear God’s voice in conscience; while as for him “that hath not (*i.e.* by appropriative obedience to what he *can* hear), from him shall be taken away that which he hath” (elsewhere “seemeth or thinketh (*δοκῆ*) to have”). This represents progress, and specifically progress into the present Messianic kingdom, as the outcome of a prior preparedness of heart. In its realization, initiative at any stage is of God who “gives”; while yet if man is to “have,” he must actively receive by loyalty to God’s whispered yet authoritative will. Thus there is

continuity in kind between the preparation and the issue, though the issue may often be of the nature of conscious crisis; and the kind in either case is primarily moral, though of that inner and intense quality called spiritual. For the process is that of the whole man, focussed in his will, with two ideal poles of movement, self and God. So that his state ultimately determines itself as self-centred (dead to God) and God-centred (dead to self; cf. "saving" or "gaining" life, and "losing" it). It is this and nothing else, that finds such searching expression in our evangelist. Jesus here goes behind the mere fact of non-belief upon Himself, and sees therein a moral inability, having its roots in a habit absolutely at variance with that underlying His own life, and implying an ideal of self-seeking in the subtle form of love of human applause, which negatives that of filially dependent intercourse with the Father, so manifest in Him.

"Faith," then, according to Christ, is vital trust, springing from at least latent moral or spiritual affinity. It is morally conditioned, and so contains an element of responsibility. This hint the evangelist, pained at heart by reason of the general unbelief of his countrymen the Jews, eagerly treasured up in his soul, and later on gave forth in the form of a sort of soliloquy, following on the unique summary of the gospel message to erring man (John iii. 16): "Ay, God so loved the world, that He *gave* His Son with saving intent. But ah! how few, even of the chosen people, have *received* Him by believing upon His name! Those judged seem to outnumber those justified, to wit, those brought to judgment, here and now, in repentance, and so ushered into a life on which, as such, judgment hath no longer effect (*οὐ κρίνεται*), "eternal life." What then is the principle of judgment latent in this message of love? What the basis of distinction? For at least God, who is love, must have no willing hand therein. That were to

deny Himself. It must be man's own suicidal act that works his ruin. Yet how? It was as the light that the Lord came unto men. And man was made to recognise and love the light, foregleams of whose presence had been in the world from the first—oft ignored, never fully comprehended, yet never quenched. But, alas! to "recognise" is not *per se* to "love." For what man loves, shapes in the end the deeds of man. And man has deeds far alien from the deeds of light: deeds that as done involve his sympathies, deeds that still he hopes to do. Such deeds, preferred as promising immediate gratification, bias the man's affections and will. For, after all, he must in certain sense love his own cause, however bad, just because it is his own. When then the light so shines as to make evasion vain, man can force himself to call light darkness, and trace its works to evil source. It was this the Master called sin against the Holy Spirit, the course which in the end quenches His rays in utter darkness. Yes, the light tests the deeds of each; laying bare their spring in self or in God, and judging all by secret affinity. For "like to like" is still the law that rules the soul. Faith after all is, in one respect, but reaction of the human spirit to stimulus from God. Where response has been as it should be, there may come yet higher things. Till the supreme crisis is reached, in which Christ is recognised and accepted as very Message of God, life of the soul, Saviour and Lord."<sup>1</sup>

### III.

Such would seem to be our evangelist's soliloquy as to the genesis of "faith" and its converse. Do we not need to ask ourselves seriously, whether this is really our root-

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 16-21. With this compare the Greek Apologists' doctrine of the *λόγος σπρωματικός* in men before Christ, making them "friends of Christ" by anticipation; as also Tertullian's "anima naturaliter Christiana."

idea in the matter; whether after many ages we have entered into his thought, as distinct from his words, and made it our habit of mind in things of faith? For after all, this seems to be the veritable thought of the Master Himself. Can it be wise, then, for us to suffer the emphasis of our thoughts and words as to faith, and the authority on which it must rest, to fall at all otherwise than fell the stress of His concern as to men's attitude? Surely none of us can, least of all those who lay pre-eminent claim to the name evangelical. Happily, to-day no one school can or should claim for itself a monopoly of the effort to reflect the "gospel" of the Gospels. But at least it befits those who most emphasise this aim, which yet should lie clear before all, to spare no effort to pierce through the traditional form which a term so sensitive to the general attitude and outlook tends to assume in our instinctive thought; and to ask what right "faith," in its current senses, has to be called the thing which Christ delighted to honour. The feeling cannot then be long resisted that here, at any rate, we are in sore need of a New Reformation, a reformation which shall do more thoroughly what the Old was too deeply involved in the past to do. We need to get face to face with the New Testament as authentic mirror of Christ, and from Him, and none less, to derive what is bound to determine all our thought on things of faith, the very notion of "faith" itself. "Faith" as an attitude of trust is definable through its object. In so far as that object has consisted, not so much in a Person, revealing in the form of man another Person, God His Father, as in an organized body of dogmas, to this degree the emphasis of "faith," as Christ sought and evoked it, has been lost, and its essence thereby altered. The soul, striving to realize it, is thrown into a different and far less simple attitude, one, also, far less indicative of its real character and moral sympathies. The result tends to be a seeming premium placed upon

mental and spiritual torpor. Not the man of truest conscience, but the man of most mindless acquiescence as to terms not half understood, inevitably becomes the average "man of faith," as we may see in the later use of the term "the faithful," *i.e.* those in whose mind the phrases of the creed excited no opposition. Surely this is but a negative virtue at best, and supplies in itself no guarantee that the "root of the matter" is in a man. Whereas, if faith, in its true Christian sense, be in a man, all that is necessary as to orthodoxy "shall be added" thereunto. Nor can we wonder that Christ Himself withheld the title of disciple from none who thus met Him with an open, childlike devotion, when we consider that it was just among those of least mental attainments (as contrasted with the reflexion which goes hand in hand with moral earnestness), that He sought and found believers in His gospel. Matthew xi. 25 ff. is here decisive, not only for the fact, but also as by anticipation precluding a plausible objection, often urged against anything like the use of such cases as precedents for all time. Conditions, it is said, change. Things become explicit which were once indeterminate, and obligation arises to submit to articles of faith, at least formally in excess of what was realized by the men whose faith Christ blessed. But surely there is confusion here. To realize such articles may be helpful, when one has the mind to achieve this. To deny them when understood may logically be fatal to true Christian faith, even of the primitive type. But, where conviction is lacking, to leave them in abeyance for the time—though earnest souls cannot be content to do so altogether and permanently—this, surely, cannot be construed as forfeiting a man's title to the Christian name. Our Lord's own interest lies in the fact that it is the Father who reveals the essential truth of His gospel, and that to "babes." The "truth," too, that is presented to their "faith," though vitally connected with a Person,

to whom they are called to stand in a certain unique relation of trust, is primarily truth as practical. It is "truth" of the kind that may be "done" (John iii. 21); truth that a man is to learn by becoming Christ's yokefellow. Accordingly, to use modern distinctions alien to the religious language of the gospels, the "truth" contemplated is moral rather than metaphysical. So then we must be content to admit that true "faith" is essentially compatible with no small indeterminateness as to certain philosophic questions as to how and why; that even as regards these, continuance in this attitude of loyalty may keep a man practically right; and that the *manner* in which truths are appropriated is the thing which, religiously speaking, is of value. Convictions as to speculative aspects of the life of faith should represent vital outgrowth of the spiritual life, whereby they become necessary parts of the soul's enlarging horizon.

#### IV.

It may be well, however, before closing, to bring to a head what has been said, by means of a concrete example. Peter's confession is a crucial case. Its historical setting should be carefully borne in mind. During a prolonged intercourse, Jesus had been careful not to force an artificial faith by explicit dogmatic utterances as to His own Person. In keeping with His general parabolic method, He had chosen rather to evoke, by suggestive word and deed, a living and spontaneous trust, such as by vital necessity finds itself gradually attaining a clearer consciousness as to the significance of His Person in relation to His ministry. And now He brings this faith to birth by a sudden personal question. "Thou art the Christ,"<sup>1</sup> ejaculates the apostle of

<sup>1</sup> That this is the essence of the confession is proved by the fact that it is the common element in the three forms in which the confession is found in the Synoptists (Mark viii. 29, Matt. xvi. 16 Luke ix. 20).

impulsive utterance. But how deep a preparation of heart has here its outcome, is shown, not only in the joyous emphasis of the Master's "Blessed art thou, Simon son of John; for flesh and blood revealed it not unto thee, but My Father who is in heaven"; but also in the glimpse we get in John's gospel of the inner experience which, on the human side, was therein implied. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Words of life eternal Thou hast; and we have believed (are 'convinced,' *πεπιστεύκαμεν*), and know (or 'recognise' = *ἐγνώκαμεν*, not *οἶδαμεν*) that Thou art the Holy One of God." "Depart from me: for I am a sinful man, O Lord," is not the goal, though it marks the start. "No man can (*δύναται*) come to Me, except it be given him of My Father," is the general account rendered of such "faith." Note this emphasis in its bearing on what follows the blessing. Thus the Rock will be *fides divina*, both subjective and objective, amid the shifting sands of human tradition and speculation, which enter so largely into the formation of the mere *fides humana*.<sup>1</sup> Doubtless such a view will appear arbitrary to some; to those especially whose eyes are rivetted immovably upon the related terms, *Πέτρος* and *πέτρα*, in the impressive turn of language attributed to the Master. But perhaps a deeper feeling for the pulse, as it were, of the context would see in Peter, spite of his impulsive nature, the typically loyal man, when steadied by the very fibre of another's rock-like immutability. While as to the Rock itself, the whole genius of the Christian system, as seen not only in the gospels, but also in the epistles, including that of Peter himself, cries out aloud against its being other than "the Christ of faith" en-

<sup>1</sup> For the formal definition of these terms, see Martensen's *Christian Dogmatics* (Introduction), and Dorner, *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. i., in his section on "The Doctrine of Faith as the Postulate in the Cognition of Christianity as Truth."

shrined in human hearts, as here in Peter's.<sup>1</sup> It is His to bear the weight of the Church-kingdom, of which it can be truly said, "ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia." It was Peter's as key-bearer in a special sense, to formally open the gospel dispensation of the Spirit, as well as to define the conditions of entrance, as may be seen from the Acts.

There are one or two corollaries which seem to attach themselves naturally to the discussion now ended.

(a) It is certainly becoming increasingly difficult to believe in either Bible or Church, apart from their relation to the self-attesting Person of Christ, whose lineaments are enshrined in the former, and who is presupposed as the key to the riddles of both alike. But, on the other hand, it is becoming increasingly possible, through the greater precision and delicacy of the historical method, to get face to face with Jesus Christ. Accordingly the docile can gain a deeper insight than ever into Him who "bears witness to Himself" in satisfying the now deepened needs of men. Thus enabled, they can say, humbly but exultantly, to each of the vehicles which, amid the human imperfection of the "letter," yet direct men's eyes to Christ, "No longer is it on account of thy speech that we believe: for ourselves have heard and know that this is of a truth the Saviour of the world" (John iv. 42). Christ, as perfect, guarantees both Church and Bible, not *vice versa*. This is recognised by

<sup>1</sup> The references above made are to Matt. vii. 24 ff. ("My words"="a rock"), 1 Cor. iii. 10 ff. (Christ the one *θεμέλιον*), and 1 Pet. ii. 4-6, where even the strange idea of stones constituted living by relation to a fundamental "living stone," seems to explain the relation between *Πέτρος* and *πέτρα* in Matthew. Lightfoot ("St. Peter in Rome," in his *Clement*, vol. ii. p. 487) remarks that "as a matter of exegesis, it seems to be more strictly explained *not* of Peter himself: for then he should expect *ἐπὶ σοῦ* rather than *ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ*." But when he proceeds to refer the promise to the *historical inauguration* of the Church on the basis of Peter's "constancy," we feel that this is to limit to a single historic fact the bearing of a principle which really expresses the process or condition of Christ's *continuous building*.



the best thinkers in all Churches. But greater emphasis on it in public is much to be desired.

(b) In arguing for such direct faith as the truly Christian faith, one is not extolling faith's primal rudimentariness as such. What is urged is that the sense of the immediate witness of God, as the *living* God, so present in conscience as to make His witness the supreme reality, is of vital religious import. And that in so far as this implies the necessity of a gradual growth in the fulness and clearness of the content of faith, which again implies initial vagueness, the gain outweighs the loss. This aspect of the subject has been admirably worked out by Mr. Latham, and so need not be dwelt on. That in its development such faith costs not a little, in the way of patience and self-discipline, may even be regarded as a watermark of its true quality.

Our subject so far has been one ideal of Christian faith as contrasted with another. But we cannot close without a reference to the bearing of "faith in Christ" according to Christ, upon an age of widespread doubt. This will help us to realize how rich and positive a possession such faith is. Broadly speaking then, while the world is becoming to us more rational, an old and inveterate problem is daily assuming a more acute form. This is the problem as to the relation of the physical and spiritual orders, viewed especially in its human and moral aspect. The validity of moral ideals is in question. Duty, freedom, immortality, are in doubt; and to this extent life is being paralysed. When men scrutinize the borderland between the material and the mental, faith in the spiritual waxes low. But when they dwell on the points at which the contrast is greatest, such faith tends to revive, and that in proportion to the spirituality of a man's own life and effort. Yet even with the best there are moments far below the ideal, when the flesh would, as it were, annex the spirit. At such times,

what a world of meaning and hope would lie in the assurance that One in our nature did once live free from bondage to the flesh, even in its sublimated forms, as befitted One from above, who yet represented the true destiny of His fellows. But has such really been? "Come and see," reply the gospels: "come with your deepened sense that He who could live a perfect life amid imperfect, earthy men, must be superhuman, supernatural, not from below, but from above." If then men come, and read His life through their own inmost consciences, and find Him like as man, yet as the Perfect all unlike, what may be the issue? May they not ask Him, saying, "Perfect in life, august yet humble, what hast Thou out of the perfect mirror of Thy heart to tell us of Thy Source, Thy Whence"? And He make answer: "From the Father, from My Father and your Father; I know My Whence and Whither." And may not His self-witness, which yet is of Another, convince the earnest heart and kindle "faith" that shall brighten to the perfect day?

VERNON BARTLET.

## THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND.

### IV. JUDÆA.

HAVING gone round about Judæa, and marked well her bulwarks,<sup>1</sup> we may now draw some conclusions as to the exact measure of her strength. Judæa has been called impregnable, but, as we must have seen, the adjective exaggerates. To the north she has no frontier; her southern border offers but few obstacles after the desert is passed; with all their difficulties, her eastern and western walls

<sup>1</sup> EXPOSITION for April. The Central Range and the Borders of Judæa.