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he exclaims, "and less in the night!" He thinks all that is needed is that they should think only of the garden and of their work, and forget the edifices which separate them. But he forgets that they work in the garden on different principles; that the Protestants work in full trust in God's light and air, while the Roman Catholics work in reliance on their artificial methods of spiritual culture. The consequence is that the results are very different. The one method of culture produces a spiritual life of fear, and of dependence on human agency; the other produces that manly and womanly dependence on God, and that independence of human authority, which is the glory of the Evangelical faith and of the Protestant nations. Let us, with all charity, but with all earnestness and firmness, resolutely resist the many temptations around us to disregard these deep divisions of principle, and amidst all the minor differences which distinguish the Evangelical Communions, let us hold fast to the great cardinal principles of the Evangelical faith.

Leaders of Religious Thought. IV.—Butler: Evidential Thought.

By the Right Rev. the BISHOP OF BURNLEY.

THE toleration which marked the attitude of William III. to religion, while for a short space it raised hopes of reuniting the Nonconformists and the Church, offered occasion to freedom of speculation such as had heretofore been unknown. From 1688 to 1750 has been assigned the period of the sway of a rationalizing bent of a kind which to-day seldom gains a voice or an ear.

The deism of the end of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century—belief in a God, coupled with disbelief in providence and revelation (theism, shorn of all sympathetic relation to man)—has long since receded before the dawn of other dim interrogative days. This shifting of the contro-

versial scene is not without its pathetic interest for the student of the human mind. One school of rationalism after another rises, and proclaims its quarrel with God's revelation, and then sinks back into the dimness whence it came; and the light of that assailed revelation is not as the light of yesterday, but much more abundant.

Joseph Butler was born at Wantage, in Berkshire, on May 18, 1692. His father, a respectable draper, had retired with a competence some years before. He was a Presbyterian, and intended his son for the ministry of that persuasion; and with this in view, had him educated first at the Wantage Grammar School, and later at a Dissenting academy at Gloucester. The headmaster — one Samuel Jones, able and estimable—did much, apparently, in the moulding of the boy's mind. While here, an ardent attachment was formed with young Secker, the future Primate.

It was during his time at this school that he examined the principles of the Church of England, and compared them with those of Presbyterianism, with the result that he formed the resolution to become a member of the Church. In this his father was brought reluctantly to acquiesce.

Before passing from school to college he had already shown marked ability in the field of theological discussion. Five letters, written when Butler was only twenty-one, to Dr. Samuel Clarke—a friend and patron, who afterwards lapsed into Unitarianism—attest the growing powers of the future author of the "Analogy."

The next year he was entered at Oriel. When he was ordained, or by whom, is not known. On the recommendation of his friends Clarke and Talbot (son of the Bishop of Durham of that name), he was appointed preacher at the Chapel of the Rolls. With his other preferments, before he was raised to the bench of Bishops, we will not concern ourselves. As Clerk of the Closet to Queen Caroline, his attendance was required from seven to nine on every available evening, so great was her pleasure in his conversation.

When he was devoting himself to his distant northern parish of Stanhope, later in his career, and, that he might do this the better, had relinquished some of his southern employments, the Queen, on the mention of his name one evening by Archbishop Secker, remarked that she had supposed him dead. "Not dead," said Secker, "yet buried." She did not forget him, and on her death-bed commended him to the notice of her husband. George loved not metaphysics, and the poorest of the sees, Bristol, was offered and accepted. It is stated, but on doubtful authority, that he afterwards refused the primacy, saying, as he did so: "It is too late to try to support a falling Church." Whether or no the story be true, the words hardly too forcibly express his own sad reading of the signs of the times.

The words are no sadder than those to be found in his "Advertisement" prefixed to the first edition:

"It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it, as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."

Butler did not long survive his translation to Durham. He died at Bath in 1752, two years after his appointment, and was interred in his old cathedral of Bristol. By his orders, all his MSS. were burned after his death.

His biographer, Bartlett, lingers tenderly over the last hours. We listen to one treasured sentence, and pass on: "Never before have I had such a view of my own inability to save myself." The conversation in which this sentence occurs has been taken by theological busybodies as betokening a loose hold upon the doctrines of grace through life, with as little ground as the placing of a plain cross in his chapel at Durham afforded of his alleged leanings towards Rome.

Before proceeding to offer a few considerations touching

Butler's position in evidential thought, this seems to be the place to remark the unique influence his writings have had, and still have, notwithstanding the circumstance to which I have referred, that the particular attacks which those writings were designed to confront have ceased to trouble our English orthodoxy.

It is hardly necessary to do more than remind the reader that the "Analogy" is still a text-book at our Universities, and a careful knowledge of it is exacted of candidates for ordination. Men of most varied, if not actually diverse, bents have spontaneously registered their obligations to the writer.

Dr. Chalmers (in his "Bridgewater Treatise") acknowledges that he here "found greater aid than in the whole range of our existing authorship." John Henry Newman said that "the study of it was to him an era"; and in his "Grammar of Assent" he does not hesitate to call one whom some small critics have charged with substituting morality for Christ "the great master of the Doctrine of the Atonement."

The late Rector of Lincoln College, Mr. Mark Pattison, has left behind an able digest of a ripened estimate of a work which he describes as "a résumé of the discussions of more than one generation: its thoughts those of a whole age, reconsidered and digested."

Looking back after sixty years to his Oxford course, Mr. Gladstone lifts Butler into lonely eminence as "conferring upon me inestimable service . . . inuring me to the pursuit of truth as an end of study."

By the first three of his celebrated fifteen sermons Butler has laid all students of the wonderful faculty of conscience under weighty obligations, though it may not be forgotten that Bishop Sanderson preceded him in this field by a century, of whom Charles I. said: "I take my ears to other preachers, but I take my conscience to Mr. Sanderson."

As we are not returning to this branch of the subject, we content ourselves with counselling the reader to study the second and third sermons. The two together can be thought-

fully read in an hour, being not more than seventeen pages of closely spaced octavo. They will furnish many a thought to offer a doubting friend, only he is cautioned that no one can read his Butler without shutting himself in with him. Let concentration be entire, or—keep him shut.

The reader will not expect to find in the space of a short paper anything beyond a mere indication of the lines of the closely reasoned argument of "The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature." We remember our despair, when endeavouring on a first reading to analyse a work which has no superfluous, or even dispensable, paragraphs from beginning to end.

The attempt, however, may be made to mark three things—viz., the special place in the "Evidences" occupied by the writer, his intention, and the strict limits of the ground taken.

First, the special place the "Analogy" occupies in the field of evidential thought. We have already noticed that the deism of the day involved the repudiation of Providence (in the Christian sense) and of the need and fact of revelation. It is scarcely needful, in passing, to urge how unfortunate the word "rationalist" was, and is, as applied to men who demanded that reason should be permitted its proper sway in the province of religion. Butler's whole contention is an implied recognition of the legitimacy of the exercise of this faculty. In its relation to the religious question, reason has been defined as "the sure and steady notions which we have of the Divine nature and attributes prior to any revelation." Butler himself calls it "the knowledge of moral fitness and unfitness prior to all apprehension of religion."

Deist and believer alike, then, are agreed that this natural faculty may rightfully assert itself when turned towards the treatment of religious questions. But from this point they diverge, and never again meet. The deist asserts that natural religion (that is, such apprehension of the Deity as we have apart from revelation) suffices. The Christian denies this, and denies it partly on the ground that the natural order of things

shows unmistakable signs of a moral governor behind Nature, and partly on the ground that it is unreasonable to conceive that the Author of our being should not also approach us, if by such approach advantage might accrue to the creatures of His hand; and, further, that there is nothing unreasonable in this approach being effected through a mediate revelation, as in the Old Testament, or through an immediate, direct, and personal, as in the New.

You will notice that with such a scope Butler's task is not to resolve doubts, but to meet difficulties. And let it not be forgotten that difficulties are not doubts. Many persons of a questioning turn permit themselves to slip into confusion here. They recognize the difficulties bristling on the subject of religious belief, and these they take to justify doubt. If they are right, let them proceed to doubt the reality of the material world, the reality of their own existence. Let them reduce personal identity to an unproved theory. The principle of physical life is (and, for anything we can forecast to the contrary, ever will be) an insoluble enigma, defying the deepest researches of science. Does any sane man take the presence of these baffling problems as ground for questioning that he breathes and lives? Indeed, things not only difficult, but totally inconceivable, have to be accepted. For example, space finite and space infinite are alike inconceivable. Notwithstanding, there is nothing for the mind to accept between these two equally inconceivable propositions: space is finite; space is infinite. In accepting either, we assert that which is not only non-reasonable, but unthinkable.

Here, then, we see the propriety of the title of the work. It is an "Analogy"—*i.e.*, an argument from resemblances. A resembles B in many things. It is an argument from analogy that if A has a certain property or attribute B will have it likewise. B may not, it is true; but no one can say that it is unreasonable to suppose him to have it. You will observe that the evidential result of such a line of reasoning is strictly measured.

What, then, was Butler's intention? This is our second point. This was not to *demonstrate* the truth of Christianity. It was to remove difficulties lying in the way of belief in it. Demonstration results in an irreversible truth. Analogy results in a probable truth!

But is probability worth anything as a stimulus to action? The answer is that in matters of this life it is continually regarded as a sufficient stimulus to action. A man starts in life with so-called good prospects. These prospects never strengthen into certitudes. They are at best fair probabilities. Yet how potent a spur to continuous strenuous action they are!

Now, we may not conclude that the evidences for our faith never rise above probabilities. Butler does not say so. All he urges is that, supposing the Christian scheme were presented to us supported by no clearer credentials, its acceptance would still be worthy of reasonable beings; its rejection would be unworthy.

Colton writes: "We should embrace Christianity even from prudential motives; for a just and benevolent God will not punish an intellectual being for believing what there is so much reason to believe. Therefore, we run no risk by receiving Christianity if it be false, but a dreadful one by rejecting it if it be true."

It is singular that such an astute mind as that of the younger Pitt should have failed to read the "Analogy" in the light of the author's intention; and so stumbled into the weakness of pronouncing it "a dangerous book, suggesting more doubts than it solved." Neither this nor any other evidential work is written for those who have no difficulties.

The third consideration necessary for the right reading of our author is attention to the limits of the reasoning he imposes upon himself. Intellectual sobriety and restraint are his never-failing characteristics, and in these the safety of his guidance consists. From the line of calm dialectical thought he has laid down for himself he never swerves; and he never overstates

his case. In these traits he has, we fear, few followers amongst the rank and file of religious disputants. Into the snares of diverging and of overstating most people fall within ten minutes after a discussion has begun.

The line is laid down by mutual agreement between the two disputants. In five minutes A loses sight of it; B recalls him to it, and five minutes later loses sight of it himself.

Hence, private talks over difficulties of Christian belief become proverbial for their inutility. One difficulty is started, and before it is fully met a dozen others are admitted to the mind, which, in the distraction consequent upon the admission, becomes incapable of dealing with the original one.

And as Butler never loses sight of the line along which to travel, so he is satisfied with what less acute thinkers would regard as a somewhat disappointing goal. Smaller men, especially those of an emotional or imaginative temperament, may be conscious, as they follow him in his argument, of something akin to irritation at his refusal to push his successive points further. An opponent is not pulverized. Butler contents himself with making clear the reasonableness of conviction. It is not unreasonable to believe that God should reveal Himself. It is not unreasonable to conceive that miracles might be wrought in attestation of that revelation. It is not unreasonable to look forward to a future life, with its awards of weal or woe, according to the life lived here.

And in contenting himself with this guarded conclusion Butler does two things of moment for his readers: he convinces them that his own faith is unassailed; and, next, by laying deep his unadorned foundations, he adds to the stability of those positive proofs of the truth of Christianity, the existence of which he hardly does more than indicate; the value of which, for minds trained and disciplined by him, is so much enhanced.

Of some, indeed, of these positive proofs Butler had no knowledge. To meet fresh attacks on the truth fresh weapons have been forged. As rationalism changes its front, belief has still to confront it not unprepared; nor is she altogether

unpleased when she sees one school of hostile criticism arrayed against another.

He who, biased at the outset in favour of the assault, reads only on the side of negation, is asked to weigh the wise King's words: "He that pleadeth his cause *first*, seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him out." For we fear they are not few who let judgment go by default, while refusing to afford a hearing to the other party in the suit.

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The Holy Communion.

By the Rev. Canon BARNES-LAWRENCE, M.A.

"THE Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's Death, insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ. . . . The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith," etc.

So speaks our Church in her Article. The Sacrament is to be received "rightly" (*rite*)—that is, with due regard to all the essentials of administration; "worthily" (*digne*)—that is, in such mode and spirit as Scripture demands; and "with faith" (*cum fide*), as the paramount condition of such right reception.

It is to be noted, moreover, that the Sacrament is a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves. The Article goes on to speak of its further and more distinctive work, but this, its primary aspect, is one never to be forgotten. If ever there was a time when this warning was necessary it is surely now, when the Church seems likely to be rent in twain