

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE CHURCHMAN

January, 1914.

The Month.

*A Message
for 1914.*

THE Editors of the CHURCHMAN wish to extend to all their readers the heartiest good wishes for the year 1914. They hope and pray that the year may be an auspicious one for the promotion of those great objects in ecclesiastical, academic, and social life, in the furtherance of which the CHURCHMAN attempts to take its part. It is sometimes customary for friends to send to friends a message in the hope that it may be a beacon-light to illumine the unknown waterways on which the barks of their respective lives will journey during the oncoming year. If we may be permitted to undertake this office for those friends—whether known or unknown to us personally—who form the circle of our readers, we would venture to suggest as a helpful, and in these days a very necessary, thought: “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” It is a message from Old Testament Scripture, but in the New Testament it is repeated and reaffirmed with deepening emphasis. It was with the prospect of cruel adversity lying before them that the Master bid His disciples “Rejoice and be exceeding glad.” It is St. Paul, who endured so much for Christ’s sake, who says: “Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.” It is St. Peter who repeats the Master’s word, perhaps as remembering it from His own lips, when he says: “On Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable.”

We ask our friends to dwell on this thought, because we believe that in these days it tends to be forgotten, and because we believe that our Christian life is thereby impoverished. We are all so busy, so grave, so occupied with problems, and so grimly intent on the solution of them, that we are inclined to lose the element of joy from life entirely. And yet joy is not an accident of the Christian life; it is, or should be, an essential element in it. The joy of Christ was one of the most characteristic features in His perfect and most lovely life. He rejoiced in God, He rejoiced in human friendship, He rejoiced in little children, He rejoiced in the glory and the beauty of the world around Him. It was not the joy of the light-hearted, superficial *dilettante*. He had indeed a cup to drink and a baptism to be baptized with. And yet He could rejoice. And if we would live His life, we must in this respect, too, make it our aim to enter into His spirit. It is sometimes said that good people are dull and uninteresting. So far as the charge has any truth, it is probably because of the negative character that has come to be stamped on their lives. They are perpetually saying "No" to something or other. We need more to-day of the Master's power of seeing things at their best. We need more of St. Paul's magnificent eclecticism: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

We have spoken of the element of negation that often enters into many worthy and pious lives. In this respect we would venture to address a "word of exhortation" to our fellow-members of the Evangelical school of thought. We are told from time to time by candid friends that we have so much been content to "be good, and let who will be clever," we have so much emphasized personal piety at the expense of mental culture, that we need not be taken into

Knowledge
and Courage.

serious account in some of the issues of theological and ecclesiastical controversy. In this sphere of life, too, we have been content to say "No" in certain directions, and have had no positive message to give. Now, the trend of events in the Church of England is making it abundantly clear that we shall have to examine thoroughly our first principles as Evangelicals, and then either maintain them or abandon them. We must know *what* we believe and *why* we believe it, and then we must take our stand—we must stand fast in "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." If a crisis should come, we must not be blind to its significance, and so let our birthright go by default. Lord Haldane, in his recent address to the students at Edinburgh on "The Conduct of Life," speaking of certain mistakes and failures of which he was conscious in his own past life, said :

"The mistakes and failures would nearly always have been avoided, had I at the time been possessed of more real knowledge and of firmer decision and persistence. We all, or nearly all, get a fair number of chances in life. But we often do not know enough to be able to take them, and we still more often pass them by, unconscious that they exist. Get knowledge and get courage. And when you have come to a deliberate decision, then go ahead, and go ahead with grim and unshakable resolution to persist."

One of the problems which 1914 will present to us for solution is that of the Divinity Degrees in the Universities. Cambridge has now thrown her Divinity Degrees open to others than members of the Church of England. It is confidently expected that Oxford will do the same at no distant date, and many are hoping that Durham will follow the lead of the two older Universities. But when the opening of the Degrees is an accomplished fact, there will still remain further difficulties ahead. Is theology to be treated exactly as any other subject, so that the intellectual ability of the candidate to satisfy the examination tests is to be the sole condition of obtaining the Degrees? Or is anything in the nature of a profession of faith to be required? Is there to be any guarantee that the Bachelor of Divinity and the Doctor of

Divinity
Degrees.

Divinity are professing Christians? Some people hold, and publicly declare, that once the limitation of the Degrees of the Church of England is removed, there is no alternative but to treat theology purely as a subject of examination, apart from any confession of faith whatever. This means, in effect, that Christianity must either be construed in terms of Anglican belief and practice, or it cannot be construed in any effective way at all. To put the alternative in this way, we hold, for our own part, to be one of the most appalling and monstrous propositions that even theological controversy has produced.

Suggested Causes of Action. Some are inclined to find a way out of the difficulty by requiring, in the case of Divinity candidates, a profession of Christian belief. They feel that in a distinct way Divinity Degrees do stand in a category separate from that of all other Degrees, and that they should be taken to signify, not only intellectual capacity, but personal conviction. Others are inclined to seek the solution along a different line. They maintain, on the one hand, that so far as the Universities are concerned which examine the candidates and confer the Degrees, the matter should be purely one of intellectual capacity, and that the test should be purely one of intellectual knowledge. But they hold, on the other hand, that the element of personal conviction should be present in the candidate, and that this should be secured by the presence of denominational colleges in connection with the Universities, the students of which colleges will naturally be assumed to be professing Christians. We do not quite see from this point of view what would become of a graduate of one of the ordinary colleges at one of the older Universities. He may be a professing Christian, but he does not belong to a distinctively theological institution. Others look for the solution in the founding of different theological faculties in each University—a Roman, an Anglican, and a Free Church Faculty. We trust ourselves that the holding of Divinity Degrees will not come to be totally dissociated from a profession of Christianity.

Bishop Weston has addressed an open letter, **Bishop of Zanzibar,** couched in terms always indignant, and sometimes scarcely respectful, to his much older and far more experienced brother Bishop, Dr. Jacob of St. Albans. The letter contains the elaboration of his charges against Bishop Jacob and a disquisition on Kikuyu. The first charge deals with the book called "Foundations," and complains that Mr. Streeter, who wrote the essay most open to objection in the book, was allowed *quietly* to cease to be the Bishop of St. Albans' Examining Chaplain. The essence of the charge lies in the word "quietly." The Bishop ought to have published Mr. Streeter's resignation on the house-tops. Now, we hold no brief for Mr. Streeter, or, indeed, for "Foundations." There is very much in the book from which we very seriously dissent, but we feel that fairness of treatment is due even to "Foundations," and upon examination of some of the charges which Bishop Weston brings against it we cannot but notice marked unfairness. The Bishop writes: "The book permits priests to believe and to teach, among other things equally heretical—we only quote specimens of his charges—

"(c) That Christ did not come into the world to die for us; but having come, He died because of the circumstances of the case.

"(e) That He did not found a Church, nor ordain Sacraments.

"(g) That there is no authority in the Church beyond the corporate witness of the Saints, many of whom are now unknown, to the spiritual and moral value of the Christian religion."

Then, a little later on, he adds by way of comment :

"If Episcopacy, Sacraments, the Bible, and the Lord Christ Himself, are on the list of open questions, what is there left in the Deposit that we are here to hand on to Africans."

The Bishop of Zanzibar either misunderstands "Foundations" or he misrepresents it. We are loath to believe the latter, but the well-known scholarly attainments of the Bishop make the former difficult of acceptance. Possibly in the strenuous work of his missionary life his reading of "Foundations" was somewhat hurried. Surely the best way to meet the dangerous tendencies of the book is not to exaggerate its teaching, but

calmly and dispassionately to face its argument. Heresy-hunting is never a pleasant undertaking, but it becomes unpleasant indeed when the heretical tendencies are magnified.

The second charge is based on the Bishop of St. Albans' action in the matter of the "Catholic League" action, which we frankly confess won our intense gratitude. Here Bishop Weston complains of Bishop Jacob that "You publicly inhibited from ministering in your diocese a priest who had invoked our Lady, and the other Saints, in one of your churches, that you had delated him to his own Diocesan as an offender against Church Law and Catholic Truth, and had announced your refusal both of ordination and of jurisdiction to any who practice these Invocations." We have dealt so recently with the practice of Invocation in these pages that there is no need to do more now than quote one or two passages from the Bishop of Zanzibar's letter to show how far he has travelled :

"I can quite understand that some have never used this practice and some mistrust it. Our past history accounts for all this. I recognize that the *Ecclesia Anglicana* has excluded Invocation from her Divine office. But what I cannot understand is that any Bishop should oppose all and every use of it, much less seek to bring about its official condemnation. And when I add that the Bishops who are abroad have had no official intimation that our Deposit of Faith and Practice is to be reduced for us, you will understand how anxious I am, how worried, and how unhappy."

And again :

"And yet, my lord, you would, behind our backs, seek the complete condemnation of a practice so catholic, so beautiful, and so profoundly useful!"

The Bishop adds a note of exclamation at the end of the latter quotation. We are inclined to add several from rather another point of view.

The third section of the Bishop's letter is devoted **Kikuyu.** to the Conference of Protestant Missions at Kikuyu, British East Africa, held in June of last year. That Conference was a definite, though tentative, effort at a comity of Missions, so framed and arranged as best to make for closer unity in the

distant days to come. We have compared Bishop Weston's account of it with the very clear and straightforward report contained in Bishop Willis's letter to the *Record* on December 5, 1913. The two accounts do not tally. Bishop Willis was present. Bishop Weston, unfortunately, was not. We found the prejudiced eye in Bishop Weston's account of "Foundations"; maybe it exists here. However, the accounts are sufficiently in accord to enable us to understand Bishop Weston's plea. He holds a view of Episcopacy which Mr. Rawlinson—a Fellow of Keble College—finds himself compelled to repudiate in "Foundations," a view which quite obviously our Reformers did not hold. On the strength of this view he charges the Bishop of Mombasa and Uganda with heresy. He asserts that they are "seriously wrong in remaining in an Episcopal Ministry." Now, the comity of Missions tentatively arranged at Kikuyu is a large and complex matter, and we do not want to commit ourselves to all its details as yet. We gladly endorse its spirit and its general idea, and are prepared so far to stand by it. But to those who are impressed by Bishop Weston's letter we would venture to say that the Bishop appears to forget that the Bishop of Mombasa and Uganda are Bishops of the same Church as Bishop Cranmer and Bishop Cosin, a Church which is both Catholic and Protestant in the best sense of both words. Later on in his letter the Bishop writes: "If she (*Ecclesia Anglicana*) have need of us to catholicize the heathen world for Christ, I am at her service now as always. But if to protestantize the world, and modernize the Faith, by the works she officially undertakes, I, for my part, have no longer place or lot within her borders." We do not recognize the distinction. Bishop Weston's business is to win the heathen for Christ, and to build them up in the most holy Faith—a Faith alike Catholic in its condemnation of error and Protestant in its affirmations of truth. We cannot keep silence in this matter. Bishop Weston's party have no monopoly in the Deposit of the Faith. It is ours as much as his; we intend to retain it and hand it on, and to do so within the borders of the Church of England.

The
 Communion
 Service.

At the close of the Conference the two Bishops administered Holy Communion in the Scotch Church at Kikuyu, there being no English Church available, and admitted to Communion as many of the delegates as cared to present themselves. This was an act of occasional conformity, exhibiting much large-heartedness on the part of our Presbyterian brethren and others, who have principles as well as we. Bishop Cosin was a party to a similar act when he fraternized with the Huguenots in France in the seventeenth century. The circumstances of Kikuyu were exceptional, and although the Communion Service was doubtless extraordinary, it was a case in which two Bishops of the Church of England were enabled to welcome as guests, not as members, some of our brethren in the Church of Christ who are engaged in doing the chief business of the Church. We believe that moderate Churchmen generally, and without any reservations, ourselves amongst the number, will not only refuse to condemn the action of the two Bishops, but will cordially approve it. Here are the comments of the Bishop of Zanzibar: "If our position is so chaotic that a Bishop, consecrated for the very purpose of ordaining priests, may publicly communicate with a Church without Episcopacy, the whole purpose of our life and work is gone." We simply call attention to the last words, and quote again: "On the day that a Bishop can communicate with a Protestant minister deliberately and of set purpose, one of them is, it seems to me, bound in conscience to surrender the outward form which means so little to him, and yet so powerfully hinders the work of reunion." This quotation reminds us somewhat of the threat which the present Bishop of Oxford uttered at the Cambridge Church Congress, although it goes a step farther in its narrowness, and a great step, than the Bishop of Oxford did.

Threats.

A custom is growing up in our modern controversy of using threats. Just a few of us who take serious objection to the reintroduction of the Mass vest-

ments threatened to leave the Church of England if they were legalized. The great majority of us felt at the time that the threat was unwise and unhelpful, and, indeed, it came from no responsible quarter. We ventured to deprecate the threat then, and we deprecate it just as strongly in the present case. The satisfactory solution of difficulties does not lie that way. Sometimes the comprehensiveness of the Church of England is strained to the uttermost. It seems as if such a period of strain has come upon us now. No man of principle, no school of thought with principles, can afford to listen to threats. It is a species of blackmail, from whichever side it comes. We do not intend to leave the Church of England, nor do we wish any others to leave it. We believe that the Bishop of Zanzibar, like the Bishops of Uganda and Mombasa, is a man of the highest principle. Principles may be mistaken, and friendly controversy, conducted in a Christian spirit, will in the long run reveal the mistakes. But it is unbrotherly to threaten; it is also useless.

Since the foregoing paragraphs were written, **The C.M.S. and Kikuyu.** the General Committee of the C.M.S. have passed a resolution upon the subject, which we think of sufficient importance to be quoted, and with which we are in cordial agreement :

“The Committee understand that at the United Missionary Conference held at Kikuyu in June last there was no intention to take any steps involving alteration of the present ecclesiastical status of the Missions and nascent Churches in the field, but only such steps as the Missions concerned might rightly take with any necessary sanction upon the part of the Church authorities.

“Recognizing that there are certain issues involved which primarily concern the Church authorities, and which are not, at least at present, matters for consideration by this Committee, and without necessarily assenting to the details and the wording of the proposed scheme, the Committee wholeheartedly sympathize with the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda and their brethren in their desire for fuller co-operation and advance along the path-way towards such reunion as may eventually be according to God’s purpose.”

