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The Churchman

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Editorial.

IN every sphere of life to-day realism is of paramount importance, it is equally essential for the Christian Church as it is for the Nation.

The Christian Church is facing what may be one of the most critical chapters in her history—it is a challenge which demands absolute reality, both in our thinking and in our witnessing. In this supreme hour of opportunity if Evangelicals are to be a vital spiritual force they must recapture the realism of the New Testament.

In the realm of theology the failure of humanism is an accepted fact, but yet in reality it is still the religious creed of many, who believe in the ultimate triumph of the power of good inherent in the flesh. Whereas the realist believes with St. Paul—" For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

We must also be realists in assessing the relationship of the Christian Church to the world. The New Testament envisages the world as a system which is organised apart from and in opposition to the will of God and for realists it is a clear issue—Jesus Christ or the world. The vision of Jesus Christ was not a world christianised by a process of social reform, but a Church called out from the world, the Kingdom of God built up in the world through the preaching of the Gospel, but separated from the world.

There must be the same realism in our pastoral work—the plain truth of Scripture is that " The natural man is dead in trespasses and sin " and " receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The essential thing, if there is to be reality of spiritual life, is a new creation, man must be " born again ".

Again in our preaching there must be the same note of realism if we hope to restore to the Evangelical pulpit the power and the prestige it once possessed. " The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword ", but it needs to be preached by realists. The spiritual power of the Prophets and the fire of the preaching of John the Baptist were due to the fact that they were realists in their day and generation. They knew the real issue, and their intense zeal for the truth in all its reality gave their message that note of authority which arrested and convicted.

The more implicit is our faith in the Word of God the more realistic we shall be in our witness—because the Word of God is supremely realistic.

Trends in Present Day Theology. II.

By The Rev. D. W. Cleverley Ford, B.D., M.Th.

In our first article we were considering modern trends of thought with regard to God and His work in the world; in this article we shall consider modern trends of thought with regard to man. As last time we tried to show that the recent outlook in theology could be styled "dogmatic", so here we hope to show that the recent outlook in this doctrine of man can in short be styled "realistic". The development of the Doctrine of Man towards a realistic view is then the subject of this article.

As we take up this study of man, we must take up that which is distinctive of man among the creatures, namely, his sin. No doctrine of man can be presented apart from Hamartology. The course we shall follow will be precisely that followed previously. *First* we shall remind ourselves of the Traditional doctrine of man,; *secondly*, we shall indicate what is the modern doctrine of man; *thirdly*, we shall examine the present day outlook which we have already described as Realistic.

We begin then with the *Traditional* doctrine of man. Some one once asked the question, What is a theologian? The answer was given—"A man whose Greek Testament automatically falls open at Romans v." There is truth here for the doctrine of man begins at Rom. v. 12. and no anthropology is complete which does not take it into account. The significant verse is—"Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death passed into all men for that all sinned". However, the verse is explained, and exegesis is not our present function—it certainly is the "Fons et origo" of the Traditional view and cannot be forgotten in any doctrine of man.

The Traditional view reads the Adam story literally and historically. In Adam before the Fall we are to see a state of original righteousness. Because of Adam's sin, the whole human race, naturally engendered of Adam, is corrupt in nature. Since, however, Christ Himself was not naturally engendered, but supernaturally, through the Virgin Birth, His nature is not so corrupted. This fault and corruption of every man's nature is called original sin, a phrase which attempts to go behind the individual sins of man, the ἁμάρτημα and attempts to account for sin itself (ἁμαρτία) which always rears its ugly head in every life. Strictly speaking, the phrase "original sin" is inaccurate, for if man was in a state of original righteousness he could not have been in a state of original sin, but it is clear what the phrase attempts to explain. Moreover there attaches to this original sin in man original guilt, so that every person born into the world deserves God's wrath and damnation. Not that children dying before committing "actual sin" are damned, for their stain is wiped away by an objective atonement already accomplished by Him whose nature is sinless.

How then is the nature of man viewed? Let us look for a moment at St. Augustine. Augustine held that the fall of man was complete,

the power of spiritual good was henceforth entirely lost, ever afterwards man wills nothing but evil and can do nothing but evil. The fall was not limited to Adam ; as the stem of the human family, he corrupted his entire posterity ; the whole race shares his guilt and cannot by its own efforts escape the penalty due. The only possible means of recovery is through Grace—the free gift of God—drawing man to Christ. Man does nothing and can do absolutely nothing to implement his recovery, he is as passive as the child in infant baptism. Original sin has rendered every man incapable of even moving in the direction of God, it has rendered man completely impotent.

This is how Augustine read the Adam story. How did Pelagius, his opponent, read it ? He declared :

(1) That Adam was created mortal and would have died if he had not sinned anyway.
(2) The sin of Adam hurt only himself.
(3) Infants are therefore good as Adam was before the Fall.
(4) Man is able to keep God's commandments if he will.
(5) All men may be sinless if they choose, and many saints, even before Christ, actually lived free from sin.

Quite clearly then, Pelagius denied the doctrine of inborn sinfulness and with it the belief that man needs supernatural help to keep God's laws. He tended to conceive of sin as individual acts only, ignoring all that is meant by environment, heredity and habit.

So a double course was open to the Church. Was it to follow Augustine and say that the nature of man is that he is wholly depraved, utterly unable to make any steps in the direction of salvation ? or was it to follow Pelagius and regard man as completely free, free to follow which path he will, free to follow that of righteousness or free to follow that of sin ? As a matter of fact, Pelagianism was condemned as a heresy in 418 and 431, but this did not mean Augustinianism was followed. Rather semi-Pelagianism became the norm in which *both* man's will *and* the Holy Spirit were recognised as efficient agencies in the renovation of man. Grace was not denied nor was man's power, at least to do something. This semi-Pelagianism became the backbone of Roman theology and it was against this, with its accompanying view of salvation, that Luther and the Reformers reacted. In them, but especially of course in Calvin, we see Augustine's pessimistic doctrine of man's nature worked out with unscriptural and pitiless logic. "*Total corruption*" was its resultant view of man's nature. "Man is utterly leprous and unclean "—What do they mean by this description ? Is it not wholly unrealistic ? Certainly, if it means what the Westminster Confession seems to make it mean, *viz.*, that "we are utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite to all good and wholly inclined to all evil ", it is plainly indefensible. If " Total corruption" means that every man is as bad as he can be, then the sooner the Reformers are dismissed the better, for the doctrine is plainly contradictory to common sense and the Scriptures. But in spite of some of the wild language of Luther the Reformers clearly did not mean this when speaking of the Total Corruption of human nature, they meant that sin extends to the whole range, there is no part of it which is not tainted, even man's virtue is marred. That is to say the river of human nature is not according to them solid mud, but is wholly muddy, no part

is quite clear ; some parts are even more muddy than others, but mud does extend to the whole of it. What the Reformers were doing, which made them use the term " Total Corruption ", was looking at human virtue, not from an ethical but from a theological angle and in that light all our righteousness *is* as filthy rags. They meant that man is wholly unable to come unaided to a saving knowledge of God. " Thou must save and thou alone ". The Doctrine of Total Corruption is the Reformer's answer to the Renaissance Humanism and is to be read in that light. It is untrue to say they had no interest in ethics, they had. They recognised, too, degrees in evil, extenuating circumstances, and they valued man's cultural arts, but what they were driving at was this—that all such things, however good in themselves and good ethically, are unable to answer the heart's deep question, " What must I do to be saved ? " Perhaps in our 20th century we shall find after all that the Reformers were much more Realist than we have been wont to imagine.

Total depravity so interpreted has remained a fundamental of Protestant Doctrine in its view of human nature. But the rigid determination of Calvinism and its austere predestination has been watered down. Arminianism did it. Some results are seen in the 39 articles, but when we say that Arminianism has blunted the edge of Calvinism the world over, we are not to see in Arminianism Latitudinarianism although there were developments that way. Methodism was Arminian through and through and every one knows its power in the past as an instrument of revival. Everyone knows its insistence on the text " By Grace are ye saved through faith, it is the gift of God ", but its great contribution to the doctrine of human nature was that it kept alongside of its insistence on Grace the fact that the light of God has not completely gone out in the soul of man, he is still, in spite of the total depravity, made in the image of God, and there is still in man, every man, something to which the appeal of God can be made.

What we are saying then is this, that before the rise of modernism at the end of the 19th century and since, the Traditional Doctrine of man was based on a literal reading of the Adam and Eve story. It embraced ideas of original righteousness, original sin and original guilt. Justification was by Faith alone, yet at the same time it recognised good works and lofty aspirations in and before faith. It steered then between Augustine and Pelagius, profiting by the Arminiam outlook. This *via media* of course particularly appealed to England. In Scotland, America and the Colonies, pure Calvinism took deeper root.

Before now we pass on to state and examine the modern view of the nature of man, in order to take our bearings, it will be well for us to comment at one or two points on the Traditional view of the Nature of Man. As Denny points out in his " Studies in Theology ", It is a pity the study of the nature of man has always been considered as if it were a study of the nature of Adam. When men have asked what is man, theologians have, along the line of Tradition, tried to tell them what was Adam. Man is before us and in us, we can know some things about him but Adam is not within our reach. It is exposing ourselves unnecessarily to refutation by archaeological science to approach the question in this way, for the early chapters of Genesis

will certainly not be taken by the scientists as science nor by historians as history. There is no need to dogmatise about Adam, man's nature can be seen by what he is, enlarged and interpreted by God's dealings with him, and above all in Jesus Christ. Furthermore at the outset we can lay down two broad principles about man.

(i.) His nature according to Scripture was made in the image of God, destined for fellowship with God.

(ii.) His state is in contradiction to his nature and may be called sinful.

In man then, as we know him, we see his state or present condition in contradiction with his nature, the lofty position for which he was made. It is far better not to describe sin in terms of original righteousness back in some dim age, for original righteousness is an obscure and unknown thing.

Neither is there need to explain or rather try to explain why it is man sins always and everywhere by a doctrine of original sin tied up with Adam's transgression in a historical past. To see sin in its full range we need only look at man. We shall see it as an incident in the actions of a particular man. We shall see it as a state of character of a particular man and we shall see it as organic, related to the natural character of all men.

Quite clearly sin emerges in man's consciousness as an incident. It is a sin of which man accuses himself, a blot, a stain, to be dealt with by itself. The Adam story is a true picture in giving this. But this is by no means all, Pelagius was mistaken in thinking of sin so simply and many unwittingly still follow. It needs little reflection to realise that nothing in a man's life has this purely incidental character. Life is all of one piece, there are antecedents and consequences. Man's will is affected by the choices he makes, he gains character and direction by them. If the atomic theory of sin were all the truth there would be no such thing as a bad or a good character. Acts of sin affect the character and character affects acts of sin. Man then not only commits *acts* of sin, he is in a *state* of sin, so that we see sin referring (i) to actions; (ii.) to persons. But even this is not all. Further reflection shows us that no one lives unto himself. Actions and their consequences affect others besides the actors, our circle of influence widens to an incalculable extent. Sin then is not only personal but social, and furthermore, any sinful life is not without effect on its children. And all this is summed up in the one word—heredity. We have arrived then at a full view of sin and man's nature; sin as individual, sin as social, sin as organic—all without launching forth upon the uncharted seas of the state of primitive man. And this is the point for our present concern—we can, it seems, maintain the essential content of the Traditional Doctrine but need not tie it up to a Disputed Form.

We can pass on then to the second point in our consideration and examine the modern outlook and chiefly as it is presented by Dr. Tennant. In result, if not in aim, modern theories of Sin tend to reduce the sphere of human conduct in which sin, in the strict sense, can be applied, and they cast suspicion on the alleged consciousness of guilt. Such are Kant's theory which confines sin to the will of man, Hegel's theory which makes sin a necessity, all theories which confine

sin within the bounds of religion, and theories which seek to explain sin from empirical observations such as Pfleiderer's and Tennant's.

Since Tennant's is the oldest and most widespread of the modern views it is with this that we shall concern ourselves. Its rise was due to the current anthropological interest and discoveries, and it constituted an attempt to bring the theological doctrine of man into line with them. Briefly sin is an 'evolutionary overhang' from man's animal origin. For the sake of clarity we may begin with a simple illustration—the habit that a dog has of turning round and round before lying down. That habit is an 'evolutionary overhang'. It belongs to an earlier stage in the process of the development of dogs. It was essential then, it was part of life. So the primary incentives to sin in man are natural, inborn, morally neutral instincts and passions which belong to man as evolved from a lower creation. These non-moral incentives to action are the common inheritance of the human stock from its mammalian origin. They are forces necessary to life, to the very preservation of the human species. They are, therefore, morally innocent and indifferent in themselves, being the basis and constitution of our virtues as well as of our vices. They are in short the raw material of man's moral activity.

Furthermore these inborn tendencies in man must not be confused with the human will. Sin is a matter of the human will. In spite of Augustine and the Reformers these non-volitional propensities cannot be regarded as sinful. It is impossible to talk of man being in a sinful state in the Traditional sense. It is man's will which shapes, not the stuff which is shaped, which calls for approval or disapproval. It is not the existence in man of appetitive senses which makes him a sinner, but his voluntary surrender to them. The propensities are the condition of sin's emergence, and sin emerges as man with a will develops from an animal with an impulse. Sin is therefore as we said an 'evolutionary overhang', and its universality is accounted for by the theory that conscience is a later development of impulse in the course of man's evolution.

Three criticisms of this modern theory are presented. The first is that this theory may tell us—it may perhaps tell us truly—how it is that sin happens. But still it has failed to answer our question. Granted sin comes into being when man's will consents to appetitive senses within him. But our desire is to know why men's wills always consent to the appetitive senses within them. Why is sin universal? Why is sin virtually inevitable? As has been aptly said, 'We may abandon the classical doctrine of original sin when it is bound up with the insupportable doctrine of Original Guilt, but we are still left with the historical fact of universal moral imperfection . . . whose reality that grim doctrine attested.' After all, as Edwyn Bevan put it, 'How is it that all over the world to follow the good impulses has seemed like going uphill, and to follow the evil ones like going downhill?' This theory has not told us.

The second criticism is this. Suppose we did determine the causes of universal sin, would we not therefore have removed from man all responsibility for it? If, according to certain bygone facts, man is bound to sin, can he be blamed for it? He is no longer therefore morally responsible for he is not morally free to do otherwise than

sin—he is bound, he is determined. And if he has no moral responsibility he has no personal responsibility. So then we see that if it could be explained how sin arose, and why it arises, it would mean a determinism which deprives man of moral and personal responsibility. And this is contrary to the empirical facts.

Another criticism according to Von Hugel is this. The single source theory may be plausible for sins like gluttony and sloth. It is easy to account for them by a consent of the will to primitive animal appetitive and necessary senses, but it is extremely difficult to include in the same theory such sins as self-love and pride, which are deadly in the eyes of an enlightened Christianity. 'This single derivation' writes Von Hugel, 'simply will not work.'

All these views then arose along with, and because of, the prevailing interest in anthropology of the latter years of the 19th century and in the early 20th. Similarly the outlook today arises along with and because of present day prevailing conditions.

"It is common form to-day," says Whale in his book on Christian doctrine, "to dismiss most forms of liberalism in sociology, politics and theology, as unrealistic and sentimental," or, as Professor Hodges wrote, "The gospel that goodwill is the one thing needful is so clearly false that people who see its falsehood have been driven away from Christianity because they have been led to think that this is Christian doctrine."

The fact is realism is in the ascendant, and the complacency of idealism is nauseating today. The world is suffering from disillusionment, and the optimistic theory of man's evolution is plainly discredited by the facts of life around us. This is the case even in America, or as Dr. Bennett, an American theologian has recently expressed it in his book "Christian Realism", "Nothing is too terrible to be possible." Seeing as we do the depths to which the hearts of men can sink, we realise that after all public enemy No. 1 is not stupidity, nor a defective social order, but sin as a deep-rooted mystery in the heart of man.

Recently then, the modern doctrine of man has been discredited along three lines:

1. It fails to take a large enough view of human nature, clinging to a vague notion that somehow, in the end, man's better self will come out top, when present facts of life are against it. In short, the evolutionary view is unrealistic.

2. It has concentrated too much attention on that sphere of life in which there is undoubted progress—the natural and scientific, and this has been foisted on to the whole world in general with the result that it makes the whole world conform to a single pattern—Progress with a capital 'P'. But history does not exhibit such neat simplicity. Niebuhr expresses it most tersely of all when he says, 'History is the story of an ever-increasing cosmos creating ever-increasing possibilities of chaos." In other words, as our world advances it makes at the same time bigger possibilities of a total collapse.

This view of history is expressed in the parable of the wheat and the tares. Both good and evil grow together until the harvest. Men ask, "Is the world growing better or is it worse?" Both are true. Evil

is more evil, more corrupt, more integrated, more scientifically cruel, and goodness is growing better, more enlightened. No apostle today would tolerate slavery. There is progression and there is retrogression, and they continue until the harvest—this is realism.

3. The now discredited modern view of man's nature did not look closely enough into man's goodness. Had it done so it would have found that even there there is corruption. The Pharisee went to the temple to pray, but was defeated in his attempt to reach God by the pride in his own soul. Even if man has the will to see God he may stand in his own light. Even if the Christian is humble he may fall from the topmost rung of the Christian ladder by being proud of his humility. The modern view is misled and misleading. It does not examine closely enough the human heart. Righteousness can overlay a wealth of smugness, and the Devil is not slow to pose as an Angel of Light.

Perhaps now we are in a position to state three principles concerning man and his nature which will, so it is held, stand examination in the modern world. They are derived ultimately from Brunner's book " Man in Revolt "—

1. Man is God's creature—like the animals he is God's creature, but he is on a higher level than they are because he is aware of it. This knowledge is a constitutive element in the fundamental fact that man is made in the image of God—God, who is also above the creatures, Apart from this it is impossible to understand man's basic disharmony—he is able to stray because he is made in God's image.

2. Everywhere, and from time immemorial, men have rebelled against God. The will to rebel seems part of him. This rebellion differentiates man from the animals. Man is superior to the animals in that he is a sinner. The essence of sin is man's denial of his distinctive endowment—the *imago dei*. He will persist in thinking that his greatness exists in his own right. *Imago dei* is interpreted to mean " Ye shall be as gods." Man is a sinner because he revolts against the very dependence on God which constitutes his greatness. The fundamental ground of the rebellion is pride, and the tragedy of man's rebellion, with its tragic results, is deep because this is corruption of the best of God's creation—*Corrupto optimi pessima.*

The result of the rebellion is two fold. First it means alienation from God. Sin began, according to Gen. iii., in man's desire to be autonomous. He was driven out. Sin arose in the prodigal's heart with his desire to be autonomous. His own desire drove him out. Rebellion against God means alienation from God.

Secondly, the result of rebellion is the Wrath of God. This is the terrible way the alienation works out both for the individual and the society. The point is that although man is banished as a rebel, as the immortal Genesis story will never allow us to forget, he cannot destroy God's image—his fundamental endowment. He still experiences the Love of God, but the form in which he experiences it is wrath. As Brunner says " Man cannot be Godless without God." The rebellion does not destroy the image.

3. The third principle witnesses to Man's solidarity in Evil. Sin is an individual act. That is plain. But we cannot say with Pelagius that that is all. Sin is also a state, and apparently is part of our empiri-

cal make-up. This is what the New Testament teaches. Man cannot separate himself from the infection of evil. It is so strong that in the New Testament it is ascribed to a personal enemy—Satan. He is our common enemy. However we explain the fact there is no doubt that individual sins are inspired, directed and reinforced by a kingdom of evil.

How then is man's nature viewed today? Pessimistically? No! That is pagan—although Augustine came perilously near it, and some continental theologians, notably Gogarten, assert that the function of Christianity as far as this world is concerned, is solely to preserve it from its inevitable journey to Hell. Nor—on the other hand is the present view of man's nature optimistic as in the immediate past. Neither of these. Rather it is realistic. Man is made in the image of God. Apparently he has rebelled, but he has not lost that image.

What then of the Fall story? It is not abandoned by present day scholars. Much more attention is paid to it than by the modernists. It embodies the very essentials about man's nature and about man's state. It is the truth but it is not truth in historical form, but in mythological form. It involves no scientific description of historic things. The Fall does not refer to some aboriginal calamity, but to an active human experience on the part of every man. It says that we, every one of us, has been created for fellowship with God and has repudiated it: and not only do we individuals do this, the whole race does it and has done it from time immemorial. As Whale put it, "Every man is his own Adam, and all men are solidly Adam." The paradise before the Fall is not a period of history but our memory, our knowledge, our consciousness of a divinely intended quality of life given to us along with our consciousness of guilt.

We are to see today then in this doctrine of man a return to the Bible, and with a desire to let the Bible speak for itself and interpret human life. This new attitude is as much to the fore in America as in Europe where we have been shocked out of complacency by the strident voice of Barth. But there is this difference: here we have more respect for tradition—the Barthian School acknowledges the halo it puts round the head of Luther, and Calvin—but America will have none of this. Strictly empirical is its temper, its strength and its weakness, but there too, realism has replaced Utopianism.

It is in the light of this realistic view of man's nature and state that we can appreciate how the newer dogmatic theology outlined in the previous article, fits.

Messianic Prophecy.

By B. F. C. Atkinson, Ph.D.

MISUNDERSTANDING of Old Testament prophecy and divergence of view with regard to its interpretation are at present a source of weakness among Evangelical Christians. The reason for the confusion, which has not been decreased by the bitter polemical spirit in which opposing views have often been treated, lies in neglect of the inspired commentary provided by the New Testament upon the Old. The treatment of Old Testament prophecy by the New Testament is the continuation in writing of the message of the primitive church, which in apostolic times was already pointing out that in Christ and the Christian church lay the key to the meaning of the predictive messages of the prophets. This is clear from the recorded speeches of the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii) and of Stephen the first martyr (Acts vii). One of the strongest arguments of the early church in its conflict with Judaism lay in this fact of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in Christ and the church, and the same line of argument was used with Gentiles as the church increased in the Roman empire. In fact the early church found a great source of strength in the correspondence between prophecy in the Old Testament and fulfilment in the New.

There are three passages in the New Testament which provide a key to the general message of Old Testament prophecy. The first is to be found in the apostle Peter's speech in the Temple after the cure of the lame man. "All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days" (Acts iii. 24). The same apostle in his first epistle explains that the theme of Old Testament prophecy was the salvation proclaimed in the Gospel, but that the prophets could not fully understand the message which was delivered to them. Prophecy can only be properly understood in the light of the Christian revelation (I Pet. i. 10-12). The apostle Paul, as is to be expected, agrees with this view and tells King Agrippa that the subject of his preaching, which concerned the salvation offered both to Jew and Gentile as a result of Christ's resurrection, was only what Moses and the prophets had predicted (Acts xxvi. 22, 23).

The New Testament everywhere teaches that the Christian church is the New Israel in which the Old Testament prophecies find their fulfilment, that it supersedes and takes the place of Old Testament Israel, whose life and nationhood were but temporary shadows of the eternal substance to come. The New Testament knows of no future for Jews as such. It calls upon them as individuals to enter the Christian church by conversion and regeneration and declares that in that church "there is neither Jew nor Greek." This truth appears in the message of John the Baptist at the beginning of the New Testament. "Say not among yourselves, We have Abraham to our father." Descent from Abraham means and matters nothing in the new dis-

pensation that is coming in (Matt. iii). In an important passage our Lord Himself is recorded as telling the Jews that the kingdom of God is taken from them and given " to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." This righteous nation that supersedes the Jews is the Christian church, as is clear from 1 Pet. ii. 9, but even if the apostle had not directly said so, it should be plain to all who understand the elementary facts of the Gospel that only those who are regenerate are capable of bringing forth the fruits of the kingdom of heaven, so that the nation in question can only be the whole company of regenerate people (Matt. xxi. 43).

In the Acts of the Apostles we find the Gentiles admitted to the Christian church on an exact equality with the Jews, and we read of the conversion and appointment of an apostle to be their minister in a special sense. This same apostle Paul tells us the same about the relationship of the Jews to Christ as John the Baptist and the Lord Himself. He says that one who is a Jew only outwardly has no right even to the name of Jew (Rom. ii. 28, 29), and he couples with this the assertion that the Christian church constitutes the true circumcision, that is to say, the people in true covenant relationship with God (Phil. iii. 3). What can these statements possibly mean but that the Christian church has superseded the Jewish nation as the people of God? It is true that the apostle leaves one privilege to the Jews, the opportunity to hear the Gospel first, but this is not a spiritual privilege but one of opportunity. The advantage which he claims for the Jew is likewise an advantage of opportunity (Rom. iii. 2), as he goes on to explain. It consisted in the possession of the Scriptures. Almost in the same breath he denies that the Jew has any spiritual advantage (Rom. iii. 9). Jew and Gentile are alike sinners and must come to God by the same road of repentance and faith.

Three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans are devoted by the apostle to a discourse on the relationship of Old Testament Israel to the Gospel (Rom. ix-xi). In the course of this he emphatically declares that natural descent does not involve membership in the Israel of God (Rom. ix. 6). He develops the conception of the believing remnant taught by the Old Testament prophets and shows by quotation from the Old Testament that the true Israel has always been identical with such a remnant. He asserts that the same is true in his own day and shows that the " all Israel " of prophecy refers to the same remnant to which Gentiles are now joined. The salvation predicted by the prophets consists of conversion to God through the Gospel, which the apostle illustrates by the vivid figure of being grafted into an olive tree (Rom. xi. 23). The remnant of Israel, augmented by Gentiles, becomes of course the Christian church. In this church, the apostle teaches us, there is no distinction of race, class, sex, or religious privilege. When he becomes a Christian the Jew is no more a Jew nor the Greek a Greek. He is a new creation in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 28, vi. 15, Col. iii. 11). In the whole New Testament from beginning to end there is not so much as a hint of any future for the Jewish nation apart from the conversion of its individual members to Christ. The most we can find is the apostle's statement that if the Jews were to be converted in a body, great blessing would ensue (Rom. xi. 15). This passage is sometimes read as a prediction that such a mass conversion

will take place, but the apostle does not say so. In accordance with the principles of the offer of salvation to all men through the Gospel the matter, as we should expect, is left open.

If the New Testament knows nothing of a national future for the Jews, does not Old Testament prophecy lead us to expect a national restoration to earthly privilege? We have already pointed to the general interpretation of Old Testament prophecy given us in the New Testament. We will now turn to some quotations of specific prophecies in order to see how the Lord and the apostles interpret them. At this point we meet with a strange situation prevalent among Evangelicals to-day. All are at one upon the meaning of the predictions of the Lord's incarnation and death (such, for example, as Isa. vii. 14, Mic. v. 2, Isa. xlii. 1-4, liii), and all condemn the Jews for their failure to see the fulfilment of these prophecies in the events of the Lord's life on earth. All realise that the Jews were mistaken in expecting a national and earthly fulfilment of Messianic prophecy. In fact the Jews are condemned for blindly holding to a Jewish interpretation of those prophecies to which Christ alone holds the key. Yet when we pass on from the predictions of the incarnation and death to those of the spiritual triumphs that have followed them, we find the literal earthly Jewish interpretation widely held by Evangelicals to-day, who are thus led to look away from the Gospel to some strange future period of their imagining when they expect the retrograde restoration of the privileges and disabilities of Old Testament times. Let us fully admit that such doctrines are held and taught out of a mistaken sense that literalness of interpretation is a necessity of full honour to the Word of God. Our purpose here is to show that they arise from neglect of the inspired commentary upon the prophets provided by the New Testament. They interpret the New Testament by the standard of the Old instead of the Old Testament in the light of the New.

Quotations are so numerous that the limits of this essay only allow of examination of the most prominent. The first three and the sixth beatitudes import the Gospel into the following passages: Isa. lvii. 15, lxi. 3, Ps. xxxiv. 4, xxxvii. 11, li. 10, lxxiii. 1 and cxxvi. 5. The quotation from the thirty-seventh Psalm is worth a moment's study. The blessings promised in the beatitudes are quite obviously blessings of a spiritual character obtained by the Gospel. The third can be no exception. This shows us that the expression in Ps. xxxvii. 11, quoted in Matt. v. 5, cannot refer to the present earth. It is a blessing promised to the regenerate, and the earth to which it refers is the "new earth", as is made clear from II Pet. iii. 13. Incidentally it may be remembered that both in Hebrew and Greek the word meaning "earth" also means "land" and is often so translated. Thus Old Testament promises of future glory in connection with "the land" find their fulfilment in the new earth, which means in the world to come. In commenting upon the faith of the centurion and predicting blessing to the Gentiles (Matt. viii. 11) the Lord quotes four Old Testament promises, Isa. xlix. 12, lix. 19, Mal. i. 11, Ps. cvii. 3, thus interpreting each of them of the ingathering of souls into the church by the Gospel and the final assembly in heaven. This interpretation provides the key to the passages in whose context the

verses respectively occur and proves them to be predictions of the Christian church, not of the Jewish nation.

The great promises made to Abraham, which are so often interpreted to-day by Evangelicals in a Judaistic sense, are explained by both the apostles Peter and Paul as referring to the blessings of the Gospel. The former quotes them at the conclusion of his speech in the temple precincts after the cure of the lame man, and states definitely that the blessing promised through Abraham and his seed to all families of the earth consists of conversion and that the promise is fulfilled through the Gospel (Acts iii. 25, 26). The latter similarly explains the promises as fulfilled in the justification of the Gentiles by faith, and declares that the seed referred to in the promise is Christ (Gal. iii. 8, 16). He also states that the promise to Abraham that he should be the father of many nations is fulfilled in the call of the Gentiles through the Gospel (Rom. iv. 16, 17). In Acts xv. 14-18 we have the quotation in full of Amos ix. 11, 12 and a valuable interpretation of it. These verses constitute the only prediction of future blessing in the book of Amos, which otherwise consists of unrelieved denunciation. They are explained as having their fulfilment in the salvation of the Gentiles through the Gospel, which had at that time begun. The apostle Peter (1 Pet. ii. 6) and the Epistle to the Hebrews (xii. 22) implicitly identify the Zion of the prophets with the Christian church, while the former and the apostle Paul explain the promise of mercy for a people formerly not the Lord's, of the call of the Christian church composed of both Jews and Gentiles (1 Pet. ii. 10, Rom. ix. 24-26). This last is a most important and interesting comment. That Isa. lii. refers to the Christian church and the Gospel is clear from its quotation in Rom. x. 15, xv. 21 and Eph. vi. 15. In fact a large number of quotations and allusions from the second part of Isaiah (xl.-lxvi.) prove beyond a doubt to the unbiased student that these chapters are concerned throughout with Christ and His church. The eleventh chapter of Isaiah, which is sometimes referred with assurance to a future millennium, is several times quoted in the New Testament and interpreted exclusively of the Christian church and the Gospel (see Eph. vi. 17, II Thes. ii. 8, Eph. vi. 14, Rom, xv. 12 and five quotations in the Apocalypse). In addition to Isa. xi. 10 the apostle Paul interprets Deut. xxxii. 43 and Pss. xviii. and cxvii. as predictions of the Gospel (Rom. xv. 9-12). The most quoted Old Testament passage is Ps. cx. and it is made clear by the apostle in I Cor. xv. that Christ is reigning *now* at the right hand of God till His enemies are destroyed. The destruction of death, the last enemy, is to take place, the apostle tells us, at the resurrection of believers on the return of the Lord.

A key passage for the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy is to be found in Gal. iv. 24-29. Here the apostle Paul not only quotes Isa. liv. 1 and explains it to refer to the Christian church, but also states that the Jerusalem of whose glorious future Isaiah and other prophets speak is the heavenly Jerusalem or Christian church and not Jerusalem in Palestine. The latter, says the apostle, is in the bonds of carnality and unbelief and will be "cast out" to make way for the true heirs. No language could express more clearly the supersession of Judaism by Christianity, or that the latter was the

true subject of Old Testament prophecy. In the same epistle the apostle explains the true meaning of the Israel of prophecy, when he refers to the Christian church as " the Israel of God " (Gal. vi. 16). We thus find all three terms, Zion, Jerusalem and Israel, explained in the New Testament as referring to the Christian church.

We find in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as we should expect, a considerable amount of interpretation of the Old Testament. Thus the second part of Ps. xxii, which describes the triumphant consequences of the crucifixion, is explained as referring to the Christian church and the Gospel (Heb. ii. 12). The " rest " reserved for the people of God which is spoken of in the ninety-fifth Psalm is explained as fulfilled in the effects of the Gospel, of which the occupation of Palestine under Joshua was nothing but a shadow which could not correspond to the promise (Heb. iii. 7-iv. 11). The final promise made to Abraham, confirmed by God with an oath, is interpreted as having its fulfilment in the assurance of the Christian believer, for which it constitutes one of the pillars (Heb. vi. 13-20). According to the same epistle the Gospel is the fulfilment of the great promise of a new covenant made through the prophet Jeremiah, whose words, previously echoed in the course of the account in the Gospels of the institution of the Lord's Supper, are here quoted *in extenso* (Heb. vii. 7-13). This fact throws an interesting light on the interpretation of the terms " Israel " and " Judah " as used by the prophets. The New Testament scatters the pretensions of a literal interpretation to the winds. The Israel of God is the Christian church. The people of Judah, the true Jews (see Rom. ii. 28,29), are the same. The meaning of " Judah " is " praise ", and the true Jews are described in Eph. i. 6, 12, 14.

These are only the most prominent of the passages in which the New Testament interprets the Old. There are hundreds of quotations and allusions throughout the New Testament which without exception confirm the key passages. The writers one and all declare that in Christ Jesus and in His Gospel the fulfilment of what the prophets looked for has come. It is true that the old order at present continues side by side with the new. But the day is coming, known to the Father alone, in which eternity will break into time, the old order will be engulfed and the blessings which are now enjoyed by Christian believers in their hearts by faith will become eternally outward and actual. Faith will be exchanged for sight. That is the day of the *manifestation* of Christ, when we also shall be manifested with Him in glory.

In spite of this clear, consistent interpretation of messianic prophecy provided for us in the New Testament and held by the church universal from apostolic times until the nineteenth century, as attested by all commentators, two other interpretations of Old Testament prophecy have appeared among Evangelical Christians during the last hundred years. These interpretations are opposed to each other in principle, but have this in common, that they literalise the message of the prophets and understand its fulfilment to be in this world among an earthly people of God in flesh and blood. These views are held in face of the clear statements of our Lord that " the flesh profiteth nothing ", that His kingdom is not of this world, and of the apostle

Paul that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We need not linger over the first of these views, the fantastic British-Israel theory. I have no doubt that if those men and women who advocate this view were able to go with unblinded eyes straight to the Bible without having first fed their minds with "British-Israel" literature and read these theories into the prophecies, they would see how contrary to Scripture this view is. The view is certainly contrary to science and history and, at any rate as it is expressed in certain of the publications of its exponents, it is contrary to common sense. More serious still, it is contrary in some respects to the principles of the Gospel and to the moral bases of God's dealing with men, for it involves the arbitrary favouring by God of a single nation among those in the world which He makes into a *Herrenvolk* without regard to faith, justification or conversion. The theory breaks to pieces upon the single statement, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." This strange arbitrary "blessing", conceived of as operating towards one single nation, must therefore in view of the apostle's statement be *out of* Christ. But there is no need to prove to the humblest Christian believer that *there exists no blessing* out of Christ, which fact is the core of the message of the whole Bible. It is tragic to think that earnest men and women, among them intelligent Bible students, should so misread God's purpose, and should occupy their minds with carnal glories that nourish national pride when the service of the Gospel among perishing men of every race calls for the exertion of the utmost that heart, mind and strength can give. "God is no respecter of persons."*

The second of the two theories which I have mentioned as widely held among Evangelicals to-day is what I have called the judaising interpretation. Speaking generally it looks for the fulfilment of Old Testament promises to Zion, Jerusalem and Israel not to the Gospel and the Christian church, as the New Testament interprets them, but to a future period of a thousand years known as the millennium imagined as to take place after the second coming of the Lord. The basis upon which the views known as pre-millennial are made to rest is found in the opening verses of the twentieth chapter of the book of Revelation in which a reign of the saints with Christ during a period of a thousand years following upon the "first resurrection" is described. The interpretation of this mysterious passage has divided the church from earliest times. The early chiliasts, who seem to have disappeared after the fourth century, held pre-millennial views, but they differed in essential respects from the millennarians of to-day. The millennium of the early chiliasts was a Christian one, that of the

*There are four books which provide answers to this strange theory: Brayne (A.H.): *Were the ten Tribes of Israel ever lost?* (1917). This is very short, but quite convincing so far as it goes. I should say it was the best of the four; Procter (W.C.): *Is "British-Israel Truth" Scriptural Truth?* (1922). This is hard going with an abundance of references which repay looking up but rather dull and written from the Judaistic point of view; Goudge (H.L.): *The British Israel Theory* (2nd Ed. 1934), written from a critical point of view, but it deals well with the absurdities of the theory, which the author alas! seems inclined to regard as typical of the viewpoint of those who hold the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible; Frost (B.): section on B.I. in *Some modern Substitutes for Christianity* (1942), written from the Anglo-Catholic standpoint, humiliating to Evangelicals to read. It only speaks the truth about B.-I.

modern millennarians is Jewish at least as much as Christian. It involves the restoration to national privilege of the Jews and on that account is open to some of the same objections which we have advanced against British-Israelism. Such a view is retrogressive. To suppose the restoration of any Old Testament conditions implies a misunderstanding of the fundamentality and finality of the Gospel. Some modern millennarians expect the re-erection of a material temple at Jerusalem in Palestine and even the re-institution of some of the sacrifices of the Mosaic law. They appeal in support of this view to the last nine chapters of the book of Ezekiel, which they interpret in the literal judaistic sense instead of in the Christian. They also imagine our Lord Jesus Christ in the place of an earthly ruler. To base these views upon the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse is to lay upon its opening verses a very much greater weight than they can support. Those verses say nothing of Jerusalem, Palestine, or Israel, nor even of the earth. The reign may be in heaven. The passage does however provide an opportunity for the location in future time of Judaistic speculations, and in order to find room for the grand Jewish restoration in comparison with which the Christian Gospel and church are but an interlude simply filling a gap till it is time to turn to the Jews, the fulfilment of prophecy after prophecy of the Old Testament is placed in this future millennium in spite of the clear consistent and continuous New Testament explanations to the contrary. The view of the early chiliasts, though open to difficulties, is arguable. That of the modern judaisers has no thread of Scriptural support. From the fourth to the nineteenth centuries the church universal held the post-millennial view, which regards the passage in Rev. xx. as a prediction of a thousand-year triumph of the Gospel previous to the return of the Lord. We are not here concerned with this view, except to say that it too is open to grave difficulties. The meaning of the prophecy in Rev. xx. is not likely to be known before its fulfilment.

In the fertile brain of John Nelson Darby, who in addition to some excellent Scriptural views left a fatal legacy of speculations to his followers, the Jewish restoration so overshadowed the Gospel and the Christian church that it over-ran the bounds of the millennium prepared for it and extended backwards to a period before the second advent of the Lord, which was regarded as preceding the millennium. Throughout the nineteenth century the fashion among certain Evangelical Christians of interpreting Old Testament prophecy in the literal and Jewish sense led to a maze of fanciful speculation and produced a literature which culminated in the decade between 1880 and 1890, since when little new has been said, though these views retain their force among many Evangelicals. Thus the Lord's second advent was quite unwarrantably divided into two separate stages, the first of which was to be secret and intended for the removal from the world of the true Christian church. This view gave rise to the expression "secret rapture", which is a very unscriptural term, seeing that the apostle Paul distinctly tells us that it is when Christ *appears* (or is *manifested*) that we shall *appear* with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4). It also gave rise to sensational speculations which were even embodied in works of fiction that described the effect upon the world of the

instantaneous disappearance of all Christian people. Imagination however did not stop at this point. Certain fanciful minds went on to conceive the idea of " select rapture ", which means that only some Christian people will be removed by the " secret rapture " and others left on earth till the end. This is still taught in defiance of the apostle's statement that " we shall *all* be changed *in a moment* " (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52). Controversy still continues between the exponents of these two views.

Advocates of the " secret rapture " have generally taught that the second or final stage of the second advent is referred to by our Lord in His apocalyptic discourse (Matt. xxiv, Mk. xiii, Lk. xxi) and the first or " secret " stage by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. xv, and 1 Thess. iv. This leads to some strange conclusions. The passage in Rev. xx already referred to which speaks of the " first resurrection " is of course placed by these interpreters with the events predicted in Matt. xxiv, not with those in 1 Cor. xv. But if the resurrection foretold by the apostle in 1 Cor. xv and 1 Thess. iv precedes that of Rev. xx, we find our friends teaching the existence of a resurrection *before the first.* Not only so. In Matt. xxiv the Lord speaks of " the loud sound of a trumpet." In 1 Cor. xv the apostle states that certain events are to take place at " the last trump." If therefore the events of Matt. xxiv follow those of 1 Cor. xv we find our friends believing in a trumpet *subsequent to the last.* The truth is of course that any unbiased mind going straight to the Scripture can see that the Lord and the apostle are referring to exactly the same thing. One says that the world will see the Son of man, the other that the Lord Himself will descend from heaven. One says that the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven, the other that we shall be caught up in clouds. One says that the angels will be sent, the other speaks of the voice of the archangel. One speaks of the great sound of a trumpet, the other of the last trump or trumpet of God. One speaks of gathering together the elect, the other says that we shall be caught up together with the risen dead to meet the Lord in the air. There is not an item in the one passage that does not appear in the other.

The fictitious future period that is imagined as intervening between the supposed two stages of the Lord's return is a happy hunting-ground for " students of prophecy ", that is to say, experts in prophetical speculation. As in other subjects these experts do not agree. The length of this period is dogmatically stated in differing terms. Most, however, are in general agreement in the supposition that the major part of the book of Revelation predicts this time. It is to be a period of super-apocalyptic horror, round which the morbid imagination can play to its heart's content. The world is to be in the grip of the great futurist bogy man, a kind of super-Hitler—whose identity with Benito Mussolini was firmly expected some years ago by leading speculators—and his despotism will cause " the great tribulation ", a term carefully explained to be the meaning definitely required by the original language of Rev. vii. 14, but usually so explained by those who are not acquainted personally with that original language, or, being partially so, have never looked up the original language of Luke viii. 8. The truth about the tribulation

is of course that it extends throughout the Christian age for " all that will live godly in Christ Jesus." Our Lord Himself told us, " In the world ye shall have tribulation ", and His words are echoed as usual by His faithful apostle, who said, " Ye must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." There are certain marvellous features about the fictitious concentrated futurist tribulation. It has converted persons attached to it, who are known in the jargon of the prophetic manuals as " tribulation saints." They are identified with the redeemed company described in the second part of the seventh chapter of Revelation. Their numbers are immense and they are all converted in the space of a few months or years. This is the more extraordinary as one of the dogmas agreed upon by most of their sponsors is that the Holy Spirit will have left the world before the conversion of any of them. Miracles of grace are thus to be accomplished in the face of an unrestrained devil, and in the absence of the Holy Spirit, which appear far to exceed anything that the Gospel will have effected during the Christian age. Perhaps the converts' religion will be one that it is easier to be converted to, for it appears to be a sort of compromise between Judaism and Christianity. To pass through this tribulation is regarded by futurists with horror, whether or not they expect to escape it, as most of them do. This seems to be a different spirit from that of the apostle, who told the Philippian Christians that they had been granted the extra privilege of suffering on Christ's behalf (Phil. i. 29). These absurdities should surely have made sensible, God-fearing men pause before now.

During the last thirty or forty years some at least of these speculations have been gathered into a kind of system known by its advocates as " dispensationalism." The Scripture knows of two dispensations, that of law in the Old Testament and of grace in the New. Our friends' main occupation has been to add to this number by imagining a retrogression in one or more stages to the Mosaic law and Jewish privileges in the future. An extreme school of this kind was founded by the late Dr. E. W. Bullinger, and its teaching has the practical effect in true Marcionite style of rejecting almost all the Bible as irrelevant. Only the " prison epistles ", that is to say, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and with some doubt the Pastorals, are left for Christians to-day. The apostle Paul seems to have been an elect member of at least two different Christian churches at various times of his life in succession. The kingdom of God according to our friends has nothing to do with the Christian church and " the Gospel of the kingdom " is a different Gospel from " the Gospel of the grace of God." In fact our extremist friends recognise several Gospels in apparently unconscious defiance of the apostle Paul's words in Gal. i. 6-9. The Bible is made into a kind of mixture of a crossword puzzle and a legal document intelligible only to the elect, and both the approach to it and the treatment of it are wrongly conceived.

My own experience teaches me that such views are sometimes due to the practice on the part of younger and immature Christians of reading the books of these teachers before they know their Bibles properly, and of grafting the theories thus imbibed upon the Scriptures. I myself did this. It is of the utmost importance to read both sides to a question. This I never did. The " dispensational " scheme

seemed to me logical and its speculations appealed both to my active mind and my ready imagination. I felt satisfied with it and did not care to read the other side. Later I came to study my Bible for myself, and in the light of this first-hand study the whole scheme with its neatly-labelled pigeon-holes vanished into thin air. There is to-day a quite startling reaction in theological thinking towards conservatism. Much of this is being diverted in Anglo-Catholic directions, because Evangelicals are playing with these theories instead of occupying themselves with the Catholic Evangelical faith. I make in all love and humility an earnest appeal for the re-examination by Evangelical Christians of the relevance and importance of these questions. With souls perishing around us we occupy hours in talking of tribulations and millenniums in a speculative future to come, and in face of deadly rationalist forces threatening to engulf the Christian faith we go round with our neatly-folded plans of the future decked with gold and other colours, which we pin to a blackboard in order to demonstrate their superiority in some speculative detail over those of others. In certain circles horrible tests of orthodoxy and heterodoxy arise from these fancies and others are condemned as "not sound on the rapture." What will the Lord say to these things? If I urge a re-examination of these questions, I urge more strongly a thorough examination of quotations from the Old Testament as they appear in the New, and a thorough mastery of the New Testament interpretation of them and comment upon them. Till we have done this, I believe none of us should presume to teach these matters to others or even to close his mind upon any particular theory of the fulfilment of prophecy.

The Reformers and the Social Order

By The Rev. F. J. Taylor, M.A.

THE disintegration of the contemporary European social order has stimulated numberless attempts at diagnosis of our present ills. The prevailing opinion seems to hold that the capitalist society of our time is doomed and moreover that its fate is deserved since it has demonstrated both economic inefficiency and moral indifference. The origins of modern capitalism have been traced to the sixteenth century, and the teachings of Luther and Calvin have been blamed for its rapid growth. The religious revolt from Rome summarised under the convenient historical label of 'the Reformation' is thus represented as a movement primarily economic in its significance. Protestantism with its alleged undue emphasis on the individual in religion and on material prosperity in the world, has come to be regarded with increasing disfavour particularly by those whose gaze turns longingly towards a socialised Europe, or a resurrected Christendom owning a single loyalty. Now there can be little doubt that we are living in an epoch when the moulds, in which economic life has been set for a couple of centuries, are in an advanced stage of decay and in places already breaking up. A question of outstanding importance remains for our consideration. Is it true that reformed Christianity in Europe or in America is so closely identified with the present order of things, that the final collapse of capitalism will strike an irreparable blow at evangelical Christianity? It seems worth while to examine again the sixteenth century scene from this angle as a preliminary attempt to answer such an urgent question.

I.

The Western Church under the masterful leadership of the Papacy had for long centuries wielded a greater influence than any other single power in Europe, but it had never been strong enough to make of European society an effective unity.[1] Medieval society, like modern society, was subject to constant changes which were often obscured or misrepresented by the theological approach to such problems. The opening words of Dr. Eileen Power's Ford lectures on "The Medieval Wool Trade in England" comments on "the weakness of the conventional view of the middle ages as mainly a period of natural economy and self sufficiency . . . directly we come to examine the picture in detail, seeking not to establish an ideal type, but to seize something of the infinite variety of the reality we cannot fail to observe that the picture of self-sufficiency and natural economy is broken in several directions."[2] The disruption of outward religious unity in the sixteenth century was not the cause of political and economic disunity, but the final manifestation of the fact, that despite strenuous papal efforts, the idea of Christendom had failed to impress itself in the whole area of man's activities and interests. Behind the facade of religious unity and the moral and spiritual leadership of the

papacy, profound changes had been taking place in the social and economic life of European man.

The civilization of the Roman Empire had given to a large part of Europe and Asia Minor a real unity of social order and of culture. It was primarily an urban civilization, and its principal instrument was a money economy based upon the exploitation of slave labour or of a depressed proletariat. The breakdown of this Roman order followed upon the successive barbarian irruptions between 400 A.D. and 600 A.D. with important political and economic results. Politically the Western Church under the leadership of the Bishop of Rome emerged as the strongest centre of authority in a chaotic society. Economically the towns declined in importance and many of them fell into decay, with the consequence that there was a great reduction in the use and importance of money. The reconstitution of society under Charlemagne and his successors from the eighth to the tenth centuries was based more on Germanic than on Roman ideas. The foundation of the social order was land, real property, the holding of which involved the possessor in duties as well as rights. This new economy was essentially agrarian with production for consumption. Such a relatively static society based on communal self sufficiency in the essentials of life was able to repair the worst ravages of Gothic and Norse invaders. But it was not long before the inadequacies of this order for the real needs of society became apparent. Comparative peace and a measure of public order promoted conditions in which it was possible for urban society to revive and seaborne trade, particularly in the Mediterranean, to be renewed. Further, by the eleventh century, a growing population, especially in North East France and the Swiss Alps required the development of long distance exchange, in addition to the local exchanges between towns and the surrounding countryside. The need to import more corn than any particular area produced could only be met by exporting wool, butter or cheese. This meant production for exchange as well as for consumption, and it was an easy step for certain producers to concentrate on production for export and to carry on their business by means of money instead of barter. Illustrations of this development can be seen in the twelfth century when English wool was exported to Flanders, and wine from Gascony and Anjou was exported both to England and to the Low Countries.[3]

The renewed importance of money had a profound effect on the social order in other ways. The lord was affected by it since the range of commodities he desired from the merchant or craftsman was steadily expanding. His need for cash was increasing and he began to treat his estate as a source of revenue instead of administering it himself. Hence the personal relations between lord and peasant, of protection and service based on the tenancy of land were gradually replaced by a rent contract signifying a material relationship between legal equals. For his part the peasant gradually became free to produce for export to the towns, and not merely for consumption on the estate.

This development of trade and maritime commerce gave rise to modern banking and the financier class, since it was necessary to have some means of changing foreign currencies, receiving deposits, cashing

cheques and extending credit. The financial requirements of the papacy, drawing moneys from every country both for its own purposes and in order to finance the crusades greatly stimulated such economic tendencies. The new monarchies also assisted this process when frequent wars involved an extended use of money. It was in 1339 that three merchants from Malines lent 54,000 florins on certain securities, to Edward III. for his French war. About the same time the Florentine banking house of Acciajuoli was reported to have forty-one agents in different towns, including London, Paris, Bruges and Tunis.[4] It is clear that by the end of the twelfth century the three factors[5] which Weber has defined as essential to capitalism, were operative in European economy. Merchants and bankers carried on their business for profit so that there was "a ceaseless striving after gain." Labour which was nominally free was rationally organized and profits were reinvested in the business. Already in the twelfth century Godric of Finchale had learned with great success to carry on trade by transferring goods from a low priced to a dear market and to increase the scale of his operations by regular reinvestment of the profits. It is true that an awareness of defiance of traditional Christian teaching involved in such activities, drove him in later life to retire from business and enter a monastery. Nevertheless his life was commended as a praiseworthy example to many future generations of laymen without any apparent condemnation of his business career. Sombart in his great work on 'Modern Capitalism' regards the year 1202 in which the commercial state of Venice attacked and conquered Constantinople for trade and Pisano wrote his Liber Abbaci, an arithmetical treatise rendering exact calculation possible, as the definite date when capitalism came to birth in Europe.

The fifteenth century, a period of serious religious decline, marked the heyday of medieval capitalism. Rich merchants and bankers gave liberal patronage to the arts and helped forward the Renaissance. Families like the Medicis and the Fuggers exercised powerful influence in European politics. Many towns attained positions of outstanding importance and won valuable privileges of self-government. This was particularly noticeable in northern Italy, along the Rhine and in the Low countries where towns grew up at strategic places along the main trade routes. The restless striving after gain had already begun to seek for new markets in overseas exploration, and it was in this century that renewed efforts to find a way to the mythical riches of Cathay led to the discovery of ocean routes to America, to India and the far East. Other features of modern capitalism can be observed in the formation of fifteenth century cartels among Florentine and Hanseatic merchants.[6]

This brief survey of economic conditions and developments in medieval Christendom has been a necessary preliminary to a discussion of the attitude of the great reformers to these problems. It serves to show that far reaching economic changes had taken place behind the facade of external stability and carefully regulated business morality. When the inner stresses became too acute at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the traditional moral and spiritual moulds were broken beyond repair. The attitude of scholastic theologians to these new facts of the economic situation had for a long time been

unreal. Their teaching had been originally formulated in a time of relative economic stagnation and in the last three centuries before the Reformation was hedged about and elaborated with concessions and interpretations of every kind. The basis of their teaching was the prohibition of usury and superficially its condemnation was absolute. The statement of Aristotle that "*pecunia non parit pecuniam*" was set alongside a legalistic interpretation of Luke vi. 35, "lend, hoping for nothing again and your reward shall be great."[7] Aquinas, whose philosophy is predominantly urban in outlook,[8] was chiefly concerned with the morality of economic exchange and the virtual abandonment of the traditional doctrine of usury can be seen in the assertion, "he who keeps the money of a creditor beyond the appointed date seems to injure him to the extent of the whole gain he might have made by his money."[9] The payment of interest on the loan of money was sanctioned under the fictitious devices of ground rents, partnerships and insurance for risks. The fifteenth century papacy as patron of the Renaissance and engaged in Italian power politics was deeply committed to this traffic in financial operations which were frankly capitalist. Buridanus (d.1358) a pupil of William of Ockham had sought to find some justification for this state of affairs by arguing that a morally good man who cared for the common weal and did not strive for possessions "*ultra modum et debitem ordinem,*" ought not to be hindered from growing rich since he brought great benefit to the community. The capitalist spirit and ethic was thus firmly rooted in European economy from the beginning of the twelfth century, and its development was considerably helped by the international financial transactions of the papacy. All that was lacking was the stimulus afforded by sixteenth century geographical discovery and the technical developments of applied science in the nineteenth century.

II.

The Reformation as a religious revival springing from a new understanding of the meaning of Divine Grace entered the stream of history at the point where economic capitalism and political absolutism had already established a formidable condominium. Like their medieval predecessors, the great reformers approached all questions from theological presuppositions so that it is from incidental references rather than by systematic exposition that their social teaching is to be discovered.

It is frequently stated that Luther subordinated the church to the state and was largely responsible for the sixteenth century worship of "that rare monster" the godly prince. Some go so far as to say "it is easy to see how Luther prepared the way for Hitler" and his wide divergence from Calvinist teaching is noted at this point.[10] Such judgments rest upon inadequate acquaintance with Luther's own writings and an unfortunate confusion of Luther with some of his followers. Like the writers of the New Testament, his thought was primarily unpolitical and he was faced by a similar situation to that which confronted them—the task of promoting a new form of an old religion in a hostile environment. Beginning with a clear distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world, Luther pointed out that Christians as such do not need a worldly government

at all. Christians will of course obey the ordinary laws of the state but having the Holy Spirit who teaches them within their hearts they will live according to the Word of God in the order of faith. " The Christian man is the most free lord of all " because he possesses the only true freedom which comes from hearing God's Word and obeying it. This inner freedom finds expression as God's Word directs in a concrete situation so that " a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all and subject to every one."[11] However, Christians are and always will be a small minority, " scarcely one true Christian in a thousand," and Christians are still sinful people, so there is need of an external order of law. The state is a secular order alongside the church instituted by God[12] as a power of co-ercion on account of sin. This teaching is not due to some deep seated pessimism in Luther but the result of taking seriously the fact of human sinfulness. Like Thomas Hobbes, on the basis of historic experience Luther believed that unredeemed human life left to itself was " nasty, brutish and short." Without a lawful and powerful government human life would be indescribably chaotic. God had indeed showed His mercy to men in instituting the state and endowing it with a real but limited authority to save men from the worst consequences of their sin. The state can thus be regarded as a part of the fatherly action of God,[13] but the fact that it operates by means of physical force is a continual reminder that its origin is to be found in the sinful nature of man.

The aim of the state is the creation of a measure of order and the establishment of external peace and a relative justice. Indirectly, through the maintenance of peace and order the state assists the Church in its task of preaching the Gospel, and creates better conditions for the hearing and the obeying of God's Word. This is the limit of its usefulness, but up to that limit it is of God and in supporting it the Christian partially fulfils his obligation to love and serve his neighbour. Luther always maintains this clear distinction between the order of faith and the natural order of law, and shows that both Christian and non-Christian need the assistance and correction which the law can give. But this separation of grace and law does not confer an autonomy of procedure upon either order.

With most of his reforming contemporaries, Luther perceived that one of the chief sources of corruption in the church was to be found in the practice of prelates holding state offices and competing with lay lords in luxury and ostentatious display of pomp. In that way the Church was secularized and the Gospel obscured. Hence he urged that churchmen should be obliged to recognize the boundary laid down in the New Testament between church and state and should be restricted to their proper office of ministry in the church. It may be asked whether he allowed to state officials the power to order the church as they pleased in their own territory? Nowhere has Luther been so much misunderstood or misrepresented as on this point. If there is a boundary to limit the activities of churchmen there is also a boundary to limit the activities of the civil power. The duty of the magistrate is to maintain public righteousness and true religion, but it is never suggested that a magistrate may decide what is true religion. " Implicit in his teaching was the assumption that his own interpretation of God's revealed Word could not reasonably be dis-

puted."[14] Luther believed that it was the duty of the prince to put into operation the reforms which he himself or any other competent authority had planned.[15] This conception of the place of secular power in church business was shared by Rome and Geneva as well as Wittenberg, for the notion of a church as such possessing executive power apart from the secular authority was hardly known anywhere in the sixteenth century. But Luther never exalted the state over the church, and he was fully aware of the fact that most princes were men of doubtful morality. He openly derided them " as commonly the greatest fools and worse scoundrels upon earth," adding that " from the beginning of the world a prudent prince has been a rare bird and a devout one still more rare."

It is important to remember that he did manifest a profound and far reaching pacificism which seems to have been derived in part at least from medieval German mysticism and the '*Theologica Germanica*.' Under no circumstances would he sanction armed rebellion—at most he would only allow flight to another territory where a Reformed prince was ruling. As early as 1520 he wrote " I will always side with him however unjust who endures rebellion, and against him who rebels however justly." Behind this attitude we can discern three convictions—first that it was degrading to the Gospel for Christians to assert their rights. The rights were undoubtedly a personal possession, but the Christian man " should rather suffer quietly and live humbly." Hence when the peasants refused his mediation and rose in revolt, in some instances claiming Gospel sanction for their acts, Luther lost his head and urged on the authorities the suppression of a movement which was misrepresenting the Gospel. Secondly, he was profoundly convinced that force and violence could never be a real remedy for undoubted wrongs. Rebellion would be not only impious but foolish and useless. "Nothing," he wrote, " is so satisfactory to the devil as a civil commotion when the innocent suffer." Thirdly, he was convinced that the Word of God was itself powerful and needed " no man's weapons," and would ultimately triumph. " *Summa summarum* is this.[16] I will preach the Word, will declare it, will write it. Take an example from me. I opposed all the practices of the papists, but not with force. I have urged God's Word alone and . . . the papacy has been rendered more impotent than any prince or emperor has ever succeeded in making it. I have done nothing ; the Word everything. If I had so wished I might have deluged Germany with blood ; yea, I might have started such a game at Worms that the Emperor himself would not have been secure. I have only let the Word act. Had I done otherwise, I would only have done the devil's work for him."

At the same time it should be noted that Luther allowed passive resistance if the prince sought to take away the Word from you or to compel you to do wrong or participate in an unjust war. He never identified the law of the prince with the law of God which all must obey. The submission which he taught was common to the practice and teaching of others as widely sundered as the lawyers of Bologna or Bishop Stephen Gardiner of Winchester. The real cause of princely absolutism in Germany was the reception, early in the sixteenth century of the Roman Civil Law (*Corpus Juris Civilis*) as the common law of

Germany, in the foundation of the Imperial Court of Justice which with its fundamental postulate " that the people has invested the prince with the whole of its own authority and power " and therefore " the prince's decision has the force of law " speeded up the development of the absolutist tendency already visible in the fourteenth century.[17]

The differences between Luther and Calvin on the subject of state authority were neither great nor important in themselves. The very different circumstances in which each worked produced different results. Like Luther, Calvin held to the two orders of life, one under the Word and the other under a civil ruler. The primary function of the state was to establish and maintain an order of society in which the church could exist and do its necessary work. " It is to foster and maintain the worship of God, to defend the condition of the church . . . its object is that no idolatry, no blasphemy against God, no calumnies against His truth nor other offences to religion should break out or be disseminated amongst the people ; that the public quiet be not disturbed, that every man's property be kept secure."[18] On the other hand no minister was to hold secular office. Where Calvin differed most widely from Luther was in his conception of discipline. Luther believed in the inner freedom of the man who lived by God's Word which put him on a moral level above the standards required by the state, but Calvin found a more definite place for law in the life of the Christian. Released from the control of the confessional men needed some new method of public supervision of morals. In Geneva and in Scotland the organs of the state were pressed into the service of the Christian moral ideal. Idolaters, swearers, blasphemers and cheats came under the discipline of the Consistory and the Kirk Session. The spirit and purpose of this discipline was well defined by John Knox in his interview with Mary Stuart when he said " God forbid that I should grasp at the exercise of power or set subjects free to do exactly as they like. My one aim is that Prince and People alike should obey God."[19] This quotation also serves to illustrate the Calvinist emphasis on obedience to the Will of God in all life. The primary task of declaring God's will fell to the ministers of God's Word, and the resolute determination to keep the power of the state within its due and proper confines made the Church at times almost " the monitress of the state, teaching it its purpose, advising it concerning its way."[20] Thus while Luther was more concerned to deliver the Church from its late medieval secularization, Calvin at times approached the spirit of mastery of the state characteristic of the Hildebrandine papacy.

III.

Turning to consider economics and the state of society in general there is again in the great reformers a lack of systematic exposition and a traditional outlook. As Tawnay admits " the mark of nearly all this body of teaching, is its conservatism."[21] Luther's fundamental conception of the Christian life was freedom in obedience to the Word so that in place of the medieval contrast between the way of perfection exemplified by the religious and the way of ordinary men in secular occupations, he drew the contrast between those who lived by the

Word and those who lived under the burden of law. " Canon Law is the work of the devil and must be destroyed root and branch," and it was in this spirit that he had thrown a copy of it into the flames with the papal bull of condemnation.[22]

The idea of vocation was thus no longer confined to the monastic life but brought into everyday Christian life. Again and again he asserted that the common Christian life is the only true Christian life.[23] The Gospel was thus seen to command the common service of the community in the practical duties of life. Thus the highest spiritual places were open to all whatever their occupation and the notion of a spiritual aristocracy abolished.

Detailed examination of the economic teaching of Luther shows that his approach was typical of the peasant outlook—vigorous in denunciation but unsystematic in teaching. It is in the document entitled " To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation " composed in 1520 that Luther came nearest to setting out a programme of social reform and educational policy. Commerce was declared unchristian and detrimental to the common weal in draining Germany of its gold and in the raising of prices. " The merchants grow rich by what is sheer trickery." He considered " it were much more godly to encourage agriculture and lessen commerce." The bitterest attacks on the pope and on highly placed ecclesiastics were reserved for their financial exploitations. He described the papacy " as the see of robbers, the head and supreme protector of all thieves."[24] For the banking activities of the Fuggers he had no words hard enough. " It is time to put a bit into the mouth of the holy company of the Fuggers." " Is it possible " he asks " that in one man's lifetime such great wealth should be collected together, if all were done rightly and according to God's will? I am not skilled in accounts, but I do not understand how it is possible for 100 guilders to gain 20 in a year and that not out of the soil. . ."[25] In the same pamphlet he urges Christian rulers to pass laws against extravagant dress and too much eating and drinking. In the Greater Catechism expounding the commandment " Thou shalt not steal ", he attacked those who took advantage of others at the market. In a tract published in 1524, he attacked usury with considerable bitterness and in 1539 towards the end of his life, he raised his voice, not for the first time, against those who made a corner in corn and starved the people. In pulpit and in pamphlet he thundered against the taking of anything above a reasonable price and constantly urged the duty of the preacher to stand up for the right. "Luther was the living and most active conscience of the princes, the Christian teacher of the statesmen of his time."[26] He never hestitated to speak out against social abuses and to defend the poor.

When we turn to Calvin we find the same conception of a vocation in the world which was conditioned by the discipline or what Tawnay has so aptly called " the nerves of religion."[27] The Christian was to be distinguished by a certain strenuousness of living, a heroic endeavour to glorify God in all things so that the due balance was to be maintained between taking a moderate and an immoderate pleasure in material things. Earthly blessings were trusts for which we must give account. In bearing poverty there must be patience, in time of abundance,

moderation. Life was regulated by one's calling so that each man had his station in life and "' no one may presume to overstep his proper limits or be driven about at random."[28] Excessive austerity was denounced and the asceticism commended was not for the purpose of increasing capital but for greater efficiency in personal service and the abolition of all unworthy ostentation or extravagance.

In 1545 Calvin was approached by a correspondent seeking information on the subject of usury. His devout acceptance of the facts of life led him to begin his reply by saying that he would deal with " things in themselves and not words." Hence he repudiated the Scholastic concessions and refinements. There was no clear testimony of scripture to assert that usury was altogether to be condemned. Scriptural condemnations were directed against extortions and frauds. Next he rejected the Aristotelian watchword *pecunia non parit pecuniam.* " What about the dwelling from the hiring of which I receive payment? Is money really born of the roofs and walls? He who asks a loan of me does not think to have it by him unoccupied after he has received it from me." In the light of these facts Calvin thought the question should be judged by the rule of equity. It was ridiculous to prefer on moral grounds, buying a rent-charge to granting a loan to a farmer for which usury was taken. Certain exceptions or modifications were, however, added. The needy should not be charged for a loan nor should greater security than he could honestly afford be exacted from the borrower. The lender should not take payment unless the borrower had made a gain at least equal to or greater than the amount originally promised to the lender. In these ways his teaching was not only direct and intelligible but better adapted to changed and changing economic conditions.

It is clear from this evidence that the Reformers were not conscious innovators in their social and economic teaching. But they did bring vocation out of the cloister into the market place, and viewing it as a life of personal obedience to the will of God they sought to bring all parts of life under the control of the Gospel. This emphasis has been of lasting value and is as important to-day as it became in the sixteenth century. In other ways the great reformers revived the critical and prophetic function of the church in the world so that the destiny of evangelical Christianity is not irrevocably linked with the fate of our present civilization.

1 The Unquenchable Light : K. S. Latourette, p.60.
2 The Medieval Wool Trade in England : E. Power, p.1.
3 Cambridge Economic History, Vol I., pp. 493-496.
4 The Rise of Economic Individualism : H. M. Robertson, p.40.
5 In his book, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, E.T. 1930.
6 The Legacy of the Middle Ages : ed. C. G. Crump and E. F. Jacob, p.449.
7 The Divine Imperative : E. Brunner, pp. 673-4.
8 Political Thought in the European Tradition : J. P. Mayer, pp.92-4.
9 Summa ii.ii, questio 62, art. 4.
10 Religion and the Rise of Capitalism : R. H. Tawnay, pp.102-3.
11 Concerning Christian Liberty : printed in Wace and Bucheim ' The Primary Works of Luther,' p.256.
12 Luther and the Reformation : J. Mackinnon, Vol. III. pp.282-6.
13 The Church and the Modern State : Nils Ehrenström, p.153.
14 Social and Political Ideas of the Renaissance and the Reformation : ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw, p.184.

[15] See the 'Appeal to the German Nobility' in Wace and Bucheim, pp. 175-179, 190. Mackinnon, op. cit. III., pp.171-173.
[16] A Sermon quoted in Mackinnon, Vol. III., p.91.
[17] Edouard Meynial in the Legacy of the Middle Ages, p.385.
[18] Inst. iv. xx. 2.
[19] The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches : E. Troeltsch, Vol II., p.634.
[20] Calvinism : A Dakin, p.233.
[21] Tawnay, op. cit., p.87.
[22] Wace and Bucheim, op.cit., p.287. Mackinnon, op. cit., Vol. III., p.283, Vol. IV., p.164.
[23] Mackinnon op. cit., Vol. III., p.27.
[24] Wace and Bucheim, p.74, p.181.
[25] Wace and Bucheim, pp. 240-1.
[26] C. G. Schweitzer in Theology, Vol. XLVI, p.200, (Sept. 1943).
[27] Tawnay, op. cit., p.114.
[28] Inst. iii. x. 6.

Popular Cosmologies

By The Rev. Douglas Jones, B.A. (Oxon.)

It has been acutely observed, I think by McNeile Dixon, that the progress of civilisations is dependent, to a degree largely unrecognized, upon the power of metaphor. Pictures presented to the imagination exercise over the minds of the vast majority of men and women a far greater power than the cold logical reason. Where reason and imagination are in conflict, imagination wins.

I wish to suggest that popular cosmologies, that is the imaginative pictures of the world whether true or false, which exist in the minds of the people, exercise a powerful, even formidable influence upon all their thinking, including their thinking about God, and that anyone who wishes in our day to present the Christian Revelation in a way that is relevant to their condition, must take account of these cosmologies. The power of these imaginative pictures lies not least in the fact that the people themselves are *unconscious* of them. They are the constant presupposition of all else, a fancy which folk share as the common stock of their age and completely take for granted. But Christ's minister and teacher must not be unconscious of them. He must be utterly alert to the popular cosmology of his day, and must be equipped not only to point it out to his people, but, also to correct it and to show how the Christian message of redemption is relevant to *this* kind of universe and to such people as *us*.

I. In the early years of the Church's growth we have an excellent example of this process of adaptation. The great imaginative picture of the world, shared by nearly all Eastern Mediterranean peoples was that which was finally delineated and developed by the Gnostics. Their leading thinkers developed and embellished the ordinary popular cosmology which was largely unconscious and taken for granted. The picture was of a world completely out of the hands of God. *The* God was the Unknown God, unknowable, self-enclosed, changeless, remote and indifferent. The earth was created and governed by a Demiurge. Human Beings were in reality Spirits encaged in their mortal bodies. Salvation consisted in escape from the body, and the whole earthly sphere, by the motion of the soul through the upper air, which was peopled with myriads of divine beings often identified with the stars and planets, to the Unknown God beyond. This salvation was attainable only by an esoteric Knowledge.

Clearly, those whose thinking was determined by such generally accepted presuppositions about the nature of the created universe were not in the right frame of mind to accept the Christian doctrine about God and Jesus Christ. Therefore part of the essential preparation for the proclamation of the Christian message was the correction of the falsely-assumed world-view. There were two different methods by which great theologians of those early centuries met the challenge.

(*a*) Irenaeus and Tertullian found a comparatively easy solution.

They pointed their readers and hearers away from the false philosophical and speculative systems to Holy Scripture. If you want to know what the world is like, they said, that knowledge which is permissible to us is to be found in the book of Genesis. In the Old Testament God has revealed to us that He Himself created the world (He is no hostile Demiurge !) ; He has shown us how sin entered into His perfect creation (this for the Greek mind was always the great problem) ; and He has told us simply the purpose of creation. The Christian doctrine of redemption was shown to be ideally relevant in a world of this kind. The whole business was of a piece. Creation, the Fall, Original Sin, Incarnation, Redemption and Judgment were presented as a vast, impressive and closely articulated system of theology in harmony with the unconscious presupposition of popular thinking.

(*b*) Clement of Alexandria and Origen offered a different solution. Instead of roundly overthrowing the old cosmology, they found in its more purified and scientific form elements of truth. They therefore sought to cleanse it of baser elements, to correct them and then to present to the world that true form of *Gnosis* which is the Christian way of salvation. This was a much bolder method, but it not unnaturally evoked the charge of heresy, and remained in Christian doctrinal history the beginning of a movement which has always existed but never become popular. It was indeed for the masses of the people too intellectual.

But in both answers to the Gnostic challenge it is noteworthy that Christian thinkers provided (*i*) a better cosmology, and (*ii*) a doctrine of redemption which was of a piece with that cosmology.

II. The answer given by Irenaeus and Tertullian determined Christian thinking throughout the Dark and Middle Ages. Indeed, as long as the literal inspiration of Holy Scripture was assumed, this was inevitable. And the picture of the universe given by Genesis and assumed by Christian theologians became the ordinary, popular cosmology. In the Middle Ages this was embellished and coloured so that whether you were a Christian or not, whether an original thought ever entered your head or not, whether you were a Martha or a Mary, you always assumed a universe which was three-storied. Beneath the crust of the earth was Hell, whose jaws were the terrible opening of the volcano. The deathly eruptions of lava were a sign of what the wicked might expect after death. The earth of course was flat. and heaven was literally " above the bright blue sky." Nearly everybody took this for granted. That is why it is not utterly misleading to speak ot the Ages of Faith. This cosmology to which the Christian doctrine of redemption was excellently adapted was universally held. The Christian preacher was readily understood because he was speaking to his hearers within a common heritage of imaginative presuppositions. He was not, like the modern preacher, speaking out of a strange and alien context.

III. In our day the popular cosmology is fundamentally different and is no longer based on the early chapters of Genesis or on any part of the Christian tradition. And that which is responsible for so fateful a change is the quiet, powerful, penetrating rise of modern

science.* Copernicus stands for a radically new cosmology. And a whole host of distinguished men from the sixteenth century onwards stand for the combination of close and scrupulous fidelity to "irreducible and stubborn facts" with generalisation based on them. Almost all the early men of science were men of faith engaged upon a divine task. And indeed, that faith in the *order* of the universe, which is the essential conviction and motive power behind all scientific effort has been shown by Professor Whitehead to be "an unconscious derivative from mediaeval theology."

But, the results of this epochal revolution went far beyond the dreams and intentions of the pioneers. Such was the working hypothesis of the nature of matter as "an irreducible material, spread throughout space in a flux of configurations", and, such the conception of the normal operation of the world's processes according to fixed, unrelenting and ascertainable laws, that the faith known as "scientific materialism" became congenial and plausible. Disastrously, this faith grew up for the most part *alongside* philosophy and unconnected with it. Its immense influence lay in its strength as a *working* hypothesis. By it the astounding technological advances of the nineteenth century were made possible; and conversely by reason of these advances, the hypothesis seemed to be transformed into an obvious certainty.

The vital observation for us is this. Without realising their responsibility and often vigorously disowning their baneful offspring, the scientists have given to the popular imagination a cosmology. This cosmology is unconscious; it is assumed; it is in the very atmosphere and texture of our age; it is always in the background of popular thought. It may be not inaccurately described thus. People ordinarily think of the world rather in the nature of a great machine. A Creator may have set it in being or it may have come about by some kind of cosmic accident. That does not matter, because in any case there is little room and no need for the action of a God within it now. It functions according to fixed laws. Some we know, others we are learning, the rest we ought to know eventually. There is an inexorable sequence of cause and effect; things happen as they will happen, and if only we had still more advanced knowledge, we should be able to predict the effects according to the causes. And if modern scientists are teaching us to expect the apparently arbitrary and idiosyncratic, yet the great mass of the people have inherited such a view of the universe as makes inevitable the conclusion (whether they draw it or not) that miracles just do not happen in a world like this world. This is the source of most modern difficulties about prayer and Providence; there just does not seem room for the special action of God. What was formerly attributed to His governance is now otherwise and sufficiently explained. Modern folk are left unwillingly in the position of Laplace who, being asked why he had omitted all reference to the name of God in a treatise on astronomy, replied: "Sir, I have no need of that hypothesis."

IV. Confronted with such a popular delusion, the Christian theologian and preacher has the same task which those early champions

*See Whitehead: *Science and the Modern World.*

of the faith so effectively tackled. He must (*i*) examine this popular cosmology, draw it into the open and present a better and a truer cosmology and (*ii*) preach the Gospel of Redemption as it is seen to be so distinctly and effectively adapted by God for such a world as ours. Thus the cosmology and the doctrine of Redemption will be of a piece instead of, as now, failing to meet at any point. Only we have to recognise boldly that the simpler method of Irenaeus and Tertullian is for ever closed to us. We cannot build on the scientific accuracy of Genesis. We have to attempt the much more dangerous and uncertain road followed by Clement and Origen, and use the best-attested results of modern science and philosophy, interpreted by the spiritual insights of Genesis.

What is this better cosmology? As always the work of construction is more difficult than that of criticism or analysis, and a satisfactory imaginative picture of the world has yet to be painted. I believe we shall accept the method of science with a renewed emphasis on its necessary limitation. We shall welcome its devotion to " irreducible and stubborn fact ", but we shall insist on pressing this activity further. For has not science gained such very high marks in the public favour because, having been presented with an examination paper, it has dazzled the examiner's eyes by answering all the easiest questions? We shall insist on the recognition of certain very stubborn facts which do not fit in with all the facile generalisations,—on the fact of the individual and of the personal, on the fact of the spontaneous, on the fact that in evolution cumulative small variations can establish specific distinctness, on the fact of the experience of the saints, on the fact of the meeting of the individual soul with the personal God, on the fact of Jesus. Perhaps the basic recognition is of the fact of the individuality and spontaneity of personality. Here is a " given ", not able to be analysed, itself the centre of every process of intuition, analysis and interpretation.

This entails the recognition of at least two ways of knowledge. We insist that devotion to *facts* reveals that the scientific way of knowledge is not the only way. There is that quite different realm of the intuition of values. There is the realm of history, art and religion; we have to take account of the perceptive faculties of the poet and the mystic. We are to recognise a different technique whose results are not so easily verified as those of science because its subject-matter is a more complex, more personal and therefore higher subject-matter than that of science. The Christian preacher and theologian may once again offer release from captivity, this time release from intellectual and moral and religious imprisonment within the closed system of a mechanical world. And therefore the Christian need no longer, as he has done lately, exhibit the slightest complex of inferiority in the presence of the agnostic scientist or throw himself into a closed (traditional) system of his own, and so become aggressive about it in an effort of compensation. We ought now to see the clergy regaining their confidence as they rediscover their message, and therefore becoming the more sympathetic with their hearers and the less easily irritated by their perplexity. This return of confidence will make possible a new evaluation of all our knowledge, and a glad

recognition of all authentic contributions from whatever quarter.* The human mind will no longer be mastered by a single branch of knowledge; but all knowledge will be at the service of the human mind in a hierarchy of values, all interpreted by the fundamental deliverances of the divine Revelation. Thus we shall see Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Geology, Geography as the sciences and the attempted explanations of the *material* universe. And Anatomy, Biology, etc., as the sciences which study man as a *physical* being. Where shall we put Psychology? As a science which studies the behaviour of man as more than a physical being? Yes—but also as a science which cannot escape closest dependence upon other insights into the nature of man. And those other insights—these are the insights of literature and history which view man whole and more accurately as a morally-conscious personality. Then Philosophy, taking account of all these kinds of knowledge, inquires into the fundamental character of the world in which we live and of the kind of life which we ought to live. But the key to the final interpretation must, for those who have been confronted by Reality, necessarily be found in the divine Revelation. So Theology is rehabilitated as Queen of the Sciences and presides because she guards God's self-revelation, because she speaks of God Himself and of the approach of the soul to God and of God's approach to the soul, and of an ineffable mystery where human knowledge at last admits its limitation, and yet alone finds its fruition in the Vision of God. The true Cosmology will derive insights from *all* authentic disciplines and not from science alone.

But when the popular cosmology is corrected and we are clear about the functions and limitations of the various branches of knowledge, we have still to present the Christian message of Redemption. This message will be of God's merciful approach to that which is the real problem, *i.e.* not an intellectual perplexity but that "irreducible and stubborn fact"—the individual, the spontaneous, the personal—a wayward, rebellious human being. And what the world most needs both to demonstrate its erroneous assumptions and to prove the truth of the Christian religion is something more than a corrected cosmology and a relevant doctrine of redemption. The final proof that the laws of science are inadequate as the basis of an interpretation of the universe, the final proof that the world is not to be conceived of as a machine or as a closed system, is the existence before our eyes of the Holiness that is lived in the fellowship of the Spirit and cannot be explained by any known laws. It is the transcendence of law. It is the breaking down of the sequence of cause and effect (that is our modern bondage of the law); it is the breaking out into the freedom of the Spirit. Such lives in themselves prove the limitation of science, and the reality of religion.

*See Sir Richard Livingstone, *The Future in Education*, esp: pp. 71-74

Shadow or Substance?

THE REAL CHOICE BEFORE THE CHURCH.

By The Rev. A. M. Stibbs, M.A.

Reflections on the present situation suggested after reading "The Throne of David" by A. G. Hebert.

"So let no one take you to task on questions of eating and drinking or in connexion with the observance of festivals or new moons or sabbaths. All that is mere shadow of what is to be: the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one lay down rules for you as he pleases . . . instead of keeping in touch with that Head under whom the entire Body . . . grows with growth divine." (Colossians ii. 16-19: from the translation by Prof. Jas. Moffatt).

Christianity is a fulfilment of earlier anticipations. It is the "substance" of which they were the "shadows". In the Old Testament we find the "shadows," or the "figures of the true." In Christ God has given the "substance," the reality itself. In the ancient Israel much was anticipated which Israel was impotent to fulfil. The fulfilment came only in Christ. He was the one true Israelite. God brought the Israelites as "a vine" out of Egypt, and planted them in the land of promise. But Christ and Christ alone is "the true vine."

This means, therefore, that many things which were prefigured in special ways by the Israelitish nation of the preparatory age are in Christianity fulfilled only and wholly in Christ. But, having been fulfilled they are then in Him extended to all. He alone has fulfilled the vocation of Israel. But through His fulfilment all alike may now find a place in "the substance" or the body,—which is "Christ."

This is particularly true of the office of the priesthood. The old Levitical order was the "shadow." It recognised a need and suggested a method. There must be a mediator between God and men. But "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." Then, in Christ the reality was given. He entered into heaven itself to appear in the presence of God for us. Henceforth there was no more place for "the shadow." It had done its preparatory work. It was now ready to vanish away. In Christ, and with Him as their High Priest, all alike now can with boldness enter into the holiest of all, the very presence of God. Also, in Him the privilege of priestly service is extended to all alike. Christians are "a kingdom of priests," "a royal priesthood." There is, therefore, no more room for "the shadow." There is no more any place 'in Christ' for the claim that a select class, 'the priests' or 'the clergy', stand nearer to God than the laity. For through Christ each and all alike have direct "access by one Spirit unto the Father." There is now" one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."

In the course of Church history there has been a tendency to revert from the "substance" to the "shadow," and to appeal to the

Old Testament " figures of the true " as a justification for so doing. Hence there has been reintroduced into Christendom the idea of a mediating priestly caste. In his book ' The Throne of David ', A. G. Hebert, writing of the true Sabbath, which has now come to supersede the shadow Sabbath of the Law, says, " But they are to be blamed . . . if they reject the substance, the Messianic reign itself, in order to cling to the shadow-Sabbath, which exists only in order to point forward to it" (p.155 f.). Is it not equally right to suggest that they also are to be blamed who reject the substance, the one eternal and all sufficient priesthood of Christ alone, and in Him the priesthood of all believers, in order to cling to the shadow-priesthood? Also, to pursue the analogy, under the Law only one day in seven was a Sabbath ; but in Christ all our days become the true Sabbath ; we enter into the rest of God, which is to be consummated in eternity. Similarly, under the Law, only a select minority of the people of God were priests, who could offer sacrifice and enter the holy place ; but in Christ, according to the plain teaching of the New Testament, all the people are priests, all alike can offer sacrifice, all can enter the holiest of all. Is it not, therefore, relevant to the present situation in Christendom to say that our generation has afresh to choose between the " shadow " and the " substance? " There is not room for both to exist together.

When in fulfilment of Malachi's prophecy the Lord came to His Temple, He came to break down every barrier which separated men from God and from one another. He came to rend the vail and to remove the middle wall of partition. He meant His house to be a house of prayer for all nations, in which through Him and His priestly work as the one all-sufficient mediation all might draw nigh to God. So, in the last week of His earthly life at the time when He did enter the holy city and the temple, the Gentile Greeks who came asked not for Jewish priests but for Jesus. They wanted not the " shadow " but the " substance ". " Sir, we would see Jesus." And in that hour Jesus said, " I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me ". But the danger to-day is lest the " shadow " prevent men from properly seeing the " substance,"—lest the " priests " stand between Christ and a gathering humanity hungering to find unity in Him.

In February, 1941, in a letter to ' The Times ' the Bishop of Oxford suggested that the sight of the Bishop on his throne in the Cathedral might serve as " the starting point for a vivid scheme of Christian education." Is this not to offer the rising generation the " shadow " rather than the " substance? " However far it may be from the minds of its devoted supporters, in the last analysis is it not true to say that communion with the Bishop as a test of true Christianity or membership in Christ's Church is, or may all too easily become, first a shadow-substitute for the " substance," and, in the end, a false or anti-Christian idea, because it makes the Bishop to claim to be what none but the Christ Himself can be—the centre of loyalty and unity? It is, in principle, similar to the claims of the Papacy. It is the " shadow " not the " substance."

As A. G. Hebert says so plainly and so well in his book ' The Throne of David ', the true centre of unity is our Lord Himself. " As soon as Israel is cleansed from sin and is gathered in faith and humility round

her Messiah, the Gentiles will be found coming" (p.221). "There is one centre of unity only for Israel and mankind . . . That centre of unity, that gathering point, is the Messiah in His Kingdom" (p.221f.). For there is to be one flock not one fold. "A Flock is constituted by its relation to the Shepherd" (p.224). It is He Who will gather together in one the children of God scattered. "His Cross is the appointed centre of unity" (p.224).

Membership and unity are, therefore, "in Christ," and in Him alone. It is those who are in Him Who form the true "Israel of God." Whatever men may think or claim there are now in God's sight no Jewish-Israelites (or British-Israelites); for membership in "the "Israel of God" is not a privilege restricted to those who possess a particular line of physical descent. Nor are the true Israelites Papal-Israelites or Episcopal-Israelites; it is not a privilege limited to those who possess a particular line of official connection or succession. The true Israelites are now Christo-Israelites. Those who are in Christ Jesus are "Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." The true Church is 'ubi Christus' not 'ubi episcopus'. None have a right to say "You must have our ordination, and our sacraments." All that men must have is Christ. For He is "the true Vine;" and if any individual abide in Him he is a true branch. No other ecclesiastical connection is necessary. Rather it is by that one connection that all alike belong to the Ecclesia.

There is, therefore, no need of, nor place for, any priestly caste as a necessary channel of grace. Just as in the extreme case any individual Christian may baptize, similarly in the last analysis any Christian congregation may under God, and by His call and gift, appoint and set apart or ordain its own ministers, including those, of course, who will administer the sacraments. Also, if someone is so baptized by one of the laity, the practice of the Church is not to require re-baptism by a properly ordained minister, but to receive the baptised person into the congregation of Christ's flock. Similarly, if a minister be truly set apart by a congregation of Christian men, or 'by men who have public authority given unto them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard' (Art. xxiii), it is improper to demand that he should be reordained, and it is only right to recognise him as a true minister of the Church of God.

It is surely very remarkable that when in the last days of His earthly life the Lord came to His Temple He came to oppose the priests and to vindicate the place of Gentile 'outsiders'. This day of fulfilment when the one true Priest came to His Temple was a tremendous challenge to the shadow-priests in possession. This was the day when they ought to have been willing to yield place to Him, to decrease that He might increase, to disappear that Christ might be all in all. This was the hour when Jesus said, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone'. 'He that loveth his life shall lose it'. But these priests were unwilling 'to die'. Rather they asserted themselves and their importance. They said in effect, 'This is our House. No one can come before God or have freedom of action here without us and our blessing. It is our right to ask, By what authority doest Thou these things?'

This was their supreme act of robbery. They had appropriated the

court of the Gentiles for their business. They were taking more than a fair price from the worshippers through their monopoly of the Temple trade. Now they sought to retain for themselves the place that belonged to Him Who said, 'My House'. The "shadow" would not make way for the "Substance." So judgment had to begin at the House of God. The Lord went out from the shadow-Temple and disowned it. He said,—awful words—"*Your* house is left unto you desolate." To one of His disciples He added, "Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." If the "shadow" will not make way for the "Substance," it must, in the end, be swept away in judgment.

To-day, it would seem, the same Lord comes again to His Temple, bringing as He promised His "other sheep" from the young churches of the mission fields. He comes to gather together in one the children of God which are scattered abroad; that all may be one. Those who would oppose this movement are "the priests." It is they who seem to want to say, "Some of these 'other sheep' have no right here. They do not belong to the 'one flock'." It is those who claim some kind of 'monopoly' of sacramental grace who once again ask, "By what authority?"

One can almost hear the same Lord answering, "I also will ask you one question. The ministries of the Free Churches, are they sent from God? Their sacraments are they from heaven or from men?" One is thankful, indeed, that to this question the Lambeth Conference of Bishops has already given answer. The Bishops in the Lambeth Appeal of 1920 have said,

"It is not that we call in question for a moment the spiritual reality of the ministries of those communions which do not possess the Episcopate. On the contrary we thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace."

To such an answer the Christ Himself would surely reply, "Why then do not all in the episcopal communion receive and recognise these ministries as genuine ministries of the Church of God?"

Perhaps the reason why we seem so slow to see and to follow the truth is because, though we want the "substance" rather than the "shadow," our sense of perspective is not true. For we live in a day in which Episcopal power tends to assume undue proportions. For instance, did not Archbishop Davidson once allow himself publicly to describe the Church as consisting of "The Bishops, with the Clergy and Laity"? And is this not how some would still describe it? Did not St. Paul preserve a wiser sense of proportion when he described the Church in Philippi as "all the saints in Christ Jesus . . . with the bishops and deacons"? For the laity are not subservient to the clergy and the Bishops. Rather the latter belong to the People of God as well as to the Lord, as their servants as well as His. So Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, that is, to the laity, to say, "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas." In other words, the clergy belong to the Church, not the Church to the clergy, or to the Bishops. For in Christ, and in the Church which is His body, the only "heirarchy," or rule of the priests, is the "democracy"

or the rule of the people ; for all are priests and kings unto God. This is the " substance " or the " body," which is " of Christ."

In relation to present practical questions of Church order one feels that the Apostle Paul would adopt to episcopal ordination an attitude somewhat similar to that which he adopted towards circumcision. There would be occasional circumstances possibly in which, to avoid giving needless offence to those as yet unaware of our full liberty in Christ, he would take a Timothy and have him episcopally ordained. There would be other circumstances in which, whatever the pressure even from some in the Mother Church, he would not yield and allow a Titus to be re-ordained—that the Truth of the Gospel may continue with the Free Churches. Nor would he be satisfied with any decree of the Church in council unless it refrained from laying upon the Free Churches episcopal ordination as something necessary for unity. Above all, he would say that in Christ Jesus, and in the Church which is His body, episcopal ordination or non-episcopal ordination makes no essential difference ; but faith which worketh by love.

For the " ministers of the new covenant " are ministers " not of the letter but of the Spirit." Their " sufficiency is of God." Their apostleship is " not of men," and may not even be " through man." Certainly it need not always be through Bishops. There are ministries of the Spirit which are non-Episcopal. If Bishops are to continue to find their place of ministry in the Church, instead of trying to put God's people in bondage to themselves, they must be willing in fresh ways to act on the Christian principle and to lose their life in order to find it. Nothing is more Christlike than to renounce inherited privilege. Nothing is more calculated to promote the glory and Kingdom of God.

It is perhaps the greatest tragedy of history that there has been within the Christian Church a widespread and widely successful return to the " shadow " of a priestly and a ruling caste. At first sight, it is true, the " shadow " often seems more substantial than the " substance." It seems to promise more. But it is the limitation of all shadows that they can never realise that which they suggest. Still worse, if clung to in place of the substance, they increasingly become a disappointment ; until at last there is a revolt on the part of those who want God's reality. It is, therefore, the growth of the power of the Papacy and of the priest, and the increase of sacerdotal ideas of the ministry, that are chiefly responsible for the disruption of Christendom. The Reformation was an inevitable revolt against it.

Some of this " shadow " of a priestly caste claiming undue authority in the Church still remains. Only if they will die to their superior claims can the Church fully live in unity and brotherly love. Only if they will yield the office of priestly mediation to Christ alone can He make His House a House of Prayer for all nations. Nor is it without significance that in the wider world a similar hindrance and challenge confront human society. For there can be no true democracy or commonwealth, no true brotherhood among men, until the plutocracy and the privileged renounce (or are deprived of) their vested interests and monopolies, and until all who still must have wealth or position learn to use them in service and not for self. To return to the condition of things in the Church, and to put the same

idea in an allegorical way, there is a spiritual sense in which it seems to be true that only when this "Moses is dead," can we hope to arise and go over "this Jordan" and enter the promised unity of the People of God. "The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Only as we follow Him as "the one Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" shall we become in realised experience one Flock under one Shepherd.

This, then, is the issue before the Church of to-day. Are we, or at least are some of us, to hold fast to Episcopacy, to a mechanical "Apostolic Succession," or perhaps to the Papacy, and thus oppose the fuller realisation of the "substance," or the "body," which is "of Christ?" Or are we all prepared to hold fast the Head, and in acknowledgment of Jesus only as Lord find our unity in Him? This is the one age-long hope of ultimate unity—that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This does not mean uniformity. Indeed, those who insist on the outward form as of primary importance inevitably return to the "shadow."

At the very end of A. G. Hebert's 'The Throne of David' there is, for instance, a most disappointing anti-climax. When he has a great opportunity to finish by focussing all faith and hope upon the Christ upon His Throne in the City of our God as the one and only centre and vital connecting Head of the unity of God's People, he suddenly and unexpectedly says, 'And the Christian Minister—primarily in each place the Bishop—is the focus and the organ of the local unity of the Church;' (264); and again, with equal suddenness, in some of his closing words, he says, 'When this episcopal office shall again become for Christians who are now divided the focus and the organ of unity—' (265). In strong contrast to this our Lord said even of the local ecclesia at its very smallest, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them' (St. Matthew xviii. 20). 'This episcopal office' or 'Jesus in the midst'; Shadow or Substance? To whom does 'the Throne of David' belong? the Bishop or the Christ? Are we to exalt Bishops and a particular form of "Apostolic Succession" as indispensable, and perpetuate divisions? or are we all to hold fast the Head, and find increasing unity in Him? Is our loyalty to Bishops to take priority over our loyalty to Christ? or are we prepared, not to love Bishops less but to love Christ more? Nothing less than this is surely the choice which now confronts the Church.

Book Reviews

THE INTERPRETER SPIRIT AND HUMAN LIFE.

By A. J. Macdonald, D.D. S.P.C.K. 6/- net.

The contents of this book are described by its author as forming the Third Series of his Boyle Lectures of 1937, and as consisting of the material of the White Lectures of 1936 (the last six chapters) and of three chapters added later to make the first three of this volume.

It is obvious that Dr. Macdonald is giving us here the fruit of many years of study and thought. The plan is both simple and comprehensive. It is to trace the doctrine of the Holy Spirit from its roots in the early history of revealed religion, through the Old Testament and Apocrypha, the New Testament and the primitive Church, to its relevance for the modern world and the modern individual. No more important subject could have been chosen. The vagueness of so many professing and even thoughtful Christians about the personality and work of the Holy Spirit is so widespread that the loss to the Christian Church and to the Christian, and to the world in which they live and work and witness, is tragically serious. If for nothing else the author earns our gratitude for calling our attention afresh to so vital a theme.

But there is much else in this book that stirs our grateful appreciation. Dr. Macdonald has become impressed, as all who study this subject must be, by the fact that most of the later conceptions of a developed Pneumatology are found in the Old Testament. The idea of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, His holiness, His immanence, His inspiration of prophecy, artistry, powers of leadership and government and of practical "wisdom" are all there. "The Isianic School had reached the point of hypostatizing the idea of the Spirit of God." The predicates of His active influence and work imply personality. The same characteristics can be traced in the "wisdom" books and in the Apocrypha generally, and Dr. Macdonald usefully deals with the relationship between Sophiology and Pneumatology. He rightly deprecates the patristic neglect of Hebrew pre-Christian thought in favour of a predominant Hellenism, though he adds the caution that Church History shews how sophiology, in cults in which the Mother God, Sophia, the divine Wisdom, has played and plays a central part, may become a dangerous heresy.

How did the Apostles regard the Holy Spirit? Were they confused at first, only gradually realizing His personality? Dr. Macdonald once thought so, as many scholars have done. He has now modified this view after a fresh and detailed study of New Testament references. The puzzling absence of the definite article 'the' in the Greek in many passages, and its equally puzzling presence in others, unless some satisfactory principle of interpretation is found, might support the former opinion. But the author has now accepted a principle, not new, as your reviewer remembers well from Cambridge days, but not sufficiently grasped or applied. It is that there was purpose and deliberate choice on the part of the New Testament writers, and their views were not confused or tentative. Where the definite article is used the reference is to the Holy Spirit as an agent, as a Divine Being, a person; when the article is absent ("Holy Spirit") it refers to His immanent influence and endowment. No small part of the value of this book is in the author's application of this principle to every reference. Dr. Macdonald does this with thoroughness, and it need hardly be said, with scholarly fairness. There are many seeming exceptions, undistinguished in our translation, which he finds on examination not to negate but to confirm this rule. In the process of investigation light is thrown on many difficult passages and doctrines; the Trinitarian position is affirmed as against the Binitarian, the basis of the credal statement of the double-procession is described,and the scission of the Orthodox from the Western Church is discussed. Special emphasis is laid upon the Holy Spirit's function as the Interpreter Spirit (the Son being the Revealer), and as Inspirer alike of the writers and readers of the Bible.

It might be thought that in this interesting study the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit has not received its due place. That impression is, at least to some

considerable extent, rectified in the last Chapter, where Pauline teaching receives further attention. Dr. Macdonald also sees more references in the New Testament to confirmation than are usually held as certain. He touches interestingly on many subjects of controversy, such as the relation of the preaching of the Cross to the first Christian message, the relation of the gift of the Holy Spirit to Baptism and Confirmation, and the "process" of spiritual regeneration. The reader who ponders over and works through this book will surely have his faith clarified, his vision extended, and his hope for the world and for himself strengthened by fresh realization of the Holy Spirit's presence and power today as in the past, and of the spiritual dynamic available now as always for the regeneration of human souls and world's salvation. S. NOWELL-ROSTRON.

THE HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

By Jules Lebreton, S.J. and Jacques Zeiller. Translated from the French by E. C. Messenger, Ph.D. London, Burns Oates. 18/-.

The first volume of this learned research study received wide and high recommendation and we can safely say that this second volume 'from the death of St. John to the end of the 2nd century' well maintains the same high standard of scholarship. All through, it tests historical evidence in a careful and critical spirit. Consequently in discussing the propagation of Christianity Mr. Zeiller summarily rejects the early legendary claims of the Apostolic founding of the different regional and national Churches, and is highly sceptical of any merely conjectural evidence. Similarly in examining the extent of the early persecutions he gives a very discriminating and well balanced account.

Pére Lebreton clearly explains the character of the early Gnostic teachings and heresies which threatened Christianity at the end of the first century, and he gives us a very instructive and helpful analysis of the teaching set forth by Hermas in the 'Shepherd'. He admits that Hermas nowhere mentions the monarchical episcopate, although he speaks of the heads of the Church as 'presbyters and pastors'. Hermas comments on the still existing rivalry between the 'prophets' and the 'presbyters' and places the former above the latter, which would seem to point to an early date for the composition of the 'Shepherd'!

Although the authorship is definitely Roman Catholic 'awkward' facts and evidence are not shirked. Mr. Zeiller, for instance, admits that there was no thought for the first two centuries of the obligation of clerical celibacy, and that there was no official Eucharistic liturgy in Justin's day, but merely 'improvisation by the president.' In fact not till after the middle of the 2nd century is a liturgical formula imposed by the Church. Mr. Zeiller also makes it clear that none were admitted to baptism without a profession of the Apostolic Faith. In dealing with the development of ecclesiastical organisation Mr. Zeiller declares that in primitive times the unity of the Church was based on charity, it was the "union of those who love one another" and "Christ was the bond of this unity, and the centre of this love." This is a full recognition of the fact that these early disciples of Christ, unlike too many of their present-day descendants, realised that they were all members of the one great Church and thus claimed fellowship with all "who in every place called upon the name of Jesus Christ." In fact it is correct to assert that the whole Society was a brotherhood based on the one hope of salvation through the one Lord rather than on any special connection with the original Apostles. Mr. Zeiller is also correct in saying that "each single church lived its own life" (p.399), and as he reminds us, intercommunion between these isolated communities was maintained in these early days by the exchange of Letters such as the Epistles of Paul and later those of Clement of Rome and Ignatius of Antioch.

Both the Authors write with commendable fairness and candour. Naturally, as a Roman Catholic, Père Lebreton stresses what he describes as "the incontestable primacy of St. Peter," and he cites as evidence Peter's leadership in condemning Ananias and Sapphira and his initiative in baptizing Cornelius's household, although he omits to mention that the Jerusalem Church compelled Peter to justify this startling innovation, or that St. Paul opposes St. Peter's intolerant attitude to the Gentile Christians at Antioch regarding circumcision (Gal. ii. 11). But there is a candid and welcome admission that this primacy of Peter involved no dictation to his fellow Apostles since the "Apostles received from Christ the power of universal jurisdiction and the assurance of a personal infallibility in doctrine, privileges which they did not transmit to the Bishops

who succeeded them " (p.289). This is an important acknowledgment of the unique powers conferred on the Apostles, since we certainly ' have no evidence that Our Lord appointed them as the supreme rulers over the whole body of disciples or that in the development of the Christian Society they claimed or exercised such a position ' (Carter's Ministerial Commission, p.6). Thus in tracing the development of the Ministry, Père Lebreton frankly admits that in the primitive Church " presbyters and bishops appear to be identical " and that the " presbyters continue the work of the Apostle and are to take his place " (p.292). But while admitting this identification of the offices of bishop and presbyter, he immediately asserts an inconsistent distinction between " bishops and simple priests," and claims that because Timothy and Titus, the temporary apostolic delegates of St. Paul, were authorised by him to ordain elders, " they were therefore certainly bishops " (p.294)—a very easy *petitio principii* method of claiming that " in the Pauline churches we find the three distinct orders of bishops, priests and deacons." We are thus prepared for the further assumption " that this Apostolic Succession, *already attested in the letters of St. Paul*, is expressly confirmed by the witness of St. Clement at the end of the first century " (p.294). We are further told that Clement's Letter to the Corinthians makes it " clear that he was Bishop of Rome " and that his intervention in the Corinthian dispute " is the epiphany of the Roman primacy," while his Letter proves that " the Roman primacy and the divine origin of the hierarchy were truths then generally admitted by Christians " (346). To such confident dogmatic assertions we need only add Q.E.D. !

But Mr. Zeiller frankly admits that Clement writes " rather as the chief mandatory of the Church of Rome, in the name of which the epistle is sent, than as its head properly so called " (400), and he does not deny that after Peter's day the Roman Church was still governed by a ' College of presbyters,' although again rather inconsistently he declares that " nothing shows that the episcopate did not exist already in the time of the first successors of Peter." Such a deduction is however most questionable, since the century later description by Irenaeus of one or two leading men in this Roman College of presbyters, as ' bishops,' is merely an anachronism, and certainly is no proof that these men exercised monarchical authority and the exclusive power of ordination, so familiar a feature in the Church organisation at the end of the 2nd century.

Strong evidence to the contrary is found in the fact that Clement in his Epistle never claims the episcopal status or to be more than *primus inter pares* of the presbyters, and that a little later Ignatius, the great champion of the autocratic government and authority of the bishop, makes no mention of, or appeal to a bishop in his Letter to the Roman Church, although he over-emphasises such appeals in his Letters to other Churches. In spite of assumptions and much special pleading in claiming that Clement's reference, in his Epistle, to the Old Testament ' chief Priest ' and ' priest ' witnesses to his belief in the 'unitary episcopate ' Mr. Zeiller cannot overcome the fact that Clement in his Letter to the Corinthian Church makes no mention of any distinction between the episcopal and presbyterian office, but still regards bishops and presbyters as synonymous terms. Clement is content with a strong condemnation of the anarchical action of the factious members of that church in rejecting their presbyters who had been duly appointed by the Apostles or by ' other approved men ' after the death of the Apostles.

We get further evidence of special, but very inconclusive, pleading when Mr. Zeiller examines the ' awkward ' custom of the Alexandrian Church where, according to the testimony of St. Jerome, the College of twelve presbyters elected and appointed one of their own number as Bishop or Patriarch at least up to the year 250 A.D. To suggest, as he does, that if this practice really took place it was because there were no other bishops in Egypt in this period, is to surrender the whole theory of apostolic episcopal Succession. And although Mr. Zeiller tries to discount this evidence, from Jerome's failure to make clear whether he is referring to ' election ' or ' consecration,' he is singularly silent concerning Jerome's direct unequivocal testimony that " with the ancients presbyters were the same as bishops, but gradually all the responsibility was deferred to a single person that the thickets of heresies might be rooted out " (On Titus i. 5).

Père Lebreton gives us a full and very instructive account of the 2nd century Christian Apologists, and very well analyses Justin Martyr's apologetic writings and the measure of his sympathy with Greek philosophy. Two concluding

volumes are to complete this careful and scholarly examination and review of the history of the Primitive Church, and they certainly should prove of great value to students of Early Church history. A sincere tribute of praise is due to Dr. Messenger who, in this English translation has given us a most readable story.

C. SYDNEY CARTER.

"THIS IS THE MESSAGE."

By Franz Hildebrandt, Ph.D. Lutterworth. 4/6.

This unpretentious little book is, we hope, a signpost at the theological cross-roads. To understand it thoroughly one should have read Professor C. E. Raven's "Good News of God" (and perhaps also his "Science, Religion and Reality") to which this is a reply on behalf of continental theologians. But it is not necessary to have read either in order to appreciate Dr. Hildebrandt's book, for it is an answer based upon ten assertions from I John i to the purely intellectual and philosophical approach to the Gospel. He has in mind those who say in effect, "If we expect people to believe what God says, we must first convince them that God is talking sense." The answer is, of course, that to the natural man what God says is not sense because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them for they are spiritually (not mentally) discerned. Dr. Hildebrandt sums it up thus "Sincerity, search for truth and even the noblest theology are not enough; to know the true God, we must be found in Him."

While writing in a perfectly friendly spirit (each chapter is a letter addressed to Professor Raven and begins "My dear Charles" and ends "Yours ever, Franz") he nevertheless smites heartily in love.

Referring to what he describes as "the much over-rated need for a restatement of the Gospel in this generation" he asserts that the starting point is not to ask whether the Gospel is up to date but whether it is true. What he finds missing in Professor Raven's "Good News" is the fact that the Good News is God's revelation, not our conception. He and his fellow continentals are deeply concerned by the almost complete absence of Biblical argument in English theological discussion, "the personal sincerity or logical consistency of a speaker appears to matter far more than his being in line with the New Testament." He continues, "At a very representative meeting last year we heard a speech on 'a new strategy for Religion and Life Weeks' which lasted for ninety minutes without one single reference to Christ or the Bible. . . . To you this may seem a mere formality; to us it is a major disaster."

By contrast, the pastors in Germany who, under the eye of the Gestapo, were thrown back upon the Word of God, found that where "religion and life" had failed, the Word of God succeeded. The author criticizes the popular fashion of seeing something "Sacramental" in every detail of life. We dare not, he says "speak of a Sacrament without His own promise or command." Luther made it a criterion to seek for a Divine word of institution and a definite promise of grace, and only Baptism and the Eucharist survived the test. He criticizes the outlook which sees this life as a "splendid adventure" but sees nothing beyond it, and he suggests that St. John's emphasis was not upon *life* but upon *eternal* life, that is, something quite different from what the natural man regards as life, however splendid and adventurous.

Speaking again of some attempts to restate the Gospel in modern language, he calls it 'jargon,' "but its most serious defect is that it is so thoroughly unscriptural."

Another popular notion, that the Church must find its place in politics, etc. by entering into every phase of the nation's life, he approves, but rejects the method. He thinks the Church would be seen to better advantage if, like the Master, she "thrust out a little from the land and taught the people out of the ship." He prefers the Church as an "ark of salvation" rather than a "redeeming society."

Among the outstanding impressions of this book is the copious reference to Scripture. As a Lutheran we would expect Dr. Hildebrandt to appeal often to Luther, but one is more impressed by his devotion to Wesley, and his refreshing contrast of the solid grandeur of Wesley's hymns with what Wesley himself would have called the "nature prattle" of some of the hymns in "Songs of Praise." Dr. Hildebrandt is obviously greatly impressed by the Book of Common Prayer and the Articles which he quotes freely and with delight in support of his views.

The style is vigorous and trenchant and there is much humour. After one of his numerous references to Wesley he apologises and says, " I am sorry . . . but it's that man again ; Wesley." In another place he quotes an obituary notice alleged to have been published in " The Times " :

The trumpet sounded loud and clear,
The Angel shouted : ' Come ! ',
The pearly gates were opened wide—
And in walked Mum.

This is a valuable book and we hope that the author will find time to expand the theme in a larger work. It will probably not please those who hold the view that the Gospel must be brought up to date to suit the higher education of the modern man, but it will hearten and encourage many simple Christians. If from it we may judge the character of the Confessional Church in Germany, it gives a much more hopeful outlook for the future of that nation. T.G.M.

DAMIEN THE LEPER.

By John Farrow. Burns Oates. 8/6. (*2nd. Edition,* 1944).

Sir Hugh Walpole writes a foreword to this study of " Father " Damien. It is dedicated in Latin to Dr. John Joseph Cantwell whom we identify, with no help from the author, as the R.C. Archbishop of Los Angeles, who was appointed Bishop Assistant to the Papal Throne in 1929. The book was first published in May, 1937 and bears the Imprimatur of the then Vicar General of Westminster who ceased to be such in 1939. The fact that he was appointed Privy Chamberlain to the Pope in 1920, coupled with the facts in the book, make it likely that this book has been written with an eye to the ultimate beatification of Joseph Damien de Veuster. A Fleming by birth and rearing, of sturdy farming stock, he volunteered in 1873 for the leper colony at Molokai, and twelve years later after most devoted work, instead of addressing his lepers as ' My brethren ' he said " slowly and significantly, *We lepers.* It was his way of telling them that he had caught their disease at last." He died in 1889 and in January, 1936 his remains were exhumed and carried away to Antwerp to the sorrow of those who knew him in Molokai. Photographs of the procession in Honolulu and Antwerp seem to be out of keeping with the simple and heroic life of the Apostle to the lepers, but Rome never misses a chance to show off ! Even this book serves to shew that he received more help from Protestants than from his own co-religionists. Latourette (*Hist. of the Expansion of Christianity* Vol. 5, p.256) remarks : " Three years before his death there came to help him Joseph Dulton, a convert, an American, who was attracted by what he had heard of him, and as a lay brother gave himself to the lepers, especially in institutions founded, as it chanced, by Protestants." The most interesting part of the book is the excellent account of the disease from p.91 onwards. After the story of Joseph Damien's wonderful labours the controversy over the letter of Mr. Hyde, a Congregational minister, strikes us as an anti-climax. His letter dated August 2nd, 1889 called Father Damien " a coarse, dirty man, headstrong and bigoted," . . . " not a pure man in his relations with women, and the leprosy of which he died should be attributed to his vice and carelessness." Robert Louis Stevenson's letter defending him is quoted but neither in the text or in the bibliography is there any clue as to where this letter is to be found, and this is all the more remarkable as the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons, are thanked for permission to include it. They appear to have published it in New York in 1916. We think that the author would have done better to have left this attack on his hero unheeded. For the rest we agree with Sir Hugh Walpole in considering Mr. Farrow's book " both true and beautiful " even if the style irritates us sometimes as on page 45 . . . " there was a great deal of merriment occasioned by the seemingly, to feet and balance used to decks, swaying motion of solid land." A. W. PARSONS.

MAN'S DILEMMA AND GOD'S ANSWER.

*Broadcast Addresses. pp.*216. 6/-. *London : Student Christian Movement Press.* 1944.

Here we have an interesting series of broadcast talks by ten men, representative of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Free Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. They are, one and all, the result of careful thinking, and are therefore worthy of careful reading. The Foreword by Dr. James

Welch draws attention to the importance of a right understanding of the Gospel as "good news" for to-day. Dr. Welch is also the author of the first of the series of addresses, in which he asks, and answers to some extent, the question 'What is the Gospel?' Canon Cockin points out the difficulty which some feel in accepting the message of the Gospel under present-day conditions. The Gospel preached by the Apostles is finally delineated by Professor C. H. Dodd. He emphasises the need of realising that if we are to make the future what we desire it to be we can only do so by dying to the old life and rising again from it to a new life in the power of Christ. Thus we might go on through the book. The whole series of addresses, taken together, form a welcome witness to the Fundamentals of Christian Belief, a Belief which is to reveal itself in altered lives. We commend this book to thoughtful people.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE SENIOR SCHOOL.

By R. L. Arundale. Nelson 8/6.

This is an excellent book on method, ably written by one who is obviously an experienced teacher. The introductory chapter on the aim of religious education in schools lays down five basic principles :

1. The teaching must be in accordance with modern educational theory and practice ;
2. It must be inspirational ;
3. It must be related to the children's own experience ;
4. Religious education must permeate the whole of the school curriculum ;
5. It must include worship.

The chapter on school worship is useful though it does not contain anything very new. There are some wise comments about the selection of prayers, Bible readings and hymns, and a very useful list of recommended books. The writer then turns to the use of the Bible, and here he deals with the various streams of intelligence (which he calls A, B and C children) and shows in some detail the different treatment best suited for each type of child. Conservative evangelicals will not follow the writer in his attitude towards Biblical criticism, though in the main his approach is reverent. His explanation of some of the miracles is interesting, but it is a pity that he descends sometimes to explaining them away in the Leslie Weatherhead fashion. His attempt to show that the Gospel story does not necessarily mean that Jesus actually walked on the water is very laboured and not convincing. On the other hand, he is not unaware of the support which archeology has brought to the historicity of the Old Testament. The chapters on the Old Testament and the New Testament are probably the least valuable in the book, though even here there are some useful suggestions. There is an interesting chapter on the growth of the Church, an aspect of religious education only too frequently omitted in schools. A great deal of careful thought has been given to the chapter on the syllabus. "What does it mean to be a Christian and how can I become a practising Christian?" This is a question which the whole syllabus is designed to answer, by imparting knowledge that will contribute to a true conception of Christian fellowship. "The syllabus in religious knowledge should therefore be directed towards knowledge, inspiration, practice." The part of the syllabus which deals with the growth of the Church, and with the Church in the modern world, is especially good though one may be permitted to doubt the wisdom of including the International Labour Office, the Atlantic Charter, and Housing Schemes, in the period of religious knowledge. There is a very constructive chapter on the oral lesson, with the alternative procedures open to the teacher discussed in some detail, and the demonstration lesson based on the healing of the palsy. The book concludes with a chapter on written work and private study and teaching aids.

This is a book which every Christian teacher who is dealing with children between the ages of 11 and 15, and who wants to make the most of the opportunities opened up for religious education by the Butler Act, should possess, provided he is prepared to read it discriminately and to pick out the large amount of wheat from the limited quantity of chaff.

SALUTE TO INDIA.

By J. S. Hodge. S.C.M. 125*pp.* 6/-.

Dr. Hodge describes his book as being primarily a tribute to the India people, and then a plea that their problems may be approached with understanding,

forbearance and trust by those in this country. The contents fully bear out this description. Beginning with a view of present-day India from the political aspect, with its rising tide of nationalism, he enters an earnest plea that the Congress leaders should be trusted and given a free hand. In the following chapter, entitled "Swaraj (self-rule) is my birthright," he argues that independence should be regarded as an inherent right, whilst by no means denying all that British rule has done for India in the past. An interesting chapter is devoted to Gandhi, and the author's personal contacts with him.

In these matters Dr. Hodge has every right to speak after 40 years missionary experience, and as secretary of the National Christian Council having been in close touch with educated Indian Christian thought. Yet many who know India will think that he is much too indulgent towards his non-Christian friends, and that in his desire to gain sympathy for Swaraj, he over-rates their virtues and glosses over their weaknesses and faults. Whilst fully endorsing his plea for understanding and sympathy, some will feel that he does bare justice to the constant patience, tact and indeed sympathetic understanding which has been shown by the British government in face of the bitter intransigence and reckless opposition of the leaders of Congress.

In his later chapters he gives a series of happy and graphic sketches of missionary work, chiefly social and medical, and of the Indian church. He is emphatic that not only are European missionaries still needed, but that those who go endowed with gifts of healing or for other forms of service, and in a humble and loving spirit, will be warmly welcomed.

Dr. Hodge will attain his end, for the reader cannot but be moved to sympathy with India and its peoples, and to catch something of the warmhearted affection for them which the author displays on every page.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

By H. F. D. Sparks. S.C.M. 6/-.

In his introduction Mr. Sparks says that his more "orthodox" readers will think his conclusions too "modernist"; while his "modernist" friends will accuse him of being too "orthodox." The present reviewer, being more "orthodox," agrees with the author's judgment on himself, but none the less is thankful for yet another book which demonstrates that the Christian Church cannot dispense with the Old Testament either in public worship or in private study. Mr. Sparks makes out a good case for "retaining the O.T., lock, stock, and barrel, both as Scripture through which we may even now find God speaking to us, and, in consequence, for reading in public worship." Naturally he holds that there is need for exposition and explanation of what is read, and the proper place for this is not immediately before the reading of the Lessons, but from the pulpit during the sermon. The concluding chapter, which argues this point, repays careful reading as does also the first chapter, dealing with the place of the O.T. in the faith and life of the Christian Church from the earliest days.

One can agree with Mr. Sparks on his conclusions, and yet disagree strongly over the unnecessary difficulties that he has produced in the central chapters. Here he treats the O.T. from the points of view of Criticism, History, and Science, and enumerates very clearly all the best known "difficulties." But only rarely does he give any indication that sane writers in each sphere have given answers to them. Occasionally he creates difficulties that are not there, as when he says that Jacob's deception is accorded divine approval. The clear lesson of Genesis is that because of his deception Jacob had to suffer a long exile, be deceived himself over Rachel, and eat humble pie before his brother. Moreover there is nothing to indicate that Jephthah's treatment of his daughter has the divine approval, and even the blessing of Jael may be no more than Deborah's own sentiments. Again Mr. Sparks rejects the idea that circumcision was adopted by Abraham in obedience to a divine command; he points out that circumcision was practised by all the Palestinian peoples except the Philistines. A similar argument could be used to deny that Jesus Christ instituted the Covenant sign of Baptism, since the Jews already had baptisms, and purification by water was practised by many peoples.

To sum up—those who already hold freer views of the Old Testament will find this book helpful. Conservative readers will on the whole be disappointed.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT.