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she tells this: 'Mr. Moody was speaking of the Lord's loving invitation, "Come," and with outstretched arms he repeated the word again and again, while all his great big heart seemed to go out in that word. As he spoke I caught sight of a baby in front, and saw it put out its little arms to go to Mr. Moody as he repeated his loving "Come, come, come." Probably the child could not understand a word of English, but the tone and attitude were enough.'

Professor James Cooper has made a contribution to the Union controversy which is not controversial. It is historical and healing. It will be welcomed at once in England. And it is for England he has written it. For he calls the book, *Reunion: A Voice from Scotland* (Scott; 3s. net). But it will be read in Scotland also. And perhaps most industriously by the ministers and members of Dr. Cooper's own church who are most opposed to his policy.

A volume of High Church sermons (and they are very High) is *A Vision of the Catholic Church*, by the Rev. Thomas J. Hardy, M.A. (Scott; 4s. 6d. net). There is Transubstantiation, the Intercession of the Virgin, the Worship of the Saints, Prayer for the Dead, and Purgatory. They are all here and other things with them. 'What about the Figure of the Crucified which not only stands miraculously unscathed amid the desolations of Northern France, but has begun to appear in hundreds of streets and squares in our own country! If the last time I preached in this church, I had said that within four years the

Crucifix would be set up in the open streets all over London, the keenest Catholic here would have shaken his head and called me a visionary!' The most eloquent sermon is the sermon on Prayer for the Dead.

The Bishop of Bethlehem. You did not know that there is a Bishop of Bethlehem? It is not Bethlehem in the land of Judah, it is Bethlehem in the State of Pennsylvania. The Bishop of Bethlehem, the Right Rev. Ethelbert Talbot, D.D., LL.D., sends *A Bishop's Message* to candidates for ordination (Skeffingtons; 3s. 6d. net). It is a simple, sincere message, with a man's personality behind it. The most serious word is at the beginning, just where it ought to be. For if a man meets what Bishop Talbot calls 'a valid call to the ministry' he will meet all the demands that follow. He says: 'There are three great words of the Divine Master which might serve to test the validity of our call to the Ministry. They are words which connote three great spiritual principles which animated Him, and may well inspire any man looking forward to the Ministry. Those principles are a sense of Divine Companionship, a sense of personal mission, and a sense of the glory and moral beauty of service. Here they are. First, "I am not alone." He was stayed and comforted in all hours of doubt and discouragement by the assurance of His Father's presence. Secondly, "I have come not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." This clear sense of a divine mission urged Him on always to the highest and best. It was this sense of mission that led St. Paul to say, "This one thing I do."'

The Reconstruction of Religion.

BY STANLEY A. COOK, M.A., CAMBRIDGE.

ALL who reflect upon the social, industrial, and other problems of the day are fully alive to the necessity of Reconstruction. But it also happens that the question of the Reconstruction of Religion is very much in the foreground; and perhaps it is hardly recognized how vital this is. The reason can be briefly stated. A living Religion — Religion after Reconstruction — permeates the whole of the individual's life and of

social activity, and influences men's attitudes to the social and other problems. In addition to this, the social and other non-religious problems are invariably found to involve all that is felt to be personally most real and true. Accordingly, on the one hand, Religion cannot be indifferent to men's convictions of Reality, and, on the other, all Reconstruction, of whatever sort, sooner or later is seen to concern men's ideas of Reality. No

reconstruction, no Religion, can have any endurance if it is contrary to the Ultimate Realities of the Universe. Reconstruction, Religion, and Reality are the three great R's of the age.

All the world over there are earnest, keen, and sometimes drastic tendencies which are potent for the future of Religion. Not in Christianity alone are there movements and trends of thought which must leave their mark upon the religious ideas of to-morrow. But one has only to glance back at the history of our race to perceive how profound has been the development or evolution of Religion. The conscious or unconscious efforts which are now making for some change in the history of Religion are part of a process which has been in evidence from the age of primitive prehistoric man. The efforts to 'reconstruct' Religion are in accordance with the fact that Religion has constantly been undergoing change and development. Periods of quiescence and of great activity alternate, the development has sometimes been considerable, and sometimes so slight as to escape notice. The fact remains that the historical development of religion is a very profound phenomenon to which those who are interested in the future of Religion cannot be indifferent.

Perhaps the comparative study of religions is not quite so important as the study of the questions that arise when we consider them historically, or perhaps we should rather say that each study corrects the other's mistakes. Certainly, the discovery of the resemblances and of the differences between, say, Christianity and Australian Totemism, leads us to ask questions touching the growth and decay of religions; and when we have finished the 'comparative' study of men's attitudes to Religion to-day, the next step is to inquire what light the 'historical' study of religions in the past throws upon the prospect of Religion in the future. After all, it is the history of Religion in the coming years that really interests us. The importance of Comparative Religion lies more especially in the fact that it brings to light beliefs and ideas which our own convictions or our theories are forced to take into consideration. We may have our own convictions of the line Religion may or must take—our opponents will perhaps differ diametrically from us; but the historical aspect of Religion becomes the more significant, as the technical, specialist, or academic treatment of the world's religions in the past

leads to the discovery of principles and working-hypotheses of the greatest value for the future. A reconstruction of Religion that would be in harmony with the highest progress of thought must obviously be in harmony with the actual principles of the progressive development of Religion in the past. There is no reason to suppose that any reconstruction can be of lasting value if it runs counter to the line of development in the past and is in opposition to the ordinary psychological and other factors which are manifested in men's activities.

The religious vicissitudes of the East can suggest future possibilities. The artificial efforts to archaize, in Egypt and Babylonia, roughly about the sixth century B.C., mark the decay of religion and civilization after many centuries of history. Meanwhile, the religious history of Palestine is marked by a wonderful renewal and revival, the true nature of which is the central problem of Old Testament criticism. The crises in Western Asia lead to decay or to new life. But while artificial or conscious archaizing means death, progressive evolution does not necessarily involve the sloughing off of all that may seem irrational, obsolete, or harmful. Indeed, the historical study of Religion finds, what has analogies in organic evolution, namely, that a new stage may be marked by a new form of the old, so that the resemblances between lower and higher stages in the advance of Religion are not so significant as the organic and far-reaching differences due to progress.

Accordingly, special interest attaches to any cry of 'back to' or of a 'return': the Christian to the Gospels, the Jew to the Old Testament, the Mohammedan to the Koran, or the Indian to the Vedas or Vedanta. As in Roman Catholic 'Neo-Thomism,' there is a characteristic 'return' or a 'reassertion' ('renewal,' etc.); but the history of Religion emphasizes the enormous importance of the real difference between the 'return,' which means superstition, obscurantism, and decadence, and that 'reassertion' of vital progressive elements which give life and permit healthy movement.

Perhaps the most serious difficulties are caused, partly by preconceptions or presuppositions of the true line of progressive development, and partly by unconscious theories of the nature of the difference between our own ideas, convictions, etc., and those which we consider lower, reactionary, or irrational. The future of Religion, of society in

general, is estimated by our personal convictions and their future line of development. Their future runs parallel to our ideals and convictions. Hence it may even be said that the whole theory of Reconstruction, religious or other, is bound up with the nature of mental development: on the one side, the possibility of implanting in others fruitful ideas which make, not for revolution, but for evolution; and, on the other side, a clear realization on our part of the fact that our own personal psychological development is incomplete.

Consequently it is of great interest when so competent an authority as Professor Jastrow points out that, for a proper understanding of the religion of Babylonia and Assyria, he had to distinguish carefully the popular from the speculative currents of thought.¹ This is to distinguish the religion of the people from that of the State, the Church, the priests, prophets, etc.,—the religion of the masses from that of the classes or of the individual reforming agents. In fact, we gain a clearer and truer conception of the principles of religious development—and therefore of the Reconstruction of Religion—by attending both to the common groundwork, the average religion, and also to the features which distinguish religions historically or which affect their movement.

Comparative Religion, it is true, pays attention mainly to the lower, cruder, and popular religious beliefs and practices. But it is neither psychological nor humanistic. It does not take them seriously. It does not consider what they imply, what elementary aspirations they reflect. From the psychological, the democratic, and the general scientific points of view the religion—or superstition—of the rank and file must be taken seriously in any conscious effort to reconstruct Religion. Certain it is that in the progressive development of Religion, at every new stage, the religion permeates the whole environment, uniting in one organic whole, as it were, different ranks, grades, and mental types. The result is that the Religion lives, and the most vital religious concepts, beliefs, and usages have a sufficiently similar meaning to all. The environment is united on fundamental religious grounds; it is not, as

¹ Preface to his *Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria* (New York, 1911).

to-day, disunited because the profoundest ideas are at variance and do not converge.

The 'theory' of the Reconstruction of Religion, indeed of all Reconstruction, rests upon the determination of the development of thought, such that a clearer view can be gained of the steps in the mental development of individuals, peoples, or countries and of the natural differences in thought which cause social or national differences. Living in an age of transition we may yet come to realize the importance of combining historical and comparative methods of studying religious and other thought so that light may be thrown upon the typical ideas which appear to be inherent in man, and upon the principles which make for evolution and not for revolution.

Revolution in Religion or Society has been followed by an equilibrium, which, though it may seem reactionary from one point of view, really represents the reassertion, though in a new form, of interests which are necessary for the welfare of the whole environment. Eager though one may be at the present day to work for the Reconstruction of Religion, for a new stage in its development, there is only too much reason to fear that the tendency is rather to impose what may strike us as rational, elevated, or in accordance with science, instead of seeking first to understand the grades of thought in the environment as a whole. In fact, the true Reconstruction of Religion, like ideas of a true Democracy, will involve the same sort of problems and the discovery of similar principles.

New problems, tasks, and types of research make their appearance. The desire to do justice to individuals and peoples compels a closer attention to subjective convictions and ideals and to the method of co-ordinating them. The autocrat and the revolutionary alike impose the rule of the few upon the many, and do injustice to the natural and legitimate feelings of those outside their class. The Reconstruction of Religion will take its stand on St. John's Gospel, chap. 3¹⁶—the love of the greatest conceivable Reality for the whole world is the Christian expression of the ideal of true Democracy, which now needs only a reinterpretation and application to our complex society and thought at a period of transition.