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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE latest of Professor Kirsopp LAKE's published volumes contains the lectures given at Oberlin College in 1919 on the Haskell Foundation. Its title is *Landmarks in the History of Early Christianity* (Macmillan; 8s. 6d. net). In that volume he says: 'If the history of religion has any clear lesson, it is that a nearer approach to truth is always a departure from orthodoxy.'

What does that mean? That Professor Kirsopp LAKE is out of touch with the Nicene Creed? He is, somewhat glaringly. But it cannot mean that, for his business is not with theology. He is a critic and historian of early Christianity. It can only mean that already he is out of touch with the majority of New Testament scholars, and that he is proud of it.

But he is more than out of touch. He is out of reach of the scholarship of his time. He is almost, if not altogether, as far away already as van Manen was in his day. He reduces the Christianity of the Early Church to a very commonplace affair. If it conquered the pagan world it did so through its defects.

'The Church,' he says, 'conquered the world by offering salvation through a redeeming Lord. Jesus made no such offer.' 'Nor is there much more truth in the attribution of its success to the

influence of the personality of Jesus.' 'Not the men who had known Jesus, but those who had not, converted the Roman Empire, and their gospel was that of the Cross, Resurrection, and Parousia, not the Sermon on the Mount, or an ethical interpretation of the Parables, or a moral *imitatio Christi*.'

It is as if a child had gone out unarmed to meet a well-equipped warrior and when he returned victorious we were told that his victory was due to defective eyesight. For to Professor LAKE the Cross, Resurrection, and Parousia are all defects in a Christianity that ought to be simply ethical.

Christ Himself, according to Professor LAKE, was a quite ordinary person. His 'thoughts and words, like those of Origen, were borrowed from his own time and race; they belong to the first century as those of Origen belong to the third.' And the teacher of the present century will not always agree with him. 'He will often appear to contradict the thought or the language of Jesus or of Paul or of Origen, but he will be loyal to the purpose which was theirs, and yet so much more than theirs.'

All this is uttered with an air of authority, as if it were the last word of exact scholarship. But the scholarship is by no means overwhelming.

For his knowledge of Rabbiniſm, Profeſſor LAKE has apparently to depend upon ſo popular a writer as Mr. Claude Montefiore. In any caſe it is not ſcholarſhip that brings him to his concluſions, it is bad reaſoning.

The moſt amazing example is found in the long diſcuſſion of the Pre-exiſtence of Chriſt. More immediately manifeſt, however, is the uſe made of our Lord's reference to the 110th Pſalm and its authorſhip. Twice Profeſſor LAKE uſes that reference. Firſt he ſays: 'The queſtion of Jeſus to the Phariſees, how David in the Scriptures could call the Meſſiah Lord if he were his ſon, is pointless, except on the aſſumption that Jeſus did not regard himſelf as the Son of David.' And a few pages later: 'It was wrong and futile to pretend that when he ſaid "David ſaid" and quoted a pſalm, he did not mean to aſcribe it to David.'

Is it worth while refuting theſe fallacies? It would certainly be eaſy to ſhow that men of as reliable a ſcholarſhip as Profeſſor LAKE's have held that in ſpeaking of the 110th Pſalm as David's, Jeſus was ſimply referring the Phariſees to their own interpretation of it. Will Profeſſor LAKE tell us what neceſſity there was or what opportunity for anything elſe?

Persistent belittling of the Chriſt of the Gospels is poor occupation for a hiſtorian. Does Profeſſor Kirsopp LAKE deſerve the name? What hiſtorical insight or imagination can he have who believes that Chriſtianity got even its ſtart from the Chriſt of his conception? What real knowledge can he poſſeſs, who, in the victory of Chriſtianity over the pagan empire of Rome, allows no place for the influence of Chriſt's perſonality?

Dr. W. E. ORCHARD has been brave enough to offer us a new theory of the Atonement. And in a ſermon. His ſermons are certainly never addreſſed to children. In the new volume, *The*

Safest Mind Cure (Allen & Unwin; 6s. net), every one is of full length and full intellectual demand. But only in one has he been courageous enough to offer a new theory of a great theological doctrine.

It is a ſocial theory. If it is accepted it will be known as the Social Theory of the Atonement. And juſt becauſe it is ſocial it is likely enough to be accepted. For we are all aſſured at preſent that the man who is ſatisfied with the ſalvation of his own ſoul has not a ſoul worth ſaving. We are all preaching the ſocial value of Chriſtianity.

Dr. ORCHARD begins well. He begins with an undeniable hiſtorical fact. That fact is that 'the death of Jeſus was actually occaſioned by a coalition of political tendencies which demanded His removal as a danger or a hindrance; and theſe forces combined in delivering Him over to death.'

'The firſt of theſe was the ſocial ideals of the religious leaders. Caiaphas is ſometimes conceived as a human monſter becauſe he ſtooped to diſcreditable means in order to compaſs the extinction of Jeſus. But he excuſed his actions upon the ſimple plea that at all coſts the nation muſt be preſerved. The teaching of Jeſus was being miſinterpreted by the common people, it was deteſted by the ruling claſſes, and the inevitable reſult would be a general riſing, which would bring the Romans down upon them and take away their place and nation. Caiaphas therefore argued that it was a caſe of juſtice for one man or the continuance of the State. To get rid of Jeſus would involve injuſtice, for Caiaphas knew as well as any one that the teaching of Jeſus was not directed againſt the rulers in Church or State. It would have to be accompliſhed by treachery and falſe wiſneſs, but national neceſſity knows no law.'

'The ſecond force was the policy of the State rulers. Pilate is often condemned as a hopeless coward, and his weakneſs traced to the fear of

Tiberius. But there was something more than that at work. He was there to see that Caesar's rule was maintained; and the claims of Jesus to Messiahship introduced dangerous complications. Pilate knew perfectly well that the claim of Jesus was politically innocuous, but practically it was subversive. The Roman Government had no room for a Messiah Prince. Pilate was not judging wrongly, as the final conflict between Christianity and the Empire afterwards revealed.'

'And the third force was the policy of the revolutionaries. It is a fact that the crucifixion of Jesus was able to be carried out because at the last the mob turned against Him. We might dismiss this as of not much significance, because the mob were worked up by false charges made by religious leaders, and were carried away by the blood lust which can so easily be roused. But there was something behind which made this possible. They had already been disappointed in Jesus. The Zealots of Galilee were working for a political and social revolution, and when Christ refused to adopt what they conceived to be the only practical means of bringing this about, namely, accepting political leadership and advocating violence, they let Him go to His death undefended, significantly choosing Barabbas, who was a seditious leader evidently ready for any violence.'

Now these forces, Dr. ORCHARD wants us to observe, 'were not morally wicked or socially abnormal; they were the forces of nationalism, government, and social aspiration. The people who compassed the death of Jesus were the best elements in Church, State, and People. And the excuses they used were such as have been used over and over again by patriots anxious to preserve nationality, officials responsible for order, and revolutionaries clamouring for reform. It was the combined interests of national security, imperial policy, and political freedom that brought the Son of God to death. To a world organized upon this basis He was an impossible person. He was therefore put to death under the Law in a sense

wider than St. Paul perhaps realized: the law of ordered society.'

Well, when we consider that—and it seems difficult to deny it—we cannot help seeing one thing very clearly. If Christ were to come among us to-day He would be crucified over again. Would the patriot let Him off? Or the imperialist? Or the social reformer?

But Dr. ORCHARD's point is not that. His point is that Jesus suffered on the Cross, not as a substitute for the individual or as the victim of an offended Deity, or on any other theory of the Atonement yet suggested, but as the inevitable result of being in the way of the social needs and aspirations of mankind.

And if that is so, it follows that we must repent of our social needs and aspirations. Dr. ORCHARD does not shrink from demanding the repentance. For 'if we track the mistakes of nationalism, imperialism, and revolutionism down to their moral basis, what is wrong with them is seen to be simply this: pride, national pride; fear, fear which demands forceful protection; unbelief, unbelief in the convertibility of men save by threats and violence. Is there any sociologist, advanced thinker, pacifist, who thinks himself free of these root causes? How many advanced theorists are themselves only a hindrance to the cause they advocate; how many who are pacifist on national issues live by quite different principles in their relationship with others; and how many who deprecate violence and bloody revolution are by their lack of a constructive alternative, sacrificing example, or personal faith, really inviting that type of revolution as the only practical course. Personal pride, fear of our fellows, unbelief in the power of God over the human heart; these have only to be worked out to social magnitudes and they end always in the crucifixion of the Son of God. Society but embodies in gigantic crimes the inevitable results of the weaknesses and failings and sins of the human heart.'

If it is true that there is less apologetic in the pulpit than there used to be, the reason is not only because it has been found more profitable to preach the gospel than to 'apologize' for it. A potent reason is the consciousness that arguments which touch philosophy or science can no longer be used without an intimate and up-to-date knowledge of those departments of study.

That knowledge does not involve specializing in science or in philosophy. If it did, no preacher could ever be an apologist. But it does involve acquaintance with the most modern and most reliable literature. It demands that before he approach, let us say, the Argument from Design, the preacher should read the Gifford Lectures of Professor J. Arthur THOMSON.

Professor THOMSON calls his lectures *The System of Animate Nature*. He divides the universe as known to us into three spheres, which overlap one another. One is 'the cosmosphere, from the solar system to the dew-drop, from the moon to the moonstone, from the sea to the snow-crystal—the Domain of the Inorganic.' Another is 'the biosphere, the Realm of Organisms, where the laws of matter and motion still hold, but are no longer exhaustive, since another aspect of reality has welled-up, which we call life.' The third is 'the sociosphere, the Kingdom of Man, where mechanism is in many departments transcended or sublimed, where even the science of the individual is transcended, for human beings in societies behave in a way which cannot be formulated in terms of individual Biology and Psychology.' His own business is with the biosphere. And in the exposition of that sphere he finds himself face to face with the Argument from Design.

How does it stand with the Argument from Design to-day?

'Discovering some of the thousand-and-one ways in which the structure and function of organisms

are fit for the conditions of life, many keen-sighted and reverent naturalists of older days argued directly from the adaptations to the agency of a Divine Adapter.' That is the Argument from Design. It is a scientific argument. And once it was used by scientific men. Some of the authors of the Bridgewater Treatises had an unchallenged scientific reputation. It is used by scientific men no longer.

Professor THOMSON gives three reasons. First of all, it is no longer felt necessary to call in the aid of an extraneous force in enabling an organism to make its calling and election sure. 'What the older Naturalists should have done before concluding their argument was to inquire how far the intelligence, which adaptations certainly suggest, may be resident as intelligence or some analogous form in the creatures themselves. Modern study shows that many animals work out their own salvation.'

Then there is the recognition of stages of evolutionary progress. When modern naturalists 'scrutinise the magnificent series of adaptations more closely they discern less perfect stages of them in antecedent forms of life. The eye of a fly is an extraordinary instrument, but there is a long ladder of eyes approximating to it. The community of hive-bees or of social wasps amazes us—at first almost bewilders us,—with its complexity and subtlety, but there is a long series of gradations connecting it with the life of solitary bees and wasps. Moreover, as we look around, we see that many adaptations are still in progress, and very far from perfect.'

'The third reason is; that, given a sufficient crop of variations, plenty of time, and a process of sifting, the Darwinian can give a plausible and approximate—we do not say an easy or complete—account of the way in which most of the wonderful adaptations have been evolved. The hard-shelled Darwinian says: These effective adaptations you so justly admire are the outcome of natural

tentatives and natural siftings. We assume that the forms of life are restlessly but not inconsistently variable, that they are continually offering new qualities and characters to the sieve of selection, and that the conditions of life are such that they eliminate in a very discriminating fashion the relatively less fit. If these assumptions are granted, we can account for adaptations. The immediate operation of a Divine Adapter is a hypothesis of which, we say it with the utmost reverence, we cannot scientifically make any use.'

But that is not the end of the matter. Professor THOMSON does not give up the Argument from Design. As a scientific observer he gives it up. As a philosopher, or, as he prefers to say of himself, as a religious thinker, he asserts it to be 'not outside the right of interpretation which we claim as rational beings.'

What Professor THOMSON means is this. Science does not demand a Divine Designer, but the religious consciousness does, and science does not contradict it. More than that. The scientific mind, if it is able to lift itself above the things that are seen and handled, recognizes a world which cannot be explained without the design of a Designer. 'If we free ourselves, as we think we must, from a purely mechanical evolutionism, and recognise organisms as genuine agents, we may see in the factors of evolution the relatively, though, of course, not absolutely, self-sufficient means of working out a purpose, or thought, or idea, which was involved by the Creator in the origination of the first organisms, or wherever it seems clearest to begin.'

So the Divine Designer is still to be acknowledged. The only difference is that He is now believed to follow a different method in His working. And to the mind of Professor Arthur THOMSON it is a more adorable method. 'That He—the Unmoved Prime Mover—has made things to make themselves and to go on perfecting themselves—albeit they may be never separable in

thought from Him—seems a finer kind of creation than Paley pictures. As Professor Pettigrew said in his *Design in Nature* (p. 820), "Natural Selection may be regarded merely as a process of so-called evolution by which the Creator works and accomplishes His purpose. Indeed the Creator, by conferring upon living matter in its simplest and lowest forms the power of appropriating the elements and building them up by endless elaboration and gradation from a monad to a man, proves Himself to be an infinitely more wonderful Designer than was ever dreamt of by even the most ardent teleologist."

Dr. F. Homes DUDDEN has issued a volume of Sermons, to which he has given the title of *The Dead and the Living* (Longmans; 5s. net). It is the title of the first sermon. And without any doubt that sermon is the most arresting in the book.

Its argument is that the dead are alive, and being alive have it in their power to do three things. They can visit the living; they can communicate with the living; they can minister to the living. These are strong statements in view of the evidence. But the man who makes them is the Master of an Oxford College.

The dead are alive. That needs no evidence. It is a revelation. The War has made it. Before the War we refused to look at death. The War compelled us to look at it. And when we looked we discovered 'that death is not, as we had thought, a plunge downwards into the darkness, but a step upwards into the light; that it is not a blank wall that blocks and closes our path of life, but simply an open passage from life to higher life.

For all is life, and death the door whose portal

We pass to enter on diviner ways;
Achieving there the work that is immortal,
With prayer transformed to praise.'

'Gradually two great convictions concerning the

condition of the departed became firmly established in our minds. The first conviction is that those whom we call the dead are not really dead at all. They are alive; they are still alive; they are very much alive; nay, they are even more alive than they ever were. The body, indeed, is dead; but the spirit, the real self, that inhabited the body and used the body as its vehicle, still lives on. That is the first conviction.'

'The second conviction is that the purely physical process of death does not destroy the individuality or involve any sudden break in the continuity of personal existence. When a man "dies" (as we say) he is still exactly the same person that he was when here. His true self is not diminished. His intelligence remains, his memory remains, his moral qualities remain, his affections remain, to a certain extent even his tastes and interests remain. Death changes, indeed, his circumstances, but it does not change his character. Thus, when he emerges into the other life, he is still exactly the same person—thinking, remembering, willing, desiring, aspiring, loving, in the same way that he was wont to do. In all essentials he is still himself—just his own familiar, individual self. That is our second conviction.'

Whereupon—if you feel these convictions, if they *are* convictions—you pass to the three Statements, that the dead visit the living, that they communicate with them, that they help them.

There is no proof offered. There is scarcely any evidence. The dead visit the living: Dr. DUDDEN is content to say, 'Is it possible to doubt it?' 'Is it conceivable that a longing, so legitimate and so natural, should be thwarted by a God who is Himself essentially Perfect Love? I do not believe it for a moment. Nay, I am sure that the dead come home.'

And he knows how they come. They come back intermittently. 'They come back, I should imagine, pretty much as a man of affairs, who has

important business in the world, comes back at intervals to his wife and children. He cannot be with them all the time. He has grave matters to attend to. He travels upon missions, he goes up and down the country, he crosses the sea, perhaps, and transacts business in distant lands. Sometimes he is away for days together; sometimes his absence is prolonged for weeks or even months. Yet, through all the days and weeks and months, the love for his own is tugging, tugging at his heart, and at the end of every journey, when the task for the moment is finished, he comes home. And so it is, I believe, with our dead. They cannot continue with us always. They have much to do, and much to learn, and many experiences to encounter; but they do not forget their own dear people, and at intervals—at far more frequent intervals, perhaps, than many of us imagine—they come home.'

But not only do they come back, they also make their presence known to us. Is Dr. DUDDEN a spiritualist, then? Certainly not. He leaves the spiritualistic phenomena to scientific experts. It is not outward communication, such as the spiritualist seeks, that Dr. DUDDEN believes in or cares for. It is inward and spiritual. 'Inwardly and spiritually, they speak to us, act on us, influence us, inspire us, bring ideas to our minds, and light up visions in our souls. Not a breath stirs the silence; but impressions are felt, intimations are received, and suggestions from unknown quarters are mysteriously telegraphed through. Yes, I am convinced that the dead communicate.'

And they minister to us. Again, Dr. DUDDEN troubles us with no proof: it is a conviction. 'Are they not, like the angels, "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation"? In manifold ways, I think, they help us. They guide, they instruct, they comfort. They insinuate beauty and truth. They strengthen whatever is good in us, and, so far as is consistent with our freedom, bend our desires and aspirations Godwards. As God's agents—I further conjecture

—they ward off malign influences from our hearts and from our homes; and sometimes, perhaps, as they increase in spirituality and receive greater gifts and endowments, they are permitted to turn aside calamities that threaten us and modify circumstances for our help.'

And then Dr. HOMES DUDDEN turns to his hearers and tells them to receive the living dead when they return. Receive them sympathetically, he says; and receive them gladly, 'Ah! let us see to it, my brethren, that we do not grieve our dead by false conceptions and foolish prejudices about themselves and their condition. Let them find in us, when they return, nothing but faith and trust and eager hope and sympathetic comprehension.'

'It was the beginning of the end for Jesus, and the burning of His bridges behind Him, when He took His stand on the saying, "God loves the world," putting the accent not upon *God*, and not upon *loves*, but upon *the world*.'

That is the Rev. JOHN A. HUTTON, D.D., in a book on *The Proposal of Jesus* (Hodder & Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net). Why does He put the accent on 'the world'? Because He takes this great text as the gage of battle between Himself and the Jews. The Jews, forgetting Jonah and the Ninevites, had come to the belief that God was the God of the seed of Abraham only. We know how St. Paul had to combat that belief. Dr. HUTTON holds that Jesus met with and fought it before St. Paul. 'Our Lord declared that God is the Father of the entire race of man, that He has no natural favourites, that he has no respect of persons, that God loves *the world*.'

Has Dr. HUTTON forgotten the story of the Syro-phœnician woman? Has he forgotten the words, 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel'? He has not forgotten. He passes to the story of the woman of Canaan at

once. He gives his own translation of the narrative. He gives his own interpretation.

This is the translation: 'Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew into the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. Here a Canaanitish woman of the district came out and persistently cried out, "Sir, Son of David, pity me. My daughter is cruelly harassed by a demon." But He answered her not a word. Then the disciples interposed and begged Him, saying, "Send her away because she keeps crying behind us." "I have only been sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel," He replied. Then she came and threw herself at His feet and entreated Him; "O Sir, help me," she said. "It is not right," He said, "to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." "Be it so, Sir," she said, "for even the dogs eat the scraps which fall from their masters' tables." "O woman," replied Jesus, "great is your faith. Be it done to you as you desire." And from that moment her daughter was restored to health.'

That is the story. It leaves, Dr. HUTTON thinks, a certain instinctive uneasiness in our minds. He has read the many 'ingenious and laborious and entirely unconvincing reasons and explanations' that have been offered for the removing of that uneasiness. Jesus, it is said, 'purposely put difficulties in her way so that she might fall back before the face of these difficulties into a sullen acquiescence in her lot, or that her faith might be heightened or deepened by these very difficulties into an agonising cry.'

Dr. HUTTON does not believe it. He calls it 'a horrid idea.' It is an idea which 'bristles with theological difficulties as it does with moral, for it would attribute to our Blessed Lord something far removed indeed from the Divine Charity which will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoking flax.'

Why, then, did He hold the woman off? Why is it recorded so emphatically that 'he answered her

never a word'? Not for His own sake and not for hers: He did it for the sake of the disciples.

This woman was a Gentile. In the anguish of her spirit she had come to a Jew for help. 'Sir, Son of David, pity me. My daughter is cruelly harassed by a demon.' He answered her never a word. 'He was leaving the woman's question to burn its way into their Jewish hearts who were looking on and listening. He would not interrupt the controversy which had now begun in their spirits; the controversy as to what a man is to do who will still call himself a man, and what God is to do who will still call Himself God, when human weakness and pain appeal for a deliverance which man or God can render.'

But when He did speak, He said, 'I have only been sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' What does Dr. HUTTON make of that? 'Now these,' he says, 'I firmly hold, are not His words at all. They are, so to speak, a quotation to be read within inverted commas, a quotation embodying the prevailing temper of their Jewish minds. It is as though He had said: "Well, but you know if I help this woman I shall be acting in contravention of all that you Jews believe and protest. If you really mean what you say, you mean that this woman, because she is a Canaanitish woman, is not eligible for the charity of God. That is to say, God, in your view, can close His ears and is right to close His ears to any appeal that comes from any human heart if that human heart is not a Jewish human heart."' "

The meaning of it could not enter into their minds in a moment. The woman returned: 'O Sir, help me!' He held her off again. 'I think,' says Dr. HUTTON, 'it must have cost Him almost as much as the agony of Gethsemane—"It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."' "

Is there—here is Dr. HUTTON at his height now—'is there any man living who will try to convince me that Jesus said that, meaning every word of it? Were I convinced that Jesus said that, meaning every word of it, I should have to close my New Testament and go out into the darkness. No! He never said that, meaning it. Once more He was holding up a mirror to the soul of His own Jewish people, and to the soul of their representatives, His own disciples, Jews every man of them. It was as though He were saying: "You see how these principles of yours work out. It is one thing for a rabbi, sitting in his study, to develop with a horrid intellectual consistency some doctrines about the necessary exclusiveness of God; but it is another matter to apply that doctrine to life, to life with its pathos and its agony. How do you feel just now with this woman crying out for help which I could render—which you know I could render—but which I am forbidden to render if I confine Myself to the people of My own race? And how do you think God feels when a cry like this woman's reaches His ears? Can your theory of God, compelled by some document to confine Himself to the Jews, stand this assault of human weakness? Can you yourselves stand this assault; can you bear this any longer?"'

'And the woman's voice sounded again over the silence and tension of their souls: "Be it so, Sir," she said. "Dogs we are, hungry, beaten dogs; but even dogs, though they may not presume to what is spread for honoured guests upon the table, are still permitted to pick up the crumbs that fall." At which Jesus could no longer restrain Himself. He had kept up His self-appointed pose, as Joseph did for a little while before his brethren, but at last outpoured His heart. It was as though He had said, who never needed to ask forgiveness from any one: "Woman, forgive Me. O woman, great is your faith! Be it done to you as you desire."' "