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

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

DR. L. P. JACKS, the well-known Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, has written an interesting and helpful book on *Religious Perplexities*, which is reviewed under 'Literature.' In his last chapter he discusses the perplexities that are felt about the Christian Religion.

He admits the failure of Christianity, and deals severely with Christian apologists who explain it away. Two reasons are given by apologists to account for the failure. One is that Christianity has never been tried. The other is that the influence of moral or spiritual ideas is always slow and gradual in its effects. Dr. JACKS calls these reasons 'flagrant dishonesties,' and this is the only lapse from good taste in a book that is singularly fine in its tone and spirit.

Dr. JACKS' own explanation is that the failure has not been that of the Christian Religion, but of a system that has been superimposed upon it. And the perplexities that are felt about Christianity are not about real Christianity, but about its 'entanglements.' It has become entangled with philosophies, with dogmatic systems, with political ideas, with the vested interests of great institutions; and especially with the habits of mind which have grown up with these things. 'These entanglements are another name for our perplexities. They are so many and so deep that it becomes a

matter of difficulty to extract the original genius of Christianity.'

When we see this, and discover the true nature of Christianity, we are rid at once of all perplexity. There is nothing in it to be perplexed about. Christianity, in the official, or authorized, presentation of it, is a *smothered* religion. If you take it along with its encumbrances and unnatural alliances, you will find it a hopelessly perplexing thing, a thing which neither Reason nor Faith can accept.

What then is Christianity? When we turn to the first three Gospels we find it in its elemental purity. The Gospel is neither a sermon nor a treatise on religion; but a *story*, which tells how Christianity began in something that happened, in a deed that was done, in a life that was lived. There we touch the dynamic of Christianity. In the beginning was the deed: go thou and do likewise. So presented, Christianity is not perplexing; but quite the most convincing religion ever offered either to the intellect or to the heart. The religion of Jesus is the spirit of a great comradeship, with man and with God, and a call to us to make the same experiment.

All through his argument Dr. JACKS summons his readers to adopt the heroic attitude to life,

for this is the solvent of religious perplexity. And Christianity is the supreme call to this heroism. It is very simple. It is reducible to two words: 'Follow me.' But, while Christianity is as simple as that, it is by no means an easy religion. 'It is the simplest and most difficult religion in the world,' says Dr. JACKS. For you must follow not only by the shining shores of the Lake of Galilee, but into the Garden of Gethsemane and along the Via Dolorosa.

The religion of heroism is to be found in Christianity. Yes, and in other religions also. 'Far be it from me to set up an exclusive claim for Christianity at this point. Any one who does that goes a long way towards forfeiting his title to be called a Christian. Let each of us look for truth where it is most accessible and where it speaks the language he best understands. For most of us here, Christianity has this advantage. It gives the sharpest point to the challenge of life as we know life.'

Such is the solution of Christian perplexities which Dr. JACKS offers. Two things may be said of it. It is too easy, and it is too difficult. It is too easy, because perplexity is felt mainly about one point which does not seem to have occurred to Dr. JACKS. Has God spoken to man in any final and conclusive way? Has the silence of the eternal been broken in a fashion to which we can apply the words 'unique' or 'final'? Dr. JACKS would probably say, God has spoken everywhere and always, through all the great religious teachers. And we would all say the same. But we say it because 'in these last days He has spoken in His Son.' If we can say that Jesus is the Word, the expression of God's whole being and of His will for man, the whole world is full of Him and all history is religious.

But the solution of Dr. JACKS is too difficult also. It is the example of Jesus. That is religion. But is this a *religion* at all? Is it a *gospel*? Just in proportion as Jesus is great does His example

cease to influence us. The example of One who lived in a totally different age from ours and in different conditions, and was a 'supreme moral genius' is not likely to appeal to men. We cannot be surprised at the 'failure' of Christianity if this is Christianity. Indeed, what is so surprising as to be quite inexplicable is the revolution it worked in the world and in human life.

As a matter of fact, the example of Jesus *was* a power precisely because it was not a mere example. With it was the Spirit of holiness, the redeeming and uplifting ministry of a living Saviour. The crucial fact in Christian belief is the fact of a risen Christ and the moral dynamic of the Spirit He has sent into the hearts of men. This alone has made the example of Jesus a creative force in human life.

There are religious questions we are keeping back at present. We have to solve the greatest question of all, the Person of Christ. But in Christianity one question raises and one question solves another. It may be unwise to isolate in argument that which cannot be isolated in fact. Our doctrine of the Person of Christ may depend upon our doctrine of Revelation.

Professor DROWN believes that it does. The Rev. Edward S. DROWN, D.D., Professor in the Episcopal Theological School of Cambridge, Massachusetts, has published a study of the Incarnation in terms of modern thought, and called it *The Creative Christ* (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s. net). In it he asks the question, 'How is God known?'

God is known through revelation, is his answer. And by revelation he means experience. He is careful to explain that the knowledge of God is not put on a plane by itself. 'How does a child come to know his mother? Only as the mother reveals herself to him. The child must have experience of his mother, experiences that come

through sight, sound, touch. But through these sensations the mother reveals herself, and the child knows her care, her patience, her love. Our friends reveal themselves to us through our senses, and through our sensations we have experience of what our friends really are.' Experience and revelation are but different names for the same thing.

How is God revealed? By nature? If so, He cannot be a God of love, for nature is full of horrors, 'red in tooth and claw.' Nature at best only partially reveals God.

Is He revealed by impersonal means, in signs and omens, through the flight of birds, by the entrails of sacrificial victims? This was the belief of the religions of Greece and Rome. And as the revelation was by impersonal means, so the conception of the Deity was impersonal. In the N.T. there are isolated instances of such revelations—the main revelation being very different—but Professor DROWN lays little stress on them. There is the incident of the casting of lots to decide whom God chose to take the place of Judas. With regard to this he says, 'the instance stands alone.' St. Paul's vision of the man from Macedonia 'cannot be separated from his waking thoughts and aspirations.'

In the O.T. the revelation is personal; it is through human life. 'Of course the religion of Israel emerged only slowly from the nature religions among which it had its birth, and naturally we find traces of lower forms of thought; dreams and ecstatic visions play a part. But their part is utterly subordinate to the belief that God was revealed in life. Through persons God's word was spoken. And it came to persons not in remoteness of life, but as leaders of life. Moses, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah—these men were patriots and statesmen, men standing in the market-place, and proclaiming the Divine will of justice and righteousness and truth.' 'And not only in individual prophets here and there came the word of God.

Israel felt that the whole nation was the means of God's revelation, that God's character was to be revealed in the upbuilding of a righteous commonwealth, where the justice and truth and mercy of God should form the basis of a human society reflecting and revealing the divine life.'

The revelation in the N.T. is essentially by one Life. 'The gospel begins with the teaching of Jesus. And He becomes to His followers the essential contents of the message which He taught. The beginning of the apostolic preaching is that Jesus is the Christ. His followers find in Him the reality of the kingdom which is to manifest the ways of God. St. Paul resolved to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. To him Christ is the image of the invisible God. To St. John He is the Word of God become flesh. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him. He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father.'

Christ is not the revelation of God in the sense that He reveals truths concerning God. That takes too low a view of revelation. The character, the purpose, the will of God are revealed in Christ Jesus. The Father is given in His Son. The incarnate Jesus is the Word become flesh. He is the God-man. It is the doctrine of the Incarnation. It is the doctrine of the Person of Christ.

On What Authority? Dr. KNOX has rewritten his last charge as Bishop of Manchester, and published it under this title (Longmans, Green & Co.; pp. 281, 7s. 6d.). Very definitely does he tell us for whom it is written, and for whom it is not. It is not for 'those who accept their beliefs as part of a spiritual inheritance which they may learn to defend, but which they never seriously question.' Nor is it 'for that far larger class who are not troubled by doubt because they are satisfied by

vagueness and indefiniteness in their attitude to the spiritual world. They regard their haziness as a sign of breadth, even nobility of mind.' 'It is written for those—who seriously believe in the duty of honouring God with all their mind, as well as with all their heart and soul. For they are conscious that they cannot really love God unless they know Him, and know Him as truly as He can be known by the best and most unsparing intellectual effort at their command.'

Dr. KNOX's mind has little sympathy with the former class that he rules out. He tells us, indeed, that his own faith is still in essentials, what it was in his college days. But then, between the glories of the rising and the setting sun, similar though they are, there lies the whole width of the earth. And here is a mind that has thought and read and brooded for a lifetime, facing the problems of a difficult transition age with hardihood and honesty, and it emerges from it all as it began—still a warm evangelical, who finds that that faith meets all calls upon it.

Nor has he any love for vagueness and indefiniteness. Nothing could well be clearer than his views and attitude, than that half-page in which he dismisses the help others would fain find in the Mysteries as a vain thing, than his handling of Mr. Wells' amateur incursion into theology, than his criticisms of the Modernists, than his quiet amusement over the Higher Critics' caution (he has counted up a hundred such words as 'perhaps' and 'probably' in one of Dr. Kennett's articles), and their hesitation here and there where they once trode with firmness, than his whole treatment of the difficulties about Inspiration and the like. Nobody, as a rule, can be at any loss to know exactly where our author stands.

But sometimes that haziness he so dislikes comes creeping in. About the Old Testament, for instance. Dr. KNOX does not like that phrase, 'the record of a progressive revelation,' which others find so helpful. Yet he admits that there

is obvious progress. He concedes willingly that modern criticism has resulted in great gains, and that in any case facts must be faced, whether they lead to gain or to the opposite; still he is not altogether happy, feels that the net result is serious, that the gains are intellectual gains, but that somehow the New book left to us has not the old spiritual power. There, indeed, is a problem worth considering! Probably the majority of scholars will declare that God's Word has become far more His Word to them than ever; that the new light that has been cast upon it has made God's presence in it doubly clear. But it is probably as true that as yet many ordinary folk do feel that they have lost something, which evidently means that no little part of the preacher's duty these days must be to make people realize that, in place of the older more mechanical views, they now possess something vastly grander, and more serviceable for their souls, which surely is the simple fact.

But it is when we come to our Lord's personality and death that here and there over the sunny landscape there lie little patches of trailing mist. Dr. KNOX has a reverent mind. Face to face with Jesus Christ he admits a mystery that baffles him. And yet squarely, as usual, he faces it, and tries to feel his way. To begin with, he is not greatly helped by studies of the Historical Jesus. 'He who would understand aright the humanity of Jesus Christ must turn from the modern tendency to understand it by dramatizing it, that is, by reproducing the Palestinian Jew and erecting Him into Friend, Hero, Teacher, Master, with all the limitations of His age and surroundings. There is more truth than some would have us believe in holding that he who would know the manhood of Christ, must study Him as Man, as Son of Man, rather than as a man.' That is a feeling and reaction growing daily commoner in many minds.

As to our Lord's death, he is most helped by the old metaphor of sacrifice, 'The Christ who is not a sacrifice for Sin, is not the Christ of the New Testament.' And yet nothing is plainer in the

Gospels than that Our Lord carefully trained His disciples in the doctrine of immediate forgiveness of sins. How then does this other view appear? Dr. KNOX falls back on 'The Testimonies,' as Dr. Rendel Harris calls his collection of old Testament quotations from the Gospels and Epistles and early Fathers, and his view that a book of these for convincing Jews existed before any of the Gospels, and holds that these were chosen because of 'a looking back to them from the point of view of Jesus Himself.' He it was who taught the Church to think of His own death as an atonement by His view of the O.T. But why, then, in His teaching has this doctrine so undeniably small a place? Dr. KNOX says he cannot answer, chiefly because 'we cannot penetrate into the mysteries of His self-consciousness.'

Are we then altogether baffled? Can nothing be made of that consciousness and nature? Dr. KNOX holds that the contents of our Lord's consciousness, as seen in the Gospels, have been demonstrated 'thoroughly and repeatedly,' and yet he doubts whether it can really be done at all, but makes up his mind that he will try at least to aid us to some understanding of it. He will have nothing to do with Dr. Rashdall and his views of Christ, which make worship, so it seems to him, 'not an act of devotion, but a very strenuous metaphysical exercise.' 'We are brought back to realities, he says, and must make a decision.' The Christ of the New Testament is God, and is to be worshipped as God. 'He is Omnipotent,' but it is a 'restrained omnipotence, else He would have had no occasion to pray: the mere exercise of His will would have sufficed for all His needs.' He is also Omniscient. But 'omniscient within the limits imposed by His self-chosen Manhood.' 'The infallibility of Jesus—we say it with all reverence and consciousness of our fallibility—was not due to the superseding of human fallibility by divine omniscience.' He 'did not use His omniscience to concern Himself with modern scientific discoveries.' Moreover, He 'did not use' His omniscience in writing the gospel He might

have done, but stooped to our limitations, and gave only the best that we were likely to follow.

And if the bewildered mind asks, But how, and in what sense, is that tired, dusty man sitting there on the well-head to be thought of as God? Dr. KNOX answers that 'no little patience is needed to reach the truth even approximately,' but that we are likeliest to do it by considering our own personalities. Here, as in other places he founds upon Professor Wallace. 'In the little physical individual which is alive—in the single subject or living soul which is a mere point excluding all others and excluded by them, there is a potential universality,' and when we turn to Jesus Christ 'we are conscious, however we account for it, that this universality is not potential but actual, restrained certainly, but actual.'

In his new book, *Belief in Christ*, Dr. GORE has an interesting passage on the influences under which our Lord transformed the original idea of the 'Christ.' That He did radically change it, and of set purpose, there can be no doubt. The current idea was connected with visions of worldly glory and dominion for Israel, and before He allowed Himself to be openly identified with the traditional hope of His people, Jesus set Himself to transfigure the whole Messianic conception.

There cannot be any doubt, says Dr. GORE, that this was done by our Lord identifying Himself, the Son of Man, with the Suffering Servant of Jehovah in the later Isaiah. The astonishing vision of the prophet in the fifty-third chapter appears to have made little or no impression on the imagination of Israel. They never identified the Messiah with the Suffering Servant. This was the work of Jesus. Two things seem to prove this: (1) That our Lord plainly regards the sufferings of the Christ and His death as necessary because prefigured in Scripture. 'The Son of Man goeth, as it is written of him.' And the same

intense conviction of prophecy and fulfilment appears in the earliest Church and was associated from the beginning with the figure of 'the Servant of Jehovah.'

A second proof is the way Jesus quotes at Nazareth the 'Servant' section of Isaiah to interpret His mission, and later uses of His own end the words of the prophet: 'He was reckoned among the transgressors.' Jesus therefore associated both the 'Christ' and the 'Suffering Servant' with the title He had chosen for Himself, 'the Son of Man.' Henceforth the Man, the Christ, and the Suffering Servant are the same person.

But one more step had to be taken to complete our Lord's profoundly new doctrine of the Christ, and that was to introduce in a new way what was already suggested in Is 53, the idea of resurrection and glory. Jesus did this by identifying the Christ with the figure of glorified manhood in the visions of Daniel. It must be insisted on that for the crowd and for the disciples 'The Son of Man' was not a term which had Messianic associations. Probably the Book of Enoch had already interpreted the human figure in the great passage of Daniel as being a mysterious person who is to be manifested in the clouds as God's vicegerent in judgment at the end of the world. Our Lord could therefore use this as a means of extending the meaning of His own title, the Son of Man, and giving to the conception of the Christ its new meaning. In point of fact, Jewish Messianic ideas were confused and vague. Our Lord was the first to give them spiritual coherence.

This, then, was the final element introduced by our Lord into the conception of the Messiah. He was not a mysterious angelic being, but a man born of a woman; then the Suffering Servant who wins redemption for many by his own sacrifice; and finally, one who is to pass to resurrection and glory, and the 'awful dignity' of the Judge of the world. The Son of Man is to come 'in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

'The conception of the Messiah which Jesus caused to grow in the minds of the disciples was profoundly original in the sense that it took up all the elements of ancient prophecy and recent interpretation, and combined them in a whole in His own person—in a whole which, while it realized their best spirit, was quite remote from the expectations of His contemporaries.' In this way all the elements of the Self-consciousness of Jesus—His humble manhood, His suffering, and His exaltation to life and the throne of judgment—were fused into a unity that was profoundly new.

'It is worse than futile—it is disastrous—to try to meet the need of our own day for a Gospel by dropping out of sight the eternal realities of redeeming love and forgiving compassion, and preaching instead, not the Jewish law, but a new and better law suited for the twentieth century—a law of service. Of course it is intelligible and interesting, it is divine and beautiful and most truly Christian, and the conscience yields assent. But it no more meets a man's immemorial hunger for God and for the daily refreshment of His love and mercy, than the call to pay our debts assures us of a comfortable income.' The words occur in a series of posthumous papers of Henry KINGMAN, published under the title of *The Place of Jesus in the Life of To-day* (Association Press; \$1.25).

Did Dr. KINGMAN lack sympathy with the law of service? Was his ear dull to that heavenly call that rises clear above the discordant voices of the age and thrills the noblest hearts in Christendom?

Let the record of his life answer for him. In his college days he heard the call of the Foreign Field, and laboured in North China till invalided home. Thereafter, with broken health, in much pain and weakness, he ministered to a large Congregational Church in Claremont, California, where he went on 'playing the game and putting up a

brave fight' to the last, because, as he said, 'What else is there to do?'

Yes, he had heard and obeyed the call. But he knew by experience that a heavenly call can be obeyed only in the power of a heavenly impulse. And this impulse is given by 'Jesus the Bringer of Love' to those who put their trust in Him. Browning, in his 'Epitaph of one of Nero's Slaves,' puts in his mouth the familiar words :

I was some time in being burned,
But at the close a hand came through
The fire above my head, and drew
My soul to Christ, whom now I see.

'A hand came through,'—that was the Gospel as Henry KINGMAN knew it, preached it, lived it. And would not Paul have said that there was no other, not though an angel from heaven proclaimed it?

St. Paul and Aristophanes.

By J. RENDEL HARRIS, LITT.D., MANCHESTER.

FEW passages in the New Testament are so perplexing, alike to the textual critic and the commentator, as the second chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, in which St. Paul denounces a teacher or teachers who are propagating some ill-defined heresy in the Colossian church. It is commonly held that these dark shadows which fall across the early history of this famous church are cast by Jewish forms; perhaps they are Essene as well as Jewish; but they are so ill-defined that one might write a volume of speculative comments about them, without bringing the shadows into reality. The text of Colossians in this chapter is held by the best critics to be in a very bad state of preservation, but even where the textual critic finds it plain sailing, the language is so inflated and grotesque as to leave us wondering—not only what the ultimate sense of the words can be—but whether they are really apostolic in origin, and from the same hand and brain that produced the Epistle to the Galatians or the Epistle to the Romans. However, something can be done by the textual critics to help us into clearness of vision and understanding. At all events, they will tell us to drop the negative in 2¹⁶ (ἃ μὴ ἔορακεν ἐμβατεύων), on the ground of its late and inadequate attestation, even if they cannot tell us what *θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ* can mean: and if the critic is not afraid to use the art of conjectural emendation, he will be able to rescue a clause or two from the chaos in which the words are now swimming. Let us see how far inquiry

has progressed in this regard. First of all, we write down the text of two closely related verses in which the worst obscurities are found :

- Col 2¹⁶, μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἃ ἔορακεν ἐμβατεύων, εἰκὴ φυσιοῦμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦς τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ.
Col 2²³, ἀτινά ἐστιν λόγον μὲν ἔχοντα σοφίας ἐν ἐθειλοθρησκείᾳ καὶ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ ἀφειδίᾳ σώματος.

With regard to the first of these notes, Hort writes in his *Select Readings* as follows :

'Dr. Lightfoot has with good reason revived a suggestion of Alexander More and Courcelles that the (last) word *ἐμβατεύων* must be taken with the three preceding letters, so as to make *κενεμβατεύων*; at the same time, in place of ἃ ἔορακεν he suggests *ἔωρα* or *αἰώρα*, a word twice used by Philo in similar contexts appropriate here. On the whole, however, *ἀέρα*, conjectured by Dr. C. Taylor, (*Journ. of Philol.*, 1876, xiii. 130 ff.), is still more probable; the transitive construction is amply attested for *ἐμβατεύω* and presents no difficulty with *ἀέρα*.

ΔΕΡΑΚΕΝΕΜΒΑΤΕΥΩΝ differs from ΔΕΟΡΑΚΕΝΕΜΒΑΤΕΥΩΝ only by the absence of ο after ε.'

Having thus given his benediction to the Taylor emendation at the cost of the abandonment, in part, of the parallels which Lightfoot adduced from Philo, Dr. Hort went on to say of v. 23 that 'no probable emendation has been suggested. This