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whether in all time there has ever been such widespread and deep interest in religion.'

Note these words 'in all time.' It is a large assertion, but the man who makes it speaks with authority. The words we have quoted are taken from Dr. MOTT's recently published book, *Confronting Young Men with the Living Christ* (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s. net). Dr. MOTT spent four months of the last year in a tour among the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States and Canada. He held retreats and conferences with all sorts of men, clerical and lay, and the addresses he delivered are published in this volume. They are what we should expect—alive with fervour and faith, and stamped with the spirit of their author as well as with his shrewd sense and insight.

One of the addresses is on 'What has happened to the Faith of Young Men throughout the World in the Past Few Years.' It is in this address that his optimism breaks out. Dr. MOTT is quite aware of the difficulties created for faith by the War. But he tells us that all over the world the faith of young men has been deepened and enriched by the experiences of those years.

Faith has been and is being *purified*. Purified

of the formal and conventional, and made more real. There is a demand for reality. And this demand takes the form of an insistent call that Christianity be actually tried, that the reign of Christ be extended over every area of life. Further, faith has been and is being *simplified*. Probably men don't believe as much as they used to believe. 'Man-made theologies and human speculations' are being scrapped. Formal and dogmatic Christianity is questioned. Questions of life are being reduced to their utmost simplicity: Is there a God? Can He help me in my struggles? How can I find Him? How may Christ become a reality to me? These are the questions men are asking.

Above all, faith has been and is being centred in Jesus Christ. Countless men to-day are being driven to the conviction that in Christ is the one hope of the world. Amid the shattering of many 'isms' the great Reality is more and more seen to shine out from the face of Jesus. Dr. MOTT tells us all this in glowing words, and he ends his analysis by saying, and saying well, that the facts to which he points are themselves a challenge to us to re-think and re-state our religious positions, but above all to apply them fearlessly to the conditions of modern life.

Education and Religion.

BY THE REV. THE HON. EDWARD LYTTETON, D.D., D.C.L.

THE interest and importance of this subject have never been greater than they are to-day. On all sides we hear clamorous demands on 'the Churches' that they should bestir themselves and give to the rising generation that secret of life—that guiding principle of good conduct towards our neighbours—which alone can save civilization. The 'world' has tried to save itself; and, feeling its own impotence, has turned to the Christian community, confessing that all their machinery is in vain unless mankind can develop a sense of brother-

hood in place of the spirit of rivalry and grabbing which is threatening us all.

But here we are brought up short. There is something in the tone of this request which reminds us unpleasantly of the Kaiser's proclamations early in the War, when he prated before the world of the old Ally of Germany, meaning the Deity. Let it be distinctly laid down that if religion is to be taught to children, it must be for its own sake and not for its beneficial effects on society. This point requires some explanation; and till it is

made clear we cannot deal with the subject of this article with any chance of finding agreement among our readers.

Certain strong currents of thought are noticeable among us at the present time which the historian of the future, if he knows the subject, will designate as heresies. Perhaps the simplest and most comprehensive description of the thing we mean would be given by the word anthropocentricity: the unconscious view of the Universe as an entity with Man at its centre. In spite of Copernicus and all his works we still habitually think of man before we think of God: of man's claims before we estimate God's claims: of the main principle of living being love of each other, and our main primary duty being the mending of this world.

Certain symptoms of this state of mind are unmistakable. It has been truly said that we have got into the way of fussing and parleying about the last five Commandments and of ignoring the first five more and more. Again, there is a general disregard of the fact that all through the Bible God's claims are invariably put first; that Christ never told His followers to mend society, but to teach it; and that by teaching He meant teaching what He taught—which was the Transcendence of God even more than His Immanence; and hence that the First and Great Commandment was to love God, and that dealing rightly with our neighbour is simply the corollary of that love. These facts, we repeat, are disregarded, just at the very time that the public is beginning to appreciate the sublimity of Christ's teaching sufficiently to pay much lip-homage to it, but not discerning that obedience to it must mean a complete metanoia, a reinterpretation of all big questions; the nearness of God, Duty, Sin, Love, and Judgment being perhaps the very first of them all.

A shallow objection to this line of argument may be summarily put on one side. St. John's words will be quoted: 'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?'—as meaning that we rise through the human to the Divine. This is the exact contrary of the Evangelist's affirmation, as a glance at the context will make clear (1 Jn 4²⁰). The words mean, of course, that an unloving temper towards our neighbour is a proof that the preliminary condition has not been fulfilled, namely, the loving God. But so blinded are we

on the whole of this overwhelming subject, that a clever speaker could exhort a large audience to social service by a heinous misquotation (twice) of this text as follows: 'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love *his brother* whom he hath not seen'! Nobody apparently knew that anything was wrong.

As a corrective of our deep-seated error let us notice our Lord's opening words when He first came forth to preach to the Nazarenes: 'Change your minds: for the Sovereign God is near to you'—a command so pregnant, so profound, so supremely difficult to obey, that it is not too much to say the whole of His subsequent teaching is simply an expansion of these opening words.

Now the upshot of the Divine teaching, as far as we can see at present, is that we all are disposed to interpret life, duty, etc., on the assumption that God is remote from us; and that as soon as we dislodge this assumption for the opposite one which Christ gives us, namely, God's nearness or majesty, then the metanoia really begins; and to bring about this metanoia must be for a Christian the *first* aim of education: indeed, when fairly interpreted, it may be said to be the only aim. For education means feeding the spirit and mind of children so as to dispose them to a joyous, hopeful, and unintermittent seeking after God, no matter how much of pain it may involve.

The point may be made clearer still if we substitute a different expression for the wrong assumption alluded to above. Instead of thinking of God as remote—an idea which modern science rather corrects—our modern line of thought presents Him to us as *not acting*. That is to say, we think of Him as immanent in Nature, but as leaving man alone to work out his own salvation. We take kindly to a pantheism which is easily suggested by the wonders of creation as they unfold themselves to our view, and which, like all heresies, undermines the sense of responsibility—the belief that this life is a probation for eternity.

We are inclined to think that a large proportion of our readers would agree with this view of education theoretically stated. The crux of the matter is our application of it in practice. For it means that we adults are called upon so to deal with children that their minds, their aims, hopes, desires, energies, may be detached from self and set upon God; so that life may become for each one of them an unceasing quest after Him, and a detach-

ment of the heart—the affections—from the world and self, called by our Lord, Mammon.

In regard, then, to the working out of this principle, we are confronted by a problem of such apparent difficulty that the wonder is it should be conceived of as in any sense practicable. Yet it is so conceived of; in a confused, contradictory fashion, it is true, but genuinely, among English-speaking peoples: and the reason for this amount of hopefulness must be mainly the readiness with which normal children turn away from self to God. That is to say, *little* children; and it is important to notice that Christ specifies the age before self-consciousness begins: that time of innocence the beauty of which no adult can describe any more than he can recover the thing itself, once it has passed away. Since the day of Pentecost, no human theme has inspired more of the poets' imagination than the ever-fresh mystery of childhood—except the pure love of man and maid: more than the wonders of the yearning sea-waves or the silence of the stars in heaven. But, in connexion with our subject one fact stands out: namely, that before self-consciousness begins, the true, vivid, and lasting idea of God may be and ought to be planted—of God in His Nearness, His Love and His Majesty. If the opportunity of this golden age is missed—and it soon passes by—self is sure to assert its strong and subtle claim; and the worst of it is that in very many cases self masquerades as an angel of light, and its service is talked of and thought of as if the service of Mammon were identical with that of the Most High God. Let us see how this comes about.

The human baby is born self-regarding, because at first it knows nothing of life except bodily sensations, and, as far as we can see, differs little from the young of the higher animals. But the character of the child begins to express itself as soon as he is aware of another personality, the mother's, dealing with it tenderly and affectionately—that is, manifesting love; but also, and quite as emphatically, interfering with many small self-gratifications by necessary prohibitions—that is to say, exhibiting the other side of love, namely, law. Character in the child is shown by his readiness or unreadiness to respond to the parent's overtures, whether they come in the form of endearments or in that of checks and prohibitions. If the child's character develops healthily, he will respond to the double influence—that is, he will

be both loving and obedient, showing the former by the latter.

So far, the first chapter in the soul-drama. Now comes the critical moment, the great testing question, 'Quo tendimus?' to what end is this training? Or to put the matter more simply: how is the child to regard this twofold relation to his parent; as started by her; as her wish; her claim? or does it start from above? is it, in short, human only, or Divine—a wonderful thing from heaven showing itself through things earthly? According as this question is answered by the child's experience the element of *godliness* is either effectually present in him as he grows, or is absent. In other words, he comes to conceive of law as a human invention, not entitled to any special reverence; but in the other case his conception of it is more or less consciously of something 'from above.' In plain, practical language, when our child is told not to ask for two helpings of jam, or later on, not to practise whistling on the stairs while his father is writing to his solicitor in the study, how does he explain to himself this perplexing interference with his self-gratification?—merely as a conventional etiquette; a convenience of the 'grown-ups'; or an august command from a higher world, an invisible Father to whom even his own father and mother yield humble deference? No words can describe the difference between these two ways of starting on life's pilgrimage. In the one case, home-discipline confirms the child in his original belief that we are all of us in this world to follow our own inclinations. In the other case, he slowly grows up to interpret human life from a different angle; to realize that in the fact of a Personal God revealed in Christ lies the warrant for the notion of our desire of happiness being absorbed in a higher law; and more wonderful still, in being absorbed it is fulfilled.

But can we not make it clear how the difference in principle works out in practice? or rather, let us put the question as follows: What are the essential conditions of the training which disposes a child not only to be conformable to his parents' discipline but to grow up a seeker after God? this being the difference between works and faith, between respectability of conduct and a life inspired by love.

It is important to notice that the issue thus stated is determined by the great words with which Christ began His ministry: 'Change your

interpretation now and onwards, realizing that the Sovereign God is near to you' (Mt 4¹⁷). The problem before each parent may, then, be thus simply stated: How can we present the fact of the Invisible God to this child so that he may realize the close presence of his Infinite Creator and Saviour? Nothing short of that can be for a Christian a training in religion. Obviously, it appears at first blush to transcend our powers; but if this were so indeed, then Christ would have mocked us by commanding an impossibility. The truth is, there is boundless hope to be gathered from observation of the normal child's disposition, exhibiting as it does a most remarkable affinity with the three great departments into which we divide up what we call the Divine Revelation: namely, Goodness, Beauty, and Truth. We have fallen into a lamentable error by dissociating these three in education; conceiving of art and scientific research as if they had no connexion with the source of all truth and of all beauty. Against this error we may now notice a reaction which, as often, goes too far, till we think of the discoveries permitted to man's mind or the beauty which the artist is enabled to present upon the 'deathless canvas' as being modes of revelation no less glorious, august, and dignified than the sublime intimations as to God's righteousness and as to His austere demand for righteousness in His children. We must be careful to bear in mind that all members of this trinity of subjects are not on the same level. But with this caution we may welcome with something of rapture the child's readiness to choose what is *good* in truth and art, and, later on, to assimilate eagerly the facts about the universe which mighty intellects have garnered up in recent times. This readiness is, surely, the divinely implanted faculty for seeking God through the 'outskirts of His clothing.' It is deplorable

that religious people have banned art and science: but even more deplorable that artistic and scientific people have often been inclined to fancy themselves independent of the law of righteousness.

Religious education, therefore, consists not merely in learning the Bible, nor even, a greater thing still, in the leading of a virtuous life. It is more. It is the learning to love and adore God through the knowledge of His law and His love together; and by law I mean not only the moral law, but law as manifested in science and art, which, if not subjected to Him and employed as channels of His truth to man, become channels of error, extravagance, and falsehood.

Thus all education worthy of the name is a turning of the young mind from an erroneous view of life to the truth: effected through the vivid presentation of God's nearness in its double aspect, revealing the majesty of the Divine law and the infinite tenderness of the Divine love. In short, if goodness, truth, and beauty be a fairly adequate statement of the channels through which the Divine is revealed to man, education is the bringing the child by experience to realize the infinite bounty of God, and, in consequence, the majestic, constraining, awe-inspiring character of the claim on his affection and his obedience.

Two corollaries follow:

1. The modern dissociation of secular from sacred subjects in school curricula must tend to cause a distortion of perspective in the young who are striving to interpret life in terms of order.

2. Such distortion of perspective is rendered still more probable by the prevailing fashion of training children to look on communion with God as a wringing of benefits from Him; instead of what it ought to be, a spontaneous giving of thanks for the 'unspeakable gift' already received.

Literature.

JEREMIAH.

A BOOK on Jeremiah by the greatest living English-speaking exponent of the Old Testament needs no commendation. Suffice it to say that in his Baird Lecture for 1922—*Jeremiah* (Hodder & Stoughton;

10s. 6d. net), Principal Sir George Adam Smith has fulfilled the hopes of those who for long have looked wistfully forward to this volume. Alike by temperament, gift, and the line of his special studies, Dr. Smith is qualified to be the ideal expositor of Jeremiah. He knows Jeremiah's