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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

What do we mean by the Church? Whatever else or more we mean, we at least mean this, 'the attraction of men to Jesus Christ, and their consequent association with one another in Him.' Dr. Rendel Harris in his volume of addresses which is published this month, and to which he gives the title *As Pants the Hart* (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s. net), has a short devotional meditation on Christ and His disciples. The simile which he uses for the Church is that of a solar system, and he chooses it because it preserves the two ideas of an individual relationship, and then following out of that, the formation of a collective unity.

There can be no collective unity unless there is this individual relationship, and so we start with our Lord as the centre:

> Throughout the universe of bliss,
> The centre, Thou, and Sun.

He is the centre of a world of redeemed souls whom He calls the elect, and the elect, Dr. Rendel Harris says, 'were near to Him and they were dear to Him, and He used nearing language and dearing language. The "nearing" language is when He tells them, "Ye shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me"; and, "Where I am, there also shall My servant be." And the "dearing" language is when He lays aside lower terms of relationship and exchanges them for higher. His chosen shall be more than disciples or servants. "Ye are My friends," He said, and not merely friends, but companions of the Bridegroom, those who rejoice because of the Bridegroom's voice.'

'Now, how do they come into such a near and dear state of relationship to Him? How do they find it? How do they persist in it? How do they grow in it? For He Himself spoke of their being in His love and of their continuing in His love; nay, He made a kind of imperative mood of it to them, as Love is in the habit of doing: "Continue ye in My Love."'

Two things are necesssary. First, there must be an individual call. Before we can enter into personal relationship with Christ, we must have heard the 'Follow me.' When we answer the call we enter into the personal relationship; but there is more needed. The relationship has to be sustained and strengthened, and this is done by personal communications. Dr. Rendel Harris reminds us of the text, 'All things whatsoever I have received from my Father, I have made known unto you.'

Now, as in the solar system there are circles within circles, so in the Ecclesia there is an 'ecclesia intra ecclesiam.' 'The apostle Paul once tried his hand at delineating this solar system. He put his compasses on the paper, and sketched a

number of concentric rings. There are, he said, first apostles, second prophets, third pastors and teachers, and so on; and all persons with orderly minds try to imitate his concentric arrangements. The hymn-writers do it: "Apostles, prophets, martyrs there, around my Saviour stand." The name "apostle" stands for "Man of the inner circle." And the inner circle is taken to exist in the next world as well as in this; for we can hardly imagine St. John, who leans on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper, placed in any very different position at the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb; the man must lie then, "as he lay once, breast to breast with God."'

How do we enter the 'ecclesia intra ecclesiam'? One way is by suffering, for there are some who travel faster and farther along this road than others.

And there is an election on Tabor; there are those who have peculiar visions of glory. Among the original company of disciples there was this 'ecclesia intra ecclesiam.' Three of them were an apostolate within an apostolate. Dr. Rendel Harris gives an account of how his little nephew and niece interpreted the story of the Transfiguration—probably the most striking instance in the New Testament of variation in privilege. 'The little girl asked, "Why mightn't they tell it to any one?" And the little boy replied, "Oh, because, you know, it was a great treat; and, if they told it, every one would want to go up—and besides, you know, perhaps it was a private mountain."' 'There are such things as private mountains in experience. We must be content if one or two, here and there, join the Celestial Alpine Club, and if we are brave enough and strong enough to be qualified for membership with them.'

Mr. J. Middleton Murry is one of the most brilliant of the band of literary critics who have in recent times delighted and instructed the intelligent reader by their published essays. Most of them, as for example Mr. Squire and Mr. Lynd, are deeply religious men and do not hesitate to say so. None of them, however, so far as we know, has as yet done what Mr. Murry has just attempted in a published essay. He has set down a reasoned statement of what he conceives religion to be and what are its foundations.

The essay is to be found in a book of remarkable interest and value, *The Necessity of Art* (Student Christian Movement; 7s. 6d. net). The other essayists are Mr. Clutton Brock, the Rev. Percy Dearmer, Mr. Malcolm Spencer, Mr. Alfred W. Pollard, and Mr. A. S. Duncan-Jones, and the subjects are mainly concerned with the relation of art to life and to religion. Mr. Murry's contribution is on 'Literature and Religion,' and it is a deliverance of immense interest and value.

Religion, says Mr. Murry, is the deepest and the most necessary motion of the free human soul. It is the binding relation of the I Am within us to the I Am without. Its roots are, first, our indefeasible sense of freedom, and, second, in the heart of this essential freedom, the sense of an inner obligation to obey the command of something deeper even than the soul itself. Here we touch the very quick of being, the secret core where self passes into not-self and is born as self once more. This and none other is the meeting-place of the soul and God, the moment of contact and fusion between the I Am that is within and the I Am that is beyond—beyond, because we know it as exceeding the soul's capacity, and apprehend it immediately as infinite.

Now literature is the most complete expression of the free human soul, and it *must* therefore be religious, and the greater the literature the more religious it must be. Religion and literature are branches of the same everlasting root. No doubt the relation between them is sometimes hard to discern, because religion is sometimes petrified in dogmas and ceremonies, and literature is ossified into forms and canons. Between these empty husks the connexion is invisible, but the connexion between the living essences is real and vital.

Indeed, so close is the connexion at the root of each that they sometimes flourish at the expense of one another. When religion is living and powerful, literature is apt to wither, and when religion decays literature springs up to give expression to the soul's need and to satisfy it. Religion is not confined to one medium of expression. At one time it may be an organized Church which is the vehicle of the religious tradition. At another time the soul may express itself outside the Church. It all depends on where the freedom attainable by the soul is greatest.

As an historical fact, the stream of religious tradition began at the Renaissance to flow mainly outside the Official Church. Science took upon itself the fulfilment of the outward exploration, literature the fulfilment of the inward exploration of life. Literature in modern times has been mainly concerned with the problem, which is *the* religious problem, of finding a mode of reconciliation between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, and it has found the reconciliation in the moments of vision, vision of reality, of God, as the binding link making our knowledge of within and without an organic unity.

The whole great movement which is expressed in modern literature is essentially a religious movement. It can be grasped only by those who have experienced it within themselves. For them it has been expressed, but only for them, and expressed completely in the sayings of Christ. In literature the supreme prophet has been Shakespeare, who in *The Tempest* has said the decisive word, 'No western mind has passed beyond *The Tempest*; none perhaps has gone so far.' We are bound ever again and finally to return to Shakespeare in our pursuit of an understanding of the whole spiritual history of man since the Renaissance.

'Up to Shakespeare the spiritual history of man—I speak of the West alone—is comprehended within the church; with him, it passes outside the church. The severance was necessary and inevitable, for the sake of religion itself; simply because religion, if it is to be more than a comfortable and convenient narcotic, must be based on a challenge of the nature of things by the free spirit of man. And that again simply because man cannot *accept* certainties; he must discover them.' Jesus for all time expressed the truth, but men have to discover it again for themselves.

Finally, the human soul is bound upon an adventure which is necessarily religious. It is an adventure because, after all the centuries, the meeting-ground of the lesser I Am with the greater I Am is still almost an unknown territory. As literature affords the only complete expression to this adventuring human soul, it has become the supreme medium of the religious spirit.

In view of the great international Sunday School Convention to be held at Glasgow this month, we are all brought once again—and on a singularly impressive scale—before the ever-urgent question of the place of the teacher in the life of the world, and the conditions that make for greater efficiency in teaching.

When, Bible in hand, the teacher takes his seat before his class, he is there to do a greater thing than he sometimes realizes. For his business is not merely to instruct his scholars in the truths enshrined in the Bible: his business is nothing less than to make a deliberate and effective contribution to the higher life of the world, to help to usher in a nobler order of human society—in a word, to promote Christian civilization. No task surely can be higher than that, and no work surely can be more necessary in a world so confused, so perplexed, so helpless, and so much in need of reconstruction as is ours to-day. The teacher who conceives his task in these large terms, who understands the need for it, the importance of it, and the incomparable value of it if it is well done, will be lifted above the humdrum and perfunctory per-

formance of his duties. If he sees in each of his boys and girls a potential force for the Kingdom of God and for the creation of a nobler society—a force for good whose limits it is impossible to calculate—he will be sustained and inspired amid the drudgery and disappointment inseparable from teaching.

Truly it is impossible to overestimate the importance of the teacher. As Frederic Harrison has said, 'The main instrument of Humanity in the future is Education, in the highest and widest sense of the term.' 'After all,' says H. G. Wells, 'the Empire, the whole world of mankind, is made up of Joans and Peters; what the Empire is, what mankind becomes, is nothing but the sum of what we have made of the Joans and Peters.' And again, 'Give me the schools of the world, and I would make a millennium in half a century.' Whatever may be said of other schools, the supreme business of the Sunday School at any rate is the creation of character; and if the Sunday schools of the world were all that they might be, the millennium would assuredly be not so very far off.

It is well for teachers to remember that Jesus was a teacher, and that He laid superlative stress on this aspect of His ministry. The gospels are sprinkled all over with references to this Teacher and His teaching. Part of His work was to communicate ideas, to transmit to His hearers something of that force and life which are generated by commanding and ennobling thought. And the effect, we read with little surprise, was that the people were astonished. Why? Because He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

The scribes and Jesus! There are the two types, and what a contrast! They had the same textbooks—the book of experience, and the Old Testament; but the people were astonished by the one teacher and bored by the others. Instinctively the unsophisticated conscience of the common people felt the difference, and they heard the great Teacher gladly. The scribes for the most part were playing upon the surface, Jesus went to the depths. They were dealing largely with words, He with real things. They quoted Rabbi this and Rabbi that: He let the Truth speak for itself. He not only uttered the Truth: He was the Truth—in flesh and blood.

Now what is the secret of authoritative teaching? It lies (i) in Preparation. Like other commonplaces this is easily forgotten—forgotten above all by teachers who begin to study Sunday's lesson on Saturday night, or perhaps even later. No man has any right to present to children any more than to adults his undigested thoughts. We have to earn the right to speak—by study and meditation. Jesus thought thirty years not too long a preparation for His ministry; but was there ever a ministry like His?

If even a New Testament writer found in the Epistles of 'our beloved brother Paul' some things hard to be understood, we may be sure that we, who are so far from that old world and its ways, need all the help we can find to understand them. And the lesson-helps, however good, are not enough. Every teacher should have beside him, for purposes of consultation and study, at least one complete commentary on the Bible, such as PEAKE's one-volume Commentary, or DUMMELOW's.

But preparation involves something even more important than that. The teacher must not only conscientiously acquaint himself with the facts of his passage, he must be familiar with the atmosphere of it. This means that he must begin his preparation early, so that the lesson may have time to simmer in his mind and imagination. He must almost literally 'meditate upon it day and night'; he must at any rate live with it, until he stands inside it as within a familiar world. Brooding and reading are involved in all worthy preparation; and he will say to each passage, as he commences its study, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'

(ii) The next indispensable condition of authoritative speech is Conviction. The teacher must, with all his soul, believe what he is saying. This seems an elementary demand to make upon an honest man : it is really one of the highest and sternest of all demands. Of the truth that he would drive home upon the souls of others he must be able to say, 'I know and am persuaded' of it myself. With the Apostle he must be able to say, 'That which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, declare we unto you.'

The old word 'proof-text' acquires for him a new meaning. It is no longer a text which proves a doctrine—after all, can any text do that ?—it is a text which he has himself proved, put to the proof in his own experience, and triumphantly and joyfully proved to be true. He will speak with power on the twenty-third Psalm, not because he can tell his scholars all about the ways of Oriental shepherds, but because he can say with the conviction of experience, 'The Lord is *my* Shepherd.' Teaching is not merely the presentation of truth, it is the communication of personality ; or, as some one has said, religion is not so much taught as caught—caught from the contagion of a religious personality.

(iii) A third condition of success in teaching is Concentration upon the things that matter. In one sense, of course, everything matters ; the interest of the Bible is of the most exhilaratingly varied and abundant kind — scenery, history, politics, literature, etc.—and we rightly read and study to acquaint ourselves with all that. But that, after all, is only the setting ; these are not the things that matter most. The supreme thing is the religion, the life, the spiritual force that is there—the things that make for character, that contribute to moral efficiency, that promote the welfare of men and the Kingdom of God.

The modern movement of Biblical study has been singularly successful in throwing into vivid and attractive light the conditions under which Biblical characters lived and Biblical events happened : the peril is that our interest in these things may become so absorbing as to deflect us from issues of vastly more vital importance. Enough of the former kind of knowledge, as Dr. J. Morgan Jones says in his *The New Testament in Modern Education*, 'must be given to make the books intelligible, but maps and models, the details of habits and customs of Oriental lands, must not be allowed to monopolize the time and energy of teacher and pupil as they have sometimes been in danger of doing.' The teacher must stress most the thing that matters most, and he must stress it with the accent of one who knows for himself the power of the truth he would communicate, so that he, too, in his own measure, may make that solemn claim his own, '*I* say unto you.'

The conflict between Genesis and Science has lost its bitterness, and the smoke of battle is clearing away. Towards this happy result a fresh and notable contribution has been made by Sir Oliver LODGE, F.R.S., D.Sc., LL.D., in *Making of Man* (Hodder & Stoughton ; 3s. 6d. net), a book which though at times daring in speculation is in spirit profoundly Christian.

Sir Oliver LODGE makes no demand for the re-writing of Genesis in terms of modern science, as if present-day knowledge were the pure and final truth. 'It is wholesome to remember that we too are or will be "ancients" to some of those who shall come after us : let us hope that some at least of our present-day utterances will be as worthy of appreciative study, and as near to the then more deeply perceived truth of things, as are the utterances of genius among our dim and distant forefathers.'

He finds that the discrepancies between Genesis and Science are more apparent than real. The differences are superficial, not deep-seated. 'It is true that the two accounts differ considerably in mode of expression. Science detects a Formative

Principle acting on the primæval slime. Literature, far more poetically, calls it the Spirit of God brooding upon the face of the waters. But the essential meaning is the same, the formation of the complex out of the simple, the completion of an elaborate structure out of unpromising raw material.'

It has frequently been pointed out, as an illustration of the utterly unscientific character of the creation narrative, that the birth of light is mentioned first before the creation of the sun. This has been ridiculed as absurd. Sir Oliver LODGE sees in it an extraordinary flash of genius. 'The creation of something is mentioned, some first and fundamental something, called Light, which we may reasonably interpret as standing for what we now understand as the Ether, the substance whose vibrations constitute light, the thing without which light could not exist, the universal substance which unites the worlds and conveys the energy from one to another.' It is not to be supposed that all this was in the conscious view of the writer of Genesis, but there it is.

Was man's first conscious experience a fall or a rise? Sir Oliver LODGE finds room for both. 'A rise there undoubtedly has been, a rise out of the limitations or restrictions of his animal ancestry. What more natural than that a rise should be followed by a fall? Man was to be given freedom; he must be free to decide his own course. . . . The gift of freedom involved the possibility of sin. And sin followed. Before man had risen from the animals there was no sin. He was in a state of innocency like them. He followed his own nature as they do.' But the first authentic man must have been conscious of a warring in his members, his efforts towards the right were fitful, his sinking below his aspirations was frequent and painful. 'No longer could he plead innocency and irresponsibility; the dire gift of freedom had been realised, the striving after self-control had been begun. No longer was he in Paradise; he was out in the world now to labour and struggle, not only with external nature but with himself. The long struggle *humanam condere gentem* had been begun.' In short, to quote an expression which Sir Oliver LODGE uses repeatedly, 'man tripped over the upward step and fell.' Here, surely, is a singularly felicitous phrase which, if it satisfies the scientist, certainly conserves all that the theologian would contend for.

The appearance of a little book, *What is Modernism?* by the Rev. Leighton PARKS, D.D., Rector of St. Bartholomew's Church, New York (Scribners; $1.00), will be something of an event in America, and is not without interest over here. Dr. PARKS may be said to be the protagonist of the modernist movement on the other side, and he was the hero of a dramatic scene in St. Bartholomew's Church. When the Bishop's pastoral against the Modernists was issued, Dr. PARKS referred to it in his church, and doffing his robes and, donning the black gown of a scholar, proceeded to handle the pastoral with the utmost frankness.

This scene drew the attention of the religious world to Dr. PARKS, and letters began to pour in on him from all quarters. Some were frankly abusive, some sympathetic, but many contained appeals to the rector for enlightenment, and not a few expressed the relief of the writers at his action, because it indicated that liberty of thought was to be afforded to those who, unable to accept the traditional dogmas, were seeking for truth in a freer atmosphere.

Dr. PARKS was urged from many quarters to put his views into print, and state frankly what the modernist views really are, and what he and others were aiming at. He was reluctant to accede to this request, as he is not an expert in scholarship, but ultimately he was driven to accept the task, and this book is the result. It is an interesting book and needs no apology for any shortcomings in knowledge. Dr. PARKS knows his subject and has read widely and thought deeply on it.

Dr. Parks says that America is fifty years behind Britain in these matters, and the statement suggests some curious reflections. It is obviously true, but it is very strange that a country which in every other respect is so advanced, should be so traditional in the religious sphere. Britain has been educated by two things, by her long line of scholars who have never fallen behind the van of research, and by her heresy trials. The 'Essays and Reviews' controversy in England and the 'Robertson Smith Case' in Scotland made the average church-goer acquainted with the conclusions of modern criticism.

But there is another curious fact. The religious world in Britain has gone steadily forward in its outlook and creed. Knowledge here has been growing and broadening so that insensibly the average man has attained a freer attitude and a broader creed. But we have had no violent reactions or extreme departures. In America it is different. The average man is still a believer in verbal inspiration and all that goes with it. But the heretics have reacted violently against tradition and go much farther than the broad churchman here.

Dr. Parks, for example, speaking for the Modernists of America in this book, may be said roughly to state their position. He is for the 'supernatural' as distinct from the 'miraculous' (though he does not deny historically attested 'miracles'), for the reality of Christ's risen life as distinct from a belief in the bodily Resurrection, and finally for what he claims is the older tradition of the birth of Jesus, a natural birth, as opposed to the belief in a 'Virgin birth.'

That is pretty radical. But Dr. Parks' apologetic for modernism is that it is trying to rescue *truths* from their entanglement with '*facts*.' Creation, descent into hell, ascension, and the resurrection of the body were originally conceived as 'facts.' No educated man to-day believes them to be facts, but symbols of truth. The modernist is trying to interpret the truth which the formulas attempt to express, in a way that can be accepted by truthful men who have gained a knowledge of which the ancient world was ignorant.

The Example of the Unjust Steward.

By Professor W. P. Paterson, D.D., The University, Edinburgh.

It is an interesting observation, that those whose chief concern has been with God have often given much thought to the subject of wealth. It was so with two of the greatest Scotsmen of the nineteenth century. The intellectual interests of Thomas Chalmers were divided between Theology and Political Economy, and many who have not read a line of Flint's 'Theism' and 'Anti-theistic Theories' have given days and nights to his exposition and criticism of Socialism. One reason, no doubt, why the subject is attractive to the theologian is that wealth is the most familiar and powerful of the rivals which dispute the claim of God to the allegiance of the human heart, and that the pursuit of wealth is accordingly the most interesting of all forms of idolatry. Another reason is that Mammon, while often fighting against God, is capable of being enlisted in the support and service of manifold causes which are embraced in the programme of the Kingdom of God.

The teaching of our Lord reflects a similar interest in the subject. In the Sermon on the Mount He speaks of God and Mammon as the two great powers which contend for the mastery over human souls. In the fifteenth chapter of Luke the evangelist gives us three parables concerning God's love of man, and the sixteenth has the story of the Unjust Steward which turns on man's love of money. In the teaching of Jesus, also, we find a recognition of the fact that there is both a good and an evil