THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE hard old dogmatic materialism, once so confidently pugnacious, has in recent times received many a shrewd knock. So much is this the case that it has now begun to be affirmed in religious circles that materialism as a tenable philosophy is dead. That, of course, remains to be seen.

The attack on materialism which has gained currency in our day comes, curiously enough, from the physicists. Their investigations into the constitution of matter have led them far past the solid indestructible atom, once the foundation stone of materialism, into dim and mysterious regions where matter appears to lose its solidity and reveal itself as essentially energy. This seems to cut away the ground from beneath the old materialism. As Eddington has said, 'What is the use of talking about materialism when we don't know what material is?'

The difficulty here is, that while it undoubtedly gives the quietus to the hard old materialism, it may lead to a materialism of a more refined and subtle type. Matter, it may be argued, is so mysterious, so full of energy, so capable of transforming itself into radiation, that it may well be counted capable of everything. It is Eddington who says, 'There is nothing to prevent the assemblage of atoms forming the brain from being itself a thinking machine *in virtue of that nature which physics leaves undetermined and undeterminable*.' The term 'materialism,' we may be sure, will not readily be given up, for it is the watchword of all who would exclude the spiritual from the realm of reality. In some form or other it will doubtless survive, as it does in the Marxian 'dialectic materialism,' though it involves a manifest logical contradiction.

A very interesting and informative book on this subject has been published under the title of *Science versus Materialism*, by Professor Reginald O. KAPP (Methuen; 10s. 6d. net). The title of the book is itself a challenge and indicates that the writer does not think materialism is scientifically sound. He has read widely and thought deeply and he applies a keenly logical mind to the problem. His book is more critical than constructive, but many of his points are well taken and he writes in a straightforward way that makes a strong appeal to one's common sense.

Professor KAPP is Professor of Electrical Engineering in the University of London and he writes throughout as an engineer. The dominance of this engineering mentality powerfully influences his thought. To him matter is an inert thing, just the raw material which the engineer has to mould and shape out of its natural chaos into forms of usefulness. Accordingly he holds the distinction between the animate and the inanimate to be perfectly rigid and absolute. He would have no sympathy with the doctrine, supported by weighty names, that there must be even in things inanimate a certain sensibility or power of selection in accordance with which they manifest various attractions and repulsions towards one another. Lord Bacon speaks of this as a 'perception far more subtle than sense,' and Spinoza held that all bodies, even the inanimate, were *animata* in varying degrees. To express this blind form of apprehension Whitehead coined the word 'prehend.'

The gist of Professor KAPP's argument is that there are manifestly non-material forces at work in the animate world, that there is no potency in matter itself to impose order upon itself, or to combine into forms of higher complexity, or especially to produce the phenomena of life and mind. He regards the doctrine of 'emergent' evolution, at present looked upon with favour, as a clouding of the issue by the use of a question-begging word. Matter has no power inherent in itself to cause a higher than itself to emerge. Many doubtless implicitly take that doctrine as meaning that a non-material power causes the new and higher forms to emerge, but that, of course, is to give up materialism.

Materialists have laid great stress upon the influence of environment on the living organism, and in this connexion they scientifically prove what everybody knew and learnedly affirm what nobody ever denied. Some have been mightily impressed by what modern physicists have revealed of the influence of certain chemical substances in glands upon health, character, and life itself. This has seemed to imply that life is nothing but a by-product of chemical substances. But substantially all this was well known from earliest times. The rudest savage knows that a crack on the skull with a club produces unconsciousness and even death. He knows that a deficiency of blood or of air or of food reduces vitality and may be fatal. 'It has become the fashion among biologists to tell us that various recondite discoveries made by specialists reveal some new truth full of philosophical implications. And when we examine this revelation we find that it is something which was never doubted. Every one knew it already from everyday experience. Here even so eminent a scientist as the late J. S. Haldane succumbed to the prevailing fashion. He told us, in effect, that 'science is discovering "with ever-increasing clearness" that we suffocate if we lack air.' Of course we do. Of course we depend on our environment. But that does not prove that the living organism is solely the product of its environment.

The materialist is fond of arguing that if everything is not wholly determined then the alternative is chaos, a world in which anything may happen. But this does not by any means follow. Actions might be determined by higher laws than the laws of mechanics. They need not be chaotic. We must not begin by begging the question through the assumption that there are no other laws than the laws of physics and chemistry. Professor KAPP prefers to speak of living things as being 'doubly determinate,' that is, fully subject to the laws of physics and chemistry while at the same time responsive to the higher laws of life.

The principle of complete physical determinateness may itself be called in question. Science has never proved it and never can. 'Most physicists tend to believe in a principle of complete determinism, but they would be the first to admit that their belief is based on faith and not on fact. . . . There is no authority whatever for the assumption of such a principle. There is no experiment or observation, or piece of deductive reasoning to prove it. All that can be said is that its assumption has become so engrained in our habits of thought that few persons are prepared to give it up readily.' The principle has never been proved, and, now that physicists are able to scrutinize the fine structure of matter in the atom, Heisenberg has shown that there is an absolute limit to the accuracy of observation. In face of this it is sheer assertion to maintain that all action is rigidly determined by physical law.

The thoroughgoing materialist is fond of asserting that the living organism is simply a machine, and the answer of the theologian commonly is that the lowest of living creatures is more than a machine. That may be very true but the materialist may be more simply answered out of his own mouth. His analogy is a most unhappy one from his own point of view. For what is a machine? It is the product of human ingenuity. Thought, purpose, energy from a source outside itself have gone to its construction. It did not create itself out of a heap of scrap iron. Its existence postulates the skill and planning of the engineer. 'We should expect the mechanist to support his theory by pointing an analogy to rocks or stars or clouds, or perhaps to

crystals, or rivers, or atoms, to something belonging without a doubt to the rough, untouched world of lifeless things. If he did this we could follow his reasoning, even if we thought the resemblance only slight. But the mechanist does not do this. He says that living organisms are a part of the rough, untouched world of lifeless things because they are even less like this world than machines are. He says that living organisms are due to nothing but the unco-ordinated forces of Nature, because they resemble objects which are due to the carefully co-ordinated powers of man. . . . Surely this is the kind of logic which was taught in the Colleges of Unreason in the country of Erewhon described by Samuel Butler.'

Psychology, Psychotherapy and Evangelicalism (Allen & Unwin ; 10s. 6d. net), by J. G. McKenzie, D.D., Jesse Boot Professor in Social Science in Paton College, Nottingham, is meant to be a contribution to the better understanding of Evangelical experience and doctrine. Those who are acquainted with this author's work and writings know that he is more interested in a theology based on psychology than in the theology based on logic. In the attractive volume before us, in which he applies psychological and psychotherapeutic principles to a particular type of religious experience, he trusts to have given the theologian something to work upon.

The book falls into three parts. Part I. would justify the application of psychology and psychotherapy to Evangelical experience and doctrine, and outline the essence of Evangelicalism. Part II. begins the contribution proper, treating of salvation and its various problems. Part III. seeks to carry the discussion into the doctrinal as distinguished from the experiential sphere and also to show how psychology may be applied in Church work. It is the discussion in Part I. of the essence of Evangelicalism to which we would here invite our readers' attention.

It is first observed that, from the psychological point of view, there is nothing that binds Evangelicalism to any particular regulative creed. Freedom is the keynote of Evangelicalism. If Evangelical doctrine tends to be a hard conservatism, it is a tendency which besets doctrine in general. 'Bishop Barnes is proud to belong to the Evangelical tradition, and although it is difficult to imagine him delivering one of his trenchant addresses on the Keswick platform, he would not fail to make contact if he were speaking at a convention on personal religion.'

It is by his experience, and not by any intellectual emphasis, that the Evangelical is distinguished from other types. What unites all Evangelicals, and indeed enables them to be placed in one class, is an experience which they believe to be of God's grace as mediated through Christ. It is an experience, to cite terms used in psychotherapy, which is not merely 'recognition' but 'realization'; or which the philosopher calls not simply 'knowledge by description' but 'knowledge by acquaintance.' It is this realization, this knowledge by acquaintance, which is an experience of an immediate kind, not reached by methods of ratiocination, that the great leaders of the Evangelical Movement attempted to evoke, and which the Evangelical preacher also attempts to evoke to-day. And here is the source of Evangelical fervour.

To note the theological emphasis of the Evangelical will help us to gain a clearer idea of Evangelical experience. The Person of Christ and His Work and the Authority of the Bible are the axes round which the theology revolves. However great the differences among Evangelicals on these subjects, their centrality is acknowledged by all.

As for the Person of Christ, the Evangelical sees Christ not, as in humanistic views, as a point which humanity may one day reach, but as the creator of the new humanity; He is not the projection of man's highest hopes, but the objective power of God seeking the fulfilment of His eternal purposes. He is the window, as Brunner, for example, expresses it, through which we can see God; this is His significance, and His alone. Whereas for Troeltsch, and the humanistic interpreters generally, Christian experience is a fellowship of ideals or hopes, moral

and spiritual; for the Evangelicals, on the other hand, it is a fellowship with 'the living Christ,' the Word of God incarnate.

As for the Work of Christ, it is the Evangelical alone who makes the Cross crucial for the conviction of man's sin and need, and the all-sufficiency of God's sacrifice to meet that need. Theologically the question is, How can the sinner be justified before God? Psychologically it runs, How can the sinner enter into filial relations with God? The various theories of the Atonement show how the Cross answers this theological and psychological question. As far as Evangelicals are concerned the fundamental question has remained the same, whatever be the interpretation of the Cross. All feel that on the Cross something was done; the Cross exhibits something objective, something that happens in God as well as in man.

As for the authority of the Bible, there is much divergency among Evangelicals, ranging from the 'verbal inspiration' of the Fundamentalists to Burkitt's position that 'there is in the Gospel history . . . an element which Christians cannot discount if they are to remain Christians.' But practically all the Evangelical churches feel the need for a restatement of the doctrine of Biblical authority. Principal D. S. Cairns puts the modern Evangelical approach to Scripture in a way that leaves to it its unique authority, and yet encourages a reverent scholarship: 'The Bible is not the Revelation, but the record of the Revelation; it is not an inspired record of history, but the record of an inspired history.'

The latest 'Burge Memorial Lecture' was delivered at Oxford recently by Mr. Arnold J. TOYNBEE, and has been published under the title *Christianity and Civilization* (S.C.M.; 1s. net). It contains a striking and original historical review, which seems at first far removed from our present situation, but as a matter of fact bears closely on it. Mr. TOYNBEE begins with Gibbon's view of the subject, that Christianity was the destroyer of the civilization within whose framework it grew up. It was the age of the Antonines, and Gibbon's conviction was that that age was the flower and peak of the Græco-Roman culture, and that it began to decline from that point, and that it was Christianity as well as barbarism that overthrew it.

Of course Gibbon admired the pagan ideals of that civilization, and to him Christianity stood for its antithesis. Christianity meant religious self-seeking, saving one's own soul, whereas in the pagan civilization the State was supreme and the individual existed, and regarded himself as existing, solely for the State. Græco-Roman society was built on the conception that the safety of the community was the supreme aim of conduct, above the safety of the individual. The citizens, therefore, trained in this unselfish ideal, were ready to lay down their lives for the common good. This idea was shattered by the insistence of Christianity on the salvation of the soul as the only object worth living for. And the glorious era of the Antonines was eclipsed by the 'spiritual' aims of a selfish religion.

Another view, which does not seem incompatible with Gibbon's, and which must be very welcome to the Totalitarian powers, which, indeed, is very much that of Herr Rosenberg, is that religion is a kind of interlude between much greater and worthier systems. The Græco-Roman system was followed by the Christian, and what we see to-day is the revival of the older civilization which has sprung up out of the ruins of the once powerful Christian religion. Christianity is fading away. Its day is almost done. And in its place a new system in which again the State is supreme has appeared, not so much new as renewed, the classical conception, in which the Commonwealth is everything and the individual, in and for himself, nothing.

This view Mr. TOYNBEE regards as false reading of history. He contends, with many illustrative examples, that the rises and falls of civilizations are subsidiary to the growth of religion. Time after time we see a religion rising from the ruins of a secular civilization. These secular systems come and go, but religion pursues its upward way. 'If

religion is a chariot, it looks as if the wheels on which it mounts towards Heaven may be the periodic downfalls of civilizations on earth.' The movement of civilization is cyclic and recurrent, while the movement of religion is on a single upward continuous line.

This opens up a startling view of history. Civilizations are the handmaids of religion, and bring it to birth before they go to pieces. And the recurrence of civilizations of the same type are 'vain repetitions of the Gentiles.' It is the function of civilizations to serve, by their downfalls, as stepping-stones to a progressive process of the revelation of always deeper religious insight. If this be true (and Mr. TOYNBEE adduces convincing historical evidence of it), then the great event of these days is not our modern secular civilization. It is still the Crucifixion and its spiritual consequences. And, because the line of religion is continuous and upward and the line of secular systems is cyclic and recurrent, we may expect that Christianity will grow in wisdom and stature as the result of a fresh experience of secular catastrophe.

And Mr. TOYNBEE goes on to an interesting speculation, that Christianity will gather into itself all that is best in the other religions. He sees in the 'mythical passions' of Tammuz and Adonis and Attis and Osiris a foreshadowing of the Passion of Christ. And he looks for a time when 'in some city of the Far East' there will take place an infusion of Chinese philosophy into Christianity. It is possible that Christianity drew out of, and inherited from, the other Oriental religions the heart of what was best in them. And, if so, the present religions of India may contribute new elements to be grafted on to Christianity in days to come.

And then one may look forward to what may happen when Cæsar's empire decays—and it always does decay after a run of a few hundred years. What may happen is that Christianity may be left as the spiritual heir of all the other higher religions, from the post-Sumerian rudiment of one in the worship of Tammuz and Ishtar down to those that in A.D. 1940 are still living separate lives side by side with Christianity, and of all the philosophies from Ikhnaton's to Hegel's, while the Christian Church as an institution may be left as the social heir of all the other churches and all the civilizations.

This Patmos vision rather takes our breath away. But it is soberly, gravely and persuasively argued. And it raises the question: Supposing this were to happen, would it mean that the Kingdom of Heaven would then have been established on the earth? Is this the form the millennium will take? Christ, in a sense, all in all? Mr. TOYNBEE does not think so. And chiefly for two reasons. One is that, so far as we can see, man will always bear in himself the taint of original sin. The replacement of a multiplicity of civilizations by a universal church would not have purged human nature of this taint. And so long as original sin remains in human nature Cæsar will always have work to do.

The other reason is that the institutional element in the Church will always be a drag, its hierarchy and its organizations and its forms. Even if these be an indispensable means of survival, they are a mundane element that makes the Church militant's life different from the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, even if the Church had won a fully wide-world allegiance and had entered into the inheritance of the last of the civilizations and of all the other higher religions, the Church on earth would not be a perfect embodiment here on earth of the Kingdom of Heaven. She would still have sin to contend with, and also a panoply of institutions to give her the massive social solidity that she needs in the mundane struggle for survival, but this at the inevitable price of spiritually weighing her down.

And, a last word, that answers Gibbon about the selfishness of the Christian aim—In what sense and in what way can we think of progress in regard to this growingly victorious Christianity? The answer is that progress here means a growing likeness to God, a growing salvation for the soul therefore. But because it is an approach to God it means love, and love of our fellows as well as of God. The salvation of the soul is not self-regarding. It is social because it is Godlike. God is spirit, and spirit is fellowship, and to know God and be like Him is to love others as we love Him.