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THEOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION AT CAMBRIDGE.

'BEHOLD now this vast City; a City of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompast and surrounded with His protection; the shop of warre hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed Justice in defence of beleaguer'd Truth, then [i.e. than] there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and idea's wherewith to present as with their homage and their fealty the approaching Reformation: others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more from a Nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge?'[1]

There is all the glow and splendour of a poet's imagination about this picture. Its grandiose proportions have to be reduced somewhat before they can be fitted to the more prosaic reality, whether in 1644 or in 1905. It required a Miltonic temperament to see his own age as Milton saw it. And yet the fact that he could so see it was justification enough for his lofty language. It does not hurt us to idealize the age in which we live, if we do not take our individual selves too seriously.

There is a real parallel between the age of Milton and our own. The first fifty years of the seventeenth century and the last fifty of the nineteenth have both been times of forward movement, consciously realized as such. Now as then, and then as now, there have been 'pens and heads, sitting by their studious lamps,

[1] Milton *Areopagitica* p. 69 (ed. Arber).

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musing, searching, revolving new notions and idea's'; and the work on which they have been engaged has been very largely that of religious restatement and reconstruction.

It may help us to feel how much the two periods have in common if we compare them both with the long period which intervened. Perhaps better dates to take would be Milton's death in 1674, or the Revolution of 1688, and the beginning of the Tractarian movement in 1833. The long interval between those dates was in the main a time of depression. It was at best an age of genial acquiescence, at worst an age of sombre despondency. Even its best work, like that of Bishop Butler, was done upon the defensive; great minds were content if they could hold their own, and if Christianity could hold its own. The note of hope and the sense of forward movement were wanting. No one would have thought of using such language as Milton's; nor, if it had been used, would it have met with any response.

No doubt, if we look a little deeper, restatement and reconstruction were really going on. Butler, no less than the contemporaries of Milton, was really adapting Christian ideas to the thought of his time. He could not help doing it; the greatest men in every age have done the same. We only have to place *The Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed* by the side of the New Testament to feel how great is the difference between them and the length of the road that has been traversed from the one to the other. But I greatly doubt if either Butler or any other eighteenth-century writer, until we come to Coleridge, had any sort of consciousness that he was restating Christianity in terms of the thought of his own day. Milton, in the passage I have quoted, gives impassioned expression to this consciousness; and it has been steadily growing in strength and volume in the English theology of the last fifty years. We do not need to overrate the success of the efforts that have been made in order to recognize that there has been a real effort, and one that has increased in extent and momentum as the years have gone on.

If we desire to gauge the deeper characteristics of a time, we should probably do well to study the works of the more prominent individual writers. But if we wish to take a broad survey and to form an estimate of the extent of the forces at work, we may turn our attention rather to joint undertakings.

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From this point of view we may take as landmarks the four successive volumes, *Essays and Reviews* (1860), *Lux Mundi* (1889), *Contentio Veritatis* (1902), and now the *Cambridge Theological Essays* edited by Dr Swete. When I speak of them as landmarks, I do not mean to imply, either that the volumes are equal in value or that they contain (except to a limited degree) the most important work of the period. The work of individual scholars, conceived on an ample scale, will usually take precedence of mixed volumes, whatever their contents. It rarely happens that the distinction of single writers extends to a whole group. It would be possible to select particular essays—such as the contributions of Mark Pattison and Jowett to the first series, and those of Dr Inge to the third—which stand out rather conspicuously among their surroundings, and deserve to rank with the permanent literature of their time. The distinguishing feature of *Lux Mundi* was not so much the prominence of single contributions as the unity of conception, with the corresponding weight of impact and appeal, which runs through the whole. This volume indeed illustrates the relation in which individual writers stand to a group. The untimely death of Aubrey Moore left his essay as perhaps the best of his published works; on the other hand, Dr Illingworth and Dr Moberly, although their essays were not unworthy of them, would yet be more adequately judged by their later books. Both in *Essays and Reviews* and in *Contentio Veritatis* the independence of the writers was carefully emphasized, whereas *Lux Mundi* was deliberately put forward as 'the expression of a common mind and a common hope'. In this respect the volume of *Cambridge Theological Essays* stands rather midway between the two types: on the one hand, we are told that the nucleus of the volume proceeds from a small body of associated teachers, and that the essays were circulated among the contributors in proof; but on the other hand, the writers would not be all described as belonging exactly to the same school, and there appears to have been no attempt to interfere with individual freedom and responsibility. It is only fair to remember that, while *Essays and Reviews* and *Contentio Veritatis* each contained no more than seven essays—the work in the one case of seven, and in the other of six authors—*Lux Mundi* in the first edition had twelve essays by

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eleven authors, and the *Cambridge Essays* are fourteen in number by as many authors. To what extent the larger volumes gain by the increase of bulk is a question on which there may be differences of opinion. No doubt they do gain, by covering the ground more completely and by weight of representative utterance; but probably all the volumes would have been the better for a process of weeding, and the smaller even more than the larger. The smaller volumes vindicate their *raison d'être* chiefly (as has been already hinted) by the excellence of particular essays.

The character of the successive ventures is in the main such as might naturally be expected from the place which they occupy in the movement.

The first series of essays stated problems and difficulties. Some, indeed, did little more than mark the emergence of new questions with the acquisition of new knowledge. Such were Mr Goodwin on the 'Mosaic Cosmogony' and Dr Rowland Williams on 'Bunsen's Biblical Researches'. Weightier and of a less purely historical significance were H. B. Wilson on 'The National Church', Mark Pattison on 'Tendencies of Religious Thought, 1688–1750', and Jowett on 'The Interpretation of Scripture'. These essays were remarkable for the boldness and frankness with which they broke new ground at a time when theological thought (as distinct from religious life) was sleepy and conventional. Mark Pattison's essay stands alone in all four series as a masterly historical monograph, with its wealth of concrete knowledge, its breadth and severity of judgement, and its unflinching realism. We cannot help feeling, for instance, that if an ideal like this had underlain the essay in *Lux Mundi* on 'The Preparation in History for Christ', it would have come out differently.

I have said that *Lux Mundi* derived its importance as the manifesto of a new school. And the school itself was important as the meeting-ground of tendencies that had been hitherto conflicting. The religious movement which had been in the ascendant in the second and third quarters of the last century had been almost wholly hostile to the intellectual Liberalism which began to assert itself in the third [1]. But towards the end

[1] I do not wish to deny that this newer Liberalism had been to some extent

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of this third quarter and at the beginning of the fourth, the two streams began to unite. And it was just in their union that the power and attractiveness of the new movement lay. The religious enthusiasm of the middle of the century was enhanced in value when it no longer shut its eyes to the progress of thought and the problems that were forcing themselves upon the modern mind. On the other hand, the obstinate questionings of scattered thinkers acquired a fresh significance when they came to be associated with the warmth of popular, but cultured, religion. *Lux Mundi* made the impression that it did from the fact that it embodied this new point of view. It was a serious and strenuous effort on the part of a group of young writers, who were not merely drawn together by fortuitous combination, but a veritable 'band of brothers', personal friends as well as allies, to give expression to the faith and hope that were in them. The circumstances of its origin thus gave to the volume an impetus, a buoyancy and *élan* of chivalrous appeal, which distinguishes it among its fellows. It was rather in this, and in the coherence and relative completeness of the views expressed, that the strength of the book consisted, than in the conspicuous excellence of particular contributions.

Contentio Veritatis was a more occasional product, not so long in its incubation, or so spontaneous as a rallying of opinion. Single essays may well hold their own in comparison with the other books; but as a whole the volume gave an impression of inferior weight and maturity.

These qualities come more to the front—if we again look at the whole rather than at the parts—in the volume of *Cambridge Essays*. It has not quite the *élan*, or upward lift, of *Lux Mundi*. I doubt if there is anything in it that quite rises to the commanding level of Mark Pattison's essay, or that in freshness and directness as well as in style is altogether to be placed by the side of Jowett's. But the strong point of the book seems to me to be a general impression of thoughtfulness and gravity appropriate to the subjects discussed, and calculated to exercise a wholesome influence upon English thinking.

anticipated in the teaching of men like Arnold and Whately, and still more in that of Coleridge. It is chiefly perhaps the increasing predominance of the element derived from Coleridge that gave it its distinctive character.

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If we may see in it on the one hand, lightly impressed, something of the characteristics that we associate with Cambridge, on the other hand it serves to bring home to us still more strongly the common standpoint of English Theology. There is, as I have ventured to say elsewhere [1], a large amount—perhaps a surprising amount—of solidarity in the teaching of theology in all our British Universities and in all our Churches. The average of this teaching is excellently represented in the Cambridge volume. Everywhere there is the effort after restatement and reconstruction, but everywhere this effort proceeds along conservative lines. I do not doubt that to many abroad and to some at home the tendency will seem to be too conservative. It is, however, in harmony with the genius of our nation, which has always been anxious to pull down no faster than it can build up, and has always shewn itself reluctant to part with the old before it can make sure of assimilating the new. If I understand its temper aright, English Theology does not for a moment pretend either that it has said or is saying the last word; but it does hope that such progress as it has made is sound, and that the work upon which it has been engaged will not have to be undone.

By a happy coincidence, almost at the same time with the *Cambridge Essays* there appeared Dr Knowling's *Testimony of St Paul to Christ*, another book crowded with facts exactly stated and judicially weighed, which is a striking illustration of the same tendencies. Altogether we may begin to feel that England is taking its place in the international movement in a manner that is really characteristic and really deserves attention.

I.

In coming to closer quarters with the volume before me, there are just two remarks to be made on the *personnel* of the contributors to it. I am sure that all its readers will regret that the editor should have confined himself to the writing of the Preface. Those who know Dr Swete will not be surprised at his wish to efface himself in this way. But, if I may say so, the essayists who have responded to his invitation should have left him no choice in the matter; they should have risen in a body

[1] *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel* p. 45.

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and insisted upon his taking an equal share with themselves. The world that is interested in Cambridge cannot be content that the University should speak without the mingled learning, gentleness and wisdom of the Regius Professor.

The other remark is that, although the volume is no doubt generally representative of Cambridge, it is not completely so. One rather feels the absence from the list of writers of Dr Kirkpatrick, Dr Stanton, Mr Burkitt, the Master of St John's, and the Dean of Westminster. At the same time we understand that the initiative came from a small society, and we know the difficulties that always stand in the way of making such an enterprise completely representative. It would not be right to do more than just take note of the fact that the book is not quite all that those at a distance might suppose it to be. On the whole the younger generation has had a rather larger part in it than the elder.

The writer of this review approaches the detailed criticism of the essays with some diffidence. The fourteen essays are in part outside his province. Of some of them he cannot speak with any special knowledge. And in respect to all he would wish that the fullest allowance may be made for subjective fallibility of impression and judgement. He hopes that his Cambridge friends will accept his assurance of this, and that they will at the same time forgive the frankness without which criticism is as salt that has lost its savour. *Prima facie* the writer is inclined to think that the strongest sections of the book are those concerned with Science and Philosophy (II, III, IV) and with the New Testament (VIII, X, XI), especially if we may combine with the latter group the essay on Prayer (VII), which seems to the writer particularly valuable. Nos. XII and XIII seem to fall into their natural place as (in more senses than one) subsidiary to these. The last essay is in a manner *hors concours*, and can only be spoken of by itself.

The opening essay on 'The Christian Standpoint' is not one of those which impress me most. It is pleasantly written, and is evidently the work of a cultivated mind; but the effect that it leaves behind is rather intangible. I should be inclined to set this down to a certain looseness of structure. There is a want

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of logical clearness and cohesion. One fails to see exactly how one step in the argument leads to another. The essay appears to be of that familiar type which fills a gap readably enough, but does not contribute much of positive and ponderable value. It is only just to add that in my opinion the writer had an extremely difficult task before him in reducing to concentrated expression a subject at once so wide and so vague.

The next three essays are different from this: they are clear, definite, rigorously coherent, and really constructive. Coming to them as one of the unlearned, I find them supply just what I look for. They seem to be all really abreast of the knowledge and thought of the time. They present in a summary and compact form just what a Christian is interested to know, and what I imagine that most Christians will feel that they can assimilate. Personally, I should give the palm to No. III, Dr Caldecott on 'Philosophy, and the Being of God'. It is no small feat to compress into some forty pages a complete philosophical view of the central truth of religion. And the result, so far as I am able to judge, is a piece of strong and satisfactory thinking.

Dr Caldecott represents the reaction which is so characteristic of our day against the excessive intellectualism of the past. He takes the whole of human nature as he finds it. He seeks to interpret this nature in the interrelation of part with part; and he finds the elements of it projected on an infinite scale into the universe.

Is the objection raised that this method is too anthropomorphic? It may be replied, that what we are concerned with is the interpretation of the universe *to man*; if there are other beings more highly endowed, there will doubtless be another interpretation for them, adapted to their peculiar faculties. But as a fact there are properties in the universe objectively, or in what to us is objectivity, that really correspond to what we find in ourselves. If we are to discover in it a single meaning, it is out of these elements that it must be constructed. Man is conscious of intelligence, and he finds the universe intelligible. That must surely mean that there is at work in it an infinite Intelligence. There is something within himself 'that makes for righteousness': and he sees that there is also something in the universe 'that makes for righteousness'. Nor is it possible for

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him to say that the Power which acts thus is impersonal; because all that he is conscious of in his own personality, all that goes to make up what he means by the word, is reflected without as well as within. It is the person in him that is the bond of union in his own nature; and if there is anything that is apparent in the world, or world of worlds, without, it is its unity. Dr Caldecott does ample justice to the recently propounded theory of an absolute 'Pluralism'. But it is hard to think that this theory can be a serious alternative.

It would be presumption on my part to attempt anything in the way of criticism. And indeed Dr Caldecott carries me along with his argument almost entirely. I would only ask whether his language is always quite consistent with itself—more especially on the subject of the 'impenetrability' of the individual consciousness. As thus:—

'Consciousness is seated in individuals, in centres: these are inaccessible to one another: each of us stands within his own circle, others are to him' (p. 120).

'Individual spirit we took to be impenetrable; the imperviousness, the inwardness, the inaccessibility of the self is rarely questioned—"impervious in a fashion of which the impenetrability of matter is a faint analogue", says Professor Pringle-Pattison' (p. 135).

It is natural that Professor Pringle-Pattison should be quoted in this sense; for is not his name associated with a specially uncompromising view of the subject? But is it not also the case that philosophy in other quarters is becoming rather less uncompromising? And are there not features in Dr Caldecott's own view that would fall into place better on a less rigorous hypothesis?

I cannot part from Dr Caldecott's essay without expressing the lively satisfaction with which I see given to the world in this volume the outlines of a construction which (if one who is not of the *Fach* may be allowed to say so) is at once so genuinely philosophical and so genuinely religious and Christian.

Nearly as high praise may, if I am not mistaken, be given to the companion essay (II) by Mr Tennant on 'The Being of God, in the Light of Physical Science'. Nearly, but not quite. Mr Tennant's essay, like Dr Caldecott's, is just what the readers

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of such a volume will be glad to have—a comprehensive well-rounded survey of his subject from the point of view of the present position of physical science. The essay is lucid, and compact, and thoroughly adapted to its purpose. I only seem to detect—it will be remembered that an outsider is speaking—a little less firmness of handling, more especially in regard to the conception of a First Cause, and on the subject of teleology.

I have just a doubt whether the essayist quite does justice to Mr Huxley. We are reminded (p. 61) that he was the author of the Lay Sermon on 'The Physical Basis of Life'; and it is almost suggested that he ought to have accepted the name of 'materialist'. True, we are told that he was 'a good instance of a scientific thinker who, in spite of his whole habit of mind, lapsed at odd moments to the side of idealism and conceded the position to the idealist's view of ultimate reality' (p. 89). But was not the author of 'The Physical Basis of Life' also the author of the essay on 'Descartes'? And was it not really characteristic of Huxley to hold the scales as evenly as possible between the two seemingly antithetical propositions—on the one hand, that the activities of spirit were to be explained in terms of matter, and on the other hand, that the ultimate reality might rightly be said to be spirit? My impression is that Professor Huxley practically gave up the attempt to reconcile these propositions, but contented himself with stating them side by side.

I observe that we are warned in the Preface that the writers are allowed to use their own spelling. I suppose, therefore, that 'transeunt' (pp. 82, 84, 85) must be taken as a deliberate correction of the dictionaries. Would Mr Tennant have us write 'anteunt'?

The next essay (IV), on 'Man's Origin, and his place in Nature', is by Dr Duckworth, one of the University Lecturers in Science. It fitly takes up the two essays which precede it, and like them is just of the kind that is desirable in such a volume. It is a quiet, straightforward, unpretending statement of the present position of science on the subject of man's place in nature. There is, perhaps, just a little primness of style, reminding one of a cabinet of specimens, in the way in which the subject is divided up into sections and sub-sections. But this, if a fault at all, is eminently a fault on the right side, and contributes to the

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clearness of result which makes the essay such satisfactory reading. To those who are not themselves students of science it conveys a maximum of instruction in a minimum of space.

II.

I wish I could say as much of the two essays which follow, and which carry us over to a different field. The first is by Dr Askwith on 'Sin, and the Need of Atonement'. This is, I think I may say, quite well intentioned, and shews a certain dialectical ability. But it seems to me (though I may be wrong) that this ability has acted rather as a snare. It has led the writer into a long and elaborate preliminary discussion, which to me at least contains little that is really helpful. The writer begins by affirming and developing the proposition that 'the term Sin is at once religious and ethical'; but he seems to me to exaggerate the ethical element in it. Ethics may come in to determine what is rightly regarded as sinful; but the term Sin is, I conceive, essentially religious. It denotes an attitude or condition of the soul in relation to God. It seems to me that we ought never to leave this primary meaning out of sight. There may be some question as to the way in which the attitude or condition implied in the word should be defined. It is often described as an act of conscious disobedience and rebellion. But it must be obvious that many acts of sin do not really possess this character. A man falls into sin, without any rebellious thought, simply out of weakness. Temptation carries him away against his better self. Still, it is essentially the relation of the act to God that makes it Sin. We use all sorts of anthropomorphic language about it; we speak of God as 'offended', as 'displeased', or the like. We do so simply because we cannot help it. We mean to express the relation of a person to a person; and we are obliged to have recourse to words of this class. We know perfectly well that such words as applied to God can be only symbols. His blissful untroubled Essence cannot, in our human sense, suffer hurt or grief or pain. The worm that turns against the hand of man is a comparison immeasurably too great to describe the detriment that man can do to God. But this only brings home to us the poverty and utter inadequacy of language. We do not know what we mean when we speak or think of the contact of infinite

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holiness and infinite love with sin. It must suffice for us that we are led to think of it, and that we have reason to believe that the will of God is that we should think of it, somewhat after the analogy of the effect which the shock of sin has upon finite holiness and finite love. More than this (in substance) I doubt if we can say.

The initial mistake of (as I cannot but think) imperfectly realizing this seems to me to throw out of gear the whole essay. The preliminary discussion, which I am obliged to regard as ineffective, takes up so much space that little is left for the subject of Atonement. I should have thought, indeed, that from the first it was too much to attempt to combine two subjects so large as Sin and Atonement in a single essay; but the disproportion is made still greater by the way in which the first subject is treated. And the element that I must needs think inadequate in the treatment of Sin reacts also upon the treatment of Atonement. I know that Dr Askwith is only going with the multitude when he begins by laying down that 'some views of the Atonement fail to commend themselves because they are unworthy of and inconsistent with the perfection of the character of God Himself'. He is in the majority, and I am in the minority; and of course as it stands the sentence is true. Still, I confess to being one of those who think that as a premiss to an argument it is often too lightly assumed. Through assuming it too lightly I cannot help thinking that the whole work of theological reconstruction has been made artificially easy, and easier than it ought to be. Simple denials and dismissals do not constitute reconstruction. Before a doctrine can be said to be reconstructed, we ought to be able to put the older forms of it into their place. We ought to feel that we understand the part that God intended them to play in the history of His people. As I have said, mere conditions of space must have prevented any attempt at this in the present essay. But, apart from that, I doubt very much whether Dr Askwith is prepared with an explanation for the facts that I think ought to be explained.

It is characteristic of Dr Askwith—and the feature strikes us all the more because it is so little characteristic of Cambridge—that the side from which he approaches his subject is so much more *a priori* and philosophica than biblical.

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Generally speaking, he may be said to follow in the steps of Dr Moberly; but the small scale to which this part of his subject is reduced makes the omissions and abruptnesses stand out rather conspicuously. The biblical passages to which he appeals are chosen quite eclectically, and those which do not fit readily into his view are simply passed by. I am quite aware that there are many to whom this method will commend itself; but, for the reasons stated, I cannot regard his essay as any long step towards the permanent reconstruction at which it aims.

The essay next in order (VI, 'Revelation and Modern Knowledge')—I say it with real sorrow—compels me to speak more strongly. I can only wish, and greatly wish, that the whole essay were away.

Dr J. M. Wilson is a writer whom one is always glad to have on one's own side. When the course before him is clear, when he is dealing with a subject of which he has complete mastery, his style is admirable—direct, forcible, lucid in exposition, serious and yet bright, at once earnest and inspiring. I doubt if any other writer in the volume possesses these qualities in equal degree.

Another quality that he always has is courage. If anything unpopular needs to be said, he is always prepared to say it. In the present instance he thinks that he has something unpopular to say, and we can almost see him bracing himself for the task.

But the misfortune is that in this case he has not really mastered his subject. He has not read enough, and he has not thought enough about it. For the time—I must needs think all through the essay—the accurate scientific thinker is asleep in him, and he is carried off his feet by an antithesis that is little more than verbal.

There are two ways, we are told, of conceiving of Revelation: one is objective, the other subjective; one *to* man from without, the other *through* man from within.

'By the word "objective" as applied to revelation, I mean any communication of truth that comes to a mind in and through the phenomenal world. By the word "subjective", applied to revelation, I mean communication of truth in and through the world of personality. It will therefore include the action of God regarded as Transcendent and as Immanent, so far as this distinction is valid, on the human mind. The contrast between the words is not one of revelation to the subject by God, and of

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revelation to the subject by itself, but a contrast of revelation by God to the subject through phenomena or through personalities' (p. 228 n.).

What responsible writer in this age, or—I had almost said—in any age, ever thought of the leading method of revelation otherwise than as 'through personalities'? Perhaps at the time when the most crudely literal construction was put on the Books of Genesis and Exodus, there might have been some justification for speaking of revelation 'through the phenomenal world'. I cannot think of any other conception to which the phrase would be rightly applicable. Who really thinks, or has ever really thought, of the prophetic inspiration—the type of all inspiration—as 'phenomenal'? What is called the subjective mode of revelation is no modern discovery, but goes back almost as far as the correlated ideas of inspiration and revelation at all. 'No prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost' (2 Pet. i 21). What could be more completely 'subjective'? Or, if we take the most extreme view of inspiration, the form in which it is conceived by Philo, how else does even he think of the Holy Spirit as acting but through the faculties and organs of men? The very term *θεόπνευστος* from the beginning told its own story.

The mere word 'revelation' is a stumbling-block to Dr Wilson (p. 225), only because it is externalized—as if it were anything more than the external expression of an internal process; and as if without such external expression any kind of communication were possible.

The whole question is simple enough, when it is not darkened by inconsiderate language. The really important point is safeguarded by Dr Wilson himself, when he asserts the active energizing of the Holy Spirit on the minds of men. It is true that here too his language does not always satisfy me. He leaves us in doubt how far this active energizing has about it anything specific, any concentration upon a particular purpose of God. He seems inclined (as we might expect) to exalt the ordinary working of the Holy Spirit in man at the cost of the extraordinary. And yet I think that I could come to an understanding with him on this head. My quarrel is with the negative side of his contention, not with the positive. I could gladly

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adopt the really beautiful words in which he speaks of the universe

'as essentially one continuous whole, in which, from hidden sources of life within, which we call Divine, mysterious and ordered movements spring up, progressing towards some remote end'.

All that we have to add would be that there are greater and lesser or higher and lower ends, and that there are also ends within ends.

In the name of his false antithesis we are called upon to give up 'finally' (*bis*) beliefs with which, even if it were true, it could have nothing to do; for instance, the common opinion that

'first individuals, then a family, then a nation, and then a Church, are the Divinely selected channels and depositaries of God's revelation to man in the past' (p. 225).

What is there really *ab extra* in this? Why should not the Divine Spirit, operating within, make use of 'first individuals, then a family', and so on? The inward working is implied in the words 'channels and depositaries'. I can imagine that Dr Wilson does not like 'depositaries'; but it means in this connexion the same thing as 'channels', which Dr Wilson must use along with the rest of us. The affirmations objected to are merely a description of plain historical facts.

As the essay goes on, the confusion becomes deeper and more hopeless, especially when it reaches the Person of our Lord. Here it has to be admitted that the revelation is in some sense objective, though the revelation through prophets and holy men is no less objective in its degree.

Of course there are substantial questions connected with Revelation and its counterpart Inspiration; and the present time might have been opportune for dealing with them. The problem of Inspiration (and therefore ultimately of Revelation) is largely psychological; and, if I am not mistaken, some recent work—more particularly by Giesebrecht (*Die Berufsbegabung d. alttest. Propheten*, Göttingen, 1897) and by A. B. Davidson (in his posthumous work on Hebrew Prophecy)—enables us to carry the psychological analysis some way further. If Dr Wilson had helped us in this, we should have been grateful to him; but, as it is, he presents the melancholy spectacle of a strong man

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entangled in a net that he has spread for himself, and that his struggles to escape do but wind about him more tightly. I think with dismay of the unlucky student who takes up this essay in the hope of finding his ideas cleared up and deepened.

Fault-finding is an ungracious task, and it seems better to have done with it as soon as possible. There is another essay in this neighbourhood (IX, 'The Permanent Value of the Old Testament') which rather disappoints the expectations that I should naturally have formed of it. Readers of the JOURNAL will be familiar with the careful judicious work of Dr Barnes; and his contribution to the present volume is both careful and judicious. My complaint of it would be that it does not rise to the height of its subject. It singles out a detail or two here and there; but the permanent value of the Old Testament surely ought to be traced on grander and more comprehensive lines. Is it not really to the Old Testament that we owe the enduring forms of our religion—the essential contents of our doctrine of God, and the typical forms of the relation of the soul to Him? Where else do we get our conception of God as a Person, endowed with the highest moral perfections? And where else do we get our models and examples of devotion—of self-abasement and contrition, of fervent aspiration and worship, of prayer and praise?

It makes no real difference to this position of things, either (1) that behind the Old Testament there should be a dim background of Semitic religion, out of which by divine appointment and guiding these higher forms were to arise; or (2) that in the fullness of time both the knowledge of God and the shaping of the soul's attitude towards Him should have been carried to a yet further point of perfection by the Incarnation of His Son. To the Old Testament belongs the imperishable glory of having cast the moulds into which the religions of all the most civilized races of mankind were to run. To this day we go back to the prophets of Israel for a classical expression of the fundamental attributes of God. And to this day we go back to the Psalmists of Israel if we desire to learn how to worship Him.

The real value of Dr Barnes's essay is as a sketch of the growth of Messianic doctrine, not over the whole of its course, but from the end of the eighth to the end of the sixth century B. C. Here

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the writer is on his own ground, and we are glad to be instructed by him. I rather doubt, however, whether anything is really gained by trying to read the ideas of kingship and kingdom into the description of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah lii–liii. We are in no way bound to think that the Messianic idea progressed only along a single continuous line. So far as a particular figure lies behind the portraiture of these chapters, is it not rather that of the prophet than of the king?

The essay on 'Prayer' (VII) is to me one of the most attractive in the volume. It derives especial interest and pathos from the fact that the writer, Dr A. W. Robinson, stepped into the place of his brother Forbes Robinson, whose loss Cambridge is not alone in mourning. No one would have thought from the essay itself that the subject had been taken up in an emergency and not by deliberate choice. But apart from the circumstances of its origin, and apart from the further fact that the essay is an excellent specimen of the thoughtfulness and gravity characteristic of the volume generally, it marks a real step in advance on the important subject with which it deals. And it is a specially encouraging feature that this advance is one that can be at once appropriated by every individual Christian.

The full title of the essay is 'Prayer, in relation to the idea of Law'; and it is on this side that the advance is chiefly felt. I think it may be said that the bugbears which have gathered round the subject are really cleared away. The essay itself refers to the controversy which arose over Prof Tyndall's famous Belfast Address in 1872, and attention is rightly called to the difference in the position then and now.

I cannot claim to have followed the history of the subject closely enough to say how much of this difference is due to a memorable paper which appeared in the first number of *The Hibbert Journal* (Oct. 1902) by Sir Oliver Lodge. In my own mind that paper stands out prominently, though I may perhaps be using it in a sense not altogether intended by its author[1]. The same thing might possibly be said of Dr Robinson, who quotes the paper, and with whose somewhat extended application of the principles involved in it I entirely sympathize. I will

[1] Although it seems right to say this, I have, on the other hand, no reason to think that the use of which I am speaking would be unwelcome.

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venture to go back for a moment to the point at which this paper struck into the discussion.

There was an eloquent passage in which the late Prof Tyndall combined, as he was wont, his Alpine experiences with his scientific knowledge.

'The principle [of the conservation of energy] teaches us that the Italian wind, gliding over the crest of the Matterhorn, is as firmly ruled as the earth in its orbital revolution round the sun; and that the fall of its vapour into clouds is exactly as much a matter of necessity as the return of the seasons. The dispersion, therefore, of the slightest mist, by the special volition of the Eternal, would be as much a miracle as the rolling of the Rhone over the Grimsel precipices, down the valley of Hasli to Meyringen and Brientz. . . . Without the disturbance of a natural law, quite as serious as the stoppage of an eclipse, or the rolling of the river Niagara up the Falls, no act of humiliation, individual or national, could prevent one shower from heaven, or deflect towards us a single beam of the sun.'

Sir O. Lodge demurs to this, 'even from the strictly scientific point of view'.

'The law of the conservation of energy is needlessly dragged in when it has nothing really to do with it. We ourselves, for instance, though we have no power, nor hint of any power, to override the conservation of energy, are yet readily able, by a simple physical experiment, or by an engineering operation, to deflect a ray of light, or to dissipate a mist, or divert a wind, or pump water uphill; and further objections may be made to the form of the statement, notably to the word "therefore" as used to connect propositions entirely different in their terms.' (*H. J.* i. 50.)

A little further on the same writer observes, with that pointed simplicity which is characteristic of arguments that are really decisive, that Prayer for rain

'need involve no greater interference with the order of nature than is implied in a request to a gardener to water the garden'.

We naturally ask ourselves why it was that anything so obvious did not occur to us in this form before. Of course it does not follow at once that Prayer for rain is right, or that it will necessarily be answered. All that really follows is the removal of what I have called the 'bugbear' that Prayer for rain involves

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a gigantic interference with the order of Nature. The interference need be no greater, except in scale, than that involved in the most ordinary use of a watering-pot. The larger question, which remains in the background, whether anything is ever accomplished by direct divine volition, is one that the humblest Christian can answer for himself on the basis of his own experience. He knows full well that prayers of his without number have been directly and immediately answered.

There will still be room for discussion—what sort of prayers are endorsed by this experience and what are not. The essayist is doubtless right in saying that we shall hear no more of the proposal to establish a hospital for the testing of the effect of prayer by experiment. A Bible-reading person would call that a 'tempting of God', on which he would look with horror. But there is nothing to prevent us, in the silence of our own closets, from observing what kinds of prayer are answered more unambiguously than others, or from conforming our own practice to the result of this examination.

The essay contains many wise remarks to this general effect. And it also contains (p. 299) some interesting speculation as to the method by which it may perhaps in the future be discovered that prayers are answered.

III.

I have already said that the triad of essays that may be connected with the New Testament is, with the philosophic and scientific triad, and with the essay last mentioned, the most permanently valuable part of the book. Perhaps there is a little more overlapping than might have been necessary. But, as this is on important points like the Resurrection, it need not be regretted. Neither need we regret the little difference of style and mode of treatment which marks off No. XI from Nos. VIII and X. The excellence of these two essays lies partly in their definite and concrete character. In No. XI the concreteness might perhaps have been still further increased with advantage, but it comes in as a rule in another way.

The first essay of the triad (VIII) is on the subject of Miracles. To one who only skimmed the outline of the argument prefixed

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to the essay, it might hardly do itself justice. I might at least myself have been tempted to describe that outline as rather more commonplace than it need have been. I cannot help thinking that time is wasted in discussing before the fact what amount of evidence will justify us in accepting the miraculous. There is no quantity known to arithmetic or algebra by which that amount can be measured. It seems to me more to the purpose to point out that we do as a matter of fact possess the evidence of one—St Paul—who undoubtedly believed himself to have worked miracles, and who testifies with undeniable good faith to the fact that miracles were worked around him. That ought to be a fixed datum in the discussion.

Another small criticism that I might make would be—that it might have been well to keep more distinct from each other the conception in the minds of those on whom we rely for the evidence bearing on miracles, and the conception present to our own minds now. The definition of Miracle as 'an extremely wonderful event waiting to be fitted into its place in the order of Nature' is excellent in its way, but it is entirely modern. It would not be true to say that the ancients had *no* idea of fitting miracle into its place in the order of Nature; but it would probably be true to say that the writers of the first century with whom we are most concerned had no thought of any such thing. This does, perhaps, in some places affect the course of the argument; and it is desirable that it should be consciously kept in view from the first.

With these slight exceptions, I have nothing to say that is not praise. The strong point of the essay is in its thoughtful remarks on points of detail.

Dr Chase (in essay X, 'The Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism') has much in common with Dr Murray. In particular, he shares with him the great merit of conveying the impression that his work is always at first-hand. He writes with his eye directly upon the object. And he brings to bear a sober, weighty, even-handed judgement. I have read this essay with a strong feeling (in the main) of sympathy and agreement—of sympathy and agreement even where I am conscious that what Dr Chase says, as well as what I should myself be able to say, is something short of convincing. I suppose that the feeling

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of race, and of like environment, has a good deal to do with it. I can quite understand that a Continental scholar, even with similar predilections, would sum up differently. Still, I cannot but rejoice that Dr Chase's summing up should take the form it does. From an educational point of view, his essay is just what I should like to see put into the hands of a student, especially a more advanced student, who is to investigate for himself.

A notable point about Dr Chase is his candour. There are many things that are commonly slurred over, but which he does not slur over. He discusses these just as one would wish them discussed, not hastily putting a new patch on to the old garment, but feeling his way towards the interweaving of new and old. That which is not itself absolutely final and satisfying, may yet be a step towards it. Dr Chase does not write like one in a hurry, and this wise suspense of judgement I can only commend.

A writer of this type will naturally have some individualisms; and, naturally, there will be some of these that will not command every one's assent. The point on which perhaps I should be most inclined to part company myself is the peculiar theory that the Acts, although it was doubtless published after the Third Gospel, was really planned and composed before it. I agree cordially that St Luke himself was probably the author of both works. It is as common for English scholars to assume this as it is for scholars on the Continent to assume the opposite. So far, I can side with my countryman; and I can also join with him in the belief that the two years' stay at Caesarea (Acts xxiv 27) was a probable occasion on which some at least of the materials for both treatises were collected. But I am unable to go with the rest of Dr Chase's construction on p. 380 f. I greatly doubt if St Paul ever suggested to his companion 'the task of telling in outline the story of his apostolate'. I question whether the Apostle ever wished his own biography to be written as his biography. I do not think that we can generalize from the first chapter of Galatians. The Apostle was too intent on preaching the Gospel to care to dwell on his own past where there was no special necessity for doing so. I suspect that the historical interest, strictly so called, hardly began to arise before the beginning of the sixties. I am aware that this is only

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speculation; and I do not give it for more; but it is the view that I am inclined to prefer.

Dr Mason's essay (XI, 'Christ in the New Testament') has a special quality of style. I hope that readers will observe the skill with which a great amount of close exegesis is woven into the main texture of the essay, without any parade of learning. Not only is the exegesis close, but the result of it is handled with such dexterity of expression that the essay almost amounts to a paraphrase, especially of the Gospels, 'in modern speech'—and not only in modern speech but in very elegant and finished speech. I am inclined to think that this is the most distinctive feature in the essay.

With the main lines of Dr Mason's criticism I am quite agreed. But, once again, I am agreed as an Englishman. It is the common ground on which so many of us stand. I think, however, that Dr Mason passes rather too lightly over some points that are sure to be challenged—indeed, that *are* challenged in books more or less widely circulated. Instances occur (e. g.) on pp. 432, 437, 438. I am afraid that Dr Mason is rather too optimistic and takes too much for granted. It would have strengthened his essay if he had shewn rather more signs of having considered objections. This is where Dr Chase gains in weight and authority.

It will not be expected that I should always be able to follow the exegesis. I should not be sorry if I could have done so in the case of the note on p. 449; but I cannot get Dr Mason's sense out of the (corrected) Greek. What of πάλιν?

IV.

The two essays that come next (XII, 'Christ in History', and XIII, 'The ethical significance of Christian doctrines') have been already described as subsidiary to those which have gone before. The object of the first (by Mr Foakes-Jackson) is to shew how the verdict of history confirms the New Testament witness to Christ; and the object of the second (by Mr Bethune-Baker) is to vindicate the place of doctrine by bringing out its intellectual necessity and its moral value.

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The first essay is of a type that I am as a rule inclined to deprecate (see *J. T. S.* iv 10 ff), which resolves itself into a rapid excursion over the whole field of Christian history. In such a hurried career it is difficult to say anything of permanent value. I must confess too that at first I was not impressed very favourably. To appeal to the early Gnostics, and then to the Apologists, with hardly even an allusion to the abundant material contained in the Apostolic Fathers, who from their mere position in time could not fail to be specially valuable, did not seem to me hopeful. But I gladly confess that the essay improved, and became quite as pointed as it could be expected to be, as it went on.

The questions that I should be disposed to ask with regard to the essay on Doctrine are, (1) whether it might not have been rather more concise—the author has command of such an easy and graceful pen that it is apt to carry him away; and (2) whether it would not have gained by the concreteness which (to my mind) forms such an admirable feature in Nos. VIII and X.

I should also have to make the same criticism of this essay as of No. XI, that it takes too much for granted; the writer does not ask himself so constantly as he ought, Is this that I am saying wholly and absolutely true?

For instance, the leading idea of the essay is expressed on p. 538. It is summed up in the words:—

'He based—the historical Jesus of the earliest tradition based—all His ethical teaching on Himself.'

But then we are confronted with Harnack's famous thesis:—

'The Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the Father only and not with the Son.' (*What is Christianity?* p. 144.)

I am more inclined to agree with Mr Bethune-Baker than with Harnack. Still I cannot but feel that his way of stating the case is too absolute; it needs examining, qualifying, and guarding—more especially the phrase as to the 'earliest tradition'.

The essay has many good ideas scattered up and down, and I can quite believe that an intelligent survey of the whole position lies behind it. But the phrase that occurs to me in regard to it is

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that it is somewhat discursive. I cannot help thinking that it might have been better still than it is, if it had cost a greater and more concentrated effort to write it at all.

The concluding essay of the book is felicitously assigned to the Master of Trinity. The real function of this essay is, I conceive, not so much to forge a link in the chain of logic or to add a course to the edifice of learning, as to *make the book end upon the right note*. And for that purpose, such a gift as the Master's was peculiarly appropriate. A right instinct has guided his treatment of the subject committed to him ('The Christian Ideal and the Christian Hope'). He appears to have taken it up in the first instance rather as an outlying branch of apologetics, but he found that the subject did not lend itself easily to this, whereas it did lend itself to an expression of faith.

Dr Butler does well to emphasize the religious side of his subject. My only question would be whether he emphasizes it quite enough at its central point. The true ground—at least the supreme ground—of the Christian Hope is in that piercing word, 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' Round that word as a centre are grouped a number of other words that are also piercing. They assure us that the world of being is not exhausted by the world of sight. Their function is not limited to the light which they throw on the state of the happy dead. They make us aware that there are many things besides for which perhaps we have no place in our everyday philosophy.

To sum up. We must not expect in the *Cambridge Essays* exactly the kind of newness that was found in *Essays and Reviews* and in *Lux Mundi*. Neither must we expect exactly the kind of corporate feeling that was specially characteristic of *Lux Mundi*. The book in no sense inaugurates a movement. There is really, I venture to think, no movement that needs to be inaugurated. All that is wanted is that we should go on steadily and progressively as we are. And that is where the Cambridge book seems to me to be so admirable. With the exception of a single essay—and that not really representative of Cambridge—it gives every promise both of steadiness and of progressiveness.

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I should be inclined to say of the volume as a whole that it was eminently educational. Here again there is but one exception in a higher degree, and one or two more perhaps in a lower. And the fact that there are just these few and on the whole slight exceptions, suggests to me the remark with which I will close. Accumulating experience seems to shew that what is most wanted in these joint volumes is some means of securing the maintenance of a more even level—a level of soundness in substance as well as of style. How this might best be done is a further question—whether by strengthening the hands of the editor, or arranging for thorough and searching discussion among the contributors before the volume goes out into the world. I am inclined to think that the latter method would be more effective. And, although the process would no doubt be rather delicate, and although it would add to the responsibility of contributors, I still believe that it might be done. After all, it is well to have one's weak places brought out, and one's defects made good, before publication rather than after.

W. SANDAY.

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