and yet it is only as a whole that we can attach any meaning to its being inspired. There is no sense in saying that every separate sentence is inspired: we know that every separate sentence is not. There are utterances of bad men in the Bible, and suggestions of the devil. Neither is there any sense in going through the Bible with a blue pencil, and striking out what is not inspired that we may stand by the rest. . . . No doubt it is a task for the historian to trace the gradual progress of revelation and to indicate its stages, but the historian would be the first to acknowledge that the questions so often raised about the inspiration of persons or books or sentences or arguments are mostly unreal. We will never know what inspiration is until Scripture has resolved itself for us into a unity." This is all omitted. Whether it is being quite fair to James Denney to do so we must leave the reader to judge. Most living authors, one imagines, would not be very happy in thinking that their writings might be liable to this kind of treatment at the well-meaning hands of a future generation.

Denney himself usually refers to the apostles as St. Paul, St. John, etc. This edition of his work, however, prefers to drop the customary prefix throughout. This is a pity. There is a reverence due to the apostles which the traditional mode of referring to them helps to preserve. There are many Pauls; there is only one St. Paul.

The Biblical Doctrine of the State

By The Rev. Philip E. Hughes, M.A., B.D.

THE question of the relations between Church and State is one of outstanding significance for the present time, and it is therefore a subject deserving of the most careful consideration. In many respects it is a difficult and complicated subject in connection with which many divergent and ill-considered opinions have been expressed, insufficiently related to scriptural principles. Such principles should be both the starting-point and the setting of all Christian thinking.

I

The first and all-pervading scriptural principle is that of *the universal sovereignty of God*—over all creation and, consequently, over *all men*. This sovereignty, it should be noted, is not confined to *godfearing* men, who willingly acknowledge it; it covers no less really those who rebel against it. Man in revolt does not dissolve the rule of God over him, as the biblical testimony to God's judgment and punishment of sinners makes plain. No matter what men or nations may desire or presume, they are still subject to the divine rule, wrath, and judgment. God is not helpless before rebellious man. "The kingdom is the Lord's, and

He is the Governor among the nations. . . . The whole earth is full of His glory. . . . All nations before Him are as nothing. . . . Every one of us shall give account of himself to God " (Ps. xxii. 28 ; Is. vi. 3, xl. 17 ; Rom. xiv. 12). This perspective involves the supremacy of God as Creator and Governor and the dependence of man as creature and subject. The scriptural focus also includes in its purview the new creation, the restoration or palingenesis of all things in Christ, the new heavens and the new earth peopled by those who are new creatures in and through Him—in short, the realization of that State whose citizens have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and into which no sin or defilement can enter (cf. Acts iii. 21 ; Eph. i. 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 17 ; Is. lxv. 17 ; 2 Pet. iii. 13 ; Rev. vii. 9, 14, xxi. 1, 27).

Against this background, then, and in this setting, the rule of God alone is absolute ; all human rule is seen as subordinate and derivative: " By Me," declares the Divine Wisdom, " kings reign and princes decree justice ; by Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth " (Prov. viii. 15f.).

II

Our second major premiss is that of *the universal sinfulness of man*, to which all Scripture bears clear witness (cf., e.g., Rom. iii. 9-23). The expression and outworking of human sinfulness must necessarily be restrained within certain limits if communal and civic life is to be possible and tolerable. Were God to allow sin to flourish unchecked, it would hardly be a sign of His love and mercy, for the world would soon become such a cesspool of the vilest filth and hatred that to be born into it would be a calamity beyond description. Thus even in the scriptural warnings concerning the punishment to which all breakers of God's law and covenant are liable, we may discern a token of the Creator's concern for His creatures. In fact, we may go further and assert that the imposition of law upon mankind is associated with God's *redemptive* purpose, inasmuch as it renders human society a suitable environment within which the Gospel may operate effectively. In other words, the State which impartially administers justice is a setting which is conducive to the existence and growth of the Church. This is suggested, for example, by St. Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 1-4, where he exhorts Christians to offer prayers *and thanksgiving* " for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty : for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth ". Thus, although the administration of law by the State is designed and instituted for mankind in its present capacity as a fallen and sinful race, yet neither the law nor the State should be regarded as themselves evil or intolerable.

One of the basic concepts of Scripture is that of the law as actually *God-given*. To speak of Moses as the great law-giver is, from the scriptural point of view, not strictly accurate : Scripture depicts him as the law-receiver and law-mediator. The fundamental principles of all law are enshrined in the precepts of the decalogue which Moses received (Ex. xx. 1-17, xxxi. 18, xxxiv. 1 ; Deut. v. 1-22, x. 1-5). The

two tables enjoin, first, man's duty to God and, secondly, his duty to his fellowmen, and it is not unimportant to notice that the second follows after and indeed flows from the first (cf. Mt. xxii. 37-40). It is necessary also to remember that, in view of the universal sinfulness of mankind, these laws are universally binding: they bind both the Church and the State.

Just as God, the supreme Judge, is no respecter of persons (Acts x. 34; Rom. ii. 11; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iii. 25), so, too, all human judges must display impartiality towards all without exception, otherwise they show themselves to be betrayers of a sacred trust and despisers of the law. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment," said Moses to the judges he appointed; "but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man: *for the judgment is God's*" (Deut. i. 17). This last statement, which I have emphasized, is of the utmost importance: the judge is the minister of God's judgment, and universal justice is an essential part of the will of God.

III

What we have already said points the way to our third basic principle in connection with this subject of the State, that, namely, of the operation of *universal or common grace* (as distinct from special or regenerating grace). Law-consciousness is, in fact, one of the most notable manifestations of this common grace. Not only does Scripture regard the law as God-given in an external sense (as we have seen), but it also regards it as God-given in an *internal* sense. Since the *external* giving of the law on Sinai was particularly associated with God's elect people of Israel, it would probably be more correct for us to view it as in some respects a manifestation of God's *special* grace, as a tributary to the stream of God's redemptive purpose, moving towards Christ, the perfect and only Law-Keeper (cf. Deut. xviii. 18 f.; Ps. xl. 7 f.; Rom. ix. 4 f.; Gal. iii. 24—"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith").

The *internally* given law, however, was not entrusted to a special people, but is universally implanted in the human heart and indicates the path of righteousness to the heathen as well as to the saint. St. Paul speaks of it as the law of *conscience*, written in the hearts of all men (Rom. ii. 11-15). This inner law provides a standard either of accusation or of vindication whereby motives and actions may be assessed. Yet the heathen, who possesses this internal law but has not been confronted with the externally given law, is not without a source of external witness to God, for he is surrounded by the natural revelation of the created order, which points unmistakably to the Creator's "eternal power and Godhead", and thus to the creature's dependence and subordination. This external witness is also a manifestation of God's universal or common grace, and it renders inexcusable those who refuse to acknowledge the supreme sovereignty of God (Rom. i. 18 ff.).

Hence we may deduce from Scripture that there is no class or nation of men that is incapacitated for the setting up and maintenance of a State which is founded upon principles of justness and order; and we assert that this benefit enjoyed even by sinful men is a consequence of

Scripture frequently affirms that a nation which honours God and orders its life in accordance with His Word and Law will be prosperous, internally harmonious, and internationally influential, whereas a nation that forgets God and forsakes His ways can only expect declension, discord, and judgment (cf. Deut. xxviii-xxxii ; Josh. i. 7 ff ; Ps. cvi ; etc.). " Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee," warned the prophet (Jer. ii. 19). In our own day we have seen the sort of State that apostate Germany received, and the nature of the State which holds sway in atheist Russia. That apostasy and atheism should be associated with inhumanity and evil government is no coincidence : the latter is the effect of and a judgment upon the former. But these solemn examples are not remote from *us* : they are a warning to us in England, and it is for us to pay heed to them in all seriousness. If we discern signs of decline in our own national life, the easy and complacent thing to do is simply to " blame the State " ; but the wise and scriptural thing is to examine *ourselves*, and our national standards, yes, *and our Church*, to see whether or to what degree our living and thinking are conducted in accordance with the Law and Word of God. Scripture constantly admonishes us, both individually and corporately, not merely to look outwards, but to look inwards, and, of course, as Christians, to look upwards.

2. We must not forget that Scripture indicates that *even pagan and heathen States set forward God's purposes*, albeit unconsciously and unwillingly. This teaching is an integral component in the grand perspective of the absolute and universal sovereignty of Almighty God. Neither man nor devil can ever frustrate His purposes. Thus heathen Assyria is called " the rod of God's anger " for the punishment of unfaithful Israel (Is. x. 5 ; cf. Deut. xxviii. 47-50), and Cyrus the Persian monarch is called " God's shepherd " and " God's anointed " because he is an instrument, though all unwittingly, under the divine control (Is. xliv. 28 ; xlv. 1). The outstanding example is that of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, who, in delivering Jesus over to be crucified, was, at the same time, unknown to himself, acting in line with " the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God " (Acts ii. 23). Thus we see how even wicked States and their rulers are unconsciously caught into the flood-stream of the divine purposes. This perspective of faith should be a strong bulwark to all Christians to-day as we are confronted with the dark menace of godless Russia. Stalin and his minions cannot in any way frustrate or deflect the will of our Sovereign God. God will promote His purposes even through them.

3. Let us also humbly remember that it is not unknown for religious leaders and ecclesiastical systems to be fierce opponents of the Gospel. The blame does not always lie at the door of the State ! Our Lord's bitterest enemies were the religious Pharisees, not the pagan State authorities. It was the Church leader Caiaphas who plotted Christ's death, not Pontius Pilate. It was in the first place the religious Jews who persecuted the early Christians with the utmost hatred. The Inquisition was the horrible machine of a Church that professed to be Christian.

VI

Enough has been said to show that the Bible teaches a very high doctrine of the State. The reason for this is that the source of all authority and justice is God. Obedience to the State is, in fact, obedience to God. St. Paul, as we have seen, declares that " there is no authority but of God ", that civil rulers are " God's ministers ", and that therefore to resist their authority is to resist " the ordinance of God ". The State, too, must remember that its authority is derived, that it holds its position *under God*, and therefore that it is to administer justice with strict impartiality, without fear or favour, for, as Moses stressed, " the judgment is God's ". " The first duty of subjects towards their rulers," wrote Calvin, " is to entertain the most honourable views of their office, recognizing it as a delegated jurisdiction from God, and, on that account, receiving and reverencing them as the ministers and ambassadors of God ".[1] It is not without significance that our Lord said to Pilate, " Thou couldst have no authority at all against me, except it were given thee from above " (John xix. 11), especially when we consider that although Pilate was a definitely pagan ruler, yet Christ submitted Himself to his authority.

Thus false dualistic views of Church and State must be shunned. The Church must not regard the State as a monster, nor must she regard herself as inviolable and impeccable. The contention that the temporal power has no jurisdiction over the spiritualty was effectively and scripturally dealt with four centuries ago by Luther in his *Address to the Christian Nobility*. In the course of this *Address* he says: " Forasmuch as the temporal power has been ordained by God for the punishment of the bad and the protection of the good, therefore we must let it do its duty throughout the whole Christian body, without respect of persons, whether it strike popes, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, or whoever it may be. . . . Whatever the ecclesiastical law has said in opposition to this is merely the invention of Romanist arrogance. For this is what St. Paul says to all Christians: ' Let every soul ' (I suppose including the popes !) ' be subject unto the higher powers ' ".

But, it will be asked, what of the State that is obviously wicked and unjust and monstrous? Are we passively to submit to the jurisdiction of such a State? If the great biblical principles expounded above have been grasped, the answer to this question will be plain. The whole matter is one of the law *of God*, the justice *of God*, and the authority *of God*. If the State is enforcing a form of law which is clearly foreign to the scriptural law of God, if it demands of us that we should repudiate our allegiance to God and His Word, then, as those who owe loyalty to Him who is Lord of lords and King of kings, our duty is perfectly plain. The judgment of God which such a State ought but fails to wield will be wielded inexorably by God against that State. Its sword will be turned against itself. And as for Christians, Calvin's words sum up their position admirably: " In that obedience which we hold to be due to the commands of rulers, we must always make the exception, nay, must be particularly careful, that it is not incompatible with obedience to Him to whose will the wishes of all kings should be

[1] *Institutes*, IV. xx. 22.

subject, to whose decrees their commands must yield, to whose majesty their sceptres must bow. . . . We are subject to the men who rule over us, but subject only in the Lord. If they command anything against Him let us not pay the least regard to it ".[1] Scripture supplies us with the noble examples of Daniel, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. To such a perverted authority we should reply with the Apostles : " Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. . . . We ought to obey God rather than men " (Acts iv. 19 ; v. 29). Yet let us remember that these words were spoken, not to the State, but to the *ecclesiastical* authorities! The Church, no less than the State, which seeks to enforce requirements that are contrary to the Word and Law of God has become a Church of man or of Satan and can no longer hold our allegiance.

Too often to-day the Church speaks as though the responsibility for present conditions were all on the side of the State, as though it is the State which has obligations to the Church, and not *vice versa*. Surely it is needful in these perilous times for Church and State to see and acknowledge that they have a *mutual responsibility* to each other. Surely it is high time for us Church-people to shoulder *our* responsibility to the State, namely, to remind it of its position of dependence under God, and to educate it by every means possible concerning its essentially God-given standing and function. We must, indeed, recapture the vision of Church and State as, under God, complementary institutions, both deriving their authority from the same Lord, and both designed for the benefit of fallen human society, the one as an instrument of special, the other of common, grace. Let us, with the utmost sincerity, proclaim to the State the solemn scriptural admonition : " *Take heed what ye do ; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you ; take heed and do it : for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts* " (2 *Chron.* xix. 6 f.). No words could be more appropriate than these. To-day we desperately need to recapture the *theocratic* world view.

[1] *Institutes*, IV. xx. 32.

Contemporary Commentary

A Quarterly Review of Church Affairs and Theological Trends

BY THE REV. F. J. TAYLOR, M.A.

CONVERSION BY RADIO

IT is said that in Ecuador an American broadcasting station exists for the purpose of securing direct religious conversions by radio, but elsewhere the impersonality of the microphone has been generally regarded as inimical to the achievement of direct evangelistic results. Nevertheless Listener Research has revealed the fact that very large numbers of non-churchgoers, perhaps even of non-believers, listen