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# The Churchman

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1944

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Vol. LVIII. No. 3. New Series.

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PRICE : ONE SHILLING

*"The Churchman," 1s. quarterly. Annual subscription, 4s. 6d. post free.*  
*Church Book Room Press, Ltd., Dean Wace House, Wine Office Court, E.C.4*

## Editorial.

OUR readers will appreciate the opportunity of reading three of the papers which were read at the recent Conference of the Evangelical Fellowship of Theological Literature. The subject chosen for the Conference was "Revelation" and the papers included in this number deal with Revelation and Science, and Revelation and the Word of God; we hope that it may be possible to include in a subsequent number of *The Churchman* the remaining paper of the Conference, The Rationalization of Revelation.

The papers will be valued for their scholarship, but chiefly for their fresh contribution to a subject which is of absorbing interest and challenging to all who are thinkers and seekers after truth. In the paper on the attitude of Science to Revelation there are many things said which we welcome and things which needed to be said today, especially when the writer calls attention to the change of emphasis which has characterised scientific thinking during the past century. "Whereas the early scientists, with their faith in the Creator given to them by Revelation, could study Nature with the confidence that the knowledge was worth while in itself, the aspect of knowledge which is uppermost to-day is that it confers power." "The pursuit of the maxim 'knowledge is power' is the full-blooded expression of man's independence of God, which is the essence of his pride."

The two papers on the Bible and Revelation are complementary. The great question of the Authority of the Bible is fundamental to every student of the Word of God, and it challenges the foundation of his Christian Faith; therefore we welcome any frank discussion of the problem, though not necessarily agreeing with all the conclusions. We believe that frank discussion does help to clarify the issue and thus enable the Christian to speak with a more certain sound. Surely it is imperative today for the Church to be able to speak with authority and give an authoritative message.

The remaining article in this number of *The Churchman* deals with an entirely different subject—"The Church and Social Righteousness." It is a 'live' issue about which there is a good deal of confused thinking. Few seem to realise how tangled the human situation is to-day and how desperate is the need for truths to be said which may "save us from the disaster of the persistent illusion of human perfectibility."

As the writer declares, "The Gospel has a word to speak to just such a tangled human situation" but "only a genuinely penitent Church can give it."

# Revelation and the Scientific Attitude.

BY THE REV. D. R. VICARY, M.A., B.Sc.

**T**HE claim that the Christian makes for Revelation is that it is God-given, depending on the divine initiative. It is not merely the knowledge of God in an intellectual sense; it is knowledge given in a personal meeting of the Living God with Man, and in Man's response there is created a living fellowship of Man with God within the created order of the World. This fellowship finds its consummation beyond this life, but I emphasise that it is initiated within the created order of the world because this order is the sphere of the pursuit of science. The Creator makes Himself known both in the witness of nature and in His moral law, but as S. Paul shows in Romans i. and ii., this does not create fellowship between God and Man—rather, it serves to underline Man's need of being reconciled to God. The Revelation is the making of fellowship from God's side in His saving activity in the Life, Death and Resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. In revealing Himself, God has visited man. The emphasis of science, however, is on discovery rather than revelation; on Man's activity in search of knowledge rather than on a personal meeting with the Living God. As Prof. Horton says: "When a man perceives a new planet, or conceives a new mathematical theory for unifying two fields of knowledge, he shouts, 'Eureka! I have found it!' When he meets the God of Grace revealed in the Cross of Christ, he bows in gratitude, and confesses, 'Thou hast found me!'"

In attempting to see the relation between these two kinds of experience, it is necessary to avoid the danger, on the one hand, of losing sight of the value of the created order and the pursuit of science, and on the other, of emptying the Christian revelation of its meaning as Revelation.

## I. HISTORICAL SURVEY.

The history of the relation between men of science and the Church is an unhappy story. Since the latter part of the 19th century, the popular impression has been that men of science are champions of the truth while the Church remains obscurantist, and that they are in possession of a body of universal knowledge while the Church remains divided and sectarian. There is a good deal of emotional backwash from this impression—thus dogma is spoken of as 'hidebound' while the pursuit of scientific research is often referred to as 'fearless.' We must admit that the Christian Church has not a flattering record in relation to the pioneers of science, but it is unfair and indeed inaccurate to paint the picture of the relation of Christianity and Science in such lurid colours. It has been made clear by such writers as Alfred Noyes in "The Unknown God" and Dr. Raven in "Science, Religion and the Future" that, in the controversy which came to a head with Darwin in the 19th century, leading scientists were as much in opposition as churchmen. The record of the Church in other controversies also is not simply one of the influence of prejudice;

neither is the record of men of science free from it. As Michael Roberts has put it,<sup>2</sup> "It is natural and almost inevitable that the study of material science should at times produce a metaphysical outlook that leaves no place for doctrines meant to conserve the highest values, and it is equally natural that the forces of intellectual conservatism should from time to time press the banner of religion into their service. But the instances of actual repression and obscurantism are more familiar than numerous, and there are many instances of less blatant but no less effective repression on the part of learned academies. If the Inquisition placed the works of Kepler on the Index, the Royal Society succeeded in losing Waterston's paper on the Kinetic Theory of Gases for forty years, and in never reading Lomonosov's earlier work at all."<sup>3</sup>

The existence of controversy has disturbed the balance of most thinking on the relation between science and the Christian Revelation. Dr. Raven, for example, accuses some historians of science of reading the 19th century struggle into earlier times.<sup>4</sup> It is fair to say, however, that Raven himself tends to read the problem in the light of 16th-18th centuries. Dr. Sherwood Taylor has written of this period<sup>5</sup>: "The philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries established a world-view based on a universe rigidly conforming to natural law. They rejected authority as a ground for accepting any belief, scientific or theological. They did not, as a whole, reject the existence of a Deity, nor attack the foundations of human morality: they laboured, rather, to show that a Natural Religion arose from the application of reason to human conduct. Their attitude, in England, at least, was adopted by the theologians, who, while accepting the Christian revelation, based their apologetics upon reason, giving but a secondary place to faith." It may be added that Revelation itself was thought of in intellectual terms rather than what would now be called "existential" interpretations, and that the inherent view of Man was not one in which he was regarded as a creature whose primary need is redemption. Dr. Temple says in this connection,<sup>6</sup> "Natural Theology no longer suggested that beyond its reach lay truths which the soul could embrace with an assurance never due to its own conclusions, but rather suggested that it alone offered the grounds of certitude, which are to be found in the realm of possible experiment. . . ."

It is true that the great pioneers of science were deeply religious men. Many spent more time discussing theology than studying nature. Newton may be accused of giving rise to a mechanical deistic picture of the Universe, but he was also a theologian. Robert Boyle founded the Boyle lectures in order to refute Deism,<sup>7</sup> and John Ray, as Raven has shown, had a wonderful sense of the working of God in nature. But while Raven shares this insight into nature, he is so anxious to insist on the value of nature that I cannot help feeling that he does not come to terms with human nature. He may believe in the sinfulness of man,<sup>8</sup> but in "Science, Religion and the Future" his emphasis is on man who must use his scientific and religious insights in order to save himself. In spite of a hint of a theology of redemption in the last chapter, the most significant aspect of the Incarnation appears to be that it is God's word that the created order is good.

For our purpose, at the risk of over-simplification, we may divide

the history of science since the Renaissance into 3 periods during which aspects of the relation of science to revelation become explicit :

(1) Up to the 18th century, when science is the exploring of God's created order which is good. Man's reason is his chief light. Truths of revelation exist side by side with Natural Theology.

(2) The 19th century, when we have a repetition of the earlier controversy over Galileo. Galileo came up against the Infallible Church.<sup>9</sup> After his time, science gained greatest impetus in countries where the Reformation had repudiated this doctrine. It is in the 19th century that Darwin came up against the Protestant counterpart—the Infallible Book. In the Darwinian controversy, science established its right to pursue its own methods within its own domain and triumphed over the accepted view of revelation on a matter of fact. Revelation is no longer identified with a book but with its content and message.

(3) The 20th century, when the humanism of science shows its tragic side. This was becoming clear from the time of the Industrial Revolution, but it is in the 20th century that Bacon's dictum—" Knowledge is power"—becomes fully explicit, and science is most clearly a weapon in the hands of man for the exploitation of nature and the furtherance of man's power over his neighbour. Here, we have exposed for us the fact that science, as an activity of man, is an instrument of his sinfulness. Man himself is the problem.<sup>10</sup>

This is also the age of scientific humanism which denies the possibility of revelation from outside man except in the form of an immanent urge in nature, and this is considered impersonally in terms of process. Also, the scientific method is not confined to science, but is extended in this age to history, sociology and religious experience. It is the method rather than the subject-matter which makes this age a scientific age.<sup>11</sup>

## II. ASPECTS OF SCIENTIFIC METHOD.

In considering the scientific attitude to revelation, it is necessary to understand some features of the scientific method.

1. It depends on measurement and classification. The emphasis on measurement has led to the over-estimation of the material, while the use of classification involves the neglect of unique conditions or characteristics in the effort to obtain correlation. Thus the method is frankly analytical and ignores the qualities which we associate with the personal—*i.e.* uniqueness and spontaneity. This reluctance to give the category of the personal full place is a consequence of scientific method, but is also forced on the modern world through the de-personalising influence of a machine age, and, we may add, of sin itself.

This method of classification means also the isolation of experiences in abstraction from the wholeness of their situations. It is in the whole situation that the self acts and comes into relation with other selves in what Farmer calls "value-resistance" and "value-cooperation."<sup>12</sup> The abstractions and generalisations produced by reflection are valuable as knowledge : they may illuminate conduct : but they do not "cover" the will in action. They are confined to the impersonal. This method, then, as a dominant mental dis-

cipline, creates a bias against the personal. The acceptance of revelation as the personal self-disclosure of God to man-as-a-person is only possible when a man realises that this way of knowledge by analysis is not the only way. Our knowledge of others in personal relationships is something given in the occasion of meeting, and is not something arrived at by analysis. As Farmer has observed,<sup>13</sup> the scientist "will find his test-tubes and balances singularly irrelevant if, when he gets home, he is unfortunate enough to have a row with his wife." Similarly, on the level of the knowledge of God given in a personal revelation, abstractions and generalisations must give place to the concreteness of personal acquaintance.

2. Another feature of the scientific approach is the kind of truth at which it aims. In Mathematics, this truth has a timeless quality. In Physics and Chemistry, the idea of physical law has similar associations. The discoverer of a physical law or a chemical element has discovered something which was there all the time. The element of creativity is missing except in the synthetic intuition of the discoverer. This conception of timeless truth, or of truth in which time is taken up in a generalisation (*e.g.* law of radio-active decay), has no room for the unique event: all events are fitted into a general conception.

Further, the theories of Evolution and Relativity have given rise to notions of wider significance than the theories themselves. The theory of Relativity, which abolished the idea of absolute space and time, has lent an emotional though certainly not rational basis for the idea that all values are relative. The concept of Evolution, which arose primarily to account for the occurrence and mutation of species, has given stimulus to the idea that anything is likely to be superseded. Although this idea of progress arose in mechanistic biology, it has been extended to most branches of knowledge and experience. But it remains largely a mechanical idea for it leaves out the element of uniqueness which marks moral experience and makes a person an end in himself rather than part of a process. Dorothy Sayers has said from the artist's point of view,<sup>14</sup> "We may say, for example, that the power loom has superseded the hand-loom . . . But there is no sense whatever in which we can say that Hamlet has "superseded" the Agamemnon."

Thus, in the ideas which surround the concept of scientific truth, we find a bias against unique events, against an absolute claim from within history. But these are precisely the qualities which the Christian claims for revelation.

3. A third aspect of scientific method which is of importance for our discussion is that it aims at the elimination of bias, while at the same time it presents us with the picture of man in control over nature. I mention these two features together because they illustrate both the greatness and the danger of science. The scientific ideal of the pursuit of truth based on observation, irrespective of the research worker's personal prejudices, is one which is truly noble. The lives of many great scientists bear witness to the beauty of its discipline. But as we move away from the realm of the physical sciences, the elimination of bias becomes more difficult. Julian Huxley is aware

of this difficulty when he says, "Bias has also been encountered in natural science, but only when its findings come up against emotionally held convictions—only, that is, when it has had social entanglements."<sup>15</sup> But this is a very big "only." The social entanglements of which he speaks cover the whole realm of personal relationships in which man is involved in the meaning and purpose of his actions. Even in the social sciences, pure objectivity is not possible. "When he starts investigating human motive, his own motives are involved; when he studies human society, he is himself part of a social structure."<sup>16</sup> Thus, when man has to become, so to say, "his own guinea-pig," other considerations are important: valuations, conduct and the acceptance of other persons. Science may be of assistance, but it does not provide man with his purpose and values to cover the whole self in action. This is the reason why there are few scientists who do not introduce some extra article of faith to supplement their search for truth. "An intense and over-riding enthusiasm for their own special study sustains many scientific workers; . . . But for ordinary people who are not likely to enjoy the excitement and fascination at first hand or in their full intensity, this scientific mysticism is not satisfactory; and even for the scientists themselves it often has to be supplemented by some other article of faith—a belief in the greatest happiness of the greatest number, the increase of material goods, the aggrandisement of the nation, or the survival of the human race."<sup>17</sup> This fact makes clear that the scientist makes value-judgments and decisions on other than purely scientific grounds, and the reason for this is that in the sphere of ordinary living, it is not possible to be purely objective. Man cannot remain a spectator of the living scene which is the place of meeting between Man and God. Thus, while the scientific attitude seeks only the kind of knowledge which is free from personal bias—*i.e.* valuation—the revelation of God meets man at a point where he must make a decision: it demands a valuation of himself in relation to God and other men. The "ingraining" of the scientific attitude tends to remove a man from personal decision and makes for a kind of false neutrality about a revelation which carries with it the demand for decision.

This factor throws into prominence the other feature of scientific method—that it is individualistic and puts man in the place of control. The conventional picture of the scientist bent over a microscope, or controlling delicate apparatus or machinery, is not inappropriate; it conveys the thought of man controlling natural forces, even people. The pursuit is individualistic: it does not carry with it the impulse to community. The fact that men of science have a community sense arises from other considerations—their sense of the worth of their pursuit and of its value for mankind. Science is a weapon for good or evil, and the problem of its application throws us back on man himself. Now applied science has made such material advances as to lessen man's sense of need. This is a fact to which revelation appeals. Fortunately, men are aware of the dangers of mis-applied science. So long as science was the goose that laid the golden eggs, there seemed to be no need to worry; but now the eggs have hatched out such possibilities for evil, it is clearer that man's conquest of nature does little to help his conquest of himself. Man remains in need of the

power over the self-will, which the message of redemption in Christ alone can meet.

### III. TRENDS IN SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT AND THE PASTORAL PROBLEM.

In the present situation, we can discern, broadly speaking, four trends in scientific thought: (i) an increased awareness of cosmic design. This is mainly due to modern physics and its interpretation by Jeans and Eddington, although some doctors and biologists have made good contribution from their side.<sup>18</sup> The philosophies of Creative Evolution<sup>19</sup> are, as it were, half-way houses on the way to a full cosmology in the Christian sense. (ii) More recently, a widespread movement among younger scientists to see that their work is devoted to constructive social ends. This has brought in its train a discussion of science and values, and a concern for the social function of science.<sup>20</sup> On the whole, these workers have looked to Marxism for their inspiration. And we may note in passing that the Marxist view of history is that of a process which is self-explanatory, and that the Marxist view of man is liberal in so far as man is regarded as being perfectible by the removal of economic frustrations. (iii) The general movement which may overlap the other trends of thought—scientific humanism. Julian Huxley defines it thus, "Scientific Humanism is a protest against supernaturalism: the human spirit, now in its individual, now in its corporate aspects, is the source of all values and the highest reality we know."<sup>21</sup> This movement is eclectic. Since man is made the source and judge of all values, great faith is placed in his ability to improve his lot by loving the highest when he sees it. He is confidently expected to make use of all that he judges good in art and religion; and, above all, to employ his ever-increasing power over nature for the greater comfort and good (whatever that may mean in this context) of his neighbour.<sup>22</sup> This paragon-man is in no need of outside help, but it is assumed that he can live by a "Religion without Revelation." This religion appears to involve worship of the vastness of the universe and of the great unknown which, if it is called Reality even with a capital R, is impersonal. Speaking of religion, Huxley says "the universe and human personality being what they are, this way of experience will always involve some feeling of sacredness."<sup>23</sup> But his optimistic view of man and of the possibilities of his science empty the word sacred of most of its meaning. Moreover, as Prof. Dickie has pointed out, "the one thing science clearly cannot do is to *know* that the unknown impersonal is an object suitable for worship. There is not such a thing as Religion without Revelation."<sup>24</sup>

(iv.) The fourth trend in modern scientific thought is a re-valuation of religion. It is accepted as a fact of human experience and as something to be valued. Thus, Dr. Needham says we can learn a lot from Confucius,<sup>25</sup> and Aldous Huxley attaches supreme importance to mysticism. In this, however, the scientific bias remains for Confucianism is a man-centred moralism and the neo-Buddhism of Aldous Huxley abhors the idea of a personal God and emphasises man's work in saving himself by spiritual discipline.

All these trends indicate that scientists are not "case-hardened": they are seeking meaning and purpose in existence and in their work.

This must inevitably lead them out, away from the purely scientific outlook. Therefore the next question to ask is: "Is there any point of contact between this seeking, combined with this attitude of mind, and the Christian Revelation?" I know it is a question of debate whether there are such things as "points of contact,"<sup>26</sup> but I want to indicate briefly that this situation is one in which the appeal of the Gospel can be made. To a certain extent the soil is prepared.

When men have some idea of purpose and design in Nature and existence, the claim of the personal God can be brought home. Resistance to such revelation may be intellectual, but more often it is the resistance of man to submit to God's judgment and accept reconciliation. In this respect, the scientific mentality is one particular case of the general pastoral problem of bringing the message of the Gospel to man.

But the problem takes on this form: Is it possible to bring the Gospel to minds trained only to think inductively? Whitehead insists that "induction pre-supposes metaphysics" and requires for its rational justification a faith in the order of Nature.<sup>27</sup> But Whitehead is also responsible for the idea that science proceeds only by induction: he does not emphasise the role played by experiment.<sup>28</sup> Reliance on experiment is an additional factor, and it depends on the objectivity of nature which, as Whitehead points out, passed into science from the objective outlook of medieval theology.<sup>29</sup> Now such an outlook implies that before a myriad facts, choice is involved, and that the attainment of truth is largely experimental. The Christian builds his life on a not dissimilar basis. He accepts the significant fact of God's Word in Christ and lives a life of faith which is experimental. Forsyth has said "What Nature is to Science, that is Christ to positive faith."<sup>30</sup> Conversion occurs when a man sees the fact of Christ as *the* significant fact which judges him, which embraces all experience and brings him into personal fellowship with God, His Creator.

The place where the purely scientific outlook comes nearest to meeting revelation, as it were, "on its own ground" is in the discipline of its search for truth. I have already outlined the way this search is affected by bias, but nevertheless, the ideal is one which comes from outside. The discipline of following the ideal is a voluntary spiritual obedience. Surely the truth in the contention that science has to do with values lies simply in this: that as it unfolds the greater vista of truth about Nature and experience, then the obligation to follow the truth is laid more heavily upon us. But this obligation is not something which comes from within science. The discipline of the scientific life is a response to the claim of the value of truth. It may well be the place where a man meets God. But when he does meet God, it is a personal meeting. The abstract scientific truth is taken up into the larger personal truth of relationship to God in which science is seen as the product of reflection upon God's work in Nature.

#### IV. THE CHRISTIAN CRITIQUE.

We come now to consider the Christian critique of the purely scientific attitude. First we must distinguish between the kinds of criticism. There is the philosophical criticism based on Ideals or Values, which

may or may not be consciously Christian. Such a book as T. E. Jessop's "Science and the Spiritual" is of this type. Then there is the criticism which proceeds from experience which is the fruit of the Christian Revelation. Thus, a criticism based on the category of the personal owes a great deal to Christian faith, for Prof. C. C. J. Webb has shown that the concept of personality has developed by stimulus from the development of Christian doctrine.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Prof. Farmer's criticism of the psychological and sociological theories of religion on the grounds that they do not do justice to religious experience is a criticism which proceeds from the experience itself.<sup>32</sup> But the kind of critique of the position which concerns us is the critique by the Gospel itself of man in this situation. Revelation is a criticism of Man. It is saving Judgment as well as saving Knowledge. The aspects of the historic Christian revelation which are relevant are (i) that the life, death and Resurrection of Christ reveal to Man his need before God as a sinner, who nevertheless is addressed by a word of reconciling Love; (ii) that this revelation has happened once and for all "under Pontius Pilate"; and (iii) that the Creator-God is only known fully in His works because of His work of redemption which involves the whole natural order. Let us take these points in turn.

1. The understanding of man as sinner. The Gospel reveals to man his true nature for it declares man's dignity in asserting that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, while at the same time, the necessity of the Cross for the Incarnate Son of God exposes the tragedy of the corruption of Man's nature. The Biblical view of this corruption is that it consists primarily in asserted independence of man over against God. This hardens into active rebellion. Man sets himself up to be his own arbiter, and the self-centredness involved in this is something which taints his nature and activity. Thus, in our context, the activity of the critical and scientific method, which places man in the position of spectator and judge of events, panders to this side of his nature.<sup>33</sup> It could only occur because of man's dignity as created in the image of God, however defaced the image may be. Yet its occurrence is the occasion of man's asserted independence of God, which is Sin. This independence shows itself also in the love of abstraction, for it is to a certain extent true in experience as a whole that love of abstraction represents a retreat from living on the level of personal relationships. It is in the realm of the personal that man meets wills over against his own. His autonomy is challenged: and supremely so, when Man's Creator and Redeemer confronts him with His claim that he is bought with a price.

The idea of knowledge in the scientific sense also reveals Man's pride. It has always been knowledge in the intellectual sense rather than knowledge in the personal sense, but the emphasis has changed during the last century or so. Whereas the early scientists, with their faith in the Creator given to them by Revelation, could study Nature with the confidence that the knowledge was worth while in itself, the aspect of knowledge which is uppermost to-day is that it confers power. Things are worth knowing because the knowledge of them may be useful. Thus Julian Huxley can say "the concept of God has reached the limits of its usefulness"; or, as a young munition-worker asked me more bluntly, "What is the *use* of God to me?" The attitude

of mind which puts all knowledge on this level is clearly in opposition to that knowledge of God, which comes in a personal meeting involving a demand for obedience, for this will dethrone man from being in the position of a law unto himself. It would be unfair to suggest that this attitude to knowledge is universal. As Brunner says, "The real opponent is not science but a false estimate of science, a scientific monism, *i.e.* the superstitious belief in one science including all possible forms of knowledge in itself . . . Even to the critical man of science reality appears to consist of degrees or strata, only one of which is the subject-matter of a particular fundamental science. By their nature the phenomena of life rise above the science of physics, those of consciousness above biology, those associated with spiritual values or normativity above psychology."<sup>34</sup> It remains true, however, that the pursuit of the maxim "knowledge is power" is the full-blooded expression of man's independence of God, which is the essence of his pride. This pride is only broken when man sees his need and finds God through His redeeming work. Thus, we pass on from the understanding of man as sinner, to the uniqueness of God's work of redemption in Christ.

2. The second issue of the Gospel in relation to the scientific outlook is that God's Word is given once and for all in Christ: a fact to which the Holy Spirit bears witness.<sup>35</sup> Christ meets man, submitting Himself indeed to man's acceptance, yet to be judged by no comparisons. Brunner puts it in this way: "Revelation is not a datum in the natural order, but is *logos*, meaning, word. Yet even this meaning is really given; for we are not summoned to pass judgment ourselves or to verification by self-contained logical or ethical standards. We cannot 'judge Jesus to be God.' By what standard are we to test the nature of the mystery of God?"<sup>36</sup>

It is in the acceptance of God's Word in Christ that many points in this discussion fall into place. There is a relative quality about our values till we find Christ, the Word of God to us. In Karl Heim's phrase, Christ becomes the Man of Destiny for us.<sup>37</sup> The importance of the category of the personal in this discussion arises from the fact of Christ as God's Personal Word to man as a Person. Likewise, the meaning of truth becomes fully the truth of personal relationship to God, inside which, as it were, truths of reason and truth about Nature find their proper setting. This has been summed up finely by J. H. Morrison: "Here is the Word of God, final, authoritative and revealing, a Word which must take precedence over all the discoveries of science, not in the sense of invalidating them or depreciating them, for in so far as they are true they should be found in harmony with it, but in the sense of providing a light which they cannot give and a spiritual dynamic which they confessedly lack. Here is something more than a spiritual interpretation of Nature. From the first it was hailed and proclaimed as something specifically divine, the master light of all our seeing and the power of God unto salvation."<sup>38</sup>

3. Finally, the third issue of the Gospel in relation to Science is that the Creator-God is only known fully through His work of redemption, which includes the whole natural order. Since God has revealed Himself in redeeming activity, the natural order is part of the whole redeemed order.<sup>39</sup> Both history and Nature have value in themselves

as the place of God's working.<sup>40</sup> It is this aspect of Nature which gives to the pursuit of science its value, for the man to whom God has revealed Himself as "just and the justifier of him who has faith in Jesus" can delight in the works of His Creator.

But to proclaim the goodness of Nature and the work of the Creator pre-supposes the whole Christian revelation of God's redeeming work in Christ. Man's primary need is reconciliation. The "recovery of Nature" which Prof. Raven desires can only come through the recovery of Man; and man is recovered by the Creator-God Who reveals Himself in Love as Redeemer.

We must beware of two over-simplifications. First, not all men are Christians. But we dare not be cut-and-dried. We cannot divide men into the sheep who know their Creator and the goats who do not. As Hodgson has warned us,<sup>41</sup> many, who do not see the things that we have seen because God has opened our eyes, may possibly be found to be more faithful to their vocation. Secondly, we cannot simply draw a distinction between Nature and Human Nature and say, in effect, that "only man is vile." The goodness of Nature is not always apparent, and evil exists in Nature. As S. Paul saw, the process of Redemption is a cosmic one. Thus, our faith in the Creator depends upon the resolution of the problem of evil for us: it depends finally upon His revelation of Himself as Holy and Triumphant Love. When God is known as Redeemer, we may begin to pierce the veil of Nature and know Him more fully as Creator and "Our Father."

1 Revelation, ed. Baillie and Martin, p.244.

2 Recovery of the West, p.259.

3 For an account of Lomonosov, see Journal of the American Chemical Society, 1912, Vol. 34, p.109.

4 See "Science, Religion and the Future", p.11.

5 Short History of Science, p.139. Dr. Sherwood Taylor is the Curator of the Museum of the History of Science at Oxford.

6 Nature, Man and God, p. 15.

7 See A. D. Macdonald, "God, Creation and Revelation", pp.5 and 97.

8 Gospel and the Church, p.196.

9 It is interesting to note that scientists pay much more attention to Galileo's fight with the Church than the historians do. Thus, the Cambridge Modern History, Vol. 2 contains but one reference to Galileo, p.707, whereas three times the information is given in a school certificate textbook such as Mackenzie's "Hydrostatics and Mechanics" pp. 225-8, where the case is very fairly discussed.

10 Compare Brunner, "Philosophy of Religion from the standpoint of Protestant Theology", p.183.

11 Tennant, Philosophical Theology, Vol. I, p.333.

12 The World and God, pp. 21-25.

13 Towards Belief in God, p.139.

14 p.33, The Mind of the Maker. Compare O. C. Quick, Doctrines of the Creeds,—p.43.

15 Uniqueness of Man, p.228.

16 *op. cit.*, p.226.

17 Michael Roberts, *op. cit.*, p.108.

18 *cf.* "Design and Purpose" F. Wood Jones, and Osborne Greenwood's "Christianity and the Mechanists," and "Biology and Christian Belief."

19 Bergson and Lloyd Morgan. See discussion in Matthews' "God in Christian Thought and Experience," pp.141-9.

20 J. D. Bernal, Social Function of Science.

21 *op. cit.*, p.274.

22 Huxley, What dare I think? p.161-3.

- 23 Uniqueness of Man, p.275.
- 24 Revelation and Response, p.26.
- 25 Science and World Order, ed. Crowther, Howarth and Riley (Penguin Special), p.21.
- 26 *vide* Appendices to Brunner's "Man in Revolt".
- 27 Science and the Modern World, pp.55, 4 and 23.
- 28 Compare Wolf, History of Science, Technology and Philosophy in 16th-17th centuries, pp.2-8.
- 29 *op. cit.*, p.175.
- 30 Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p.195.
- 31 God and Personality.
- 32 Towards Belief in God, Chaps. 9 and 10.
- 33 *cf.* Niebuhr, Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. 2, pp.156, and 216-7.
- 34 *op. cit.*, pp.173-4.
- 35 St. John, xvi., 13-14.
- 36 Philosophy of Religion, p.79.
- 37 see Dickie, Revelation and Response, p.208-9.
- 38 Christian Faith and the Science of To-day, p.101.
- 39 *cf.* Romans, viii. 21, Ephes. i. 10. Also the article in Sanday and Headlam's Romans, pp.210-12. "The Renovation of Nature".
- 40 Compare Temple, Nature, Man and God, Chap. 19, "The Sacramental Universe," and Farmer, The World and God, Chap. 4, "The World as Symbol."
- 41 Doctrine of the Trinity, p.30-37, esp. 36.  
Towards a Christian Philosophy, 147-8.

# Revelation and the Bible.

BY THE REV. C. F. D. MOULE, M.A.

ALL over the Bible we are met by the problem of authority. Here are the Israelites, on the borders of Canaan, listening to the reports of a reconnaissance expedition. The majority of the members take the view that, eligible land as it is, there is no hope of conquering it: "we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight"—a playfully mournful bit of defeatism. But the two whose names have become household words for dauntless optimism, Caleb and Joshua, say: "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." "*Let us go up*": that is reminiscent of the eve of another proposed conquest, when Ahab said: "Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?", and something like four hundred prophets answered with one voice, "Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the King." (1 Kings xxii. 6). On that occasion it was a minority of one which took the defeatist line; Micaiah the son of Imlah alone denied all hope of victory. Now, leaving aside the question of how far either or both of these incidents are historical, what is there in the assumed situation to assure us that in the one case the optimistic, and in the other the defeatist, minority is speaking with the authentic voice of revelation, while the majority are wrong and are false prophets? In neither case does the context give any immediately obvious answer. Or think, again, of that deliberately perplexing tale in 1 Kings xiii about the old prophet in Bethel who claimed to have had a fresh message direct from Jehovah, overriding the orders previously given to the man of God from Judah: "I also am a prophet as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water." "He lied unto him" says the Chronicler; but how in the world was the Judahite prophet to know that, until the tragic sequel (v.24) had made it too late? St. Paul, giving directions about Christian prophets, explicitly says: "But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence . . . and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets"—and this Old Testament incident might have been precisely a case in point, for all we can see. What are we to do about conflicting prophecies both delivered in Jehovah's Name?

Now, some of the Old Testament writers consciously recognised this problem of discerning between true and false oracles, the most notable treatments of it being, of course, in Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. Admittedly, the explicit directions in Deuteronomy do not get us much further: in Ch. xiii, a warning is issued against accepting a *non-Jehovistic* prophet, even if he can back up his message with a sign or wonder which comes to pass; but when it is a case of discerning between true and false *Jehovah*-prophets, all the guidance we get is, Wait and see: if his prophecy comes true, he was a true prophet; if not, he was false (xviii. 21, 22). Incidentally, this would rule out

Ezekiel's prophecies against Tyre (ch. xxvi) which are virtually admitted, in xxix 17-20, to have failed. However, it is something to find the problem even made explicit; and in the Book of Jeremiah we are admitted to a more detailed examination of it, in the concrete terms of Jeremiah's own struggle with the false prophets without and his own doubts and misgivings within. For example, ch. xxviii suggests that, on the whole, the unpopular minority-message is the more likely to be the authentic one—a principle borne out by the whole story of Jeremiah's lonely ministry: "The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied against many countries, and against great Kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesied of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him." (xxviii. 8, 9). As for the margin of uncertainty which so rough and ready a test still leaves, the suggestion is that within that margin both prophet and people must be content to rely upon a conviction which cannot be defined or rationalized and which may form itself in a slow and perplexing way, but which is, for all that, a matter of experience.

So it is with the New Testament, where precisely the same question of authority meets us. Nicodemus is perplexed, but in his perplexity he virtually admits himself already convinced by Jesus' mighty works: "for no man can do these signs that Thou doest, except God be with him." The Pharisees demand a sign and ask for Jesus' credentials; but when He puts to them the question about the Baptist's authority, their conscience tells them that they knew the answer all along. The apocalyptic passages in the Gospels speak of false Messiahs and false prophets who shall deceive, if possible (Matt. xxiv. 24, Mark xiii. 22), even the elect; but the implication is that it is *not* possible to deceive the true elect; there *are* those who know how to discern; and this is echoed in the apocalypse of 2 Thessalonians, where the pseudo-parousia of the Lawless One, accompanied by all sorts of false signs and portents, only deceives those who have shut their eyes to the truth. This passage, which is, in its manner of expression, curiously akin to the rationale of revelation given by Micaiah, the son of Imlah, will claim our attention again later.

Meanwhile, it can be said that the New Testament, though not giving us a cut-and-dried formula for testing authority any more than the Old Testament—and how summarily, indeed, we should have to dismiss, as wholly inadequate to so profound a matter, any facile or mechanical criterion, were such a thing offered—does, nevertheless, take us considerably further along the road of understanding; and that largely in terms of *the Body of Christ and the Spirit*. This familiar fact can be illustrated in detail. I have collected some of the hints and indications which the New Testament yields on the question of authority, and when we have reminded ourselves of these, we shall see how all, or practically all of them fall under this common head, as concerned with the corporate life of the Church created and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

I start from what, to my mind, is perhaps the most explicit and most fascinating passage of all—1 Cor. ii. 6-16. It is not very explicitly concerned with *the Body of Christ*, although membership in the Body is all the time presupposed. But it comes nearer than anything else

in the Bible to a modern rationale of revelation in terms of *the Spirit*. You will remember that the Old Testament, in its vivid, pictorial manner, sometimes speaks of a genuine prophet as possessing his message by virtue of his membership in, as it were, the Cabinet of Jehovah's world-government. The technical Hebrew term for that Royal Council, as also for the counsel which is divulged or determined in its sessions, is *sodh*. Thus Amos says that Jehovah does nothing without first revealing His *sodh*, or counsel to His servants the prophets (iii. 7) ; and, even more strikingly, Jeremiah (xxiii. 18) represents Jehovah as denouncing the false prophets for speaking a random message of their own devising without having been members of His *sodh* or council : " For who hath stood in the council of the Lord, that he should perceive and hear His word ? " I have sometimes wondered whether there is not a reference to the same idea in the obscure promise made to Joshua the High Priest in Zech. iii. 7—" If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou also shalt judge my house, and shalt keep my courts, and I will give thee a place of access among those that stand by " i.e., " I shall admit you to be among my attendants, my privy council." At any rate, my point is that the Old Testament sometimes represents the prophets as speaking with the voice of God because they have been allowed to overhear the Divine deliberations ; and the passage now before us in I Cor. ii. merely modernises and (if I may put it so) psychologizes the same conception. Here is a free translation (vv. 6-16).—

" But there is a wisdom which we utter among the mature, only it is not a wisdom of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are to be brought to an end ; but it is the wisdom of God which we utter as a mystery—that hidden wisdom which God designated beforehand, before the ages, with a view to our glory. None of the rulers of this age recognized it ; for, had they done so, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But it is as the Scripture says : Things which eye has never seen and ear has never heard and which have never entered the heart of man—all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God has revealed them through the Spirit ; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what man knows a man's affairs except the spirit of the man within him ? In the same way also no one knows God's affairs except the Spirit of God. But we have received, not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God, to enable us to know the things bestowed upon us by God ; things which we also express, not in words dictated by human wisdom but in words dictated by the Spirit, combining spiritual truth with spiritual expression. [For the translation of the latter phrase, see e.g., W. F. Howard in The Abingdon Commentary]. But the merely ' animal ' man [without the Spirit] does not receive the things imparted by the Spirit of God ; for they are folly to him, and he cannot know them, since they are only spiritually discerned. But the spiritual man discerns everything himself, although he is not himself discerned by anybody. For ' who knows the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him ? ' Yet we have the mind of Christ."

If I mistake not, St. Paul is here being boldly anthropomorphic in the sense that he is drawing an analogy between man's self-consciousness and God's. It is only a man's *spirit* which is aware of that man's

thoughts, purposes, intentions—all that is in him. We (using modern terms) might say that a man's self-consciousness is his own self-revelation. Very well, says St. Paul, *God's Spirit*, correspondingly, is aware of the deep secrets of God; and, if so, when a *man's* self-consciousness (or spirit) is in touch with *God's* self-consciousness (or the Holy Spirit), then that man has an insight into the mysterious depths of God's heart: he is, as it were—O stupendous thought!—given an insight into the working of God's mind and will. In other words, to be possessed of the Holy Spirit (or, more correctly, to be possessed *by* the Holy Spirit) is to be in possession of a divine revelation: it is to have "the mind of Christ." It is a raising to the highest power of that sympathetic intuition by which two friends know one another's thoughts. This is all of a piece with what Anderson Scott points out so forcibly in his memorable essay "What Happened at Pentecost?"<sup>1</sup> He shows that one of the permanent and deep results of the Spirit's presence, in a community or in an individual, is ἐπίγνωσις—perception, or religious insight—a sense of true values, as we might say, an intuition into the will of God: ". . . that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." That is natural, says 1 Cor. ii, because our self-consciousness, if we are true Christians genuinely endowed with the Holy Spirit, is actually fused and blended with the self-consciousness of God Himself. Conversely (it may be added) our own limited wishes and aspirations are communicated in the reverse direction, to God's heart: "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. viii. 27). There is a two-way traffic between the mind of God and the mind of men, for those who are endowed with the Holy Spirit.

The same principle which gives the prophet his message holds good also for the *recipients* of prophecy: the congregation has a responsibility to discriminate between true and false, and they can only do this successfully if they are spiritual". Thus, St. Paul tells the Thessalonians (1 Thess. v. 20, 21) not to despise prophesyings or quench the Spirit—that is to say, they are not to dismiss what we might call the charismatic gift of direct spiritual intuition; but they are to prove or test everything—as a banker tests his coins to see if they are sterling—and they are to retain only what is genuine. Similarly, in the list of endowments of the Spirit in 1 Cor. xii, διακρίσεις πνευμάτων (v. 10) is one: the power, that is, to discriminate between true and false utterances which alike claim to be inspired; and later on we see the gift actually in operation: in 1 Cor. xiv. 29, two prophets, or at the most three, are to exercise their gift at any one session, and the rest are to use their spiritual discrimination—οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν; and in v. 37, when a ruling about the place of women in Christian worship has been given, a challenge is thrown out to the spiritual to discern whether or not it is authoritative: "If anyone thinks himself a prophet or spiritual person, let him recognize that what I write to you is an injunction of the Lord". That was a bold claim: was it, in fact, justified? At any rate, it illustrates the principle that an utterance, delivered authoritatively as a revelation from God, needs to be

<sup>1</sup> In *The Spirit*, edited by B. H. Streeter.

brought also to the bar of the recipients' inspired judgment. Another instance is, of course, St. Paul's own views on marriage, expressed (we are thankful to find) with a note of diffidence, in 1 Cor. vii. 40.

If evidence were needed that this was not merely Pauline, but a generally recognized principle throughout the early Church, we might point to a writing far removed in tone and manner from St. Paul's, namely 1 John, where—in an entirely different idiom and atmosphere—the same truth is formulated: "And you have an anointing ( $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ ) from the Holy One, and you all have knowledge" (ii. 20): the condition, that is, for a true religious perception is the presence of the Holy Spirit, here spoken of in terms of the Messianic chrism or baptismal oil of anointing (with a possible side-reference also to anointing rites in the Greek mysteries). It is by becoming "Christs"—baptized and spirit-endowed members of the Messianic Community—that we become possessed of the true knowledge.

And this Johannine passage reminds us that in all this the New Testament takes us an immensely important step forward. For 1 John is (as is well-known) anti-docetic: among other things it is combating a false conception of the Incarnation, and the burden of its message is that an acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah Incarnate is the basis of morality: theology and conduct are closely interconnected, and the only faith which overcomes the world is faith in Jesus as the Son of God who has come in the flesh. In other words, it is upon the basis of the  $\kappa\acute{\eta}\rho\upsilon\gamma\mu\alpha$ , or essential facts of the Gospel, that we receive that membership in the Body of Christ and that endowment with the Spirit which are the conditions for hearing and receiving the guidance of God. We are thus given something more concrete to build upon than the Old Testament thinkers ever had in their wrestling with the problem of authority. God did speak to them, intermittently and fragmentarily (as the writer to the Hebrews says); but it is in His Son that He speaks continuously and as completely as humanity can receive. It is the Son of God, incarnate, crucified, and risen, who enables us to know and receive the Spirit of God; and that, no doubt, is why we find ourselves once more listening to the same, uniform message (though couched in other terms) when we return to the 1 Cor. passage on Spiritual gifts and hear St. Paul declaring (1 Cor. xii. 1-3) that acceptance of Jesus as Lord is the test of authoritative inspiration. Personally, I believe that the same is true also of so different a writing as the Apocalypse, when (xix. 10) it says:  $\eta\ \gamma\alpha\rho\ \mu\alpha\rho\tau\upsilon\rho\iota\alpha\ \text{'}\text{I}\eta\sigma\upsilon\text{'}\ \epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu\ \tau\omicron\ \pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma$ . That, I know, is patient of various interpretations; but I believe it means that the essence of prophecy is witness to Jesus—that is, to the facts of the  $\kappa\acute{\eta}\rho\upsilon\gamma\mu\alpha$ . Finally, the great Paraclete passages in St. John xiv-xvi, gather up, most emphatically, the same ideas: it is intimacy with Jesus which opens the way for the Spirit of Truth who, dwelling in the united followers of Christ, guides into all Truth, which is itself (xvi. 12-17) a matter of personal understanding of Christ.

Now, this is obviously no exhaustive review of the relevant New Testament passages. I have rather arbitrarily picked out an example here and another there. But it does, surely, confirm the statement that the controlling ideas behind the New Testament view of Revela-

tion are the Body of Christ and the Spirit. *A full acceptance of the good news, with a personal surrender to Jesus as Lord, and the accompanying sacrament of Baptism, means incorporation into the Messianic Community and participation in the Spirit; and it follows that limbs of the body are in touch with the source of direction and authority.* It scarcely needs saying that this carries the rider that ἀγάπη, a right relationship with others, is a *sine qua non* of revelation. The wisdom which is from above is emphatically connected by St. James (iii. 15-18) with moral qualities, and sharply distinguished from that earthly, merely animal, devil-possessed wisdom which goes hand-in-hand with partizanship and rivalry. If God is love, no loveless man may know Him.

Before we turn to consider another aspect of the question, I should like to add that I believe another way of expressing the New Testament standpoint would be to say that *the New Testament speaks from the greatest age of prophecy.* If we ask what were the periods in Old Testament history when God spoke most clearly and most directly, I suppose the answer is at the Exodus, when Moses interpreted the mighty acts of God in terms of a Jehovah who was personal and moral; and in the 8th, 7th and 6th centuries—the era of the great, authoritative writing prophets. After that, prophecy suffered eclipse. Even the prophetic revival of the post-exilic period was but a pale reflexion of the golden period, and it is a commonplace of scholarship to point out how the post-exilic prophets are already halfway to a different mode of revelation, namely apocalyptic. And, subsequently, we are even told that the Jews acknowledged that the stream of prophecy had temporarily dried up. They had recourse, instead, to the guidance of a book-religion: in default of the living voice, they pored over the writings of past ages of inspiration. And thus it was that when John the Baptist appeared, he was hailed as a veritable reincarnation of the ancient prophets: once more the authoritative "Thus saith Jehovah" was heard; once more it was felt that God had begun to speak directly to His people. And when John was closely followed by that greater than the prophets—by the Incarnate Word of God Himself—it gradually came home, first to one follower and then to another, that the long-promised days of the Messiah were imminent, when (as prophecy had foretold) God would dwell among His people and walk among them; when they should all know Him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; and when the servants and commonfolk as well as the special messengers of God would all alike be endowed with the Spirit. The universality and the continuity of the spiritual presence of God was the great feature of the good time coming: the prophetic gift, hitherto limited and intermittent, would be possessed by all the people of God. Moses' wish would be realized—"would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them" (Num. xi. 29.) And this, the New Testament writers recognize, had happened on the Day of Pentecost. In the Acts, St. Peter claims Joel's prophecy as fulfilled; in Hebrews, the Christian era is hailed as the climax of prophecy; in Thessalonians, in 1 Cor. i, in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. iv. 1) and again in the Acts, we find actual examples of fresh Christian prophecy with its direct voice of authority, its "Thus saith the Lord", its power derived from no mere written document

but from the living presence of the Spirit of prophecy. But nowhere do we find the Christian era more arrestingly explained in these terms than in 2 Cor. iii, where the whole point is that whereas the Mosaic period represents an intermittent and mediated touch with God's will, through Moses and his written code, the present era is an era of the Spirit—that is, the uninterrupted, ubiquitous, spiritual presence of the Lord, involving a progressive sharing of His glory, an immediate intuition into His will, and a release from the static and lifeless grip of legalism and a written code. *Torah* in the Old Testament has a great range of meanings, from the living instruction of the voice of God given direct to the prophet's inner consciousness to the written code of laws which tried to summarize and crystallize His will; but with the discovery that Jesus *was* Himself the whole *Torah*, or instruction of God embodied, a new era of contact with God began: the New Covenant had been inaugurated: the Law had been written on the hearts of God's people.

What place, then (if any) in the matter of authority and revelation has the written word? This is, of course, the crux round which there has been so much discussion, and on which even our own limited group<sup>1</sup> is scarcely likely to find a common mind. I can only state my own present and tentative beliefs, and hope to learn more myself in any discussion which may follow. In the first place, I believe that the use of quotations from the Old Testament by the New Testament writers is—in respect of authority—quite secondary. In the second place, however, the historical facts of the *κῆρυγμα*, as has already been shown, are basic to the whole approach to revelation; and the documents which now guarantee them (and the Old Testament is here included) are, in this respect and in this sense, vital.

Let me try to expand those two statements.

(i) I know perfectly well that the whole Christian message is given, in the New Testament, in the framework of the Old Testament; that the writers presuppose the Old Testament at every turn (a fact which is strikingly true even of the gentile among them); and that the Christian Church is well-nigh unintelligible, well-nigh unenterable, for anyone who does not in some measure understand the Church of Israel; and that the New Covenant is practically meaningless without the Old. All this I grant; indeed, I have no choice in the matter. But I still maintain that detailed quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures are not really authoritative for the New Testament writers: they are sometimes used as such, but in every case the real source of authority is something else. Jesus quoted the Old Testament many a time, and sometimes (it would seem) even argued from it to prove a point. But in every case it is quite clear that, although His own use of the Old Testament had helped Him *closer to God*, it was this closeness to God and His immediate experience of God which was the real source of authority. Otherwise it is impossible to account for the highly *selective* use which He seems to have made of the texts, and the utter freedom with which He evidently handled them. And of the New Testament writers themselves it may be said that their use and selection of the Old Testament Scriptures is controlled by their experience

<sup>1</sup> A meeting of the Fellowship of Evangelical Literature.

of Christ, not that their interpretation of Christ is controlled by the Old Testament Scriptures. Often they write as though they were reinforcing an argument by an appeal to infallible Scripture ; but therein they are only dropping into the habits of their time. Had they been consistently *controlled* by Scripture as authoritative it would be impossible to account for their autocratic selection of texts. I sometimes picture the situation as though the Old Testament Scriptures were a great relief map with mountain ranges and valleys. What causes the prominence of certain ranges and the depth of certain shadows while others pass into insignificance or go unnoticed altogether, is the position of the light. The Jews of our Lord's day were viewing the relief map with the light in a certain position which showed up the Messianic ranges with their hopes of conquest and their royal estate ; but the life and ministry of Jesus, His death and resurrection, and—above all—the mysteriously representative, corporate, recapitulatory nature of His Person took and transferred the light to an altogether different position ; so that when He Himself and His followers after Him, returned to the Old Testament, they noticed altogether new ranges : the favourite texts in the New Testament—the *testimonia* used in the early preaching represent, I take it, an altogether new anthology, and one which the rabbis never dreamt of using and certainly did not associate with the Messiah : the Stone which the builders rejected, the suffering Servant, the Son of Man,—these and other themes now stand out in the map in a quite new way. And to say so is to admit that the use of Scripture does not condition but is itself conditioned by the Christian Gospel. So much is this so that a considerable collection can be made of sheer mistranslations and misapplications which have been pressed into the service of Christian preaching. In such cases there can be no inherent authority in the words themselves : they merely come in conveniently to reinforce a conviction already arrived at by some other route. (See, e.g., Ac.xv. 17, Rom. ii. 24, iii. 19, x. 18, 1 Cor. xv. 55, Heb. i. 10 ff., ii. 13, x. 5, xii. 27). The chain of New Testament texts usually quoted to prove the opposite (e.g., Matt. xii. 40 (Jonah), Mk. xii. 26 ('I am the God of Abraham . . .'), Lk. xx. 42, 43 (Ps. cx.), xxii. 37 (Isa. liii.), xxiv. 26, 46 (The Christ destined to suffer), Jo. x. 34, 35 ('I said, Ye are gods'), 1 Cor. ix. 10 (Ordinance about oxen for *our* sakes), x. 10, 11 (Scripture written for *our* warning), 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16 (All Scripture inspired, etc.), 1 Pet. i. 11 (The Spirit of Christ in the prophets), 2 Pet. i. 20, 21 (The prophets controlled by the Spirit)) only, to my mind, proves that all or some of the writers *thought* that the Scriptures were directly authoritative : it does not negate the fact that the real controlling authority lay elsewhere : the authority was the revelation of God in Christ Himself, and, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit working in the Church.

(ii) But it is the essentiality of the revelation in Christ which makes the Scriptures, Old Testament and New Testament together, a vital element in revelation. The New Testament writings are the guarantee, the canon, of the facts of the  $\kappa\eta\rho\upsilon\gamma\mu\alpha$ ; and they, in their turn, are unintelligible without the Old Testament. Old Testament and New Testament together bear witness to the mighty works of God which pivot round the Incarnation. And since it is through Christ that we become members of the Spirit-filled Body of Christ,

the Scriptures will always be indispensable in the process. That, too, is why I, for one, do not believe that Biblical criticism can be kept in a separate compartment while we let the Scriptures speak to another part of us as though they were a magical *sortes Virgilianæ*. The Bible is the expression of a revelation of God in His mighty acts—above all in that mightiest of His Acts, the Incarnation—whereby the Church of God has been called into being. And, as such, it needs to be studied as objectively, humbly, and scientifically as any other book, as part of the process whereby we are enabled to receive God's revelation and to hear His voice.

At the risk of over-labouring those two points of mine, I will try to define them further by one simple modern illustration, which may help to clarify the relationship of the two. In Ps. cxvi. 12, 13 there are the words "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Now to any Christian who has not studied the language and idiom of the Psalter with the help of experts, that verse movingly suggests a whole train of evangelic truths: it sums up for him the glorious paradox that the best way to express one's sense of utter indebtedness to the Lord for His salvation is to put oneself even more hopelessly in His debt by receiving more grace; humbly to accept from Him the cup which represents His blood poured out in salvation is the truest thanksgiving within our power. That is what 'taking the cup of salvation' naturally suggests. But in all probability the Psalmist actually meant something quite different. What he intended to do was to take into his hands, preparatory to pouring it out before the Lord, the libation-cup which represented his thank-offering for salvation: it was *his* cup, expressing *gratitude* for salvation, which he was going to *take up and pour*, not the *Lord's* cup expressing the *bestowal* of salvation which he was to *receive and drink*. Thus, a sermon on free grace preached on this text would be demonstrably unsound if that particular Scripture were its real authority and foundation. But in actual fact, of course, the free grace of God, which we can but thankfully receive, is no whit the less a reality of experience for being expressed to a Christian congregation by a preacher in that memorable and moving form; and—what is more—that reality of experience is indeed all part and parcel of the great experience of the saving acts of God to which the Old Testament does bear witness. The cup of wine which Jesus used to embody the New Covenant sealed by His blood was indeed an Old Testament conception: the basic idea of the Covenant is part of the very texture of the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus we have an instance of how the words of Scripture are often misapplied in detail to convey a great truth which is itself utterly consonant with the experience to which Scripture as a whole does point; so that while verses and phrases from Scripture are invested with an unjustifiable authority and—while appearing to support—are in reality supported by the truth in question, yet that truth does ultimately rest upon what Scripture as a whole attests. I do not mean by this to advocate the deliberate misapplication of tags from Scripture: far from it; I could not myself use that Psalmist's words as a text for that particular sermon. But I do suggest that again and again a Biblical truth is bolstered up by a Biblical sentence which in reality does not

concern it ; which shows that the authority resides not in Scripture itself but in that personal dealing of God with man to which Scripture bears witness. As P. T. Forsyth says<sup>1</sup> ' The authority of our Redeemer . . . does not condescend our personality—as an authority would do which was institutional, impersonal, external in that sense, like a church, or even a book. For the authority of our Redeemer over our person is a personal authority.'

And this, finally, brings us back to the conditions of our receiving of His word. Who are " the elect " whom it is impossible for a false Messiah or a false prophet to deceive ? Who are the deluded, whose eyes are dazzled by the tinsel of the Lawless One's *παρουσία* ? These latter are those, simply, who (through selfishness and sensuousness) have not had the courage to face and accept the truth. Micaiah said that the Lord had deliberately sent a lying spirit to the false prophets to lead Ahab to his death ; and 2 Thess. ii. 11 says (in almost the same words) that God sends an activity of error to people to prevent them from seeing reality. But in both cases this is only one side of the great paradox of free will : we know it is Ahab's wickedness, we know it is our rebelliousness, of which the counterpart is that seemingly heaven-sent infatuation. Similarly, the elect are those who, of their own free will, accept the truth. And for us, to whom the truth has been presented as it is in Jesus (not as an abstract proposition but in a mighty and personal act of redemption), the will of God is progressively revealed in proportion as we live as members of the Spirit-filled Body of Christ. This, I take it, is the sum of the Biblical teaching on Revelation.

<sup>1</sup> *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, pp. 64, 65.

# Revelation and the Bible.

## ANOTHER VIEW.

BY THE REV. W. M. F. SCOTT, M.A.

THIS article comes out of the conference at which the preceding paper by the Rev. C. F. D. Moule was read. Most of what he has written will find grateful acceptance. But there are certain criticisms and additions which suggest themselves, especially on the Old Testament. For it is there that Mr. Moule's virtual equation of the problem of authority with that of revelation is least adequate. My comments fall into two parts—first, on authority where they are mainly critical, and secondly, on revelation in general where they are mainly complementary to Mr. Moule's position.

### I. AUTHORITY.

My first point concerns the Bible as a whole. While it is important to realise that the Bible was addressed to the Church and therefore can only be fully understood from within the Church, it is equally important to stress that it does not receive its authority from the Church's acceptance, but rather that the Church accepts it because she sees that it has an authority which she can not confer. The Apostles did not ask their hearers "to discern whether or not it (their message) was authoritative." They assured them that it was so. The hearer's acceptance or rejection of the message tested, not its validity, but the hearer's possession of the Spirit. Mr. Moule has quoted I Cor. xiv. 37 in a different sense, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things that I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord." I should dissent from Mr. Moule's comment that this verse shows "that an utterance delivered authoritatively as a revelation from God needs to be brought to the bar of the recipient's inspired judgment." On the contrary, St. Paul is telling the Corinthians that it is not for them to submit his ruling to their own judgment. They must accept it as authoritative and no claim to inspiration on their part can override it. This is made clear by the following verse which Moffatt rightly translates "If any man disregards this, he will be disregarded" (or if the imperative is read "let him be disregarded").

It is of course true that God does not force us into acceptance of His revelation. Its authority is moral and spiritual, and provides no substitute for spiritual insight. But the function of our spiritual insight is to receive the Christian revelation; it does not add one whit to its authority.

But coming to the Old Testament, it is clear that if by authority one means (as Mr. Moule appears to mean) that which guarantees the genuineness of revelation, then neither the Old Testament as a whole, still less isolated quotations from it are authoritative. There is nothing which can guarantee the genuineness of a revelation to a man

whose eyes are not enlightened by the Holy Spirit. It must also be admitted that even when New Testament writers quote an Old Testament passage as their authority for their message, they have clearly come to the Old Testament through Christ. He is their authority for their interpretation of the Old Testament just as much as, if not more than, the Old Testament is their authority for their interpretation of Him.

But is there no other sense in which the Old Testament was authoritative for the New Testament writers and especially for our Lord? In the light of the New Testament it seems to me quite inadequate to say merely that "the Old Testament brought Him closer to God." It is of course notoriously inconclusive to quote texts and counter-texts, but it is difficult to resist the conclusion that our Lord's understanding of His mission came out of His profound insight into the Old Testament Scriptures by which He re-interpreted messiahship in the light of the figure of the suffering servant. His acceptance of the title of Messiah (Mk. viii. 29) implies that the Messiah had rightly been expected. And He could have derived His own distinctive view of messiahship from no other source than the figure of the Lord's Servant. Only so can we explain His sense of the divine necessity of the Cross. "The Son of man must suffer." For our Lord made it clear many times that this was not merely an intuitive conviction but depended on His understanding of the Old Testament. "For the Son of man goeth, even as it is written of him" (Mk. xiv. 21, *cf.* Mk. ix. 12, Lk. xviii. 31, xxiv. 25-27, 44-46.) It would, of course, be quite wrong to imagine that anyone without the light of the Holy Spirit could have discovered beforehand from the Old Testament what our Lord would be like. The Bible never speaks to anyone except in so far as the Holy Spirit enlightens him. But this does not alter the fact that one of the great functions of the Spirit is to bring home the inherent authority of the Scripture. Our Lord's new and profound understanding of the Scripture was only possible because the Spirit dwelt in Him without measure. At the same time the Old Testament, as the Spirit illuminated it, had an authority which determined His whole understanding of His mission.

The same applies to the New Testament writers. Certainly they read the Old Testament in the light of their knowledge of our Lord. But they claimed that so far from undermining its authority, our Lord was the key to true understanding of the Old Testament and that no one had really understood it before. "For until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which vail is done away in Christ" (II Cor. iii. 14). But at the same time the Old Testament, as read in the light of our Lord, gave them the authoritative categories by which they interpreted His person and work.<sup>1</sup>

## II. REVELATION.

All will, of course, agree that the New Testament cannot be understood apart from its Old Testament background. But it is now becoming clear that a knowledge of contemporary Greek papyri is also an indispensable aid to a full understanding of the New Testament. Have then the papyri and the Old Testament a value for the Christian

which differs only in degree? Or has the Old Testament a distinctive value as part of one continuous revelation with the New Testament?

In attempting to answer this question we should notice that every line of the New Testament presupposes the fact of one living and true God which it derived from the Old Testament and the Old Testament alone. Was this Old Testament belief the result of the natural development of the Semitic genius for religion? Was it due to the exile? Was it the outcome of philosophical or scientific discovery? Or, is it to be ascribed to God's revelation? If it is said that monotheism is simply the spiritual evolution of a desert faith, we have to ask why none of the surrounding nations followed Israel in this. It is a significant fact that the world's only monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, all derive their monotheism from the Old Testament. Why, again, was Israel always slipping back into idolatry, polytheism, and submoral views of God? The theme of so much Old Testament history is that a man of God is sent to deliver apostate Israel from idolatry and oppression but that after a brief period they fall back and serve Baalim. Israel's natural tendencies and environment, so far from favouring monotheism, seemed to undermine it.

Some would say that Israel owed her monotheism to the exile, that they went into exile with a belief in Jehovah as one of many national gods operative only in local territory. But, finding that they could still realise His presence in Babylon, they concluded that He was the God of the whole earth. But the natural conclusion, which some Jews actually drew (Jer. xliv. 17), was that their national God had been defeated by the Babylonian gods and that it would be politic to worship them instead. Therefore some Jews at least must have taken into exile a belief in a God who was far more than a local or tribal deity. Otherwise they would never have thought of worshipping Him, after utter defeat, in what others regarded as the territory of the victorious gods.

It is certainly true that the Greek philosophers had an idea of one God which they reached by human discovery. They discovered that the principle of causation was universal. Therefore it was no longer necessary to have one God to explain rain, another fire and so on—one god to each natural function. This belief had been almost inevitable as long as they believed only in direct and personal causation without any idea of secondary causes. But their growing realisation of the rule of cause and effect gradually put the old gods out of a job, making them unnecessary hypotheses. In their place the discovery of one universal principle made the Greeks speak of God or of the Divine. But they knew nothing of this God. They thought that He was probably ignorant of the existence of this world.<sup>2</sup> He was not a God to whom men could pray. He could not be identified with any known God. The Old Testament on the other hand said that Jehovah, one of the many gods worshipped in the world, was the only God. Clearly the Hebrews were not driven to their belief by any similar process of discovery of an over-ruling principle of cause and effect. For the Old Testament shows no trace of any idea of secondary causes. It traces everything to the immediate intervention of a personal will, an idea which fits polytheism but creates difficulties for monotheism. (Consider such problems as the hardening of Pharaoh's heart). Israelite

natural science or philosophy (if either phrase is appropriate), so far from being the source of Old Testament monotheism, was almost an embarrassment to it.

We must therefore fall back on the Old Testament's own account of the matter and we find that Israel's prophets and leaders so often go back to a call—Moses at the burning bush, Isaiah in the Temple, Ezekiel by the river Chebar, etc.—when Jehovah opened their eyes to His action in history and revealed Himself to them as a living, righteous, and saving God, so commanding, holy, and exalted that there was room for no other. He was Jehovah their God, but in His presence their eyes were opened to see that He had not only brought up Israel from Egypt but also the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir (Amos ix. 7). It came to them by revelation. No other hypothesis is adequate to explain the facts.

But the Old Testament is not merely an independent revelation which the New Testament assumes. The Old Testament and New Testament together are the record of one continuous action of God coming to its climax in our Lord. For revelation comes when God acts in history and illuminates the mind of a prophet to see the meaning of His action. "The Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos iii. 7). His message then brings into existence a people who will be the witness and keeper of the message.

The action of God creates the Gospel of God, and the Gospel creates the people of God. Both the Gospel of God and the people of God look forward at each stage to a further hope—but at the same time in both there is continuity. This might be expressed in the form of a table.

<i>Era</i>	<i>Divine Action</i>	<i>People</i>	<i>Hope</i>
Abraham	God's call and promise	Family	Blessing of all nations
Exodus	Deliverance and redemption	Nation	Giving of the land for an inheritance
David	Rest from enemies	Kingdom	Everlasting kingdom
Prophets	Exile and deliverance	Righteous remnant	i. King of house of David ii. Suffering servant iii. New covenant
Our Lord	Incarnation, Cross Resurrection, Gift of the Spirit	The Church, the new Israel	Our Lord's coming in glory, the summing up of all things in Him

Each stage looks back to the last and forward to the next. We can see this in the way the exodus-theme provides the clue for the interpretations of each successive stage. The Redemption from Egypt (Exodus xv. 13) is seen by Deutero-Isaiah as a shadow of the deliverance from Babylon. "Fear not, I have redeemed thee . . ." (Isa. xliii. 1-7).<sup>3</sup> Again it provides the category in which the New Testament can speak of the historic "redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24), which in its turn looks forward to a greater redemption.

"Ye were sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. iv. 30). Each adumbrates a future redemption which is to recapitulate and transcend its predecessor. In the same way the Church is reconstituted by the successive unfolding of the acts of God. The family comes out of the individual, the nation out of the family, the kingdom out of the nation, the remnant out of the kingdom. The remnant is narrowed down to one as our Lord hung upon the Cross, and the Church is reconstituted in Him as His body. The Gospel of God and the people of God, which the Gospel creates and successively recreates, run through the Old Testament and New Testament and bind them together. It is the same God who saw the affliction of His people and came down to deliver them from Egypt, who saw the affliction of His people and came down to save them from sin. Moreover the saving from Egypt was a step on the way to saving from sin. St. Paul says that the events of the Exodus happened to Israel *τυπιζῶς*—by way of type (I Cor. x. 11). They were a rough draft or model of the Gospel that was to come. Israel was saved, not by law, but by grace, by Jehovah's mighty hand and stretched out arm. She was separated from Egypt by passing through the baptismal waters of the Red Sea, fed with spiritual food and drink. Only after their deliverance was the demand made that "the ordinance of the law should be fulfilled in them." A recent writer has summed the matter up in a reference to "the metaphor of Brunner that the Old Testament is like the first part, and the New Testament like the closing words of a sentence. One sentence, neither part fully intelligible without the other, the final part decisive (particularly in the instance of the German which of course, was in Brunner's mind) of the total meaning—such is the Bible as a whole."<sup>4</sup> We may find the Gospel in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament and we should read the Old Testament, not in the light of the primitive savagery which went before it, but of the great things which came out of it.

This raises the problem of the Christian use of the Old Testament. Biblical criticism has done the Church a valuable service in its efforts to recover the original meaning of the Old Testament. But there has been a tendency to confine the meaning of any passage to its original meaning. This tendency Mr. Moule evidently shares, judging from his illustration from *Psa. cxvi. 12-13*. But he has not disposed of the question by quoting an example of Christian re-interpretation of the Old Testament which is clearly based on a misunderstanding. A true understanding of the Old Testament original would lead to a different mystical interpretation. Is such interpretation justified at all? Mr. Moule's has evaded the issue partly by giving a bad example, and partly by his concentration on authority to the neglect of other aspects of the problem of revelation.

Further examination of the Old Testament will show that it is often impossible to confine its meaning to the original meaning. Consider *Psalm xlv*. Oesterley's agrees with most scholars in regarding it as "purely secular in origin," written without Messianic significance, for the wedding of a king. The original meaning of the words addressed to the king in verse 6 "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" is that "in ancient Israel the king was regarded as divine." But surely this Psalm was incorporated into the Canon, not because of its original

meaning but because post-exilic Judaism found a new meaning, applying it to the relation of the Messiah to Israel. In fact we may say that it is canonical Scripture on condition that it has that meaning. Which, then, is the true meaning for the Christian? The original meaning? the meaning which secured the passage its place in the Old Testament? or a further meaning that the passage has in the light of our Lord (Heb. i. 8-9)? Mr. Moule insists that the New Testament writers interpret the Old Testament by the authority of our Lord. Were they wrong to have done so? And, may not we do the same?

The principle found in this one example could be developed over the whole range of the Old Testament. Take such ideas as sacrifice, priesthood, holiness, salvation. How different is their original meaning, rooted in primitive superstition, from the meaning which they came to bear in the context of Old Testament revelation. But what God meant by any of these ideas was always more than the writer could grasp at the time, and the full revelation of what God means by them is only to be found in Christ. So in the light of Christ the Old Testament records become charged with a new meaning for the Christian.

It may be said that this opens the door to all the extravagances by which mystical interpretation has sometimes overlaid the message of Scripture. But equally the concentration on the original meaning of the Bible has sometimes been used to impoverish us of much of its meaning. These abuses do not therefore justify us in excluding the mystical interpretation any more than the literal interpretation. Both are needed; neither can set aside the other; and the mystical must always be checked by the literal interpretation.

The basic difficulty, perhaps, is that people are prepared to see God's hand in the facts which the Bible records but not in the Bible record of the facts. This, however, seems to be contrary to St. Paul's claim for his own inspiration. "Which things also we speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth but in words which the Spirit teacheth." (1 Cor. ii. 13). One need not be a fundamentalist to see that there is a sense in which the inspiration of the Bible is verbal, extending not merely to content but to the language.<sup>6</sup> This will not imply that the writers had an inerrant perception of either. For both form and content came by inspiration not by dictation. But if we believe in that inspiration we need not be surprised if the Bible language has a divinely intended meaning greater than the writer could realise.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller statement of the argument of the last two paragraphs see *The Old Testament in the World Church* by G. E. Phillips, pp.55-73.

<sup>2</sup> See Ross *Aristotle*, p.183.

<sup>3</sup> For the exodus theme in Isaiah see Phythian-Adams in *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. cxxxiii. pp.28-29.

<sup>4</sup> G. E. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p.82.

<sup>5</sup> The Psalms, vol. I, p.250.

<sup>6</sup> H. L. Goudge, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, says ad loc., "From the Spirit comes not only the substance of the message, but the language in which it is proclaimed. . . . As Dr. Lightfoot has said, 'The notion of verbal inspiration in a certain sense is involved in the very conception of any inspiration at all. . . .'"

<sup>7</sup> Cf. C. Gore, *Reconstruction of Belief*, p. 313, n. 3. "We must always distinguish the original sense of the prophecies from that which Christian teachers saw in them. But it is, of course, quite credible that the sense later assigned to them may have lain in the intention of the inspiring Spirit. In some cases I should find it difficult to doubt this."

# The Church and Social Righteousness.

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

THE average Englishman has a profound dislike for politics in the pulpit, considering that the accredited representatives of the Church in their public ministry should confine themselves to those spiritual interests in which alone they can claim a competence worthy of respect. Perhaps this prejudice is an unconscious survival from his earlier anti-clerical days when the development of English life, secular and ecclesiastical, was furthered by driving the clergy out of those offices which had previously given them a commanding position in national life. It may also bear a somewhat confused witness to the Gospel principle that the Kingdom of Heaven is not of this world, lest any attempt to bring religion into politics should finish by making religion an optional part of the political rough and tumble. Here is an obscure but definable feeling that the Christian message is "above" the secular necessities of life, from which men seek a temporary release when they go into the sanctuary of God. Only in this way, it is argued, can the rhythm of Christian life be maintained, if periods of activity in administration or industry are balanced by moments of withdrawal when men are confronted by spiritual realities.

It is obvious, if this analysis does represent the truth, at least in part, that there are warnings to be heeded in all these objections. But it is equally obvious that if the phrase 'no politics in the pulpit' is to be taken seriously as implying that Christianity and politics have no real relationship one to another, or that the Gospel has no word of guidance to speak to those engaged in political and social tasks, then not only is the modern evangelical turning his back upon a constant tradition of Church history, but also he is denying the Gospel itself. For the Gospel does not deal with one part of man called his spiritual nature, leaving the rest to be ordered in accordance with natural laws; neither does it consist in the reformation of parts of his life, but in a radical renewal of the whole of his nature expressed in the categories of death to an old moralism and resurrection to a common life in the Spirit. This is expressed historically in the existence of a Christian community wherein is embodied the Gospel, even as the Word was made flesh. No doubt this is the humiliation of the Gospel inasmuch as the Church is the great scandal of faith. But it is the way in which God has worked redemptively in the world from the beginnings of sacred history until now. The Community of the Faithful, the People of God, Israel, the saints, the elect, the Church, use what scriptural title you will for the body of believers and you are still left with the fact that though redemption is personal, it is always in terms of community. Christianity is in its essence social and can only continue to exist socially.<sup>1</sup> This fact seems to be as deeply involved in the postulates of faith as in the nature of man. At this point the order of grace confirms and fulfils the order of nature.

The Gospel brings news of a God whom we know as Father, Son and Spirit, the pattern of true harmony in fellowship. The one undoubted command (mandatum) of the Gospel is the command to love one another,<sup>2</sup> as the Incarnate Lord loved us and gave Himself for us. A community which owes its origin to God and not to man, yet which must be visible in the order of history and live in the world, is part of the foundation of our religion. It is also recognised by most non-Christian thinkers that sociality is part of the truth about man as man, that only in fellowship can he become truly human.<sup>3</sup> It is not good for man to be alone.<sup>4</sup> If it were possible the result would be not a man but a monster.

Now this fact of the Christian community as central in the whole development of Christianity, involves Christians in the social struggle, inasmuch as the Church is a visible embodiment of the Gospel. Supernatural in origin and destiny though it be, the Church is also firmly built into the historical order so that it is in direct relationship with the prevailing social structure at any given moment of its history. "The Christian Church cannot find an escape from history"<sup>5</sup> and therefore it is deeply involved in questions of historic justice and social righteousness even though its anxiety to preserve unsullied its spiritual message and function may sometimes blind its members to the fact that this theological issue can hide an evasion from social decisions. Inevitably therefore because it can only be discerned in a community, Christianity has social consequences which cannot be ignored. It has actually exercised a great and formative influence upon society.<sup>6</sup>

This becomes clearer when it is remembered that there is a very close connection between the missionary experience of the Church and its social consequences: between the epochs of revival and social progress. The triumphant expansion of early Christianity not only demonstrated the power and significance of fellowship in its own life but also had important social results in the structure of fourth century life. The evangelisation of Northern and Eastern Europe in the eighth and ninth centuries disciplined the barbarity of the Teutonic peoples and brought them within the range of Christian civilization and under the influence of the idea of a common life in Christendom. Thus was the stage set for the great attempt to work out in detail the meaning of Christendom in the thirteenth century. The failure of society in the latter years of the Middle Ages coincided with that decline of religion which made the history of the Reformation inevitable. Religious revival in the sixteenth century led to great changes in the social order and to the reformed emphasis on a man's secular calling as the sphere where he was to discover the will of God for his life and perform it. The eighteenth century missionary movement not only provided the spiritual foundation for much of what is best in contemporary English society, but also led to far reaching social results in relatively primitive societies in many parts of the world. Indeed the quickened social conscience of modern Christians with its emphasis on justice is largely due to the extensive Christian activity of the last century and a half which for sheer vitality can only be compared with the first two centuries of the Christian era.<sup>7</sup>

It is possible to distinguish three social attitudes which have emerged

in the course of Christian history and which with many modifications and changing emphases persist until this day. All of them can claim that they are based upon the New Testament and give expression to fundamental Christian insights, but in isolation they distort the truth and discredit their version of Christianity. The first in point of time, if not in importance, is the eschatological outlook which understands that "the fashion of this world is passing away."<sup>8</sup> The deep-rooted and persistent effects of sin and evil are faced realistically and since 'the whole world lieth in the evil one,' to dream of a permanent improvement in the moral structure of the historical order is to become the victim of an illusion. This present world order is so corrupt that it is idle to think of it in terms of reformation or reconstruction. Only the irruption of the Eternal into history, a *παρουσία* of the Son of God can overthrow the embattled forces of evil and rescue anything that is worth saving from the wreck. It was natural that this should have been the dominant outlook in the early ages of the Church when Christians were confronted by a totalitarian empire whose moral assumptions were non-Christian or anti-Christian and which frequently used its power to persecute the faithful. Only an eschatological hope firmly rooted in the Bible could have enabled the Church to withstand such an unremitting pressure. But this strain of thinking has endured in all subsequent ages, particularly in periods of social distress or political upheaval. Alongside the dominant world-affirming outlook of the medieval church, this world-denying temper persisted (as a protest against the secularisation of the Church and its thinking), in such movements as the Waldensians, the Spiritual Franciscans and the Brethren of the Common Life. It has been well said that Puritanism had a high ancestry in the medieval church<sup>9</sup> and was in part the continuance of these strains which were so influential in medieval Christianity. In modern times this outlook may be seen in the Pietist movement and in a good deal of English evangelicalism such as is represented in the Keswick movement.

A second attitude, which could only become explicit after the Church had conquered the Roman empire, is to be found in the attempt to give meaning here and now to the lordship of Jesus in the world. It seeks to claim the whole range of human life as His rightful inheritance and to impose upon the world the laws of His kingdom. The history of the fourth century illustrates the stages in this process as Christianity becomes first a tolerated, then an established and finally the exclusive religion of Rome. The social functions of Christianity between the fifth and the tenth centuries were discharged in the preservation of something of the old civilization of Greece and Rome and in the reduction of the northern invaders to a nominal allegiance to the Gospel and a measure of social order. From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries the great attempt to Christianise Europe was worked out theologically and politically. In the eyes of the men of those times the key to the whole situation lay in an effective Papacy. Pronouncements aimed at the moral control of rulers or of turbulent peoples were of little use unless they were backed by sufficient executive power to secure their observance. Hence the outward story of these centuries seems to be little more than an account of the

squalid disputes between Pope and Emperor and the shameful abuse of spiritual authority to obtain secular advantages. But behind the facade of events a great argument was being conducted on the question of Christian influence and how that influence could be made effective in the world of affairs. Could the Christian voice be respected and obeyed without, at any rate in reserve, the sanction of executive power behind it? Such a question is not so simple as it appears, nor can it be hastily answered.

Nevertheless it is important to observe some of the consequences involved in such an outlook which commands a great deal of sympathy at the present time. It is simple wisdom to recollect that earlier Christian generations have grappled with these problems, even though their circumstances were different from ours. Those who most vehemently repudiate Calvin and all his works are often most ready to demand for their particular solution of the social dilemma, the unqualified support of Christian people, and expect the secular authority to act, as it was required to act in Geneva in the sixteenth century, at the behests of a spiritual leadership. This can be an attempt to evade the problem of power by exercising it indirectly. The Roman church has been consistent in its demand for temporal power on the real ground that if it is to speak effectively to a social or political situation it must be able to speak as one sovereign to another. There is, moreover, another danger concealed in this approach to the social problem, and it is present in every situation where the eschatological framework of Christian living is ignored and the Kingdom of God is identified with an order which can be established here on earth. The practical identification of the Kingdom with an historical order, however carefully planned, involves us in the desperate expedient of giving absolute value to a human contrivance which can only have a relative importance. The next step is to declare that a particular programme is Christian and to excommunicate all who are unable or unwilling to subscribe to its demands. This is to ignore the fact that sin persists in every re-ordering of human affairs and to prepare for a situation in the future when the church being identified with a corrupt or decaying social order once called Christian, must be attacked without mercy as a means of dealing with the social problem. Examples of this may be found in pre-revolutionary France and Russia. The temptation to give an absolute Christian sanction to some new order continually faces men who are aware of the need of social action, but it ignores the inner dynamic alike of social development and of Christian faith.

The third attitude to the social question is perhaps most congenial to the Anglo-Saxon mind as it represents something of a compromise between the first two suggested above. Its tendency is to accept the present social order whatever form that may take and to do all that is possible to mitigate the evil effects incidental to any state of society. It will suggest that the root of the trouble is in the hearts of men and that the social structure as such is comparatively unimportant. If there are enough men of goodwill and Christian integrity the machine can be made to work in such a way that the greatest benefits will result for the largest possible number of people. Meantime the victims of society will be cared for by voluntary institutions

founded and supported by Christian philanthropy. In some quarters this task is apt to be dismissed, somewhat contemptuously, as mere "ambulance work" but the care of the sick, the poor and the helpless has been a constant Christian obligation from the beginning. The Dominical precept 'He that would be first among you let him be your servant even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many' has sunk deeply into the Christian conscience.<sup>10</sup> What is required of individual Christians in society, whether they occupy influential positions or very subordinate posts, is the exercise of qualities such as honesty, justice and fair dealing dominated by the concept of service. From time to time some great social issue emerges, such as Anti-Slavery, the state of the prisons or Factory legislation in nineteenth century England and a small group of Christians begins the long crusade, eventually to be joined by large numbers of the faithful. There is however, rarely, if ever, any exercise of discipline within the Christian community to secure massed Christian support for such a crusade; largely because Christian opinion, at any rate in the early stages, is usually deeply divided on the issue and support or opposition is regarded as a question to be decided by the individual conscience. Further, it is to be remembered that modern society possesses an extremely complex structure and that proposals for change must very largely depend upon technical judgments<sup>11</sup> for which Christians as such, except the few who are technically accomplished, have no special aptitude.

Now if we turn to consider our contemporary situation, almost overwhelming in the multiplicity of problems it thrusts upon our attention and all of them requiring decisions to be taken which may have far reaching effects, there is one point of agreement amongst the vast bulk of Christian people. With few exceptions, all are agreed that the future of humanity depends upon the influence which Christianity may exert on the people who will be directly responsible for taking such decisions in the coming years. Disagreement begins when we attempt to define in what particular ways the Gospel can speak imperatively to a bewildered generation and how its voice is to be made effective. It is only to be expected that if there is such a thing as Evangelical Christianity, it should have a word to speak to modern man which is different in some vital respects from the word of Catholic Christianity. It is also true that Evangelical Christians have not given very much attention to fundamental social questions in recent years, as compared with the work that has been done by Catholic Christians so that there is not a body of authoritative guidance in England for evangelical thinkers grappling with this problem.

The Church is a body charged with the responsibility of bearing a distinctive witness in the world, which if it is not given by the Christian body will not be given at all. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."<sup>12</sup> It is a witness to Jesus Christ which is thus given, as the centre and meaning alike of history and of every individual existence. He is the true centre and destiny of every social grouping. Consequently there must be no confusion of the mission of the Church

with the aims and ends of any secular society even when Christians in the fulfilment of their Christian duty feel themselves obliged to support the policy of a particular state or party. Therefore, because the Church is the bearer of that Divine Word by which it lives and which all mankind is bound to hear, if life is ever to be more than a miserable tragedy, it will have a distinctive word to speak to our social confusion; a word which if it is not spoken by the Church will not be spoken by any other body. Most emphatically it is not called upon to endorse the programmes of political parties or to throw a protective cloak over the secular nostrums, many of which are now set before us as Christian schemes. No doubt there are many places where the social action of the politically-conscious Christian will coincide with the action of the secular politician. But that is only an illustration of the fact that in a corrupt society the Christian is obliged to choose the best line of action under the circumstances, which may well be very far from his confessed ideal. Nevertheless the dimensions of his thinking, the motives and hopes of his actions will be different from those of his secular contemporaries. The Christian, and particularly the Evangelical Christian has a distinctive word to speak to the present situation. It will not be an easy or a simple word such as "my people love to hear" but it will be a word that must be heard if the nations are not to perish. The Church dare not, whatever individual Christians may be able to do, in loyalty to her Lord compromise herself by a definite political attitude. For the Church is the only place where all the citizens who are drawn into opposite camps by their political or social conflicts, can escape from the obsession of these difficult problems in their public life. It is the one place of reconciliation where together all may invoke 'Our Father' and ask Him, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us': and where together all may sit down at the table of the Lord and share in the same Body and Blood.

If it is asked what are the notes of this distinctive Christian witness in the social sphere, we may begin by pointing out that 'People Matter' and matter supremely. This insight comes from the Biblical understanding of man created in the image of God—a responsible moral agent possessed of a real measure of self determination and accountable to God. Further the Bible shows clearly from the opening chapters of Genesis onwards, that true humanity is only possible in the context of personal relationship, in the family and in the wider community. The Fall, despite its radical consequences, has not entirely obliterated these fundamental truths about man which are given meaning at a deeper level in the redemption wrought by Christ. "The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" is the Christian confession of true personality and is always accompanied by the recognition of the brother for whom Christ died."<sup>13</sup> Much of this has been recognised in recent thought with its emphasis on the doctrine derived from Martin Buber, that 'real life is meeting.' It is clear that if people matter in this sense, that if the testimony of the Bible both in the order of creation and in the order of redemption points to the primacy of personality then Christianity has a word of judgment to speak against "the vast spectacle of ugliness and tyranny which is the modern notion of civilisation."<sup>14</sup> For the unprecedented

mechanical expansion of the last century and a half has led to a great depersonalization of large areas of human life and suppressed much that is truly personal. The day of the individual craftsman or the small domestic industry (where indeed there was plenty of opportunity for exploitation) has passed and the drift towards ever larger industrial units is continually being accelerated. In these conditions it is difficult to see how a man can take a real interest in his work or express his personality through what he does.<sup>15</sup> A recent correspondence in the *Spectator* pointed out some of the disastrous personal effects of the narrowness of factory life and the consequent loss of personal initiative. Clergy and social workers in industrial areas will be all too familiar with the spiritual and mental inertia which descends like a blight on the majority of people whose working hours are spent as a cog in a machine. Under such conditions human labour is inevitably treated as the same sort of commodity as the work achieved by a machine. The relationship between the worker, as a person who should find deep satisfaction for his whole nature in his work, and the job he is given to do is ignored. It is hard to see how this fundamental issue is affected by any re-ordering of the economic or political structure of the country. Indeed the nationalisation of heavy industries in the interests of real economic efficiency might only intensify the impersonal element. A good many years ago, in his essay on the Russian Revolution, Berdyaev pointed out that one of the tragic things about the Russian revolutionaries (and this applied to most of the adherents of socialist parties elsewhere) was that they had taken over most of the assumptions and values of the bourgeois civilisation which they were pledged to destroy.<sup>16</sup> It is not now possible for the world (despite Mr. Ghandi) to go back to a pre-industrial society since there are far too many mouths to feed. But a good deal of Christian thinking and effort will be needed at this point in our economic life. Evangelicals have maintained the Reformation insight that vocation is not confined to the cloister but must be followed in the world,—in the home and in business. Nevertheless they have failed to appreciate the changes in the social order which have made it almost impossible for the worker to serve God and fulfil his own personality in daily work. How can a man, set to accomplish some automatic task requiring very little physical or mental effort in co-operation with a machine for eight or nine hours a day, discover and serve any real sense of divine vocation? There is no easy solution to this human problem but a constant Christian witness that 'people matter' is needed whether the economic structure be individualist or socialist.

A second way in which Christians can render great service at the present time is by an unfaltering witness to the primacy in all life of the spiritual order and of man's eternal destiny. "A religion which is perfectly at home in the world, has no counsel for it which the world could not gain by an easier method."<sup>17</sup> The Christian is a citizen of two commonwealths, living here below as in a colonial outpost, the life of heaven above. This will require from the Christian a greater measure of self discipline and a resolute acceptance of higher standards than are observed elsewhere. "It seems to me that we are at a moment when the primary Christian duty is one, I will not say

of detachment, for that word has a stoic flavour, but rather of conscientious recollection of the absolute primacy of the spiritual and of determination to live here and now in the light of that recollection."<sup>18</sup> We say, and mean it sincerely, that 'a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth,' that it is possible to be a Christian in the most adverse social environment. We recollect that early Christianity was practised by slaves and others who were in a worse economic and social position than anyone is to-day. But what is needed is a demonstration that Christians mean what they say when they profess comparative indifference to worldly possessions. In the first few centuries of their existence monks and hermits gave this testimony in an unmistakable form. It has been repeated again and again in times of revival, among the early Franciscans, the Moravians or the Methodists. Nowadays Christian practice and assumptions on the question of property and possessions are little distinguishable from any other views.

One of the effects of industrialization and the social thinking it has stimulated, has been to infect the majority of people with a materialistic outlook. A good job, a house, a car, the gadgets and amenities of a technical civilisation and above all, material security, have become the professed objectives of large numbers of people. To obtain these ends is the dominating purpose of their waking hours and applied science now seems to hold out the possibility that a majority of people can have these things if vested interests in the present scarcity are removed. To the Christian, the personal life of the Spirit in obedience to the Word of God and in fellowship with others, is the most important thing in life and the material equipment which God has provided in the form of raw materials is of secondary importance and must be used to assist the development of Christian life. In an age which thinks in terms of material security and estimates the value of the Church in terms of its social and economic effectiveness, it may well be that Christians are being called to a more heroic mode of life, a kind of monasticism in the world which by its outward form will bear witness that Christian people regard these things with comparative indifference.<sup>19</sup> In any discussion, or in the promotion of practical measures Christians ought to make quite plain that their motives and expectations are different from those with whom they may be co-operating as fellow citizens. "The Christian . . . will wish to adjust the conditions of this vale of tears so as to procure a relative but very real earthly happiness for the assembled multitude ; a polity in which all can find a good and decent living, a state of justice, of amity and prosperity, making possible for each the fulfilment of his destiny. He claims that the terrestrial city should be so directed as effectively to recognize the right of each of its members to live, to work and to grow in their life as persons."<sup>20</sup> The key words in this passage from the writings of Jacques Maritain are 'a relative happiness' 'fulfilment of his destiny' 'to grow as persons.' The Christian is concerned with the ordering of the material order, in which he must live the life of the Spirit, so that it may demonstrate the destiny of man in the eternal order and that true happiness can never be found in things material by themselves. He will therefore be continuously aware that an improvement in social conditions may

effectively prevent men from hearing the Word of the Gospel, breeding the illusion that they can save themselves by technical means. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>21</sup>

A third aspect of Christian witness most needed at the present time is one which springs historically from the Reformation and its renewed understanding of the meaning of grace. To put it quite simply, the Christian testifies that no re-ordering of the social and economic structure removes the problem of sin. The Reformation "was the historical locus where the Christian conscience became most fully aware of the persistence of Sin in the life of the redeemed."<sup>22</sup> The justified man is always a justified sinner and can never presume on perfection. As Calvin put it "there still remains in a regenerate man a fountain of evil, continually producing irregular desires . . . for sin always exists in the saints till they are divested of their mortal bodies."<sup>23</sup> It was at this point that Reformation theology separated decisively from Catholic theology which defined sin as the privation of an original perfection rather than as a positive and radical corruption. Consequently the Catholic doctrine of grace seeks for a place in history "where sin is transcended and only finiteness remains."<sup>24</sup> This tendency to overestimate the sinlessness of the redeemed finds its most striking expression in the virtual identification of the Church with the Kingdom of God, with the consequent claim that it is a 'societas perfecta.' This identification of the Church with a particular social order of which it is the directive principle is not only spiritually dangerous, but ultimately historically disastrous. It ignores the dynamic of history, thus making the Church the ally and the defender of an *ancien régime* which must be either transformed or destroyed owing to changed circumstances. Further it ignores the persistence of sin in the human will to power so that for instance in the medieval attempt to order society in obedience to the law of Christ, the Spirit of Christ and the genius of Caesar were tragically compounded in the activity of the greatest popes. The sanctions thus given by religion to the feudal structure of society meant that the injustice of the feudal order could not be changed without challenging the religious authority which supported it. This is always the result which follows upon the sinful sanctification of relative standards of knowledge or action.

Sin persists. Every new situation provides new opportunities for evil as well as good. Such testimony to a dynamic in fallen nature which must be matched by a dynamic of grace is especially necessary at this moment in human history. The hope of a new order after the war, which shall somehow have shed all the iniquities and frustrations of this present order, is very widespread. An acute criticism of present wrongs is combined with a credulous belief that if vested interests are thwarted and the welfare of the common man erected into a principle which is genuinely observed, then an order of justice and prosperity will be established in which every one will have what he wants. This optimistic expectation, which for its fulfilment would require the greatest miracle ever known in human history, is typical of the easy conscience of modern man which seems to regard war and its accompanying evils as a temporary breakdown which can easily be repaired. "No cumulation of contradictory

evidence seems to disturb modern man's opinion of himself."<sup>25</sup> At best he deals with the problem of sin by diagnosing its presence in those whom for some reason, he believes to be opposed to him. The method of seeking a scapegoat to explain the breakdown of human relationships has been pursued by most groups in the last few decades. The Jews, capitalists, appeasers, Fascists, revolutionaries and conservatives have been among the victims designated as responsible for our present disorder. The deliberate attempt to discredit opposition in advance by speaking of vested interests as the sole obstacle to the attainment of a desired end has inflamed passions and substituted prejudice for reason in the development of policy.

The Gospel has a word to speak to just such a tangled human situation. It is a word of judgment and a summons to repentance. It throws a searchlight on the actual facts of the existing situation, reveals the consequences of present forms of economic or social behaviour and lays bear the obstacles to justice in the human heart. This searchlight of the Word illuminates impartially the sinfulness of those within the Church as well as those outside, of the capitalist as well as the proletariat. This is only possible, humanly speaking, if it is clear that those who endeavour to speak the Word have no axe to grind, no personal interest to defend and therefore nothing to lose. They will make plain that they are members of a church which is always under the Cross, that they understand themselves to stand under the judgment of the Gospel, before they give utterance to any word. "Every Christian should become aware of the factors which determine his judgment, should suspect his own motives, because he knows that sin is natural to him, should put the burden of proof on those social judgments which harmonize with the economic interests of his group."<sup>26</sup> There is little doubt that such testimony is urgently needed at the present time, to save us from the disasters of the persistent illusion of human perfectibility and also that it is a most costly witness to give. Only a genuinely penitent church can give it.

Another important factor in Christian witness to the social order is testimony to the Eternal Kingdom of God. Christian thought must always work within an eschatological framework, for the destiny of man and of the historic order is to be consummated in the eternal order. History does not explain itself nor does human life find its meaning in itself. Moreover this particular problem of meaningfulness will become more acute just in so far as there is a genuine improvement in the relative justice of any new social order. When drudgery and exploitation have been reduced to the minimum point in human life, then the problem of the destiny of man and the reason for his existence will become more insistent for our minds. Christian eschatology speaks of judgment, of heaven and hell; it reckons seriously with death, that final No! spoken to all the aspirations of man. It is not possible for man to evade the problem of death any more than he can escape from dying. It is this important fact together with the knowledge that sin persists in every situation which prevents the Christian from indulging in any Utopian expectations for the future. These he understands to be but illusions—the rationalisation of the hopes of men. Fulfilment of the hopes of men in terms of the destruction of evil and injustice cannot be achieved in history but can only come from beyond

history. The dynamic of sinfulness which is an integral part of the historic process can only be overcome by a greater dynamic from without. Hence the Christian looks for an *eschaton* which shall be the great redeeming act of God. His present existence is a life which is lived 'between the times', between the coming of Jesus Christ into history which was the earnest of final redemption and His return which will be the consummation of redemption.

This eschatological understanding of history which prevents us from adopting any Utopian illusions about the future of society, and insists that Christianity is an end and not a means, must not lead us into complacency over present social tasks. Niebuhr has pointed out with an impressive weight of argument that the understanding of the ultimate problem of historical existence in terms of divine mercy which was the great insight of the Reformation, seems to have precluded any understanding of all the proximate problems<sup>27</sup>. This moral complacency or social defeatism has been characteristic of a good deal of reformed theology particularly among the pietistic sects. A doctrine of the world has been formulated in rather narrow eschatological terms and Christian duty has been interpreted as a necessary separation from this world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"<sup>28</sup>. Sometimes this has been worked out so that a perfectionist private ethic has been placed in juxtaposition to a realistic or cynical public ethic. The world as represented by industry or commerce has not been a forbidden arena for the Christian warrior, though he has been warned of the personal dangers confronting him in such a sphere. An eschatology which leads to moral complacency in the social order—things must get worse since Scripture indicates this as a prelude to the parousia and therefore it is not our duty to seek to arrest this decline—not only discredits eschatological dimensions of thought but also denies equally fundamental insights of the Gospel such as the responsibilities of Christian love and obedience to the will of God as the Lord of history. We are obliged by the circumstances of our lives and the dynamic of the Gospel to struggle for such a relative measure of justice and security as is possible at this present time, for it is here in the world as it is that we have been set to accomplish the will of God.

The responsibility of the Christian for the public life of the world is involved in the fact that God is the Creator and the Lord of history. This truth is most effectively proclaimed by the prophets of the Old Dispensation; but the New Testament is the fulfilment and not the denial of the Old Testament. Christianity is not a religion of escape from the world but of obedience to God in the world. The medieval monasticism which was so heavily criticised by the Reformers, has had its revenge in the perverted doctrines of other worldliness current in much modern evangelicalism, where a kind of individualistic monasticism is practised. This is not to deny that any authentic Christianity will manifest a strain of asceticism, but it is to declare that the traditional doctrines of separation and worldliness need a radical re-thinking in the light of the politico-social situation of the present day. The fact is that, just as the individual justified Christian recognises imperfection and sin persisting in him and yet the complementary duty of striving by grace towards perfection, so in the social sphere the Christian has

to recognise the persistence of sin in any social order and the fundamental otherworldliness of any true Christianity and at the same time strive for obedience to the will of God as the Lord of history in the social sphere. In fulfilling this latter obligation he will not be content with corporate action aimed at particular evils and undertaken as occasion serves but will work for a radical re-ordering of the basis and motives of an acquisitive society, remembering that the religious community of which he is a member, is intended by its founder to counteract corruption in the body politic by being mixed in it and also by standing forth distinct from it as a burning and a shining light. This twofold function is fulfilled when the Church preaches and lives by the Word of God. All that has been said above is comprehended in living by the Word of God and testifying to it. This is all that the Church can do for a better order of the world. This alone is her mission but if she does it faithfully by the grace of God, it may please Him that His Word and Spirit will lay hold of those responsible for the new order that must come in the world.

- 1 'The Gospel and Human Needs', J. N. Figgis, p. 141.
- 2 'New Testament Ethics', C. A. Anderson Scott, p. 11.
- 3 'The Christian Understanding of Man': Church, Community and State Series, Austin Farrer, p. 202.
- 4 Genesis ii. 18.
- 5 'Malvern, 1941', Report of the Conference, D. M. Mackinnon, p. 111.
- 6 This can be examined in such a book as 'The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches' by Troeltsch.
- 7 'Church and Community': Church, Community and State Series, K. S. Latourette, p. 14.
- 8 I Corinthians vii. 31.
- 9 'The Medieval Village' G. G. Coulton, pp. 509, 559; 'Medieval Panorama' G. G. Coulton, pp. 120, 180-81.
- 10 St. Matthew xx. 28. Galatians vi. 2. I Peter iii. 8.
- 11 'Christian Realism', J. C. Bennett, pp. 103-4.
- 12 I Peter ii. 9.
- 13 Galatians ii. 20. Romans xiv. 15.
- 14 Figgis *op. cit.* p. 127.
- 15 'Christianity and Economics', A. D. Lindsay, pp. 79-84, 119-122.
- 16 See the comment by Bertrand Russell; "The Bolsheviks love everything in modern industry except the excessive rewards of Capitalism," quoted in Lindsay *op. cit.* p. 119.
- 17 'Does Civilization Need Religion?': Reinhold Niebuhr, p. 177. *cf.* "If we have learnt the Gospel message, we shall at least escape the error of imagining that universal comfort and the Kingdom of God are synonymous." F. C. Burkitt, "Cambridge Biblical Essays," p. 209.
- 18 D. M. Mackinnon in 'Malvern, 1941', p. 101.
- 19 'The Relevance of Christianity', F. R. Barry, p. 248.
- 20 'True Humanism', J. Maritain, p. 131.
- 21 St. Luke xviii. 24.
- 22 'The Nature and Destiny of Man' (Gifford Lectures), Reinhold Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 191.
- 23 Inst. III. iii. 10.
- 24 Niebuhr *op. cit.* Vol. II. p. 148.
- 25 Niebuhr *ibid.* Vol. I. p. 100.
- 26 Bennett *op. cit.* p. 100.
- 27 Niebuhr *op. cit.* Vol. II. pp. 194-212.
- 28 I John ii. 15.

## Book Reviews

### SOUTH INDIA AND CHURCH UNION : A DEFENCE OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

*A Statement submitted to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Anglican Communion (Church Book Room. 1/-.)*

The germ out of which the proposals for Church Union in South India has sprung, originated at a conference of ministers and missionaries held at Tranquebar, about 150 miles south of Madras, in May, 1919. There were thirty-three members of the Conference, and all were Indian except two, one an Englishman, the other an American. They were facing "the titanic task of winning India for Christ." After much prayer, thought and discussion, they issued a statement of which the substance is contained in the following words :

"Yet, confronted by such an overwhelming responsibility, we find ourselves weak and relatively impotent by our unhappy divisions—divisions for which we were not responsible and which have been, as it were, imposed upon us from without ; divisions which we did not create and which we do not desire to perpetuate."

From this, after long and careful consideration, the scheme for Church Union in South India has sprung. It proposes the union of the South India United Church ; the South India Province of the Methodist Church ; and the Dioceses of Madras, Dornakal, Tinnevely, and Travancore and Cochin in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. The desirability and urgency of such union needs no demonstration. Division among Christians in this country, unhappy though they are, have their origin in our ecclesiastical and political history, and we know and understand their causes even though we may not approve them ; and long familiarity has accustomed us to the fact and deadened our sense of the scandal and practical mischiefs attaching to it. But it is not so in the Mission Field ; and native Christians in India and elsewhere cannot understand why they should be divided into separate camps, the distinctions between which convey no intelligible meaning to them. Reasonable, however, as this may be, the scheme has been fiercely attacked from the Anglo-Catholic direction, just as, some thirty years ago, in 1913, somewhat similar proposals associated with a conference held at Kikuyu in central Africa were attacked. The object, of course, is to induce the Bishops, when the next Lambeth Conference meets, to refuse to approve the scheme. The reason for disapproval is, as in the Kikuyu controversy, that for a given period from the date of union, ministers who have not had episcopal ordination shall not be reordained. When that period has elapsed, those who seek to be ministers in the United Church will be ordained by the Bishops of the United Church. What the Anglo-Catholic party urges is that the *principle* of their private theory of the absolute necessity of Bishops for the very existence of the Church, will be given away, if during this preliminary period of thirty years, non-episcopal ministries are authoritatively recognized.

It is well, therefore, that those Churchpeople who are in full agreement with the proposed scheme should make their views known, so that the case for it should not be allowed to go by default, and we cordially welcome this Statement. It is put out in the names of twenty-three clergy of position and influence, among whom are the Deans of Chester and Gloucester ; the Provost of Chelmsford ; the Archdeacons of London and Sheffield ; the Principals of six Evangelical theological Colleges ; and the Secretaries of eight Evangelical Church Societies : C.M.S. ; C.P.A.S. ; C.C.C.S. ; C.E.Z.M.S. ; C.M.J. ; A.E.G.M. ; C.A. ; N.C.L. Several of the signatories are, like the Vicar of Islington, Proctors in Convocation. We gather from the form of the letter prefixed to the Statement that the signatories have appended their names as individuals and not as thereby committing any of the organizations they may happen to represent. In any case, the names cannot lightly be ignored when attached to so cogently reasoned a document. It is, moreover, a valuable proof of the essential unity of evangelical thought on a matter of fundamental importance. The tone of the Statement is excellent. It shows a commendable desire to persuade rather than to confute objectors to the Scheme. It is somewhat long, nearly fifty pages, but, it should be remembered, there was a considerable amount of ground to be covered. This perhaps explains

the sentence in the prefatory letter, which reads : " While each one of us writing individually might have expressed some phrases differently, we want it to be known that corporately we are in substantial agreement with this Statement." The document should of course be read as a whole and it will we think be found that any expressions which the reader might wish to put differently are sufficiently guarded by statements occurring on other pages.

There are five principal divisions : The Doctrine of the Church ; Principles of Reunion ; Necessary Elements in a United Church ; The South India Scheme ; and Some Objections Considered. Some of these are sub-divided further, and care has evidently been taken to omit no point of any importance which concerns the Scheme of Union. A prominent feature of the Statement is the manner in which it emphasizes the paramount authority of Holy Scripture as God's Word written. That is regarded as the supreme and final test by which every point of doctrine is to be decided. Under the heading of the doctrine of the Church, it is defined as the body of believers who are united with Christ by a sincere faith and are baptized. This is the sense in which the word, we are told, is used throughout the Statement, though we notice here and there that a slightly different sense attaches to it. In the New Testament, *e.g.*, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, this is the meaning of the word Church, and it is obviously the true meaning. This spiritual union of all believers with Christ necessarily involves a spiritual union with each other and constitutes the Church, as " the visible organism through which the invisible personality is known " and " This forbids us to be content with a divorce between the Church visible and the Church invisible." It may be observed that if the Church visible consisted only of those, however imperfect, who were united to Christ by the Spirit, there would be no need of the distinction ; but " in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good " (Art. xxvi.) and as in our Lord's parable, the tares amongst the wheat will grow along with it until the harvest. It is this which caused the distinction to be made and led to Hooker's well known caution against neglecting it.

Under Principles of Reunion the following are enumerated : Urgency, Reciprocity, Comprehensiveness, Liberty, Toleration, Catholicity. The treatment of these is brief as the points are more fully elucidated in the next section. But we may quote as an illustration of what is meant by comprehensiveness the words " The re-united Church must therefore be comprehensive enough to include as much as possible of the riches of common life now enjoyed by the separate denominations."

The Statement proceeds next to the necessary elements in a United Church, of which the first is the supreme Authority of Holy Scripture. The main strength and in fact the dominating note of the Statement throughout, is the firmness and clearness with which this is emphasized. When, for instance, the authority of the Church or of the Ministry are discussed, it is pointed out that these are strictly subordinate to the authority of Scripture. The creeds and confessions of the Church " are authoritative only if ' they may be proved by most certain warrant of Holy Scripture '. Its ecclesiastical discipline and its moral pronouncements must be consistent with, and expressions of, Biblical principles. The Church is at every point subject to the judgment and criticism of the Bible which creates it." and " Just as the local ministry was in Apostolic times, subject to the ultimate authority of the apostles, so the whole ministry ever since has been subject to the ultimate authority of Scripture." There is a reference to ordinations by presbyters (pp. 28 and 29) which is probably one of the points which some of those who signed the Statement might have wished to express differently ; but even there, the strong and definite statement is made that " The preaching of the apostolic Word is a surer mark of the Apostolic character of the ministry than its historic continuity with the Apostles " (p. 29) and later on the well known statement in which Archbishops Davidson and Lang concurred : " The Free Church ministries are real ministries of the Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church " is quoted and adopted (p. 39).

The concluding portion of the Statement is concerned with certain particular objections which have been alleged against the Scheme of Union. Many of these are very trivial and they are all drawn from premises which have no ground in Scripture. But it is well that this should be made clear ; and also that it should be shown by plain historical fact that the assumptions of the objectors are novelities in the Reformed Church of England, introduced by the Anglo-Catholic party since the middle of the last century, and entirely lacking in official sanction ;

indeed, where they have, in any judicial sense, come before official consideration they have been officially repudiated.

We hope the Statement will be widely read, for it contains an amount of historical and theological information which will be of great service to those who are concerned for the cause of Christian reunion and have opportunity in local discussions and conferences to promote it. The South India Scheme, if carried to a successful issue, will remove a great hindrance to the spread of the Gospel in that part of the Mission Field, and will give encouragement and hope to similar efforts elsewhere.

W.G.J.

INTO EXILE. THE HISTORY OF THE COUNTER REFORMATION IN BOHEMIA (1620-50).

*By Ernest Sommer. London. New Europe Publishing Co. 7/6.*

The shameful overthrow of the independent and prosperous Czechoslovak State by the treachery and tyranny of Hitler has brought into prominence that heroic Nation and People who have had such a tragic and chequered existence during the last 500 years. It has been well said that the Hussite Reformation in Bohemia at the beginning of the XVth century "transformed its people into a nation of heroes", and certainly after the martyrdom of John Huss and Jerome of Prague they were the first people to band together and fight for liberty of conscience.

Their marvellous victories under Ziska and Procopius, over the vastly superior forces of the Church and Empire, are without parallel in history. Their armies were invincible, although through internal divisions and the wily diplomacy of their foes the Bohemians were later on temporarily defeated. But early in the next century the spread of Lutheran teaching accomplished the revival of the Bohemian Reformation. And in spite of short persecuting intervals a considerable period of peace and progress was enjoyed by the Czechs till 1618 when the refusal of the Bohemians to accept the Emperor Ferdinand as king precipitated the unspeakable horrors of the Thirty Years War.

In this comprehensive and closely packed history Dr. Sommer gives us a graphic but appalling account of the relentless and systematic rape, subjugation and terrorisation of a whole People, and he records the dauntless faith, indomitable courage and amazing resistance of these fearless Czech people in their hopeless effort to defend their religious freedom and national heritage. When we read of the marvellous evidence of God's grace in the superhuman endurance of these persecuted Bohemians we can only re-echo the language of the *Te Deum* 'The noble army of martyrs praise Thee' of whom the world was not worthy.'

The whole 'conquest' of Bohemia was engineered by the Jesuits who used Ferdinand as their willing and obedient tool, and the barbarous methods employed are being all too exactly repeated to-day by Hitler's 'New Order' in that unhappy land. The Jesuits then seized the University and controlled all education, while Hitler has closed the University entirely and proscribed all higher education for Czechs. Under Ferdinand's rule, which Hitler has copied, Czech nobles, intellectuals and peasants were tortured, murdered, expropriated and beggared and many villages and towns ruined or destroyed. The Bohemians were denied political and religious liberties. But then, as now, the spirit of the people was unconquerable. With surpassing hope and courage they patiently awaited, as to-day, their resurrection. History strangely repeats itself, for Czechs fought under Gustavus Adolphus for the liberation of their Fatherland just as they are doing today with the Soviet Armies. Happily their rights and liberties are not likely to be ignored in the Coming Peace as most shamefully they were at the Peace of Westphalia.

In the beginning of the struggle about 150,000 Czechs managed to escape, almost penniless, to foreign lands, and like the expatriated Huguenots 70 years later, these Exiles were highly skilled and industrious craftsmen and often well educated. They were thus the means of blessing and prosperity to the Countries which befriended them. The story makes sad but inspiring reading and as the Dean of Chichester says in his Foreword "Above all it is a record of faith, a faith in which belief in People and in God are inextricably intertwined." The fact that the Bohemian Reform Movement was the direct fruit of the influence of Wycliffe's teaching on Huss and Jerome of Prague makes it of special interest for English historical students.

C.S.C.

## THE WRETCHEDNESS AND GREATNESS OF THE CHURCH.

By *W. A. Visser't Hooft*. *Student Christian Movement Press* (Price 2/6).

Revival of interest in, and concern about, the nature and functions of the Christian Church relative to the present world-order is one of the more encouraging developments of our time. Most of us—and this is particularly true of Evangelicals—have been content to regard the idea of the Church as a minor and vexatious issue. To raise it would be only to intensify the already existing and lamentable divisions among us. Such a policy had, inevitably, the effect of stereotyping the divisions that we feared to face. It stands condemned as both unworthy and dangerous in a day when the Church is everywhere confronted by determined and implacable foes.

Dr. Visser't Hooft writes from the standpoint of one whose deep concern for the Christian Church is informed by wide and intimate understanding of the pains and perils of "the Churches under the Cross." Our sympathy and admiration go out to them, and sometimes we idealise them to an extent which they from the thick of the struggle, would disown. "They have discovered in the moment of crisis that they are far from *being* the Church . . . It suddenly appears with a terrible clarity that the Church does not know how to witness to its faith and that it has no solid community." Assuming that this is both an accurate and a sympathetic statement of the case with regard to the persecuted Churches on the Continent of Europe, it requires no special insight, nothing, indeed, beyond a little imagination, to foresee how tragic would be the exposure of our own weakness were similar fiery trial to overtake the Christian Churches of our own land. And we have no guarantee, and certainly no right or reason to assume, that it will not. In any case, however, it is high time that we asked ourselves what is the will of God for His people in days such as these, and in such a world as this. Not fear for ourselves but concern to know and fulfil the divine purpose ought to provide the appropriate incentive.

It is the great merit of this relatively slight book that it offers just this kind of approach to our problem. The opening chapter reviews briefly and historically the idea of a people of God called, created, and constituted, to witness to Him, His Word, His purpose. The whole Bible is concerned with the beginning of the story. Principles enunciated and illustrated there are evident in subsequent centuries, strikingly evident in our own time. The true moments have always been those when God's people were conscious that they were obedient aliens in the existing world-order. Dark days have always followed when this has been replaced by worldly ideas of progress and accommodation. But God has never allowed the story to end there. "He takes from them all false security. He makes His word sound forth in a new way. He makes His people pass through suffering in order to approach the Cross of His Son." And in the plight of the persecuted Churches we see the contemporary action of the God who said in ancient times "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations like as corn is sifted in a sieve."

Such a process must always declare, and emphasise, the essential oneness of the People of God, and recognition of that "oneness" is basic and essential to any true thought of Christian unity. The trouble so often begins when our movement toward Christian unity is inspired by untrue premises or by motives born of expedience. Moreover, there is a prior responsibility resting upon us, that of rebuilding the Church by obedience to the laws of its true life. To the practical consideration of what this involves the second chapter of the book is directed. It means, first and most of all, an anxiety to hear and obey what the authoritative Word of God has to say to, and about, the Church. "Many reasons could be given for the sickness of our parishes, but the chief of all reasons is their failure to recognise the living authority of the Word which has made them and which alone can remake them." And in "the return to the Bible reported today from many parishes" Dr. Visser't Hooft finds clear evidence of the rebuilding of the Church. "The Churches under the Cross" are showing us the way, and the laity therein are playing their full part. Other signs and developments follow. "When the Bible is open and the cloud of witnesses begins to speak, when the clash between Church and world reveals the powerlessness of a church which is no more than an audience for religious lectures, the body cannot remain asleep. So here and there churches are awaking and in process of rebuilding." And as the process continues, develops, and extends, the Church "becomes again the light, the salt, the conscience of the world."

Ministry and laity are united in a true fellowship of worship, witness, and service.

The closing chapters of the book face the implications of all of this for the reconstitution of the Universal Church and for the peculiar part which such a Church must play in world reconstruction. In the matter of Church Unity Dr. Visser't Hooft follows the true Reformation tradition. He repudiates alike the identification of the one Body of Christ with any factual communion or communions, and the "laissez faire" assumption that the unity of the Church is merely spiritual in a permanently invisible sense. It is well for us to be reminded how often, and with what tragic loss, modern Protestantism has been content to hold only the negative half of the Reformation witness. Our first duty is to believe and to assert the real and actual unity of the people of God. Our second is to promote and manifest it. We are given good ground for hope that, amid all the chaos of our time, progress is being made; and good counsel as to our own part therein.

What about world reconstruction? Here the Church has a special responsibility assigned to her in the purpose of God. It is real and explicit, though very different from what the world would like. The more the Church is true to her Creator and her nature the more she is able to reconstruct, both "by incarnating on earth the community of the new creation" and by fulfilling her vocation "to proclaim the concrete commandment of God at a given moment, for a given situation, on the basis of which the schemes must be elaborated and the decisions taken." The application of these principles to some of the pressing issues before Church and State brings to its conclusion a most stimulating and commendable book.

T. W. ISHERWOOD.

#### THE INSPIRATION OF GOD.

*By Canon Roger Lloyd. The Centenary Press (Price 5/-).*

That there is an elusive and incalculable element in inspiration will be denied by no one who has given time and serious thought to the consideration of it. The very word is the expression of a problem and of an essentially religious assumption. We are faced with the obvious fact that in some particular realm,—intellectual, æsthetic, scientific or religious for examples—a man is outstanding, has the discernible quality of a genius. How is this to be explained? Or must we be content to regard him as an utterly inexplicable phenomenon, or human "sport" whose appearance is a mystery only when we forget that it is also an accident? The latter course would scarcely seem satisfactory or convincing in view of what has been achieved for humanity as a whole by the genius true to himself and his vocation.

Canon Lloyd's attack upon this problem is conditioned by, and is dependent upon, his holding the Christian view of God. It is in terms of God and inspiration that the true, as distinct from the perverted, genius must be explained. "Inspiration" means that God inspires. This premise he is courageous and wise enough to make clear from the beginning of his book, and he illustrates what he means by the use of a helpful analogy. "To speak of God as the Inspirer is the religious way of joining hands with the physicists who make exactly the same assertion about the essential character of fundamental reality, namely, that an eternal energy, unresting and unending, lies at the root of all things. The physicists think of it quantitatively, while we think of it qualitatively." And behind that assertion is the idea that divine inspiration "must be a manifestation of the essential energy of God" unless, indeed, the distinctively religious approach to the problem is wholly false. So arises the question "In what terms can we rightly speak of the energy of God?" Other questions are not far behind. "What do we mean when we call a man inspired?" And, perhaps most important of all, what is the relationship of the inspired man to the community from which he seems so obviously apart, and yet to which he belongs, and upon which, in a profound if not easily recognised sense, he depends?

It is the chief merit of a book with much to teach us that it is especially helpful in this last connexion. By a simple illustration, the force of which will be apparent to any parish priest not wholly concerned with routine and organisation, Canon Lloyd shows the immediate relationship between inspiration and fellowship and at a later stage in his argument indicates the depth and sureness of St. Paul's relevant insights in "Ephesians." We may note, in passing, that it is an argument for the reality of inspiration and an indication of its dependence upon acceptance by the community that so many of us today are naively crediting

Mr. T. S. Eliot with an "originality" which—as he would be the first to admit and as Canon Lloyd plainly shows—goes back to that supreme Pauline utterance. How much of our present failure and irrelevance in a world of tragedy is due to the Church's sustained failure to recognise, accept, and implement the inspiration of God mediated through St. Paul about "the beloved community?" Advance in understanding of this major problem will throw light upon two others, hardly less in practical significance but not so fundamental. Canon Lloyd deals wisely with each of them. What is the relevance of inspiration for the kind of actual world-order in which we live? By what canons of judgment are we to distinguish between genuine inspiration, and that disastrous perversion of it to which so much of the tragedy that has marred Church history is due, and which is all the more dangerous because sincerity is no certain insurance against it? In dealing with this second problem Canon Lloyd makes effective use of the case of Father Joseph, Richelieu's confederate, whose story Aldous Huxley has revived in his "Grey Eminence." And, incidentally, he offers a useful criticism of the position adopted by Mr. Huxley in this connexion.

Canon Lloyd's last chapter but one need not detain us. It is a relatively simple, and a helpful treatment of "the inspired devotional life." The book closes with a discussion of "the inspiration of the artist," and here your reviewer finds himself more frequently in disagreement with the author than throughout all the preceding argument. Though in general agreement with the statement that "once a broadly theistic interpretation of the universe is accepted, the finger of God is laid upon a Shakespeare and a Bach" it must be recognised, sooner or later, that a distinction is to be drawn between genius, pure and simple, and inspiration. Content, quality, and spiritual direction all are significant in this regard if the Christian hypothesis is to be maintained. That Hardy, for example, was endowed with genius, and that the endowment demands recognition and evokes both respect and gratitude, we do not for a moment deny. But his claim to inspiration must be tested by the direction that he took, and by that test he fails. With all due respect to Canon Lloyd we suggest that the failure is evident by application of principles found in the earlier chapters of the book. Possibly the mistake proceeds from trying to prove too much; possibly from excessive deference to cultural genius. Finally, there are two questions one would like to ask from a merely factual point of view. Is it absolutely true that Brahms' 'Requiem' "wings a genuinely Christian reaction from the minds of all who sing or hear it?" And is there not, again, need for some qualification of the statement that "more and more people are coming to realise that no human activity which is wholly severed from the religious impulse can bring forth the fulness of its promise." Some of us whose work takes us continually up and down this land would be encouraged by practical evidences of it.

T. W. ISHERWOOD.

#### THE WRATH AND THE PEACE OF GOD.

By *Stephen Neill, Bishop of Tinnevely. United Society for Christian Literature (Price 2/-).*

The publication of this little book gives a more permanent form to a group of addresses delivered in May, 1942, at the Nilgiri Missionary Convention. The author, well known as a missionary statesman and a theologian, modestly describes them as "unsystematic expositions of Holy Scripture." We, however, can speak of them only in terms of superlative commendation and gratitude, and especially welcome the hint given in the preface that other studies of a similar nature may follow. Alike in respect of good Biblical scholarship, devotional insight, and practical usefulness these studies are of outstanding quality. They will serve a most useful purpose as the subject-matter of quiet meditation. And they are models of what clear and thoughtful Scriptural exposition ought to be.

The book takes its title from the first chapter, which has for background Romans i. verses 9-15, and xv. verses 20-24, 28-9. The Apostle's teaching and attitude are examined and applied with particular reference to those whose concern is the cause of Christ in the India of today. Careful thought is given, among other things, to what the Bible has to say, and we ought to understand, about the wrath of God, and there is an illuminating comment on the probable nature of the "reprobate mind" mentioned in Romans i. 28. Bishop Neill suggests that it may refer to the mind which has lost the capacity to discriminate

between good and evil, between the true and the counterfeit. "The faith of Abraham" is the theme of the second chapter of the book. Scholarly reference is paid to the text of Romans iv. verses 1 and 19,—the comments in the latter case are both intriguing and apt—and the quality of Abraham's pioneer faith is examined in relation to some of the problems which the man of faith must face today. The most helpful, and perhaps the most urgently needed, section of this chapter is that which considers faith in relation to those ordinances which are bound up with the life and experience of the Christian community. Chapter three, with a title somewhat suggestive of the Bible Readings of "Keswick" half a century ago, is outstanding for its sustained challenge to the conscience of the most dedicated of Christ's servants. The teaching of Romans vii. is applied with a touch that is at once sure and sympathetic, and some of the great Pauline words of command—'reckon,' 'present,' 'follow'—are made to live in terms of Christian discipleship in our time. Study of a fourth word—'walk'—is postponed till the fourth and last chapter, which is wholly concerned with the Christian's newness of life in Christ and in the Spirit. "We are Christians, and therefore the Spirit dwells in us as the renewing principle, as the source in us of the divine life. But this is not enough; that inner life must find its expression in act, in the re-orientation of all the activities of life according to the new principle. That is what is meant by *walking in the Spirit*." Among other points made with quiet power in this chapter is the extent to which our walk in the Spirit is threatened and hindered by the persistent habit of "thinking like a man and not like God." The classic instance of what this means, and of whither it leads, is the fall of Peter and nothing in the book is finer or more stimulating than the author's study and explanation of this episode. It is marked, let it be said, by combined fidelity to the Scriptural record and to psychological probabilities.

The printing of the book, otherwise excellent, presents one textual problem. A line would seem to have been omitted from the last paragraph on page 31. It would be interesting to set out upon an essay in textual emendation, but it is wiser to resist the temptation!

A reviewer's work should be marked by dispassionate detachment. It is obvious that we find it, in this case, easier to commend than to criticise. If anyone should imagine that praise has been immoderate, we can but add—buy the book and read it for yourself!

T. W. ISHERWOOD.

#### THE ABOLITION OF MAN.

By C. S. Lewis. Oxford University Press. 2/6 net.

The sub-title of this small volume which comprises the report of the Riddell Lectures of 1943 is that of "reflections on education with special reference to the teaching of English in the upper forms of schools."

The Author has chosen as a starting point for these lectures a little book on English intended for boys and girls in the upper forms of schools, and in the light of its teaching, he expresses a doubt whether 'we are sufficiently attentive to the importance of elementary text-books.' He makes excellent use of the well known story of Coleridge at the waterfall where one onlooker referred to it as 'sublime,' and another, as 'pretty,' and discusses at length the issues raised by these judgments. He proceeds to employ in considering value-judgments, the great thing which the Chinese call the *Tao*, and which he defines as 'the reality beyond all predicates, the abyss that was before the Creator Himself.' He adds that 'it is Nature, it is the Way, the Road; it is the Way in which the universe goes on, the Way in which things everlastingly emerge, stilly and tranquilly, into space and time.' In an illuminating Appendix he gives some striking illustrations of the *Tao* culled from ancient sources.

The last lecture deals exclusively with the intriguing title of the book. Mr. Lewis asks, in what sense is Man the possessor of increasing power over Nature? He deduces that each new power won by Man is a power *over* man as well, and, that each advance leaves him weaker as well as stronger. He goes on to show that in the ultimate, "Man's final conquest has proved to be the abolition of Man," or, in other words "Man's conquest of Nature turns out, in the moment of its consummation, to be Nature's conquest of Man."

This is a most thought-provoking book, and deserves the attention and study of all those interested in the education of the young.

W.G.L.