

# Faith and Thought

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# Faith and Thought

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of the Christian revelation and modern research

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## EDITORIAL

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1964

The Annual General Meeting for 1964 was held on 5 May, at the Ivanhoe Hotel, London, W.C.1, in the presence of Fellows, Members and other friends of the Institute.

The President, Professor F. F. Bruce, took the Chair, and began by reviewing the Institute's activities. The possibility of expansion was being explored, and there was some prospect of arranging a number of provincial meetings, beginning with Liverpool.

Professor Bruce suggested that he should step down from his office as President and, since next year was to be the Centenary Year, this would be a suitable time at which a new President should be installed.

The present time was one of much intellectual stock-taking generally, and some of the issues which had occupied the Institute's time previously were now changed. There were now more serious challenges to the Christian Faith, and it was hoped that the Victoria Institute would face these new issues in an up-to-date manner. Its main activity still rested in the publication of the Journal, *Faith and Thought*, though it had been difficult to obtain the right kind of material. The President thanked the Editor for his services in this connection.

Preparations for the Centenary were already in hand, and among them was the commissioning of a history of the Institute which was in the hands of Mr Timothy C. F. Stunt.

No officer of the Institute had announced his wish to resign, and the President moved that they all be confirmed in their offices. In particular he thanked the Secretary, Mrs B. C. Ellis, for the maintenance of the Institute's business. Professor Bruce then acknowledged the debt of all concerned to Mr Francis F. Stunt for his efforts on the Institute's behalf.

THE VICTORIA INSTITUTE, OR

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

1962			
£405	Papers, Lectures, etc., and printing		£240
321	Administration: Salaries	£300	
22	Cleaning and Sundries	6	306
13	Typing and Duplicating	£3	
56	Postage, Packing and Addressing	29	
24	Stationery, Advertising, etc.	7	
10	Audit Fee	10	49
£851			£595
200	Excess of Income over Expenditure for the Year		440
<u>£1,051</u>			<u>£1,035</u>
1962			<i>Balance Sheet as at</i>
£19	Prepaid Subscriptions		£19
103	Sundry Creditors		98
321	Cash overdrawn on General Fund		3
904	General Fund: Balance at 1 October 1962	£904	
	Excess of Income over Expenditure for the Year	440	1,344
£1,347			£1,464
	<i>Special Funds</i>		
481	Life Compositions Fund	£465	
508	Gunning Trust	508	
200	Langhorne Orchard Trust	200	
220	Schofield Memorial Trust	220	
400	Craig Memorial Trust	400	
346	Prize Fund	402	2,195
<u>£3,502</u>			<u>£3,659</u>

*Note by the Treasurer*

At the Annual General Meeting held on 5 May I tabled the audited statement of accounts for scrutiny by the fellows and members then present. The substance of what I then said follows:

1. The excess of income over expenditure for the year amounted to £440 which is more than twice that of the previous year. This does not justify any reduction in subscriptions because it only means that we are able to repay in part the internal borrowing which has been forced upon us during the difficult post-war period.

2. The total of subscriptions in arrear at the close of the financial year was in my judgement too great but since the issues of the *Journal* were brought up-to-date and our affairs generally were in a much more satisfactory condition, I felt free to send out a special letter to all those who were in arrear, as a result of which a considerable amount has been collected and payments are now flowing in satisfactorily.

3. We are in process of recovering about £140 of tax from the Inland Revenue and this leads me to urge upon all subscribers the advantage of paying their subscriptions under a *Deed of Covenant*. The Secretary will be very pleased to supply a *Deed of Covenant* to anyone who would like to pay in this way.



Mr Stunt then gave his Financial Report for the year ended 30 September 1963, and this was tabled with a copy of the Institute's Accounts. The adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Mr E. G. Ashby, and seconded by Mr A. E. Dale. A vote of thanks to the Auditors was proposed by Mr D. J. Ellis, and seconded by Mr F. F. Stunt.

At the conclusion of formal business, the President then called upon Professor J. N. D. Anderson, Vice-President of the Institute, to address the audience upon 'A Lawyer's Approach to the Authority of Scripture'. The address was cordially received by all present.

★   ★   ★

*Fellows and Members will be informed well in advance of the arrangements for the Centenary meetings. It is hoped that these will take place in London, and that all will give them their utmost support.*

★   ★   ★

*New Contributors in this Number :*

J. M. CLARK, B.ENG. lives in Derbyshire, and is an engineer. He maintains an interest in Biblical studies. We welcome this, his first article in the Journal.

H. DERMOT McDONALD, B.A., B.D., PH.D. is well-known as the Vice-Principal of the London Bible College. Among his recent publications are two important books, *Theories of Revelation* and *Ideas of Revelation*.

E. M. BLAIKLOCK, LITT.D. is Professor of Classics at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. A regular visitor to England, he has endeared himself to many Christian people throughout the world as a writer and lecturer.

F. F. BRUCE, D.D.

## History and the Gospel

Presidential Address, 11 June 1963

HISTORY and the gospel—is this a meaningful, or meaningless, collocation of two terms? We are frequently told today that the task of extracting historical data from the four Gospels is impossible, and in any case illegitimate. But the people who tell us that are for the most part theologians, not historians. Whether the task of extracting historical data from the Gospels is impossible or not is for the historian to discover, not for the theologian to tell him; and one thing that no self-respecting historian will allow himself to be told is that his quest is illegitimate.

The quest has often been called the quest of the historical Jesus. The old quest of the historical Jesus is reckoned to have reached its terminus with the appearance of Albert Schweitzer's work which bears that title in its English translation;<sup>1</sup> nowadays there is talk of a new quest of the historical Jesus,<sup>2</sup> but there is considerable doubt whether the figure recovered by this quest is one which can properly be called the *historical* Jesus. The Jesus of the primitive apostolic preaching—yes; but there are some who hold up an arresting hand and forbid us to cross the boundary which lies between the Jesus of the early preaching and the Jesus of history as the historian understands history.

We could consider as a parallel the case of St Patrick.<sup>3</sup> Our sources for reconstructing Patrick's career are unpromising enough, and much scantier than our sources for the ministry of Jesus. From Patrick himself we have his *Confession*, his *Letter to the Subjects of Coroticus*, and some ecclesiastical canons. Later sources for his sayings and doings contain a varying admixture of legend. The data are so ambiguous that

<sup>1</sup> A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London, 1910), translated from *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: Eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (Tübingen, 1906).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. M. Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London, 1959).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. C. J. Cadoux: 'I venture to say that our means of truthfully telling the life-story of Jesus are quite as good and plentiful as they are for many another character of bygone days—say St Patrick or St Francis—regarding whom no one has a word to say by way of discouraging the attempt to tell their full life-story' (*The Life of Jesus* [Pelican Books, 1948], p. 18).

some scholars have recently postulated the existence of two St Patricks.<sup>1</sup> Yet what is the result of historical criticism of this material? Not only are the main outlines of Patrick's career reasonably clear, but we get a convincing and attractive picture of the humble, kindly and powerful personality of the man himself.

When we are dealing with Patrick, however, no one thinks of holding up his hand and saying: The materials for reconstructing the historical career of Patrick do not exist, and it is illegitimate to try to reconstruct it; that is not the purpose for which the *Confession* and the *Letter to the Subjects of Coroticus* were composed! And if anyone were so foolish as to say so, we should simply reply: We know that is not the purpose for which these documents were composed, but nevertheless they are available for the historian to use, with all proper critical safeguards, as basic sources for his work.

### I. *The Gospels as Sources*

We must look, then, at our primary sources for the historic mission of Jesus—and that, in the first instance, means the four Gospels.<sup>2</sup> If we wish to establish what, as a matter of history, Jesus actually said and did, we cannot ignore their evidence. We know that the Evangelists did not set out to be historiographers or even biographers. But they did set out to bear witness, or to preserve the witness of others, to what they believed actually to have happened; and their writings provide the historian of early Christianity with the raw material of his craft.

On the source criticism of the Gospels it is not necessary to say much here. So far as the three Synoptic Gospels are concerned, it is easy to distinguish the Markan material in all three, the non-Markan material common to Matthew and Luke (conveniently labelled Q), the special material of Luke (L) and the special material of Matthew (M). These four bodies of material are not generally conceived today as four separate documents on which the Synoptic Evangelists variously drew, but that two of them represent distinct documents is fairly certain. Mark, of course, we know; and the arguments for treating his record as

<sup>1</sup> Cf. T. O'Rahilly, *The Two Patricks* (Dublin, 1942).

<sup>2</sup> An earlier source is provided by the letters of Paul which, however, were addressed to people who had already been taught the story of Jesus, so that he did not need to tell them what they knew. Yet it is surprising how much of an outline of the story and teaching of Jesus can be reconstructed from incidental references in Paul's letters. See p. 133 below; cf. also E. Jünger, *Paulus und Jesus* (Tübingen, 1962).

prior to those of Matthew and Luke are in my eyes as valid as ever.<sup>1</sup> Nor am I disposed to follow the current fashion of 'dispensing with Q'<sup>2</sup> (or rather with the hypothesis of a document from which the First and Third Evangelists drew their Q material); attempts to account for the non-Markan material common to Matthew and Luke apart from the Q hypothesis strike me much more unconvincing than anything in the hypothesis itself. I envisage, perhaps in the early fifties of the first century, the appearance of a compilation based on the model of the Old Testament prophetic books—'The Book of the Prophet Jesus', we might call it—in which, after an account of the inauguration of the Prophet's public ministry, his 'oracles'<sup>3</sup> were arranged in a brief narrative framework, but which did not record the Prophet's death (precisely as no Old Testament prophet's death is recorded in the book which bears his name).<sup>4</sup>

The four bodies of material which have been mentioned as underlying our Synoptic accounts could no doubt be further sub-divided; for example, the nativity narratives of Matthew and Luke do not appear to be homogeneous with the rest of the special material in these two Gospels. But when we reach this point, we have left source criticism behind; we have already pressed our quest back to a stage where form criticism promises to help us much more than source criticism ever could.

A German writer<sup>5</sup> has recently remarked that outside Germany the form-critical method is either rejected or else (as with Dr Vincent Taylor)<sup>6</sup> limited to a means of formally classifying the traditional material. It is denied, he says (and, from his point of view, denied

<sup>1</sup> Cf. most recently, N. B. Stonehouse, *Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (London, 1964).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. M. Farrer, 'On Dispensing with Q' in *Studies in the Gospels*, ed. D. E. Nineham (Oxford, 1955), pp. 55 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the use of 'oracles' in the fragment of Papias which, I am disposed to think, refers to such a compilation as this: 'Matthew compiled the oracles (τὰ λόγια) in the Hebrew speech, and everyone interpreted them as best he could' (Euseb. *H.E.* iii.39.16). Cf. T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London, 1949), pp. 15 ff.

<sup>4</sup> T. W. Manson suggested that in this work the sayings of Jesus were arranged under four topics: (1) 'Jesus and John the Baptist'; (2) 'Jesus and His Disciples'; (3) 'Jesus and His Opponents'; (4) 'Jesus and the Future' (*The Sayings of Jesus*, pp. 39 ff.).

<sup>5</sup> Hans Conzelmann, art. 'Jesus Christus', *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3rd edn., III (Tübingen, 1959), col. 621; cf. also H. Zahrnt, *The Historical Jesus* (London, 1963), pp. 79 f.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. V. Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (London, 1933).

wrongly), that it can lead to conclusions about the historical genuineness or otherwise of the material on which it works.

No one, I suppose, has expressed this non-German scepticism about the value of form criticism in more characteristically down-to-earth language than my predecessor, T. W. Manson. 'Strictly', he said, 'the term "form-criticism" should be reserved for the study of the various units of narrative and teaching, which go to make up the Gospels, in respect of their form alone. . . . But a paragraph of Mark is not a penny the better or the worse for being labelled, "Apothegm" or "Pronouncement Story" or "Paradigm". In fact if Form-criticism had stuck to its proper business, it would not have made any real stir. We should have taken it as we take the forms of Hebrew poetry or the forms of musical composition.'<sup>1</sup>

How then has form criticism not stuck to its proper business? Because, said Manson, it got mixed up with two other things. One was K. L. Schmidt's theory that the narrative of Mark, for the greater part, consisted of disconnected units joined together by 'editorial cement' devoid of any historical value of its own<sup>2</sup>; the other was the doctrine of the *Sitz im Leben*, the 'life-setting.' In saying this, Manson was defining form criticism a good deal more narrowly than is commonly done. Usually such a study as K. L. Schmidt's and the endeavour to establish the life-setting of the component elements in the gospel tradition would be regarded as coming within the province of form criticism. Schmidt aimed at determining the character or form of the tradition as it came into Mark's hands, while a study of the life-setting can throw light on the form which an incident or saying originally took,<sup>3</sup> or on the form in which it was transmitted in the believing community.

<sup>1</sup> In a 1949 address, 'The Quest of the Historical Jesus—Continued', published posthumously in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (Manchester, 1962), pp. 3 ff.; the quotation is from pp. 4 f.

<sup>2</sup> K. L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin, 1919); cf. C. H. Dodd's well-known critique of his thesis in 'The Framework of the Gospel Narrative', *Expository Times*, 43 (1931-32), pp. 396 ff., reprinted in his *New Testament Studies* (Manchester, 1953), pp. 1 ff., in which he argues that the 'editorial cement' is actually an independent kerygmatic outline. Cf. further D. E. Nineham's critique of Dodd's argument in 'The Order of Events in St. Mark's Gospel—An Examination of Dr. Dodd's Hypothesis', *Studies in the Gospels*, pp. 223 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Thus William Manson has shown how the saying about 'this mountain' in Mark xi. 23 is illuminated if its life-setting was really, as Mark represents it, under the shadow of the Mount of Olives; it may then be an application of Zech. xiv. 4 (*Jesus the Messiah* [London, 1943], pp. 29 f., 39 f.).

In its extremer formulations, however, the doctrine of the life-setting lays it down that if a saying or action ascribed to Christ in the Gospels reflects the faith of the church after the resurrection, it must be regarded as a creation of the church rather than an authentic saying or action of Jesus, and that if a parallel saying or action is elsewhere attributed to some rabbi, it must be regarded as a Jewish tradition which has come to be erroneously ascribed to Jesus.<sup>1</sup> It would follow that only sayings or actions unparalleled in the early church or in Jewish tradition could with any confidence be accepted as authentic. But this involves the two utterly improbable assumptions: (a) that there was no continuity between the post-resurrection faith of the church and the ministry of Jesus,<sup>2</sup> and (b) that the teaching of Jesus and of the rabbis never overlapped at any point.

The study of the forms in which the various units of gospel tradition were preserved and transmitted has been handicapped, not promoted, by excessive scepticism of this *a priori* kind. Form criticism which has been unhampered by such scepticism has led to conclusions of considerable positive value for Gospel study, as some work by C. H. Dodd,<sup>3</sup> William Manson<sup>4</sup> and Joachim Jeremias<sup>5</sup> shows. The value is perhaps greatest when what was originally one and the same unit of teaching or narrative can be shown to have been handed down along two separate lines in two different 'forms'; we are thus enabled to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. R. H. Fuller, *Interpreting the Miracles* (London, 1963), p. 26; H. Zahrnt, *The Historical Jesus*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> T. W. Manson made what might seem to be an elementary point, but a point none the less necessary, when he remarked that concerning the life-setting of any incident or saying in the Gospels we may ask whether it is a setting in the life of Jesus or a setting in the life of the early church, adding: 'It is sometimes overlooked that an affirmative answer to the latter alternative does *not* automatically carry with it a negative answer to the former' ('Is it possible to write a Life of Christ?' *Expository Times*, 53 [1941-42], p. 249).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. his *History and the Gospel* (London, 1938).

<sup>4</sup> *Jesus the Messiah* (London, 1943).

<sup>5</sup> Especially in *The Parables of Jesus* (2nd English edn., London, 1963); cf. his article 'The Present Position in the Controversy concerning the Historical Jesus', *Expository Times*, 69 (1957-58), pp. 333 ff., where he claims that form criticism helps us to remove a later Hellenistic layer which has overlain an earlier Palestinian layer, and so to move back from a setting in the life of the early church to a setting in the life of Jesus. But even this modest claim (which is illustrated by his work on the parables) must be received with caution, if only because Palestine itself was not free from Hellenistic influences, and there were Hellenists in the primitive Jerusalem church, if not indeed among the companions of Jesus during His ministry.

envisage the material of the unit as it was before it began to be transmitted.<sup>1</sup>

There is a third thing (in addition to the two mentioned by T. W. Manson) with which form criticism has been mixed up, and that is the excessively sceptical evaluation of the gospel history which marks the work of Professor Rudolf Bultmann. Since Bultmann was a pioneer in the form criticism of the Gospels, it is no doubt inevitable that his form criticism and his historical scepticism should be mixed up together, although logically the two are distinct. To quote T. W. Manson again, 'Professor Bultmann's *History of the Synoptic Tradition* is an account, not of how the life of Jesus produced the tradition, but of how the tradition produced the life of Jesus. And when the work of the tradition has been undone, there is very little of Jesus left. I may remark in passing that the disseminated incredulity of Bultmann's *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*<sup>2</sup> has its nemesis thirty years later in his *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*,<sup>3</sup> in which a perfunctory thirty pages or so is devoted to the theology of Jesus himself, while a hundred or more are occupied with an imaginary account of the theology of the anonymous and otherwise unknown "Hellenistic Communities".<sup>4</sup> Professor Manson reasonably concludes his examination of this phase of Gospel criticism with a plea for 'a return to the study of the Gospels as historical documents concerning Jesus of Nazareth, rather than as psychological case-material concerning the early Christians'.<sup>5</sup>

One of the most interesting of recent developments in Gospel study has been a fresh appraisal of the historical value of the Fourth Gospel. In some quarters this has been influenced by the discovery and study of the Qumran literature; in others it has been the result of further study of this Gospel itself in its New Testament context.

At the 'Four Gospels Congress' held in Oxford in 1957,<sup>6</sup> for example, two important papers on the Fourth Gospel were read by Professor

<sup>1</sup> For examples of this approach, cf. C. H. Dodd, 'The Dialogue Form in the Gospels', *Bulletin of John Rylands Library*, 37 (1954-55), pp. 54 ff.; 'The Appearances of the Risen Christ', *Studies in the Gospels* (ed. D. E. Nineham), pp. 9 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Now available in an English translation, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (Oxford, 1963).

<sup>3</sup> Now available in an English translation, *Theology of the New Testament* (London, Vol. I, 1952; Vol. II, 1955).

<sup>4</sup> *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, pp. 6 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> The proceedings are available in K. Aland et al. (ed.), *Studia Evangelica, Texte und Untersuchungen* 73 (Berlin, 1959); a selection of the papers was published in *The Gospels Reconsidered* (Oxford, 1960).

W. C. van Unnik of Utrecht and by the Bishop of Woolwich—by the former on 'The Purpose of St John's Gospel'<sup>1</sup> and by the latter on 'The New Look on the Fourth Gospel'.<sup>2</sup> Professor van Unnik argues that this Gospel was basically a missionary document designed to lead Jewish readers to faith in Christ. One of his arguments is the occurrence of the title 'Christ' or 'Messiah' in the Evangelist's own statement of his purpose: 'these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ . . .' (John xx. 31). I agree, but I would go farther. John's purpose is to lead Jewish and Gentile readers of the Hellenistic world towards the end of the first century to faith in Jesus: for Jewish readers this will mean faith in Jesus as the Christ, but for Gentile readers to whom a call to believe in Him as the Christ would not be immediately relevant he adds: '. . . believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.' His desire is that both classes of readers, so believing in Jesus, might have 'life in his name'.

Bishop Robinson in his paper takes issue with 'five generally agreed presuppositions' on which current critical orthodoxy regarding this Gospel has been accustomed to rest. 'These are: (1) That the fourth Evangelist is dependent on sources, including (normally) one or more of the Synoptic Gospels. (2) That his own background is other than that of the events and teaching he is purporting to record. (3) That he is not to be regarded, seriously, as a witness to the Jesus of history, but simply to the Christ of faith. (4) That he represents the end-term of theological development in first-century Christianity. (5) That he is not himself the Apostle John nor a direct eyewitness.'<sup>3</sup> His conclusion is that the crucial question is whether the distinctive tradition of the ministry of Jesus preserved in this Gospel came 'out of the blue' around A.D. 100. 'Or is there a real continuity not merely in the memory of one old man, but in the life of an on-going community, with the earliest days of Christianity? What, I think, fundamentally distinguishes the "new look" on the fourth Gospel is that it answers that question in the affirmative.'<sup>4</sup>

Professor Dodd, whose contributions to the study of the Fourth Gospel have made him *facile princeps* among contemporary Johannine students, has pointed out how, beneath the diversity of dialogue form

<sup>1</sup> *Studia Evangelica*, pp. 382 ff.; *The Gospels Reconsidered*, pp. 167 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Studia Evangelica*, pp. 338 ff.; *The Gospels Reconsidered*, pp. 154 ff.; reprinted in J. A. T. Robinson, *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London, 1962), pp. 94 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *The Gospels Reconsidered*, p. 155; *Twelve New Testament Studies*, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> *The Gospels Reconsidered*, p. 166; *Twelve New Testament Studies*, p. 106.

as between the Synoptic Gospels and John's there is at times a community of theme which suggests that the Synoptic and Johannine traditions alike go back to an earlier 'unformed' tradition.<sup>1</sup> Not only so, but he envisages the probability that more of this 'unformed' tradition of Jesus' teaching lies behind dialogues in the Fourth Gospel which have no parallel in the Synoptic tradition, although they can be integrated with it. The recognition of such material must call for very delicate judgment, but the quest, as Professor Dodd sees it, is far from hopeless.

Not only in its discourses and dialogues, but in its narratives, the Johannine account is worthy of at least as much respect as the Synoptic accounts.<sup>2</sup> This is so, for example, with its tradition of an earlier phase of our Lord's ministry in the south of Palestine, simultaneous with the later phase of John the Baptist's activity, and also with its presentation of the events of Holy Week, the chronology of which has been illuminated by the study of calendrical texts from Qumran.<sup>3</sup>

The upshot of all this is that our task is made in a sense more difficult rather than easier. At one time those who believed that the evidence of the Fourth Gospel could be largely ignored in any attempt to reconstruct the course of our Lord's ministry felt themselves able to reconstruct it in terms of the Synoptic—that is, substantially, the Markan—framework. Now, let me say that despite all that has been urged to the contrary I still consider that the Markan framework suggests a sequence and development in the story of the ministry which is too spontaneous to be artificial and too logical to be accidental. But it is no longer feasible to treat the material fitted into this framework in such a way as to distinguish (say) between the optimism of Jesus' hope of the kingdom of God in the earlier period of His ministry and His gloomier forebodings from Caesarea Philippi onwards.<sup>4</sup> Nor is it feasible to treat the Markan outline as being so watertight that anything in the Johannine narrative which cannot be readily fitted into it (the raising of Lazarus, for example) must for that simple reason be set aside as historically suspect.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the articles referred to on p. 126, n. 1 above, and now pre-eminently his *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambr'dge, 1963).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also A. J. B. Higgins, *The Historicity of the Fourth Gospel* (London, 1960).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. A. Jaubert, *La Date de la Cène* (Paris, 1957); 'Jésus et le Calendrier de Qumrân', *New Testament Studies*, 7 (1960-61), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. J. Cadoux, *The Historic Mission of Jesus* (London, 1941), pp. 183 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. F. C. Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (3rd edn., Edinburgh, 1911), pp. vii f., 221 f.

If, however, the Johannine tradition claims to be regarded as equally primitive with the Markan—and Professor Dodd pointed out many years ago that the Second and the Fourth Gospels are the two which preserve the essential kerygmatic outline most faithfully<sup>1</sup>—the historian's problem is the more complicated. Neither the Johannine nor the Markan framework can be made the norm to which the other must be accommodated.

On the other hand, the difficulties must not be exaggerated. If the Markan and Johannine traditions are independent, the greater weight attaches to those features in which they concur. In addition to their agreement in associating the beginning of Jesus' public life with the ministry of John the Baptist, and in the main outlines of the passion story at the end of His public life, special attention should be directed to the way in which both Mark and John treat the feeding of the multitude and Peter's confession which followed it as a turning point in the ministry of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> The more I reflect on this coincidence, the greater importance it assumes in my mind.

## II. *Historical Scepticism*

The historical scepticism of Professor Bultmann and his school, which is paralleled in some parts of the English-speaking world of New Testament scholarship, is unlike the scepticism of earlier generations. Whereas the older scepticism endeavoured by the removal of the outer theological layers in the Gospels to get back to a historical Jesus who could still be a moral and religious guide to the undogmatic heirs of the enlightenment, the new scepticism has recognised that the Gospel material is theological through and through, so that when the last layer has been peeled off we are left with little more than the residual affirmation: 'crucified under Pontius Pilate.' Professor Dodd might point out a quarter of a century ago that, no matter how we classify the Gospel materials, all parts of the record agree in emphasising the messianic significance of all that Jesus said and did: 'we can find no alternative tradition, excavate as we will in the successive strata of the gospels.'<sup>3</sup> The modern scepticism agrees with his findings, but dissents from his conclusions, which were that this messianic portrayal of Jesus has strong claims to be accepted as the authentic portrayal of the historical Jesus. It holds rather that since the material is theological

<sup>1</sup> *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments* (London, 1936), p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Mark viii. 29; John vi. 68 f.

<sup>3</sup> *History and the Gospel*, p. 103.

through and through, the history eludes us almost completely; and it bids us come to terms with this state of affairs and be thankful for the theology, since we cannot have the history.

The new scepticism is thus much more radical than the older scepticism, so far as the Jesus of history is concerned. At the turn of the century P. W. Schmiedel isolated nine passages in the Synoptic Gospels which, he said, 'might be called the foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus'.<sup>1</sup> Some shrewd observers at the time recognised that Schmiedel was conceding more than he knew since, for all his belief that these passages ran so counter to later tendencies that they were not likely to be inventions of the church, some of them implied quite a high Christology. But now we find Professor Conzelmann saying of one of these 'pillar' passages (Jesus' cry of dereliction on the cross): 'The objection that this saying would not have been put into his mouth, if he had not actually uttered it, fails to recognise the character of the narrative. This saying was taken up in order to portray his death as fulfilment, and thereby to overcome the "scandal" of the cross. The saying therefore should not be evaluated psychologically, in order to reconstruct the feelings of the dying Jesus.'<sup>2</sup> With the last sentence we may be disposed to agree; but as for the rest of the statement, my reaction to it—as to so many other statements which I find in the writings of this school—is to reflect that assertion is not proof.

That the Gospel narrative, and especially the passion narrative, should be recorded in the language of Old Testament fulfilment is not surprising when we remember Jesus' insistence that in His ministry and supremely in His passion the scriptures must be and in fact were being fulfilled. I know it will be said that this is an example of the reading back into His own life and teaching of a theme that was developed for apologetic and other purposes in the early church. That the theme of fulfilment was developed in the early church is clear, but the manner in which it was developed can best be explained if Jesus first laid down for His disciples the guiding lines of Old Testament interpretation—that He did for them in one way what the Qumran Teacher of Righteousness did for his community in another

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, II (London, 1901), art. 'Gospels', cols. 1881-1883. The nine passages are Mark x. 17 f.; Matt. xii. 31 f.; Mark iii. 21; Mark xiii. 32; Mark xv. 34 (= Matt. xxvii. 46); Mark viii. 12; Mark vi. 5 f.; Mark viii. 14-21; Matt. xi. 5 (= Luke vii. 22).

<sup>2</sup> *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3rd edn., III, cols. 646 f.

way. I have tried to show elsewhere, with reference to one group of Old Testament *testimonia* which play a substantial part in the passion narrative (those drawn from Zech. ix-xiv), that Jesus led the way in speaking of His passion to His disciples in terms of these oracles (especially the oracle of the smitten shepherd in Zech. xiii. 7); the Evangelists, more particularly the later ones, dotted the i's and crossed the t's of this pattern of prediction and fulfilment, but the initial impetus was given by Jesus Himself. The oracles were not used to create but to explain the recorded events.<sup>1</sup>

Even the geographical data, the sacred sites and ways, which we might have thought were objective enough, have been interpreted as theologumena. For example: Luke, says one writer, can locate John the Baptist neither in Galilee nor in Judaea, for these were both areas of Jesus' activity; John is therefore given a marginal location, in the wilderness and the Jordan valley. (But did not John preach and baptize there, as a matter of history?) In order to be baptised by John, of course, Jesus must come to Jordan, but since the Jordan is John's territory, Jesus has nothing more to do with the Jordan or its neighbourhood. But does not Luke bring Jesus to Jericho later in his Gospel (xviii. 35 ff.)? Yes, but it is questionable whether Luke knew that Jericho is near the Jordan!<sup>2</sup> As for Mark's Gospel, its chronological and geographical outline, the same writer assures us, 'is not ancient tradition, but literary redaction. . . . The geographical framework of our oldest Gospel is an editorial construction following the schema "action in Galilee, passion in Jerusalem"' (with Mark x as the transition between the two; cf. Lohmeyer).<sup>3</sup> However, we need not take too much account of this: behind the schema, 'of course, lies historical information'.<sup>4</sup> Of course it does: Galilee *was* the main region of Jesus' public ministry, and Jerusalem *was* the place where He was crucified; if members of the early church theologised these data (and I am not persuaded that they did, at least to anything like the extent postulated by E. Lohmeyer<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The Book of Zechariah and the Passion Narrative', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 43 (1960-61), pp. 336 ff. On the general subject see R. V. G. Tasker, *The OT in the NT* (2nd edn., London, 1954); C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London, 1952); B. Lindars, *NT Apologetic* (London, 1961).

<sup>2</sup> H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit* (Tübingen, 1954), p. 11; Eng. tr., *The Theology of St. Luke* (London, 1960), p. 19. Even if Luke was personally unacquainted with that district of Palestine, he had presumably read Joshua and 2 Kings, where Jericho's proximity to the Jordan is made plain.

<sup>3</sup> RGG III, col. 622.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* col. 627.

<sup>5</sup> *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (Göttingen, 1936).

and R. H. Lightfoot),<sup>1</sup> at any rate the data were historical data before theological significance was read into them.

But it is extremely interesting right now to mark the developments within the Bultmann school, a school whose influence is second to none. (In Germany certainly, and to some extent beyond it, Bultmann is a much more potent name today than Barth.)

If you look, for example, at Günther Bornkamm's *Jesus of Nazareth*,<sup>2</sup> you will see that this distinguished disciple of Bultmann, while sceptical by the British standards of (say) C. H. Dodd and Vincent Taylor, is more optimistic than his teacher about the possibility of extracting from our records a picture of Jesus' person and career. Nor does he find such a hiatus as Bultmann does between the ministry of Jesus and the message of the primitive church. Whereas Bultmann places the shift from the old age to the new between Jesus and Paul, Bornkamm places it between John the Baptist and Jesus—a judgment which we can embrace the more readily because, according to the Evangelists, that is where Jesus placed it!

Other members of the Bultmann school, such as Ernst Käsemann and Ernst Fuchs, have also reacted against the teaching of the *maestro*, but not all in the same direction. Käsemann, for instance, has recently come to view all four Gospels as arising out of the apocalyptic understanding of history in the earliest Christianity<sup>3</sup>; Fuchs has remarked that whereas 'we formerly endeavoured to interpret the historical Jesus with the help of the primitive Christian kerygma, today we endeavour rather to interpret this kerygma with the help of the historical Jesus—the two lines of investigation are mutually complementary'.<sup>4</sup>

In such a situation as this there is every encouragement for the historian of Christian origins to press straight forward as the road opens up before him. There is no need to listen to those who tell him that his task is vain and improper. He knows that the Evangelists were not objective and dispassionate researchers, producing Ph.D. theses—not even Luke, for all his care to 'trace the course of all things accurately

<sup>1</sup> *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* (London, 1937).

<sup>2</sup> Eng. tr., London, 1960.

<sup>3</sup> 'Die Anfänge christlicher Theologie', *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 57 (1960), pp. 162 ff. Cf. also his essay 'The Problem of the Historical Jesus' now translated in *Essays on NT Themes* (London 1964), pp. 15ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Zur Frage nach dem historischen Jesus* (Tübingen, 1960), preface. Cf. also the translated volume of his *Studies of the Historical Jesus* (London, 1964).

from the beginning' (Luke i. 3). Of course not; they were Christians, deeply committed men. They viewed the ministry of Jesus in the light of His resurrection (or, as some prefer to say, in the light of the Easter event). Their aim was to commend the Saviour to others. All four of them, like John, were concerned in one way or another so to write that their readers should believe in Jesus as Messiah and Son of God, and by so believing have life in His name.<sup>1</sup>

The historian of Christian origins knows, moreover, that 'if the nineteenth-century view of history found its meaningful expression in "the historical Jesus", the twentieth century has found its approach already anticipated in the *kerygma*'.<sup>2</sup> But what was this *kerygma*, this proclamation of God's good news in Christ? It was, for the first thirty years or so, substantially the witness of the disciples of Christ to what they had seen and heard. If one of the principal heralds of the *kerygma*, Paul, had not himself seen and heard the works and words of Jesus, he was careful to acquire the necessary information from eye-witnesses so that he could deliver to others what he himself had first received.<sup>3</sup> Dr Vincent Taylor found it expedient a quarter of a century ago to remind certain leading form critics that the apostles and other original followers of Jesus were not translated to heaven immediately after His resurrection, as one would almost be forced to suppose if some of their theories were true.<sup>4</sup> We do have eyewitness testimony in the Gospels—more of it than is commonly recognised today. Luke knew what he was about when he assured Theophilus that, although he himself had not been present at most of the events described in his twofold history, he had access to information handed down by 'those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word' (Luke i. 3). Eye-witness testimony was highly regarded in his day, for many ordinary purposes and especially in Roman law. There was a time, too, when eye-witness testimony was highly regarded by historical researchers. It was an important feature of Thucydides' history, for example, that he himself played a leading part in the earlier stages of

<sup>1</sup> John xx. 31.

<sup>2</sup> J. M. Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> It is noteworthy that Paul, in his catalogue of resurrection appearances in 1 Cor. xv. 5 ff., mentions appearances to two individuals, 'Cephas' and James—the only two members of the apostolic company whom he met when he visited Jerusalem in the third year after his conversion to have an interview with the former (Gal. i. 18). Cf. F. F. Bruce, 'When is a Gospel not a Gospel?' *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 45 (1962-63), pp. 329 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition*, p. 41.

the Peloponnesian War which he records. Nowadays, however, we hear doubts expressed about the value of such testimony.

In his article in the *Journal of Theological Studies* for October 1960 on 'Eye-witness Testimony and the Gospel Tradition',<sup>1</sup> Professor D. E. Nineham speaks of the task of today's historian of Christian origins as being 'to wring truth relevant to the history of Jesus from the increasing stock of remains of the Judaism of his time'.<sup>2</sup> This is true, since our primary sources, the New Testament records, have been so thoroughly sifted and resifted. But in relation to these records themselves, or at least to the element of eye-witness evidence which they claim to contain, he shows himself unduly influenced by some unqualified remarks of R. G. Collingwood, whom he quotes as follows:

If anyone else, no matter who, even a very learned historian, or an eyewitness, or a person in the confidence of the man who did the thing he is inquiring into, or even the man who did it himself, hands him [the student of history] on a plate a ready-made answer to his question, all he can do is to reject it: not because he thinks his informant is trying to deceive him, or is himself deceived, but because if he accepts it he is giving up his autonomy as an historian and allowing someone else to do for him what, if he is a scientific thinker, he can only do for himself.<sup>3</sup>

But surely, if the historian is handed 'on a plate' a ready-made answer by someone who was involved in the situation which he is reconstructing, he will not reject it out of hand. He will not treat it as a ready-made answer, but he will welcome it as a material piece of evidence. For example, if he is trying to establish what really happened on the Damascus road, he will not ignore Paul's own explanation of

<sup>1</sup> New series, II (1960), pp. 253 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 258; the quotation comes from Collingwood's posthumously published *The Idea of History* (Oxford, 1946), p. 256. In this section of the work—a section, incidentally, which his editor, Sir Malcolm Knox, included 'with some misgivings' (*ibid.* p. vi)—Collingwood pushes to extremes what, as elsewhere set forth by him, is a very sound case in vindication of the historian's right to be a true historian, free to exercise his historical judgment on all the material that comes his way. But one may question whether his work represents such a 'Copernican revolution' in historical study as he himself held (*ibid.* pp. 236, 240); cf. Professor Nineham's remarks on 'the "Collingwoodian" revolution in historical studies' which he sums up by saying that 'the modern historian is no longer willing to set the seal of the word "historical" on events, simply because an authority or authorities exist which allege that they happened' (*The Church's Use of the Bible Past and Present* [London, 1963], p. 156). But did any historian worthy of the name—that is, a scientific historian as distinct from a chronicler—ever take his material on trust just like that?

the event.<sup>1</sup> He will treat Paul's explanation as a material piece of evidence: the event must have been of such a character that this man, who was totally involved in it—this man, too, of whose antecedents and qualities we have a good deal of information—could only explain it in the way he does. Everyone experienced in law-court procedure knows that the testimony of eye-witnesses, not least the testimony of honest eye-witnesses, must be subjected to cross-examination in order to ascertain what really happened<sup>2</sup>; but nothing can take the place of the direct testimony of someone who was on the spot when it happened, and kept his eyes and ears open.

Since I have mentioned Paul in connection with eye-witness testimony, it may be relevant here to point out that Paul does not, as is sometimes alleged, disparage the eye-witness testimony of those who were companions of Jesus during His ministry when he speaks about no longer knowing Christ 'after the flesh' (2 Cor. v. 16). These words do not disown or deprecate any interest in the earthly life of Christ,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As in Gal. i. 11-17; 1 Cor. ix. 1; xv. 8 ff.; Phil. iii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> As indeed Collingwood himself says earlier: 'the historian puts his authorities in the witness-box, and by cross-questioning extorts from them information which in their original statements they have withheld, either because they did not wish to give it or because they did not possess it' (*The Idea of History*, p. 237). The distinction which he draws later (p. 268) between the juror and the historian is accidental rather than substantial.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. Bultmann: 'We must not go back behind the *kerygma*, using it as a source in order to reconstruct a "historical Jesus" with his "messianic consciousness", his "inner life" or his "heroism". That would be precisely the *Χριστός κατὰ σάρκα* who belongs to the past. It is not the historical Jesus, but Jesus Christ the preached one, who is the Lord' (*Glauben und Verstehen*, I [Tübingen, 1961], p. 208). Bultmann feels that an appeal to history may on the one hand seem to preserve something of man's autonomy over against God in Christ, and on the other hand make the basis of faith something which is liable to change in the course of historical study. Indeed, his historical scepticism with regard to the life of Jesus and the gospel story is probably bound up with his insistence that the only Christ who matters for faith is the Christ with whose challenge man is confronted in the *kerygma*. But if the Christ of the *kerygma* is not also the Jesus of history, there is the danger that our faith may be placed in 'cunningly devised fables'. The Christian with a historical conscience can and should ask historical questions about the one whom he has believed. When Emil Brunner in one of his earlier works says (in similar vein to Bultmann) that 'Jesus of Nazareth, the rabbi, the so-called historical Jesus, was an object of no interest for the early Christians and it is of no interest today for those who have preserved some understanding of what Christian faith means' (*The Word and the World* [London, 1931], pp. 87 f.), his statement must be denied in both its parts. A corrective to such views is provided by P. Althaus, *The So-Called Kerygma and the Historical Jesus* (Eng. tr., Edinburgh, 1959).

nor do they suggest that the other apostles' earlier companionship with Him was now irrelevant, and of no spiritual advantage. The contrast which Paul is making is between his own present estimate of Christ and that which he had before his conversion, as is brought out very well in the New English Bible: 'With us therefore worldly standards have ceased to count in our estimate of any man; even if they counted in our understanding of Christ, they do so now no longer. When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world; the old order has gone, and a new order has already begun.' Whatever Peter and Paul may have talked about during the fortnight that they spent together in Jerusalem in the third year after Paul's conversion,<sup>1</sup> we may be sure that Paul did not write off the story that Peter told him as so much knowledge of Christ 'after the flesh'.

### III. *Jesus in His Historical Context*

When Professor Nineham says that we have to 'wring truth relevant to the history of Jesus from the increasing stock of remains of the Judaism of his time', we may perhaps say much the same thing with regard to the Gentile environment too; the history of Jesus can best be understood in the total historical context of His life.

Mark sums up Jesus' early Galilaean preaching in the words: 'The appointed time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near; repent, and believe in the good news' (Mark i. 15). What would such words have meant in the setting in which they were spoken? This important question has sometimes been overlooked, even where we might most have expected it to receive attention. T. R. Glover, for instance, in *The Jesus of History*, 'does less than justice to the central theme of Christ's preaching, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand", and . . . does not sufficiently relate the mission of Jesus to the crisis in Israel's history which incorporation in the Roman Empire involved.' That was the judgment of his friend H. G. Wood.<sup>2</sup>

The Roman occupation of Judaea from 63 B.C. onwards did in fact lead more than one Jewish group to the conviction that the indestructible kingdom which (according to the book of Daniel) the God of heaven would one day set up was on the very eve of appearance. In particular, we know how this hope was stimulated among the Zealots, in the near-Essene community of Qumran, as well as in other pious

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> H. G. Wood, *Jesus in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1960), p. 123.

groups in Israel,<sup>1</sup> including (it appears) the families into which John the Baptist and Jesus were born.<sup>2</sup> We do well to ask what relation the hope of the coming kingdom as cherished by some of these groups bore to the hope of the kingdom as proclaimed by Jesus.

As for the Zealots, they (at least from the time of the revolt led by Judas of Galilee in A.D. 6) saw it as their duty to offer armed resistance to the Romans at every fitting opportunity, to give no countenance to their claims to imperial sovereignty over Israel, and to hasten the advent of the coming kingdom by violence—thorough-paced ‘Fifth Monarchy Men’.<sup>3</sup> There were others whose view (now attested by the Qumran texts) was that it was better to await God’s time, but that when He gave the signal it would be their duty to co-operate with His purpose and play the leading part, under God and His holy angels, in the establishment and administration of the kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

In the first decade of the present century Dr Albert Schweitzer could write:

The apocalyptic movement in the time of Jesus is not connected with any historical event. It cannot be said, as Bruno Bauer rightly perceived, that we know anything about the Messianic expectations of the Jewish people at that time. . . . What is really remarkable about this wave of apocalyptic enthusiasm is the fact that it was called forth not by external events, but solely by the appearance of two great personalities, and subsides with their disappearance, without leaving among the people any trace, except a feeling of hatred towards the new sect.

The Baptist and Jesus are not, therefore, borne upon the current of a general eschatological movement. The period offers no events calculated to give an impulse to eschatological enthusiasm. They themselves set the times in motion by acting, by creating eschatological facts. It is this mighty creative force which constitutes the difficulty in grasping historically the eschatology of Jesus and the Baptist.<sup>5</sup>

Today, while the prophetic and creative activity of both John and Jesus can be acknowledged as heartily as ever, we can no longer say that, eschatologically speaking, there was ‘silence all around’<sup>6</sup> when

<sup>1</sup> E.g. the circle in which the ‘Psalms of Solomon’ were composed about the middle of the first century B.C.

<sup>2</sup> Luke i. 5 ff.; we may think of the hopes expressed in the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus*, and cherished also by people like Simeon and Anna of Jerusalem (Luke ii. 25 ff., 36 ff.).

<sup>3</sup> The most recent monograph on the Zealots is M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten* (Leiden, 1961).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. one of the best accounts of these people, E. F. Sutcliffe, *The Monks of Qumran* (London, 1960).

<sup>5</sup> *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 368.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

they appeared. The Qumran discoveries, to mention no others, have provided us with just that 'general eschatological movement' of the closing decades B.C. and early decades A.D. which Dr Schweitzer could not find.

The community which had its headquarters at Qumran, north-west of the Dead Sea, for the best part of the two centuries preceding A.D. 70, seems to have been an Essene or near-Essene group.<sup>1</sup> There were some Essenes, associate members of the order, so to speak, who lived in the towns and villages of Judaea, while others withdrew from public life to embrace a coenobitic life in the wilderness of Judaea. Qumran may well have been the headquarters of the principal group of these 'separated' Essenes; we are assured by archaeologists that there is no other site which could answer to the description of the Essene settlement between Jericho and Engedi given by Pliny the elder.<sup>2</sup> But Professor Matthew Black<sup>3</sup> has given reasons for thinking that the Essenes themselves were part of a wider movement of nonconformist Judaism which, he suggests, was divided into a northern and a southern group. The southern group was the milieu in which John the Baptist was born; the northern group was the milieu in which Jesus grew up. Not that either of them can be accounted for simply in terms of his milieu; both of them, in different ways, took a line which deviated sharply from that of their respective milieux. But we do have a background—an eschatologically-minded background at that—against which we can view their ministries with greater understanding than before.

There is a further point: this strain of nonconformist Judaism appears to have had close affinities with Samaritan theology (apart from the more sectarian features of Samaritanism, such as the insistence on Gerizim as Israel's true central sanctuary). John the Baptist discharged part of his baptismal ministry in Samaritan territory, 'at Aenon near Salim' (John iii. 23)<sup>4</sup>; Jesus, not long afterwards, spent two very fruitful days in the same area (John iv. 35-43)<sup>5</sup>; Philip the Hellenist, a few

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my previous papers in FAITH AND THOUGHT: 'Qumran and the New Testament' (90, no. 2, Autumn 1958, 92 ff.), 'Qumran and the Old Testament' (91, no. 1, Summer 1959, 9 ff.), 'The Gospels and some Recent Discoveries' (92, no. 3, Summer 1962, 149 ff., esp. 160 ff.). <sup>2</sup> *Hist. Nat.* v. 17. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *The Scrolls and Christian Origins* (London, 1961), pp. 15 ff. *et passim*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. W. F. Albright, 'Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St. John', in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 153 ff.; *The Archaeology of Palestine* (Pelican Books, 1960), pp. 247 f.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, *Twelve New Testament Studies*, pp. 61 ff.

years later, conducted a very successful evangelistic campaign among the Samaritans, an unintended by-product of which was the emergence of a remarkable brand of *Christian* nonconformity (Acts viii. 5-25).<sup>1</sup> In the light of all this we may understand better why some of our Lord's hearers in the temple court at Jerusalem, according to John viii. 48, charged Him with being a Samaritan. The word was not a mere term of abuse; it had a theological significance. Although He was as far from being a Samaritan in theology as He was by descent, there was something in His teaching which reminded them of the Samaritan way of putting things.<sup>2</sup>

Attempts, on the other hand, to associate Jesus closely with the Zealots cannot be called successful.<sup>3</sup> For one thing, they involve an excessively sceptical attitude to the gospel tradition, as though the apologetic motives of the Evangelists and their predecessors had distorted the original pattern of His words and deeds almost beyond recognition. Only here and there, it must be concluded, have a few hints of the real state of affairs been allowed inadvertently to be preserved; for the rest, the original picture has been painted over with a new picture of Jesus as one who taught His followers to take the opposite line to the Zealots, to offer no resistance to evil, to turn the other cheek, to volunteer to go a second mile when their services had been conscripted by the military for one mile, to pay Caesar the tribute he demanded (the chief offence of all in the Zealots' eyes). Because the land, and especially the capital, disregarded the way of peace which He showed, and preferred the way of rebellion against the occupying power, destruction would fall on the nation as surely as it fell on the rioting Galileans who were cut down by Pilate's troops in the temple

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. A. T. Ehrhardt, 'Christianity before the Apostles' Creed', *Harvard Theological Review*, 55 (1962), pp. 73 ff., esp. pp. 83 ff., now reprinted in *The Framework of the NT Stories* (Manchester, 1964), pp. 151 ff., esp. pp. 161 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. Bowman, 'Samaritan Studies', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 40 (1957-58), pp. 298 ff.; 'The Importance of Samaritan Researches', *Annual of the Leeds University Oriental Society*, 1 (1958-59), pp. 43 ff., and, most recently, John Macdonald's great work *The Theology of the Samaritans* (London, 1964).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. S. G. F. Brandon, 'Jesus and the Zealots', *Annual of the Leeds University Oriental Society*, 2 (1959-61), pp. 11 ff. Professor Brandon is a friend and colleague to whose work I cannot refer without great respect; in spite of (or more probably because of) my inability to see eye to eye with him on a number of questions in New Testament study, I have learned more from him than from many with whom I find myself in much closer agreement.

court.<sup>1</sup> That this picture should be a fabricated substitution for the original picture of a Zealot sympathiser is as probable as that today an attempt should be made, with any hope of success, to persuade us that Michael Collins and other leaders of the Irish liberation struggle between 1916 and 1922 were pacifists who inculcated in their followers an attitude of sweetness and light towards the 'Saxon foe'.

The upshot of such arguments must be that the Evangelists were thoroughly tendentious characters, who succeeded quite amazingly in camouflaging the truth, but occasionally and by accident let the cat out of the bag. This is no way in which to treat ancient authors in any case; initially, at least, they should be dealt with as honest witnesses if we are to derive the greatest profit from what they have to tell us. But if the only documents which have any claim to be regarded as sources for our Lord's public life are so untrustworthy, it must be recognised that we have nothing of any substance to put in their place), and the portrayal of Jesus as a near-Zealot rests on nothing that can reasonably be called documentary evidence.

That Jesus' death on the cross by the sentence of a Roman court did call for a strong and sustained apologetic is writ large throughout the New Testament. The New Testament apologetic is familiar enough to us, and it certainly was amazingly successful.<sup>2</sup> Could that not have been because it had the advantage of being a true defence? The idea that Jesus' followers, who drew their inspiration from Him, made such headway in the first century with a message which deviated in essential respects from the teaching of the Master in whose name they spoke and acted, is so antecedently unlikely that it should not be accepted without strong and unambiguous evidence to support it—and such evidence we do not have.

That one of the apostles was a Zealot we know; we also know that one was a tax-collector. Simon Zelotes must have been as much an ex-Zealot as Matthew was an ex-tax-collector if the two could co-exist peacefully in the same company.

The incident of the two swords at the Last Supper<sup>3</sup> does not even begin to indicate that the Twelve had some of the qualities of a Zealot band. When one of the disciples a few hours later used one of these swords in his Master's defence, he was ordered immediately to sheathe it. A Zealot band would not have been content with two swords;

<sup>1</sup> Luke xiii. 1 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. F. F. Bruce, *The Apostolic Defence of the Gospel* (London, 1959).

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxii. 35 ff.

R. Eisler's interpretation, according to which each of them had two swords concealed in his garments, like the *sicarii*,<sup>1</sup> reads into the text what is not there. If a parallel in contemporary life is sought, we have it in Josephus's statement about the Essenes (to which Eisler makes reference in the same place), that since they can always rely on the generous hospitality of fellow-Essenes wherever they go<sup>2</sup>; 'they do not carry anything with them when they go on a journey, except that they take arms on account of robbers'.<sup>3</sup> But no interpretation of this incident in Luke's narrative is adequate which fails to reckon seriously with Jesus' quotation of Isaiah liii. 12 ('he was numbered with the transgressors') and with the sorrowful irony with which he puts an end to the conversation: 'Enough, enough!' he replied' (Luke xxii. 38, N.E.B.).<sup>4</sup>

The cleansing of the temple, which has also been appealed to in this connection, was not a Zealot action. It was not undertaken against the Romans, and in so far as it was a protest against the chief priests, it was not a protest against them for collaborating with the Romans, but for permitting a misuse of the temple precincts. This action was completely in the prophetic tradition, except that where Jeremiah's protest was delivered by word of mouth 'in the gate of the LORD's house' (Jer. vii. 2), Jesus expressed His protest by deed as well as by word. It was not by accident that, as Matthew tells us, some of His contemporaries called Him Jeremiah.<sup>5</sup> A further reason for comparing Him to Jeremiah was that He urged His hearers to show the same submissive attitude to the Romans as Jeremiah urged upon his fellow-Jerusalemites with regard to the Babylonians.

It is clear that Jesus did have the opportunity, had He so wished, to put Himself at the head of a strong insurgent force. T. W. Manson's interpretation of His compassion because the multitude in the wilderness were 'like sheep without a shepherd'<sup>6</sup> (Mark vi. 34) is probably correct: He saw them as an army without a captain, and He knew that if they found the wrong kind of captain they could be led to disaster.

<sup>1</sup> *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist* (London, 1931), pp. 369 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Matt. x. 11: 'And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it, and stay with him until you depart.'

<sup>3</sup> *Jewish War*, ii. 125.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus' reply (Gk. *hikanon estin*) is translated 'Well, well,' by T. W. Manson in *Ethics and the Gospel* (London, 1960), p. 90.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 14.

<sup>6</sup> T. W. Manson, *The Servant-Messiah* (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 70 f.

And the kind of captain they would have liked to find is shown by the Johannine narrative of the feeding of the multitude; for, after Jesus had fed them in the wilderness, they tried to compel Him to be their king.<sup>1</sup> He would not be the kind of king they wanted, and they refused to have the only kind of king He was prepared to be; therefore, as John says, many of His followers left Him from then on. Had He been a near-Zealot, albeit an unsuccessful one, His reputation in Jewish tradition would have been different from what it became.

Even before this incident, we can well believe that His closest disciples, in their rather unintelligent zeal, had gone beyond the terms of their Master's commission when He sent them two by two throughout Galilee, and had compromised Him in that part of Herod Antipas's tetrarchy to a point where He found it wise to cross the lake with them until Antipas's interest in Him had cooled off somewhat.<sup>2</sup>

The plain and consistent testimony of the Gospels is that Jesus regarded the policy of the Zealots and those who shared their general attitude as tragically mistaken, and bound to involve them and their fellow-Jews in ruin. Their ideals were noble; their chosen way of realising them was disastrous. The spirit that hailed Barabbas as a popular hero was the spirit that would one day lay Jerusalem level with the ground.<sup>3</sup>

#### IV. *Jesus' Message of the Kingdom*

What, then, was Jesus' message of the kingdom?

He proclaimed it as a new order in which God's rule was to be established in the hearts of men and in the world of mankind. He did not proclaim it as something to be set up beyond space or time, but as something to be realised here on earth, wherever men and women yield ready and glad obedience to God, that His will may be accomplished in and through their lives.<sup>4</sup> He proclaimed this message not only in His teaching but in all the activities of His ministry, in His own attitude

<sup>1</sup> John vi. 14. Cf. H. W. Montefiore, 'Revolt in the Desert?', *New Testament Studies*, 8 (1961-62), pp. 135 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Montefiore (ibid. p. 140) suggests the further possibility that 'the death of John the Baptist was the occasion for immediate public disturbances and an abortive Messianic uprising'.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Luke xix. 41-44; xxiii. 28-31.

<sup>4</sup> A talk by Professor Jeremias on the B.B.C. Third Programme on 14 February, 1962, showed how the main themes of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God are summed up in the Lord's Prayer.

to God and men, and supremely in His acceptance of suffering and death so that His Father's will might be fully done. As a sequel to His suffering and death, indeed, the kingdom of God, already in one sense present in His ministry,<sup>1</sup> would come 'with power' (Mark ix. 1).<sup>2</sup> Not the way of violence but the way of love would unleash the powers of the coming age on earth: this is emphasised throughout the ministry of Jesus, spoken and acted alike. And the passion and triumph of the Son of Man—that is to say, His triumph through passion—is all of a piece with the preceding ministry; it crowns His historic mission; it reveals and liberates the kingdom of God to make its victorious way in the world. Since the kingdom of God is received where His will is obeyed, nowhere is it more effectively manifested than in Him who said 'Nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt'—and acted accordingly. In Jesus, to use Origen's<sup>3</sup> great word, we hail the *autobasileia*, the kingdom in person.

In the vision of Daniel vii, which lies behind so much of our Lord's language about the kingdom, the coming kingdom is received by 'one like a son of man', who is closely associated, if not absolutely identified, with 'the saints of the Most High' (Dan. viii. 13 f., 18). Indeed, when Jesus proclaimed that 'the appointed time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near' (Mark i. 15), we may catch an echo of Dan. vii. 22: 'the appointed time came and the saints received the kingdom.'<sup>4</sup> T. W. Manson argued that in the earlier phase of Jesus' ministry He maintained the corporate interpretation of the 'one like a son of man', and called His disciples that they, with Him, might be fellow-members of the Son of Man.<sup>5</sup> Whether this was precisely His intention at that stage is a debatable question. What is not debatable is that, in the event, He fulfilled single-handed all that was written concerning the Son of Man, 'that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt' (Mark ix. 12).

When we study those passages in which Jesus speaks of the predestined sufferings of the Son of Man, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Matt. xii. 28||Luke xi. 20: 'the kingdom of God has come upon (ἐφθασεν) you.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the reference to Jesus' impending 'baptism' which must be undergone before the present limitations of the ministry are removed (Luke xii. 50; cf. also Mark x. 38; John xii. 20-33).

<sup>3</sup> Origen, *Commentary on Matthew*, xiv. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London, 1952), pp. 68 f.

<sup>5</sup> *The Teaching of Jesus* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 211 ff.

that He accepted and accomplished His mission as the Son of Man in terms of the Servant of the Lord of Isaiah xlii-liii.<sup>1</sup> This Servant, in his humble and faithful obedience to God, endures undeserved suffering and death at the hands of men, but his suffering and death are the very means by which he brings his mission to a triumphant conclusion. For in that suffering and death he presents his life to God as a sin-offering on behalf of others, and by so bearing their sins he wins for 'the many' a favourable verdict from God and a righteous status before Him.<sup>2</sup> Thus, while Daniel portrays the 'one like a son of man' as receiving authority to execute judgment on men, Jesus declares that 'the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins' (Mark ii. 10).<sup>3</sup>

As the Representative Man Jesus thus accomplishes for others what they were unable to accomplish for themselves, taking His people's sins in death upon Himself and by that very act taking them away. But as the Representative Man He is also, through His passion, the founder of a new humanity, the members of which bear the marks of the Son of Man, drinking his cup and sharing his baptism,<sup>4</sup> giving service rather than receiving it, forgiving and not condemning, living for others and not for self.

That the bringing into being of such a new humanity was part of the historic mission of Jesus is clear enough in the New Testament record. The very number of the Twelve implies that they were envisaged as the nucleus of the new people of God.<sup>5</sup> They, together with Jesus' other disciples who continued with Him in His trials, were the 'little flock' to which the Father was pleased to give the kingdom (Luke xii. 32). After His death and resurrection their numbers rapidly

<sup>1</sup> H. Zahrnt (*The Historical Jesus*, p. 80) finds that this synthesis is characteristic of English scholars, and that its outlines have been drawn from the work of Rudolf Otto—especially his *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man* (Eng. tr., London, 1938). But the synthesis was developed independently by English scholars (cf. T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 231) and is not without its defenders among German scholars (cf. W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, *The Servant of God* [Eng. tr., London, 1957]); on the other hand, some English scholars have questioned it (cf. C. K. Barrett, 'The Background of Mark 10: 45', in *New Testament Essays*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins [Manchester, 1959], pp. 1 ff.; M. D. Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant* [London, 1959]). It may well be that the synthesis had been made already, before the Gospel age, by the Qumran community, who interpreted both figures corporately in terms of their own calling.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. John iii. 17; xii. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Mark x. 38; cf. such Pauline expressions as 'baptised into his death' (Rom. vi. 3), 'that I may . . . share his sufferings' (Phil. iii. 10).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30.

increased, to the point where they could no longer be described as a *little* flock. But while their numbers might increase, their character must not change, if they were to remain true to their commission to carry forward the ministry of the Servant-Messiah, with the assurance of His abiding presence and power made real to them by His Spirit. They recognised this themselves. The Servant of the Lord was to be 'a light to the nations' as well as the restorer of Israel (Isa. xlix. 6). When Paul and Barnabas at Pisidian Antioch announced their intention of concentrating on the evangelisation of Gentiles, they claimed to be fulfilling the servant's rôle (Acts xiii. 47): 'For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

"I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles,  
that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth".'

The historic mission of Jesus is thus the first phase of the mission of the church; or, to put it more biblically, the mission of the church is the continuation of the historic mission of Jesus.

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## Genesis And Its Underlying Realities

### *Survey of Genesis ii-xi*

EARLIEST men were free to roam anywhere and were given a completely free choice of vegetables and fruit for food (Gen. i. 29). By contrast, Adam was confined to the garden of Eden (ii. 15), and forbidden to eat from one particular tree (ii. 17). It will be noted in passing that i. 29 does not necessarily mean that earliest men restricted their diet to vegetables and fruit. The statement is that their diet of vegetables and fruit was free from restriction.

The Genesis narrative is so arranged that the creation of man and the creation of Adam are separated by a period of time called the 'seventh day', during which God rested from His creative activity (ii. 2).

Thus, when Adam was created and placed in Eden, the human race was already long established, and it is possible that quite advanced civilisations were already in being.

The existence of the human race before and during Adam's time (as dated in the Biblical chronology) is confirmed by abundant evidence in the fields of archaeology and anthropology, as well as by Scriptural allusions such as Gen. ii. 14-17 and vi. 2, 4.<sup>1</sup>

It was essential for God's redemptive purpose that the garden in Eden should be isolated and cut off from the various races of mankind who existed at that time.

<sup>1</sup> The Biblical genealogy (Septuagint) puts Adam at about 5,500 B.C. The Genesis account describes an agricultural and pastoral life in the time of Adam, and a rapid development in the civilised arts (including the use of metals) in the period shortly afterwards.

This state of culture is compatible with what we know of the Near East in about 5000 to 6000 B.C., but it is not compatible with the ice-age conditions which existed before about 9000 B.C.

The existence of men before 9000 B.C. is well established by archaeology, and fossil remains indicate that their bone structure was the same as that of present day man. See F. E. Zeuner, 'Dating the Past, An Introduction to Geochronology' (1958).

The fine cave art of the ice-age period indicates that man had attained a very reasonable standard of mental development. This further supports the fossil evidence that intelligent men were living on the earth well before 9000 B.C. See H. Breuil, 'Forty Centuries of Cave Art' (1952).

Such isolation was achieved by locating the garden in a rainless area, where no vegetation grew. Agriculture was almost impossible and it is stated in the narrative that there were no agricultural inhabitants (ii. 5).

In the midst of this drought area the trees of the garden were sustained by a river, whose head waters were located in distant lands (ii. 10-14).

The existence of the river indicates that the rainless conditions in Eden were local and not world-wide.

The ground surrounding the garden was watered by a mist or flood (ii. 6), which must have originated from water transported to the site by the river (as there was no rain), and therefore it too must have been local in extent.

A mist might also have provided a measure of concealment from any passing travellers and may even have served to frighten them away from the area by playing on their sense of superstition and fear of the unknown.<sup>1</sup>

When Adam and his wife were expelled from the garden, they appear to have continued living in the region nearby. The water carried by a mist might have made it possible to carry on an agricultural life, but only with the greatest difficulty (iii. 17-19). Nevertheless, the climatic conditions near the river were probably very much better than those further away, where there was little or no water to support the crops necessary for human existence.<sup>2</sup> It appears that Adam remained in this place and was still there by the time Cain and Abel had grown up. It is referred to by name in Gen. iv. 16 as 'the Presence of the Lord'.

After Cain had killed his brother Abel he was expelled from this area by God and forced to leave it entirely (iv. 11-14). Cain was now

<sup>1</sup> B. Ramm, 'The Christian View of Science and Scripture' (1955), p. 232.

Ramm recognised the isolated nature of Eden. He writes: 'The second chapter of Genesis states that a certain territory is staked out as it were, for man, with certain plants and certain animals making it a paradise. How large the areas was we do not know but it was an oasis for man. His days of probation were spent there. The animals that Adam named were not the thousands of the world, but those in this staked-off territory.'

<sup>2</sup> Ramm, *op. cit.* p. 233. A similar suggestion is put forward:

'Outside the Garden of Eden were death, disease, weeds, thorns, carnivores, deadly serpents, and intemperate weather. To think otherwise is to run counter to an immense avalanche of fact. Part of the blessedness of man was that he was spared all of these things in his Paradise, and part of the judgment of man was that he had to forsake such a Paradise and enter the world as it was outside the Garden, where thistles grew and weeds were abundant and where wild animals roamed and where life was possible only by the sweat of man's brow.'

being driven out into a forbidding wilderness, where the struggle for existence would be even more difficult than in the past (iv. 12). Worse still, driven out of the enshrouding mists of the river area he would be alone, unhidden, and completely at the mercy of any who might find him. By this time Cain must have been aware of the existence of other men, and aware too that their presence spelt danger. He felt certain he would be discovered and killed (iv. 14). It seems his fears were well founded, for God took his appeal seriously and marked him for his own protection (iv. 15).

Cain did more than merely establish friendly relations with the existing population in the area 'to the east'. He married into them, organised them, and became a man who was feared (iv. 17-24). The descendants of this racial intermarriage were pioneers of accomplishment in the civilisation of their day (iv. 20-22).

In the meantime the reason for Cain's expulsion from his family had become apparent. In his absence, a third son, Seth, had been born, who was chosen to carry on the Messianic Succession (iv. 25). After this, the narrative records that Adam had further sons and daughters (ii. 4).

Genesis vi describes how Adam's sons intermarried with earlier inhabitants, and indicates that this had a dramatic effect on the future history of the civilisation (vi. 2).

Although the descendants of this intermarriage were men of outstanding ability in the material and cultural spheres, their influence also led to deepening moral and spiritual wickedness which ultimately led to the destruction of the entire civilisation at the time of the flood (vi. 1-7).

The term 'sons of God', used in vi. 2, 4, would be applied naturally enough to Adam's descendants, because they would be associated in men's minds with his own miraculous origin in Eden, and the same expression is used of Adam in the New Testament in Luke iii. 38.

Man's need and God's redemptive purpose were first revealed to the human race through Adam. The lesson and message of Eden must have been passed down from generation to generation by the patriarchs of the Messianic Succession until it was incorporated into the book of Genesis by Moses. Evidence of the spiritual life it produced can be seen amongst the Messianic patriarchs themselves, in Enoch, Noah and Abraham, as well as in others such as Abel, Job and Melchisedec.

Such a message, and such an unusual and indeed incredible testimony as that which Adam gave, would be certain to arouse a great deal of

scepticism amongst the majority of his fellow-men. Thus we can readily see why God endorsed this earliest revelation of His purpose, by bestowing on those who carried His message the gift of miraculous longevity (v. 3-32, and xi. 10-32). The patriarchs of the Messianic line lived to such miraculous ages that all who encountered them must have felt compelled to acknowledge the divine origin of their message.<sup>1</sup>

The climatic changes which occurred as a result of the flood are worthy of note. As we have seen, the drought region, which was a means of isolating Eden from the rest of mankind, became the scene of Adam's unrewarding toil when he was expelled from the garden. His contemporaries in the early Mesopotamian civilisation must have suffered from the same unfavourable climatic conditions. The flood, however, brought about changes which led to a more normal climate and much easier agriculture (viii. 32). The sight of the rainbow was probably unknown in the area before the flood, due to the lack of atmospheric moisture. Its first appearance after the flood must have made an admirable token of God's covenant to those who had never previously seen it (ix. 12-16).

### *The Place of Adam in Scripture*

One reason for the popularity of the traditional doctrine of the universal fatherhood of Adam is its apparent simplicity. Its simplicity, however, is not a valid reason for its defence. In the sphere of science, we have been forced to abandon the simplicity of Newtonian astronomy in favour of the complex and 'difficult' Relativity theory of Einstein. The simplicity of a theory, either in science or theology, is no criterion of its correctness. If we are to find any valid support for the doctrine of universal human descent from Adam, we must seek it in Scripture, which is the only reliable authority on this particular subject at our disposal.

#### Romans v. 12-21

We are not told in this passage that sin and death are transmitted through heredity. The means of transmission is not stated, but it is clear that transmission does occur, that it originates in Adam, and

<sup>1</sup> Ramm. op. cit. p. 242. Ramm recognised that longevity might be a special gift of the Messianic patriarchs, not shared by other men. He writes:

'In passing it must be mentioned that longevity is attributed to the Seth line and not the Cain line, i.e. not all men lived to such ages but only those who were bearers of the true religion of God and the promises.'

that it reaches to the whole human race, both those who received the Law and those who did not.

The influence of time factor is referred to in v. 13 and v. 14, where Paul differentiates between the period before the Law and that after. The period from 'Adam to Moses' is expressly mentioned. However, before laying too much stress on the time factor, we must note the very wide and sweeping scope of v. 18, where the righteousness of Christ is described as opening up the way for all men for justification.

The existence of men in Old Testament times, who clearly benefited from grace, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, shows that the grace provided in Christ was operative backwards in time as well as forwards. But it appears from this passage as a whole and particularly from x. 18 f. that there is a great deal of similarity between the ministration of sin and death from Adam and the ministration of grace from Christ. It is therefore conceivable, if the sin and death from Adam were transmitted in the same way as grace, that it too could be operative backwards in time from Adam as well as forwards. Adam, therefore, might have been a valid representative of men who lived before him as well as of those who lived after.

Before leaving this passage we must note that transmission of sin by heredity is not mentioned, and that although Adam is viewed as a representative man, he is not said to be the first man ever to live on earth.

1 Cor. xv. 21 f. and 45-49

This passage continues on essentially the same theme as the previous one. Verses 21 and 22 reiterate what we have already read in Romans v.

The subsequent verses bring the first possible reference to Adam as the first man on earth. Before reaching conclusions about these verses, however, we must ask ourselves in what way Adam is to be viewed as first.

It is clear that this passage is seeking to draw a comparison between Adam and Christ, so that positive statements about Adam are paralleled with similar but contrasting statements about Christ. We see two titles given to Christ, 'the last Adam', and 'the second man'. Clearly, these two titles of Christ are meant to convey a spiritual meaning, rather than some literal statement of fact.

However, if the passage is seeking to draw a comparison between Adam and Christ in the spiritual sense, and for this purpose Christ is given the title of 'the second man', we must feel free to view Adam's titles in a spiritual sense also. We cannot accept that Christ's title of 'the second man' (45, 47) should be viewed in a literal and natural sense, and therefore we cannot insist that Adam's title of the 'first man' (45, 47) should be viewed in a literal and natural sense either. Of course, the possibility of such an interpretation is not ruled out, but on the other hand we cannot definitely say that the passage teaches it.

1 Tim. ii. 13 f.

This passage deals with the conduct and relative precedence of men and women in Christian life and church affairs. Paul supports his teaching by reference to a created order indicated in Gen. ii. In the created order of Gen. ii, 'Adam was first formed, then Eve' (14). While this verse clearly teaches the precedence of Adam relative to Eve, it cannot, in its contest, be taken as teaching the precedence of Adam relative to the whole human race.

Jude 14

This verse refers to Enoch being seventh from Adam. It conveys the fact that there were seven generations between Adam and Enoch, but could hardly be taken to convey anything more. Adam, after all, if he were not the first human being on earth, nevertheless retains the position of being the first human being to be specifically named and described in the record of Scripture. As such, he is the inevitable landmark from which Biblical genealogies are reckoned.

#### *Summary of New Testament References*

In summarising our examination of the New Testament references, we must note that we cannot anywhere find a clear and definite statement to indicate conclusively that Adam was the first man on earth, nor can we find a clear and definite statement that all men now living are descended from him. This is certainly not to deny the unity of the whole human race. Such unity is implied in the statement that when God created man, He made man 'in His image, after His likeness' (Gen. i. 26). Adam is identified in this unity, in Gen. v. 2. And in the 'transmission' of sin and death, described in Rom. v, all men are identified in the unity of the human race without any boundaries whatsoever.

## Gen. v. 1, 2

A number of points in the detailed wording of these verses are worthy of careful consideration. They involve a double statement, based on the dual sense of the Hebrew or original pre-Hebrew word which can equally mean either 'Adam' or 'Man'.

Referring to 'Adam', Gen. v. 2 states that he was called 'Man', or, in other words, the Adam who lived in the garden of Eden had a fully human nature. The second and more important meaning of Gen. v. 2, achieved simply by reversing the senses in which the word is understood, bring us to its deeper application. For when 'Man' was first created (in Gen. 1), God called their name 'Adam'. The form and context of the verse enforce the simultaneous use of both these two meanings. Because the verse is an integral part of the Messianic genealogy, the reference to Adam as subject is unavoidable. But at the same time the verse is cast in an unusual form and with associative wording which relate it to the original creation of man described in Gen. 1. 26 f., thereby enforcing the second meaning.

Firstly, we may consider the verses as they relate strictly to the couple in Eden. It is clear from the narrative of Gen. 2 that both Adam and Eve were especial and unique creations of God. Gen. v. 1 clearly refers to a creation, but we must note that it does not explicitly state that it was the first creation. We may therefore take Gen. v. 1 f. as applying to the couple in Eden without in any way committing ourselves to the view that they were the first human beings on earth, from whom all others are descended. The close association of these verses with the table of Adam's generations suggests that they do in fact refer primarily to him. In that they refer primarily to him, they make it clear that he was made in the likeness of God, and hence shared a common nature with man of Gen. 1. 26 f.

A secondary meaning to the verses is also clearly suggested. The name 'Adam' can equally be translated 'the man' and vice versa, and it is interesting to note how the Authorised translators' choice of words brings out the second meaning rather than the first. The expression 'in the day that God created man' immediately connects in the reader's mind with the 'day' of creation in Gen. 1. Furthermore, the whole form of Gen. v. 1 and 2 seems superfluous to the strict requirements of the historical narrative at this point, if it were taken as referring solely to Eden. The same form acquires point and relevant meaning when the verses are considered in the light of their secondary but vital purpose of associating the original man of Gen.

i. 26-28 with the Adam of Gen. ii. The expression 'called their name Adam' indicates that original man, like ourselves, was reckoned to share in the nature of Adam, and therefore to share in his sin and in his condemnation to spiritual and physical death. The use of the plural and the emphasis on the creation of 'male and female' (a further reflection of Gen. i. 27) serve to underline further this secondary meaning.

We must be quite clear that the two meanings conveyed by these verses are not incompatible and mutually exclusive. Rather, they exist side by side in the verses. While the primary reference is that of the context, to the Adam of Eden, the form, content, and associations of the verses also imply a vital link with the originally created man of Gen. i. 26 ff. Thus the verses are, in effect, the Old Testament equivalent of Rom. v and 1 Cor. xv, and they say exactly the same thing about the spiritual relationship between the entire human race and the Adam of Eden as these later New Testament passages.

Deut. xxxii. 8

This verse appears to refer to the dispersion of peoples and nations after the flood. They are described here as 'the sons of Adam', although the alternative rendering 'the sons of man' would be equally valid. The first rendering is certainly correct in that the peoples of the dispersion were descendants of Noah, who himself traced his descent to Adam. A reference to 'the sons of Adam' in this context is therefore quite in place, whether Adam was the first man on earth or whether he was not.

Psalm li. 5

No reference is made to Adam in this verse, but it seems to indicate that a corrupt and sinful nature is transmitted by heredity. At birth, and even before, this nature is implanted within the individual.

The verse is linked in the minds of many with Rom. v, and it is suggested that the method of 'transmission' of sin and death in Rom. v is by the process of heredity described in Psalm li. 5. From this it is argued that all men must be descended from Adam, because they all obtain a sinful and corrupt nature through heredity.

However, we must note that the New Testament writers do not specifically link these verses. Even if heredity does play a part in the transmission of sin and death to all men, it does not necessarily follow that the line of heredity stems from Adam.

In Gen. v. 2 we see a spiritual identification of the originally created human race with Adam. It is therefore irrelevant whether the first man was Adam or whether he was not. Scripture teaches that 'God called *their* name Adam, in the day when *they* were created'. Here then, in the origin of the human race (wherever or whenever it was), we have an identification with Adam, and in such an identification with Adam we find sin and death coming upon the first men. If sin and death are in any sense transmitted by heredity it is equally possible that they could be transmitted from these earliest men rather than from Adam himself. We have already noted how the results of Adam's sin may operate backwards in time as well as forwards, in the same way as the saving work of Christ. Thus men who lived long before Adam would be under the same dominion of sin and death as those who have lived since. This is not to say that we can explain the transmission of sin and death in Romans v fully in terms of the heredity process of Psalm li. 5. But whatever part the process of heredity plays, it in no way ties down to Adam as being the first man on earth and father of the whole human race.

### *The Role of Adam in Theology*

Adam was a man whom God created individually and specially, to fulfil the role of 'First Representative' (1 Cor. xv. 47).

His isolation in the garden in Eden, the idealised conditions of paradise which prevailed there, and his miraculous creation from the dust and from the Breath of God, all had one end in view. This was to demonstrate that man will sin against God regardless of his origin and circumstances. The manner of Adam's creation safeguarded him from any possible taint of heredity or environment, whilst the isolation of the garden safeguarded him from the evil and tainting influences of his fellow men. His circumstances were in every way ideal and could hardly be improved upon. He had no lack of suitable companionship. The commandment he was given cost him nothing to keep, for he had sufficient to eat and an ample choice. Yet Adam broke the only commandment which God had given him, and 1 Tim. ii. 14 records that he was not acting under any deception when he did so.

Adam could make no excuses about his heredity or environment. Before God, he was without any excuse at all. The death penalty passed upon him was an act of complete justice.

Adam's name, which simply means 'the Man', identifies him as a

valid representative of the human race. We can find nothing special about him, apart from his unusual creation. His name gives no identifying feature which would make him distinguishable from anyone else, indeed, it seems deliberately chosen to associate him with the whole of humanity.

Thus Rom. v and I Cor. xv bring Adam before us as a representative of the human race, and in the latter passage he is termed 'The First Man', implying a similar representative office to that of Christ, who is termed in the same context 'The Second Man'. (Clearly we cannot accept Christ's title of Second Man in a literal sense, and therefore we would not be justified in taking Adam's title of First Man in a literal sense either.)

Because of man's effective identity with Adam, God's judgment and condemnation of the human race in Adam is an act of absolute justice. God's sentence is passed, not merely on human sin, but on sin which by its nature is utterly without excuse. Everyday experience teaches us that we sin, and also that we have, and have always had, a sinful and corrupt nature. Lest we should blame our behaviour on our nature, and claim that it is God's fault in creation for allowing us to be as corrupt as we are, Eden is brought before us. In Eden we see that man's sin is at root independent of heredity and environment. Created without a sinful and corrupt nature, man will still sin, and thereby acquire one.

Thus, in Rom. v. 12, we see that sentence of death was passed upon all men, not because they are descended from Adam, but because they all sinned in him. In Adam man's sin is brought out into the open (Rom. v. 13). It is a violation of God's covenant (Hos. vi. 7), utterly without excuse. Such sin demands the death sentence, but in sentencing Adam, God must sentence the whole human race who bear his nature. Adam and man are so bound together by their kinship of nature that it is impossible to separate them. All men do not commit precisely the sin which Adam committed (Rom. v. 14), simply because they have not been put in his position. A covenant-breaking sin cannot be committed when there is no covenant, but nevertheless sin remains a reality in man's nature (Rom. v. 13), and given a covenant to break, man will surely break it (Rom. ii. 1).

### *The Spiritual Status of Man*

In the foreknowledge of God the human race has been reckoned 'in Adam' even from its inception, because the fundamental nature and

character of man has been basically unchanged throughout his history (Gen. i. 26 f.).

The spiritual identity of the human race with Adam, from the time of its creation onwards, is taught in Gen. v. 2. The statement in Gen. v. 2 that when God created Man, he called their name Adam, implies that from the very beginning God has counted the human race as having Adam's nature. And by having Adam's nature, Man was counted as a potential partaker in Adam's sin, even though Adam's sin was then still future. As a result the death sentence described in Romans v. was operative on mankind even before the time of Adam, as well as on mankind after him. In the same way, the saving work of Christ was operative in Old Testament times, long before His redemptive act had actually taken place (Heb. xi. 13-16). The foreknowledge of God permits both the saving work of Christ and the condemnation through Adam to be operative throughout the entire period of human history, both before and after the central events concerned.

Thus it will be seen that God's condemnation of man is not due to his corrupt heredity. It is possible that heredity may be used as one of the instruments of condemnation, for instance by transmitting traits leading to senility and ultimate death. But heredity is neither the reason for condemnation nor the ultimate cause of it. The New Testament passages which deal with this subject, namely Rom. v and 1 Cor. xv, have nothing to say about heredity. On the contrary, the Genesis account of Eden makes it clear that the chain of heredity was deliberately broken (Gen. ii. 7), thus demonstrating that it was not the factor involved.

Man cannot be condemned to death for his heredity, for it is a matter over which he has no control. He is condemned for a wilful act of disobedience, committed in Eden, in which the operation of heredity could not be held to blame.

Man's sin in Eden demonstrates that his problem goes very much deeper than his heredity, environment, circumstances, companionships, or even the kind of commands or spiritual laws he is required to keep. Eden shows that the ultimate seat of man's problem is to be found in his own freedom of will and freedom of self-determination. Yet rob him of these and he is no longer truly man, for he is no longer in the image and likeness of God. Here we have a dilemma, and it is one of such magnitude that the only possible solution was to be found in the Cross and redemptive work of Christ.

It is of course equally true that the human race is self-contaminating and that environmental and hereditary conditions have a corrupting

influence on man. These facts are taught in Gen. v. 4 and Ps. li. 5. But we must note that these factors are given a second place in Scripture, and are not mentioned at all in the New Testament, in the key passages which deal with the origin and universality of human sin.

In Eden we see that sin is, at root, independent of heredity. And God condemns man because of his sin in Eden, not because of his heredity. Thus men do not die 'from Adam', implying a process of heredity, but, as the apostle Paul said, they die 'in Adam', implying effective identity (1 Cor. xv. 22).

### *The Typology of Eden*

It is not the purpose of this thesis to develop or discuss the typology of Eden in any detail. However, the subject must be given a brief mention in order to fit it in with the main subject under consideration, and deal with a possible cause of difficulty in Gen. iii. 20.

We are familiar already with two typological allusions in the Eden narrative, firstly, that in which the common flesh and blood of Adam and Eve represents the marriage institution, and secondly, that in which Adam represents Christ and Eve the Church.

However the most consistent, and therefore, perhaps, most important typological allusion is that in which Adam represents the general race of man whilst Eve represents the redeemed who are called out of it. In this type we first see that God himself creates a redeemed race from a parent humanity (Gen. ii. 22). It will be noted that the parent humanity is unconscious of the process which is really taking place (21) and also that the redeemed race is small compared with the parent, being represented merely by a rib in the type. The spiritual attitudes of Adam and Eve were very different, as pointed out in 1 Tim. iii. 14. The latter verse implies that Adam's sin was deliberate, which is a most serious charge, but the verse also says that Eve's sin was the result of her being deceived. It will be noted that the serpent directed all his attentions to Eve, and did not waste any time on Adam: clearly it was not necessary, as the narrative subsequently bears out, for Adam's sin was not dependent on the wiles of the serpent. When challenged by God, Eve said she was 'beguiled', but Adam had no such excuse to offer. However, the most significant difference brought out in the type is the difference in treatment meted out to the two sinners. Adam, the deliberate sinner, was condemned to death (iii. 19), but Eve, although punished by suffering and sorrow, and condemned to subservience to her husband,

was to be the bearer of new life (16). The fact that Eve was not specifically condemned to death is most significant, both in this type and in the type of Christ and the Church previously mentioned.

In the narrative Adam's naming of Eve (iii. 20) is closely connected with God's judgment which had just been announced, for the future now hinged on the future life which Eve alone could bring forth. In the type this incident is used to drive home the spiritual meaning. Eve has been beguiled into sinning and is technically just as guilty as Adam. Nevertheless she has a different attitude of heart to Adam, and has found a place of forgiveness before God. While suffering much she will bring forth a new and eternal life. In this capacity she is, spiritually, 'the mother of all living'.

Although the spiritual teaching of this type might be taken further, it is convenient to leave it at this point, having dealt with the spiritual meaning underlying Gen. iii. 20; a verse which would otherwise cause difficulty in the general theory of origins which has been under consideration.

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#### *Acknowledgment*

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## The Apologetic for Miracles in Contemporary Thought

THE question of miracles is to the fore again after a long period during which the subject was rejected by the sceptics and neglected by the Christian apologist. Miracles were the *Streitfrage*, or main-point of controversy in the nineteenth century. And there were, of course, good reasons why the period should have been pre-occupied with the discussion of the problem. It was an era when the omnipotence of science was virtually axiomatic. The Newtonian physics had made it appear that the world was sufficient of itself and that it was able to conduct itself by its own inherent laws without any further aid from God. In such a context the cry went up, 'Nothing Miraculous'. How could God, if God there was, interfere with the unbreakable course of nature? This impossibility is expressed by Pope in his *Essay on Man*

'Think we, like some weak prince, the Eternal Cause  
Prone for his favourites to reverse his laws?'

God can have no makeshifts. He cannot alter the movements of the universe. Under the impact of Darwinianism the world was imprisoned more firmly in the strait-jacket of inevitability. And the gospel of unhindered progress was proclaimed with virtual religious fervour by Frederic Harrison and T. H. Huxley. 'Nothing miraculous', asserted the sceptics; for the scientific understanding of the world has made all ideas of a divine interference impossible. Besides, Hume was ready at hand to be quoted against any who dared to claim that miracles do happen. Hume had made it appear that of all fallacies the worst was to claim that God could, as and when He wished, play fast and loose with the laws of nature.

The queer thing was that both Hume and Darwin, had they but seen it, had undermined their thesis by the way they had stated their case for the rejection of the miraculous. Hume had argued that a miracle is so contradictory of all human experience that it is more reasonable to believe any amount of testimony false than to believe a miracle to be a true happening. But Hume's argument involves a glaring *petitio principii*. A miracle, Hume maintained, is contrary to all human

experience; and by human experience, he meant personal experience. Now it is a fact that we have not ourselves witnessed a miracle. But others claim they have. To make our own experience the measure of all human experience, would be tantamount to making unacceptable the proof of any absolute new fact. The general experience to which Hume appeals, and which, he contends, makes miracles incredible is, after all, merely negative experience. But the positive testimony of one man who witnessed the commission of a certain crime is not rebutted by the assertion of any number of men who were not there and declare that they never saw any such thing. Negative testimony can never neutralise that which is positive, except upon principles which would render void all human testimony. Hume falls into the self-contradiction of seeking to discredit faith in human testimony, by adducing to the contrary the general experience of men which we *know* through testimony alone.

The Darwinians, to explain themselves, made much of the concept of 'mutations'. They readily admitted that these saltatory jumps away from the original species were inexplicable. But to say that they are just chancy affairs is surely only another way of saying that they are unpredictable; that they do not act according to ascertainable laws. This, of course, does not mean that they can be pronounced miraculous in any authentic use of that term; but it does suggest that the claim that nature acts according to unbreakable inherent laws is here denied.

It was Hume, however, who called the tune in the earlier apologetic for the miraculous. Christian writers found their arguments too often embarrassed by their acceptance of Hume's definition. By regarding a miracle as an intrusion of the Divine Being to change the laws of nature, and as consequently a breach in the natural order, they could not make good their case by showing how the universe could continue on its ordained course. The general tendency was to appeal to the operation of some unknown higher law or to speculate about miracles as the natural issue of physical laws at work. The purpose of this defence was to stress that a miracle takes place within the natural and physical order so that their evidential character might be underlined. In this regard miracles were seen as proof of God's sovereignty in revelation. Herein He had demonstrated the divinity of the truths He had communicated to man. But the idea of miracles as a violation of the causal nexus became more impossible to defend in the environment which prevailed in the last half of the nineteenth century. It was felt

by some that it was no longer reasonable to seek to justify the so-called natural miracles. Emphasis began to be laid upon the moral miracles and it was contended that here at least is a realm not under the rule of unbreakable natural law. Here God is free to act. Thus in the end, the reply to the sceptic 'Nothing miraculous', was; there are 'moral miracles'. The result here was to leave the physical world—the world of natural science—outside the interference of God.

The eclipse of materialism and the upsurge of idealism with the change of emphasis from the divine transcendence to that of the divine immanence brought about a new approach to the idea of the miraculous. The earlier cry of 'Nothing Miraculous' was replaced by that of 'Everything miraculous'. It was left to Schleiermacher to lead this opposing notion of the miraculous. Are not the laws of nature and the evolutionary process itself aspects of the divine working? Contemplated from the religious point of view all nature becomes, in Carlyle's phrase, the living visible garments of God. Any event, even the most natural, is a miracle when viewed religiously. The Darwinians asserted that what others call the miraculous is really natural: the Schleiermacherians taught that what is called the natural is really the miraculous. This last was the notion, having its origin in the *Illumination* period, which found vogue in the pantheistic musings of Wordsworth to whom all nature was instinct with the divine. There was, of course, something suggestive in the idea: and understandable in the lake districts of Cumberland but not quite so discernible in the lust district of China town. The tendency was to equate the vaguely aesthetic with the validly religious. It may be argued that these God-intoxicated individuals, who saw God in every bush and branch, were not altogether pantheistic pietists but that they were the real seers penetrating to the heart of nature. But by making everything miraculous they emptied the word miracle of all effective characterisation.

Under the inspiration of Ritschl a dichotomy was introduced between the realm of the physical and that of the spiritual. Ritschl drew a sharp distinction between the scientific and the religious view of the world. His desire was to exempt religion altogether from the criticism of science by insisting that religion relates only to the category of value. For Ritschl a miracle is not a scientific concept, but a religious one: A miracle has its truth, not for science, but for religious experience. According to Ritschl, any event which might awaken a kindling impression of God's presence is to be termed a miracle: this meant that no special historical events in the past could be granted the status of the

specifically miraculous. This conception of the miracle was given stress by Herrmann, Ritschl's most thorough exponent. He defines a miracle as 'Any event in which we clearly perceive the impinging of God upon our lives'.<sup>1</sup> Such miracles cannot be made 'intelligible' to others; and they need no 'defence'. They lie in the realm of faith and have no real connection with the natural order, the province of scientific knowledge. In no sense can it be said that God breaks through the natural order. 'Our faith can only recognise miracle when in an event within our experience we recognise the impact upon our life of a power not ourselves.'<sup>2</sup> In this context the miracle is what appeals to us as the specifically religious.

By the turn of the century interest in the question of miracles appears to have spent itself. But the pendulum has swung again and the subject has become alive once more. Already the earlier approaches to the problem have revealed themselves. Some have sought to defend miracles within the framework of the scientific world-picture; others contend for an understanding of miracles in the context of religious faith.

Those who take the first line are no longer content to define a miracle as a violation of the order of nature. For science itself has taught us that the idea of natural law is not a statement about the ultimate structure of reality. No longer are the theories of natural science taken as certain literal interpretations of the real constitution of the universe. The relation between scientific theories and the actual physical world is far less close than was originally supposed. Stephen Toulmin has taught us to regard scientific theories as 'maps' of the real world,<sup>3</sup> and R. B. Braithwaite sees them as 'models'.<sup>4</sup> In general, scientific theory and law can be likened to a model produced by the observer in his investigation of phenomena that he might gain some understanding of the world in which he lives. This does not mean that the map or model is a pure invention or a mere subjectivity. It has a sense of objectivity given by what the investigation of the physical world conveys. Nonetheless the map or model cannot be said to be grounded in the nature of things. It has in this sense no ontological status. It is a map or model woven out of the scientist's empirical generalisation, and conditioned, in some measure, by the state of existing knowledge and observational techniques. This means that the

<sup>1</sup> W. Herrmann, *Systematic Theology*, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Toulmin, *The Philosophy of Science*.

<sup>4</sup> R. B. Braithwaite, *Scientific Explanation*.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. p. 85.

map or model cannot be taken as final since future discoveries may necessitate new constructions.

Does this view of the universe make the idea of miracles more acceptable? Many writers are sure that it does. They feel that there is no reason to be intimidated by the scientists for it is they who have renounced the strait-jacket conception of the universe which prohibited any interference by God. It is consequently argued that the scientific account of the universe cannot give a true account of the ultimate. Indeed, what hints we do gain from the scientists' maps and models suggest that the ultimate nature of reality is personal. It is, therefore, arguable that this personal ultimate, controls the regular pattern of natural events or what is called the laws of nature; and can inaugurate irregular ones, or what is called miracles.

C. S. Lewis rejects the notion that the progress of science has somehow made the world safe against miracle.<sup>1</sup> He stresses that nature in general is regular and behaves according to fixed laws. It is only in an ordered universe that a miracle can, so to speak, be identified as a 'supernatural interference'. Lewis makes the point that a miracle is 'caused' by the direct action of God, but when once introduced it takes its place in the area of the natural and obeys its laws. 'If God creates a miraculous spermatozoon in the body of a virgin, it does not proceed to break any laws. The laws at once take over. Nature is ready. Pregnancy follows, according to all the normal laws, and nine months later a child is born. . . . If events ever come from beyond Nature altogether, she will be no more incommoded by them. Be sure she will rush to the point where she is invaded, as the defensive forces rush to a cut in our finger, and there hasten to accommodate the newcomer. The moment it enters her realm it obeys her laws. Miraculous wine will intoxicate, miraculous conception will lead to pregnancy, inspired books will suffer all the ordinary processes of textual corruption, miraculous bread will be digested.'<sup>2</sup>

For Lewis the interlocking system of nature is not the ultimate. He sees man's rationality as the little tell-tale rift in nature which shows that there is something beyond and behind her. Man's thinking, which seeks to construct a Total System, cannot itself be brought into that system. It requires an explanation in terms which admit of the more than natural. Lewis makes the point that human thought is evidence of the ultimacy of a Higher Thinking; while miracle is a demonstration of the existence of a super-natural order. While the miracles are

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Miracles: A Preliminary Study*.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 72.

God's short-cut methods, they are yet not disconnected raids on Nature. They are essentially purposeful, fulfilling the needs of God's redemptive plan for the world.

Arnold Lunn in his apologetic for miracles stressed that they have their origin in God's action. He contends that they demonstrate the existence of a divine order and as such are to be regarded as 'above, contrary to or exceeding nature'.<sup>1</sup> It was on this score that he was attacked by Nowell-Smith.<sup>2</sup> He questions the contention that miracles cannot be given 'natural' explanations. Nowell-Smith points out that while scientific *theories* are necessarily changing, the scientific *method* remains constant. And while it is true that miracles cannot be explained in present day scientific theory, is it not obvious that they cannot be investigated by the scientific method. And if they can, then they belong to the order of the 'natural', and may well, one day, be explained in new terms which remain strictly scientific. Nowell-Smith cannot see how miracles demonstrate the existence of a divine order. If God's acts are detectable then a generalisation can be made respecting them which has an accurate predictability. But such an admission would only make the so-called supernatural a new department of the natural. 'The supernatural', concludes Nowell-Smith, 'is either so different from the natural that we are unable to investigate it at all or it is not. If it is not, then it can hardly have the momentous significance that Mr Lunn claims for it; and if it is it cannot be invoked as an explanation of the unusual.'<sup>3</sup> It is not our purpose to enter into an examination of this criticism; which is more clever than convincing. Nowell-Smith merely gives an instance of a faultily constructed dilemma which can be 'rebutted' by the logical expedient of constructing another which appears equally cogent. If the supernatural is different from the natural then it can be taken as an explanation for momentous events of a special character; and if the supernatural is not different from the natural, then it can only account for explicable events. But the supernatural is either different or it is not different: in which case it becomes an explanation for momentous events of a special character or there are only usual explicable events. The stunt of dilemma construction is not, we submit, a sufficient reason for rejecting miracles.

<sup>1</sup> A. Lunn, 'Miracles: The Scientific Approach', *Hibbert Journal*, April 1950—being a reply to Professor H. Dubs, article in same *Journal*, January 1950.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Nowell-Smith, 'Miracles' in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, ed. A. Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre (1955), pp. 243 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 253.

I. T. Ramsey seeks to explain the nature of God's activity in the natural world by analogy with an empirical difference which, he holds, is discernible in ourselves.<sup>1</sup> We are all aware of a 'general' activity which characterises ourselves and our world in all ordinary perceptual situations. This 'first order activity', as Ramsey speaks of it, is observable and is therefore open to scientific investigation. Our 'particularised' or 'second order activity', on the other hand, arises through involvement in actual situations. It is here the personal quality of our activity, as it were, comes to prominence. It is, however, a private awareness and is consequently not amenable to scientific generalisation and abstractions. Awareness of this particularised, second order activity can only be invoked; it cannot be inferred. It comes to the fore when a situation comes alive for the one concerned. Since this sense of personal quality is non-objective it cannot be described or contained in impersonal object language. Its 'proof' lies in the actual experience when, for example, a situation is not just 'seen', but when it, to use Ramsey's phrase, 'takes on depth'. Examples are frequent of situations suddenly taking on this sense of depth; when the crust of human experience is broken and hitherto unnoticed meaning, significance and realities are revealed. The 'ice breaks', the 'penny drops', the 'light dawns'.

It is this distinction between impersonal first order and personal second order activity which Ramsey applies to God's twofold relation to the world. He sees a miracle as an event which witnesses to and is the occasion of a 'personal, second order' activity of God. 'What is a miracle?' Ramsey asks. His answer is that it is 'a non-conforming event, a *miraculum* whose non-conformity, whose oddness, evokes, gives rise to, what we have called a characteristic theological situation. With a miracle, a situation "comes alive", the light dawns, the penny drops.'<sup>2</sup> It is when the universe comes alive in a personal sort of way that we have a miracle.

There are, of course, obvious weaknesses in this apologetic for miracles. The distinction drawn between impersonal and personal activity of which our own experience is said to give evidence is taken as substantiating a similar distinction in the mode of the divine activity. But this is surely a case of *petitio principii*. The whole subject of analogy from the human to the divine is here raised, and this is an issue so much in debate that it is unsafe to take it as a foundation upon which to rear such an edifice. If indeed we are only aware of our own second order

<sup>1</sup> I. T. Ramsey, *Miracles: An Exercise in Logical Mapwork*.

<sup>2</sup> I. T. Ramsey, *Religious Language*, p. 144.

activity in a non-inferential way then it is difficult to see how we can be so sure of God's, as to be able to transfer to Him the distinctions claimed to be discoverable in our human activity.

Left as it is, Ramsey's account of miracles yields the conclusion that it is only as man discerns in a situation what he interprets as an activity of God that there is a miracle. Such a conclusion would mean that a miracle may give us some information about the adequacy of our own spiritual insights: it does not give us any certain justification for distinguishing between different modes of God's activity.

Ramsey does, of course, seek to avoid the difficulty by substituting the idea of 'disclosure' for that of 'discernment'. But this does not of itself give us any reason for singling out any special event as such. Ramsey does, to be sure, refer to the oddness and non-conformity of the event, but this does not meet the situation. For the 'disclosure situation' turns out to be one and the same with the 'non-conforming' event; that is a mere tautology. The 'oddness' lies precisely in the fact that a situation has yielded the awareness of God in a personal way and that is what is meant by a miracle. There is no reason why God's personal activity should be limited to special events; for the regular processes of nature can give rise no less surely to the awareness of such activity.

Yet for all this there is undoubted value in Ramsey's approach. It serves to remind us that God's activity cannot be reduced to a neat, uncomplicated formula. But more particularly there is underlined the limitations of objective scientific abstractions to give a total explanation of all events. Ramsey refuses to have God imprisoned in a network of causal relationship. In similar manner Emil Brunner contends that we should rid ourselves of the fiction of a pan-causalism which would exclude God from His universe.<sup>1</sup> It is only, he argues, in the sphere of what is called 'dead nature', that the strictly mechanical and causal idea can be carried through. The fact of our own human experience marks the limitations of causality in our experience of the world. The reality of our own human freedom leads on to that of the divine wherein human freedom has its ground and goal. Divine freedom 'is only revealed in the freedom of revelation, the miracle of the "supernatural" revelation in its perfection: the miracle of the Incarnation and Redemption. And this miracle of the divine revelation is the real "miracle" of which the Bible speaks. And the so-called "miracles",

<sup>1</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics*, II, pp. 160 f.

those of the Old Testament and those of the New, are only the "accompaniment" of this one miracle of revelation, the miracle of the Coming of God to man.<sup>1</sup>

All these writers are anxious to find a place for God's activity in an ordered universe. And they do this, by contending, as Barth says, that 'we cannot hypostasise the concept of law'.<sup>2</sup> They reject any idea of miracles being an interference with the laws of nature in the Humean sense; at the same time they see the theological significance of God's miraculous action in the universe.

It is, however, this religious purpose of what is called a miracle which is the main stress of other writers. It is their conviction that miracles cannot ultimately be explained in terms of natural law. This way of treating the subject is not, of course, new, but it is given effective statement by H. H. Farmer.<sup>3</sup> He begins his account by seeking to remove the idea of the miraculous from the sphere of the mechanical. For Farmer a miracle is essentially a revelatory event; an event, that is, in which and through which a man becomes aware of God as active towards him. In a miracle God meets us both as absolute demand and final succour. Farmer sees a miracle as bringing with it an awareness of the supernatural; of God as active will operative within events. This means for Farmer that the wonder and awe evoked by the miraculous event is not due to its cataclastic accompaniments but to the sense of the 'numinous', the awareness of the presence of God. It is in God's approach to the soul that we have the true explanation of the 'arrestingness and inscrutability' of the revelatory event.

Farmer declares categorically that this understanding of miracles removes from us the necessity of seeking for them intellectual proof. For, since they are revelatory events, the discovery therein of God speaking personally cannot be definable in terms of, nor dependent on, our knowledge of natural processes and relationships. The upshot of this is the assertion that 'each man's miracle and revelation must be his own'.

Farmer is not content, however, to leave the matter there. All revelation discloses God, but it is not therefore all miracle. It is when God comes redemptively in the revelation that we have a miracle. And more specifically when God's succour is felt as something intensely personal and individual that the word miracle becomes more inevitable

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. pp. 166-167.

<sup>2</sup> K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III, 3, 129.

<sup>3</sup> H. H. Farmer, *The World and God*, Chapters, vii, ix, x.

and appropriate on the lips of the religious man. Farmer underscores his conviction that miraculous events take place through the initiative of God; and that they happen, so to speak, in the world of ordered nature. This does not mean, however, that they sever the causal nexus. Here Farmer finds relief in the modern view which regards the true nature of scientific generalisations as statements of how the phenomenal world does work, not specifications of how the real world must. Farmer regards God as immanent within His world and able to take up every new event into His total workings.

There are many serious problems left question-begging in this account which we cannot follow through here.<sup>1</sup> The one which needs notice here is this;—that Farmer seems to have robbed miracles of real objectivity and reduced them to the subjective personal judgments of the individual concerned in the divine-human encounter through the revelatory event. In this way he can assert they have no proof: but it is not quite so easy to silence the demand that they should be subject to the processes of reflective examination and comparison before they can be accepted as authentic.

This deficiency in Farmer, H. D. Lewis has sought to remedy. He claims that to define a miracle as a supernatural or religious event is too wide.<sup>2</sup> He is emphatic, of course, that a miracle must involve some reference to a religious factor in the determination of events if we are to keep at all to its normal use and association. There must, however, be something more specific than this. This, 'something further' according to Lewis, which sets miracles apart from other events, is that there should be some deviation from the normal course which events would have taken due to some religious factor and yet other than the process of revelation itself and the effect this naturally has on other events.<sup>3</sup>

There is a good deal to commend itself in Lewis's assimilating of a miracle with religious experience. But the question left to be asked is, Is the criterion of deviation from the normal course of events sufficient? After all, who is the judge of this? And in what sense is the deviation to be understood in relation to the normal course of events? But, perhaps, the most serious difficulty is the failure to refer the 'deviation'

<sup>1</sup> See, 'The Conception of the Miraculous and its Place in Christian Belief', P. J. Mitchell, An Unpublished Thesis for the M.Th., Degree, University of London, 1962, for an effective detailed criticism of the views of Farmer and Ramsey.

<sup>2</sup> H. D. Lewis, 'Miracles and Prayer', in *Our Experience of God* (1958), p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 240.

to, or to declare it to be, a direct act of God. By a miracle we do not mean some abnormal event which inspires a religious response.

It is, perhaps, high time we came to something more positive by way of miracle theory on our own account. This we begin by stressing that we regard a miracle as an activity of God, an event in which He is seen to be working in a special way. For the one who believes in the existence of a personal and moral God the issue is clear. The possibility and actuality of miracles derive from that conviction. When adequate account is taken of the testimony of man's moral consciousness, and when full regard is given to that testimony for the moral nature of God, then it will seem most fitting that God should make miraculous interpositions into the natural order for the sake of the moral beings who stand in need of His grace and help. It is indeed the very essence of the Christian world-view that God, as personal and free Spirit, has a moral end in view and that it is His holy, and, therefore, not helpless, purpose to bless men. This involves, for the believer, the conviction that the unity of nature, far from being a system of physical causes and effects, is a free system of divine ends. The reality of miracles finds confirmation in the Christian's own experience of God in Christ. He has become aware of a supernatural power in his own life and it is on this basis that he can go on to accept the recorded miracles of the Scripture which has assured that experience. They have significance for him because they are woven into that revelation which has meaning for his own life.

On the side of cognition, the man who has entered into a living awareness of God as ethical personality cannot but confidently assert the existence of a supernatural order. There is no doubt about the fact that there is ambiguity attached to the term 'supernatural', as, indeed, there is to its cognate one 'natural'. There is a genuine sense in which it can be said that all God does is 'natural' to Him. All that He does is in accordance with some method and is in harmony with His own nature, and must, therefore, be part of the wider rational system of His action. Yet we cannot discard the word 'supernatural', however right it is to insist that all God's activities are normal, rational and intelligible. There are still activities of God outside that 'natural' order, which are 'unusual', and it is these activities that we refer to as 'supernatural' and 'miraculous'.

We would define a miracle as an event in which God, by His immediate agency, departs from His ordinary method of acting; although appealing to the senses it is performed for a religious purpose; and is

of such a nature that there is no violation of causal laws, and yet, the total laws of nature, if they were fully known, would be unable to account for it.

This definition calls for several comments. To begin with, What is meant by saying that a miracle is performed for a religious purpose? Wendland has made the emphatic declaration that 'no miracles are ever experienced by unbelievers'.<sup>1</sup> He goes on to insist that it is in the context of religious experience that their independent, unique and real significance is to be found. It is faith which sees God working and hears Him speaking in any event. The 'mirabile' of the 'miraculum' has significance for the religious life only.

It is without doubt a fact that apart from this subjective personal faith there is no such thing as religious knowledge or perception of the divine working. The New Testament gives us warrant for this stress on the religious significance of the event designated a miracle. The miracle is no arbitrary act of God, no stunning and silencing wonder. A miracle is a sign wrought to express some spiritual reality.

It is, of course, perfectly true, as W. N. Whitehead has said, that 'every event on its finer side introduces God into the world'<sup>2</sup> But, none the less, it must be emphasised that a miracle is not a mere religious reading of every event. It is the religious reading of an event which is itself unique, and which would still be unique however read. In other words, the objective reality of the event as resulting from God's act must be maintained.

R. G. Collingwood denies outright the point for which we are here contending. The meaning and purpose of a miracle is lost, he claims, 'if we regard it as unique and exclusive'.<sup>3</sup> Miracles are, it appears, the religious reading of events, and as such are 'a standing testimony to the deadness and falsity of our materialistic dogmas'.<sup>4</sup> He thus urges, 'To the religious person it is surely true to say that nothing exists that is not miraculous. And if by miracle he means an act of God realised as such, he is surely justified in finding miracles everywhere'.<sup>5</sup> This however is what the religious person does only in a general way and by a loose use of the concept miracle. He still regards only that a miracle in the proper connotation of the term which is in fact 'unique and exclusive'. A miracle is an immediate act of God of a special kind

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Wendland, *Miracles and Christianity*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> W. N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making* (1926), pp. 155-156.

<sup>3</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *Religion and Philosophy*, p. 214.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 210.

produced for a religious intent; but that is not rightly termed a miracle which is merely a religious appreciation of every event.

What is intended by referring to a miracle as an immediate act of God in which He departs from the ordinary course of nature? There are those who would object to this statement and argue that a miracle belongs to a higher order of nature and is, therefore, only indirectly to be regarded as a work of God. This higher order may be either completely unknown or partly understood. This appeal to the operation of an unknown law or laws is often made so as to leave the so-called miraculous event still in the realm of nature. But this appeal to the unknown, while it does give a certain amount of deference to the notion of ruling laws, is obviously a conjectural device to make the idea of miracles less offensive to the scientifically-minded. This accommodation of the idea of miracle to the notion of law really robs the whole concept of its essential miraculous meaning. The extraordinary event which happens through the intermittent action of some unknown physical law, far from indicating the presence of divine causality, may be believed in by an atheist, provided only he is satisfied that the alleged law has a place in *rerum natura*. It does not call for any special act of God, any more than the sudden appearance of a comet or a meteor within the terrestrial orbit. Here, too, is an instance of an intersection between the wider outer circle of the unknown physical law and the narrow inner circle with which we are conversant.

The case is no better if the miracle is conceived to be the result of obscure physical activity with which we are only partially acquainted. This idea does not really dispense with the divine working; it merely pushes it back into the origination of the system. All miracles may have a natural side; but even if this be true the argument for miracles is no whit weakened, for still a miracle would evidence the extraordinary work of God as immanent. When once this vital reality of a genuine theistic faith is appreciated, this close action and reaction between God as living and personal and His own world, then miracles become at once possible events. The immanent God can impart to His world new impulses which, once originated by His immediate presence, take their place in the cosmic organism and become subject to its laws. But although these impulses arise from within, they have their origin and operation, not from the finite mechanism itself, but from the immanent God. God does not, after all, run in a rut. Unlike Ixion at his wheel, God is not bound hopelessly to the process. He is not incapable of making some unique and dramatic manifestations of

His power. Such new demonstrations are possible because God has not exhausted Himself. It is precisely for the reason that God is not far away that miracles are possible. He is at hand to meet the needs which may be demanded by His moral universe. Miracles and answers to prayer are possible for the reason that they are objects for which the universe is built. In a dynamic universe, of which the living and personal God is the inner core of its energy, results brought about by the immediate action of God cannot be ruled out. The simple fact is that since God is assured by religious faith to be living and personal, and not a mere force or the sum of cosmic processes, miracles *are* possible. They need not be regarded as spelling out 'monster' as Emerson said, but rather as bearing witness to other aspects of the divine character otherwise unknown or unrecognised.

Nor must it be allowed that God is excluded from His universe because of the evidence of uniformity in nature. Were there no settled order there could be no miracle. Miracles presuppose law; and their importance is proof of the recognition of the existence of law. But uniformity is not mechanism: therein lies the error of those who oppose the possibility of miracles on the score of this equation. Nature is a vaster realm of life and meaning, of which human existence is a part, and of which the final unity is to be found in the life of God. Nature's ways may be thought of as 'habits of will'; and its regularities as the regularities of freedom. When, therefore, as William James urges upon us, we rid ourselves of the mechanical and impersonal view of the ultimate, and substitute the personal, then we are seeing things in their truer perspective. The realities of everyday experience, the free activities of thought, choice and love, for example, show plainly that there is much that cannot be brought under the dominion of law. Such realities take place constantly in a uniform world and they cannot be said to violate the order of nature.

Man can act freely in an ordered world. He can bring about results by the operation of his volition which would not have taken place without his willing. It cannot be thought a thing impossible with God, who is the source and the cause of that voluntary ability in man, to act immediately in and to work directly on that system of nature which He has Himself created and now sustains.

A disordered universe is something which we would find repugnant. And it is our conviction that the disorderly world which we cannot endure to believe in is the disorderly world God has not endured to create. Important, however, as it is to have an orderly world, it is

possible for the idea of uniformity to so dominate our minds without rival that we come to believe that this is the full truth about the universe. The notion is then entertained that all that exists is nature conceived to be a great mindless system of interlocking events. But if naturalism is the final truth, then there would be no reason to trust our conviction that nature is uniform. If nature is all, then the question arises, however did we come to believe that there was anything else? This is a problem which the opponents of supernaturalism do not find it easy to answer. The evidences that there are 'rifts' in nature would appear to be overwhelming. But these 'rifts' do not mean that there are breaks in the causal connections. God, however, is not to be thought of as wholly outside the system of nature and here and there, so to speak, stabbing into it by what we call miracles.

Extraordinary, God's miraculous acts may be, but it is not true that they are arbitrary. And it is false to suppose that miracles require on God's part any greater exercise of power than does His providential upholding of the ordinary processes of nature. For a God who is omnipotent such conceptions as more and less have no meaning. The fundamental question is not one of His power but of the moral purpose for which He brings them to pass. The fact is that miracles give evidence of God's gracious restraint as much as they do of His sovereign power. They can be often seen as a check upon His judgements. Miracles are God's unusual methods adopted for His ultimate purpose of the redemption of mankind.

All the miraculous acts of God find their significance and their reality, in 'The Grand Miracle' of God's Incarnation in Christ. 'Every other miracle prepares for this, exhibits this, or results from this. Just as every natural event is the manifestation at a particular place and moment of Nature's total character, so every particular Christian miracle manifests at a particular place and moment the character and significance of the Incarnation. There is no question in Christianity of arbitrary interferences just scattered about. It relates not to a series of disconnected raids on Nature but the various steps of a strategically coherent invasion—an invasion which intends complete conquest and "occupation". The fitness, and therefore credibility, of the particular miracles depend on their relation to the Grand Miracle; all discussion of them in isolation from it is futile.'<sup>1</sup>

But as the Incarnation shows us God's movement into the human situation, so the Cross is God's act within history on behalf of man's

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Lewis, *op. cit.* p. 131.

sinfulness. The man who has had a personal consciousness of sin and a living experience of forgiveness is in the best position to enter upon a study of miracles. Such a one has already an assurance in his own life of an 'intervention' of God into human history which does not in any way abrogate the causal nexus. Christianity, it has been justly claimed, cannot be proved except by a bad conscience. With such a declaration a man who has entered into the living experience of divine grace through the reality of a disturbed conscience, would agree.<sup>1</sup> God's greatest act is to be seen in His inbreaking in restoring grace into human lives; an inbreaking in which He does not disturb the connections of nature. And since the natural and the moral cannot be 'sundered as with an axe', God's miraculous activities in nature, for which He has a moral purpose, likewise do not interfere with the cosmic arrangements.

In the end it is by a miracle we are redeemed into an understanding of the miraculous. It is only the one who has experienced a miracle who can believe in a miracle.

<sup>1</sup> He who has a disturbed conscience, it is said, carries a bell about with him: *Eheu quis intus scorpia!* but, *tranquillus Deus, tranquillat omnia!*

E. M. BLAIKLOCK, LITT.D.

## The Areopagus Address <sup>1</sup>

It is a little over nineteen centuries this summer since Luke the physician wrote in brief and competent Greek the story of an adventure in Athens. The narrative contains the compact outline of a speech made by the writer's friend Paul, the Jew of Tarsus, before the Court of Areopagus. It may be read today, in exquisite Greek lettering, on an oblong bronze plaque set in the rocky face of the worn outcrop of stone beneath the commanding mass of the Acropolis. The Athenians called the rock mound the Hill of Ares, or the Areopagus.

The story is found in the Seventeenth Chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*. Simply translated, it runs thus:

While Paul was waiting for his friends in Athens, he was deeply stirred to see the city given over to idols. And so in the synagogue he debated with the Jews and their adherents, and in the market-place every day with any he chanced to meet. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic Philosophers met him, and some of them said: 'What is the purpose of this picker-up of oddments?' And others said: 'He appears to be a preacher of foreign deities'—for Paul was preaching the Gospel of Jesus and the Resurrection. So they brought him urgently to the Hill of Ares, saying: 'May we know this new teaching of which you speak? For you bring to our hearing matters quite strange to us. And so we want to know what these things mean.' (All the Athenians and the strangers residing there spent their leisure in nothing else but talking and hearing about something new.) . . . Paul stood in the middle of the Hill of Ares and said: 'Athenians, I observe that in every way you are uncommonly religious, for going about and looking at the objects of your worship, I even found an altar on which was inscribed TO THE UNKNOWN GOD! That which you worship, therefore, in ignorance, I am making known to you. God who made the universe and all that it contains, He, the Lord from all time of the heavens and the earth, does not dwell in temples which hands have made, nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed something, giving, as He does to all, life, and

<sup>1</sup> The Third Rendle Short Memorial Lecture. Sponsored by The Bristol Library for Biblical Research. Delivered in the Royal Fort by kind permission of the University of Bristol on 5 June 1964.

breath, and everything. And He made of one blood every race of men, causing them to dwell upon all the face of the earth, marking out from their boundaries in time, and their place of habitation, and prompting them to seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and discover Him, though indeed He is not far from any one of us. For in Him we live, and move, and indeed, exist, as some of your own Stoic poets have said: "For we are also His offspring." Being therefore, by the nature of things, God's offspring, we ought not to think that the Divine is like gold, or silver, or stone, carved work of man's devising. Well, then, the times of ignorance God overlooked, but now calls on all men everywhere to repent because He has set a day in which He purposes to judge the world in righteousness, by the Man Whom He has appointed, giving assurance to all men by raising Him from the dead.' Having heard of a resurrection of the dead, some scoffed. Others said: 'We shall hear you again about this.' So Paul came out from their company. But some men remained with him and believed. Among whom was Dionysius, a member of the Court of the Hill of Ares, a woman named Damaris, and others along with them.<sup>1</sup>

The circumstances merit an effort of the imagination. Paul had come alone to the great city, somewhat troubled and anxious. Northern Greece, his first encounter with Europe, had seen stormy experience, and in Athens, suffering some reaction, Paul was a prey to that sharp loneliness felt by sensitive spirits amid an alien throng, and in an environment which disturbs and repels. And it seems clear that Athens did appear to Paul of Tarsus, for all his deep understanding of the Greeks, a hostile and uncongenial place in the summer of A.D. 50.

The reasons are not far to seek. Those who view with wonder the magnificence of Athens' ruined heart today, are without the Jew's deep loathing of idolatry. The modern visitor who climbs the steps through the Propylaea, and sees the breath-taking majesty of the shattered Parthenon, mellow in its golden marble, superbly placed, has no thought of Athene, who once stood in the dim interior, the object of man's devotion. He may trace the base of another colossal image of Athens' patron goddess in the precinct. It stood with spear upraised so high that sailors off Sunion caught the sun's glint on its point from forty miles away. When the blond Goths intruded at the beginning of the dark fifth century after Christ, they scattered in wild flight at the

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xvii. 16-34. Trans. E. M. Blaiklock.

first sight of the image. The modern visitor standing on the flat foundation regrets the destruction of a great statue. The reverence of the Athenian, the terror of the Goth, the repugnance of the Jew for blasphemy in bronze and stone, mean nothing to him.

Perhaps the Christian can still touch the edge of that deep sensation only in the revolting presence of the phallic image. Some fragments, vast and intricately carved on Delos, reveal the gross mingling of carnality and religion which stirred the wrath of the Hebrew prophets, and which evoke a Christian disgust. The sculptured sensualities of some Eastern temples stir the same nausea. Athens must have had examples enough of this baser use of Greek art. Athene Promachos and the Wingless Victory were not its only creations. There were the crude herms of every common street, and if evidence is needed to prove that these rough cult images were something more than decoration, there is the *cause célèbre* which their wanton desecration once provoked, a serious crisis in Athenian political and judicial history.<sup>1</sup> So real was idolatry.

Another reason for Paul's disturbance of spirit is more elusive. Perhaps he caught the atmosphere of Athens' decadence. There is no exhilaration in the twilight of a great culture. Luke, often a master of brief irony,<sup>2</sup> felt the shallow artificiality of the place. 'All the Athenians, and strangers residing there,' he wrote, 'spent their leisure in nothing else but talking and hearing about something new.' To this cult of curiosity had the old Greek sense of wonder deteriorated. Even in the great creative days, Athenian curiosity had shown its shabbier side in a manner which infuriated orators as diverse as the crude Cleon and the patriot Demosthenes. 'You are spectators in displays of oratory', shouted the former in 427 B.C.,<sup>3</sup> 'and listeners to the tales of others' doings.' Half a century later, the great Demosthenes, striving in vain to awaken a declining people to the menace of that oddly Hitler-like person, Philip the Second of Macedon, asked ironically: 'Do you like walking about and asking one another: Is there any news? Why, could there be greater news than a man of Macedon subduing Athenians, and directing the affairs of Greece?'<sup>4</sup> 'Is there any news?' Demosthenes' adjective is the very one used by Luke in the comment quoted—'some new thing'.

The great orator's scorn was four centuries old when Paul came to Athens. Decadence, indeed, had been sharp and swift from the high

<sup>1</sup> Thuc. vi. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Thuc. iii. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Acts, xix. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. i. 43.

days of the fifth century. The fearful tension of the Thirty Years' War with Sparta which closed the Golden Age, whose effects were so terribly diagnosed by Thucydides,<sup>1</sup> was the major cause of decline. The judicial murder of Socrates was one of the first symptoms. Plato's stern authoritarianism was a reaction. So were the philosophies of escape and resistance of a century later, the doctrines of Epicurus and the Stoics.

But strangely, the city still lived on the brief glory of the astonishing fifth century. Athens does still. The modern philhellene peoples the agora with the Greeks of Pericles, not with those of Luke, or even of Epicurus and Demosthenes. The voice of that short noontide of confidence, achievement, and endeavour comes too loud and clear. The Parthenon, and the fragments of the magnificence which surrounded it, set proudly on the incomparable platform of the Acropolis, still speak in lasting stone of a generation aflame with the memory of a mighty victory over mortal peril from Asia, of a people which saw nothing too difficult for their creating. Pen, too, vied with chisel to create memorials of a burst of high endeavour which left a mark on history, for a Golden Age is inevitably one when artist and people know no division, when literature is a nation's voice, and art its truest awareness. Here are the Athenians of that day's passionate patriotism, caught in a chorus from Euripides' *Medea*<sup>2</sup>:

*The sons of Erechtheus the olden  
Whom high gods planted of yore,  
In an old land of heaven upholden,  
A proud land untrodden of war.  
They are hungered and, lo, their desire,  
With wisdom is fed as with meat,  
In their skies is a shining of fire  
And joy in the fall of their feet.  
And thither with manifold dowers  
From the north, from the hills, from the morn,  
The muses gathered their powers  
That a child of the Nine should be born.  
And Harmony, sown as the flowers,  
Grew gold in the acres of corn.*

The Golden Age had no afternoon, 'Men build their empire', writes D. L. Page 'out of poverty and hardship; then rest awhile to enjoy their comfort and security; later, since peace and plenty breed satiety, a

<sup>1</sup> Thuc. iii. 82, 83.

<sup>2</sup> *Medea*, 824-5.

generation which has not toiled demands repose no longer, convention and comfort recreate the restless and the critical, decline or change comes quickly. The tragic difference of Athens was that she omitted the intermediate phase. She climbed to the peak of her mountain and rushed straight down without stopping to enjoy the prospect. Athens had no Victorian age.<sup>1</sup> Its achievements, to be sure, lived on to daunt and to inspire, while its taste, its thought, its spirit found some form of interpretation and expression in the Hellenism which spread through the world in Alexander's wake, and coloured the thinking of men like Stephen and Paul. The Silver Age of literature and art which took shape at Alexandria was its by-product, and to that era and its real achievement the literature of Rome owed much. The world at large recognised all this. Hence the amazing success with which another Athens lived on its vanished past. Conquerors spared it for no other reason. Under Rome Athens was a 'free city', and this was more than 'the contemptuous boon of an unfettered loquacity', as Dean Farrar put it in a purple passage.<sup>2</sup> Hadrian's adornment of the city reveals the genuine love and admiration her reputation could still inspire in men of another race. 'Captive Greece', as Horace put it, could still 'take captive her fierce conqueror.'

Of 'unfettered loquacity' there was, of course, enough and to spare, and any reincarnated Aristophanes, abroad in a modern University city, or indeed in the Church might make a sardonic retort to the Dean. But Paul had small regard for such shallow culture. His sturdy faith could be pungently contemptuous of aimless philosophies.<sup>3</sup> His shrewd mind must have noted the speculation for speculation's sake, and the glib talk for the sake of talking, the old vice of sophistry which Aristophanes and Plato had flayed, turned then, as never before, cynically to profit. He must have observed the commercialisation of knowledge and culture, the horde who lived by wits and words, in short, all the sham, the artificiality, the dishonesty, and empty pride of a city living on its past, its ghosts, and its relics. The encounter was no joyous experience to a Jew of Tarsus ardent for truth.

It was disturbing, too, to be taken for yet another fortune-seeker, eager to sell his doctrine. 'What', they asked, observing his Socratic activities in the agora, 'does this "seed-picker" want?' The word was Athenian slang. It was used by Aristophanes in his uproarious comedy *The Birds*<sup>4</sup> to signify the busy winged things of the meadows, snapping

<sup>1</sup> Intro. Euripides' *Medea*, ix.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Work of Saint Paul*, ed. 1884, ch. xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> Col. ii. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Birds*, 233, 580.

up the chance fallen seed, the pert sparrows and finches of the furrows. In Athenian vernacular it came to mean the sophistic picker-up of scraps of learning, the liver on his words and wits, a 'babbler' only in the sense that such charlatans were compelled to talk long and persuasively to conceal the second-hand, second-rate quality of their doctrine. The word is an authentic echo of the crowded agora, where Paul, conforming easily to Athenian tradition as old as Socrates, met the inquisitive quick-tongued populace, joined in the animated discussion which was the habit and manner of their market-place, and attracted the attention of the Stoics and Epicureans.

Hence a polite summons to appear before the Court of the Areopagus which the philosophers of both schools seem to have controlled. They were rivals for the attention of their day, for the Greek lacked somewhat the Roman penchant for eclecticism which enabled urbane folk like Horace to be Stoic and Epicurean at one and the same time. Within a mile of the agora were the Gardens of Epicurus. The Stoa Poikile, from which the Stoics took their name, closed the end of the market-place. Paul was in the ancient centre and capital city of both philosophies, four centuries after their first foundation. At Athens both were professed with academic exclusiveness.

Both Epicureanism and Stoicism had been the response of a stricken generation to a world grown harsh and hostile with the passing of an era. Zeno of Citium, founder of the Stoic school, lived from 340 to 260 B.C. Epicurus' dates almost exactly coincide. They are 342 to 270 B.C. It was, in Toynbee's phrase, the Hellenic Time of Troubles.<sup>1</sup> The Greek states had become the protectorates of Macedon. Liberty, abused everywhere when the city-states enjoyed it, was lost under foreign autocracy. Unity, elusive or scorned when it could have been found by free-will and a common purpose, had been imposed rough-handedly by the half-barbarous kingdom of the north. Stoicism and Epicureanism were a spiritual reaction and response. Each in its own way, the two systems sought to fortify souls in torment at the spectacle of political breakdown, and provide code and dogma in a sombre age of tension.

To understand Paul's address it is necessary to look a little more closely at the two philosophic systems followed by his audience. It must have been about the year 320 B.C. when Epicurus, the son of a schoolmaster of Samos, discovered the atomic theory of Democritus of Abdera. Atoms, Democritus taught, small indivisible particles variously shaped,

<sup>1</sup> *Study of History*, i. 53, 89.

form the universe. Plunging through the void with velocities proportioned to their size, these fundamental particles clash with one another forming, in this fashion, coherent groups. The world and all that is in it is thus made. Chance alone rules, and infinite time, with the infinite variations, congregation, and cohesion of the basic material, has produced things animate and inanimate.

It was materialism thorough and absolute. The soul and mind, according to Democritus, was atomic in structure, atoms round and mobile, and infinitely subtle. Sight, hearing, taste, were the impinging of atoms on the senses, themselves material in composition and structure. Hence in the midst of a virtual atheism, Epicurus' need to admit the existence of deities. In dreams and visions of the night such beings became part of human consciousness, and, caught by his own system, Epicurus could only explain such mental phenomena by his theory of vision. Films of atoms, given off by tangible realities, however subtle, formed the stuff of dreams.

But he denied that such contacts with another order of being implied a theology of involvement. The gods cared nothing for man. As Tennyson puts it in the choric song of *The Lotus Eaters*,

*. . . they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd  
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd  
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:  
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,  
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying  
hands.  
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song  
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong . . .*

Behind such physical doctrine lay Epicurus' passionate quest for peace of mind. He saw religion, the hope or fear of survival, the expectation of judgment, a power which punished, cared or interfered, as disturbance for the soul, and a poison of its peace. Let man seek only happiness, and happiness, in a world so material, could only be pleasure.

Hence the inevitable betrayal of Epicurus by human nature. The word 'epicurean' suggests to modern ears a selfish seeker after creature comfort. An 'epicure' is, in its better meaning, one who cultivates a fine taste at the table, at its nether end, a mere glutton. The elegant Petronius, or the Horace of more than one ode, are to the casual student of antiquity, the 'epicureans' of the past rather than the good master

himself, who was something of a saint, and far from carnal. For such misunderstanding the system must bear its share of blame. Pleasure is too subjective a word, too charged with the experience of sense, easily to bear a philosophic meaning.

Epicureanism was, therefore, rapidly corrupted by those who sought a philosophic cloak for self-indulgence. The speech of Cicero against Piso, an oration which, in point of fact, does the great orator little credit, contains a good illustration. A Greek told Piso of a philosophy which enthroned pleasure as the highest good. 'A truly dangerous word', says Cicero, 'for a young man not notable for his intelligence'.<sup>1</sup> Piso laid hold of such information avidly. 'He neighed at the word,' says Cicero. The Greek tried to explain what Epicurus meant by pleasure, but Piso had his dogma and was in no mood to have it watered down, and as for the Greek, who was he to differ too vehemently from a magistrate of Rome?

Such misapprehension was inevitable. The shrewd Roman Fabricius saw its significance while Epicurus was still alive. The story goes that Pyrrhus' ambassador told the Romans of the philosopher in 282 B.C., and the Roman consul displayed a shrewd knowledge of human nature when he expressed the hope that Epicurus would win many converts among the Samnites, indeed among all the enemies of Rome. The yoke in fact was too easy, but this is the limit of Epicurus' blame. The master, rightly understood, exalted virtue as true pleasure's prerequisite, and pointed the way to peace, not debauchery. Seneca, who had no brief for him, wrote: 'I dare to state, in the face of the opinions of some, that the ethics of Epicurus are sane, upright, even austere, for the man who penetrates their depth.'<sup>2</sup>

The true sage, Epicurus taught, curbed passion, scorned excess, lust, ambition, for all have aftermath of pain. He narrowed desire, that disappointment, anxiety, apprehension, desire's by products, might not ruffle his calm, sought health, quietness, simplicity, for all are part of the unseen unenvied way, pursued, in short, a species of quietism, without much doctrine save the view of physics on which so much depended, and without mystery or complication. Virile souls may have turned more readily to Stoicism. The timid of a disillusioned age found more obvious escape in Epicureanism.

There is no means of knowing the colour or temper of the Epicureanism held by the philosophers of Paul's audience. They were academic types, sound, no doubt, in doctrine, virtual atheists in consequence,

<sup>1</sup> *In Pisonem*, xxviii.

<sup>2</sup> *De vita beata*, 14.

contemptuous of all belief in divine care for human virtue, human sin, or human life at large. Josephus, who described the Epicureans as the Sadducees of the Athenian philosophic world, probably touched the truth. The worldly Jewish sect, holding doctrine lightly, and denying another life, the resurrection and the judgment, were not dissimilar in outlook. Significantly, Paul disregarded both groups in two notable addresses.<sup>1</sup> It is idle to speak to those with whom there is no point of contact, no overlap of experience. Paul chose to speak rather to the Pharisees in Jerusalem, and to the Stoics of his Athenian audience. Those committed to Epicurus, or to what men had made of Epicurus, were not open to his argument.

Paul must have known much of Stoicism. Zeno, the founder of the school, came from Paul's corner of the Mediterranean, Citium in Cyprus. A second Zeno, who was head of the school in 204 B.C., actually came from Tarsus. He it was who gave Stoicism the practical turn which so attracted the intelligent Roman. Aratus, scientist and poet, who is quoted by Paul in the speech before the Areopagus, was a Stoic of the first vintage, born at Soli in Cilicia, and converted to Stoicism a few yards from where Paul spoke. Cleanthes, whose hymn to Zeus also uses the words of Paul's quotation, was a man of Assos in Asia Minor. As second head of the school, he infused a deeply religious element into Stoicism.

Zeno, first founder of the Stoic school and, it appears, a Semite, came to Athens about the year 320 B.C., at the very time when Epicurus was finding delight and relief in the atomic theory of Democritus in Colophon across the Aegean. Two questions confronted Zeno, as they confront all seekers after truth—what to believe, and how to live. Those questions have never been dissociated. It has already been shown how Epicurus answered them, and the heresy which emerged. Zeno's answers were more noble and exacting.

Nothing but goodness is good, he averred. Rank, riches, health, race, pleasure are incidentals. Epicurus might argue that pleasure is good, and find the bulk of the world to support him. But does history ever praise a man because he was happy, healthy, long-lived, or rich? No. What lives in memory is a man's goodness, virtue, heroism. The verdict of history is obviously groping after some form of ultimate justice. A man, therefore, if he realises, possesses all good in his person. What matters is what he is, not what he has or what happens to him. No earthly power can make a man bad outside his own will. It can rob him of freedom,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Acts, xxiii. 6.

health, possessions but not of goodness. Why then fear, when, fundamentally, a man is free, safe, inviolate?

And what is goodness? A good day, a good knife, a good ship is one which fulfils its proper function well. A good man is one who fulfils his human function well. And what do we mean by 'well'? To answer this question Stoicism pointed to the conception of 'phusis', 'the process of growth' if one may hazard a translation. All things visible are moving to an end, a perfection, the seed towards the plant, the young to adulthood, the disorganised society towards the city-state. 'Phusis' is the force which promotes the process, a thrust, a drive towards the complete, the good. To live well, then, is to live 'according to "phusis"', in alliance, that is, and conformity with the great life force which pervades like a soul all Creation, making a 'cosmos', or an order out of it, and infusing it all with purpose.

From this concept emerged the Stoic conception of God, hardly a personal God, but not unlike the 'Ultimate Reality' imagined by some post-Christian theologians. It is pantheism in a broad sense, because if God is 'phusis', and 'phusis' cannot be understood or conceived apart from that which it indwells and interfuses, so God is Everything. The universe is a living whole, filled and animated by one soul. But if to live 'according to "phusis"' is to fulfil 'the will of God', how, the objection arises, can anyone do other than the will of God, if God is all? The Stoic avoided this Calvinist dilemma by answering that God is indeed in all, save in the doings of bad men, for man is free. Man's soul is part of the divine fire, and so partakes of the freedom of God Himself. Men can co-operate or rebel, though rebellion, in the nature of things, spells disaster. At this point a personal God is perilously near emerging, and no doubt in their human variety of religious experience many a Stoic thought of communion with God in deeply personal terms.

A way of life manifestly follows. The Labours of Hercules become a Stoic myth for the toilsome living of a servant of mankind. Stoic emperors like Trajan, Hadrian, and above all Marcus Aurelius, who toiled for the Empire, were practical exponents of this aspect of Stoicism. The other feature of Stoicism, its scorn of all earthly things apart from goodness, produced that taut defiance of the world, that tight-lipped endurance, and stubborn withdrawal which marked the Stoic opposition under the early Caesars, and which was a feature of Paul's contemporary Rome. In short Stoicism gave men armour in an evil day, and in days of good it urged them on. If its corruption was a philosophic Pharisaism, that was not the fault of the system.

It is easy to see why Paul addressed himself to the Stoics of his audience. He, too, believed in a purpose working to a vast consummation, and the need for man to co-operate with it.<sup>1</sup> He, too, believed that what a man was mattered supremely, and not what he possessed. He, too, sought self-sufficiency and superiority to circumstances.<sup>2</sup> His God, too, was, in Paul's view, transcendent, and beyond the patronage of man. There were points of sympathy and contact, a bridgehead of persuasion.

The address itself must now be considered. The approach was conciliatory and courteous, but perhaps just touched with that irony which was the common fashion of Athenian speech. 'Athenians', said Paul, 'I observe that in every way you are uncommonly religious.' Here was Athenian 'parrhesia' of the first order, tactful yet challenging, polite yet without sacrifice of the speaker's position. 'As I have moved about your city looking at the objects of your worship', Paul continued, 'I came upon an altar inscribed TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.' Thus it must be translated. In the Greek there is noun and adjective only, without either a definite or indefinite article. One or two examples of such inscription survive, but always in the plural, TO UNKNOWN GODS. In the plural, English can avoid a choice. In the singular, choice must be made between the definite and indefinite article. The definite is better, provided the reference and context of the inscription is realised. The inscription in each case refers to the unknown deity concerned with the altar's foundation, not generally or transcendently to a God vaguely realised and sought. Paul adapted the inscription for homiletic ends. He was not deceived about its meaning, but like any perceptive preacher sought an illustration and a point of contact in a known environment. The device captured attention and anchored the theme in experience.

What did the inscription mean? Plato preserves a tradition that Epimenides, the Cretan religious teacher and miracle-worker, was in Athens about 500 B.C. Some said it was 600 B.C., but dates are neither here nor there in a half-legendary situation. The story was that, to combat an epidemic, Epimenides directed the Athenians to loose sheep from Areopagus, and wherever they lay down to build an altar 'to the unknown god' of the place, and to make sacrifice. Perhaps the story is an aetiological myth, a tale invented to explain a visible phenomenon. Perhaps the altars merely represented a scrupulosity which, in a city full of deities from all the Eastern Mediterranean, sought to avoid offence to any in this slightly naïve fashion. It is impossible to say more.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 28; Eph. i. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iv. 11, 12.

It was convenient, however, to Paul's approach, and simple for him to slide from the altar's dedication to the Stoic god who needed nothing from any man. Or was it quite the Stoic God? Not perhaps in the more austere significance of their belief. Paul's Creator was still his own personal God, the great I AM. Indeed he snatches a remembered phrase from a speech which had burned its memory on his brain. It was Stephen, on trial before the Sanhedrin, who had protested in Paul's hearing, that 'God does not dwell in temples made with hands'.

Stephen spoke of Solomon's shrine. Paul quoted the words under the great stone altar of Greece, the Acropolis. Whether he spoke on the traditional site, the lower outcrop of stone below the greater, called the Areopagus or the Hill of Ares, or whether the hearing took place in the Royal Porch in the agora, as others contend, the magnificence of the temples on the height was in full view, the glorious Parthenon, the Erechtheum, and the fairy-light little shrine of the Wingless Victory on its promontory beside the entrance portal. And wherever he deprecated the thought that deity could be set forth in 'gold, silver or stone, carved work of man's devising', the commanding statue of Athene Promachos lifted its bright-tipped spear above him, and the gold and ivory figure of the same Athene listened from the religious light of her sanctuary in the great temple.

Here, indeed, was a mingling of Hebrew notions of deity and Greek, with the Stoic listeners intent, recognising features of their own belief, but sensing something more personal, more urgently involved in the concept their visitor's words were weaving. It was a touch of the pleader's art to quote Cleanthes' hymn to Zeus. The passage runs as follows:

'Thou, Zeus, art praised above all the gods; many are thy names and thine is the power eternally. The origin of the world was from thee: and by law thou rulest over all things. Unto thee may all flesh speak, *for we are thy offspring*. Therefore will I raise a hymn unto thee: and will ever sing of thy might. The whole order of the heavens obeys thy word, as it moves round the earth, small and great luminaries commingled. How great thou art, King above all eternally. Nor is anything done on earth, apart from thee, nor in the firmament, nor in the seas, save that which the wicked do by their own folly. But thine is the skill to set even the crooked straight; what is without shape is shaped and the alien is akin before thee. Thou hast fitted together all things in one, the good and evil together, that thy word should be one in all things abiding eternally. Let folly be dispersed

from our souls, that we may repay the honour we have received of thee. Singing praise of thy works for ever as becometh the sons of men.'

Aratus of Soli, Paul's Cilician countryman, almost a contemporary of Cleanthes, had also used the words. Notice that Paul says 'poets'. This sage wrote a poem called *Phaenomena*, a dull piece, translated by Cicero, and in concept something like Thomson's *Seasons*. Its opening lines run:

'From Zeus let us begin; him do we mortals never leave un-named; full of Zeus are all the streets and all the market-places of men; full is the sea and the havens thereof; always we all have need of Zeus. *For we are also his offspring*; and he in his kindness unto men giveth favourable signs and wakeneth the people to work, reminding them of livelihood. He tells what time the soil is best for the labour of the ox and for the mattock, and what time the seasons are favourable both for the planting of trees and for casting all manner of seeds. For himself it was who set the signs in heaven, and marked out the constellations, and for the year devised what stars chiefly should give to men right signs of the seasons, to the end that all things might grow unfaillingly. Wherefore him do men ever worship first and last. Hail O Father, mighty marvel, mighty blessing unto men.'

The indefatigable tracers of quotation suggest that both Cleanthes and Aratus derived both theme and language from Epimenides, the Cretan already mentioned for his activities in Athens, and from whom Paul quoted an uncomplimentary line against the Cretans in his letter to Titus.<sup>1</sup> No one can be sure. What is significant is Paul's easy use of popular quotation.

Note that he was grappling with the thought of mankind's unity before God which had been his theme of bitter controversy with the Jews. It is a mark of the greatness of his mind that he could contest the same point in another context, in another framework of thought. It was the boast of the Athenians that they had 'sprung from the soil', and though men of Stoic colouring or conviction, like Seneca and Epictetus, had glimpsed the thought of mankind's unity, it was left to Paul, in two racial and religious settings, to give the concept lifting power and application.

Towards God, says Paul, mankind had ever 'groped'. The word he uses would raise echoes in every listening Greek. Homer and Plato were

<sup>1</sup> Titus i. 12.

familiar reading, and every educated man would remember that the verb is used in the *Odyssey*<sup>1</sup> to describe the blinded Cyclops groping for the entrance of his cave, and in the *Phaedo*,<sup>2</sup> Plato's most moving dialogue, for the very search for truth which Paul here envisages on its highest plane, the quest for God. The word, it is true, is used four times in the Septuagint<sup>3</sup> to mean groping in the dark, but Paul must have had familiar Greek contexts in mind. His easy allusiveness is the impressive point.

So far, so good. With astonishing intellectual dexterity, the Jew of Tarsus, the Pharisee of Gamaliel's school, met the cream of Athens' intelligentsia on their familiar ground, discerned shrewdly the portion of the audience open to his argument, and with polished persuasion, in their common speech, put his concept of God before them. With fine audacity he swept the Acropolis of its divine significance, dismissing the magnificence of the grandest Greek art as irrelevant in the search for God. It is Athenian free speech at its boldest, exercised and also tolerated, for the broad-minded acceptance of Paul's argument is as remarkable as his courageous use of it. He spoke appropriately to time and place, and couched his message, as the Church is ever urged, and rightly urged to do, in the thought-forms of the day.

But where Paul's example parts company from the professed efforts of some theologians to follow it, is in the sequel. The message, in the process, must not lose content and tradition. There are those today who profess a search for an elusive God, greater and higher than 'the God of revelation', and who end bewildered with something not unlike the Stoic 'phusis', some ancient pantheism dressed in modern words, an impersonal or scarcely personal Force, created in the image of Tillich, Bultmann, and the Bishop of Woolwich. Paul made no such disastrous mistake, and sought no easy compromise. He met his audience where he could, sought by all means to graft his teaching on to accepted ideas, and to express it in acceptable and comprehensible terms. But he knew that a point of challenge had to come. It came with his introduction of Christ, and the divine authentication of His Person. In the act he lost bulk of his audience. The Epicureans had listened impatiently throughout. They were those who scoffed. The Stoics dismissed him with more polite formality. The true Stoic, the Wise Man of their famous concept, needed no repentance, feared no Day of Judgment, looked for no resurrection or reward.

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* 9. 416.

<sup>2</sup> *Phaedo.*, 99B.

<sup>3</sup> *Deut.* xxviii. 29; *Job.* v. 14; *xii.* 25; *Isa.* lix. 10.

The psychology of such rejection is not far to seek. C. S. Lewis, in his trenchant fashion hits off well. 'We who defend Christianity', he writes, 'find ourselves constantly opposed not by the irreligion of our hearers, but by their real religion. Speak about beauty, truth, and goodness, or about a God who is simply the indwelling principle of these three, speak about a great spiritual force pervading all things, a common mind of which we are all parts, a pool of generalised spirituality to which we can all flow, and you will command friendly interest. But the temperature drops as soon as you mention a God who has purposes and performs particular actions, who does one thing and not another, a concrete, choosing, commanding, prohibiting God with a determinate character. People become embarrassed and angry.'<sup>1</sup>

It was precisely such a concept which formed the climax of Paul's address, indeed inevitably formed that climax for he was preaching Christianity as a final revelation, and Christ as God's full exegesis,<sup>2</sup> a fact forgotten by episcopal and theological proponents of a dechristianised Christianity today. The reaction under the Acropolis was exactly as Lewis describes it in the modern context.

Lewis concludes his chapter: 'An impersonal God—well and good. A subjective God of beauty, truth and goodness, inside our own heads—better still. A formless life force surging through us, a vast power which we can tap—best of all. But God Himself, alive, pulling at the other end of the end of the cord . . . that is quite another matter. . . . There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion ('Man's search for God'!) suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found Him? . . . Worse still, supposing He had found us? So it is a sort of Rubicon. One goes across; or not.'

The audience dispersed. If the function of the Areopagus was the informal or formal investigation of new teachings, they no doubt regarded their function as fulfilled. The newcomer had nothing pernicious to disseminate, only the stock-in-trade of the religious enthusiast the world over, and Athens could absorb such trivialities and survive. One member only of the court crossed the Rubicon, and some of the bystanders, for there was no doubt a listening circle. There normally was on such occasions. Round the Acropolis in modern Athens runs the Street of Dionysius the Areopagite. Paul's convert would have been amazed.

A question of some importance remains. From Athens Paul moved on to Corinth, the cosmopolitan city of two seas. Writing some four

<sup>1</sup> *Miracles*, ch. xi.

<sup>2</sup> i Cor. ii. 2.

years later to the contentious church which he founded there, he remarked upon the studied simplicity of the gospel he had preached among them. Are those right who see in this attitude a repudiation of the intellectual approach which marked the Areopagus address? By no means, even if it be correctly assumed that the argument before the philosophers was commonly pursued in the agora, a reasonable assumption if the sermon at Lystra<sup>1</sup> is evidence. There, too, Paul had a Gentile audience, unversed in Judaism or Old Testament imagery.

The remark to the Corinthians must be seen in the context of the restrained irony which characterises the first four chapters of the epistle. With the shallow intellectualism of the Corinthians, Paul was disposed to waste no time. He was not prepared to give them a Christianity diluted with their pseudo-philosophical ideas, or necessarily expressed in their attenuated terminology. Nor had he been prepared to do that in Athens, as the final confrontation of his address amply demonstrates. His talk was not a failure. Dionysius was a triumph, which any intellectual of Christian conviction might envy among his peers. The whole address remains a model for those who seek in such circles to present the Christian faith, and a warning to those who, in misguided moments, have seen a virtue in crudity, and a loyalty to truth in a disrespect for the views, the habits of thought, and the attitudes of intelligent people who fail in all points to follow them. Confrontation there must be, if the popular word may be used again, but with preamble of courtesy, with the tolerance which is not incompatible with earnestness, and with the sincerest of efforts to see good where good has found a place. But what Paul was to call 'the offence of the cross' remains.

In conclusion a word about the narrator, the physician friend of Paul. The apostle himself had a way of moving to the centre of the stage. Even on the plunging, disabled galley driving into the Malta surf, he emerged in moral control of the situation. In Athens he stands out sharp and clear in three hundred and seventy words of terse narrative, dismissing the Parthenon with a wide sweep of his hand, standing a little stern and sad as both schools streamed away. That picture lies in the word about Dionysius and the few who 'clave to him'. He is an impressive figure, as apt to hold the attention in the record as in real life.

But his friend deserves notice. There are those who owe all to a friendship. In a shady graveyard behind a New Plymouth church there is a mossy stone inscribed 'Charles Armitage Brown, the Friend of

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xiv. 15-17.

Keats'. The pioneer who had known the English poet claimed no other fame. None who had known of Atticus save that he was the friend of Cicero, few of Boswell without Johnson, and what would the fishers of Galilee have been but for Christ who found them? So too with Luke. A friendship, formed first in Troas or Philippi, brought his worth and genius to life.

Luke was a writer of latent power. The poetry of the opening chapters of his Gospel, the unforgettable narratives like that of the Emmaus walk, and the riot in Ephesus, could stand in any anthology of Greek literature. So too with the narrative which has occupied this hour. The speech itself on the bronze plaque pinned to the rock in Athens today contains 193 Greek words. In such brevity Luke gave the sense and feeling of an historic oration, the pattern of its argument, its allusive language and quotation. He caught the spirit of its persuasiveness, and marked the uncompromising nature of its challenge. He made it possible to enter into the hopes and endeavour of the speaker, and to understand the mood of those who listened.

What is inspiration in the sense in which theologians use it? Is it not that state in which loyalty, a faith, a deep conviction so dominates and possesses a personality, that God who is the object of its dedication can infuse the living mind, sharpen thought, and bring to strength, coherence, and expression those powers which might otherwise lack words, unity, or beneficent release? In such mood Luke took Paul's notes, listened in the barrack-cell at Caesarea to all Paul had to say, and wrote down in vigorous and simple language the page of history which we have read. It is fitting we should close with such tribute to the good physician. Of such sort was the other man of medicine and healing whose character and testimony we commemorate in this address—  
Professor A. Rendle Short.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Norm and Action: A Logical Enquiry.* By GEORG HENRIK VON WRIGHT. Routledge & Kegan Paul. Pp. 207. 32s.

This volume has a place in the International Library of Philosophy and Scientific Method of which A. J. Ayer is editor-in-chief. Professor von Wright has made 'Deontic Logic' his special field of study. Appointed Professor of Philosophy in Helsinki in 1946, Professor von Wright held a chair at Cambridge from 1948 to 1951 and was responsible for the Gifford Lectures of 1959 and 1960 where he presented the substance of his thoughts which he had first sketched in an article in *Mind* some years earlier.

In *Norm and Action*, Professor von Wright seeks to apply the techniques of modern logic to the analysis of normative concepts and discourse. This investigation of norms has, under the inspiration of C. D. Broad, become known as 'Deontic Logic'. The word itself comes from the impersonal Greek verb  $\delta\epsilon\iota\upsilon$  which may be translated as 'ought' or 'to be necessary'. von Wright distinguishes several main types of norms. There is, first of all, the *rule-norm*, as of a game. He regards the so-called laws of logic and mathematics as belonging to this category. *Prescriptions*, as items which are given or issued by someone with the purpose of regulating duty, include commands, permissions and prohibitions. Where concern is with means to be used for the sake of attaining a required end, there is the *directive* or *technical* norm. The question is asked concerning the status of moral norms. Are they, for example, rules or prescriptions? von Wright thinks that the view that they are like *rules* of a game is inadequate. But if they are prescriptions, then the question is, *Who* prescribes them? He considers the theonomous, the teleological and the deontological answers; and while he does not pronounce on the first he certainly sees difficulties in the other two.

In his analysis of norms, von Wright distinguishes between ingredients which belong to all, from those which are without common ingredients. *Character*, *content* and *condition of application* form what he calls the *norm-kernel*, or the essential logical structure general to all norm-types. The *character* of a norm has reference to its requirement—whether something ought to or may or must not be done. Norms of the 'ought' character are *obligation* norms; and of the 'must-not' class, *prohibition*-norms. The *content* of the norm has to do with the 'that which' ought to or may or must not be done. Certain *conditions* must obviously be present if the content of a given norm is to be satisfied.

von Wright sees the scope of deontic logic as the formal theory of the norm-kernels. In following through his investigation of obligation, permission and prohibition, he finds it necessary to analyse the ideas of human *action* and *change*. There are many useful suggestions on both these subjects in the sections in which they are discussed. Whether the claim that both topics have received little attention from philosophers can be sustained is another matter. One would have supposed that the concept of change has been a major one in philosophy since the days of Herakleitos down to Bergson. Perhaps von Wright means that the concept had not been given logical analysis; if so, then it may be accepted; for is not this the era of logical analysis? His chapter on

*Act and Ability* seems to add little to what some psychologists have already written, for example, William James, Woodworth and Marquis and others of the 'activist' school. von Wright is, of course, more concerned with the actual meaning of the concepts used.

He draws a distinction between the norm *qua* norm and its formulation. The norm is formulated in language for the purpose of *promulgation*. Language must, however, be taken here in a wide sense, to include not words only but signs and symbols. A traffic-light, for example, can serve as a norm-formulation as can a gesture or a look. The question arises as to how norm-formulations are related to *language* in the narrower sense of the term. There are two grammatical types of sentences which express the norm. There are, on the one hand, sentences in the imperative mood and on the other hand, sentences containing the deontic auxiliary verbs, 'ought', 'may' and 'must not'. All norms can generally be formulated in the imperative mood; yet imperative sentences, although used mainly, are not exclusively wedded to norm-formulations. Prayer petitions, warnings and requests are imperative in form but not in intention. von Wright rejects R. M. Hare's view that ethics is the logical study of the language of imperatives. He thinks that this arises from, or would result in, a theonomous view of morality. He adds, however, that even then it is doubtful whether moral norms can be formulated in the imperative mood. Ethics, von Wright contends, is concerned with values as well as norms, and it is misleading to classify imperatives and value-judgments under the common heading of 'Prescriptive Language'.

von Wright does not regard the deontic sentences as covering the whole range of possible norm-formulations. He asks the question, Are norms true and false? He is emphatic that the notion of true or false does not enter into the subject of the rules-norm. He is uncertain whether the technical-norms are true or false; while he states confidently that prescriptions lack truth-value. He does not discuss the status on moral norms at all. The chapter on *Norms and Existence* is of great importance. Here von Wright comes to the ontological problem. What do we mean when we say that there *is* (exists) a norm to such and such an effect? He deals with this from the side of the commanded subject and the commanding object. He raises the issue of the 'ought' and the 'can', but prefers to deal with the logical problems involved under the three separate words, 'ought', 'entails', 'can'. Several immensely interesting questions are here discussed. There is the 'can do' of ability and the 'can do' of success—to which does the word refer in the 'Ought entails Can'? What of action commanded without the apparent possibility of complying? and so forth. von Wright accepts the 'will-theory' of norms as substantially correct, at least in reference to prescriptions. But the will in question seldom promulgates its norms for its own sake, in an arbitrary manner. There is an ulterior end in view—the subject is made to *do* something because the norm-object wants that same something to *happen*. There is more, therefore, than, so to speak, a mere barren imperative—a cold norm-promulgation. There is a 'Sanction'. There is a threat of punishment for disobedience to the norm. But the existence of a threat of punishment is not in itself a motive for obedience. *Fear* of punishment is. The formulated norm plus the sanction are the requisites from the side of the object. In the last chapter von Wright raises the subject of norms of a higher order.

Taking the work as a whole there is much here of interest and value. It is one of the fruits of recent philosophy to make us aware of language usage. von Wright has shown how some of our confusion is due to sheer ambiguity in sentence structure and how we often take for granted certain results because we have never stopped to examine the logical structure of the statements made.

Throughout the work, however, we have found ourselves putting a question mark beside statements which seem to us to be either too summarily made or unconvincingly argued. The number of times we came across the phrase 'we shall not discuss this here' (sometimes twice on a page) is irritating, to say the least, especially when the question raised seemed so germane to the subject. There is throughout this book an extraordinary blend of the trivial and illuminating. There is so much stress on analysis—the analysis of concepts and the significance of words—that we are left with the impression that here is another language-gamester. We are tempted to exclaim at the end—'so what?' The present reviewer was led to say 'Clarity is not Enough'!

Yet there is, we believe, here the basis for a polemic for religious faith and thought, especially when the will theory of norms is accepted and the implications of norms of a higher order are drawn out.

H. D. McDONALD

*The Bible and Archaeology.* By J. A. THOMPSON, PH.D. Paternoster, 1963. Pp. 468. 30s.

The characters of the Bible are the reverse of Macbeth's 'Poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more'. They still obtrude themselves upon the minds of men while the stage has been swallowed up in time. Gone, too, are the antagonists who mock at Israel's God; Sennacherib's patron is proved as powerless as 'the gods of Hamath and Arpad' whose fate, that king expected, would overtake Jehovah. The curious will wonder what form of worship had these gods, and their servants, what manner of men they were. Yet more questions could be asked about the men who are still remembered for good, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, onwards to Jeremiah and Ezra, into the New Testament for the Apostles. Many of these enquiries can now be answered from the evidence of archaeological discoveries. Dr Thompson has presented the answers simply and clearly and with the authority of practical experience in Palestinian excavation, research, and teaching. This book was originally published as three small volumes in Eerdmans' 'Pathway Series' in America. For the present edition the material has been revised and subsumed as three parts of one book. The whole range of the Old Testament is covered by the first part. Each chapter is divided into headed sections, commencing with the general background of the particular phase. Accordingly, the book begins by briefly discussing the narratives of Creation and the Flood. A short note is given of similarities with the Babylonian stories, but these are not discussed in detail (the photograph of two of the Babylonian tablets is upside down!). The author passes quickly to the Patriarchal age for which there is so much illustrative material. Recapitulation of all the topics resumed is not required here. Those who wish to know should buy the book. Remark may be

made upon the manner of presentation. The author writes in a simple style, a style which can perhaps be claimed to be 'Australian'. This makes for facility of reading in most sections, even the more detailed descriptions and recitation of the obscure history of the inter-testamental period. The headings of the separate sections make for easy reference.

The sections on the inter-testamental period and the New Testament are the most valuable in the book for they cover ground less frequently trodden. Good use is made of the Aramaic papyri from Egypt and of economic texts from Babylon to illustrate the days of the Exile and Return. The story of the misty centuries after Ezra is related and linked to the monuments and other remains of Persian and Hellenistic rule. New discoveries of Aramaic papyri from a cave near Jericho, deposited by refugees from Alexander the Great's attack on Samaria, will provide further substance for these chapters should the book run to a second edition (see F. M. Cross *Biblical Archaeologist*, XXVI (1963), pp. 110-121). The busy background of the gospels is emphasised by studies of various cities under Herodian and Roman rule, while what has been learned about political allusions in Acts and about the churches of the Revelation is also written here. Comments upon the value of Greek papyri for linguistic and social study of the New Testament conclude the book; the scrolls from the Dead Sea coast are studied in an earlier chapter.

The information given is reliable and more or less up-to-date. The author's interpretations are sensible, more cautious than some, admitting of other possibilities in disputed cases. Occasionally there are discrepancies resulting from the coalescence of the three smaller books, and sometimes repetition (e.g. about Goshen, pp. 42, 50; 52, 56), but that is a good method of teaching. There are a number of minor errors, mainly on peripheral matters such as the Babylonian moon-deity Sin who was a god, not a goddess (p. 167), nor is the epithet 'weak' appropriate for King Neriglissar of Babylon, who led a successful campaign to Cilicia (p. 166). On biblical subjects notice that Jehoiakim did not remain loyal to Nebuchadnezzar, thus precipitating the attack of 598-597 B.C. (p. 148, cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 1 ff.); the Moabite Stone was broken and damaged but not destroyed, and its reference to 'the house of Omri' applies to the kingdom of Israel, not to all Palestine (p. 121.) It is doubtful, too, whether the Hittites came from Europe as implied on p. 19; a name in the inscription from a tomb in Siloam is incomplete, it may be Shebna-iah, it could be any other name ending in *iah* (p. 147 caption). Some of the illustrations appear irrelevant, a number are on inappropriate pages, and the maps are scrappy.

This is a general book, concentrating largely on the material discoveries. More might be made of the literary remains from civilisations surrounding the Hebrews. These are the writings among which the Bible finds its closest kin, although their blood is mingled with other strains. A glimpse is given in discussion of the patterns of covenant, a current subject which Dr Thompson has investigated himself, and which illustrates the wide range of possibilities in such fields. Creation, the Flood, history writing, hymns, prayers, Wisdom Literature, all have counterparts to a greater or lesser extent, in Egypt, Syria, Anatolia, and Babylonia. Not only are there similarities of type and theme, the closely related Semitic languages restore lost meanings to obscure Hebrew words, unravel confusions of grammar and illustrate linguistic developments

invisible in the Massoretic Hebrew. Such inscriptions bring a number of problems and other challenges to biblical students, liberal or conservative, tumbling old theories, questioning accepted teachings. Now it is time to search again the manner in which an ancient book was written, what editing was permissible. The place and purpose of myth and aetiology urgently need clarification. These, however, are subjects for another, rather different, book.

Dr Thompson's book contains many salutary reminders of the practical end of the Old Testament 'written for our learning'. It can be recommended as a good introduction to this sideline of Bible study.

A. R. MILLARD

*Evolution: the Modern Synthesis.* By JULIAN HUXLEY. Geo. Allen & Unwin 1963. Pp. 652 + li 42s.

Twenty-one years later than its original appearance a second edition of Professor Julian Huxley's important book on Evolution has recently been published. When it first appeared it was a significant book, and with the incorporation of the results of twenty more years of intensive thought and investigation it has retained its significance. It is probably a just claim that Professor Huxley makes in the preface to the new edition, that the point of view he maintained in 1942 'has gained many new adherents and may now be regarded as the established view', and certainly any reader of Faith and Thought who wished to gain a balanced idea of the position of the majority of present-day leaders in this sphere of biological thought would do well to read this book. He will need a reasonably good grounding in the elements of genetics, but, given that, he will find the task a rewarding one. He will come away with the correct impression that the dominant view among evolutionary biologists today is still that natural selection is the most important mechanism of evolutionary change, and that to this extent Darwinism still reigns supreme; but that with the triumph of the Mendelian theory of heredity some of Darwin's lesser ideas have had to go overboard. Further, Mendelian theory itself has undergone certain important developments, such as the emphasis now placed on the significance of the whole gene-complex of an organism as influencing quite profoundly the expression of any one particular gene; and on the importance of genes which by controlling the rate and onset of developmental processes can produce the sort of results spoken of from a complementary point of view as recapitulation, neoteny and so on. He will gain the impression in all this that Mendelian theory, while it has obliterated some of Darwin's positions, has greatly strengthened his main one (natural selection); and that with the help of gene theory natural selection can now account for many phenomena which previously seemed to require (even to Darwin himself) the assistance of Lamarckism. A similar remark could be made with respect to orthogenesis. Huxley makes it seem likely that both these conceptions will largely disappear.

It is not the object of the reviewer to challenge any of Professor Huxley's specifically biological conclusions. In fact the amazing compass of his knowledge of the facts, and his great skill in marshalling them, would make him a

very difficult man to challenge. It is a salutary experience for the Christian apologist to be made to realise how fantastically complex the biological situation is, and how formidable is the evidence which can be amassed to support the author's position. Had this been realised earlier many of the slick objections to Darwinism would probably never have seen the light, and perhaps we should never have heard the parrot-cry 'Darwinism is dead'. But the author must be challenged, for in spite of his erudition in his own special field he exposes himself at once when he moves from it on the offensive against specifically theological or metaphysical objectives. It is with such sallies, in the broadest sense, that the rest of this review will be concerned.

Let us take a typical example. In a section entitled 'The three aspects of biological fact' Huxley draws attention to the conclusion that every biological fact can be considered under three 'rather distinct aspects': the mechanistic-physiological, the adaptive-functional, and the historical. Each of these 'must be investigated separately by appropriate methods, which may have no relevance to the other aspects'; discoveries in one 'are not decisive or essential with regard to the other two'. 'They represent three separate fields of discourse, which may overlap, but are of fundamentally different natures.' How true this all is! We can agree at once that elucidation of, say, the mechanism of phloem transport or of oxidative phosphorylation has no definitive bearing on the phylogeny of the angiosperms, or of the validity of Darwinism; and this is so because the physiological description has no dimensions in *evolutionary* time and space, the dimensions in which the phylogenetic description moves. Huxley's three aspects bear (at least partially) the relationship of complementarity to one another, and he is justified in concluding therefore that it is illegitimate to use 'data on the course of evolution to make assertions as to its mechanism', and vice versa (though of course in a final synthesis each valid description appears of greater significance in the light of the others).

Now it is a great pity that Professor Huxley does not carry the principle he has grasped so firmly with regard to his 'three aspects' into a wider context. The Bible asserts that biological facts have a more profound aspect still; they are significant *theologically*, and this is pre-eminently true with regard to man. The Bible stands or falls with the validity of this assertion. But Professor Huxley clearly rejects it. On what grounds? 'Modern science must rule out special creation or divine guidance.' Conservative Christians would gladly agree that science rightly excludes theological categories from its own descriptions, on purely logical grounds; but the 'ruling out' of which Huxley speaks one suspects goes much further than this. It hardly seems too much to suggest that Huxley would deny validity to the Biblical categories in any sphere at all, and not merely in that of scientific description. On what grounds then does he do so? On scientific ones, in defiance of his own principle. For if it is illegitimate to regard a discovery in the realm of metabolism as decisive in the controversy as to whether mosses or liverworts came first, it is more illegitimate still (if the expression can be pardoned) to perform the far greater extrapolation of making scientific discovery (still less hypothesis) decisive in assessing a theological viewpoint. Evolution or no evolution therefore, the conservative conviction that the early chapters of Genesis gave Divine authorship can still be maintained, at least in the opinion of the reviewer.

As a matter of fact it is not only orthodox religion that Professor Huxley is opposed to. Bernard Shaw provides another instance of what, in this connection, can only be described as narrowness of outlook. Shaw, in his *Back to Methuselah*, 'says in effect that he dislikes the idea of a blind mechanism such as Natural Selection . . . ergo, such a blind mechanism cannot be operative.' Huxley remarks that this reasoning 'does not commend itself to scientists.' Perhaps not, when the context happens to be a strictly limited one; but what would he say to Hoyle's Perfect Cosmological Principle? Is Professor Hoyle really making himself ridiculous in laboriously building on something which at least at the outset validated itself to him on mainly aesthetic grounds? The fact is that science is not a self-sustaining activity, complete in itself. It leans on other human interests, and never more so than when it approaches its ultimate problems. In cosmology aesthetic considerations may provide a guiding light to the (scientific) truth, and in anthropology (in the widest sense) it is hardly ridiculous to suggest that moral and spiritual considerations may do the same. It is folly to treat with summary contempt arguments arising from deep human intuitions when they touch such ultimate questions as the purposefulness or otherwise of existence.

Perhaps the reviewer should make it plain that he is not arguing that man's deep intuition of a purpose to existence invalidates natural selection, in the way that Huxley appears to argue the converse. He would prefer to maintain rather than it invalidates the claim that natural selection is *exclusively* true; that it establishes at least the co-existence of a complementary aspect of things in which purpose is a very important element. In other words that it validates the Biblical view, while not invalidating the evolutionary. But Huxley, it would seem, will have none of this. In a section of quite naive dogmatism he asserts that the 'purpose manifested in evolution . . . is only an apparent purpose. It is as much a product of blind forces as is the falling of a stone to earth.'<sup>1</sup> 'If we wish to work towards a purpose for the future of man we must formulate that purpose ourselves. Purposes in life are made, not found' (*sic*). This all reads like rather superficial thinking, and this impression is deepened when we find that man's higher mental faculties are merely correlated characters which have made their appearance solely because they happened to be linked with adaptively useful ones.

These comments lead on to a general one about Huxley's position as a whole. While it reveals, on the phenomenal level, wide evidence of painstaking study and profound thought, on the level which underlies phenomena it shows the exact opposite. It is no use saying that there *is* no such level on which questions can be meaningfully asked; how is it that language exists for asking them? The only answer that would seem to emerge from Professor Huxley's book is that the language and the propensity for asking such fantastical things has arisen merely as a 'correlated character' in human evolution, tacked on willy-nilly to something useful and therefore meaningful. But when it is put like this the real nakedness of Huxley's world is exposed. It is true that he often attempts to clothe it, as when he very frequently uses teleological language;

<sup>1</sup> The Bible, of course, would not agree that even the 'falling of a stone to earth' could adequately be described as being due to 'blind forces'.

but he is honest enough to admit that the clothes are borrowed! What a pity that he does not allow it to appear without them; it would be so much easier to feel how chilly and exposed it is. To drop the metaphor, it may be seriously suggested that, if Huxley were rigorously to suppress the use of the 'teleological shorthand' in which he delights, his philosophical views would seem for what they surely are, deeply unsatisfying to anyone who can 'see life steadily, and see it whole'. Certainly not many people would think that they provided even one-thousandth part of the dynamic which, on his own reckoning, the human race must find *within itself* if evolutionary progress is to continue. Fortunately for the Christian, the dynamic he believes in comes from outside this fallen race; and further it is bearing history onwards to a goal determined by wisdom and love, not to something problematical in advance. Natural selection may be a valid description of things when that description is confined to the level of what is physically observable; but the God 'for whom are all things and by whom are all things'<sup>1</sup> has revealed to His creatures enough of what belongs to the sphere of the unobservable to enable them to have a part with Him in bringing His purposes to pass; and that revelation He has given to them in the pages of Holy Scripture. It is with evolution as with all the great problems of science and existence: 'in Thy light shall we see light.'<sup>2</sup>

D. C. SPANNER

*Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley.* By T. S. ELIOT.  
London: Faber and Faber, 1964. Pp. 216. 30s. net.

As a philosopher, F. H. Bradley, did not destroy the world picture for the sake of theoretical tidiness and seeming logical accuracy. In his work *Appearance and Reality* he noted that in all statements about the external world there may well be an element of truth; there is almost bound to be also an element of illusion. We cannot know perfectly, or (even if we did) express with complete accuracy. Statements may be true in so far as they avail to *communicate*; the intangible error—(inevitably) lies in the separation of, the relationship between, the individual observer and that which is observed. There can be complete apprehension of truth only when union between the two, self and total environment, is achieved and 'felt'. The demand for secure and even dogmatic measurement of reality evidenced in the last forty years rendered Bradley's approach unpopular.

In this present work, originally intended as a thesis towards a doctorate at Harvard, T. S. Eliot many years ago examined (and I think constructively extended) much of Bradley's thought. Published at his wife's suggestion, this study, though in terminology and emphasis relevant to the assumptions of fifty years ago, is a valuable reminder of factors deserving reconsideration now that some impulses (especially the self-stultifying frustrations of logical positivism) have spent their force.

Distinguishing (p. 15) experience from consciousness, Eliot analyses Bradley's specialised use of the word 'feeling' as almost equivalent to 'experience'. 'Feeling' is the 'general condition before distinction and relationship have

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews ii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xxxvi. 9.

developed.' 'Experience' similarly remains as a 'fundamental'; it is not 'sense data'; it contains within itself every development that in a sense transcends it (p. 16). In 'feeling', understood as Bradley limits its connotation, subjective and objective merge. 'There is no reason why I should cut off part of the total content and call it the object, reserving the rest to myself with the name of feeling' (p. 24). It is in social behaviour, in the conflict and re-adjustment of 'finite centres' that feelings and things are torn apart. An 'object' is itself 'abstracted' from the background.

With some subtle argument, he persists, in opposition to Russell and Moore, that the only independent reality is immediate experience or feeling (as defined). By the failure of any experience to be 'immediate' we find ourselves in a 'fragmented' relationship. Such failure leads us to consider the possibility of an all-inclusive experience outside which nothing can fall. So he proceeds to the distinction between the 'ideal' and the 'real'. The real and the ideal are not two separate groups of objects although such a division is 'an inevitable tendency' (p. 36). As distinguished from the 'real', the 'idea' is the process—'the idea is, as idea, act'. Its ideality consists in its passing towards realisation; its justification consists in the reality towards which it points.

In Eliot's discussion of the psychological theory of knowledge, which follows, the whole emphasis of psychology, one feels, even within the indicated field, has so changed, then the chapter might be less relevant than other parts of the study. Nevertheless, words quoted from Joseph, written so long ago, still merit consideration. 'If I were asked what it (psychology) really is I should say not a science, but a collection of more or less detached inquiries, of the result of which philosophy must take account' (p. 82). Psychology divides—it implies a 'real' known eternal world and a 'real' nervous system. There is no recognition of consciousness independent of the object of attention. So science deals with objects, psychology may deal with half-objects, and metaphysics alone with the subject or point of view (p. 83). We return, in our search for truth, to the thought that the distinction between personal and objective (always fragmenting our examination) is a convenient fiction for practical purposes, varying at every moment, not inherent in things (p. 84).

But is there, we proceed to ask in the next chapter, any greater substantial significance in the contraries of the epistemologist, such as 'immanent' and 'transcendent', or 'phenomenon' and 'reality'? In bulk, this examination of the epistemological approach constitutes the main part of Eliot's work. Theories of knowledge usually assume that there is one consistent real world, and that it is our duty to find it (p. 136). Eliot suspects that this attitude likewise results from our practical everyday needs, where for our own convenience we sort things out in our own particular way. But this sorting out has no validity in the last resort. Although in practice we create a working scheme, the real world is not 'ready made'. The world—the world, that is, of meaning to ourselves—may rather be thought of as constructed, or as constructing itself, at every moment, and never more than an approximate construction. If we can accept such a view then the hard and fast (and misleading) distinction between real and unreal disappears.

The relation of the real world to the 'knower' is not in question, in as much as knowledge is not a relation (p. 139). The real world is not inside or outside the

'knower'. It simply 'is'. Knowing is only part of the much larger sphere of experience, and the point within this experience at which there is real knowing is never *precisely* determined. In so far as there is always an object of attention there is a world external to ourselves in this limited sense. But an object is not merely 'external'; when we designate it an 'object' we are setting it within a greater reality. Objects as apprehended by any finite centre are real in so far as they *are* apprehended. These 'worlds' of various finite centres (only loosely 'souls') form one world by the common meaning and identical reference of the various finite centres (p. 140).

In thus conceiving the world as reflected in various finite centres, we are not advancing a monadism which might suggest a pluralistic universe (p. 150). Nor are we falling back on solipsism. For each finite centre functions below, or wider than and above, the distinction of self and not-self. What is postulated is not my 'self' but my 'world'. Mr Eliot's concluding statement is valuable. 'It is the business of philosophy to keep the frontiers open. . . . Emphasis upon practice—upon the relativity and instrumentality of knowledge—is what impels us towards the Absolute.'

Questions raised tempt us beyond philosophy strictly understood. Paul had (it seems to me) a relevant comment. 'Now we see only puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face. My knowledge now is partial; then it will be whole like God's knowledge of me' (1 Cor. xiii. 12, New English Bible).

Two articles contributed by Eliot to *The Monist* in 1916, one on the development of Leibniz' Monadism, the other on Leibniz' Monads and Bradley's Finite Centres' are appended to the thesis proper. Noting Leibniz' inconsistencies, Eliot points out the pregnant thought in his theory, possibilities that exist for all time, while (as Eliot rightly foresaw) Bradley, by later clarifying and refining, expounded one philosophical approach so well that it was set aside as a finished statement.

The issue of Eliot's work is timely. We may well reconsider the value of much contained here. In this honest attempt to deal with inherent difficulties of verbal statement and assessment of experience, there is (to quote a phrase of Eliot's own) 'the permanence of all imperfect things', fresh starting points, dynamic centres of activity. Similarly, this brief attempt to outline his treatment of the theme must raise more questions than it answers. Your reviewer refers readers for further information to the book itself. They will find, he is sure, much profit in its perusal.

The book is beautifully produced, including a useful bibliography and full index.

E. J. B.