

## Social Theories and the Teaching of Jesus.

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### IV.

#### The Theology of the Movement.

A BRIEF summary of the New Testament basis of Christian Socialism has brought us to this point. We have found that there is a conception of a Christian society which is suggested by the teaching of Christ. That is enough for most Christian Socialists. They are content to rest for their criticism of society as it is, and their hope of society as it should be, on the bedrock of the word of Christ, and to leave theological questions alone. But no Christian movement is without theological bearings of some kind, and this is no exception to the rule.

If one has been accustomed to view a landscape from the east, and is suddenly transported to the west, the old landscape presents new features. The lights bring into prominence different aspects of field and valley and copse. There is a like gain in changing our theological point of view, even though we keep in sight the familiar doctrines. We may look for some interesting suggestions from the change of view which makes the society central rather than the individual.

For instance, the thought which makes social relations primary for man finds a warrant and justification in the Christian idea of God. The peculiarity of the Christian belief in God is just this, that it regards the Divine Life as a perfected society. The highest conception of life is not individual but social. The belief in the Trinity—the Father, Son, and Spirit abiding in a complex unity in all eternity—found a place first in the teaching of Jesus and His apostles, not at all as a metaphysical but as an ethical relation. The relations of Father, Son, and Spirit were revealed as a type of life. It was a type of life deliberately suggested by Jesus as something to which His disciples were to approximate. 'That they may all be one: even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us.'

Looked at in this way, a doctrine which is put aside by many as a hopeless metaphysical subtlety, becomes full of value. The vital social relations are there, each in its perfect form. Authority is

there in its highest expression. Justice and mercy, righteousness and love, are all revealed in the relation of the Father and Son. Obedience is there in its ideal form of submission of will, resting on perfect mutual understanding and confidence (cf. Jn 5<sup>10-47</sup> 8<sup>28</sup> 6<sup>38</sup>). Service is perfected in the perfect servant (Jn 13<sup>1-20</sup>). Care and insight are absolute. Dependence is there (Jn 8<sup>38</sup> 11<sup>42</sup>); generosity (Mt 7<sup>11</sup>); fidelity (Jn 11<sup>42</sup>); truth (Jn 1<sup>14</sup>). Mutual sympathy is absolute because the Spirit is the perfect interpreter, the Divine exegete of every purpose and the channel of every expression of will. In this perfect society familiar relations are seen in an aspect which suggests that this is what they were meant to be. We find the Trinity—the Divine society—presenting to us the image in which human society was created.

As soon as the Christian has interpreted his creed for himself in this way, he finds that it has become a criticism of the social relations he knows. If human society is created in the likeness of the Divine, it cannot be according to the purpose of God that authority should be in the hands of a metallic god which has neither heart to feel nor head to think, but only power to crush these out of others. It cannot be according to His purpose that to be a servant should ever mean to be crushed between the upper millstone of avarice and the nether millstone of starvation. It cannot be in His purpose that fatherhood should be reduced to a mere physiological relation by hours of labour, and motherhood sacrificed to the exigencies of an industrial system. It is a flat rejection of the Divine ideal of fatherhood and sonship that a son may be driven to compete against his father in the labour market and drive him out of work.

The belief that humanity is made in the likeness of the Divine social life is a substantial reason for attaching supreme importance to perfecting social relations. Only in a perfected society can even the individual fulfil his destiny. Completeness is not solitary but social. Authority is to conform to

the type of the father, obedience to the type of the son. Dependence is not to be severed from sympathy. Insight and patience meet alike in the relations of man and servant. The whole

society is to be bound by mutual understanding created by unity of spirit. A history which begins with 'in the beginning God ——' does not reach its natural end until we 'see the holy city.'

## Contributions and Comments.

### Was Tidal, King of Nations, a Hittite?

THE cuneiform records of the Hittite empire, discovered by Professor Winckler at Boghaz Keui, have informed us that the successor of Khattusib II., with whom Ramses II. made the well-known treaty, was his son Dud-Khaliya. In the Egyptian inscriptions this name is written Tidal, Todal, the Hittite guttural aspirate being as little regarded as it is in the Greek Athar-ata by the side of Atargatis. Dud-Khaliya, however, bears so close a resemblance to Tud-ghula, the cuneiform equivalent of the Biblical Tid'al in the Chedor-laomer texts, that it raises the question whether the names are not one and the same. Tid'al, according to Gn 14<sup>1</sup>, was 'king of Nations,' that is to say, the Babylonian Umman Manda, with whose help, as we learn from the Chedor-laomer texts, the king of Elam was enabled to conquer Babylonia. The Umman Manda, it is true, generally denoted the 'Nations' of Kurdistan, but the name was also applied to any horde of northern invaders, and Esar-haddon, accordingly, uses it of Teispes, the Cimmerian.

A recent discovery of Mr. King has shown that the fall of the Amorite dynasty to which Khammu-rabi or Amraphel belonged was brought about by an invasion of Babylonia by the Hittites. There is therefore no longer any reason for doubting that the references to 'the king of the Hittites' in the great Babylonian work on astronomy go back to the Khammu-rabi age when it was compiled. Here we are told how, after the murder of the (Babylonian) king, the king of the Hittites 'comes and seizes on the throne.' The fall of the Khammu-rabi dynasty was followed at no long interval of time by the establishment of the Kassite rule at Babylon, and the Kassites were an Elamite tribe. Hence it would not be surprising if at a somewhat earlier date Chedor-laomer had been

assisted by Hittites in his conquest of Babylonia. At all events, the possibility is worth consideration.

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### Job ii. 9.

A FURTHER note on this passage may perhaps be acceptable to Mr. Potten. The rendering of the A.V. is certainly ancient. The Syriac Peshitta reads, 'Even until now dost thou persist in thine integrity [or, simplicity]? curse thy God, and die.' The reading of the LXX is remarkable. Job's wife says, Μέχρι τίνος καρτερήσεις λέγων Ἰδοὺ ἀναμένω χρόνον ἔτι μικρὸν προσδεχόμενος τὴν ἐλπίδα τῆς σωτηρίας μου;—then follows a lament on their unhappy lot, and she concludes, ἀλλὰ εἰπὸν τι ῥῆμα εἰς [v.l. πρὸς] κύριον καὶ τελεύτα. This last clause was evidently read by Cyprian in his Old Latin, for he quotes (*Testim.* iii. 14), 'Dic verbum aliquod in Dominum, et morere'; and again (*de Mort.* 6), 'Et cum eum uxor quoque sua compelleret, ut vi doloris impatiens aliquid adversus Deum querela et invidiosa voce loqueretur, respondit,' etc. On the other hand, the Clementine Vulgate reads, 'Adhuc tu permanes in simplicitate tua! Benedic Deo, et morere.' This evidence would support the suggestion in Mr. Bevan's note, THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, p. 190, if we might suppose that the Syriac and the LXX preserve here an older reading than that of the present Heb. text and the Vulgate. It is worth while pointing out that in 1 K 21<sup>10, 18</sup>, Job 11<sup>26</sup>, the LXX use εὐλογεῖν in agreement with the Heb. בָּרַךְ, while in all these places the Syriac uses the same word that it employs in Job 2<sup>9</sup>, meaning 'curse.' In Job 1<sup>5</sup>, where also the Syriac has 'curse,' the LXX gives κακὰ ἐνενόησαν πρὸς (v.l. πρὸς τὸν) Θεόν; and in Ps 10<sup>3</sup> the Syriac, LXX, and Vulgate refer the blessing to the wicked man and not to God (بَلَصَمِي, ἐνευλογεῖται, benedicitur). If we admit the suggestion offered in Mr. Bevan's note, must we