

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE study of Comparative Religion, whether in the laboratory with the student at home, or in the field with the foreign missionary, will do nothing to disturb the primacy of "Jesus and the Resurrection" among all the truths that have come to men. Each religion in turn is found to have glimpses of truth, some few enough, others more or less abundant; but none of them has anything of value which cannot be traced in the New Testament. Practical contact with other religions may sometimes indeed shake doctrines on which the Church has set her seal at one time or another; but when the Christian goes back to his authentic documents he finds they are not there. Not seldom, of course, we meet with the claims on the part of the higher religions that their tenets are superior to the antagonistic doctrines of the preachers of the gospel. But the superiority is never one which would be admitted by any jury of impartial outsiders, or sustained by an argument that would appeal to the world at large.

Professor James Hope MOULTON is the authority for that statement. There is no greater authority. Professor MOULTON has all the scholarship, experience, and loyalty that are necessary to give weight to his words. He was chosen to deliver the Fernley Lecture this year. It is the year in which is kept with solemn thankfulness the Centenary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

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The subject he resolved to lecture upon was *Religions and Religion* (Kelly; 3s. 6d.).

For he knew that all missionaries and all Christian men were occupied with that subject beyond every other. Many things are settled. This is still unsettled and urgently cries for sane settlement: What is the attitude which the Christian missionary ought to adopt towards other religions?

The question is asked of the Christian first of all. And then of the Christian scholar. Those who were responsible for the selection could easily have found an able and experienced missionary to deliver the Fernley Lecture on this occasion. They chose a student of Religion. They chose one who could place side by side the religion which had to be supplanted and the religion which had to supplant it, and could say with convincing clearness why it is laid upon the Christian missionary to-day to endure hardness in order that as soon as possible Buddhism, Muhammadanism, Parsism may be no more, and Christ may be all and in all.

Professor MOULTON has been faithful to his charge. He has made no claim for Christianity that he could not face his fellow-scholars with. He has been conscious of the latest discovery, he has been sensitive even to the latest speculation.

Nor has he ignored a single element of value in any of the religions of the world. Not without wisdom of words, but far more with captivity of thought to the obedience of Christ, he has sought to persuade the modern missionary to rely henceforth not on an infallible Book or an infallible Church, not on any form of external authority, but solely on the force of the truth and the grace of the living Lord Jesus Christ. And if at any time, as they listened to him, it has seemed to his hearers that between Christianity and some other of the great religions it was only a matter of degree, he has always arrested the comparison, as in the passage quoted, to show that in reality there is no comparison, but only one perfect and final religion in the earth, the religion of the Son of God.

No one can appreciate the difference between Christianity and other religions without faith in Christ. With faith in Christ no one can fail to appreciate it. A fine example to work upon is the doctrine of Immortality.

Says Professor MOULTON, 'It is almost bewildering to us when we find that until the Old Testament canon was all but complete, the very idea of a future life in any shape was unknown. Pharisees in our Lord's time exercised their utmost ingenuity to find it in the Books of Moses, but Sadducee exegesis held the field with ease. Yet, many centuries earlier, Vedic poets had hailed the dawn as the "banner of immortality"; and Zarathushtra, the prophet of Iran, had taught that the man of "good deeds, words, and thought" should dwell in everlasting peace with the "Wise Lord" in the "House of Song." Saints of Israel could still cry, "In the grave there is no remembrance of Thee," when Socrates drank the hemlock, serenely welcoming a blest communion, a fellowship divine beyond death, and with his last breath ordering a sacrifice to the Healer who had stilled for ever the "fitful fever" of life on earth.'

How was this? How was it that Israel, 'on the mountain to catch the first dawn of every other

truth,' lay so long in the valley of the shadow when God was unfolding the sunshine of His living hope for other men? It was the very greatness of their privilege that held it from them. Their privilege was to know the only living and true God. They were well content with Him. As long as they enjoyed His presence, as long as His blessing fell on them and on their land they had no hankering after a life to come. They were satisfied with this life. All they desired was length of days, that they might live long in the enjoyment of God's presence.

But the Captivity came. Darkness fell upon the land and the people. Devout worshippers of Jehovah were severed from the beautiful House of His presence. They were thrown upon God as individuals. And He became more to them than in all the days of their prosperity. Personal communion with Him was now their desire. And the more that desire was gratified the stronger it grew. The threescore years and ten of this life could not satisfy it. 'Take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations'; and fast following on the heels of that thought came the other: 'The eternal God is my refuge; the arms are everlasting that embrace me; surely if I may call such a Being *my* God, He cannot leave the child of His love to Sheol.'

Now see the vast advantage of the Hebrew. 'Valhalla, with its jousts and banqueting, the Moslem Paradise with its hours—a mere warrior or a sensualist can believe in such a future life, and be no better for it.' But the life of continued communion with a holy God has ethical value. It adds strength to a religion, and endurance. And when the ethical value is in Christ declared to be the value of *love*, that religion, even in virtue of its doctrine of Immortality, passes out of comparison with all other religions. A hope so won, says Dr. MOULTON, 'a hope so won, so kept, is mighty to lift humanity towards the new order where the Will of God reigns. No unpractical dream, no unreal vision, nerves the best energies of those

who come by way of Hebrew saintship into the heritage bestowed by Christ. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord."

When Professor Friedrich LOOFS of Halle was invited to deliver a short course of lectures at Oberlin College, Ohio, he accepted the invitation. The lectures were delivered in the autumn of the year 1911. Since then Dr. LOOFS has added notes, confirming the statements contained in them and giving exact dates. They are now published with the title of *What is the Truth about Jesus Christ?* (T. & T. Clark; 4s. net).

The lectures have moved men exceedingly. For the question which the lecturer set himself to answer has always been and still is the great question of Christianity; and Professor LOOFS—the Sanday of Germany—is exceptionally able to answer it. It was expected that in choosing such a title he had an answer to give. But not only has he given his own answer to the question, he has proved that the answer which Germany has given to it for the last hundred and fifty years is untrue. He has been able to show conclusively that the attempt of liberal theology to explain Jesus, on the supposition that He was a man and no more, has completely broken down.

Professor LOOFS traces the history of that answer. It came to its first open expression with Reimarus, who died in 1768. Its latest utterance was made by Professor HEITMÜLLER of Marburg in the very year in which Dr. LOOFS delivered his lectures. The ways in which men have endeavoured to account for the Gospels and their contents on the supposition that Jesus was a man and no more have been as numerous as the men; for no naturalistic critic has been content with the explanations of his predecessors. The most circumstantial and perhaps the most attractive of all these endeavours was made by KEIM. In

recent years its ablest advocates have been H. J. HOLTZMANN, JÜLICHER, WREDE, and WEINEL.

Moreover, the ability of those who have attempted to account for Jesus and the Gospels on purely natural grounds has been as conspicuous as the variety of their methods. And yet the whole attempt has failed. The men themselves have been in utmost antagonism. The eschatologists have cast out the rationalists, while those who denied the existence of the historical Jesus have been in irreconcilable opposition to both. Before our very eyes the unbelievers in a supernatural Christ have been engaged in devouring one another.

But it is not because its advocates have devoured one another that Professor LOOFS says the naturalistic hypothesis has broken down. It is for two reasons which, now that they have been given their proper weight, are seen to be sufficient of themselves to bring about its downfall. And not only to bring ~~about~~ its downfall, but also to prevent it from ever rising again. The first reason is that the contents of the Gospels, and especially the person of Jesus, fall partly within the domain of science and partly within the domain of religion. In so far as they fall within the domain of science they are proper objects of historical criticism. But in so far as they fall within the domain of religion they are the object of faith. The mistake made by the liberal theologians of Germany for a century and a half has been to bring Jesus and all that appertains to Him within their own experience. And their experience was not of faith, but only of natural science.

The other reason is that the Gospels themselves contradict the naturalistic hypothesis. That is to say, they contain elements which have not been accounted for by any theory, or combination of theories, which the unbelievers in the Supernatural have been able to bring forward. These elements in the Gospels and in the person of Jesus are of three kinds. First of all, there are the words of Jesus Himself; next, there is the attitude of the

earliest disciples; and then there is the personal devotion of the believers in Christ throughout the centuries of Christianity.

First, there are the words of Jesus Himself. But here we are at once arrested, and properly arrested, by the question, Do we believe that all the words of Jesus which are recorded in the Gospels were really spoken by Him? Professor LOOFS answers that he for one does not. He gives this example. 'No sensible man,' he says, 'will deny that, by the side of the feeding of the five thousand (Mk 6<sup>35ff.</sup>), the feeding of the four thousand (Mk 8<sup>1ff.</sup>) represents a doublet of tradition. Luke already felt this; he omitted the second story of Mark. But if the second story is unhistoric, then the words of Jesus (Mk 8<sup>1ff.</sup>), "When I brake the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces took ye up? And when the seven among the four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken pieces took ye up?" cannot possibly be anything else than a fiction of the evangelist or of the tradition he followed. Consequently, it is evident that, among the sayings that are handed down to us as words of Jesus, there are at least several which are erroneously ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels, as they originated in the thoughts of the later community.'

But we are not required to weigh every word and pronounce upon its genuineness. It is with the general impression made by the words that we have to do. One man will reject nothing, another will reject a great deal. But whether little or much is rejected, enough will be left to raise Jesus quite above the level of common humanity. And the question always remains: 'If the words in the Gospels did not come from Jesus, from whom did they come?' 'The assumption,' says Professor LOOFS, 'that the faith of the later Christians first created all these words or raised them to their present level by modifying them, is surely very difficult even from a historical point of view. For from nothing nothing comes.'

The second thing that makes the naturalistic explanation impossible is the attitude of the first disciples. If Jesus was a man, and only a man, how is it that the oldest Christian community was convinced that He did not remain among the dead, but was raised by God and exalted to the 'right hand of the majesty on high'? History, says Professor LOOFS, does not know of any community in those primitive times that saw in Jesus merely the teacher and the exemplar of Christian faith. Again it may be impossible to use all the books of the New Testament or even all their writers. Professor LOOFS practically confines himself to the greater Epistles of St. Paul. But in these Epistles alone the testimony to the super-humanity of Jesus is overwhelming.

Now the experiences of St. Paul, says Professor LOOFS, 'go back to the earliest times after the death of Jesus. Two or three years after His death, and perhaps at a still earlier date, Paul was won over to Christianity. What Paul could look upon as general Christian conviction must reach back as far as this time. Moreover, it must be just as old as the belief of the first disciples in the resurrection of Jesus. For the following two or three years of the Jerusalem community could only have made it more difficult to believe in the exalted Lord, or, if this belief already existed, they could at most have developed it further in spite of all difficulties; certainly they could never have produced it. But how is the faith of the primitive Christian community to be accounted for if the life of Jesus was only a purely human one? Even from a merely historical point of view this is a weighty argument against the results or, better, presuppositions of liberal Jesus-research.'

And the historical is not the only point of view. What can a merely historical criticism make of such words as 'seeing the glory of God in the face of Jesus'? It can make nothing of them. But the discernment of faith finds their interpretation in such other words of St. Paul as these: 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.'

For to St. Paul the central thought is always the grace of God. And he knows of no access to that grace except by belief in Christ. Wherefore he says that nothing 'shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

And St. John speaks in the same way. For Professor LOOFS, though he is ready to risk his case on the acknowledged Epistles of St. Paul, is not prepared to give up the rest of the New Testament. In the First Epistle to St. John he finds a word seven times used which in the most unconscious manner reveals the place which Jesus held in the writer's own thought and in the thought of the community he lived among. It is the word *he* (ἐκεῖνος). Seven times that word is used without further designation, and out of the seven it is certainly used six times of Jesus. Who is this *he*? No one has ever the least necessity for asking. And the same pronoun is used in the same way in St. John's Gospel. The passage is Jn 19<sup>35</sup>, 'He that hath seen (viz. John the apostle) hath borne witness, and his witness is true: and he (viz. Jesus) knoweth that he (John) saith true.' We have some difficulty with these pronouns; John knew that his readers would understand them. All his thoughts were of thanks and love to *him*, and he could speak of *him* without further designation. Just as Zinzendorf, consoling a mother whose two sons had died in missionary work, could say: 'He is worthy of all this.'

The third thing that makes it impossible for the modern mind to believe that Jesus was a mere man is the devotion to His person shown by succeeding generations of Christians. Not more than eighty or ninety years after the death of Jesus we find in Ignatius of Antioch, who could not have known Jesus personally, such a faith in Jesus Christ, such a thankfulness of love, that in the history of religion it must be pronounced a singular phenomenon. No such thing is to be observed in other religions. But in Christianity it is not at all uncommon. After Ignatius it is easy to run down

a list of names, Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Francis of Assisi, Paul Gerhardt, the Wesleys, Charles Kingsley, and to add to them thousands of lesser fame, all of whom could sing:

Jesus, our only joy be thou,  
As thou our prize wilt be;  
Jesus, be thou our glory now  
And through eternity.

Is this but a dead echo of what St. Paul and St. John once said? No one doubts that what St. Paul and St. John experienced for themselves, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who wrote that hymn, experienced for himself also.

But now, if Jesus was more than a man, how much more than a man was He? This is the question which Professor LOOFS seeks to answer in his last two lectures.

The old Christology said that He was God and man in two distinct natures and one person for ever. Is that Christology still tenable? Professor LOOFS says most unreservedly that it is not.

He has three objections to it. The first objection is that it contradicts thought. He does not say merely that it is unintelligible. He says it is contrary to intelligence. Now although Professor LOOFS is very emphatic upon the necessity of the exercise of faith if we are to understand the Lord Jesus Christ, he never rejects the use of reason. On the contrary, he holds that reason and faith must go together. Whatever contradicts experience, if it falls within the domain of experience, must be rejected. If therefore the doctrine of the Person of Christ which we are taught to believe is contrary to thought, we cannot believe it. And it will make no difference that it has stood the test of centuries. The orthodox Christology, he says, can be convicted of three such contradictions.

The first contradiction was felt even by Augustine, and the mediæval theology tried in vain to get rid of it. If the distinction of persons

in the Trinity is limited to their internal relation to each other within the Godhead (and this has been the orthodox opinion since Augustine), how can one of the persons become incarnate without the other two? The only answer that seems possible is that when the Incarnation took place the Father and the Holy Ghost were not separated from the incarnate Son. But this only makes the second contradiction the more contradictory.

For the second contradiction is that when the Son became incarnate He came under the ordinary human restrictions of time and place. Now if He was still one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, these persons of the Trinity were also so restricted. There seem to be but two ways out of the dilemma. Either the Son of God in the days of His flesh still pervaded the universe in divine majesty, separate from the flesh; or else, as Luther boldly thought, the human nature partook of the divine omnipotence and omniscience. Either answer seems to Professor LOOFS to destroy the very idea of incarnation.

The third contradiction arises out of an attempt to solve the other two. It has been suggested that the divine Trinity is to be thought of as one God *before* the Incarnation. But this simply dissolves the unity of God when the Incarnation takes place. And it keeps the unity dissolved ever after. For it is the orthodox belief that when Jesus returned to glory He retained the human nature which He had assumed.

These difficulties alone seem to Professor LOOFS sufficient to wreck the orthodox Christology. But this is not the only objection which he has to the orthodox Christology. Besides the fact that it contradicts reason, there is the fact that it contradicts the teaching of the New Testament.

Now if Professor LOOFS can show that the Christology of the Creeds contradicts the New Testament, he will appeal to far more persons, and he will appeal to them far more persuasively, than

by showing that it is inconsistent with itself. But he will find it a more difficult undertaking. And that he knows. He knows that it is impossible to cover the whole teaching of the New Testament on the Person of Christ. So he selects a few decisive points.

First of all, he denies that the title Son of God is anywhere in the New Testament applied to Christ as pre-existent. It is a title of the historical Jesus. It is applied to the historical Jesus either with reference to His birth by the Spirit (Lk 1<sup>35</sup>), or because the Spirit came down upon Him at His baptism (Mk 1<sup>13</sup>), or because He stood in a unique position of love toward God (Mt 11<sup>27</sup>), or for some other reason manifestly mundane. And not only is this title 'Son of God' confined to His earthly existence, but other expressions have the same limitation, such as that He is 'the first-born of every creature' (Col 1<sup>18</sup>), and that He is 'the only-begotten Son.' This expression 'only-begotten,' says Professor LOOFS, means no more than unique or peerless. When the widow's son at Nain is called 'the only son of his mother,' the same word is used as that which in Jn 1<sup>14, 18</sup> is translated 'only-begotten.'

Again, the idea of the triune God, as formulated in the Creeds, is foreign to the New Testament. Certainly the New Testament writers speak of God as 'in Christ,' and of the Spirit of God as in single Christians and in the Christian community. But nowhere, says Dr. Loofs, is Jesus Christ identified with God. On the contrary, He is kept deliberately distinct from God, as in the greeting 'Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.' In St. John's Gospel, in the high-priestly prayer, we even read 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ.' And in the Apostolic Benediction, 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.' St. Paul does not speak of three persons in one God, but of the love of one God, and in connexion

therewith of the grace of Jesus Christ and of the communion of the Holy Ghost.

A third point is that words which Jesus uses make it impossible to look upon Him as the Second Person in the Trinity of orthodox Christology. He said to Mary Magdalene, 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.' The self-consciousness of Jesus undoubtedly surpassed the measure of a human self-consciousness. But it is still a human self-consciousness. It stops short of the self-consciousness of God.

Once more, it seems to Professor LOOFS impossible to harmonize with the orthodox dogma of the eternal Son of God such an idea as that 'he increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men.' Orthodoxy explains that He grew, suffered, and died only according to His human nature. But who will deny that even our very self is growing during our life? And it sounds very forced to say that the Son of God, who by His own nature could never suffer, suffered nevertheless in His human flesh and in His human soul. Surely, exclaims Professor LOOFS, such forced constructions are quite foreign to the New Testament.

The last point is that Jesus is represented, after His Ascension, as still in organic connexion with the human race. St. Paul speaks of the risen Lord as 'the first-born from the dead,' and as 'the first-born among many brethren.' In St. John's Gospel Jesus associates Himself with His people in the closest possible way: 'That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us'; 'That they may be one even as we are one.' And in the Apocalypse: 'He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne.' This organic connexion is not adequately reflected in the Christian Creeds. It cannot be adequately reflected in them. Jesus is 'the first-born among

many brethren' in a deeper sense than orthodox Christology is able to recognize. In all these ways, it seems to Professor LOOFS, the Christology of the Christian creeds contradicts the teaching of the New Testament.

These, then, are the two chief objections which Professor LOOFS raises against the Christology of the Christian creeds. It contradicts experience, and it contradicts the New Testament. His third objection is perhaps less important; it is certainly more difficult to appreciate. The orthodox doctrine of Christ, he says, was formed under the influence of a philosophy which is now obsolete.

Take the term *Logos*. In the creeds that term has appropriated the speculations of Philo and the Alexandrians. In St. John it means no more than *Word*. 'In the beginning was the Word,' is a recollection of the first chapter of Genesis, where the medium of Creation is the Word of God: 'and God said.' Similarly in the prophetic books, 'the Word of God came' to the prophets. And in the Apocalypse Christ's return for the last judgment is thus described: 'I saw the heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat thereon was called Faithful and True . . . and he hath a name written that no one knoweth but he himself.' Then in the next verse, it is said: 'And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood, and his name is called "The Word of God."' Here, says Professor LOOFS, 'it is not the pre-existent Christ who is called the Logos. Hence, there is no room here for the logos-idea of Philo. The returning Christ, who fulfils all the words and prophecies of God, and who is therefore called *Faithful and True*, is called the Word of God for this very reason, that God's Word becomes full truth in him.'

It is in the Græco-Roman philosophy that Professor LOOFS finds the doctrine of the two natures. 'Quoting Goethe's *Faust* we may speak of *two souls* which we feel in our breast, a lower one with sensual desires and a higher one which is open to

everything ideal. In ancient times people would in such a case speak of "two natures" in man. The strongest of these natures was considered as the leading one, which really ruled over the other.'

'Now, it is natural that Christians at a very early date—I believe from the very beginnings of Christianity—observed characteristics of human lowliness and characteristics of divine majesty and glory in Jesus Christ. Under these circumstances it was not strange for that time that people as early as the end of the second century spoke of "two natures," the human and the divine one, which were to be distinguished in Christ. The question how the unity of such a person was to be imagined did not cause any difficulties for more than three centuries. In the Eastern church many theologians as early as the fourth century considered the higher nature, the divine nature—that is, the divine Logos—as the actual subject in the historical Jesus, while his humanity was looked upon as not having a personality of its own. In the Western church people for a long time thought differently. But ultimately the Greek view prevailed.'

What is the truth about Jesus Christ? He was a man who lived in this world of ours, but He was more than a man. Professor LOOFS has shown that all attempts to describe His life as a purely human one have failed. Is He a God then? Not in accordance with orthodox Christianity. Professor Loofs has shown that the Christology of the Creeds is riddled with contradictions. He does not know a single professor of evangelical theology in Germany to-day who believes it possible to reproduce the old orthodox formulas. What then is the truth about Jesus Christ?

Now Professor LOOFS has a way of clearing the ground before he begins to build. He does so here. First he clears away the Kenotic theory.

The Kenotic theory takes its name from the place which is occupied in it by the passage in

Philippians which speaks of the emptying (*kenosis*) of Christ: 'Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men' (Ph 2<sup>6, 7</sup>). The theory asserts that the eternal Son of God, in the moment of His incarnation, emptied Himself more or less of His divinity, and so became the subject of a really human life, while His divine self-consciousness was changed into a human one. In this way people thought they could do justice to both, namely, to the really human life of Jesus and to the superhuman self-consciousness which is revealed by not a few of His words. Jesus could, because the Son of God had really become a man in Him, 'increase in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man.' He could pray, develop morally, hunger, thirst, and suffer. Only gradually the reminiscence of His eternal glory awoke more and more in His self-consciousness, and, at the exaltation, the glory, which the Son of God had put off at His incarnation, was given back to the God-man.

The theory is to Professor LOOFS unsatisfactory, and even absurd. It is unsatisfactory because it does not meet the historical facts, still less the demands of faith. And it is absurd because you cannot conceive of a person, divine or human, divesting himself of his personality. 'A German officer may resign his position to come over to America, in order to live here as a plain workman. But he cannot put off his self as he doffs his uniform.' It is mythology, says Professor LOOFS, it is not theology, that is, at the bottom of this theory. And in Germany it has long ago been abandoned.

Nor is Professor LOOFS better pleased with those modern ideas according to which, while the two natures are rejected, the eternal Son of God is represented as being the personal subject of a human life. Professor KUNZE of Greifswald and Professor SCHAEDEK of Kiel hold that Christ retained as man all His divine prerogatives, such as omnipotence and omniscience, but used them only



when He performed miracles which required their use. This theory is described as 'an ingenious but illicit play with the attributes of divine majesty.' And it fails to do justice to Christ's humanity.

Professor SEEBERG of Berlin knows better than either KUNZE or SCHAEDEK. He knows that the term 'person' points only to a relation within the Godhead. It is, in short, simply an expression for a particular direction of the divine will-energy. This divine will-energy entered the man Jesus as its organ and worked through Him. In this way Jesus in His personal life became entirely at one with the personal will of God. SEEBERG knows more than KUNZE or SCHAEDEK. SEEBERG knows too much. He is 'as well acquainted with the inner life of Jesus as if He had been the confidant of His inmost thoughts.' And that very intimacy condemns SEEBERG's theory. For the Gospels do not furnish this knowledge, and if such intimate knowledge is necessary to a theory of Christ's person the theory is condemned.

Professor LOOFS has cleared the ground. What is the truth about Jesus Christ? Two things are absolutely certain: the first, that Christ becomes a revelation of God to us; and the second, that He shows us, in His own person, what we are to become. Professor LOOFS explains these two things at some length. And they need explanation, more than at first appears. For when he says that Jesus reveals God to us, he does not mean merely that He carries further the revelation made to the prophets. He means that; for he says Jesus did not preach a new God, but wished to reveal more fully the one God whom Israel already knew. But he means more than that. He means that all we possess of the knowledge of God we have through Jesus. And he means that this absolute revelation is made, above all, in the Cross.

It is made, above all, in the Cross. For 'the man who feels his sin and then remembers that Jesus, who committed no sin and had no other

wish than to serve mankind, was put to death, in spite of this, by the wickedness of men, that man will feel again and again what the first Christians felt: He suffered what we deserved to suffer; He was "wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities." That man will understand that God permitted Jesus to suffer (or, better: made Him suffer) thus in order that all who cling to Him might gain the courage to believe in God's grace without forgetting the great contrast of their sins with His holiness. People can, therefore, experience at the present day what marvellous power belongs to that faith which Paul expresses with the words: "God made him to be sin who knew no sin (that is, He treated Christ as a sinner by giving Him up to such an opprobrious death), in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Again, Christ in His own person shows us what we are to become like. What does Dr. LOOFS mean by that? He does not mean that Christ is good enough but not too good to be an example of life and conduct. He means that Christ and those who believe in Him 'belong together.' He means that He and they are so closely united that what He is they become also. Now He is the very image of God. Therefore He is the beginning of a new manhood which is to be made after that image. And so entirely is it to be made after that image that even the body will share in the transformation. In the words of St. Paul, 'Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory' (Ph 3<sup>20</sup>).

Is that all? Professor LOOFS knows very well that if that is all it is not enough. And yet it has to be confessed—he confesses it himself—that he has not much more to offer us. For as soon as he comes to the vital question, Is He God, or is He not God? he recognizes his impotence. He offers three thoughts: 'First, that the historical person of Christ is looked upon as a human per-

sonality; secondly, that this personality, through an indwelling of God or His Spirit, which was unique before and after, up to the end of all time, became the Son of God who reveals the Father and became also the beginner of a new mankind; and, thirdly, that in the future state of perfection a similar indwelling of God has to be realized, though in a copied and therefore secondary form, in all people whom Christ has redeemed.'

Here it is evident that the essential thing is the indwelling of the Spirit. And Dr. LOOFS draws our attention to it. He recalls 'a prominent passage of Romans,' in which St. Paul says of Christ: 'who was born of the seed of David according to the

flesh . . . declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.' He would like to be content with that as the final expression of his Christology. He envies WENDT, who is content with it. But he is not himself sure what is meant by the 'spirit of holiness.' He is not sure what the Holy Spirit is. 'My last refuge therefore is the term which Paul strongly emphasizes in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, "the mystery of Christ." And what is this mystery? "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," that is the mystery. It would be attempting impossible things if beyond that we tried to understand the historical person of Christ.'

## Authority and the Individual.

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It is no unusual thing, where the problem of religious authority is debated, to hear of the authority of reason, placed alongside of the authority of Bible and Church. Not, of course, as though in the outlining of a doctrine of authority it were assumed that these three elements must have equal justice done to them and that no one of the three can or should hold a position superior to either or both of the other two; but because it is assumed that the principle of authority is, however powerfully condensed and however limited in the scope of its operations, present within the individual consciousness or reason, a fact of personality with its own claims and rights deserving full consideration and respect.

I would begin by saying that, leaving for the moment the religious question on one side, the authority of any individual is strictly limited by the character of the subject-matter on which that authority is exercised. The less human that subject-matter may be, that is, the less intimately related it is to general human needs and interests, to the formulation of purposes co-extensive with national or universal and not merely individual well-being, the more positive and authoritative does an individual's authority become. Darwin is a

greater authority, in the strict sense of the word, on obscure phenomena in connexion with the lives of plants and animals than he is when dealing with the whole field of evolution; and this not merely because the area of his inquiries is more circumscribed, but because it is more self-contained, possessing far fewer relationships to other facts which have to be borne in mind, which may lie within the province of history or metaphysics, rather than of botany or zoology, and lead to more legitimate questionings of the correctness of his analysis and the truth of his deductions. We know well that on some exceedingly obscure matters there are only two or three authorities, and that when they agree their authority is as absolute as any authority well can be. It is the authority of exact knowledge where exact knowledge is possible.

But in the great and universal interests of human life no individual authority of this kind is possible. Neither in politics, nor in art, nor in the philosophy of history, nor in social life and intercourse, with its resultant judgments of persons and its canons of taste in things, is it to be found. Here and there some one by convincing proofs of his knowledge and, still more, of his insight and judicious-