

a new feature. At the end of each sermon there are notes, the notes being gathered from good commentaries, old and new.

To that truly charming series of books on the Children of the World, Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier have added one on *The Children of Labrador* (1s. 6d. net, with coloured illustrations). It is as charming as any of them. Miss Mary Lane Dwight, the author, owes much to Dr. Grenfell. But the book is her own. The preacher to children will find material in these books for his sermons, fresh and abundant. This, for example, recalls how the Israelites loathed 'this light food':

'The patients in the Hospitals are given nourishing food, which they seldom get at home, but, like some other people, they do not always appreciate it. One man said: "Don't give me any of them nutriments, Doctor. I want a hunk of fat swile (seal) or a gull. Now *that* would have some taste."

It would have been easy for the Ven. Archdeacon A. E. Moule, D.D., who has been in China since 1861, to write a popular book on that country. But he had no such puerile ambition. He has been in China as a missionary. He has had one desire for China and only one—to bring the people to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ. And now he has written this book on *The Chinese People* (S.P.C.K.; 5s.) for the sole purpose of equipping missionaries to China as completely as possible before they go there. He tells them all that they need to know, perhaps all that it is possible for them to know, before they reach the land they mean to labour in. And at the end of the book he gives a detailed

list of literature to enable them to read more fully on any topic they may wish to specialize in. Archdeacon Moule has spared neither himself nor his friends that he may make his book complete and trustworthy.

Messrs. Williams & Norgate have issued a new and thoroughly revised edition of the late Lord Avebury's *Prehistoric Times* (10s. 6d. net). Only a few months before his death Lord Avebury himself revised the work, making numerous additions in order to deal adequately with recent discoveries, and omitting portions that were no longer true or useful. The whole book was then reset and many new illustrations were inserted. Lord Avebury was not able to read the proofs, but that has been done competently and carefully. Lord Avebury could show, better perhaps than any man of his time—unless Sir Robert Ball was his equal—that a book could be at once scientific and popular. This is now a worthy edition of one of the people's classics.

Professor L. P. Jacks's new book, *All Men are Ghosts* (Williams & Norgate; 5s. net), is likely to be taken seriously by many of its readers. For this is a time in which the thrusting forth of religion is having its revenge in the entrance of superstition. Men and women who refuse to believe in the Holy Ghost read anxiously any book which speaks of haunted houses. No doubt Professor Jacks is in earnest and deserves to be taken seriously, but not as a recoverer of the spirits of the dead. His interest is in this present evil world and its foolish inhabitants. And his desire is to bray them in the mortar of his fantastical irony, to see if at last in that way their foolishness may depart from them.

The Psychology of Conversion.

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THE term 'conversion' usually means a more or less sudden act of turning away from a life of evil, after a season of repentance characterized by a sense of sin or of imperfection, to a life of righteousness, followed generally by a feeling of new life, joy, and fellowship. It means also a definite

act of acceptance of a particular faith after apostasy or natural alienation. It also stands for a sudden illumination of the soul following upon a period of hungering after God or righteousness. It is generally supposed that God and man have both a part to play in conversion. Man's part is,

through repentance and faith, to seek union with God (*justitia activa* or *conversio intransitiva*); whilst God's is the act of impartation, through the Holy Spirit, of the life of righteousness and of forgiveness of sin through faith in Jesus Christ (*justitia passiva* or *conversio transitiva*). To maintain this distinction, the terms 'conversion' and 'regeneration' have sometimes been employed, the latter denoting especially the work of grace. It is even more common to consider 'regeneration' as the larger term, including conversion. In distinguishing the terms there has been too little consistency.

The variety of usages of the term are indicated by the different problems that have arisen in its discussion. Can either Divine or human agency in the change of heart operate without the other? Must the work of grace precede or follow the human act? Is a conversion necessary in order to enter the religious life? Is there a total loss of identity in the act? To be complete, must conversion be followed by another experience of justification or sanctification? etc.

The term 'conversion' with the experience it symbolizes is not confined to Christianity, but belongs, given a certain temperamental type, to different peoples and religions. It is well described by Plato in the *Republic* (bk. vii.), and elsewhere:

'As the eye cannot turn away from darkness to light without the whole body, so when the eye of the soul is turned round, the whole soul must be turned from the world of generation into that of being, and become able to endure the sight of being and of the brightest and best being—that is to say, of the Good. This is conversion.'

Records are not wanting, even amidst the meagre accounts accessible, among other peoples, of sudden changes of character and awakenings of the soul. A dramatic instance is that of Gautama the Buddha, after seven years of seeking for a way of deliverance from evil and death. The Hindus had, some centuries before the Christian era, reduced the experience to a doctrine and a cult. This is preserved still, in one of its forms, in the Yoga discipline. A similar cult seems to have been practised among certain tribes of the North American Indians. The Hebrews, particularly during the time of the prophets, were clearly familiar with the conception as that of a definite act of turning to Jahweh.

Among the many shades of Christian usage of the term 'conversion,' at least two should be

clearly distinguished. In the first place, there is the sudden transformation of the character from one set of habits and emotional attachments to another, usually after a wilful, though not entirely heart-satisfying, acceptance of what is afterwards regarded as a life of sin. This may be designated the Pauline or Augustinian type of conversion. Of somewhat different significance are the conversions attended by a sudden uprush of new life after a period of more or less blind struggle after a dimly felt ideal. This type of conversion may on the surface be as cataclysmic as the former. It has the appearance, however, of being the outcome of a 'sub-conscious incubation' of imperfectly felt purposes. The impulses finally burst into fresh insight, new ideals, and higher values, and result in the shifting of the centre of personality suddenly to a new plane of spirituality. Since this is a quite common occurrence during the middle teens, it might be called the adolescent type of conversion. Or, from the nature of the process involved, it might be designated the fruition type. These two kinds of experiences are so far different as to require separate description.

I.

THE CATAclySMIC OR PAULINE TYPE OF CONVERSION.

Whilst there are hardly two experiences alike, it is possible generally to mark out three steps or stages in the process: (1) 'the sense of sin,' or 'divided self,' or 'sick soul'; (2) the crisis; and (3) the joy, uplift, and exhilaration following upon the crisis. The first is characterized by feelings of sinfulness, depression, sadness, self-distrust, helplessness, estrangement, restlessness, anxiety, resistance, and rebellion. In this extreme form it is not uncommonly attended by bodily signs of stress, e.g. weeping, loss of appetite, hallucinations of sight or hearing or touch, and physical illness. The negative attitude of struggle against sin is usually more prominent than the positive one of striving towards righteousness. The duration of the stress period varies greatly, from a few days to several years. In the case of St. Paul, who was of heroic and mystical temperament, it was brief, so far as surface appearances would indicate, although the account would lead one to believe that the inner struggle had continued some days.

The condition underlying the stress and strain,

which lead on finally to the critical event of transformation, seems to be the struggle of two selves against one another. One of these is likely to be a sub-conscious self, and both of them may carry on the warfare seemingly without a conscious direction of the subject. A composite picture of the mental state at the turning-point is as if two lives—the present sinful one and the wished-for righteous one—were pressed together in an intense struggle for the possession of the field of consciousness. The subject is chiefly an observer of the combat, suffers from it, and is often torn between the contending forces until he is held between life and death. The ideal life finally, often momentarily, asserts itself, and there follows a unification of the personality, with its attendant experience of freedom, joy, and exuberance. In objective terms, this conflict has often been described as one between the prince of light and the prince of darkness, or as the agency of God in casting out bodily resident evil spirits, during which event the subject was a third party to the conflict. During recent years it has been more common for those making religious confessions to describe the event in subjective terms, as a conflict between good and evil tendencies in the self. Psychologists are fond of describing the experience in terms of antagonism between ‘habitual centres of personal energy.’ It is the nature of the mental life for one of these centres to become habitually central, while other centres remain peripheral. ‘To say that a man is converted means in these terms that religious ideas previously peripheral in his consciousness now take a central place, and that religious aims form the habitual centre of his energy.’ There is no difference in kind between the experiences immediately at the crisis and those during the period of conviction, except in their heightening and intensification. There is generally intense dejection and sadness carried to the extremes of bodily and mental anguish. If the struggle between the two selves has been a fairly equal one, it results sometimes in a state of coma. The nature of the transformation which occurs at the crisis, when it can be described at all, is of the character that would be expected from the account already given of a divided self and its resolution. Typical experiences are the following. A tension is broken, words of forgiveness are heard, something is torn up as by the roots; pictures, words, or other

symbols flash before the mental vision; there is a witness of the Spirit, a sense of deliverance, a sudden elevation of joy accompanied by a feeling of bodily lightness. The outcome of the event of conversion is a set of emotions, the counterpart of those preceding the crisis. The fruitage of the process is the awakening of a new and higher sense of selfhood, together with a somewhat antithetical process of unselfing which brings the person into lively sympathy with nature, man, and God.

Although conversion is a world-wide phenomenon, it cannot be universally experienced. It belongs clearly to the psychopathic temperamental type. It has been conclusively shown by Coe that those who try to experience conversion and succeed, as against those who try as earnestly and fail, have sensibility as against intellect predominant in their general mental make-up, are subject to automatisms and hallucinations, and are passively submissive to hypnotic suggestion. It is clear also that the quality of the conversions experienced is conditioned by temperamental traits.

There are, among many others, two types of conversion experiences easily distinguishable, the self-surrender and the volition type. The former are likely to experience forgiveness; the latter, on the contrary, are more likely to experience a spontaneous burst of new life, or an instantaneous recoil from the old, as a result of a previous act of the will in striving towards righteousness. In the self-surrender type, relief persistently refuses to come until the person ceases to resist or to make an effort in the direction he desires to go. There are many cases of this kind, like that of John Bunyan, who found forgiveness at last only by deciding to give up his soul to Satan. An interesting instance is that of John Nelson. Exhausted with the anxious struggle to escape damnation, he cried at last, ‘Lord, Thy will be done, damn or save!’ and at that very moment his soul was filled with peace. The fact underlying such experiences seems to be that the personal will is at bottom necessarily, because habitually, identified with the imperfect sinful self, and every effort of will only emphasizes its perpetuation. In an act of self-surrender ‘sub-conscious forces take the lead, and it is the better self *in posse* which directs the operation. Instead of being clumsily and vaguely aimed at from without, it is then itself the organizing centre’ (James). ‘If there is a relaxation—a letting go—the sub-conscious forces are allowed to

exert an influence, and the new centre of energy which has been sub-consciously developing, takes the chief place in consciousness' (Cutten). That something like this is the condition which obtains, is indicated by the frequency with which the transformation is wrought during sleep, or while one is engaged in some occupation entirely foreign to religion. This type of person must relax, must fall back on the larger power that makes for righteousness, and let it finish in its own way the work it has begun. The act of yielding is giving oneself over to the new life and making it the centre of a new personality, and living from within the truth which had before been viewed objectively.

In the volition type, the direction of attention and of striving is intermittently towards the new life. If the condition underlying the deliverance were described in crassly physiological terms, it would be that the 'nervous system grows to the modes in which it has been exercised.' The function of the will seems to be to give point and direction to the sub-conscious processes of growth, which in turn work out and give back to clear consciousness the revelation striven after.

The methods employed by revivalists in bringing about the change of heart are the methods which would accentuate the conflict we are describing. They intensify in all the ways possible, even by the influence of the crowd, the sense of sin, and bring it into the sharpest contrast with God, heaven, and righteousness. Such a procedure not infrequently results in pathological conditions. In many instances, particularly where there has been habitual waywardness, with an incapacity to surmount a set of evil habits, the result seems to be wholesome and permanent, despite temporary relapses. When wrought out in the midst of the great waves of revivalism, there are many evidences that the effects of conversion are evanescent, and perhaps in the long run deleterious (Cutten, Davenport). It is also credible that conversion on the part of the psychopathic temperamental type, following upon a sick-soul experience, is profitable in leading on into a 'two story universe' instead of dwelling in a flat world of practicality (James).

II.

THE ADOLESCENT OR FRUITION TYPE.

The examples of this type of conversion form a series, ranging from those in which the process

of sub-conscious ripening is so gradual that no turning-point in life can be marked off, to those of so dramatic a climax that they are difficult to distinguish from the cataclysmic conversions. Indeed, the surface phenomena are generally very similar, centring in a crisis, preceded by depression and followed by development. A characteristic difference is that in the cataclysmic conversions there is, preceding the crisis, a struggle between a habitually sinful and a righteous self, whilst, preceding the adolescent conversions, there is pain in the presence of an imperfectly felt but dawning life of maturity—the long-recognized 'storm and stress' of adolescence. The latter experience might be designated the sense of incompleteness, as against the sense of sin of the Augustinian or Pauline conversions.

Several sets of statistics have been obtained by different students, showing that this type of conversion is limited, for the most part, to the middle teens. The highest frequency among boys is at 16; among girls, at 13. Before 12 and after 19 the number is small.

Adolescent conversions must be accounted for in terms of an anthropological background, whilst the cataclysmic conversions are explainable, for the most part, from the standpoint of the individual life in the midst of its social reactions. They belong to the complex set of adolescent phenomena that well up out of race life as conditioned by social selection. The curves of frequency of conversion in adolescent years keep pace fairly closely with those of accession to puberty, and those of acceleration and decline in rate of bodily growth. It has been shown that they happen independently of immediate social influences, and that the average age is the same, whether induced by revival excitement or independently of it. Like the love life which blossoms during the same years, the religious impulse is best described as one among the instincts (Marshall, Starbuck).

The adolescent crisis stands for the event of breaking away from the free, irresponsible, sensory-motor, practical life of childhood, which has become fixed and habitual, into the responsible, purposeful, rational activity of mature life, with its appreciation of spiritual values. The transition is difficult, and represents a long process of social acquisition which in the individual is crowded into narrow time-limits. It seems to have been narrowed down to the few years of middle adoles-

cence, and the transition sharpened into a dramatic event by the customs of initiation practised among most peoples from the earliest times (Daniels). Boys and girls, showing suddenly the bodily and mental marks which would fit them for social and family responsibilities, have been the fittest subjects for the initiation ceremonies, and so have been selected as the favoured members of the group. Confirmation, as practised among several religious communities, is the modern counterpart of the custom of initiation. Conversion stands for the inner spiritual adjustment of which confirmation is the symbol.

If this theory is true, it suggests an important point in the pedagogy of conversion. Most students at the present time agree upon the wisdom of anticipating mature activities and interests during late childhood, and of protracting during late adolescence the influences leading to a final re-adjustment to the ideals of mature life, so that the

adjustment shall be gradual and normal. It is questionable, however, whether this sort of tuition can be entirely successful in respect to the mental and spiritual life, for the same reasons that it would probably be impossible to undo the sudden bodily transformations of early adolescence. The nature of the spiritual event, together with its value in a complete clarification and re-orientation, are suggested by the following quotation from Lacordaire: 'It is a sublime moment, the one in which the flash of light enters the soul and binds to a common centre the threads which had remained disconnected. There is always such an insuperable distance between the moment following and the moment preceding the flash, between what one was before and what one is after, that the word *grace* has been invented to explain this magical stroke of lightning from above. . . . He who has not had this experience has not known human life.'

In the Study.

Virginitibus Puerisque.

I.

THE Rev. H. G. Tunncliff, B.A., has gathered into a small volume a short series of addresses which he gave to children on certain familiar public notices, such as, Keep to the Right, This House to Let, Beware of Pickpockets! He calls it *Wet Paint* (Allenson; 1s. net). Here is one of the Addresses, on

Analysis Invited.

I dare say you have seen on the front of your milkman's cart, these words: ANALYSIS INVITED. I do not suppose that many of you have yet begun to learn Greek, but when you do you will discover how many of our English words have their origin in that language. This word 'analysis' is one of them, and it signifies a 'splitting up,' a 'loosing.' Those of you who have safely passed the pitfalls of parsing in your English Grammar know what the analysis of sentences means, with all its bewildering accompaniment of extensions and enlargements! What your milkman means is this: my milk is so pure that you can take it to the

analytical chemist and ask him to split it up into various parts, submit it to whatever tests he pleases, and he will find that nothing has been added to or taken from it; that it is fresh from the cow, about whom that great lover of children—Robert Louis Stevenson—sings in his *Child's Garden of Verses*:

The friendly cow all red and white
I love with all my heart;
She gives me cream with all her might,
To eat with apple-tart.

What a magnificent thing it would be if all girls and boys could say of their lives 'ANALYSIS INVITED'! How many of us can say that? The Lord Jesus Christ did not often speak with severity, but one of the most stinging things He ever said was about people who, He said, were like whited sepulchres, outwardly fair and clean, but inwardly foul and unsightly. There are some boys and girls who are so well-behaved when on a visit—but at home their conduct will not bear analysis! How industrious is many a class in the presence of the master or mistress, but, if left to itself for a few minutes, I am perfectly sure that it does not invite analysis of its work. Your mothers and