

in it. They are concerned in it more radically. God has more interest in it. We want a revival of religion. We are actually praying for it. Yet many of us are doing nothing that is worth speaking about to put an end to this sale. Cleanse your hands, ye praying sinners. Not till then will the revival come.

Why are we doing so little to bring this traffic to an end? Well, some of us are interested in it. As the Chief Magistrate of a northern city said naively to a deputation, 'You must remember that a great many private persons have an interest in the drink trade.' Then some of us are self-indulgent. We are Christians of a sort, and we do not see the absurdity of belonging to this wholly new type of Christianity—the Christianity of the self-indulgent. And last of all we have too little imagination.

We have too little imagination. One night a man whom we know was on his way home. It was late—about the time when in those days the public-houses closed. He noticed two children standing at the mouth of a close. When he asked them what they were doing there at that time of night, their answer was, 'We are waiting to see if our father is owre drunk to lick us.'

Our friend was well-meaning. He was a moderate drinker certainly, and had even repeated on occasion the jovial remark that the most in-

temperate people he knew were the temperance people. He was a well-meaning man without much imagination. But that sight arrested him. Those little girls were waiting to see if they could go to bed without the fear of a half-drunk father letting loose his maddened temper upon them. They were praying to God, in their own way, that He would not let their father out of the public-house until he was helplessly drunk.

Some time ago Lord Rosebery told us that if the country did not throttle the drink traffic, the drink traffic would throttle the country. Has the war come to give it its opportunity? There are those who think so. We do not ourselves believe it for a moment. But one thing is certain. If the Church of God in this land does not throttle the drink traffic, the drink traffic will throttle the Church. And there is little time to lose. We believe that the drink traffic will be throttled. God's in His heaven: we cannot believe that He should send this great nation down to the company of the extinct nations of the earth while yet it has so great a work to do for righteousness. But how will it be if the nation is saved by others? How if it is saved by the shipbuilders on the Clyde? 'For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?'

## Notes of Recent Exposition.

RECENT events have led men to cast doubt on the worth of the specialist. The doubt will pass with the events. The Rev. A. Lukyn WILLIAMS, D.D., Canon of Ely, is a specialist. He has given a long life (Bishop Chase speaks of 'a friendship which is "hastening to fulfil" its fortieth year') to the study of Christianity in its relation to the Jews. The field is limited, and he has mastered

it. He was chosen to deliver twelve lectures before the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn on the Foundation of Bishop Warburton. He chose as the subject of lecture *The Hebrew-Christian Messiah* (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d. net).

By 'the Hebrew-Christian Messiah' Dr. Lukyn WILLIAMS means 'the presentation of the Messiah

to the Jews in the Gospel according to St. Matthew.' It is a limited subject and it is a large book. But then it is all here. The innumerable little books that have been written about it may be removed from their place and put away. It is all here, and authoritatively. And, if it is a limited subject, it is after all a subject great enough to repay the special study of a man's long lifetime.

One of the things which have arrested the attention of Dr. Lukyn WILLIAMS in his study of St. Matthew's Gospel is the fact that St. Matthew believed in the divinity of Jesus. There seems to be nothing in all the First Gospel that has astonished him more. For St. Matthew was a Jew. If you interject that the First Gospel was not written by St. Matthew, it makes no difference. The writer was a Jew. How did a pious and loyal Israelite come to believe that the man whom he knew on earth as Jesus of Nazareth was God?

The superficial reader of the history of religion tells us that belief in the deification of men was common at the time when the Gospel according to St. Matthew was written. And no doubt it was common, quite common, among the Greeks and the Romans. But no one believes that St. Matthew or those about him were in the least degree affected by what was done in Athens or in Rome. They were Jews. They were not even Hellenists—though there is no evidence that even the Hellenists ever thought of deifying men. St. Matthew and the first Christians were Jews of Palestine, monotheistic to the backbone, not in the least likely to be affected by heathenism.

Yet St. Matthew believed that Jesus was divine. He believed that He was greater than the angels. He believed that He was on an equality with the Father. How did he come by such a creed? And when?

Dr. Lukyn WILLIAMS does not believe that he arrived at this belief during our Lord's earthly

life. He may have accepted St. Peter's acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the living God. But St. Peter himself by this acknowledgment came far short of belief in the full Godhead of Jesus. 'During the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth, St. Matthew received the impression of Him as a unique personality, quite above and beyond any other he had seen, but he never regarded Him as God.'

The Resurrection must have made a difference—partly the fact itself, partly the words of the risen Master. 'For now the Twelve, with the other believers, knew that Jesus was on so high a pedestal that all authority in heaven and earth was given to Him, and that His presence with His people was assured to them all the days until the completion of this current age.'

And if the Resurrection did much, Pentecost did more. But Dr. Lukyn WILLIAMS believes that it was not till after Pentecost that St. Matthew was able to express in identical terms the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son. Putting it as he hopes 'with no suspicion of irreverence,' he says that 'the doctrine of the full divinity of Jesus was the result of holy thought and meditation guided by the Spirit. Then, and only then, after, it may be, weeks or months, or possibly a few years (though we have no hint that the time was so long), the value and the purpose of Jesus' life, words, death, and resurrection were at last understood.' And thus it came to pass that 'in spite of St. Matthew's strict monotheism, which brooked no tampering with the deification of men, the pressure of the events of our Lord's life, together with His teaching, compelled him to come to the amazing conclusion that Jesus was not only the Son of David, and the Son of man, but even the Son of God, in the highest meaning of that supreme title.' To strengthen that faith in his readers was one of the reasons why he wrote the First Gospel.

Well, it is something to know how St. Matthew

came to believe in the divinity of our Lord. But it is not everything. Much more important for us is the question, How do we ourselves come to believe in it?

Some will answer, in the words of the children's hymn, because 'the Bible tells me so.' And some in words that are just as childish, 'because the Church has included the divinity of Jesus Christ in its creeds.' Which of these answers does Dr. Lukyn WILLIAMS give?

'Not because St. Matthew said He was. Nor because the other Apostles said so. Nor because all the writers of the New Testament said the same thing. Nor, again, because the Church tells us so. We each started with this reason, no doubt. When we were children we were bound to believe what we were told, if we were to arrive at any creed or knowledge worth holding or knowing. But for grown and intelligent men to believe so stupendous an assertion as the divinity of Jesus solely on the strength of another man's belief, or on the belief of others, countless though these be as the grains of sand along the shore, and united though they are by a spiritual tie so close and living that it is compared in Scripture to that of the various members of a human being—number and size do not count against one immortal mind—is to abdicate the functions of discernment and decision implanted in us by God. By all means let us give weight, due and proper, to the authority of numbers and of moral superiority; but to accept a truth solely because of what others say, without making any effort to understand the principles that have guided them to accept what they now offer us—this is to despise the inheritance of sanity, the awful gifts of will and choice. To accept blindly a *quantum* of dogma at the bidding even of Holy Church is what no man, above all no Christian man, is called upon to do. That is but a false humility which urges us towards it.'

The paragraph is worth quoting. It is worth

quoting to the end. There is no more loyal 'Churchman' living than Dr. Lukyn WILLIAMS; there is no 'Biblical Christian' that is more reverent than he. But he is a man, with a man's responsibilities. And the first of all his responsibilities is responsibility for what he believes. If he believes in the divinity of Christ it is because the facts of history, interpreted as he is able to interpret them, compel him to that belief.

'Can we, then,' he asks, 'as thinking men, believe in the divinity of Jesus? I answer that the question is rather: Can we help believing in it, if we accept the Gospel narrative as substantially correct? And, further, I will say, treat the narrative as critically as you may; remove, if canons of historical criticism demand it, saying after saying, and explain away miracle after miracle, strictly in accordance with scientific knowledge; cast everything into the crucible of the severest tests possible, without bias either for or against the miraculous, or for or against Christian dogma, if such freedom from bias can be found, and the residuum is that One still stands out before us unique in history for the powers He displayed over disease and nature; for the holiness He exhibited in every place and in all circumstances; for the continuous communion He enjoyed with His Father in heaven; for the love which prompted Him to give at last His very life for others; for the triumph He gained after death—One who claimed to be above angels, and even to be on an equality with God; One upon whom the earliest Christian Church, the society of the first believing Jews, was built, and in Whom, as they affirmed, they obtained pardon and peace and power, in a word, eternal life.'

Such is He whom the Gospels give us—the Gospels as a modern scholar must receive them. Who was He? Was He a good Jew, put to death for reforming tendencies? The books that tell His story are Gospels—what Gospel would there

be in that? Was He a man in advance of His age—so far in advance that millenniums may pass before there arises another like Him? The difference is not enough. He stands apart, not in time, but in conception. Time will pass, but we do not look for the man who will one day stand beside Him.

Who was He? Was He the one man among men so filled with the Spirit of God that He became the revelation of the Most High—the express image of His person? You may as well fall down and worship Him at once. For that is the very man of whom Thomas said, ‘My Lord and my God.’

And if you ask why you should fall down and worship Him, if you ask why you should name Him God, the answer is, Because He has power on earth to forgive sins. ‘When we study the Gospel of St. Matthew, it is evident that the Son of God is come not only to exhibit God’s holiness and love, but to do so with the express object of freeing us men from sin. Whatever may be said for the belief that the Incarnation would have taken place even if sin had had no power over us—and there is much to be said for it—the Gospel of St. Matthew knows nothing of this. We read instead, in the first chapter, that the Son of the Blessed Virgin shall be called “Jesus, for it is he that shall save his people from their sins”; and in the twentieth, that Jesus Himself says, He came “to give his life a ransom for many.” To us, sinful people, saved by the Incarnation of the Son of God, and by that alone, His coming is the everlasting subject of our gratitude and praise.’

It is Christopher Harvey, near the middle of the seventeenth century, who sings:

Alas! shall I present  
My sinfulness  
To Thee? Thou wilt resent  
The loathsomeness.

‘Be not afraid, I’ll take  
Thy sins on Me,  
And all My favour make  
To shine on thee.’  
Lord, what Thou’lt have me, Thou must make  
me.  
‘As I have made thee now, I take thee.’

What is meant by ‘the second death’? ‘He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.’ What is this second death? Turn to Provost Erskine HILL’S *Apocalyptic Problems* (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s. net) and you will see.

The Seer of the Apocalypse has three worlds within his ken. He has the physical, the emotional, and the mental worlds. The symbols of the book standing for these three worlds are the earth, the sea, and the air. But we may ignore the symbols now. The Seer has these three worlds within his ken. And so have we.

First we have the physical world. Our correspondence with it depends on the possession of a physical body endowed with senses which enable our consciousness to respond to the vibrations of that world. But our consciousness also responds, to vibrations coming from the emotional and the mental worlds. How can that be unless we have some sort of emotional body and some sort of mental body which correspond to our physical body? We do not see these bodies. We do not taste or handle them. We simply postulate their existence because we cannot explain the facts of our consciousness without them, just as the scientist postulates the existence of ether because he cannot explain the phenomena of light without it.

We call the physical body the real or objective

body, because it belongs to this world. The emotional and mental bodies we call subjective, because they belong to the world that is to come. But the one is as real as the other, if only we could realize it. Macbeth's dagger was indeed 'a dagger of the mind,' as Lady Macbeth called it. The guilty Thane could not 'clutch' it with his hand. But if he had laid aside the physical body, if he had laid it aside simply by dying, then the dagger of the mind might have been as visible, and to some subtler grasp of the hand as 'clutchable' as any 'real' dagger here.

We put off the physical body in death. Are we then bodiless? No; we are clothed upon with an emotional body. We are not clothed upon with a mental body at once. But we are at once clothed upon with an emotional body. It is a body which depends upon the emotional life we have lived in this world. It depends upon the desires we have felt and the encouragement we have given them. 'Here, let us suppose, is a man who is continually brooding on what is vile. He listens eagerly to what is evil. He has "eyes that cannot cease from sin." He gives free rein to every passion, he stimulates and gratifies natural cravings and creates others which are artificial, using his body meanwhile as the instrument through which these desires, gaining strength from day to day, find their gratification. Every such desire contributes to build up in him an emotional body, tuned, so to speak, only to respond to vibrations which are evil.' And when that man finds himself in the other world he will find himself 'clothed upon' with a body which corresponds in its degradation to those desires and cravings which he indulged on earth.

What is he to do now? He must be 'tormented in this flame,' as the rich man was. He must suffer as Tantalus suffered, or as the Gluttons in the Purgatorio suffered, until he is purged of his evil desires and inclinations. When that time comes he will be allowed to put off the emotional

body, as once he put off the physical. He will die a second death.

But if a man's desires on earth have been pure, and lovely, and of good report; or if he has overcome other desires by self-restraint and surrender to God, he will be clothed upon, when he passes into the other world, with the mental body, if not at once, at least after a short and comparatively painless experience of the emotional body. For the mental body is the body of those saints in light over whom the second death has no power.

Now if this speculation of Provost Erskine HILL explains anything it explains much more than the second death. It explains the conditions of that life upon which we enter with the death of the body.

Provost Erskine HILL believes that when we lay aside this present physical body we pass to an existence which does not differ in any serious respect or degree from our present existence. In other words, he believes in what is called continuity. He believes in the continuity of the life to come with the life that now is. As we are, so we find ourselves. We are caught, as it were, at the point of departure, and told to proceed from that point, by whatever painful steps and slow we are fit for.

That is a much greater matter than the matter of the second death. We may accept, or we may reject, Provost Erskine HILL's ingenious interpretation of the second death without being seriously disturbed. But we cannot accept his theory of continuity without having our ideas of the life to come profoundly modified. And not only our ideas of the life to come, but also our attitude to Christ and all that He said about the life to come.

There has just been published a small book by Dr. James DENNEY, Principal of the United Free Church College in Glasgow, on *War and the Fear*

of God (Hodder & Stoughton; 2s. 6d. net). It is a reprint of a few articles contributed to *The British Weekly*, together with three sermons, which also deal with important issues thrust before us by the war. In one of the articles Dr. DENNEY approaches the thought of victory over death.

It is an easy thought for him. He has no doubt of the victory which has been achieved by Christ. He has no doubt of the victory having been achieved for us. This great scholar and untrammelled critic of tradition finds all life that is worth living and all hope that is worth having in the atonement for sin made by Christ on the Cross. He has no fear in face of death beyond the fear that the flesh carries.

But he does not believe in moral continuity. He says that 'death is a tremendous breach of continuity of some kind, and by all analogy should have strange and perhaps literally immeasurable consequences. When the Westminster divines taught that the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory, and that their bodies being still united to Christ do rest in their graves till the Resurrection, they may have said more than they knew, but they certainly spoke more in the spirit of the New Testament revelation than those who tell us that death really makes no difference.'

And the reason why he cannot believe in moral continuity is that it is too terrible. Is that a surprise? Is it not, as much as anything, on account of its reasonableness that the advocates of moral continuity offer it for our acceptance? But in religion the most reasonable doctrine may be the most incredible and awful. For in religion—in the religion of Christ at least—we are invited to transcend the stretches of the reason. The moment we condescend on what is reasonable we find ourselves involved in compromises which take

away everything that faith looks forward to. We advance here and retreat there as 'a reasonable view of things' leads us about, until we are left with a belief which is no belief but, in Dr. DENNEY'S words, 'too terrible an unbelief.'

'If,' he says, 'we had just to go on as we are with the same degrading temptations, the same moral impotence, the same miserable facility of injuring others and of setting in motion evil we cannot control, most men, like Mr. Godkin, would "compromise on annihilation." But the New Testament is written in quite another key. Whatever be the rights of continuity, death is a stupendous event and has stupendous consequences. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." To depart and to be with Christ is not to prolong life as it is; it is far, far better.'

There is no doubt that this is all too high for reasonable belief. But we must not reject it on that account. It may be beyond all that we deserve, beyond all that we can even think of. Yet we must not refuse to believe in it. After all, is not everything that belongs to the gospel beyond our deserving and beyond our imagination? Is not the one difficulty in the gospel which haunts us through life just this, that it is too good for us? We are always saying that we would rather take less. 'Full forgiveness now, that cost the atoning death of Jesus; glory, honour, and immortality in a future in which sin is unknown—blessings like these we are too humble to accept. But such humility is but poorly veiled pride. It is far deeper humility which with its eye turned to God and not to self exclaims, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth."''