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## INTRODUCTION TO A TRANSCENDENTAL CRITICISM OF PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT<sup>1</sup>

THE subject which I have chosen for my lecture gives me the opportunity of informing you of some of the fundamental characteristics of the new philosophy which has been developed during the last twenty years at the Free University of Amsterdam, and which has come to be known as "The Philosophy of the Idea of Law".<sup>2</sup>

What is the meaning of this Philosophy?

It is a fact generally known that the student who sets himself to study the history of Philosophy finds himself much embarrassed and even disappointed because he must observe profound disagreement between the different schools even with regard to the most fundamental principles of philosophy. In this situation the most embarrassing point is that the different schools, so far at least as they maintain the scientific character of philosophy, profess all alike to be founded solely on purely theoretical and scientific principles; in other words, that they are all adherents of the so-called autonomy of reason. Now if that were true it seems a little astonishing that they cannot succeed in convincing one another by purely scientific arguments. When for example a philosopher of the Thomist school alleges that he can prove by purely scientific arguments the existence of a supreme God, First Cause and Final End of the universe, and the existence of a rational immortal soul, a substance immaterial, indissoluble and simple, he meets a philosopher of the Kantian "critical" school who alleges on the contrary that all these arguments issue from a vain and sterile metaphysic, based on the misuse of the categories of the understanding and the theoretical ideas of pure reason. The Thomist for his part does not believe his position to be affected by the "critical" arguments. The result is that these schools continue to follow each its own way after a simulated

<sup>1</sup> A lecture delivered to French students in Amsterdam.

<sup>2</sup> "The Philosophy of the Idea of Law" received its name from Professor Dooyeweerd's large work bearing that title which appeared in three volumes published by Panis at Amsterdam, 1935-6. The publication of this work, now out of print, occasioned the founding of the Union for Calvinist Philosophy (President, Professor Yollenhoven) which has now about 500 members in Holland and beyond, in addition to a large number of subscribers. It has a quarterly Review, *Philosophia Reformata* (Editor, J. H. Kok, Kampen, Holland). The Philosophy of the Idea of Law has many adherents in South Africa, the U.S.A., Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands East Indies.

combat. Have they had real intellectual contact? I believe the answer must be: No.

That prompts us to raise the question whether theoretical principles are the true starting point of these schools. Would it not be possible that their true starting point is hidden beneath supposedly scientific theses, and that scientific thought has deeper roots which must be discovered in order to establish contact between different schools of philosophic thought? The Philosophy of the Idea of Law has raised that question, which is closely related to the question of the relation between faith and scientific thought.

It begins with a criticism, thus called transcendental, of philosophic thought, and demands a profound study of its universal and necessary structure. It opens this criticism by raising the problem: how is a scientific philosophy possible? that is to say under what universal and necessary conditions?

At first sight it might appear that this problem is not at all new. Did not Kant, the founder of the "critical" school, already ask: How is an objective experience, i.e. a truly scientific experience, possible? But this latter problem is not identical with that raised by the Philosophy of the Idea of Law. Kant wanted to investigate only the objective basis of the mathematical sciences and the Newtonian Physics, and the true limits of scientific thought with regard to metaphysics. But he did not examine the possibility of a critical theory of human knowledge as a purely scientific theory. He invites his readers in the introduction to his celebrated work, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, to accept no other datum than Pure Reason. Consequently the theoretical attitude of thought has for him nothing problematical. He considers it as an unshakable datum. Now it is precisely here that the Philosophy of the Idea of Law sets its mark of interrogation. It demands a truly critical study of the structure of theoretical thought as such.

(1) *By what characteristics is scientific thought distinguished from pre-scientific thought and common experience?*

Without doubt it is characterised by a specific attitude in which we create a theoretic distance between the logical aspect of our thought and the non-logical aspect of our field of study. This attitude produces an antithetical relation in which the logical aspect of our thought is opposed to the non-logical aspect

of the reality investigated. In this antithetic relation the non-logical aspect opposes a resistance to every effort of our understanding to comprehend it in a logical concept. From this theoretic antithesis arises the scientific problem. The Germans have expressed this resistance of the object of knowledge by the strong word *Gegenstand*.

Does this antithetic relation correspond to reality? Not at all. If it were true there would be in effect a deep gulf fixed between the logical aspect of our thought and the non-logical aspect which is its *Gegenstand*, its opposite. There would be no possibility of throwing a bridge across this abyss. The possibility of knowledge would be lost. In fact the antithetic relation is based upon a purely theoretic abstraction. The different aspects of reality are indissolubly linked by time, which is the deepest ground of temporal reality. This allows us to raise a second problem which we may formulate thus:

(2) *From what is abstraction made in scientific thought and how is this abstraction possible?*

In setting this problem we may not start from the antithetic relation as from a datum involving no problem in itself. It is far from being a *datum*, for it contains precisely a fundamental problem. Let us now compare the theoretic attitude with the pre-theoretic attitude of common experience. The latter is characterised by an absolute lack of all antithetic relation. In the attitude of common experience we find ourselves completely *within* empirical reality *with all the functions of our consciousness*. There is no distance, no opposition between the logical aspect of our thought and the non-logical aspects of reality. But if there is an absolute lack of the antithetic relation, naïve experience is none the less characterised by another relation, namely *the relation of the subject to the object of our experience*. Current philosophy has very erroneously confounded this relation with the antithetic relation of theoretical thought. It is precisely the opposite.

In naïve experience we attribute without hesitation objective qualities—sensual, logical, cultural, social, aesthetic, even moral—to the objects of our common life. We know very well that they cannot function as subjects which feel, distinguish logically, live together in a society, or make value-judgments. We know perfectly that these objective qualities belong to them only with

reference to the subjective functions of some possible consciousness. We experience this relation of subject and object as *a structural relation of reality itself*. That is to say, sensual colour belongs to the rose only with reference to a *possible* sensual perception, not to my individual perception or yours. To sum up: the subject-object relation leaves reality intact, together. The antithetic relation on the contrary is the product of an analysis, an abstraction.

The view of naïve experience which I have here given you is not generally accepted. Current opinion considers naïve experience from the theoretical point of view. It is conceived as a specific theory of reality, the so-called "*naïve realist*" theory, or the "*image theory*". According to this view, naïve experience would imagine that human consciousness was placed like a photographic apparatus opposite a reality, as it were, independent of that consciousness. This "*reality in itself*" would be reproduced faithfully and completely in consciousness. That is a very erroneous conception of naïve experience. Naïve experience is not a *theory* of reality. Rather it takes reality as it is given. It is itself a datum, or rather *the supreme datum* for every theory of reality and of knowledge.

Let us return now to the antithetic relation of scientific thought. We have seen that from this relation arises the scientific problem. Theoretical thought cannot stop before the problem. It must advance from theoretical antithesis to synthesis. It must arrive at a logical concept of the non-logical aspect of reality. Here emerges a new problem, which we may formulate thus:

(3) *From what starting point is it possible to apprehend integrally in a synthetic view the diverse aspects of reality which are analysed and opposed to one another in the antithetic relation?*

In raising this problem the Philosophy of the Idea of Law submits every possible starting point of philosophic thought to a fundamental criticism.

Now it is indubitable that a truly critical attitude of thought does not permit us to choose the starting point in one of the opposed terms of the antithetic relation, that is, neither in the logical aspect of our thought, nor in the non-logical aspect of the *object* of our thought. Yet the current philosophy seems obliged by its dogma of the autonomy of reason to seek a point of departure in theoretical thought itself. Now here arises an

inescapable embarrassment. For by its intrinsic structure the logical aspect of our thought in its scientific function is obliged to proceed by a theoretical synthesis. And there are as many possible theoretical syntheses as reality has aspects. There is a synthesis of a mathematical nature, another of a physical nature, another biological, psychological, historical, sociological, etc., etc. In which of these possible syntheses will philosophical thought seek its point of departure? It matters not which it chooses, for it will always exaggerate one of these aspects, and this will lead to the proclamation of the *absolutism of one of the special synthetic points of view*. There is the true source of all the "isms" in philosophy, which haunt scientific thought and furiously give one another battle.

Now it is curious that apparently all these "isms" can be pursued in theory. How is that possible? The Philosophy of the Idea of Law has unveiled this mystery by a serious analysis of the structure of the aspects of reality.

What is a structure? It is an architectonic plan according to which a diversity of "moments" is united in a totality. And that is only possible so long as the different "moments" do not occupy the same place in the totality but are rather knit together by a *directive and central "moment"*. This is precisely the situation with regard to the structure of the different aspects of reality. They have an enduring structure in time which is the necessary condition for the functioning of variable phenomena in the framework of these aspects.

In this structure we find, necessarily, a central and directive "moment" which cannot be logically defined because by it an aspect maintains its individuality with regard to all the other aspects of reality, even with regard to the logical aspect of our thought. We call this directive "moment" the "*nuclear moment*". The "nuclear moment", however, cannot display its individuality except in close liaison with a series of other "moments". These latter are by nature partially *analogical*, i.e. they recall the "nuclear moments" of all the aspects which have an anterior place in the order of aspects. Partially also they are of the nature of *anticipations*, which recall the "nuclear moments" of all the aspects which have a later place in that order.

Let us take for example the sensation-aspect of reality. In its structure we find a nuclear element which cannot be further

reduced and which guarantees the individuality of the aspect in its proper sense. This is the "*sensation-moment as such*". "*Was man nicht definieren kann, das sieht man als ein Fuehlen an.*" Only it would be quite wrong to suppose that this is a trait characteristic of the sensation-aspect of reality and of it alone. In fact we encounter the same situation in all the other aspects.

Round this central or nuclear "moment" are grouped analogical "moments". We find in the first place an analogical "moment" which recalls the nuclear "moment" of the biological aspect of reality. There is a living sensation and in this "vital moment" the sensation-aspect discovers its indissoluble liaison with the aspect of organic life. The living sensation is not identical with the organic life of our body. It obeys its own laws, which are of a psychological nature. It remains characterised by its own nuclear "moment", the "sensation moment". Nevertheless there is no living sensation possible without the solid foundation of an organic life in the biological sense.

Then in the structure of the sensation-aspect we find an analogical "moment" which recalls the nuclear moment of the physical aspect, i.e., movement. No sensation-life is possible which does not reveal itself in emotions. Emotion is a movement of feeling. But a movement of feeling cannot be reduced to a physical or chemical movement. It remains characterised by its nuclear "moment" and submissive to its own psychological laws. Only, every emotion takes place on the solid foundation of the physical and chemical movements of our body.

Next we find in the structure of the sensation aspect an analogical "moment" which recalls the nuclear moment of the spatial aspect of reality. In the life of sensation there is necessarily a feeling of space which corresponds to perceived space, and is differentiated as optical, auditive and tactile space. This perceived space is not at all identical with mathematical space but it is not possible without the foundation of the latter.

Finally, we find in the structure of the sensation-aspect an analogical "moment" which recalls the nuclear moment of the arithmetical aspect, i.e., quantity or number. There is no emotional life possible without a multiplicity and diversity of sensations. This multiplicity is not at all identical with multiplicity in the arithmetical sense. It is qualitative and psychological. It allows no quantitative isolation like the different parts of a straight line. The different sensations penetrate one

another. Only, this multiplicity is impossible without the foundation of an arithmetical multiplicity.

So far we have analysed the structure of the sensation-aspect only in the analogical direction. That is the "primitive or closed situation" in which we find the sensation-life in the animals. But when you study the sensation-life of man you discover "moments" of anticipation by which the life of feeling relates itself to the nuclear "moments" of all the later aspects of reality. We meet successively a logical feeling, an historical feeling, a linguistic feeling, a social feeling for propriety and tact, an economic feeling, an aesthetic feeling, a feeling for right, a moral feeling and a feeling of unshakable certitude which is akin to faith.

Here is revealed a structural phenomenon which we call *the universality in its proper orbit* of every aspect of reality. Every aspect is a true mirror of the entire order of aspects. It reflects in its own way the totality of aspects. And here at the same time is the clue to all the philosophical "isms". We now understand how it is possible for them all to be pursued equally with the appearance of conviction. And it is also evident that they cannot result from a truly critical attitude of thought. For we must choose between these alternatives: either all the "isms" are equally right, in which case they destroy one another: or they are equally wrong, and that is more likely. Thus it appears that the current opinion which maintains the autonomy of scientific thought is self-refuted.

It is just at this point that Immanuel Kant, the founder of the "critical" school, believed he could show another way. He saw very clearly that the various philosophical "isms" lack a critical attitude. He seeks a starting point for his theoretical philosophy which would be raised above the special synthetic points of view. And he is of opinion that this transcendent point of our consciousness can only be discovered by the way of *knowledge of ourselves*. This way contains a great promise. For it is indubitable that our theoretical thought, so long as it is fixed on the different aspects of reality, is dissipated in a theoretical diversity. Only in the way of knowledge of itself can human consciousness concentrate on a central point where all the aspects of our consciousness *converge in a radical unity*. The ancient Greek philosophers knew this very well. Socrates already laid it down that self-knowledge is the key to all philosophy. But here arises a new problem, which we may formulate thus:



(4) *How is self-knowledge possible, and of what nature is this knowledge?*

Kant did not wish to abandon the theoretical point of departure. Owing to the dogma of the autonomy of scientific thought he is obliged to seek a starting point in pure reason itself. But he supposes it will be possible to demonstrate in scientific thought itself a transcendent point of consciousness which will be raised above the different special synthetic viewpoints. This is how he thinks to resolve the problem. He believes that in the logical aspect of our thought there is a subjective pole—" *I think* "—which has an opposite pole in every concrete empirical reality, and which guarantees the radical unity of all our synthetic acts. This " *I think* " is, according to him, the ultimate logical subject, which can never become the object of our knowledge, because every act of theoretical knowing must start from " *I think* ". This " *I think* " is not at all identical with our concrete acts of thinking. These latter can themselves become the object of " *I think* "; while " *I think* " is the universal and necessary condition of every theoretic and synthetic act of our consciousness. It has no individuality. It is not of an empirical nature. It is a condition, logical and general by nature, of every scientific act.

The question now is whether Kant has succeeded in demonstrating a true point of departure in theoretical thought, and the answer must be: No. As we have just seen, the point of departure of theoretical thought must transcend the opposed terms of the antithetic relation. But Kant seeks for one in the logical aspect of thought. " *I think* " remains within the antithetic relation, opposed to the object. In the logical aspect there cannot be a radical unity given in " *I think* ". For we have seen that the structure of a specific aspect is always a unity *in* diversity of " moments " and never a unity above the " moments ". Besides it is a profound error to suppose that empirical reality itself could become the object of the logical aspect of our thought. The object is always the product of a theoretical abstraction by which a non-logical aspect of reality is opposed to the logical aspect of our thought.

Thus there arises anew the problem which we have already formulated. How is self-knowledge possible? For indubitably the way of self-knowledge will be the sole way to discover the

true starting point of our scientific thought. Now it is generally admitted that *self-knowledge is always correlative to knowledge of God*. When for example Aristotle seeks the characteristic and central point of human nature in the theoretical understanding, this self-knowledge is indissolubly knit with his conception of God. God is for Aristotle Absolute Theoretical Thought, *noēsis noēseōs*, which has only itself for object, and which is *pure form* opposed to all *matter*. When in modern philosophy the great German thinker Leibniz seeks the central point of human nature in mathematical thought with its clear and distinct concepts, this self-knowledge is quite dependent on his conception of God. God is for Leibniz the archetypal Intellect, the great Geometrician, Creative Thought. And when Kant, in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, seeks the true core of human nature in its moral function, in its liberty to give itself its own laws, this self-knowledge is correlative to his idea of God, which is moralistic.

In fact self-knowledge is by nature religious. Man's "Self" is the concentration point of all his existence, of all his functions within the different aspects of temporal reality. The Self is the religious centre, the heart, as Holy Scripture says, of all existence. The Self seeks, by an original innate tendency, its divine origin, and cannot know itself except in this original relation.

The true starting point of any possible philosophy is always *a fundamentally religious motive*. That is guaranteed by the very structure of theoretical thought which we have investigated above. These religious motives are the true motive forces which have dominated the evolution of western scientific thought. Each motive establishes a community among those who start from it. It dominates the thinker all the more if he is unconscious of his hidden religious motive.

There have been four great religious motives which have dominated the evolution of western scientific thought. I can but briefly mention them.

In the first place there is the great motive of *Matter and Form*, which was the fundamental motive of Greek thought. It originates in an endless conflict in the religious consciousness of the Greeks between the natural religion of antiquity and the cultural religion of the Olympic gods. Matter corresponds to the faith of the ancient natural religion, according to which divinity was the great vital current without stable or personal

form, out of which emerge all beings of individual form, which are subject to the great law of birth and death by a blind necessity, *Anangke*. The motive of form corresponds to the faith of the later religion of the Olympic gods who are only deified cultural forces who have left their mother earth with its vital current to receive an immortal, personal and invisible form. But the Olympic gods have no power over against *Anangke*, which dominates the stream of life and death. *Anangke* is their great antagonist.

The second fundamental motive was introduced into western thought by the Christian religion. It is the motive of *the Creation, the radical Fall due to sin, and Redemption in Jesus Christ*. The third is that of *Nature and Grace*, introduced by Catholicism, which originates in an attempt to reconcile the opposed religious motives of Greek and Christian thought. The fourth is that of *Nature and Liberty*, introduced by modern Humanism, which originates in an insoluble conflict between the religious cult of human personality in its liberty and autonomy and the desire to dominate reality by modern natural science, which seeks to construe it as a rational and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects. This humanist motive has absorbed into itself the three earlier fundamental motives, secularising the Christian motive and the Catholic motive.

It is evident that a critical study of the influence of these great religious motives on scientific thought should open the door to a profounder view of the history of philosophy. Here in fact are to be discovered the profound roots of scientific thought which were hidden by theoretical masks under the reign of the dogma of the autonomy of reason. Here also appears the only way to establish real contact or discussion between the different schools, which at present seems impossible for lack of any notion of the true starting points of philosophy.

I regret that I cannot now pursue this transcendental criticism of philosophic thought in its application to the different schools. I hope however that I have succeeded in inspiring in you some interest in the critical view of the Philosophy of the Idea of Law.

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## THE TYNDALE FELLOWSHIP FOR BIBLICAL RESEARCH

IN May 1938 some senior members and friends of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions met in the house of one of their number in London to consider how best the reproach of obscurantism and anti-intellectual prejudice might be removed from Evangelical Christianity in England. How far this reproach was justified is a question outside the scope of this paper; at any rate, it was widely believed that Evangelicals were afraid of scholarship, especially Biblical and theological scholarship, and Evangelicals in England did not always act in such a way as to explode this belief. In this respect, of course, there was a considerable difference between English and Scottish Evangelicalism. One ordinand in the 1920's, who is now on the staff of a theological college, was strongly urged by an eminent Evangelical clergyman not to read for theological honours in one of the ancient English universities; and when he disregarded this and other warnings, the oddity of a confessed Evangelical pursuing such a course earned for him in Evangelical circles the title of "The Theologian". Most happily, the precedent he established was followed by others. But the situation left much to be desired when these men met to consider it in 1938.

After some discussion, they constituted themselves as the Biblical Research Committee, loosely attached to the Inter-Varsity Fellowship. The object of this Committee was from the first to endeavour by all possible means to promote sound Biblical scholarship among Evangelical Christians in England. Contact was made with probable sympathisers throughout the British Isles, as well as in Europe and America, and a few men who were interested in certain fields of Biblical scholarship were encouraged to pursue these interests and produce work which might help to remove the reproach of unscholarliness from English Evangelicalism. One or two major works of Biblical scholarship undertaken at that time are now in course of publication.

The outbreak of war in 1939 augured ill for the schemes of the infant Committee, but in fact those schemes grew and fructified during the war in a measure beyond what could have

been hoped. By the summer of 1941 sufficient progress was made to encourage the Committee to convoke a Conference of sympathisers from all parts of Britain to consider further plans. This Conference met at Kingham Hill, Oxfordshire, two or three weeks after Hitler's attack on Russia; and those who were present will not readily forget it. The Conference profited greatly by the wise and experienced advice of that true father in God, the late Principal Donald Maclean of Edinburgh, who had played a leading part in the resurgence of Scottish Evangelicalism twelve years previously, when he and his colleague, the late Professor J. R. Mackay, inaugurated THE EVANGELICAL QUARTERLY. It was at this Conference, incidentally, that the first steps were taken towards ensuring the continued witness of the QUARTERLY under its present constitution.

Among the decisions reached at Kingham Hill the three most important were (1) to hold an annual Summer School, (2) to found two annual lectures in Biblical studies, one for the Old Testament and one for the New, and (3) to secure a residential centre and library for Biblical research.

Arrangements were made at once to hold a Summer School the following year, and held it was, despite many unfavourable conditions arising from the war, at St. Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, North Wales. The stimulating intellectual atmosphere at St. Deiniol's showed those who attended something of the value of such a residential centre, and encouraged them to do their best to secure one of their own. Very few attended the first Summer School, but at least it was a beginning, and those who came found the time by no means wasted as they read 1 Samuel in Hebrew and Galatians in Greek. Larger numbers attended the Summer Schools of 1943 and 1944, which were held at Wadham College, Oxford; and the 1945 Summer School was held in our own residential centre, Tyndale House, Cambridge (of which more anon), to study the problems of the Fourth Gospel for the first week and the Biblical Doctrine of the Church for the second week. The latest Summer School was held there in July 1946, having as special subject for the first week "The Relation between the Testaments" and for the second week "The Authority of the Bible". At these Summer Schools, as well as on other occasions, we have benefited greatly by the help of friends from Scotland and Ireland—it may not be invidious to mention Professors G. T. Thomson

and A. M. Renwick of Edinburgh, and the Rev. W. C. G. Proctor of Trinity College, Dublin.

After careful deliberation, it was decided to call the two annual lectures founded as a result of the Kingham Hill discussions "The Tyndale Lectures" in Old and New Testament studies. The first two were delivered at Oxford in December 1942, and two more have been delivered each Christmas vacation since then. Among our Old Testament lecturers we have had Dr. W. J. Martin of Liverpool and Professors E. Robertson (Manchester), N. W. Porteous (Edinburgh), and D. Winton Thomas (Cambridge); among the New Testament lecturers have been Dr. Basil Atkinson, Mr. E. K. Simpson, Professor Francis Davidson, and Principal P. W. Evans. Some of these lectures have been published in pamphlet form: *Samuel and Saul*, by E. Robertson; *The Theology of Propositions*, by B. F. C. Atkinson; *Words Worth Weighing in the Greek New Testament*, by E. K. Simpson; *Pauline Predestination*, by F. Davidson; "The Prophet" in the Lachish Ostraca, by D. W. Thomas; *The Date of Ezra's Coming to Jerusalem*, by J. S. Wright; *The Speeches in the Acts of the Apostles*, by F. F. Bruce.<sup>1</sup>

It was necessary, of course, to find an audience for these Tyndale Lectures; they were therefore held during the Annual Conference of the I.V.F. Theological Students' Fellowship, which regularly meets during the Christmas vacation, and a number of senior men came together for a day or two in the same place, primarily to hear the Tyndale Lectures, but also for further papers and discussions. The Biblical Research Committee therefore decided to convene a Conference each Christmas vacation, to spend three or four days discussing a given topic. In the Christmas vacation of 1944-1945, for example, the topic was Biblical Interpretation; in 1945-1946, Biblical Eschatology; in 1946-1947, Biblical Anthropology.

The need for a residential centre was increasing all the time, and at last, in September 1944, we were able to secure the excellent freehold property at 16, Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge, to which the name "Tyndale House" was given. The name of William Tyndale is one in which no one party or section of English-speaking Christendom has a special interest; he and his work are our common heritage. And—rather strangely—

<sup>1</sup> All published by the Tyndale Press, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1, except *Samuel and Saul*, which was published by the John Rylands Library, Manchester.

Tyndale's name had not been already appropriated by a learned foundation, as those of Wycliffe, Ridley, and others had been. Tyndale House was first used for its proper purpose when the Conference convened by the Biblical Research Committee met there in January 1945, and it was solemnly dedicated to God for that purpose on the afternoon of January 2, at a simple service in which the Rev. G. T. Manley, Professor G. T. Thomson, and Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones took part.

When Tyndale House was acquired, a library was ready to be housed in it. From the time of the Kingham Hill Conference onwards, some of us had been collecting books suitable for Biblical and theological research. The heavy expenditure thus entailed was most generously defrayed by a Christian gentleman of long-range spiritual vision, whose anonymity must be preserved at his own desire. Now, Tyndale House contains a library of several thousand volumes, on which the Biblical scholar's eye rests with fond and envious delight. It is strictly a residential library, so that volumes cannot be lent out. It is mainly intended for the use of people who come to stay for longer or shorter periods at Tyndale House in order to carry out some form of Biblical research, though its facilities are also at the disposal of residents in Cambridge who wish to consult the volumes in Tyndale House. Colonel J. N. D. Anderson, O.B.E., M.A., LL.B., late of Egypt and Cyrenaica, a Cambridge graduate and Semitic scholar, has recently been appointed Resident Warden and Librarian.

As a result of the Summer Schools and Winter Conferences, a larger group of interested men and women was gradually forming round the Biblical Research Committee as its nucleus. It was plainly desirable that this group should be more definitely integrated, and at the first Conference held in Tyndale House (January 1945) it was constituted as the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research. This Fellowship is linked with the I.V.F. in that the I.V.F. Biblical Research Committee is also the Council of the Tyndale Fellowship, and its theological outlook is that expressed in the I.V.F. Doctrinal Basis. Its object is to maintain and promote Biblical studies and research in a spirit of loyalty to the Christian Faith as enshrined in the consensus of the Historic Creeds and Reformed Confessions, and to re-establish the authority of Evangelical scholarship in the field of Biblical and theological studies.

Among its activities the Tyndale Fellowship endeavours (1) to encourage younger scholars to engage in Biblical research, along linguistic, historical, archaeological or theological lines; (2) to call attention to and to examine contemporary research bearing upon the right understanding of the Bible; (3) to urge the claims of Biblical studies to a permanent and influential place in the national system of education; (4) to create opportunities for intercourse and co-operation between those who have at heart the objects which the Fellowship desires to promote, and to co-operate with similar bodies among the English-speaking nations and on the European Continent and elsewhere.

Membership of the Tyndale Fellowship is open to all persons of either sex who are in sympathy with its objects and wish to take an active part in Biblical Research. Members are kept in touch with the affairs of the Fellowship by means of the quarterly *Tyndale Bulletin* and circulating portfolios devoted to various branches of Biblical and theological studies. They are encouraged to contribute to these studies by writing monographs or theses for higher degrees, by reading papers at Conferences, Summer Schools or Reading Parties, by contributing articles to appropriate periodicals, and so forth. Several articles appearing from time to time in THE EVANGELICAL QUARTERLY have been first composed to be read at meetings of the Tyndale Fellowship.

But an important question is sometimes raised. While the Tyndale Fellowship professes its desire to remove the stigma of obscurantism from English Evangelicalism, is it in fact free from obscurantism itself? Does not its acceptance of the I.V.F. Doctrinal Basis commit it *ipso facto* to an unprogressive "Fundamentalism" (to employ what Principal Maclean aptly called "a refined theological swearword"!)? Are not its conclusions in the field, say, of Biblical criticism, prescribed and settled in advance? The answer is, unreservedly, No.

As for its acceptance of the I.V.F. Doctrinal Basis, that is simply a summary, in untheological language, of the Protestant faith as exhibited in its chief formularies. The Basis has frequently been criticised for explicitly predicating "infallibility" of Holy Scripture as originally given, as well as its divine inspiration and supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. But *Evangelical Belief*, the official interpretation of the Basis, explains this "infallibility" to mean "that the Scriptures



themselves, in their proper sense, never lead astray the soul who is sincerely seeking truth" (1st edition, p. 10).<sup>1</sup> The words, "in their proper sense", necessarily imply that each part of the Bible must be viewed in the light of the whole, and that the Old Testament must be read in the light of the New.<sup>2</sup> There is nothing obscurantist in this position.

Admittedly, the Tyndale Fellowship has its presuppositions and its distinctive point of view. It is committed to the Catholic Evangelical Faith.<sup>3</sup> Few, if any, Biblical scholars, whether working singly or in groups, approach their studies without presuppositions of any kind. Those who say or think that they do, very often betray in the event that their presuppositions, even if unsuspected by themselves, are none the less real. It is much better to be aware of one's presuppositions and bias, and to acknowledge them frankly, as allowances can then be more easily made for them.<sup>4</sup> Some Biblical critics, on the other hand, while professedly pursuing their research with unbiased minds and scientific methods, have in fact proceeded on the assumption that the supernatural may be discounted. They were at liberty to make this assumption if they wished, of course; if we disagree with what our opponents say, we readily defend their right to say it; but it would have been better if their anti-supernaturalist premisses had been explicitly admitted by themselves and understood by their hearers and readers. A curious situation arose when, towards the end of last century, devout Christian scholars in Scotland and England accepted conclusions reached in Biblical criticism from rationalist premisses by Continental scholars. When Dr. James Begg described to Thomas Carlyle the development of such a situation among some Scottish theologians, the sage of Chelsea, no devotee of the Reformed Faith himself, thundered: "Have my countrymen's

<sup>1</sup> The use of the term "infallibility" has been bedevilled by the dogma of Papal Infallibility. The I.V.F. Doctrinal Basis probably took it from the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. The word is strictly equivalent to Gk. ἀσφάλεια, used in Luke i. 4 (translated "certainty" in A.V. and R.V.); and the interpretation quoted above from *Evangelical Belief* gives the precise meaning of the term. Later on the same page we read: "By using the word 'infallibility' in reference to Holy Scripture, we mean that it is in itself a true and complete guide, and requires no external correction either by Church or Tradition."

<sup>2</sup> Of course, it is also true that the New Testament must be read in the light of the Old, but in a slightly different sense of the phrase.

<sup>3</sup> This does not mean, of course, that we have not the soundest reason for holding this Faith in the first place!

<sup>4</sup> "Prejudices that are recognized as such are generally harmless; the unrecognized ones are the dangerous ones" (A. D. Ritchie, *Civilization, Science and Religion* [1945], p. 12).

heads become turnips, that they think they can hold the premisses of German unbelief and draw the conclusions of Scottish Evangelical Orthodoxy?" It is a good thing to know what our premisses are, to acknowledge them openly, and to see to it that our conclusions stand in some sort of rational relationship to them.

It is helpful to contrast the position of the Tyndale Fellowship with that of Roman Catholic Biblical scholarship. Roman Catholic scholars have, of course, their special presuppositions and preferences; that is but natural, and we have no fault to find with it, the more so as they freely avow them. But the Papal authorities are not content to leave well alone and trust their scholars not to reach conclusions at variance with the premisses of their faith. The growth of the Modernist movement in the Church of Rome led to the establishment by Pope Leo XIII in 1901 of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, which in many cases prescribes the limits within which Roman Catholic Biblical scholars may operate. A reference to Dr. E. J. Kissane's scholarly work on Isaiah, for example, will show the learned author's pains to show that his view of the composition of that book does not transgress the limits prescribed by the Biblical Commission.<sup>1</sup> The late Abbot Chapman, in the introduction to his book *Matthew, Mark and Luke* (1937), related the steps by which he exchanged his earlier view of the priority of Mark for his later one of the priority of Matthew. We do not question that he really did change his mind through further study of the evidence as it appealed to him; but his arguments would carry greater weight if the Biblical Commission had not previously laid down the priority of Matthew as a conclusion not to be gainsaid. Or, when Mgr. Ronald Knox in his new translation of the New Testament says that while the passage about the Three Heavenly Witnesses in 1 John v. 7 does not occur in any good Greek manuscript, "the Latin manuscripts may have preserved the true text", we wonder what he would have said had he been left free to exercise his own judgment in the matter.

No such conclusions are prescribed for members of the Tyndale Fellowship. In such critical *crucis*, for example, as the codification of the Pentateuch, the composition of Isaiah, the date of Daniel, the sources of the Gospels, or the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles, each of us is free to hold and proclaim

<sup>1</sup> E. J. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. ii (1943), pp. lviii f.

the conclusions to which all the available evidence points.<sup>1</sup> Any research worthy of the name, we take it for granted, must necessarily be unfettered.

Evangelical Christians must, once and for all, give the lie to the common idea that they are afraid of scientific research. If the idea were true, it would say little for the strength of such people's personal faith. But it must not even *seem* to be true. Of course, if our premisses are intellectually untenable, the sooner we know it the better; but if we are convinced that our position is impregnably secure, then we shall welcome all the light that science and scholarship have to throw upon it, whether coming from friendly or from hostile quarters, in order that it may be *seen* to be impregnably secure. The early Christians challenged the closest scrutiny of their claims: "this thing", they gladly asserted, "was not done in a corner". We wish to be of their spirit. Our desire for our contemporaries, as Luke's for Theophilus, is that they may know the certainty—in the proper sense of the word, the *infallibility*—of the Christian message as they read or hear it.

From the outset, the Biblical Research Committee and the Tyndale Fellowship have emphasised the importance of the linguistic side of Biblical study. Sound theology must be based on sound exegesis, and sound exegesis on a sound text; and to establish and understand a sound text we require a thorough acquaintance with the original languages. And a thorough acquaintance with these requires some knowledge at least of other languages which influenced them. The New Testament idiom cannot be properly understood without some knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic, and the intensive study of these Old Testament languages leads one into such other languages as

<sup>1</sup> Thus, if in this QUARTERLY different views of the common authorship of the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse have been aired by two members of the Tyndale Fellowship—Mr. Beasley-Murray in Vol. xviii (1946), pp. 185 f., and the present writer in Vol. xvi (1944), pp. 107 ff.—it is simply because we differ as to which side the weight of the evidence comes down on. Or, when Mr. Nunn, in his recent Tyndale Fellowship publication (reviewed on p. 79), maintains the Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, it is purely because the evidence he adduces points so irresistibly to that conclusion. We may contrast the situation in which a Roman Catholic scholar like M. J. Lagrange finds himself. At the beginning of his *Évangile selon saint Jean* (1925), he says: "L'Église catholique a rangé parmi les livres canoniques les évangiles selon Matthieu, Marc, Luc et Jean. Le quatrième évangile a donc été écrit sous l'inspiration de l'Esprit-Saint. Pour nous c'est un dogme, ce n'est pas une question. Ce n'est pas non plus une question de savoir s'il a eu pour auteur le disciple bien-aimé, Jean, fils de Zébédée. Ce point est fixé par la tradition ecclésiastique" (p. vi). In our view, the inspiration of the Fourth Gospel is sufficiently clear even to a reader endowed with the slenderest spiritual discernment, while its authorship can be determined only by considering the internal and external evidence.

Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Hurrian, Egyptian, Persian, and Arabic. We desire to be worthy followers of the Reformers in our insistence on the primacy of the strict grammatico-historical exegesis of Scripture, and we emphasise the necessity of laying a stable foundation for this exegesis, and discourage the taking of short cuts. Though this policy may not show such immediate results as some would like to see, we believe that the results, when they come, will be the more enduring.

It has been pointed out that the success of the Evangelical Revival two centuries ago was all the greater because the intellectual tenability of Christianity, scouted by the Deists, had been re-established for many, in terms which appealed to the eighteenth-century mind, by Bishop Butler. There will be the greater hope for evangelism in this century if people in general can be rationally persuaded that Evangelical Christianity has nothing to do with a pseudo-conservatism that fears to face the facts of Biblical or any other science lest it should find its position undermined. A sane and cogent Biblical theology can be presented in terms which, on the one hand, acknowledge the revelation of God recorded in Holy Writ and, on the other, cannot be assailed as unscientific, illogical or obscurantist. The Tyndale Fellowship desires to play its part in preparing the way for such a presentation. It is no friend of the irrationalism popular in some modern theological circles.

The need for renewed efforts in Biblical and theological study in the British Isles in these post-war years is all the greater because of the eclipse—temporary, we may well pray—of these studies in Germany. When we contemplate the magnificent wealth of contributions to Biblical research made over so many years in Germany, it is with a sense of appalling loss that we learn that, at the time of writing, not one periodical devoted to Biblical or theological learning is being published in that land. Fortunately, we cannot say that none is being published in the German language, for we have to welcome the new *Theologische Zeitschrift* edited in Switzerland by Professor K. L. Schmidt; but this can go only a small way to repair the loss. There may be some people who view with equanimity or even satisfaction this eclipse of German scholarship in the Biblical field as in so many others; but the Tyndale Fellowship is of another mind. There have indeed been tendencies from time to time in German Biblical scholarship which did not commend themselves to

Evangelical thought;<sup>1</sup> but its present sorry plight can be regarded as nothing less than a calamity for the whole world—though not such a calamity as its plight under a triumphant Hitlerism would have been, for then the hope of an early and vigorous resurrection, which we may now indulge, would have been slender indeed.

On these and other grounds we feel we have reason to hope and believe that the Tyndale Fellowship may have “come to the kingdom for such a time as this”; and we confidently look for the sympathetic interest of all who have at heart the revival of the full-orbed historic Evangelical Faith, and invite the co-operation of those like-minded who desire to pursue the paths of Biblical scholarship to the glory of God and the blessing of their fellows.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those who have talked and written, especially during the recent war, as if all Biblical and theological study in Germany were affected by rationalistic tendencies, seem never to have heard of such giants as Zahn and Schlatter!

<sup>2</sup> Those who would like further information are invited to apply to the Secretary of the Tyndale Fellowship, the Rev. J. Stafford Wright, M.A., Senior Tutor, Oak Hill College, Southgate, London, N.14. In addition to an entrance fee of 5s., members pay an annual subscription of 7s. 6d. or a life membership fee of £4. The subscription includes the subscription to *The Tyndale Bulletin*, the private memorandum printed for the information of members; and membership carries with it specially favourable terms for residence at Tyndale House. For terms of residence at Tyndale House and further information about the House and Research Library, apply to the Warden, Col. J. N. D. Anderson, Tyndale House, 16 Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge. A leaflet dealing with the financial support of the enterprise may be obtained from Dr. D. Johnson, General Secretary of the I.V.F., 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.