

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

PROFESSOR SWETE has edited another volume of Cambridge Essays. The former was a volume of Theological essays; this volume is Biblical. Its full title is *Essays on Some Biblical Questions of the Day* (Macmillan; 12s. net).

The authors of the essays are without exception men of mark. There are no surprises out of the unknown. The topics treated of are also within the range of the expected. Yet there is a surprise in the book. The surprise is its agnosticism. And the greatness of the surprise is that not one or two of the writers, but that all the writers, without exception, are agnostics.

We do not use the word 'agnostic' with the Huxley meaning. We do not suggest that these Cambridge scholars have any doubt about the existence of God; or for a moment hesitate to affirm that He is a God with whom they have to do. They know both that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Their agnosticism is scientific. It is a restraint, not upon their profession of faith, but upon their profession of knowledge. Much as they are absolutely sure of in the region of the Spirit, in the region of historical affirmation they have learned one and all to hold their hand.

This is a new note of English scholarship. The  
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note was struck in Oxford, but Cambridge has given it united voice. It is partly conscious. It is a protest against the raging dogmatism of some recent Continental scholarship, a dogmatism that has been all the more dogmatic that it has mainly been denial. But it is chiefly quite unconscious. It has arisen more than anything else from recognizing the amount of mischief that has been done in the study of the Bible from the indiscriminate use of the argument from silence.

One of the strangest uses of the argument from silence ever made, was made quite recently by a writer who was arguing against the sinlessness of our Lord. We have no records of the first thirty years of His life, *therefore* we may say that He was not sinless. That was the argument. The writer admitted that He was sinless so far as the records exist. These Cambridge essayists do not argue from the unknown *against* the known; they do not argue from the unknown at all. One and all they say what they know, and hold their hand. And yet, perhaps, none of them puts quite so much restraint upon himself as does Mr. C. H. W. JOHNS, the Master of St. Catharine's College.

Mr. JOHNS has written an essay on 'The Influence of Babylonian Mythology upon the Old Testament.' Now, we all desire to know what influence the Babylonian Mythology has had

upon the Old Testament. We desire this for apologetic reasons, and for scientific reasons, and for the mere sake of knowing. For is not man the animal that would like to know? And if any one, in Cambridge or out of it, can tell us, it is the Master of St. Catharine's College.

But Mr. JOHNS does not tell us. The similarity between the myths of the early chapters of Genesis and the myths of Babylon is notorious. But what is similarity? The Professor of Zend Philology in Oxford, in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for last month, showed us two nations making the discovery of the same striking religious conceptions side by side and independently. So it is at least possible, says Mr. JOHNS, that the striking resemblances between the Flood story of the Babylonians and the Flood story of the Hebrews are due to parallel and independent development. That is the first theory.

But mythology is so widespread, it is such a *human* thing, that independent development is almost out of the question. There is no need, says Mr. JOHNS, to suggest independence, nor is there any necessity to go directly to Babylonian sources in order to account for the Hebrews having a Deluge story or a cosmogony. The myth of the Deluge is so ancient and so widespread that all we have to do is to carry both back to some common Semitic ancestor. That is the second theory.

Mr. JOHNS calls this 'a comfortable doctrine.' He means, apparently, that it has been the refuge of the believer in Inspiration. Given an original myth, it is always possible and may be easy to show how the Babylonians would let it develop on its superstitious side, and how the Hebrews would be guided to give it real religious value. But Mr. JOHNS counts it but a temporary resting-place. For it is after all a myth.

And there is no doubt, as Mr. JOHNS again reminds us, that mythology in the Bible is to most of us 'a very shocking idea.' But why is it

shocking? Because by a 'myth' we mean such a story as in our early classical studies we read and were shocked at in connexion with the gods of Greece and Rome. Mr. JOHNS feels the offence himself. He cannot quite rid himself of certain unbecoming recollections. And he wishes some one would invent another word.

But until the new word comes, it is well to understand what the old word really means. It is an attempt to put a scientific hypothesis into pre-scientific language. Say that an eclipse has taken place: what is the cause of it? The pre-scientific scientist says that a dragon has devoured the sun.

Now it is quite possible that the original inventor of that hypothesis believed that a dragon did actually devour the sun. In that case he would be a scientific observer pure and simple, with a scientific hypothesis very much at fault. But it is also possible that he simply used metaphorical language because he had nothing else to convey his meaning with. 'Some peoples,' says Mr. JOHNS, 'can only express the idea of conquering another folk by the words "we eat them up." They are not therefore to be regarded as cannibals. The Babylonian talked of "eating" a field when he meant enjoying the usufruct of it.'

Take the case of the Chaos. The Babylonians spoke of a certain monster Tiamat. But Tiamat may be nothing whatever but water, and the theory that all was once water is as really scientific, says Mr. JOHNS, as the opinion that all was once gaseous matter. Now, water in the form of an ocean was such a restless, fierce monster to early man that to speak of it as a dragon was natural. It does not follow, therefore, that the Babylonian myth is so different from the Hebrew explanation. It may be a matter of more or less mythological language. In any case, it does not follow that we need be desperately alarmed at the presence of a myth in the Old Testament.

Well, as we have said, Mr. JOHNS is agnostic.

He makes many pleasant suggestions ; he does not come to many definite conclusions. But we think we shall not misrepresent him if we say that his own theory of the influence of Babylonian mythology upon the Old Testament is none of these. There is a third theory. Before stating it, we may just notice a possible fourth. It is the theory that whatever Babylonianism there is in the Old Testament came into it at and after the Captivity. For that theory Mr. JOHNS seems to have little liking.

The third theory is that the Hebrew narratives of the Creation, the Flood, and the rest, are fragments of one stream of tradition, and the Babylonian myths are fragments of another. Besides that Babylonian version with which the narratives in the Bible are usually compared, there is another Babylonian version, which differs as much from the well-known version as that does from the Old Testament.

This does not mean that all three must be carried back to one Semitic original. All three may be independent. And all three may go back to an original beyond even the Semitic, an original that is as far back as to be for all practical purposes universal.

And thus are we led to a much more momentous remark, in making which we hope again that we do not misrepresent Mr. JOHNS. It is the remark that Mr. JOHNS sees nothing unique about the Hebrew religion which would exempt it from the operation of laws admitted to work in the case of other religions.

A history of the opposition to the infallibility of the Pope, urged by Roman Catholics themselves, has been written by the Rev. W. J. SPARROW SIMPSON, Chaplain of St. Mary's Hospital, Ilford. The book is noticed on another page.

Is there any foundation in Scripture for the

doctrine of infallibility? The Ultramontane says there is. Its foundation is found in the words of our Lord to Peter: 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren' (Lk 22<sup>32</sup>). Mr. SPARROW SIMPSON discusses the Roman interpretation of that passage.

The passage is worth discussion for its own sake. It is worth more than discussion, it is worth appropriation. Spoken originally to Peter by the Christ about to suffer, it may well be taken as spoken now by the risen Christ to each of us. But if it is the foundation of the dogma of papal infallibility it assumes a new importance. It has now an importance that is not only experimental, but also historical. What, then, is the Roman Catholic interpretation of this passage?

It consists of four statements. First, Christ here confers on Peter an exclusive prerogative, on the ground of Peter's superior position. Secondly, this prerogative is infallible insight. Thirdly, he was thereby enabled to give infallible instructions to his brethren. Fourthly, this prerogative extends to all Peter's successors, and to none but those—the prerogative being as exclusive in its range as it was in its origin. Mr. SIMPSON considers the text under four heads also. His heads are Christ's Prayer; Peter's Faith; Peter's Brethren; and Peter's Successors.

He considers first Christ's Prayer—'I have prayed for thee.' He says it is certainly an exclusive prayer. Satan hath desired to have *you*, collectively; but I have prayed for *thee*, St. Peter, individually. Christ here prays for the one: for the others, on this occasion, He does not pray. Does not this, then, imply the superiority of the individual so distinguished? Mr. SIMPSON says it does not. The exclusive petition may imply the greater superiority of the person prayed for; it may equally well imply his greater need. Mr. SIMPSON believes that if we consider the character of Peter and the nature of the coming trial we shall

come to the conclusion that on this occasion particular prayer meant particular need of prayer.

And there is another thing about the prayer. If it was exclusive, it was also conditional. No doubt it is true that whatever Christ prays for comes to pass. Is it not written, 'I know that thou hearest me always'? 'But,' says Mr. SIMPSON,—and it is right well worth saying,—'the effectiveness of Christ's prayers must take into account our human independence. To say that the prayer of Christ must necessarily realize its design, is really to reduce mankind to a mechanism upon which the Spirit plays.' The prayer for Peter is an offer of sufficient grace; but Peter must yield his will to the grace that is offered.

The next thing is Peter's Faith—'That thy faith fail not.' Now there is no difficulty in understanding what is meant here by Peter's faith, and there is no serious difficulty in understanding what is meant by his faith failing. His faith is not an intellectual assent to a number of propositions—the suggestion is itself preposterous. It is a moral relation to a Person. It is devotion to Christ Himself, and it calls not only upon the intellect, but also upon the affections and the will.

What happens, then, to a man's faith when it is said to fail? It suffers an eclipse. The Greek word here translated 'fail' is sometimes used to describe an eclipse. And to the primitive imagination an eclipse suggested death, much as we talk of the dying day. 'Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail'—the meaning is that they shall not come to an end or cease to be.

Was Christ's prayer answered? Did Peter's faith cease to be? It did not cease to be for ever. We may say, indeed, that that faith in Christ which lay within the heart of Peter, that personal devotion to Christ which was his faith, did not cease to be even for a single moment. But certainly its outward expression suffered an eclipse. And that is most unfortunate for the argument of

the Roman theologian, who uses Peter's experience to prove his infallibility. For infallibility is nothing if it is not infallibility in expression. So far as the doctrine of infallibility is concerned, it does not matter what Peter or his successors believe in their hearts. The infallibility must belong to their utterance. Peter's utterance was far from infallible when he said, 'I know not the man.'

The third thing is the strengthening of Peter's Brethren—'when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.' Now to strengthen is to give support. The word is employed by St. Paul. To the Romans he says, 'I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be *established*' (Ro 1<sup>11</sup>). He sends Timothy to the Thessalonians, 'to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith' (1 Th 3<sup>2</sup>). St. Peter uses the word also. He desires that God would 'stablish, strengthen, settle' the Christian (1 P 5<sup>10</sup>); and he says that Christians are 'established in the present truth' (2 P 1<sup>12</sup>). And St. John uses the word: 'Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die' (Rev 3<sup>2</sup>).

These passages show that to strengthen one's brethren is to lend them moral support. And it may be moral support of almost any kind. It may be the support of a man who has received richly of grace divine, or of one who has entered largely into a knowledge of the truth. But where is the suggestion made that a man must be infallible before he can strengthen his brethren? Is there any one who would have repudiated infallibility, even in the days that were to follow, more emphatically than Peter himself? Nay, the history tells us very plainly that Peter could fail to strengthen his brethren even in the ordinary way of affording them moral support. Or at least, if Peter was infallible when that sharp contention took place at Antioch between him and Paul, what shall we then say about the Apostle Paul?

The last point is about Peter's Successors. But

the text fails us here. Our Lord does not mention successors. He does not mention them even by implication. Peter's successors may be read into Christ's words; they cannot be read out of them.

But if the words 'strengthen thy brethren' are claimed for Peter's successors, then the words 'when thou art converted' must belong to them also. Bellarmin saw this, and was disturbed by it. He suggested that 'converted' must not be understood as moral renovation and repentance, but as an adverb equivalent to 'in turn,' as if the passage ran: 'I have strengthened thee, do thou in turn strengthen thy brethren.' But when Bellarmin gave that interpretation, says Mr. SPARROW SIMPSON, he gave up the case.

About a year ago an article appeared in the *Hibbert Journal* with the title of 'Jesus or Christ?' It was not a valuable article. It would probably not have been written if its author had been better educated. The chance that it would be accepted by any editor was one in a hundred. Yet that one chance came to it. It was accepted by the editor of the *Hibbert Journal*. It was printed, and appeared in the issue of that journal for January 1909.

It was a bad article, and it was badly printed. Professor SCHMIEDEL's 'Nine Foundation Pillars,' which he has had so much trouble in getting to stand, suffered the worst shipwreck that has yet befallen them. The sentence appeared in this form: 'Following it [criticism], we pass through narrowing areas of admissible statement, and, guided by Dr. SCHMIEDEL's "pillar," pass ages [for 'passages'], till we reach the position of Professor KHALTOFF [for 'KALTHOFF'], from which the figure of the historic Jesus has completely vanished.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This sentence in the amended edition of the article published at the end of this volume now reads: 'Following it, we pass along narrowing areas of admissible statement, through the textual territory marked by Dr.

Yet the editor tells us that within a week of the publication of the article, 'replies and criticisms, eulogies and condemnations, began to pour in from all quarters.' The statement is not complimentary to the readers of the *Hibbert Journal*. The article was not worth condemnation.

But whatever he thought of the article, the idea came to the editor that a certain number of men should be invited to express themselves on the alternative, 'Jesus or Christ?' which the title of the article suggested. Seventeen men responded to his invitation. Their contributions, together with an amended edition of the original article, have been issued as a volume. Its title is still *Jesus or Christ?* (Williams & Norgate; 5s: net).

Below the title of the article in the *Hibbert Journal* the author was named Rev. R. ROBERTS, and described as 'Congregational Minister.' But Dr. Horton promptly replied that the Rev. R. ROBERTS had not been a Congregational minister for eleven years. From the article itself it was evident that he was a Unitarian. The title 'Jesus or Christ?' was cleverly chosen to express the difference between Unitarians and Trinitarians. And by that difference the writers of the papers in the volume must be distinguished. They are not representative. The editor, being himself a Unitarian, may be excused for giving a preponderance to Unitarians. But the proportion of two to one is excessive. And yet, just because of the preponderance of what the editor would call 'liberal' opinion—the opinion of those to whom Jesus was 'a mere man'—the book is crammed with encouragement.

The title is 'Jesus or Christ?' Now Jesus stands for 'this human being,' to use the phrase of Professor WEINEL. And, as we have said, more than two-thirds of the authors of the volume look upon Jesus as 'this human being,' and no more. The SCHMIEDEL's "pillar" passages, till we reach the position of KALTHOFF, from which the figure of the historic Jesus has completely vanished.'

expression which has already been used is 'mere man,' and that expression is familiar now. But Professor Henry JONES, of Glasgow, objects to it. He thinks that it implies 'blasphemy against human nature.' But Professor JONES has forgotten the history of the word 'mere.'

It is one of the first words that Abbott calls attention to in his *Shakespearian Grammar*. 'Mere,' he says 'is unmixed with anything else,' hence, by inference, 'intact,' 'complete'; and the quotation he makes is from *Othello*, II. ii. 3—'The mere perdition of the Turkish fleet,' that is, its complete destruction. Other examples will be found in Murray; to which we may add one from *Robinson Crusoe* (Defoe is curiously fond of the word)—'I went down to my Farm, and became in one half Year, a meer Country Gentleman.'

To say, then, that Jesus was a mere man, is to say that He was not more than a man. It is not to say that He was less. There is here and there in this volume an inclination to suggest that believers in the Divinity of Jesus do not believe in His humanity. But that is not so. They believe, as sincerely as Professor SCHMIEDEL, that He was 'a man in the full sense of the term.' As Professor Percy GARDNER says: 'The Church has insisted on the belief that after all her Master was a "perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting."'

The question is, was He more than man? And it is an important question. Some of the writers in this volume recognize its importance. Says Dr. GARVIE: 'It will be generally recognized that this is probably the most urgent and important question with which the Christian theologian, in seeking to expound and defend the Christian faith, is to-day called to deal.'

Now the way in which the distinction is made between Jesus as man and Jesus as more than man is by the alternative title 'Jesus or Christ?' That is plainly the result, whatever may have been

the purpose, of the article which opened the discussion. But that is just what the majority of the writers in this volume deny. They accept 'Jesus,' and they accept 'Christ.' They believe that Jesus was a mere man; but to express His mere manhood they claim not only the name 'Jesus,' but also the name 'Christ.'

They do not all do so. Professor SCHMIEDEL, who is perhaps the most uncompromising Unitarian in the list, tells us that he is most particular not to do so. 'I maintain,' he says, 'a clear distinction between the terms "Jesus" and "Christ" in my own practice, and demand that it shall be maintained in the intercourse of theologians with one another.' But the Rev. R. J. CAMPBELL does so. Mr. CAMPBELL says there is no need of the alternative 'Jesus or Christ.' 'For the greatness of Jesus consists in the fact that He has made the word "Christ" a synonym for the best and highest that can truly be called human.' And with that the majority agree.

Here, then, is the first thing to settle. Here is the secret of the interest which the original article has raised. Put the matter plainly as an issue between Unitarian and Trinitarian, and only a small proportion of the readers even of the *Hibbert Journal* would hesitate to take their side. But argue that all that is involved in the word 'Christ' may be saved without passing the bounds of the human, and the argument will be listened to with respect. That is what the majority of the Unitarians who write in this volume see. That is how they argue.

The most beautiful of the papers is the one that has been written by Dr. James DRUMMOND, lately Principal of Manchester College, Oxford. It is the paper of a Unitarian, of that there is no doubt. Manchester College is a Unitarian College; and Dr. DRUMMOND describes himself in his article as a Unitarian. Yet so wholly does Dr. DRUMMOND absorb the title 'Christ' that we should not have known, and we believe no one else would have

known, from the article itself, if the author had not called himself a Unitarian in it, that Dr. DRUMMOND was not a believer in the Divinity of our Lord. So far as we can see, Christ is everything to him that He is to any of us. Take a single sentence: 'There are those who have, through the medium of the New Testament and the traditional life of the purest Christendom, looked into the face of Jesus, and seen there an ideal, a glory which they have felt to be the glory of God, a thought of Divine Sonship, which has changed their whole conception of human nature, and the whole aim of their life; and no criticisms and no shortcomings can alter that supreme fact of spiritual experience.'

The reference is unmistakable. It is Dr. DRUMMOND himself that sees the glory of God in the face of Jesus. And Dr. DRUMMOND does not stand here alone. His is the most charming paper. But the paper of Professor Percy GARDNER is only a degree less charming. Take a rather longer quotation. Professor GARDNER does not describe himself in set words as a Unitarian, but he certainly does not believe in the Deity of Christ. Yet he claims so much of what Professor SCHMIEDEL would strictly reserve for 'Christ,' that he is able to speak in this way.

'Take them as we will,' he says, 'the facts of early Christianity are of a most surprising, unparalleled character. Such facts as it offers are so unusual that no one save a shallow sciolist would be ready with a cut-and-dried explanation of them. There is the astonishing life of the Master, which has impressed many who were not professed Christians with an admiration almost beyond expression. There is the wonderful change which came over the Apostles after the time of the Crucifixion, transforming them from timid and half-appreciative disciples into bold and effective missionaries of the faith. There is the rapid spread of the new doctrine, in the face of bitter hostility and persecution. There is the remarkable ethical similarity between the teaching of Paul and that of

his Master, while at the same time in his hands the Christian teaching undergoes a prodigious development, becoming fit, not for an obscure sect of Jews, but for the great cities of the Greek world. These and many other such historic phenomena seem to me to be only explicable by the supposition that a mighty spiritual power of a new kind and of greatly superior force was dawning on the world, a power not easily to be accounted for, yet in all things to be taken into account.'

Now although Dr. DRUMMOND's and Professor GARDNER's articles are the most attractive of the Unitarian articles in the volume, and Professor SCHMIEDEL's is the most unattractive, yet Professor SCHMIEDEL is right, and they are wrong. Of that there is no doubt whatever. They claim the title 'Christ' as belonging to their Unitarianism, but history is wholly against them. Whenever the things of the moral and spiritual life, which have been so winningly described here, are found attached to Christ, they are found associated with belief in His Divinity. Not one of the writers in this volume has discovered a case to the contrary.

It is, in truth, a wholly new attitude to Christ that is taken up by the distinguished men who write in this volume. We have often seen the blessings of Christianity appropriated by those who refuse to call themselves Christians. That is a quite familiar attitude. But here are men to whom Jesus was a mere man, however they may endeavour to escape the edge of that word 'mere,' claiming for themselves all that the Church has obtained from its faith in Jesus Christ as the God-Man; and yet they write as if their claims were legitimate and undeniable.

That claim has to be rejected. There is so much sweet reasonableness in it, and so much goodwill in the men who make it, that some courage may be required from those who withstand it. Yet we must withstand it to the face. For it contradicts the whole history of Christianity. It reduces to impotence that Gospel which is the

power of God unto salvation. And more than that, however these courteous scholars may protest, none the less is it true that it makes both 'Jesus' and 'Christ' names of no particular importance to the world.

It makes 'Jesus' and 'Christ,' we say, names of no particular importance. Professor JONES protests. And we gladly admit that Professor JONES has done his best with that human Jesus whom he has no objection to calling 'Christ.' But what does his effort amount to? Jesus is historical, Christ is ideal. And then his whole endeavour is to reduce the difference between Christ and other men. Take Jesus alone, and we have a man subject to like infirmities (and sins) as we are. Take Jesus Christ, together, and we have the ideal man. This ideal man has never yet been seen on earth. But he has been conceived by the heart of man, and he is set up as a standard of encouragement to man's hope.

Professor JONES is strongly opposed to the separation of the one man Christ Jesus from every other man. His words in one place are, 'I venture to say that there is one theory which is fundamentally inimical to every Christian faith—namely, that which separates man from Christ.' And he is right. That is the fundamental heresy. Even a theory of representation is not enough. Professor JONES does well to insist on identification.

But he mistakes altogether the point at which the identification is made. He thinks that the work of Christ consisted in revealing the Fatherhood of God, and as a consequence the sonship of man, and that Christ and man were brought together in that way, both being shown to be sons of God. Who revealed the Father, he does not say clearly. Sometimes he seems to say that Jesus the man of Nazareth did it; sometimes that it was done by the Church under the name of the 'ideal' Christ. But however it was done, this, he says, was the work that Christ came to do. And when you speak of 'conversion,' all you mean

is 'the recognition by man of a relationship that existed from the beginning.'

And this is not peculiar to Professor JONES. 'There is no doubt,' says Professor SCHMIEDEL, that his making the conception of God as the Father, which indeed was not new, the central point of his religion, was a fact of the greatest importance.' And Professor BACON, of Yale, makes the sweeping assertion: 'There is nothing further to be said in the name of religion for the guidance of humanity than is implied in the three syllables of Jesus' message: "Our Father." This is the gospel; the rest is commentary.'

But if this is the gospel, how can Professor SCHMIEDEL say it was not new? The gospel was new if it was anything. That it was new was understood to have been the first announcement of it. That it was new was the unwavering delight of every 'individual Christian believer.' We believe as heartily as Professor JONES, or any other, that Christ brought the revelation of God's Fatherhood to men—all that is essential and operative for salvation in it. But whether *that* was 'new' or not we are not greatly concerned to discuss; for it is quite certain that that is not the gospel.

Professor JONES says that Christ 'came to declare the Father.' Where did he find that? Not in the New Testament. In the Gospels we are told that Christ came to call sinners, that He came to seek and to save the lost, that He came to give His life as a ransom; and with that the rest of the Scriptures of the New Testament agree. But where is it said that He came to reveal God's Fatherhood? Being here, He did reveal the Father. But that He *came for that purpose*—that is never said or suggested.

Nor is that ever named in all the history of the Church of Christ as the purpose of the Incarnation. History is as adverse to this modern notion as the New Testament. But here we have only



to make one writer answer another. Professor SCHMIEDEL agrees with the others that the revelation of the Divine Fatherhood is a fact of the greatest importance. 'At the same time,' he proceeds to say, 'we must carefully guard ourselves from attaching a too unqualified value to this conception. We ought not to forget that it is only one image, and that this image does not express everything that we are compelled to include in our thought of God.'

We do not overlook the fact that Professor JONES does go to Scripture for a proof of his statement that Jesus 'came to declare the Father.' But what Scripture? The Parable of the Prodigal Son. And in this he is at one with Professor SCHMIEDEL. The rest have left that parable alone. But how long will it be before all men will understand that that parable, as every other parable, was spoken on a special occasion and for a special purpose? It was spoken to the Pharisees because they complained that He received sinners and ate with them. And it was spoken to show them that God was as willing to receive sinners as they were unwilling. But the method of the reception was not in question, and was not considered. Besides, even if the occasion and meaning of the parable were less obvious than they are, what would become of Theology if a doctrine were held to be proved simply because it seemed to be implied in some particular parable? Does Professor JONES believe that there is a hell where the tongues of wicked men are parched in flames of fire? There is a parable which seems to say so. Does he hold that it is the final word on the subject?

Professor JONES is right in insisting on the identification of Christ with men. But the identification takes place, not because Christ happened to be born into the world as other men, but because He deliberately came into the world to redeem men. And now observe the difference.

In order to identify Christ with men Professor

JONES has to deny His uniqueness. And he finds it very difficult to deny it successfully. He does not invite us to look at the facts, whether in Scripture or in the Christian life. He relies on general observation. 'I cannot see,' he says, 'what accession of spiritual power Christianity can have from demonstrating the *unlikeness* of Jesus of Nazareth to other men.' And again, 'By making the relation of Jesus to God unique, the idealizing light which He threw upon human nature through the momentous conception of its affinity to the divine is obscured.'

But even in this way he is unable to exclude the idea of uniqueness wholly. 'I can well believe,' he says, 'that He felt that He stood alone in His mission; and that the revelation had come to Him with a fulness and power with which it came to no other, I do not doubt.' In like manner Professor WEINEL, while denying the uniqueness of the person of Christ, admits that 'we must leave him his own peculiar work, which was to give humanity a new ideal and a new belief in God—the purest ideal and the loftiest belief'—though he immediately thinks it necessary to prove that this is not 'another exaggeration.' And even Professor SCHMIEDEL, most contentedly prosaic of them all, takes alarm at the result of denying Jesus all uniqueness whatever. 'The more the Godhead of Jesus, the miracles, and the sacrificial death are surrendered, the more pressing becomes the demand that his ideas must have been new without qualification, otherwise the value of his life's achievement appears in danger of gradually dwindling towards zero.'

None of this is the uniqueness claimed for Christ by the believer in His Divinity, nor all of this together. But it is good so far as it goes. And it shows how hard a task the modern philosopher has set himself when he attempts to prove that Jesus was in all points tempted like as we are, *including sin*.

Including sin. For, of course, the mere man is

sinful. Not one of these Unitarian authors has any doubt about that. How could they? As Professor SCHMIEDEL bluntly puts it, 'If the position that he was man be accepted without reserve, the question, whether he was sinless, takes the following form: Can a man be sinless?' And accordingly the Rev. R. J. CAMPBELL dismisses the matter with an impatient shrug: 'To speak of Him as morally perfect is absurd; to call Him sinless is worse.'

And thus is opened up the whole practical question: How, then, can Jesus Christ be our example? That He is our example is the one great fact which these men rescue from the wreck of historic Christianity. It is their one great consolation prize to a disappointed world. This, according to Professor JONES, is the worth of His life. This, according to Professor SCHMIEDEL, is the value of His death. 'He thereby showed himself willing to champion his cause by suffering martyrdom for its sake, and not merely to proclaim it before the world as a teacher.'

But of what is this Jesus an example? Of intellectual attainment? By no means. Of moral excellence? Not at all. Of religious superiority? Certainly not. In all these things, according to all these writers (with the possible exception of Dr. DRUMMOND) He fell short. It is true that the Church has made an ideal figure of the historical Jesus, and to that figure has attributed everything that we look for in our example. But the historical Jesus is no example. And even the men who adopt the Church's ideal do so with this reservation, that in *some* things He comes short.

Is it answered that an example does not need to be perfect? Professor JONES makes that answer. He says that a life which is not perfect is all the better example. But that is not true. And if Professor JONES were writing again, he would admit that an example, whether of living or of dying, cannot be less than perfect, that in so far as it is not perfect it is not an example.

We do not wish to urge the matter, because the example of Christ is not the gospel. But it is the only gospel which is left for those who surrender the Godhead—it is well to see that, and to say it.

And there is another thing that has to be said. Why is it that these scholars, who cannot free themselves from the fascination of Christ, do not go all the way and, with 'doubting' Thomas, say at last, 'My Lord and my God'? They do not deny the uplift which is found by other men in that 'faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.' Some of them have even experienced it. Dr. James DRUMMOND has certainly experienced it; and we believe that Professor Percy GARDNER has experienced it also. But when they all see what this faith has done for other men—and, with the possible exception again of Professor SCHMIEDEL, they do all see and acknowledge it—why is it that they themselves stop short of it?

We shall be bold enough to go to a volume of sermons for the answer. There is a volume published this month by a preacher of the name of Henry W. CLARK. In that volume there is a sermon on 'Lost Spiritual Opportunities.' The occasion of it is Thomas, the 'doubting' disciple of our Lord. Mr. CLARK'S answer to our question is that, as Thomas 'was not with them' when the rest of the disciples had their experience, he doubted if they had it. His doubt was due to the neglect of being in the way. For—and now let us quote Mr. CLARK—'For the inevitable consequence of practical neglect in the search for Christly communions is a sense of unreality in Christly communions. Whatever of scepticism there was in Thomas was scepticism of this type. Such a revelation of Christ as the other disciples claimed to have received was to him unreal—whatever might be the abstract possibility or impossibility of such a revelation being given—simply because he had cut himself off therefrom. What he had not experienced, what he had prevented himself from experiencing, stood in his thought as a thing that would not and could not befall.'