

with the Christian thinker it is the most moving system of theology in existence. It does not always move to admiration of course, but it moves. Two books on Ritschlianism are reviewed this month. One of them is entitled *Facts and Values: A Study of the Ritschlian Method*, by Guy Halliday, M.A., B.D. (Christophers; 5s. net). The scope is deliberately restricted. But it is restricted to the most important matter in the system. And the restriction gives the more scope for satisfactory treatment. Mr. Halliday knows Ritschlianism; and more than that, he knows theology and psychology. He is a considerate but penetrating critic. On the Ritschlian attitude to Mysticism, for example, he shows the good that the Ritschlians have done in insisting upon the importance of an

historical revelation. 'At the same time,' he says, 'even if Ritschl be right in his epistemology, with its confinement of knowledge to purely subjective phenomena, he is dealing in his theory solely with the conscious personality, which is by no means the whole of that personality; nor are the laws of the ordinary surface life necessarily applicable to the whole, since this includes the region of the subconscious, of which the range is unknown to us, and the laws are still unformulated. Any metaphysic can only be the rough simplification for the working purposes of life of a portion of human experience. There is still left ample room for the recognition of other experiences than those which can be reduced to a place in this working plan.'

## Conflict in Prayer.

BY THE REV. EDWARD SHILLITO, M.A., HAMPSTEAD.

CONFLICT there must be to the end; in another order there will be rest, but not here; there is one glory of the terrestrial, it is the glory of battle. When the last enemy is destroyed, 'then cometh the end.' It is time to close the roll of this human story,—the age of struggle over, the age of fruition begun. The believers in war as a 'redeeming task' suggest, even to readers who hate their teaching, that they have seized a vital truth; even von Bernhardt makes many of us lay him down with the wonder in our minds—what is the truth which eludes us and baffles us in all this blasphemy? If he is wrong where is he wrong? Surely he is not wrong if he teaches that struggle has its appointed place in all created life. Surely conflict is in the spirit of the place. It is the thing *this* life is good for; what peace is given is the peace of soldiers in the trenches when there is a lull in the battle.

The apostle as he looked over the range of this earthly scene saw the Saviour going forth to subdue His enemies; one foe after another falling before Him; the last enemy was destroyed, then—the End! Life on this plane had achieved its purpose; out of the smoke and the fire of the conflict a race had been disciplined to share in the Divine Life; till then, not peace but a sword!

The quest of mankind must be not for a cessa-

tion from conflict, but *for a new field of battle*. The future depends upon the possibility of this discovery; is it or is it not possible for struggle to be transferred to the spiritual plane? Is it possible that mankind may fight, no longer upon the fields of France or Russia, but upon the plains of the inner life, and to compete in art, in science, in literature, in music, in faith. It is a long way from such a transformation. But meanwhile believers in Christ have to learn the secret of that inner conflict? They will not leave their place in the material strife; but even as they fight as good soldiers in the many phases of struggle, open to-day, they are called to explore the possibilities of conflict in prayer—they are called to wrestle, to meet God face to face, to put energy and courage and presence of mind into their life of prayer. But it appears as though this battlefield were overgrown with flowers; and there is only a dim memory of old forgotten battles.

*For at least a generation Christian thought has been shy of the interpretation of prayer as a struggle.* The pressure of modern science made that position hard to hold. It was hard enough to vindicate any place for prayer, and only possible, so many imagined, if the wrestling and striving were abandoned.

Though the position for thought is easier, the

effects are still felt in practice. The language of Scripture is retained ; we sing the old hymns :

Wrestling, I will not let Thee go  
Till I Thy name, Thy nature know ;

but they sound false to many of us. When we pray, we have little that calls for such words. In prayer we have the mood of acquiescence ; we know something of the rest of the soul in God ; we accept in prayer His accomplished will. Outside there is enough place for strife, in the inner chamber let there be peace ! It is no part of any one's duty to question the truth and the wonder of the prayer in which the soul is passive and resigned and shares

the silence of eternity  
Interpreted by love ;

this belongs to the treasure of the humble, which thieves cannot break through nor steal. But it must always be our wisdom to correct incomplete renderings of the Christian life by the standards of Christian experience as that is recorded for us in the history of the Church, but most of all as it is interpreted in the fulness of the New Testament. If something once familiar and fruitful has dropped out, how can we restore it ? Here is a spiritual fact, partly lost,—the element of struggle is prayer. Can we discover what it means ? Can we recover the secret ?

Perhaps it may be urged that in the lower ranges of Christian life, stormy prayer has its place, but afterwards it is outgrown. Jacob wrestles with the angel ; psalmists and prophets cry out in bitter remonstrance ; they liken their inner life to a sea in which all God's billows go over them. But is not that a lower order of communion ? This might be urged with more plausibility if the seal of our Lord were not set upon the struggle of the soul in communion with God. Gethsemane is a place which remains exceeding dark ; but whatever else it is, it is a place of conflict. We have to do not with the experience of a Jacob wrestling by night, but of Jesus beneath the olive trees, shedding as it were drops of blood. Jesus, who prayed upon the hills of Galilee, knew what it was to spend Himself in prayer. The inner life was not for Him, and cannot be for us a land into which no alarms of war ever come. It cannot belong to the lower ranges of our spiritual being to watch and to pray with Jesus in Gethsemane.

The Christian saints in all ages have known that prayer was an energy of the soul only released and operative after conflict. Prayer was a powerful act. To-day we are fond of saying, 'Why go on with

prayer ? Why not *do something* ?' The charge is perfectly justified if we consider our current methods in prayer. It would be without sting, if prayer were for us the experience which the saints have known. The wrestler does something ; the soldier does something ; the soul in prayer must learn what is meant by these metaphors ; it will be necessary in all probability to restate the truth ; that will come, if only the thing itself is familiar.

There is conflict in our inner life because we are *in the kingdoms of Nature and of Grace at the same time*, and any progress towards a spiritual life must be won by strife. First comes the natural man, afterwards the spiritual man ; and then only, as a wise teacher said, the truly natural man. This phase of conflict has its classical expression in the story of Jacob wrestling at Peniel. He was about to meet Esau again, and the old life was coming back upon him. A pause had come. In that pause he wrestled with a man till the breaking of the day. It was a conflict at the heart of it between his old self and the new calling—between the natural man and the prince with God. 'That he should know his adversary at first may not have been meant. It was meant that he should be troubled, wrestled with, shaken to the very deeps of his nature, flung into a vague, deep dark conflict with powers but indistinctly seen' (Davidson). The story tells how a soul is won for the kingdom of God. 'If we could but know in that dark struggle that it is the Angel of the Covenant that is wrestling with us ! He provokes the struggle that He may conquer us by being overcome.' Conflict there must be if we are to rise princes with God. The entrance into our race of these kings and priests unto God marks the opening of a new chapter in the history of the world. It may be that the ages are rightly divided by our knowledge of fossil remains ; but that moment which saw the first lonely wrestler, facing with a new vision the daybreak, is a more certain guide to the right divisions in the history of this planet. But always and everywhere such new beginnings follow upon struggle.

It may be doubtful whether we have taken this fact into account in our prayers ; have we fought fiercely, even madly, to win our complete deliverance into the liberty of the glory of the children of God ? Or are we content to have a divided life ?

Again ; it is only in conflict, often a desperate unending conflict, that *the new truth and vision of God come to us*.

The battle for truth is more like a siege than a battle of the old order, won between dawn and sunset. Why it should be so, we may see only dimly. That it is so, we cannot doubt. It is the familiarity of this experience in the saints, which makes the Book of Job so eternally new. There each generation sees itself struggling out of a superseded rendering of the Truth. The patience of Job is his readiness to know nothing about his peculiar mysteries, rather than dishonour God with a lie. He goes into the thick tempest a knight of the Holy Ghost—a champion of the honour of God. And he is nearly lost. Many a soul has known the conflict of prayer because it is in the transition between an incomplete view, and something else not yet given. It is the conflict by which the soul is *disentangled*. Its language then is the language of defiance and exasperation and despair; but that is more acceptable to God than acquiescence in dishonour done to Him. Disentanglement brings conflict. It is the deliberate rejection of the easy way; it brings an inward poverty for the time, and there will be loneliness and darkness in that hour. But once more conflict is in the part. It is the appointed way. 'The way is the way.' And in that inward life he who has no sword must sell his cloak to buy one, if he would come to the intimate knowledge of God.

But it is only when we consider *vicarious prayer and the agony of intercession*, that we come to our greatest lack. There is a note missing in our Christian prayers to-day. Moses cried—'Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which Thou hast written.' The Apostle Paul said, 'For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake.' The one story is an anticipation of Calvary, the other is a prolongation. But wherever princes with God have prayer, they have struggled and fought for the souls of men. Prayer with them is vicarious, and it is a steady, mighty, prolonged pressure of the will and spiritual being. There may not be storm or tumult; 'the gods approve the depth and not the tumult of man's soul'; but there is in intercession as it has been understood by Christian hearts, an element for which it is only possible to borrow metaphors from warfare. In intercessory prayer at its highest there is room for all the warrior virtues—a skilful reconnoitring—a right choice of ground and time, calmness, courage, perseverance, power to strike.

A good soldier of Jesus Christ is one who knows that inner battlefield.

It is hard to tell why this should be. There might have been conceivably a race created, through whose life the life of God would have had an unimpeded way. There are faiths, especially in the East, which do interpret the world as being in all its phases an expression of the Divine, the tiger no less than the saint, the plague no less than the healing sunshine. But as it is, the Christian thinker cannot interpret life, except in the light of Christ and His work and His truth; he must believe that the purpose of the Holy God in His eternal love was to bring to Himself a race, which would respond to Him, understand Him, love Him, and enjoy Him for ever; and this response though it is His, must come through man; that Redeeming Love which is the one ultimate Power, must be *released* in mankind through man; God who is Love has always sought expression; He will only find it in this world from within the soul, and since the soul is never so much itself as in prayer, from within the soul in prayer.

There are men and women waiting for the redeeming love of God in Christ Jesus; that is the one healing power in the world; it is always seeking, always yearning, always breaking against its barriers; that redeeming love is released in the prayer of intercession. Why cannot God deal otherwise? Why should some wretched and miserable sinner wait till I pray? To put such questions is to raise the whole question of the Divine method revealed in Christ. The place of intercessory prayer is perfectly consistent with the gospel. Its difficulties are simply the difficulties of the wonderful and amazing gospel. They stand or fall together; and it is our wisdom in the spiritual world, as in all worlds, to deal with things as they are.

But if there is need for this *expression and release* of the Divine Love, why is there conflict?

Only hints can be given from that in our life which is nearest to the Divine activity in creation. There is the conflict of an artist with his medium of expression—which will always baffle him; he means so much, the instrument even when it is mastered, cannot say all that he means; art on a great scale always involves conflict—a conflict between the mind with its vision, and the instrument. We may say that in the intercession of the

soul for another, God is seeking expression, and the conflict is due in part to the inadequacy of the instrument. The thing is so wonderful, so alien to much in our human outlook, so transcendent, that its coming into a world like this through being like us means travail and strife.

In one of her sonnets Mrs. Browning speaks of the soul's expression :

This song of soul I struggle to outbear  
Through portals of the sense sublime and whole,  
And utter all myself into the air :  
But if I did it—as the thunder-roll  
Breaks its own cloud,—my flesh would perish there  
Before that dread apocalypse of soul.

There must always be some such barrier between the soul and its perfect expression within the limits of this world. The interceding soul must be doomed to struggle because it is within two worlds, the one not yet known in all the fulness of its re-

sources and powers. The intercession of the soul is a divine act belonging to that other unseen and eternal order and conditioned by the limitations of our being ; that is why from our side it has the bearing of conflict, *it is conflict* ; what it looks like from God's side, we cannot tell yet ; from this side it is often like a wrestling with a reluctant God for the souls of men ; but the divine wrestler is playing for a fall, and loves to be worsted. What if all the time it is His own love struggling within us to expression and release ?

'Why pray? why not do something?' If we only prayed in Christ, if we only offered all our powers to Him, we should be doing something—we should be doing what He does for ever ; we should work in the fellowship of the Cross ; we should be not only good soldiers of Christ, but ourselves His battlefields, and the scenes of His latest victories.

## Gog and Magog.

BY PROFESSOR S. H. HOOKE, M.A., VICTORIA COLLEGE, TORONTO.

At a time when the Christian Church, already prepared by the recent remarkable revival of interest in Apocalyptic studies, is being forced by the world drama of to-day to think of Armageddon and its issues, the following brief summary of the information available concerning Gog and Magog, the mysterious protagonists of the final struggle, may be of interest. The essence of Christian Apocalyptic is hope. There is always God at the end. Coventry Patmore has expressed the familiar thought finely :

Under the everchanging clouds of doubt,  
When others cry,  
The stars, if stars there were,  
Are quenched and out ;  
To him, uplooking to the hills for aid,  
Appear at need displayed  
Gaps in the low hung gloom,  
And, bright in air,  
Orion or the Bear.

### I. ETYMOLOGY.

For fuller discussion of the etymology of the name 'Gog' the reader is referred to the articles on 'Gog' and 'Magog' in *H.D.B.* It will be sufficient here to sum up the available data very

briefly. The name 'Gog' has been connected with (1) *Gugu*, the cuneiform form of Gyges king of Lydia, 687-653 B.C. ; (2) *Gâgu*, ruler of the land of Sakhi, a district N. of Assyria, mentioned in the Annals of Assurbanipal. The name Magog has been explained as : (1) a contraction of *Mat-gog*, 'the land of Gog,' or *Mat-gagaia*, 'the land of Gagaia,' a people mentioned in the Tell el-Amarna tablets ; *Mat* being the Assyrian word for 'land.' (2) It has been read as *Migdon*, and connected with Har-Magedon (Cheyne). Other etymologies from Persian and Indo-European sources have been offered, but need not be discussed here.

What little evidence of an etymological nature there is seems to point towards an original geographical and etymological assignment of Gog to the peoples dwelling on the shores of the Euxine, such as the Cimmerians (Gomer), the Tabali and Mushku of the Assyrian inscriptions (Tubal and Mesech), and others. Hence in the popular imagination Gog belongs to the generic class of the Northern peoples. But by the time of the N.T. writers the term has totally lost any vague geographical sense which it may have had in Ezekiel's time. Hence the reader must be referred for a fuller discussion