

hearsay but from sight. The book is published under the title *England's Effort* (Smith, Elder; 2s. 6d. net).

It is a great story, and it loses nothing in the telling. Perhaps the seriousness is a little unrelieved, but the issue is serious, and it is a serious thing that we have been so misjudged in America and elsewhere. The only gleam of humour is in the Preface. There Mrs. Humphry Ward makes solemn apology for the title of her book—apology for ignoring in the title the contributions of Scotland and Ireland, of India and the Colonies. And what is her apology? That *England's Effort* (the title chosen) sounds best! 'Let anyone,' she says, 'try the alternatives which suggest themselves, and see how they roll—or do not roll—from the tongue.' Well, to be not less serious, *Does 'England's Effort' roll from the tongue any better than 'Britain's Effort'?* There is, however, the blessed alliteration. There is no getting over that. We might have suggested 'Britain's Bit,' but the last word wants a syllable for the rolling. Yes, the alliteration settles it. We commend this conclusion to the readers of the *Spectator*, where there has been a long but inconclusive controversy over the matter.

Questions of War and Peace (Fisher Unwin; 3s. 6d. net) are discussed by Mr. L. T. Hobhouse, D.Litt., Martin-White Professor of Sociology in the University of London, in three essays, two of which are thrown into the form of dialogue. The questions are just those which we are all discuss-

ing, so that the dialogue form is appropriate. They are concerned not so much with this war as with war, though the origin of this war and the responsibility for it are not left untouched. The book is easily read, and we have read it right through. But if any one were to ask us what Dr. Hobhouse's conclusions are we should not tell him, partly because we are not sure, and partly because it would serve no purpose. We must all reach our own conclusions. Discussion is the thing, and here it is. We must be taught to think.

Bishop Boyd Carpenter has the English gift of clearness. We may agree with what he says, or we may not agree, but we always know what he means to say. He delivered the Donnellan Lectures in Dublin in 1914, and in Westminster Abbey in 1916. He has now published them. The subject is *The Witness of Religious Experience* (Williams & Norgate; 2s. 6d. net). The most popular title now is Mysticism, but Dr. Boyd Carpenter does not once use that word. His argument is that personal intercourse with God on the part of a believer in Him (Christian or not) is a fact. It is a fact which touches every part of a man's personality. It may become ours by the steady process of the opening of the life to God's Grace, or by the cataclysm which is called conversion. But it always consists in the surrender of the will. Jesus surrendered His will naturally (guard against the misuse of the word 'natural'); Paul surrendered his will cataclysmically. The issue is Communion with God, and the joy of it.

The Fourth Book of Esdras and St. Paul.

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THE great interest attaching to the eschatological sections of 4 Esdras, such as the 'Son of Man' and the 'Eagle' Visions, has caused the quieter theological passages to be somewhat ignored. And yet they are of considerable importance for our understanding both of Judaism, and also of certain aspects of the New Testament, and in particular of Paulinism. Indeed, we may go further; they are of permanent religious value as giving poignant expression to those questions which vex

the thoughtful mind in every age, questions to which even Christianity can give no complete answer. The writer is in line both with Job and with the anxious religious inquirer of to-day; indeed at times his point of view is, as we shall see, extraordinarily modern. We shall not be surprised to find that his statement of difficulties is sometimes more convincing than his answers. This feature really adds to the value of the book; it is no superficial apologetic, but the faithful record

of the obstinate questionings of an honest and religious soul, which realizes the weakness of its own solutions and does not attempt to gloss them over with an air of spurious finality.

The discussions which are important for our purpose are found exclusively in what is known as the Salathiel Apocalypse. The researches of Kabisch, Box, and others have shown pretty conclusively that 4 Esdras is a composite work.¹ We need not enter into the details of the analysis; it is sufficient to say that this Apocalypse is contained in chaps. 3-10, except for four interpolated eschatological passages, and in 12⁴⁰⁻⁴⁸ 14²⁸⁻³⁵. It receives its title from 3¹, 'In the thirtieth year after the downfall of the city, I, Salathiel—who am also Ezra—was in Babylon.'² Salathiel³ (Heb. Shealtiel) is only mentioned as the father, or uncle, of Zerubbabel, and the identification of him with Ezra is at once a sign of the artificial combination of sources. The date supposed in the text—556 B.C.—is a century before Ezra's appearance. But though the nominal reference is—after the manner of Apocalyptic—to the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the real reference is undoubtedly to its fall in 70 A.D. The date of the Salathiel Apocalypse is therefore fixed thirty

¹ See Box, *Ezra Apocalypse*, and *4 Ezra* in the Oxford Corpus of *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*. The distinctive character of the theology of S (Salathiel Apocalypse) has already been recognized by Box and others. The difference between the sources in this respect is, in fact, very marked. I had myself previously worked over the book from the point of view of the different sources, but had occasion after some considerable interval to study it with reference to the bearing of its religious ideas on the theology of St. Paul, especially in Romans. For this purpose I was taking the book as it stood, and it was not till I had nearly completed it that I realized that all the passages which I had marked as significant were from S, and that the other strata, including those separated off from S by Box in chaps. 3-10, had practically no bearing on this particular subject (of course they are important for St. Paul's eschatology and conception of Christ). The point is perhaps worth noting as a small independent verification of the validity of the critical analysis.

² The quotations throughout are from Box's translation in the Oxford Corpus.

³ It is curious to find the name in a boy-actor, Salathiel Pavy, on whom Ben Jonson wrote an elegy (see Lee, *Life of William Shakespeare*, p. 342). Those who are learned in the use of the Apocrypha in the Middle Ages may be able to tell us whether it was ever a common proper name.

years after this, or 100 A.D.; 4 Esdras as it stands is slightly later.

The date is important as giving the keynote to the book. The writer is faced by the problem of God's apparent rejection of His people in the great catastrophe which had overtaken the nation. The thought recurs again and again, and reaches its climax in the vision of chap. 10, especially vv. 21^{ff.}:

'For thou seest how our sanctuary is laid waste, our altar thrown down; our temple destroyed, our harp laid low; our song is silenced, our rejoicing ceased; the light of our lamp is extinguished, the ark of our Covenant spoiled; our holy things are defiled, the name that is called upon us is profaned; . . . and what is more than all—Sion's seal is now sealed up dishonoured, and given up into the hands of them which hate us.'

In keeping with this idea the book contains some of the classical expressions of Jewish nationalism, e.g. 5^{23^{ff.}}:

'O Lord, my Lord, out of all the woods of the earth and all the trees thereof thou hast chosen thee one vine; out of all the lands of the world thou hast chosen thee one planting-ground; out of all the flowers of the world thou hast chosen thee one lily; out of all the depths of the sea thou hast replenished for thyself one river; out of all the cities that have been built thou hast sanctified Sion unto thyself; . . . out of all the peoples who have become so numerous thou hast gotten thee one people: and the law which thou didst approve out of all laws thou hast bestowed upon the people whom thou didst desire. And now, O Lord, why hast thou delivered up the one unto the many, and dishonoured the one root above the rest, and scattered thine only one among the multitude?'

Or again: 'Thou hast said that for our sakes thou hast created this world. But as for the other nations, which are descended from Adam, thou hast said that they are nothing, and that they are like unto spittle; and thou hast likened the abundance of them to a drop on a bucket' (6^{55^{ff.}}). If Israel has sinned, the nations are much worse (3^{28^{ff.}}); the law was offered to them and they have rejected it (7^{21^{ff.}}). If this were all, the book would be of no special significance. Its peculiar value lies in the way in which a wider outlook is revealed. Again and again, the writer, almost against his will, finds himself compelled to face the larger problems of the fate of man as man. He is at once catholic, as concerned with the fate

of the Gentiles, and individualistic, as thinking of the individual soul no less than of the nation as a whole. The problem of the future of the Jew turns out to be, after all, only a phase of the problem of the fate of the human race. If so few are to be saved, why was man made at all?

'O thou earth, what hast thou brought forth, if the mind is sprung from the dust as every other created thing! It had been better if the dust itself had even been unborn, that the mind might not have come into being from it. But as it is, the mind grows with us, and on this account we are tormented, because we perish and know it. Let the human race lament, but the beasts of the field be glad! Let all the earth-born mourn, but let the cattle and flocks rejoice! For it is far better with them than with us; for they have no judgement to look for, neither do they know of any torture or of any salvation promised to them after death. But what doth it profit us that we shall be preserved alive, but yet suffer great torment? For all the earth-born are defiled with iniquities, full of sins, laden with offences. And if after death we were not to come into judgement, it might, perchance, have been far better for us' (7^{62ff.}).

'This is my first and last word; better had it been that the earth had not produced Adam, or else, having once produced him, for thee to have restrained him from sinning. For how doth it profit us all that in the present we must live in grief, and after death look for punishment?' (7^{116ff.}; see also 10^{9f.}).

What, indeed, is the purpose of the infinite skill and labour lavished upon man? 'We are all one fashioning, the work of thine hands, as thou hast said. . . . And afterwards thou sustainest it in thy mercy, and nourishest it in thy righteousness; thou disciplinest it through thy law, and reprovest it in thy wisdom. Thou wilt kill it—as it is thy creature, and quicken it—as it is thy work! If then, with a light word thou shalt destroy him who with such infinite labour has been fashioned by thy command, to what purpose was he made?' (8^{7ff.}).

The angel's answer to these questions points to the waste of nature: 'Just as the husbandman sows much seed upon the ground and plants a multitude of plants, and yet not all which were sown shall be saved in due season, nor shall all that were planted take root; so also they that are sown in the world shall not all be saved' (8^{41f.}; cf. 9²¹). This analogy is clearly no solution, since

it only puts the difficulty a stage further back; but the whole discussion is very modern in tone and argument. It shows the moral difficulty presented, indeed, by every view of eternal punishment, but enormously heightened when it is held that this is the fate preserved for the vast majority of mankind, and a fate which they have practically no chance of escaping.

But while this great problem is so clearly stated, we find that it is deliberately put aside. 'Concerning man in general thou knowest best' (8¹⁵); 'For, indeed,' says the angel, 'I will not concern myself about the creation of those who have sinned, or their death, judgement, or perdition' (8³⁸; cf. 9¹³). We are to understand that the writer feels that the wider question is beyond him, and therefore, superficially at least, he consents to confine himself to the problem of Israel.

Here his primary explanation is found in the fact of sin, the interest of his treatment lying in the way in which he emphasizes its connexion with Adam. It should be remembered that this point of view was not usual in Judaism (see Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 137); the Apocalypse of Baruch comes nearest to 4 Esdras, but there it is mainly physical death and other evils which are traced to him; there is no real doctrine of original sin; see especially 54¹⁹, 'Adam is therefore not the cause, save only of his own soul, but each of us has been the Adam of his own soul.' The teaching of 4 Esdras goes further: 'Thou appointedst death for him [Adam] and for his generations, and from him were born nations and tribes, peoples and clans innumerable, and every nation walked after their own will and behaved wickedly before thee' (3^{7f.}). 'For the first Adam, clothing himself with the evil heart, transgressed and was overcome; and likewise all that were born of him' (3²¹). 'For a grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much fruit of ungodliness has it produced unto this time, and shall yet produce until the threshing-floor come!' (4³⁰). 'O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, the fall was not thine alone, but ours also who are thy descendants!' (7¹¹⁸; cf. v. 11).

The writer therefore teaches the universality of sin (7^{46. 68} etc.), though at the same time he holds that a few are not indeed sinless, but yet have a sufficiency of 'works' to win salvation (8³⁸). The angel includes Salathiel among the

number (7⁷⁷), but he himself in a remarkable manner expresses his sense of his own sinfulness; 'We and our fathers have passed our lives in ways that bring death' (8²¹). He is praised by the angel, 'because thou hast humbled thyself, as it becomes thee, and hast not assigned thyself a place among the righteous' (8⁴⁹). We must of course allow for the dramatic convention which naturally ascribes a considerable degree of sanctity to the seer under whose name the book is written; it is clear that the writer himself had a real sense of personal sin. A remarkable feature of 4 Esdras is the pathetic longing for some means of salvation, some 'gospel' not only of forgiveness—that as a Jew he accepts, though in an undefined and limited sense—but of power to conquer sin. 'O Lord above us, if thou wouldst but suffer thy servant to pray before thee; and wouldst give unto us the seed of a new heart and culture to our understanding, whence fruit may come, whereby every corruptible one may be able to live, who bears the form of man!' (8⁶). No doubt there are glorious promises of God held out as the reward of obedience and righteousness, but what are these to those who are only conscious of failure? 'For how does it profit us that the eternal age is promised to us, whereas we have done the works that bring death? And that there is foretold to us an imperishable hope, whereas we so miserably are brought to futility? And that there are reserved habitations of health and safety, whereas we have lived wickedly? And that the glory of the Most High is to defend them who have led a pure life, whereas we have walked in ways most wicked?' (7^{110ff.}). What is the value of the reward promised to works¹ to those who are conscious of having none? (8^{32ff.}). The law indeed has its promises of life, and its supremacy and abiding value are strongly emphasized, but nowhere is there any hint that it has within it the germ of any gospel for the sinner. 'Yea, rather, let the many that now are perish than that the law of God which is set before them be despised' (7²⁰).

The upshot is that the writer finds himself compelled to acquiesce in a small inner circle of the saved, a select aristocracy of spiritual supermen.

¹ 'Faith' is indeed mentioned side by side with 'works' in 9⁷ 13²³ (neither of these passages belongs to S), and there are hints of faith in S itself, but its general meaning is simply fidelity to the law; see Box on 6⁴.

'I will rejoice,' says the angel, 'over the few that shall be saved . . . and I will not grieve over the multitude of them that perish' (7^{60f.}). 'Many have been created, but few shall be saved' (8³). 'And I saw, and spared some with very great difficulty, and saved me a grape out of a cluster, and a plant out of a great forest. Perish then the multitude which has been born in vain; but let my grape be preserved and my plant, which with much labour I have perfected' (9^{21f.}).²

This solution clearly leaves the writer's conscience uneasy, and he can salve it only by having recourse to two principles, which must indeed form an element in the ultimate answer to all fundamental religious problems. The first principle is that man cannot hope to understand the ways of God. 'The way of the Most High has been formed without measure; how then should it be possible for a mortal in a corruptible world to understand the ways of the Incorruptible?' (4¹¹; cf. v. 21). 'Thou art not a judge above God nor wise above the Most High' (7¹⁹). With this principle we connect the frequent references to predestination and to God's power as Creator; man is after all but clay in the hand of the potter, who may work his will upon him, with none to say him nay (7⁵² 8² etc.). The writer here re-echoes the teaching of Job; the answer is really the abandonment of all attempt to find a solution, and Salathiel, in a passage with a curiously modern spirit, boldly ventures the question why, if this is all that can be said, man should be endowed with reason at all? 'I beseech thee, O Lord, wherefore have I been endowed with an understanding to discern?' (4²²). This falling back on the inscrutability of God's ways cannot, in fact, be allowed to hold good, if it stands alone. For, after all, what guarantee has man that there is a solution at all, or that, if there is, it in any way corresponds to his own desires, or to the claims either of reason or of conscience? Its value for religion depends entirely on the second principle to which appeal is made, and here the religious teaching of our Apocalypse reaches its climax. It is the appeal to the love of God: 'Art thou in sore perplexity concerning Israel? Lovest

² It should be noted that in the description of rewards and punishments after death in 7^{22ff.} there are noble ethical features; the wicked 'pine away with shame in that they see the glory of the Most High, before whom they have sinned in life,' while the climax of the joys of the righteous is that 'they are hastening to behold the face of him whom in life they served.'

thou him better than he that made him?' 'Thou art powerless to discover my judgement or the goal of the love that I have declared unto my people' (5³³. 40); 'Thou comest far short of being able to love my creation more than I' (8⁴⁷; cf. v. 59). If this faith is well grounded, man can indeed wait with patience for the new age, bearing the sorrow and impotence of this (5^{27ff}. 10). It is from a slightly different point of view the lesson of Browning's Saul, as it is also the teaching of the New Testament and particularly of St. Paul in Romans. We are, however, bound to remark that Salathiel has no fact to which he can appeal as the pledge of the love on which he throws himself with so noble a faith.

Here we may pass to the main point which we wish to emphasize. The reader will have already noted that the problems which troubled our unknown author are the same as those which troubled St. Paul. He too was compelled to face the question, 'Hath God cast off His people?' not indeed under the pressure of a grave national disaster, but in view of the fact that Israel itself had turned traitor to its destiny, and that the Gentiles had entered into the heritage of the Messianic Kingdom. He too feels the burden of sin and its universality, and traces it to the entail left by Adam's fall. Far more keenly and decisively has he realized the impotence of Law to save. No doubt he that doeth the works of the law shall live thereby; but what gospel is this in the face of man's universal failure and weakness? Again, he realizes even more clearly than the other that the problem of sin and salvation cannot be confined to Israel, and that, whatever the answer may be, it must include the Gentile world as well. On one side his solution is of course startlingly different; he has an answer in the gospel of Christ, with its universality, its promise of redemption, power, and hope, where the Jew has none. Writing when he did, the latter must have had some familiarity with Christian teaching, but nowhere does he betray the least sympathy with it. On the contrary, there are passages which seem to be definitely directed against it, e.g. when he is told that 'the end shall come through me alone and none other' (6⁶), or that 'even as now a father may not send a son, or a son a father . . . so shall none then pray for another on that Day, neither shall one lay a burden on another; for then every one shall bear his own righteousness or unrighteousness'

(7^{104ff}). It is true that these passages might refer to tendencies at work within Judaism itself—the emphasis on the work of the Messiah, which some schools rejected, and a belief in the validity of intercession—but they gain in point if read as a polemic against the 'heresies' of the Christians.

But on another side there is a most striking coincidence in the principles to which appeal is made for a final solution. We have seen how 4 Esdras rests finally on the inscrutability of God's ways, based on His unchallengeable power as Creator, and on His fatherly love for His creation. These are precisely the two answers which are combined in Romans. In chap. 9 St. Paul makes his well-known appeal to the absolute authority of God as Creator—'Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?'—using the same familiar metaphor of the potter and the clay. The peroration of the section in 11^{33ff}. emphasizes the same principle, 'How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?' On the other hand, in chap. 8, in dealing with the problem of the sufferings of this present time and the final deliverance of creation, he has asserted the love of God in Christ as the ground of hope and the pledge of the ultimate solution (8^{28ff}.; cf. 5⁵). The main difference is that he has the historical manifestation of that love to which he can point in vindication of his argument. The fact that both writers place these two principles side by side and that neither explicitly combines them is certainly worth notice.

There are other less important parallels between the two. Both draw the contrast between Isaac and Esau, with the same quotation from Hosea (4 Es 3¹⁶, Ro 9¹³). With 4 Es 7⁷², 'For this reason therefore shall the sojourners in the earth suffer torture, because having understanding they yet wrought iniquity, and receiving precepts they yet kept them not, and having obtained the law they set at naught that which they had received,' we naturally compare Ro 2¹⁻¹⁶, though St. Paul does not accept the common Jewish view that the Gentiles had been offered the law and had rejected it. 4 Es 7⁷³ embodies the same idea as Ro 2³, while the next verse refers to the longsuffering of God in delaying the judgment in the same way as Ro 2⁴, though the Jew declares that the delay is not for

man's sake. In 5⁴¹ we find the same interest in the fate of those who die before the end as is found in 1 Th 4¹³ (cf. 2 Bar 14).

What is the significance of these parallels? There is really no question of literary dependence on either side; St. Paul is, of course, the earlier of the two, and it does not appear probable that 4 Esdras borrows from him. The importance of the comparison lies in another direction. It shows that the problems which occupied the mind of St. Paul were also before the minds of other thoughtful Jews. They too were oppressed by sin and failure; they looked beyond the law for some means of deliverance, though they had not reached the point of unthroning the law from its position of supremacy. The contrast between God's choice of Israel and the facts of history presented a problem which refused the conventional solutions of the day, while the wider question of the fate of the Gentiles and of mankind as a whole refused to be ignored. To us the pressure of such problems is obvious, whatever our solution, and it may seem superfluous to labour the fact that they were felt by other Jews as well as by St. Paul. But they did not, in fact, loom large in the horizon of the average Rabbinic Jew, and this is no doubt one of the reasons why Christianity with its new solution did not appeal to him. We see from a contemporary writing such as 2 Baruch that it was not generally held that only a few even of the chosen people would be saved, and that there was little doubt as to the adequacy of the 'good works' of the average religious man. It may be useful to quote Mr. Montefiore's summary of the position of orthodox Rabbinism. 'There is therefore no need whatever for despair. No injunction of the law is too difficult for a man to seek to obey it . . . The breaches can be repaired. Human repentance, divine forgiveness; these are the methods . . . None but the deliberate and determined sinner need fail to grasp it [*sc.* the Law as a tree of Life]; none but the mocker and apostate are unable to uphold it . . . Rabbinic Judaism was convinced. . . that for every decent Israelite there was a place in the future world, in "the life to come."' ¹ Similarly, the ordinary Jew did not trouble himself about the fate of the Gentiles. 'The fate of the outsider did not thrust itself persistently within the circle of his thought, and even when it did, he could, such is the

¹ *Judaism and St. Paul*, pp. 43 f.

pathetic inconsistency of the human mind, consign the outsider to perdition and truly love God at one and the same time.' ² Mr. Montefiore recognizes more than once that 4 Esdras belongs to a different school of thought, and that it is in line with the type of Judaism presupposed in the Pauline Epistles; in other words, according to the thesis maintained by Mr. Montefiore, it represents the Judaism of the Diaspora. Canon Box ³ also takes the view that the tendencies found in the Salathiel Apocalypse 'suggest perhaps the influence of Alexandrian rather than specifically Palestinian thought.' Palestine, he reminds us, 'was saturated with Hellenistic influence at this period, and Palestinian Judaism was profoundly affected by it.' On the whole the parallelism between St. Paul and 4 Esdras goes to support Mr. Montefiore's thesis that the Apostle's pre-Christian Judaism was not of the ordinary Rabbinic type, though it does not necessarily follow that it may not have been learnt, at least in part, in Jerusalem. Whether this type was, as he argues, 'poorer' and 'inferior' is of course another question. It is at least arguable that such a book as the Apocalypse we have been considering does face the facts of the world and of human nature in a way that 2 Baruch or ordinary Rabbinism do not. A pessimism which comes from a resolute determination to do this may at any rate prepare the way for an optimism based on a sure foundation. We can only raise these questions here in passing and suggest that the comparison of 4 Esdras with St. Paul and a fuller study of its provenance may throw further light on the Jewish background of Paulinism and on the interesting point of view brought forward by Mr. Montefiore. This at least is clear: the author of the Salathiel Apocalypse is our best representative of the kind of Jewish thought with which St. Paul must have been in sympathy in his pre-Christian days. Had he not become a Christian, he might have written just such another book as 4 Esdras, while our unknown author would have surely been a strong 'Paulinist' had he been able to adopt the Christian solution of the problems he faced so bravely. As it is, the poignancy with which he states the difficulties and the very inadequacy of his answers may serve to emphasize the value of the teaching of St. Paul and the New Testament.

² *Ibid.* p. 57.

³ *Apoc. and Pseud. of the O.T.*, ii. p. 557.