

to Christ. Ordinances, originally intended to assist the soul to draw near to Him, had degenerated into barriers between the soul and the Saviour. In each of the questions which divided England and Rome, this underlies the controversy. It is against the attempt to substitute another person or another thing in the place of the One Only Mediator, that the Reformation is an unflinching protest. But, while protesting against the accretions of mediævalism, the Prayer-Book retains, not in spirit merely, but often in the very words of the formulary, the Revelation of God in Christ, transmitted from the Apostolic Church. Doctrinally, as well as socially and politically, the sixteenth century in England (it cannot be repeated too often, too earnestly), whatever it may have been elsewhere, was strictly and essentially a Re-formation, not the daring quest of "fresh woods and pastures new."

In these few pages it is not possible to try to delineate the characters of the principal actors in the drama; and yet the study of character is the most interesting, as it is the most instructive, chapter in history. It will be admitted generally by thoughtful and unbiassed students that of all the persons concerned in the English Reformation the most eminent and most characteristic is Cranmer. Hugh Latimer—genial, homely, outspoken—may represent what is often called the "John Bullism" of our nation; but in the serene reasonableness of our Prayer-Book, in the tenderness of its sympathies, in its undemonstrative reverence, above all in its conservation of all that could rightly be retained, we trace the influence of the man, who, despite his failings, stands first and foremost of our Reformers.

I. GREGORY SMITH.

HISTORY AND FAITH.

THE modern school of historical criticism of the Bible has undoubtedly contributed much to our knowledge and understanding of it, and has thrown valuable side-lights on such problems as the nature of inspiration. But it has not, up to the present, avoided several fundamental mistakes, which vitiate very many of its conclusions. One effect of these is that more conservative believers are apt to distrust all its methods and reject all its conclusions; and this, however unjust, is inevitable: for the generality of people will judge the whole by its result alone, forgetting that one, or a few, unsound principles of application may spoil much valuable work and many sound principles of investigation.

The recent correspondences in the *Daily Telegraph* and *Standard* prove (if proof were needed) that the faith of a great number of people is shaken by the results of a supposed impartial criticism of the Bible. In some cases belief is relinquished with sorrow, in others it is cast off with delight; and it is hard to say which is more pathetic.

One fundamental principle of this school may be stated in the words of one of its representatives. "In so far as that doctrine" (of the Resurrection of Christ) "implies a statement of fact it must be elucidated . . . by the patient and impartial labour of historical science." This principle, true in form, is misinterpreted and misapplied. A method useful in combination may be worse than useless alone; as mustard is good, but not by itself. Upon this principle the whole science of historical criticism takes its stand, by this it justifies its existence, to it this is the primary axiom, the First Law of Motion. How serious, then, will be the consequences if this be misinterpreted or misapplied!

It is necessary to distinguish between the functions of historical investigation and faith; but the distinction should be to combine, while the students of this school of critics distinguish in order to separate. If one who believes in the Resurrection as narrated in the Gospels will consider with himself, he will find that a preceding faith in Christ forms an important part in his belief. Historical evidence is necessary, but by itself inadequate, however strong. An investigation of the doctrine of Christ's Resurrection, which is conducted only on the lines of historical inquiry, is foredoomed to failure. For however we may believe, and rightly, that resurrection is the true and natural destiny of man, that truth is part of the gospel of the Son of Man's resurrection, and cannot be made directly contributory to the proof of it. The event remains a miracle, and as such it is extraordinary and possesses a prior difficulty which no historical evidence can remove. The believer is conscious that there are other accounts of miracles, not less circumstantial, and also attested by contemporary belief, of which he will not endure to even investigate the evidence, but rejects them at first sight; and that he does so without violence to reason or common-sense. He finds that the character of the Lord, as shown in His life, is such as to beget confidence and reverence for both His Person and His teaching; and that these are strengthened by observing the effect of His character and teaching upon His immediate followers and the world at large. This gives him confidence in Jesus Christ as a trustworthy guide. He finds, in the next place, that His own death and resurrection took a prominent place in many of the Lord's most solemn utterances, and a still more prominent position in those of His

immediate followers, when (according to the narratives) the events had taken place and their significance had appeared. Parallel with this he finds that an adequate *occasion* for such an event is alleged, namely the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ; and an adequate *purpose*, namely the salvation of mankind and the assurance of eternal life through Him. It is by these considerations that the prior difficulty of miracles is taken away, and such as these are wholly wanting in all non-Christian accounts of miracles. I can believe in miracles with such an occasion and such a purpose. I can believe in His miracles, or miracles testified to by Him, but not in others. The test of all miraculous narratives must be found in their relations with the Christ. This claim, of the necessity of preceding faith, is justified by the Lord's teaching, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead"; and by His practice, for when He had risen He appeared only to such as already had this personal faith in Him. "Why," asks St. Paul of King Agrippa, "should it be thought incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" To this general question there can only be one answer consistent with a belief in God. It is not incredible, given, of course, an adequate occasion and purpose. In this particular case there is shown to be no inherent improbability, but the reverse. The life, character, and teaching of Christ would be contradictory and inexplicable if their end was the Cross and tomb. The Resurrection becomes for us a witness to the miracles of Christ and His first disciples. It cannot be hard to believe that He who could *thus* rise from death should have performed miracles in His previous life, and subsequently, with a like purpose, have enabled His followers to perform them.

Now, these considerations do more than remove the prior difficulty of the miracles of Christ, which possess an inherent probability. Granting this probability, no serious student will find the historical evidence insufficient. Historical evidence and faith combine to prove the reality of the miracles of Scripture; and belief in miracles cannot properly stand without both these supports. Faith persuades us of their possibility; and historical science, following, persuades us of their actuality. It is as futile to discuss which of these is the essential element, as it would be to inquire whether the rope thrown to a drowning man is more necessary, or the hands with which he grasps it. Even as it is of no spiritual value to assent to the truth of a fact, and idly disregard its consequences; so neither is that faith living, secure, or reasonable which rests upon no certain grounds.

The critic, then, separates between History and Faith either too much or too little. As far as we distinguish them, so far

must we distinguish their functions also; for it is unreasonable to expect one to do the other's work. If we are to ignore the arguments from faith, we must forget that miracles are extraordinary. The custom of this school is to give full force to the prior difficulty, and disregard those arguments and evidence which alone can be expected to satisfy it. Such a method could no more lead to truth than an arch stand if one pillar were broken down. If the ordinary methods of historical inquiry be applied by themselves—cogent as they are, and convincing as their effect would be if these were ordinary or simple events—we cannot marvel if the result be despairing incredulity.

Another characteristic fault of this laboured and artificial criticism is to treat the sayings of Christ, quoted by Evangelists, as if they were merely the view and opinion of the narrator. This causes much offence and irritation to those who compare the comment with the Gospels. If it be true that the Lord uttered this or that saying, then it stands, not upon the authority of Luke, or John, or another, but upon His. Apart from the fact that we can have no possible authority to deny that He said it, this is to invert the proper form of narrative, which takes words from a speaker, and ceases to be narrative if words are put into his mouth. No history could be less open to such treatment than that written by the Evangelists. If the Lord did not say this or that, which is quoted as His, the statement that He did is simply false. It is, moreover, tampering with the records to treat them in this way, and not fair criticism. But a useful and encouraging lesson may be drawn from the fact. It is that, though these critics would banish the miraculous and etherealise the Resurrection, they desire to do so without denying the authority of Jesus Christ or slighting His Person. It shows that, though they cast away much, they seek to retain the Christ. It gives the lie to such as would hastily accuse them of infidelity or conscious irreverence. Having a seed of faith, they too often close the mind to its consequences, in order to escape the charge of partial investigation, and that they may not seem to submit to "ecclesiastical authority" and "theological dogma."

I have called this criticism laboured and artificial. Many examples of its action might be given to justify this. One may suffice. In an article published last year in the *Hibbert Journal*, Canon Hensley Henson tells us that there are "formidable discrepancies between the resurrection narratives," and quotes Dr. Sanday to show that there is disagreement as to "the chief scene of the appearances," whether in Jerusalem and the neighbourhood, or in Galilee. "Dr. Sanday refuses the natural course of regarding these two versions as alterna-

tives, and makes an attempt . . . to combine both in a single coherent narrative." "The more natural course" is "to adopt one or other of the localities as being the scene of the recorded appearances." Following this natural course, Canon Henson "adopts . . . with Schmiedel . . . Galilee rather than Jerusalem." As this is admitted by Canon Henson to be "the most important," we may fairly use it to test the alleged formidable discrepancies.

In the first place, no Evangelist evinces the least desire or tendency to say which was the chief scene of the Lord's appearances. There is nothing to show that any Evangelist made the mistake of supposing that his was the only account, and this is the least that must be assumed to justify the "argument from silence." Their brief and simple narratives show a remarkable absence of comment, explanation, or theory. On such a point discrepancy is impossible, for none ever raised the question.

In the second place, the suggested explanation seems peculiarly infelicitous. It assumes that our Lord did not appear both in Galilee and Judea. Why, granting that He appeared at all, the appearances should be restricted to one locality in the face of direct evidence to the contrary, which is accepted as proof that He appeared, it seems impossible to say.

Matthew gives one appearance in Judea, and one in Galilee. In that part of the Second Gospel which is certainly Mark's no appearance is recorded, but an appointment to meet in Galilee. The rest of the Gospel gives three, all, apparently, in or near Jerusalem. Luke gives three appearances, all in or near Jerusalem. John gives four, three at Jerusalem and one in Galilee. In the Acts Luke says that Christ showed Himself alive by many proofs, "appearing unto them by the space of forty days." He then narrates again the last appearance and ascension in Judea.

In these circumstances, the least natural of all possible courses would seem to be the adoption of one locality to the exclusion of the other. And of the two, Galilee is the one which to adopt thus would create the most inextricable confusion, and the most complete inconsistency with the evidence. For this would put the critic in conflict with all the Gospels and the Acts; since Mark does not say that the appointment in Galilee was kept (though few would have the hardihood to doubt it), and Luke does not mention Galilee as the scene of an appearance, either in his Gospel or in the Acts.

Finally, though it is difficult, probably impossible, to combine the accounts into a continuous narrative, because there is nothing to show the order in which the appearances took place, yet the apologist is under no sort of obligation to

do so. Neither of two narratives is discredited by the absence of information as to which event described took place first.

The encyclopædia article by Professor Schmiedel referred to by Canon Henson is a monumental example of Talmudic minuteness. He treats the story of the Resurrection as the rabbis treated the Old Testament. The weary traveller wanders painfully through the colossal accumulation in the search for conclusions, which when found are seen to be doomed from the outset by the methods employed and the assumptions made. It is seeking the lost crew of a derelict ship on a desert, troubled waste of waters; or the bones of a dead enterprise in an arid and limitless Sahara.

A. J. S. DOWNER.



THE SECULAR IN RELIGIOUS WORK.

HOW far it is helpful that the secular element should be admitted into professedly religious work, is one of the problems of the day. Hardly as the Education Act may seem to bear upon some of those engaged in the ministry of the Word, much as they may conscientiously regret that the religious training of the young should in so great a measure pass from their charge, the working out of this Act may after all tend to their increased freedom for the discharge of other duties, of which many pastors have a superabundance.

This problem, the problem of how far faithfulness in the discharge of their sacred office should lead our pastors to take up secular matters, must continually appeal to them, and sometimes perplexingly. Overwhelmed with work, as is generally the case with the best of them, not only leaders in the ordinances of the house of God, but expected to dispense the bread of life from the pulpit with due adaptation to the needs of their hearers; reckoned upon as the disinterested friends and advisers of any member of the congregation who claims their time and attention; expected to support and to multiply agencies directly religious,—beyond these justifiable claims, are not further calls too often made upon them? Whether it be choral society, football team, or hospital committee, the name of the pastor is almost sure to be in request, and, when given, is more than likely to involve a further draw upon his already overdrawn time and strength, and may even be met to the detriment of his own proper and more important work. Even the office of president, when held con-