

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

Archbishop Temple.*

THE biographies of the Archbishops of Canterbury have received a notable addition in the recently-published life of Dr. Temple. The lives of Archbishops Tait and Benson are well known and greatly valued because of their personal interest and literary ability, and the present life will worthily take its place among them. It is written by no less than seven different friends of the Archbishop, the editor being his former pupil, chaplain, and archdeacon, Mr. Sandford of Exeter.

The early life is recorded by Dr. J. M. Wilson, who was with Dr. Temple at Rugby. The story of the school-days at Tiverton, where the boy showed himself to be the father of the man, is full of great interest, as also is the record of the brilliant career at Oxford. Those days at Balliol, with their financial struggles, their notable friendships, their associations with Tractarian leaders, left an indelible mark on Dr. Temple. No one can read the story without feeling the profoundest admiration for the moral courage, the noble ideals, the intense sincerity, and the intellectual ability thus early revealed. The pictures of Jowett, W. G. Ward, Tait, Scott, Pusey, and Matthew Arnold are very fascinating.

After a short time of association with the Education Office in the principalship of Kneller Hall, the new training college for teachers, which not even Temple's great powers could make successful, we are brought to the period of his head-mastership of Rugby, where he found his true work, and where, as we cannot help feeling, he did his most remarkable and abiding work. It was here that he preached the only great and striking volume of sermons that came from his pen. It was here that he showed himself worthy to rank as a head-master with his great predecessor, Arnold. It was here that he gathered round him a galaxy of talent in such able assistant-masters as Wilson, Benson, Kitchener, Jex-Blake, and others. It was here that he was brought into closer contact with other lives than at any subsequent period of his career. Above all, it was here that the *man*, rather than the administrator and ruler, stood revealed, and made his deepest impression on boys and masters, eliciting their reverent and devoted service in a truly remarkable way. Not forgetful of his great episcopate at Exeter, we yet confess that we find ourselves in full agreement with the writer of the Rugby memoir when he says that he and other Rugbeians consider that Dr. Temple's best work was done in and for the great school over which he so worthily presided.

It is not often that anyone has the choice of four bishoprics at the same time, yet this was Dr. Temple's experience, owing to vacancies at the moment. He chose wisely in selecting Exeter for his sphere of work, since his West Country birth and associations were all in his favour. The story of the opposition to his appointment based on his connection with "Essays and Reviews" will be found in full in this record. In view of his subsequent career it all reads very curiously now, but there was no doubt of the intense feeling

* "The Life of Archbishop Temple," by Seven Friends. Edited by E. G. Sandford. Macmillan and Co. Two vols., 32s. net.

aroused at the time by the book in question, even though Dr. Temple's share in it was confined to one article of a not specially unorthodox character. The Exeter episcopate is a record of almost unbroken success and triumph. His powers were at their height; the contrast between the former and the new *régime* was so marked, and the genuineness of character and strenuousness of life were so pronounced, that we read without surprise of Dr. Temple's popularity and power in the West of England all through the Exeter episcopate. How he organized the entire diocese, led the movement for the establishment of Truro, developed interest in education, temperance, missions, and a number of other departments of work in various directions—this and much more can be read in these pages, which are appropriately and ably written by Archdeacon Sandford of Exeter.

In 1882 his former assistant at Rugby, Bishop Benson, of Truro, was promoted over his head to the primacy, and many readers will share the editor's wish that Temple might have gone instead, in the plenitude of his powers and popularity. That he would have made a great Archbishop goes almost without saying, and this *may* be said without any possible reflection on Archbishop Benson. But it was not to be, and there is scarcely anything more truly beautiful in the whole record than the proof of the loyalty of Bishop Temple to his once junior colleague. The friendship between the two men comes out on several occasions in these volumes, and it is hard to say to which of them can be awarded the greater credit for the relationship.

In 1885 came Bishop Temple's call to London, and very soon the diocese became aware of the change from Bishop Jackson's benign sway. Himself an indefatigable worker, who could "toil terribly," Dr. Temple made it evident that he expected hard work from his clergy. Some of them thought that their Bishop had not forgotten his Rugby days, and that he regarded his clergy as sixth form boys. Whether this was so or not, he never seems to have elicited that general personal devotion which characterized his Exeter episcopate, or made that deep impression on all classes that was so evident in the West Country. Canon Scott Holland, in his "Personal Studies," says that London never realized what a great man was among them, and this is undoubtedly true. Probably the causes were partly local and partly personal. London is such a huge place that a Bishop who gave himself to his own proper work, as Dr. Temple did, was hardly likely to impress the great mass of people. On the other hand, the Bishop's aloofness and reserve to all but personal friends made it almost impossible for men to feel any great enthusiasm for him. Most assuredly, as has often been said, he did not "suffer fools gladly," but it must be confessed that he not seldom went beyond "fools" in his method of dealing with men. His brusqueness was a cause of genuine regret and trouble to many who wished to render him the respect and devotion due to his position, and nothing can really justify the way in which he treated men at times. Nor is it any answer to say that they deserved it. Perhaps they did, but nevertheless they ought not to have had it from their father in God. If proof be needed of the truth of these remarks, we may refer to the virtual apologies of his biographers for this feature of his character.

Of his six years' primacy (1896-1902) space forbids us to speak. It was

a heroic and characteristic act to accept the office at the age of seventy-six, and it is noteworthy and delightful to see that with the advancing years and mellowing of his character came back a large measure of the popularity of the Exeter days. Everybody was impressed with the striking figure of the brave old warrior who was giving every ounce of his strength to the fulfilment of his onerous duties.

Of his ecclesiastical statesmanship it must, we fear, be said that it was not of the first order. His attitude to ritualism in Exeter and in London was fatal to the best interests of the Church; and though it is evident that at Canterbury he was at last fully aware of the real nature of the trouble, he was now powerless to stem the torrent that he had himself allowed to flow for years unchecked. The way in which the Archbishop's judgments on incense and reservation were received must have shown him this.

On the Education question his complete mastery of the subject led him to warn Churchmen against allowing themselves to favour a policy of rate-aid for Church schools, speaking, in a phrase that has become historic, of "the slippery slope of rate-aid." How slippery the slope has become, the present Education controversy only too clearly shows. And yet by a curious inconsistency the Archbishop disappointingly supported the Act of 1902, which put the Church schools on the rates, and thereby paved the way for the Bill of 1906, by which the distinction between Voluntary and Council schools bids fair to be abolished.

Like every other strong and great personality, Archbishop Temple had "the defects of his qualities"; but, in spite of these, his "qualities" were of a very high order, and his personality one of great power. This biography concludes with a section by the editor on Dr. Temple's character, and in some respects this is the most attractive and fascinating part of these able and deeply-interesting volumes. In particular, the last chapter, headed "The Completed Life," with its picture of the closing years at Canterbury, is very touching and beautiful, and we find ourselves dwelling on the Archbishop's home life and his relations with his son at Rugby and Oxford with profound interest and satisfaction. This is a book to be read by all who would know more of the Church life of recent years, and of one of the notable and remarkable figures in it.



Literary Notes.

THE "Researches in Sinai," which was mentioned in these notes earlier in the year, by Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie, D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., who is Edwards Professor of Egyptology at the University College, London, gives an account of the recent expedition with a large working party which lived in the desert excavating for some months. The oldest Egyptian sculptures known are reproduced; the geology and ancient ruins are described; the only temple known for Semitic worship was fully explored, and is illustrated in detail; the conditions of the Exodus are discussed with a new view of the Israelite census; and the life of the