

THE MORAL TEACHING OF CHRIST AND ITS MODERN CRITICS.

BY THE REV. HORACE MARRIOTT, D.D., Eccleston Vicarage,
St. Helens, Lancashire.

IT is a notable fact that the half-century or so before the outbreak of the War is marked by a widespread movement of reaction from Christian ethical ideals. It is not only Christian doctrines that are impugned to-day, but also the fundamental moral principles of Christianity. The movement has found many spokesmen, of whom Friedrich Nietzsche is the most vigorous and impassioned.

I. THE CAUSES OF THE REACTION AGAINST CHRISTIAN MORALS.

Now what has given rise to this dissatisfaction with the moral teaching of the New Testament? Doubtless there lie behind it various causes. But there is much ground for thinking that the wide acceptance of the theory of evolution has largely induced it. It is hardly without significance that the modern movement against Christian ethics dates from about the same time as evolutionary views began to gain currency, and that many of the leaders of the reaction have been deeply under the influence of the new ideas. Moreover, it is clear that the acceptance of the evolutionary theory raises difficulties in various directions in the way of continued acquiescence in the moral teaching of the New Testament, e.g.—

(1) It reacts upon the idea of God. The evolutionary theory calls attention to the cruelty and wastage of life which prevail in the realm of nature. The laws of the great cosmic process which it formulates seem to reflect a supreme Being widely different in character from the God of the Christian revelation. Now to those who accept the Christian idea of God, the Christian ethic is natural. But to those who reject that idea, it ceases to be natural. Its foundation is gone.

(2) The evolutionary theory also affects the Christian moral code more directly. The laws of the cosmic process stand in sharp contrast to the laws of human conduct embodied in the teaching of the New Testament. How can the divergence be explained? If the former reflect the nature and purpose of the Divine Being, can it be maintained that the latter do so likewise? It will be remem-

bered that Professor Huxley addressed himself to this difficulty in his famous Romanes Lecture, delivered in 1893.

(3) Further, it appears to many that the Christian moral code is a stumblingblock in the way of the working out of the evolutionary process. Whereas the law of nature is that the weak and the diseased shall die off, and that the fittest alone of each species shall survive, and propagate its kind, the Christian ethic induces the protection and nurture of the unfit, and consequently, as it would seem, the propagation and multiplication of their unfitness. It was Nietzsche's conviction that the ethics of the Gospel tend to thwart the process of evolution and are a force on the side of the degeneration of our species, which chiefly aroused his animosity against the Christian religion.

(4) Further, the evolutionary theory was early applied to the moral consciousness of man, and the moral sense itself, as we now know it, was viewed as the product of a long process of development from rudimentary beginnings. To many, the acceptance of the new view has appeared to dethrone conscience from its seat of authority. For if conscience has developed out of animal instincts, it can no longer, as it would seem, be accorded the respect and reverence which are rightly due to a faculty conceived as having been divinely implanted in an animal organism, from which it is entirely distinct. If, then, conscience is itself a thing evolved, and if the Christian ethic is viewed as purely the product of the developed human conscience, the question arises, What degree of authority can rightly be assigned to this ethic? And further, if the development of the moral sense has been continuous in human history down to the present day, is it reasonable to believe that the last word on ethics was uttered some 2,000 years ago, and that the moral sense of mankind to-day is incapable of making any advance upon it?

(5) Another direction in which acceptance of the evolutionary theory entails difficulty is the following. The evolutionist finds no support in his researches for the Biblical doctrine of the Fall of primitive man. Now the Christian ethic presupposes the fallen and sinful nature of man. It traverses at many points the natural inclinations and desires of the human heart. Those who reject the doctrine of the Fall may yet, indeed, regard man's natural morality as exhibiting many imperfections. But to such the aspect of these is far different from that which they wear in the Christian way of

thinking. Characteristics which to the Christian are manifestations of a deep-seated corruption of man's pre-fallen state present themselves as mere imperfections, survivals from primitive states of savagery and barbarism. Thus, even if liberally disposed towards the Christian ethic, they cannot endorse its tone, nor yet all of its content. And they may well hold, with more or less of consistency, that human conduct is to be based upon nature as interpreted by biology and psychology, without reference to any higher principle whatever. This is, in fact, the line which many of the new moralists have taken.

(6) Once again, the evolutionary theory was widely hailed as a great intellectual discovery. It enhanced the reputation of the discursive intellect, of its powers and possibilities. Now it may, indeed, be well maintained that human reason is not contrary to religion. But an undue exaltation of the discursive intellect above the other powers of the mind always seems inimical to a due appreciation, either of Christian faith or of Christian morals.

The foregoing instances may suffice to support the view which has been advanced that the promulgation of the theory of evolution in the middle of the last century, and the consequent rapid spread of evolutionary ways of thinking, have been, directly or indirectly, a prime cause of the recent reaction against Christian ethical ideas and ideals.

II. THE STRENGTH OF THE APPEAL OF CHRISTIAN MORALS.

Is there then cause for alarm lest the teaching of Nietzsche, and other teachings inconsistent with those of the New Testament, should spread increasingly in Christian countries? We believe not. The spread of Nietzsche's ideas has indeed been great and rapid. But it is largely due to the fact that they have been used to subserve the interests of an overweening nationalism. The appeal of Christian morals rests on far deeper and more secure foundations. Let us endeavour briefly to enumerate some of the abiding elements of strength in the appeal which the Christian ethic in general makes to human nature.

(1) It commends itself to the moral consciousness enlightened by the Divine Spirit. It stands in close relation to the Jewish ethics which preceded it. It is the climax of a long and gradual growth of ethical discernment. The Christian teaching about man,

sin, duty, etc., is what the moral consciousness of human nature delivered when fully illuminated by the Spirit of God. And as the teaching of the Jewish prophets appealed to the enlightened moral sense of their generation, so has the teaching of Christ appealed to the enlightened moral sense of every Christian age, and that in proportion to the measure of its enlightenment. Conscience is the unfailing ally of the Christian ethic. And although Nietzsche might teach that conscience is a useless piece of lumber, there seems little fear that mankind will ever stop its ears to a voice which speaks with such insistence and authority.

(2) The Christian ethic is also sustained by august supernatural sanctions. Christ laid down His moral teaching in a tone of absolute authority. It is of faith that He was the Divine Son of God, that His Apostles spoke with the authority of inspiration, and of intimate personal companionship with Him during His sojourn among men. Moreover the Christian ethic appeals to rewards and punishments, not in this life only, but also in that beyond the grave. And it is upheld and taught by Christ's own Divine institution in the world, the Church.

(3) Again, it is perfectly embodied in a personal life. The agreement between Christ's example and His teaching is complete. Less perfectly indeed, yet markedly, the Christian ethic is manifested in the lives of St. Paul and the other Apostles. This historical embodiment of the teaching in human life greatly enhances its appeal to the mind of man, and facilitates its reproduction in human life. It provides a vivid illustration of the teaching, and exhibits it as carried into practice amid the varying circumstances of life. Where moral teaching is presented in a set of precepts and statements alone, the mind can only master it by a synthetic intellectual process. But a personal example is in itself a synthesis of all the precepts, from which particular rules and principles may be drawn as called for by a process of analytic deduction. How often in Christian history has the first appeal of the Gospel ethic come to the individual through his enthusiasm and admiration for the character and the life of our Lord!

(4) The Christian ethic also agrees perfectly with the Christian idea of God. What the Christian sees in Christ on earth, he likewise sees in God above. The motive set before him is that he should strive to attain to the moral perfection which is in God (Matt. v. 48).

(5) Once more, the spirit of the Christian ethic coincides with the spirit engendered in man by acceptance of the doctrine of forgiveness through the atoning blood of Christ. Take, e.g., the Matthaean Beatitudes. Every one of the qualities here enumerated must be present in the heart which has sincerely laid hold upon Christ as its personal Redeemer through His Cross and Passion. These last three concordances of the Christian ethic, viz., with the example of Christ, with the Christian doctrine of God, and with the Christian scheme of salvation, together constitute a threefold cord, not quickly broken, binding to it the heart and allegiance of man.

III. HOW CAN THE CHURCH BEST DEFEND CHRISTIAN MORALS AGAINST ITS ASSAILANTS ?

We hold therefore that there is little danger of the Christian ethic ever being swamped by such revolutionary theories as have been put forward of recent years. Yet it is of great importance that the Church should combat these theories as wisely and effectively as possible. How can she do so ?

Looking broadly at the matter, there appear to be three main lines along which the situation can be dealt with : (1) The new teachings can be attacked and criticized ; (2) the Christian ethic can be vindicated and expounded ; and (3) defects in the current presentation of Christian ethics can be remedied.

(1) In the first place, the new teachings can be attacked and criticized. Their mutual disagreements, and their individual inconsistencies and contradictions, can be exposed.

Although Nietzsche has deeply influenced many of the reactionary writers, they are yet far from agreement with each other in their positive ideals of conduct. John Davidson, e.g., denies everything which Nietzsche cherished most, as progress, the superman, and the future of the race. These, he maintains, are all otherworldly ideas borrowed from Christianity. Again, Mr. Bernard Shaw, while basing his ethics on much the same philosophical foundations as Nietzsche, is far more humane and benevolent in his outlook upon life. He upholds socialism in place of Nietzsche's individualism. To take another instance, whilst Mr. Shaw has taken over Nietzsche's superman theory, and advocates a national breeding organization, Mr. H. G. Wells has for the most part placed his faith in education.

Nor are these writers free from self-inconsistency. This is notably the case with Nietzsche himself: e.g., he teaches that the "Natural Man" (in the Pauline sense) can find in life happiness, worth, and possibility of progress; yet he depreciates human nature, and profoundly distrusts it. (Cf. *Human, all too Human*.) He assumes the purely "natural" in man to be self-contained and self-sufficient, and rejects the doctrine of the dualism of "flesh" and "spirit." Yet he recognizes internal turmoil, and in some passages his "Natural Man" closely approaches the moral being, in whom is waged the perpetual conflict of the Christian teaching.¹ He rejects the whole idea of morality as a bad dream, alien to nature and subversive of man's true welfare. Yet in a notable passage he points out the amount of good which the world has derived from the principles of moral discipline.² He adopts a strongly individualistic standpoint and glorifies the virtues of egoism. Yet he teaches that free-will is a superstition, and that nature has nothing to say to the individual. He is the Apostle of race progress. He looks for its achievement to individuals who shall sum up in themselves the advance of mankind. But it is difficult to see how the idea of such progress can be reconciled with his determinism. Moreover, in his doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence he denies the possibility of any abiding advance, and kills the very incentive to progress.

Deductions can be drawn from these inconsistencies and contradictions. It can be shown that every purely naturalistic scheme is radically unsatisfactory. Again, the misunderstandings and travesties of the Christian scheme which these writers exhibit can be laid bare. It can be shown, e.g., that Nietzsche completely misjudged Christianity, that he did not see the gigantic stature to which the spiritual man may grow, and that he was blind to the whole dynamic force of the Christian religion. The Rev. L. S. Thornton's *Conduct and the Supernatural* affords an admirable example of how this task may be temperately yet firmly achieved.

Another way in which the new schemes can be attacked is by the application to them of the pragmatic test. What sort of fruit have these new sowings yielded? If it could be demonstrated that they

¹ E.g. in *Beyond Good and Evil*, §§ 229, 230. Engl. transl. by Helen Zimmern.

² *Beyond Good and Evil*, § 188. Engl. transl. by Helen Zimmern.

have largely contributed to the outbreak of the Great War, and to the manner in which it was waged by our enemies, this would be a most effective argument against them. A thorough and impartial investigation of the whole subject is a great desideratum. Before the war, Nietzsche was little known outside his native country. To-day even, the pernicious effects of his teaching are probably far from fully realized.

Again, a less direct method of attack is open to us. The true bearing upon the Christian ethic of the scientific or philosophical hypotheses behind the new teachings can be thoroughly examined. It has not infrequently happened that incompatibility with Christianity has been held without solid ground, through shallow thinking, or misunderstanding of the true teaching of Christianity. Let us illustrate our meaning. We have expressed the view that the rise of the reaction in morals took its departure in large degree from the theory of evolution. Now this theory has in the past been held to be inconsistent with Christianity in respects which, as we can now see, are not necessarily inconsistent with it. Take, e.g., the Christian doctrine of the Fall of Man. It has often been maintained that the evolutionary theory is wholly subversive of this doctrine. But it is now widely recognised that the two are not incompatible. This revised view is due to further thought upon the subject. On the one hand it has come to be seen that the scientific theory allows room for the Christian doctrine, and on the other we have learned to distinguish between the naked doctrine itself and the traditional accretions in which it has been clothed. There seems to be a real need for a more radical investigation of the whole subject of the compatibility of Christianity with modern evolutionary theories. We do not mean that the Church should accept these theories as certainly true, and identify herself with them. History suggests that this would be unwise. The storms of the sixteenth-century Reformation sprang largely out of the acceptance by the Church of a philosophical theory of matter which has long been obsolete. Generally accepted as is the evolutionary hypothesis to-day, it is no more than a "probable theory," even in the sphere of biology. What we do advance is that the Christian Church ought to have serious regard to views which are widely accepted by thoughtful people, and that she should address herself with thoroughness to an investigation of the question, On the assumption that these

views are true, is any part of Christianity necessarily disproved? And we venture to think that the result of such an inquiry in the case of the theory of evolution would be to show that none of the difficulties enumerated in the first section of this essay are incapable of solution, or at least of satisfactory explanation.

(2) The second line along which the Church can deal with the situation is that of exposition and apologetic. We cannot afford to treat this subject at length within the limits of this discussion. Let us therefore confine ourselves to a single illustration of the help which may be afforded along this line.

The ethic of the Gospel is often too much treated as a thing unique and apart, which purports to have come down from Heaven in the Person of Jesus Christ, and rests upon His authority alone. The ethics of Christ are indeed unique. At the same time they stand in organic connection with earlier Jewish ethical thought. This is to a large extent seen by a comparison of Christ's teaching with that contained in the canonical books of the Old Testament. It is more forcibly brought home to us by a study of the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical literature. In the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, e.g., we read, "Endure for the sake of the Lord every wound, every injury, every evil word and attack. If ill-requitals befall you, return them not either to neighbour or enemy, because the Lord will return them for you and be your avenger on the day of great judgment, that there be no avenging here among men" (c. 1. 3, 4). This recalls Christ's precepts on non-resistance to evil and love to enemies in Matthew v. 38-48. Again, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* afford numerous parallels with New Testament ethics. The passage just referred to from the Sermon on the Mount and other Christian sayings are recalled by the Testament of Gad (vi. 3-7): "Love ye, therefore, one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, cast forth the poison of hate and speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile; and if he confess and repent, forgive him. But if he deny it, do not get into a passion with him, lest catching the poison from thee he take to swearing and so thou sin doubly. Let not another man hear thy secrets when engaged in legal strife, lest he come to hate thee and become thy enemy, and commit a great sin against thee; for oftentimes he addresseth thee guilefully or busieth himself about thee with wicked intent. And though he deny it and yet have a sense of shame when reproved,

give over reproving him. For he who denieth may repent so as not again to wrong thee ; yea, he may also honour thee, and fear and be at peace with thee. And if he be shameless and persist in his wrongdoing, even so forgive him from the heart, and leave to God the avenging." Again, the saying in Luke vi. 45 about good and evil issuing from the treasure of the heart finds a striking parallel in Asher i. 6-9 : " Therefore if the soul take pleasure in the good (inclination), all its actions are in righteousness ; and if it sin it straightway repenteth. For, having its thoughts set upon righteousness, and casting away wickedness, it straightway overthroweth the evil, and uprooteth the sin. But if it incline to the evil inclination, all its actions are in wickedness, and it driveth away the good, and cleaveth to the evil, and is ruled by Beliar ; even though it work what is good, he perverteth it to evil. For whenever it beginneth to do good, he forceth the issue of the action into evil for him, seeing that the treasure of the inclination is filled with an evil spirit." There are numerous such parallels in the later Jewish literature. They show that the ethics of the Gospel are but the climax and the crown of progressive moral enlightenment among the Jews. There is a sense in which it is true to say that the least original part of the Christian religion is its morality. Thus those who attack the precepts of Christ have to reckon, not with Him alone, but also with the highest moral consciousness of the whole Jewish race.

(3) Lastly, the modern reaction in morals constitutes, as it seems to us, a call to the Church to set right what is amiss in the current presentation of Christian ethics. We believe that the reactionists are in fundamental error. Nevertheless they may have something to teach us, and their teaching may contain some measure of truth. Is the Church herself entirely free from responsibility for the rise and spread of these views ? Or does blame attach to her for exaggerations and one-sided presentations of her doctrines ? Nietzsche, e.g., inveighs against the femininity of Christ's teaching. Have we given no occasion for his invective, or have we in fact overvalued the pity virtues, in comparison with the virile, and distorted the true character and teaching of our Lord ?

We venture to think that there is a real need to-day for an authoritative systematization and presentation by the Church of the ethic which she upholds. It is true that it could be neither

perfect nor final. But it could always be revised and amended. The Church has systematized her theology in Creeds and Articles, her worship in the Liturgy, and her ministry in the Ordinal. Why should she be content to refer us back to the Decalogue alone for a succinct presentation of her ethics? Something more seems to be needed.

“ But,” it will be asked, “ how could any human words, however good and well-chosen, equal those of Christ Himself and His Apostles?” We do not deny it. We do not suggest that a systematic statement should take the place of the *ipsissima verba* of the New Testament, any more than the Creeds have taken the place of the doctrinal passages of the New Testament upon which they are grounded. We only contend that a careful and comprehensive systematic enunciation of ethics would be a valuable supplement to the ethical matter which lies dispersed in the pages of the New Testament. And we submit that this presentation ought to include, amongst others, the following features, in order adequately to meet the needs of the present day :—

(a) Its expression should be literal and modern. As in theology, so in ethics, ideas need to be translated into modern terminology. Christ’s recorded sayings abound in hyperbole, which is apt to be misleading to the Western mind. They are also often figurative and poetical, and their true purport is frequently on this account obscure. Hence the need for a clear and precise enunciation, in modern terminology, of the literal purport of the ethics of the New Testament.

(b) Secondly, the ethical principles of the New Testament need to be extended outwards from their primary reference to the individual so as to apply to all collective units of mankind. And here it may be noted that as soon as the individual application is left behind, systematization becomes the more necessary, because Christ’s precepts are not reinforced to the same degree by His individual example, and by the atoning sacrifice of which each individual can lay hold. The Christian follows Christ’s teaching, as we have already pointed out, in large measure because of the influence upon him of the pattern life of Christ, and also because He has accepted Christ as his personal Saviour from sin. There is, consequently, a warmth and fervour about the individual following of Christ’s teaching which is absent from the ethic of corporate

units of society. And it follows that the latter need for their guidance, in a way which the single individual does not, a systematic code of Christian principles.

(c) Again, principles which are only implicitly contained in the New Testament need to be explicitly set forth. Let us take in illustration Nietzsche's charge against Christianity that it makes for physical deterioration and decadence. It must probably be admitted that there is some truth in the charge, as directed against the type of Christianity which largely prevails to-day. For this type exerts great moral pressure in favour of the care and preservation of unfit and diseased humanity, and but little pressure in restriction of the propagation by humanity of its disease and unfitness, whether physical, mental or moral. This is because the principles which are explicitly laid down in the New Testament have taken hold upon the conscience of humanity vastly more than such principles as can only be deduced from New Testament teaching. And this in turn is largely owing to the lack of an orderly and systematic presentation of the whole field of ethical ideals, in which each principle, whether explicit or not in the pages of the New Testament, finds its appropriate place, and the measure of importance which rightly belongs to it. There can easily be inferred from the New Testament—e.g., from all its teaching as to the duty of caring for the weak and the sick, from its precept of love to all men, and from its doctrine of the infinite worth of the individual soul—the principle that the procreation of human life is a high responsibility. Taken in conjunction with the ascertained laws of heredity, the Christian teaching on self-sacrifice demands from many individuals a voluntary abstention from bringing children into the world. If this were generally accepted by the Christian conscience, Nietzsche's charge would have little to substantiate it. His remedy for the existing state of things is that mankind should cast off the altruistic feelings which Christianity has engendered and fostered, and that it should freely allow all imperfect specimens of humanity to perish. The true Christian ethic on the other hand discloses a far more excellent way. It is that men should continue to show all loving care for all human life, however decadent the type may be; but that this Christian sense of the duty of caring for human life should be matched by a sense, equally strong, of the duty of procreating the most healthy and vigorous specimens, and of limiting procreation,

by the voluntary sacrifice of individual liberty—enforced, as may be necessary, by the collective action of society—to such specimens as are good and healthy, and free from serious blemish. In a word, the Christian conscience ought to be as strongly eugenic as it is altruistic.

The attempt to present in systematic form the whole field of Christian ethics is attended by certain difficulties the consideration and solution of which rightly appertains to the collective mind of the whole Church. One of these is the difficulty of determining how much can rightly be included. It will probably not be disputed that Christian ethics are wider and more inclusive than the ethics explicitly or implicitly contained within the covers of the New Testament. But how much can rightly be incorporated? Let us consider for a moment the Jewish literature, canonical and non-canonical. This contains a large amount of ethic. Much of it is at variance with the Christian standard. The question presses, "How much of this Jewish ethic can be extracted which ought to be incorporated within the Christian ethic?" The same question has to be faced with regard to the pagan ideals of antiquity. But it is not solely with regard to ancient ideas that the question presses. Many of the most characteristic features of our social life are of comparatively recent origin. The active virility of the Western races has produced many qualities upon the value of which it is the province of ethics to pronounce, and has raised many moral questions which it is the province of ethics to decide.

These questions bring us up against the following more radical question: How far must we regard the New Testament as providing a full-orbed presentation of Christian character, so that what is different from that presentation is necessarily inconsistent with the Christian ideal? In other words, how far should the ethics of the New Testament be held to have exclusive force? If we hold that they do not constitute the complete Christian ethic, but only present us with certain leading features of it, then there may be large room for the addition to them of other not incompatible features. Has the eschatological outlook of our Lord and His Apostles so coloured their ethical teaching that it is not wholly applicable to an age of which the eschatological outlook is different? In other words, is their ethic the normal Christian ethic, or is it abnormal, and is it the task of the Church to discover the normal ethic? John Stuart

Mill has expressed his belief that the sayings of Christ "contain, and were meant to contain, only a part of the truth; that many essential elements of the highest morality are among the things which are not provided for, nor intended to be provided for, in the recorded deliverances of the Founder of Christianity, and which have been entirely thrown aside in the system of ethics erected on the basis of those deliverances by the Christian Church. And this being so," he continues, "I think it a great error to persist in attempting to find in the Christian doctrine that complete rule for our guidance which its author intended it to sanction and enforce, but only partially to provide. I believe, too, that this narrow theory is becoming a grave practical evil, detracting greatly from the moral training and instruction which so many well-meaning persons are now at length exerting themselves to promote. I much fear that by attempting to form the mind and feelings on an exclusively religious type, and discarding those secular standards (as for want of a better name they may be called) which heretofore co-existed with and supplemented the Christian ethics, receiving some of its spirit, and infusing into it some of theirs, there will result, and is even now resulting, a low, abject, servile type of character which, submit itself as it may to what it deems the Supreme Will, is incapable of rising to or sympathizing in the conception of Supreme Goodness. I believe that other ethics than any which can be evolved from exclusively Christian sources must exist side by side with Christian ethics to produce the moral regeneration of mankind; and that the Christian system is no exception to the rule, that in an imperfect state of the human mind the interests of truth require a diversity of opinions. . . . It can do truth no service to blink the fact, known to all who have the most ordinary acquaintance with literary history, that a large portion of the noblest and most valuable moral teaching has been the work, not only of men who did not know, but of men who knew and rejected, the Christian faith."¹ On the other hand, in the Report of the Committee appointed at the recent Lambeth Conference to consider the duty of the Church in relation to industrial and social questions, we read (in § 5 entitled "The Root of the Matter"): "By His (i.e. Christ's) Incarnation He gave us the complete revela-

¹ *On Liberty* (People's Edition), pp: 29, 30.

tion of human duty.”¹ Which of the two views is the true one? The question is one for the collective Church to answer. She cannot answer it outright. But she can, relying upon the promise of the Spirit’s guidance, gradually feel her way towards it. And she is not to-day wholly unmindful of her duty so to do. In proof of this we may quote a noble passage at the beginning of the Report of the Committee appointed at the Lambeth Conference to consider the position of women in the Councils and ministrations of the Church. It is as follows: “Sometimes it becomes our duty, faithfully retaining the lessons of the sacred past, in a very special sense to trust ourselves to His (i.e. the Spirit’s) inspiration in that present which is our time of opportunity, in order that He may lead us into whatsoever fresh truth of thought or of action is in accordance with the will of God. For the Holy Spirit is with us and with our generation no whit less than He was with our elder brethren in Christ in the first days of the Gospel.”²

Every effort in this direction is worth while. The subject of ethics is of great importance to-day. The history of Germany during the last half-century is proof of the enormous influence which moral ideas can exert upon a whole people in a comparatively short time when they are clearly enunciated and assiduously pressed upon the minds of the young. If the reactionary ideas of a fanatical prophet have had such far-reaching consequences, how great might be the results for good of the ethics of the Christian Church, clearly set forth and energetically inculcated upon the whole population! It may be that the future peace of Europe, and of the world, hangs upon what the Christian Church does with her ethics in the coming years.

HORACE MARRIOTT.

¹ *Report of Lambeth Conference, 1920, p. 77.*

² *Report of Lambeth Conference, 1920, p. 95.*

